

The British-Israel-World Federation Victorian Branch

AUSTRALIAN PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS ARCHIVE

TITLE: BIWF VIC HQ Monthly Notes 2010
ORIGIN: Victoria
LOCATION: Victorian Bookroom Archive

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DATE PREPARED AND SCANNED:
22.10.2024

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British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

MONTHLY NOTES



No. 670

January 2010

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DANIEL 9 continued.

Daniel 9 commences with Daniel's statement setting out the time, the place and the reason for his writing it. Daniel had read the writings of the prophet Jeremiah which stated his people's captivity in Babylon was seventy years. Jeremiah had also written (25.12) that at the end of the seventy years God would punish the king and nation of Babylon for their iniquity. Daniel had already seen this happen for he was writing this chapter in the time of Darius the Mede. Furthermore, Jeremiah had written that God's people would repent and turn to God in prayer, and that God would hear their prayer and return His people to their land.

Daniel 9.1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

9.2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

So Daniel had already seen the fall of Babylon in fulfilment of the 70 year servitude prophesied by Jeremiah 25.11 & 12.

Here are the prophecies of Jeremiah which Daniel would have read:

Jeremiah 25.11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

25.12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

25.13 And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

25.14 For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.'

As well, Daniel **would have learnt more** from a later prophecy of Jeremiah **29.10-14.**

Here in Jeremiah 29 we see a confirmation that the captivity would end after 70 years with the additional information that Daniel's people would **not only call upon the Lord in prayer, but also that the Lord would hear this prayer** and cause His people to return to their place:

Jeremiah 29.10 For thus saith the Lord, "That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

29.11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

29.12 Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you.

29.13 And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.

29.14 And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places wither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Having read these comforting words, Daniel humbled himself with fasting, sackcloth and ashes and turned to God in a prayer (v.3), establishing God as blameless in this matter, and a God Who kept His covenant with His People and Who was merciful to those who love Him.

In Daniel's humble prayer of intercession for his nation, he included himself and others in the confession of sin in vv. 5-6 by saying "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity." Daniel's prayer is for all Israel as we read in Dan. 9.7. Here we see so many important aspects of an intercessory prayer that we quote the prayer in full: Daniel 9.3-19:

Daniel 9.3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

9.4 And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, 'O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments;

9.5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments:

9.6 Neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the People of the land.

9.7 O Lord, righteousness *belongeth* unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, *that are* near, and *that are* far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee.

9.8 O Lord, to us *belongeth* confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee.

9.9 To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him;

9.10 Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.

9.11 Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that *is* written in the Law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him.

9.12 And He hath confirmed His words, which He spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

9.13 As *it is* written in the Law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: * yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God,† that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth.

* “All this evil etc.” refers to Deuteronomy 28.15 “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee”:

† “All this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God.” This is so true today. All these curses have come upon God’s People today, yet no salutary prayer has been made before the Lord their God.

9.14 Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God *is* righteous in all His works which He doeth: for we obeyed not His voice.

9.15 And now, O Lord our God, That hast brought Thy People forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten Thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

9.16 O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy People *are become* a reproach to all *that are* about us.

Daniel shows that Judah’s sin brings disrespect on God’s city Jerusalem and on His People and that this sin in turn brings disrespect on God. It is one of the great attributes and hallmarks of the nation of Israel that it is blessed when it is in obedience to God’s law, but cursed in disobedience to it.

9.17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.

9.18 O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we* do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies.

* "We" here suggests others were praying with Daniel.)

9.19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy People are called by Thy name.'

Daniel is not just looking at this matter from his own or his People's sake only, but "for the Lord's sake". This is the end of this intercessory prayer. Now we read the hearkening of God to the prayer as promised in Jeremiah 29.12.

Note: Gabriel is not a prophet, but an angel or hierophant who shows sacred things to a prophet. (Greek *hieros* = sacred. *Phainein* = to show.) Thus it is a transcendent prophecy (See Bullinger's note on this verse.)

Daniel 9.20 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my People Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God;

9.21 Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning,* being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

*(Gabriel interpreted Daniel's vision in chapter 8).

9.22 And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

9.23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

Now Daniel is told in the next few verses by the angel Gabriel things which are to happen to Daniel's People and the Holy City.

This prophecy commences with the “going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” in v. 25 until its destruction in 70 AD in v. 26. This nation is often known as “The Seventy Weeks Nation” because the life of this nation of Judah (together with Benjamin and Levites) and centred on Jerusalem was to be restored for a period of time represented symbolically as seventy weeks. And this nation would bring forth the Messiah. Seventy weeks is interpreted as $70 \times 7 = 490$ literal years on the scale where a symbolic day represents a year. That the life of this nation was 490 years can be confirmed from history.

9.24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy People and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

9.25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah* the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

***Messiah** = anointed. Only priests and kings were anointed, lepers, and Elisha (I Kings 19.16) being the only exceptions. (See Bullinger's note on this verse.)

9.26 And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself:

and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood,

and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

9.27 And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'

(This is the end of chapter 9.)

First we must arrive at a starting date which we are told is to commence from the "**going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.**"

There are several decrees which went out and Filmer lists them in his book *Daniel's Predictions* pp. 104-107.

These decrees, it appears, give instructions to build the Temple only, hence are not commandments "to restore and to build **Jerusalem**. This prompted Filmer to write on p. 106:

In view of what we are told in Ezra 1, therefore, we must conclude that Zerubbabel received only a part of the original decree of Cyrus which relate to the Temple, the remaining part concerning the city being either

suppressed or otherwise held up. Since rebuilding the city and walls first began soon after Ezra's return, it is by no means unlikely that Ezra carried not only the published letter from Artaxerxes, but also the second part of Cyrus's decree. This then would be the "*going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem*" referred to in Daniel's prophecy. The original word given by Isaiah was put into writing by Cyrus, but it did not *go forth* until 458 BC.

Continuing Filmer p. 107,

The going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem"
occurred on 1 Nisan, 458 BC, when Ezra set out from Babylon.

Atonement was completed when Christ, the Messiah was crucified on 14th Nisan AD 33, now accepted as the correct date. The interval is exactly four hundred and ninety solar years, although it might appear at first sight that the Crucifixion was a fortnight late. This is explained by the fact that the Babylonian and Jewish calendars were lunar, the first month of the new year coinciding with the new moon in the spring. Lunar tables show that in Babylon 1st Nisan fell on April 7th in 458 BC, whereas in Jerusalem 14th Nisan in AD 33 was April 3. Since these dates were based on the Julian calendar which has an error of three days every four centuries, the difference, according to

our Gregorian calendar, reduces to less than one day.

Thus the atonement was completed exactly on the last day of the four hundred and ninetieth solar year after Ezra had set out from Babylon with the remainder of Cyrus's decree to rebuild Jerusalem."

The original decree of Cyrus is described in Ezra 1.1-4. Here we are told that Cyrus in the first year of his reign issued a proclamation in writing:

Ezra 1.1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

1.2 "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah.'

1.3 Who *is there* among you of all His People? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (He *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem.

1.4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem."

In view of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isa. 44.28) many years before, it is interesting to read what Josephus has to say about this matter. **Josephus writes in Bk XI Ch. 1 para. 1 & 2** about Isaiah's remarkable prophecy in Isaiah 44.28 which Josephus acknowledged was written 140 years before the temple was even demolished, so here we have the power of fulfilled prophecy! Josephus tells us that Cyrus read Isaiah's prophecy and admired it so much that he (Cyrus) determined to help God's people return to their land!

Josephus writes:

1. In the 1st year of the reign of Cyrus* which was the 70th from the day that our people were removed out of their own land into Babylon, God commiserated the captivity and calamity of these poor people, according as He had foretold to them by Jeremiah the prophet, before the destruction of the city, that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar and his posterity, and after they had undergone that servitude seventy years, He would restore them again to the land of their fathers, and they should build their temple, and enjoy their ancient prosperity; and these things God did afford them; for He stirred up the mind of Cyrus, and made him write this throughout all Asia:— “Thus saith Cyrus the King:— Since God almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that He is that God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for indeed He foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build Him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea.”
2. This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies; for this prophet said that God had spoken thus to him in a secret vision: — “My will is that Cyrus, whom I have appointed to be king over many and great nations send back My people to their own land and build My temple.” This was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished. Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfil what was so written; so he called for

the most eminent Jews that were in Babylon, and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their own country, and to rebuild their city Jerusalem,† and the temple of God, for that he would be their assistant, and that he would write to the rulers and governors that were in the neighbourhood of their country of Judea, that they should contribute to them gold and silver for the building of the temple, and, besides that, beasts for their sacrifices.

3. When Cyrus read this (prophecy), and admired the Divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him (Cyrus) to fulfil what was so written; so he called for the most eminent Jews that were in Babylon, and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their own country, and to rebuilt their city Jerusalem,† and the temple of God, for that he would be their assistant, and that he would write to the rulers and governors that were in the neighbourhood of their country of Judea, that they should contribute to them gold and silver for the building of the temple, and, besides that, beasts for their sacrifices.

†**Footnote:** This leave to build Jerusalem, and this epistle of Cyrus to the same purpose, are most unfortunately omitted in all our copies, but this best and most complete copy of Josephus; and by such omission the famous prophecy of Isaiah, (Isa. 40:28) could not hitherto be demonstrated from the sacred history to have been completely fulfilled, I mean as to that part of it which concerned his giving leave or commission for rebuilding the city of Jerusalem as distinct from the temple, the rebuilding of which is alone permitted or directed in the decrees of Cyrus, in all our copies.

To be continued God willing.

CAN FREEWILL EXIST WITH PREDESTINATION?

Some people apparently doubt the existence of predestination such as we read about in the debates at the time of the Reformation of the 16th century.

The belief that salvation can be attained through good works was held by Papists such as Erasmus.

There were many debates on the subject which supply an insight into the thinking of the so-called Catholic scholars of that time.

Predestination, however, is a Scriptural teaching as we read in:

Romans 8.30 Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

Other references are: Rom. 8.29; Eph. 1.5, 1.11.

The idea of predestination and freewill existing together may be hard to understand at first. It is surely natural to think that where predestination exists then there can be no room for free-will. Some light can be cast on this apparent contradiction by considering a statement made by Martin Luther and recorded in Joseph Milner's *History of the Church of Christ* vol. 5, p. 281, where Luther explains that when God justifies a person He makes that person a new creation, as we read:

II Corinthians 5.17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

"All things are become new" must therefore include our free-will which is not taken away from us but is changed so that we now freely wish to choose righteousness, where previously we were attracted to sin. God is not a tyrant and obtains unforced obedience from us in this way by changing our desires. The evil one is the tyrant and being unable to obtain unforced obedience, can only obtain obedience by force.

Although, in this world, we are not yet perfected by God, we are told in II Corinthians 1.22 that we have been given an earnest of the Spirit. This is something like a down-payment on a purchase.

II Corinthians 1.22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

In other words God is helping us by putting something like a band aid on the natural desire of our Adamic bodies to transgress His commandments. In Paul's first epistle to Timothy chapter 1 we are reminded of the truth of this:

I Timothy 1.9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, etc.

We read of freewill offerings in Lev. 22.18, 21, 24, 38. Numbers 15.3; 29.39; Deut. 12.6, 17; 16.10; 23.23. II Chron. 31.14; Ezra 1.4, 3.5, 7.16, 8.28; Ps. 119.108.

Ezra 7.13 gives an example of freewill:

Ezra 7.13 I make a decree that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

Scriptural reference to the idea of freewill is also contained in:

Psalm 51.12 Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit.

“with Thy free spirit” = with a spirit of willing and unforced obedience. (See Bullinger’s note on this verse).

There is an interesting passage in Martin Luther’s *Table Talk* number CCLXIII:

The sentences in Holy Scripture touching predestination, as, ‘No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him,’ seem to terrify and affright us; yet they but show that we can do nothing of our own strength and will that is good before God, and put the godly also in mind to pray. When people do this, they may conclude they are predestinated.

This statement is in accord with the Scriptural passage of I Corinthians 4.7:

I Corinthians 4.7 For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received *it*?

To end this discussion with a stern reminder:

John 15.5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.

Repeat: Without Me ye can do nothing.

WHAT WAS THE GOSPEL PREACHED IN THE BIBLE?

If we study the Old and New Testaments we see that God has *already set up His kingdom on this earth*. In the Book of Daniel chapter two we read of a series of kingdoms, each of which dominated, ruled and controlled God's people, their law, the Promised Land, and the city of Jerusalem on which God had put His name for ever. (See II Chron. 33.7).

In Daniel 2 the prophet Daniel interprets the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Babylonians. Daniel explained (v.28) that "there is a God in heaven That revealeth secrets, and maketh known to king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." In v.31 Daniel told the king he saw a great image in the form of a man and it depicted various kingdoms. The head of gold was symbolic of the kingdom of Babylon. Subsequent kingdoms were represented by inferior materials making up inferior parts of the image. Subsequent prophecies and history have revealed to us what these subsequent kingdoms were. The kingdom which followed Babylon was that of the Medes and Persians. They were followed in turn by the Greek then the Roman Empires. Following these empires the rule became divided into that ruled by the Papacy and that ruled by the Moslems. After Daniel had interpreted the dream he told the king:

Daniel 2.44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not

be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

If the kingdom of God was set up back in the days of those kingdoms and if it is destined to “not be left to other people” may we assume that it exists now but is at present “left to other people”? Matthew 21.43 will help us. We are told that our Lord is speaking here to the high priests and the Pharisees:

Matthew 21.43 Therefore say I unto you, ‘The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

The kingdom of God could only be taken from these high priests and Pharisees if they were then ruling over it. They were those who were ruling God’s people by controlling their law, their land and the city Jerusalem on which God had put His Name. We know that Rome ruled over the Holy Land *de jure* (by right). However, it seems that the high priests and Pharisees ruled *de facto* (by fact).

Our Lord made clear to the chief priests and Pharisees in Matthew 21 that at that time it was they who ruled the kingdom of God for how could it be taken from them except they possessed it then?

Matthew 21.45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them.

“The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

When our Lord takes His kingdom from these “other people” to rule for ever, it will be said according to Revelation 11.15:

Revelation 11.15 “The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of His Christ; and **He shall reign for ever and ever.**”

There is not the slightest doubt that we are talking of earthly kingdoms here. “The kingdoms of this world” which the kingdom of God will supplant, is not in heaven but on earth. This is confirmed in Isaiah 60.21:

Isaiah 60.21 Thy People also *shall be* all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified.

Thy People all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever. This settles the question as to any fulfilment in the past. The land inherited for ever is not in heaven.

No wonder we hear so little about this extremely important kingdom of God these days because it contradicts so much current teaching that Christians will be raptured off to heaven to make way for “other people” to take over the world. There is not the slightest suggestion that God will again let “other people” take away His kingdom. “He shall reign for ever and ever. Whose side are the preachers on? One could be forgiven for saying that they are on the side of the “other people”.

Returning to our theme which gospel was preached in the Bible

John the Baptist taught the gospel of the kingdom of heaven:

Matthew 3.1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

3.2 And saying, “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”.

He said **REPENT YE for the kingdom of God is at hand.**

So did our Lord say REPENT: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4.17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1.14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

1.15 And saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Luke 4.42 And when it was day, He departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought Him, and came unto Him, and stayed Him, that He should not depart from them.

4.43 And He said unto them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: **for therefore am I sent.**”

4.44 And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

8.1 And it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with Him,

From these verses above we see that the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are one and the same.

Matthew 9.35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

9.36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

9.37 Then saith He unto His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers are few;

9.38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.

Next, our Lord calls His twelve disciples into service and in Matthew 10 He names them and tells them what that service is.

Matthew 10.1 And when He had called unto *Him* His twelve disciples, He gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

In verses 2-4 He names His disciples and in verse 5 we read:

Matthew 10.5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

10.6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

10.7 And as ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

So, what was the gospel our Lord Himself preached, and what gospel did he command His disciples to preach? **It was the Gospel of the kingdom of heaven alternatively called the gospel of the kingdom of God.**

Now let us move on to Luke 9 where our Lord again sends His disciples out, and see what He told them to do:

Luke 9.1 Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

9.2 And He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

After His Crucifixion our Lord was on this earth forty days. How did He spend this time? We are told in the Book of Acts chapter 1:

Acts 1.1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

1.2 Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen:

1.3 To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Even after His passion He was seen of the apostles forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

1.4 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith He*, ye have heard of Me.

1.5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

1.6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

1.7 And He said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.

1.8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

1.9 And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Here we read in verse three that our Lord showed Himself alive to His disciples after His passion for forty days, and “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” We then read in verse 8 “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” after which ye will become witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea

and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

This power was to bring about the greatest revolution in the history of the world. But after many years the force of tyrannical anti-Christian and counterfeit Christian teaching would cause a falling away of true Christianity.

This time of great apostasy is described in symbolic language in the 11th Chapter of the Book of Revelation as the time of the two witnesses. (See Rev. 11.3 & 6) We are then told that power would be given to these two witnesses that would eventually bring about the second greatest revolution in the history of the world. Merle d'Aubigne the great historian of the Reformation in his *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* writes in the preface of his book,

“Primitive Christianity and the Reformation are the two greatest revolutions in history. They were not limited to one nation only, as were the various political movements that history records; but their influences extended over many, and their effects are destined to be felt to the utmost limits of the world.”

What was the teaching behind these revolutions but a reiteration of the doctrines preached by our Lord and His followers as set out in Scripture? The essential message was to truly love God and your neighbour and all that that implies. We know that when God asks anything of us He also has the power to make it possible for us to do it. In other words

He has the power to actually win over our minds so that we have the desire to love Him and our neighbour. Thereby we are not coerced but retain our free-will.

This power exerted by the Divine Being sets Christianity apart from other religions. Coercion is typical of the forces of evil. It is the gospel of the kingdom that has the power to change the world. This gospel teaches about a King, a People, a law and a land. This kingdom is not exclusive to its people, but because there is no other king, law or land, other people may only enter under the incumbent King, Law and Land. In the kingdom of God there will be no possibility for the chaos such as we are presented with now where people can enter a nation and set about trying to change the king, the law and the land. The Canaanite woman in Matthew 15 is shown to be an example of a stranger who was given great faith. The fact that she was not of Israel is clearly shown by our Lord's answer to her request for help for her daughter "grievously vexed with a devil" when He said:

Matthew 15.24 . . . "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

15.25 Then came she and worshipped Him saying, "Lord help me."

15.26 But He answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs."

15.27 And she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

15.28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

It would be very easy to think that our Lord had changed His mind here on the basis of what this woman had said to Him and that He then decided to grant her what she asked of Him. This line of thinking makes our Lord contingent. Our Lord is not contingent. In other words, He is not dependent on other people's statements or decisions

Rev. Joseph Milner in his *History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 280 writes of a statement of Luther thus:

"This unchangeableness and infallibility in God, is the ground of all our hope and confidence. If His will were liable to contingencies, what dependence could there be on His promises?"

There must be more to this event regarding the woman's request for help. We know from Scripture that faith is a gift from God, so the faith that our Lord marvelled at in this woman when He said to her, "O woman, great is thy faith," must have come from God, for all faith is a gift from God. Is it possible that this woman was brought to the Lord on this occasion to teach us a lesson? That is, when we see non-Israelites to whom faith is given, we must realise that this faith is from God. The Lord did not simply send her away as suggested by His disciples who said in verse 23: "Send her away; for she crieth after us."

AN INTERESTING PASSAGE FROM EZEKIEL:

As we watch with great interest the happenings in the Holy Land, we may perhaps take comfort from some of the words of Ezekiel 36.

Ezekiel 36.1 Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, "Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord:

36.2 Thus saith the Lord God; 'Because the enemy hath said against you, 'Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession:'

36.3 Therefore prophesy and say, "Thus saith the Lord God; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and *are* an infamy of the people:

36.4 Therefore ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that *are* round about;

36.5 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Surely in the fire of My jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea,* which have appointed My land into their possession with the joy of all *their* heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey.'

* Idumea is the Greek form of the name of Edom according to Young's Concordance. Who are these Edomites who have appointed God's land into their possession with the joy of all *their* heart?

British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

MONTHLY NOTES

No. 671



February 2010

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DANIEL 9 Continued.

In Daniel 9, verses 21-27 we read where the angel Gabriel was sent to Daniel to "give him skill and understanding". This was in response to Daniel's prayer of intercession for his people before God. We read about this prayer of intercession earlier in this chapter.

Daniel had confessed the sins of his people and prayed for their forgiveness in the manner taught by God should they fall into disobedience to God's laws and suffer the consequences of their disobedience.

On several occasions God communicated to His people, telling them that should their nation become disobedient to His commandments and suffer as a result, they should humble themselves and pray and seek His face and turn from their wicked ways. Then He would hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land (See II Chronicles 7.14).

In the first part of this chapter nine we can see that Daniel had followed this procedure. Now he was about to hear God's response in one of the most amazing predictions ever written in Scripture. Serious attempts have been made to eliminate all reference to the Messiah. But God has preserved His word for those who make serious study of it. We can read in Matthew 24.35:

Matthew 25.35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

Identical words are written in Mark 13.31 and Luke 21.33.

That God has made His word available to those who seek them is brought out in Psalm 111 where we can read in verse 2:

Psalm 111.2 The works of the Lord are great,

Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

We read in Proverbs 25 that God conceals things, but not completely from those in whom there is the serious desire to seek! Concealment is for good reason. For we see that sometimes God first arouses the curiosity and only after that, the revelation.

Proverbs 25.2 *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*

This may also apply to searching for God Himself as we read in Deuteronomy 4.29, Jeremiah 29.13, and the sad plea of Job in Job 23.3

Jeremiah 29.13 And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.

These words have been set to music in a beautiful Air, in Mendelssohn's "Elijah"

Daniel 9.21-27 can be understood provided we know that the "week" is a symbolic week. From the Old Testament Scripture of Ezekiel 4.6, we are given the clue to the "**day for a year**" scale. A symbolic week means seven literal years. Hence "seven weeks" on this scale means $7 \times 7 = \underline{49 \text{ literal years}}$. "Seventy weeks" is seventy times seven years or 490 literal years.

The prophecy conveyed by the angel Gabriel of the seventy weeks or seventy sevens of literal years (490 years) determined upon the Jewish Nation follows:

Daniel 9.21 Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning,† being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

†Gabriel is mentioned twice in the O.T., in Daniel 8 and 9, & twice in N. T. Luke 1.19 & 26.

9.22 And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

9.23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

9.24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy People and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression,

and to make an end of sins,
and to make reconciliation for
iniquity,
and to bring in everlasting
righteousness,
and to seal up the vision and
prophecy,
and to anoint the most Holy.

9.25 Know therefore and understand,
that from the going forth of the
commandment to restore and to build
Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince
shall be seven weeks, and threescore
and two weeks: the street shall be built
again, and the wall, even in troublous
times.

9.26 And after (the) three score and
two weeks **shall** Messiah* be cut off,
but not for Himself:
and the people of the prince that shall
come shall destroy the city and the
sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be*
with a flood,
and unto the end of the war
desolations are determined.

* Emphasis of bold type and underlining is added.

Ferrar Fenton renders vv. 25-26:

9.25 "So know, and comprehend:—
that from the issue of the order to
restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until
MESSIAH arrives, is seven weeks,
and sixty two weeks.
"(It will be restored and built with
streets and moat, in times of distress.)

“And after the sixty-two weeks, the MESSIAH will be slain,— and none support Him.

“After that, the City, and the Sanctuary will be desolated by a Dominating People who are brought on.— But its end will be with a torrent, and its abolition by war. The desolations are fixed. But the Covenant will be guarded by many for a week, and in the middle of the week, He will make the sacrifice and the offering to cease, and the Loathsome Brute will desolate to the extreme;— but at last a wound will be given to the desolators.”

9.27 And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.’

Hence we read:

v.24 ‘Seventy weeks (which evidently means $70 \times 7 = 490$ literal years) are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgressions, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

v.25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, (49 years) and threescore and two weeks: (62 weeks= 434 literal years and the 49 literal years=483 years) the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

So we have:

The 7 weeks = 49 years,
followed by:

The 62 weeks = 434 years,
followed by:

The 1 week = 7 years.

A TOTAL of 70 weeks = 489 years

The seventy weeks began from "the going forth of the word" to restore Jerusalem, brought by Ezra in the spring of 458 B.C. (Filmer's date. See his *Daniel's Predictions* p. 107.) The first segment of this period was 7 weeks (49 years)

This first period of 7 weeks (49 years) was followed by the threescore and two weeks (62 weeks) or 434 years.

After (the) threescore and two weeks, or 434 years (which commenced after the 49 years following the command going forth to build Jerusalem), i.e. in the last week, Messiah is cut off.

After the threescore and two weeks, there was the one week or seven years during which the Messiah was cut off.

Daniel was told that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build

Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be 483 years.

v.26 And after (the)* threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

* the definite article in the text also in FF, RSV and Moffatt, but not in the AV, marks this period of 62 weeks as the one just mentioned in the previous verse, (see Bullinger's note).

v.27 And He shall confirm the covenant with many for a week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'

AV And **He** (referring to **the Messiah** in the previous verse 26) shall confirm **the** covenant with many for one week:

The RSV writes: And he shall make **a** firm covenant with many for one week:

Moffatt does not make the meaning clear here and does not mention covenant.

Daniel 9.27 For a week of years the main body of the people shall cease to practise their religion; for half of that time sacrifice and offering shall cease, and instead of this there shall be an

appalling abomination, till finally the appointed doom falls upon the sacrilegious abomination.

The New International Version renders:

“He will confirm a covenant with many” etc.

Filmer draws our attention to the anti-Messianic bias from which modern translations suffer.

The plain teaching that **the** Messiah confirms **the** covenant in accordance with Hebrews 9.15 is made difficult or impossible to see in most translations:

Hebrews 9.15 (AV) And for this cause He is **the** mediator of **the** new testament (covenant), that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

9.16 For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

Even the great commentator Bullinger misses the point here as is seen in his note on verse 27 where he shows himself to be a futurist.

As Filmer states, in his *Daniel's Predictions*, p.112,

“It should be observed that the Mosaic covenant was ratified by burnt offerings and peace offerings (Ex. 24.5). The seventieth week symbolises our Lord's sinless life in consequence of which He could offer Himself both as a burnt offering, as well as a sin offering, and say; “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is

shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26.28). In view of this Christ was called "The messenger of the covenant" in Malachi 3.1."

It is important to turn to the Hebrew word for "confirm" which is *gabar*. This has the meaning to strengthen or confirm. It is not *quwm* meaning establish or raise up as with Noah in Genesis 9.12 or *karath* as in Genesis 15.18 where God made a covenant with Abram; or Genesis 21.27 where Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech.

v.27 And He shall confirm the covenant with many for a week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,

Daniel had learned that the captivity of his people had been 70 years. Now it was going to be almost a further seven times that length of time until the coming of the Messiah. That time interval is subdivided into 7 weeks, 62 weeks and one week: that is, **49 years, 434 years and seven years.**

David Davidson in his book *Through World Chaos to Cosmic Christ* p. 31 gives the year of our Lord's Ministry, beginning with His Baptism, as autumn AD 27. It covered a period of 2 ½ years, not the 3 ¼ years as has popularly been supposed.

If we add the 49 years to the 434 years we come up with the number 483 which is the number of years from the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of the Anointed One.

The last week, that is seven years, brings the total time from the commandment to

rebuild Jerusalem until the end of this interval to 490 years.

Filmer in his book *Daniel's Predictions* p.108 tells us that:

"The two main differences between the AV and all modern translations are, first, the name Messiah has been changed to "an anointed one", and second, a full stop has been inserted between the seven and the sixty two weeks, so making the anointed one come after seven weeks instead of after seven plus sixty two. Authority for this altered punctuation is the Hebrew Massoretic text."

Filmer further states:

"Now it must be realised that in ancient Hebrew there was no punctuation, hence Paul's emphasis on 'rightly dividing the word of truth' (II Timothy 2.15 AV). The AV follows the old Latin and Greek translations made from the Hebrew by the early fathers of the Christian church who, in their day, were able to consult the unpunctuated text. Guided, no doubt, by the Holy Spirit, as well as by well-known Jewish tradition, they all coupled the seven with the sixty-two, making a total of sixty-nine weeks to the coming of the Messiah. On the authority of John 1.41 and 4.25, they understood Messiah to mean Christ, the Anointed One, and so left that word untranslated, just as they did the word Christ in the New Testament. Without exception they taught that the prophecy was fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ after sixty nine weeks of years, that is 483 years.

Filmer on p. 109 goes on to say that:

It was not until the tenth century that the Massoretic Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and disliked the Christian application of this prophecy, inserted a full stop in the middle of the sentence, thus throwing it into total confusion. No fulfilment or application of the prophecy according to

the Massoretic text has ever been successfully demonstrated, although some attempts have been made.

The text of the Authorized Version implies that during the first seven weeks, or forty-nine years, the city would be restored 'even in troublous times.'

The most important date to be settled here is the starting time for the seventy weeks. That is, the seventy sevens or 490 years of the "Seventy Weeks Nation".

It is worth mentioning at this stage the marvellous prophecy of Isaiah in his book chapter 44 verse 28:

Isaiah 44.28 That saith of Cyrus, '*He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, 'Thou shalt be built;' and to the temple, 'Thy foundation shall be laid.'*'

INVICTUS

One of the most revered political leaders of modern times is Nelson Mandela. There seems little doubt that when he was made President of South Africa, his moderation saved that nation from what could have been a racial based civil war. During the apartheid era he had been the leader of the African National Congress's armed wing. He had served 21 years of a 27 years prison-sentence for his part in anti-apartheid activities. After his release from prison in February 1990 he supported reconciliation and negotiation with the government and he helped establish a multi-racial democracy.

When he was made President of the new South Africa, he made it known that he had been influenced by the poem *Invictus*, written by the English poet William Ernest Henley. This poem shows strong humanist thought and brings to mind the free-will v. predestination debates of the Reformation of the 16th Century. It also brings to mind the Pelagian Controversy dating from the 5th century A.D. The reason for writing about this is in these Notes is because many Christians still hold on to some of the views of Pelagius in a form of semi-Pelagianism, (see Milner's *History of the Church of Christ* vol. 4, p. 81.)

Here is the poem:

Invictus

“Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloodied but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley

These words transport one back to a time in England when this sort of thinking pervaded the Universities as described below:

May it serve as a warning to us all, for it is indeed the antithesis of Gospel Truth. We should be thankful that a few religious leaders steeped in Scripture diagnosed this poison for what it is. The doctrine of salvation by works is an ever-present teaching of the anti-Christ.

Thomas Bradwardine, who preceded and undoubtedly influenced the thinking of John Wickliffe, lived from about 1290 until 1349. Quoting from Milner's *History of the Church of Christ* vol. 4, p. 81:

“This learned and pious person is supposed to have been born about the middle of the reign of king Edward I. He was of Merton College Oxford and was one of the proctors of the university in 1325. He excelled in mathematical knowledge, and was in general distinguished for his accurate and solid investigations in divinity. There was a depth in his researches which entitled him to the name of “The Profound”. He seems to have been so devoted to a recluse and sedentary life that very little has come down to us concerning his conduct and transactions. He was confessor to king Edward III, and attended that monarch in the French wars. It is observed that he often preached before the army. On occasion of a vacancy in the see of Canterbury, the monks of that city chose him archbishop; but Edward who was fond of his company, refused to part with him.

Another vacancy happening soon after, the monks elected him a second time, and Edward yielded to their desires.

Bradwardine was consecrated in 1349, in the twenty-third year of Edward III; but not many weeks after, he died at Lambeth.

Bradwardine's great work was entitled "*A treatise Against Pelagians*". He described how, in his time, there was a great drift in Christian doctrine into what he described as a pernicious tendency towards SELF SUFFICIENCY. (See Milner vol. 4 p. 83). The language of Bradwardine's publication is not easy to read. However, it is well worthwhile to consider his writings to help us combat some of the most powerful, insidious and destructive teachings that face true Biblical Christianity. We are speaking of the teachings that have been popularised by the Pelagians and humanists and their effects on the Christian teaching on the grace of God (from Milner vol. 4, p. 94). It may be necessary to take a little time to consider Bradwardine's words we now quote:

'Every creature is indebted to Almighty God for various gifts. These gifts may (represent) the grace of God, grace freely given.

Further, we ought to observe that there is such a thing as a peculiar species of this FREE GRACE, which makes a man accept of God, makes him a friend of God and dear to Him.

The mischievous Pelagians maintained that this sort of grace is not FREELY given by God, but is obtained by PRECEDING MERITS.

I myself, [says Bradwardine], was once so foolish and empty, when I first applied myself to the study of philosophy, as to be seduced by this error. In the schools of the philosophers, [i.e. in the 1300s], I rarely heard a single word said concerning GRACE, unless indeed sometimes an equivocal expression might drop from the lips of the disputants, but nothing further. Whereas my ears were assailed, the day through with such assertions as:

WE ARE THE MASTERS OF OUR OWN FREE ACTIONS: IT IS IN OUR OWN POWER TO DO WELL OR ILL, AND TO HAVE VIRTUES OR VICES.’ *And when I heard those parts of the Scriptures read in the church, which extol the GRACE OF GOD and lower the FREE-WILL OF MAN, for example: Romans 9:16: ‘It is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy’.....and many similar passages, this doctrine of grace was very disagreeable to my ungrateful mind. But afterwards when I reflected on the nature of the Divine Character, on the knowledge of God, and His foreknowledge, I began to perceive some few distant rays of light respecting this matter..... (I began to*

see) but by no means clearly, that the *GRACE OF GOD IS PRIOR BOTH IN NATURE AND IN TIME, TO ANY GOOD ACTIONS THAT MEN CAN POSSIBLY PERFORM.* And I return thanks to God, from Whom proceeds every good thing, for thus freely enlightening my understanding. St. Augustine confesses that he himself had been formerly in a similar mistake. ‘I was once, says he, a Pelagian in my principles. I thought that faith towards God was not the gift of God, but that we procured it by our own powers, and that through the use of it, we obtained the gifts of God; I never supposed that the preventing grace of God was the proper cause of our faith till my mind was struck in a particular manner by the Apostle’s argument and testimony:—

I Corinthians 4.7 What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?

My mind had been puffed up with worldly books, worldly wisdom and worldly knowledge; but after my heart was visited with the influence of Divine Grace, I grasped with the greatest eagerness the sacred writings, and above the rest, those of the apostle Paul. Then fell to the ground all my objections, and all the apparent contradictions in the Scriptures. The

Bible spoke to my mind one simple language of pure truth, and with the additional praise of Divine Grace constantly inculcated,—that no man should glory as though he had not received.' **End of Augustine's quote.**

Bradwardine in his treatise continues:

"The great point to be maintained is that, GOD GIVES HIS GRACE FREELY in the strictest sense of the word and without merit on the part of man. For if God did not bestow His grace in this perfectly gratuitous manner, but on account of some subordinate, contingent uncertain cause, He could not possibly foresee how He should bestow His free gifts.

THE WORD GRACE EVIDENTLY IMPLIES THAT THERE IS NO ANTECEDENT OR PREVIOUS MERIT. And in this way the apostle to the Romans appears to argue when he says, in Romans 11:6,

'AND IF BY GRACE, THEN IT IS NO MORE OF WORKS: OTHERWISE GRACE IS NO MORE GRACE'

Also in Romans 4:4,

'NOW TO HIM THAT WORKETH, IS THE REWARD NOT REKONED OF GRACE, BUT OF DEBT'

*All this is perfectly intelligible even in the conduct of liberal and munificent **human** characters. They frequently bestow their gifts from a pure spirit of liberality, without the*

smallest previous claim on the score of merit. And shall not God, Whose perfections are infinite, do more than this?

Paul says in:

Romans 5:8 *But God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:10. *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.*

Paul was, in a peculiar manner, a child of GRACE. With gratitude therefore he honours and extols its efficacy in all his epistles; and particularly in his epistle to the Romans. Throughout he defends his (God's) doctrines with great care and copiousness.

Pelagius objects in the following manner: "If grace be perfectly free, and if all men are alike, why is grace given to this man and not to that.

Again Pelagians will quote Zechariah 1:3.....Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

From which they would infer, that the grace of God is proportional to the merits of men. But all this would be to no purpose, if they would but compare one Scripture with another, e.g. Lam. 5:21

"Turn Thou us unto Thee, o Lord, and we shall be turned".

End of quote from Milner.

Scripture records many other passages showing how we depend on God and should give Him the glory for our blessings, such as:

I Corinthians 4.7 For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?

John 15.5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.

“Without Me you can do nothing”. Our Lord’s words are a reversal of the whole humanistic philosophy such as is found in the poem Invictus, or in the words of Job’s friend Zophar in his statement to Job in the Book of Job chapter 28.28:

Job 28.28 And unto man He said, “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.”

Zophar’s was *human* wisdom founded on human merit. The fear of the Lord is not true wisdom. True wisdom is “given” and we have to be “made” to know it. The fear of the Lord is not true wisdom; it is only the *beginning* of wisdom (Ps 111.10. Prov. 1.7). To depart from evil is what every prudent man would do from good policy. (See Bullinger’s note on this verse).

Mandela in the film brought out his view that the blacks needed the whites and he worked his policy to this end.



British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

MONTHLY NOTES

No. 672



March 2010

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DANIEL'S LAST PROPHECY

Daniel chapters 10,11&12 bring to us Daniel's final prophecy which deals with the long history* of Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the time of Cyrus king of Persia down to the present day and onwards to the return of our Lord and the Day of Judgment. Filmer in his book *Daniel's Predictions* reminds us that this period of prophecy can be divided into three parts corresponding approximately with the chapter divisions:

* (Reference is made to the great length of this last prophecy. See this referred to in verses 1 & 14 of this chapter 10 of Daniel.)

This last prophecy is divided as follows:

Daniel 10.1 to 11.1. The Introduction.

Daniel 11.2 to 12.4. The Prophecy of Future Events.

Daniel 12.5 to 12.13. Associated Time Periods.

Daniel 10.1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

Daniel 10.2 In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.

10.3 I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

10.4 And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;

Bullinger and Moffatt both interpret the Hiddekel River to be the Tigris River. As Daniel was by the side of this great river, he **saw a vision**:

10.5 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz:

10.6 His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

This description in these verses 5 & 6 of a “certain man” resembles the descriptions given in the Book of Revelation chapter 1.13-16 & chapter 2.18 were the Son of God our Lord is described in these terms.

10.7 And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.

10.8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

10.9 Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, toward the ground.

10.10 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands.

10.11 And he said unto me, 'O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.' And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

10.12 Then said he unto me, 'Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

10.13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withheld me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

10.14 Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy People in the latter days: for yet the vision *is* for *many* days.'

Here again we read in verse 14 as we read in verse 1, a repetition of the fact that this **prophecy is for a long time.**

To be continued God willing.

THE COVENANTS GIVEN BY GOD TO ABRAHAM

An understanding of the covenants given to Abram (later called Abraham) is essential to a proper understanding of Scripture. Abram is first mentioned in Genesis 11.26. Here he is recorded in the generations of Shem. Sarai was first mentioned in Genesis 11.29 where she is named as Abram's wife.

We begin this story by quoting Genesis 11.26-30.

Genesis 11.26 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

11.27 Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

11.28 And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

11.29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

11.30 But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child.

Genesis 11.31-32 records that after Abram's brother Haran died, Abram's father set off with Abram, Sarai and Lot, from Ur to Haran where their father died:

Genesis 11.31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

11.32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

Genesis 12 we read of "**Abram's Call**". This "call" is an act of God where God is beginning to show His purpose in calling into service a people for Himself:

Genesis 12.1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

12.2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

12.3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Verse 1 tells us that God had told Abram to get out of his idolatrous country and from his kindred and from his father's house to a land that God would show him.

In verse 2, God promises to make a great nation of Abram. He also promises to bless him and make his name great, and make him a blessing.

In verse 3 God promises Abram that in him (Abram) will all the families of the earth be blessed. God also promises that He will bless those who bless Abram, and curse him who curses Abram. Many preachers use this verse 3 to get their congregations to bless the Jews. They say that people will be blessed or cursed according to how they treat the Jews. Also many of these preachers are careful to describe Abram as a Jew and the children of Israel who came out of Egypt at the time of Moses, as Jews, despite the fact that all the tribes were represented in the Exodus. The political consequence of this teaching is of the greatest importance today.

12.4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

12.5 And Abram took *Serai* his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Moving on to **Genesis 13.14-17** we read where God showed to Abram the land which God had promised to give him and his seed for ever.

Genesis 13.14 And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot had separated from him, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

MONTHLY NOTES

No. 676



July August 2010

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DANIEL 11 (Continued).

Daniel 11 records wars in the Holy Land. The King of the North was Syria so named as it lies north of the Holy Land. The king of the South was Egypt as it lies south of the Holy Land. In the last issue we saw that **Antiochus III the Great** came up against the rising power of Rome because of his demand for territory in Europe.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1962, vol. 20 p. 305 tells:

Antiochus III the Great attacked Palestine and by 199 BC he seemed to have possession of it. [The Egyptian] Scopus recovered Palestine for Ptolemy, but was defeated at Panium near the sources of the Jordan [by Antiochus] in 198 BC. In 197 Antiochus moved to Asia Minor to secure the coastal towns, which had acknowledged Ptolemy and the independent Greek cities.

This enterprise brought Antiochus into antagonism with Rome, since Smyrna and Lampsacus appealed to Rome. The tension became greater after Antiochus had in 196 BC established a footing in Thrace. The evacuation of Greece by the Romans gave Antiochus his opportunity, and he now had the fugitive Hannibal at his court to urge him on.

In 192 BC Antiochus III The Great invaded Greece, but in 191 BC he was routed at **Thermopylae** by the Romans under M. Acilius Glabrio, and obliged to withdraw to Asia. The Romans followed up their success by attacking Antiochus in Asia Minor, and the decisive victory of L. Cornelius Scipio at **Magnesia** [on the west coast of Asia Minor in January 189 BC] gave Asia Minor into their hands.

By the **peace of Apamea** (188 BC) [Antiochus] abandoned all the country north of the Taurus (which was distributed among the friends of Rome). As a consequence of this blow to the Seleucid power, the outlying provinces of the empire recovered by Antiochus reassured their independence. Antiochus III the Great perished in a fresh expedition to the east of Luristan in 187 BC. **End of quote.**

Cambridge Ancient History vol. VIII p. 223 gives more information on the terms of the peace of Apamea. The Romans demanded 15,000 talents, 3,000 to be paid immediately, the remainder in twelve annual

instalments. Antiochus was also to send 12 selected hostages to Rome, including his younger son Antiochus, later called Epiphanes.

Antiochus III the Great's conflict with the Romans was foretold in **Daniel 11.18-19**.

Daniel 11.18 Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands [of Greece], and shall take many of them; but a commander [Roman] shall put an end to his insolence; indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him.

11.19 Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall and shall not be found.

Seleucus IV son of Antiochus III the Great came to the throne. He reigned 187-176 B.C. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* vol. 20 p. 305 continues:

The Seleucid kingdom as Antiochus left it to his son **Seleucus IV Philopater** (reigned 187-176 BC), consisted of Syria (now including Cilicia and Palestine), Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and nearer Iran (Media and Persia).

Seleucus IV was compelled by financial necessities, created in part by the heavy war-indemnity exacted by Rome, to pursue an un-ambitious policy. And was assassinated by his minister Heliodorus.

Seleucus IV is given only 1 verse in Daniel:

Daniel 11.20 (AV) Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes *in* the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.

He was assassinated, see above.

The *Encyc. Brit.* continues:

The true heir [of the Syrian king Antiochus III] **Demetrius**, son of Seleucus IV, being retained by Rome as a hostage, the kingdom was seized by the younger brother of Seleucus, **Antiochus Epiphanes**, who reigned 175-163.

Quoting from Filmer's *Daniel's Predictions* p. 125 we read:

Demetrius, the elder son of Antiochus III the Great, and heir to the throne, had been sent to Rome in 176 BC as a hostage in exchange for his uncle Antiochus Epiphanes. It was while the heir, still a boy, was absent, that Heliodorus took the opportunity to assassinate Seleucus IV to further his ambitious aims.

Apart from Demetrius, the rightful heir, there was also Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus the Great, who also entertained thoughts that her son Ptolemy VI of Egypt had a claim to the throne. Nevertheless **Antiochus IV Epiphanes** outwitted all his rivals, and persuaded the king of Pergamum to conduct him to the throne of Syria with his army. Even so, it required a good deal of dexterity and intrigue on the part of Antiochus for him to establish his position. This he did, not only by a lavish distribution of gifts, but also in accepting bribes.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes: (vv. 21-30) reigned 175-163 BC. His accession is described in Daniel 11.21-22 thus:

Daniel 11.21 (RSV) In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given; he shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

Flatteries Heb. *chalaqlaggah* 4 occurrences, AV translates as 'slippery' twice and flatteries twice. It has meaning of slipperiness, smoothness, fine promises.

11.22 Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, and the prince of the covenant also.

11.23 And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully; and he shall become strong with a small people.

11.24 Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time.

The prince of the covenant must be the High Priest. 2 Macc. 4 tells how this institution was swept away also.

The 'prince of the covenant' evidently was the High Priest **Onias** whose office Antiochus sold to Onias's brother Jason as recorded in II Maccabees 4.7-8.

II Maccabees 4.7 But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus called Epiphanes took the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias laboured underhand to be high priest,

4.8 Promising unto the king by intercession three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents:

4.9 Beside this, he promised to assign an hundred and fifty more, if he might have licence to set him up a place for exercise, and for the training up of youth in the fashion of the heathen, and to write them of Jerusalem by the name of Antiochians.

4.10 Which when the king had granted, and he had gotten into his hand the rule, he forthwith brought his own nation to the Greekish fashion.

Vv. 11 & 12 tell of more excesses of Jason in his desire to lead the people away from the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into Greek heathenism, a situation well described in v.13.

II Maccabees 4.13 Now such was the height of Greek fashions, and increase of heathenish manners, through the exceeding profaneness of Jason, that ungodly wretch, and no High Priest:

Macc. 4.23 tells that Jason gets his deserts:

II Macc. 4.23 Three years afterward Jason sent Menelaus, the aforesaid Simon's brother, to bear the money unto the king, and to put him in mind of certain necessary matters.

4.24 But he being brought to the presence of the king, when he had magnified him for the glorious appearance of his power, got the priesthood to himself, offering more than Jason by three hundred talents of silver.

So we see that despite Jason giving money to build a gymnasium in Jerusalem to please the heathen Hellenists, even so Menelaus suspected Jason of having too much sympathy for traditional Jewish customs.

When **Menelaus** was sent to Antiochus with the tribute money, he offered Antiochus more money to obtain for himself the office of High Priest. How much more he offered we read in II Maccabees 4.24. Here we read of Menelaus's success, so trivialising the office of High Priest.

II Maccabees 4.25 So he came with the king's mandate, bringing nothing worthy [of] the High Priesthood, but having the fury of a cruel tyrant, and the rage of a savage beast.

4.26 Then Jason, who had undermined his own brother, being undermined by another, was compelled to flee into the country of the Ammonites.

Returning to our theme in Daniel:

Daniel 11.23 (AV) And after the league *made* with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.

Antiochus obtained the throne with the help of the king of Pergamum.

11.24 (RSV) Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time.

II Macc. 4 gives the clue to the identity of the “prince of the covenant” in Daniel 11.22 as the High Priest.

Note the similar behaviour of Herod at a later time. Josephus’s *Antiquities* Book IV, ch. VI, tells the story how Herod also bribed his way into becoming king of Judea and also got rid of the last Maccabee High Priest ruler of the Jewish nation (Antigonus) and put in his place another person more amenable to his (Herod’s) evil plans. We deal with this in the article to follow below.

The last time a Syrian king is called a ‘king of the north’ is in verse 15 of Daniel 11 where it applies to Antiochus III the Great. Antiochus Epiphanes is not described as king of the north. We have to go on to verse 40 of this chapter 11 to see the next king of the north mentioned. Filmer in his *Daniel’s Predictions* p. 128 draws our attention to this fact when he states:

Since the defeat of Antiochus III the Great at Magnesia in January 189 BC, Syria had become tributary to the Romans and its position as an independent power, called “the king of the north” had come to an end.

End quote.

It is for this reason that Seleucus IV and Antiochus Epiphanes are never given the title ‘king of the north’ in Daniel’s prophecy, for they were subject to the Romans. Seleucus IV is called ‘a raiser of taxes’; Antiochus Epiphanes (in RSV) is called only “a contemptible person” who would arise “in his place”.

While it is fresh in our mind and full of curiosity let us briefly consider the next mention of the “king of the North” in verses 40-42.

Daniel 11.40 (AV) And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

11.41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

11.42 He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

The application of the title “king of the north” here is to the Turks in the 11th century, after the fall of the Roman Empire in the west in AD 476 and the decline of the Roman Empire in the East in the face of the all-conquering Turks.

In fact it was this king of the north (the Ottoman Turks) who put an end to the last remnant of the Eastern Roman empire when Constantinople fell to them in 1453 AD.

Returning to our theme in 170 BC we continue the story about Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Antiochus Epiphanes was engaged in two wars with Egypt. (See II Macc. 5. 1). The first war was foretold in Daniel 11.25-28.

11.25 (RSV) And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him.

11.26 Even those who ~~east~~ his rich food shall be his undoing; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.

In 169 BC Antiochus invaded Egypt, and Ptolemy was not only defeated but also taken prisoner, betrayed by his friends who placed his younger brother on the throne in Alexandria. (See CAH VIII, p. 505.)

11.27 (RSV) And as for the two kings, [Antiochus and Ptolemy] their minds shall be bent on mischief; they shall speak lies at the same table, ~~but to no~~ but to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed.

Antiochus pretended to take sides with Ptolemy against his younger brother, agreeing to restore him to the throne, but his real motive was to leave Egypt weak with two rival kings fighting each other.

For when Antiochus had returned home, the two brothers agreed to rule Egypt jointly.

11.28 (RSV) And he [Antiochus] shall return to his land with great substance, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land.

The first Book of Maccabees relates that:

I Mac. 1.20 On his return from the conquest of Egypt in the year 143 (169 BC), Antiochus marched with a strong force against Israel and Jerusalem.

1.21 And entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof,

1.22 And the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the veil, and the crowns, and the golden ornaments that were before the temple, all which he pulled off.

In the following year, 168 BC, Antiochus made a second expedition against Egypt, foretold in Daniel 11. 29-30.

11.29 (RSV) At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south; but it shall not be this time as it was before.

11.30 For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant.

Filmer in his book *Daniel's Predictions* p. 127) writes

Kittim was the general term for the coasts of Italy, Greece and the Mediterranean islands. Here the ships of Kittim brought ambassadors from Rome to tell Antiochus to keep his

hands off Egypt. When first presented with the ultimatum, Antiochus replied that he would think it over, but the Roman drew a circle [in the sand] around the king, and demanded an answer before he stepped out of it. Antiochus agreed and withdrew, and thus acknowledged the supremacy of Rome. (See CAH VIII, p. 506 f.

Here we see Antiochus is afraid of the power of Rome and withdraws, he then becomes enraged and takes action against the holy covenant.

Filmer *ibid* p. 127-8, helps us here with verse 30 when he writes:

Two separate events are foretold here: first he would be “enraged and take action against the holy covenant,” and second, “give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant.”

The first was fulfilled in 167 BC when Antiochus sent an army under Apollonius to plunder Jerusalem and set up a garrison there, (I Mac. 1.29-40; 2 Mac. 5.24-27).

The second was fulfilled when **later in the same year** he sent an aged Athenian who, aided by those Jews who had adopted Greek customs, finally polluted the temple by setting up a shrine dedicated to Olympian Zeus. (1 Mac. 1.41-61; 2 Mac. 6.1-7)

I Macc. 1.41 Moreover king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people,

1.42 And every one should leave his laws: so all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king.

1.43 Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to this religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the Sabbath.

Filmer continues (*ibid* p. 128)

Thus far the agreement between Daniel 11 and its fulfilment in the history of Syria and Egypt is so exact that secular historians, and some theologians, have thought that the prophecy was written after the events foretold.

But after making this assessment, many have gone on to make the same mistake as the author of I Maccabees, who assumed that [Daniel 11] verse 31 continues to describe the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. He said that the army under Apollonius defiled the temple (I Mac. 1. 37):

I Macc. 1.20 And after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned again in the hundred forty and third year, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude,

1.37 Thus they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled it:

1.38 Insomuch that the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them: whereupon the city was made an habitation of strangers, and became strange to those that were born in her; and her own children left her.

But II Maccabees says nothing to that effect. Both books agree, however, that pagan sacrifices were introduced by other agents sent by the king (I Mac. 1, 44; II Mac. 6. 1-2), contrary to Daniel 11.31 which specifically states [only] that “forces” (or arms, AV) would profane the sanctuary:

Daniel 11.30 For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant.

Daniel 11.31 (RSV) Forces from him shall appear and shall profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering.

The Hebrew preposition translated “from” him [in verse 31] has a wide meaning, and could equally well be translated “besides”, or “apart from” him. So apart from Antiochus Epiphanes, armed forces would appear which would profane the temple and cause the daily sacrifices to cease.

Daniel 11.31 (RSV continued) And *they* shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.

In the previous verse [30] the singular pronoun “he” denoted Antiochus Epiphanes, so the plural “they” in this verse

cannot refer to him, but to the “forces” or arms which, apart from him, would appear in Palestine.

Since the defeat of Antiochus the Great at Magnesia in January 189 BC, Syria had become tributary to the Romans, and its position as an independent power, called “the king of the north” ended. Hence Seleucus IV and Antiochus Epiphanes are never given this title in Daniel’s prophecy, for they were subject to the Romans.

[The former is called “a raiser of taxes” in v. 20] latter is called only “a contemptible person” in [v. 21] who would arise “in his place”, that is in the realm of the king of the north. Now in verse 31 we are told that apart from him, forces would appear which would profane the Temple. And Josephus confirms that on no less than **four occasions before the beginning of the Christian era, Roman armies invaded the Temple precincts and polluted the sanctuary.**”

Josephus, *Ant.* XIV, iv [Pompey], XIV, vii, [Crassus], XIV, xvi, [Herod with the Roman Sosius]: *War* [Sabinus] II, iii, 2-3.

Continuing Filmer, (ibid p. 129)

The ultimate fulfilment of this verse [31] did not take place until the war of 70 AD, when Jewish revolutionary armies occupied the sanctuary. Their abominations reached their climax when a Jewish faction led by John of Gischala gained control of the inner Temple during the Passover of AD 70, and subsequently caused

the daily sacrifices to cease in July, a few weeks before the Roman army finally broke through, and set fire to the Temple. This was the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy. "They shall set up the abomination that makes desolate". [Daniel 11.31] Not only was the Temple site made desolate, but the Romans devastated also the entire surrounding district.

Josephus, who had seen Jerusalem both before and after AD 70, describes how the Romans stripped the whole neighbourhood of trees to a distance of ~~ten~~ miles from the city in order to provide timber for their siege platforms. X

Josephus, *Wars VI, i, I.*

The countryside like the City was a pitiful site; for where once there had been a lovely vista of woods and parks there was now nothing but desert and the stumps of trees. No one, not even a foreigner, who had seen the old Judaea and the glorious suburbs of the City, and now set eyes on her present desolation, could have helped sighing and groaning at so terrible a change; for every trace of beauty had been blotted out by the war, and nobody who had known it in the past and came upon it suddenly would have recognised the place: when he was already there he would still have been looking for the City.

British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

MONTHLY NOTES



No. 677

Sept Oct 2010

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HUMILITY THE MARK OF A CHRISTIAN

Matthew 11.28 Come unto Me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

11.29 Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for **I am meek and lowly in heart**: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

11.30 For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light.

Numbers 12.3 (Now the man Moses *was* very meek,* above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

***Meek**, Hebrew *anav* occurs 26 times; translated by the AV as meek 13 times, humble 5 times, poor 5 times, lowly twice.

Romans 12.1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

12.2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

12.3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

12.4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

12.5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

12.6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

12.7 Or ministry, *let us wait* on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

12.8

Philippians 2.3 *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

And one final passage that has been quoted in these notes before but this time may we emphasise the second word in the verse: For who maketh thee to differ *from another?*

I Corinthians 4.7 For who maketh thee to differ *from another?* and what

hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hast not received *it*?

It is not difficult to see **Who** it is. The glory belongs to God.

(The bold type and underlining for emphasis were added. Ed.)

DANIEL 11 (Continued)

Some very interesting things were going on in the Holy Land around and after the **death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 163 BC** that are not mentioned in the Book of Daniel.

One important and interesting happening was the rise and rule of the Maccabee (Hasmonean) dynasty and the **Jewish revolt** in response to the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes. This oppression included a decree forbidding Jewish religious practice and the insistence on the worship of the Greek gods.

Details of this are told in 2 Maccabees chapters 5 and 6.

Jewish strength was eventually built up against Antiochus Epiphanes. This was assisted by several factors:

The war Antiochus was engaged in against Parthia,

Clever guerrilla warfare tactics used by the Jews, and by:

The death of Antiochus Epiphanes from an illness in 163 BC.

Later (in 130 BC) the Jews under their high priest ruler John Hyrcanus conquered their

old enemy the nation of the Edomites (known at this time by the Greek name of Idumea). The enmity between Israel and Edom goes right back to when Esau sold his birthright to his younger twin brother Jacob for a “pottage of lentils” (Gen. 25.34). However, when it came to receiving the blessing part of the inheritance, Esau was incensed when his father Isaac gave it to Jacob. The enmity of Esau towards Jacob continued down through the generations of Esau’s descendants. After the Nation of the Edomites was annexed by the Jewish Nation, these Edomites started causing trouble within the Jewish Nation. As this part of Jewish history is currently being dealt with in these notes under the title “Esau’s Long Hatred of Jacob” we shall now return to Daniel 11.31.

The Battle of Magnesia in 189 BC saw Rome replace Syria as the sovereign power ruling over the Holy Land. Knowledge of this fact helps interpret the next verse:

Daniel 11.31 RSV Forces from him shall appear and shall profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.

See the last issue (Monthly Notes No. 676) for the discussion on this verse.

Josephus tells that on no less than four occasions before the beginning of the Christian era, Roman armies invaded the Temple precincts and polluted the sanctuary. (See *Josephus Antiquities*, XIV, iv

[Pompey], XIV, vii, [Crassus], XIV, xvi, [Herod with the Roman Sosius]: *War* [Sabinus] II, iii, 2-3.)

After the old enemy of the Israelites, (the Edomite Nation of Idumea), was annexed to the Jewish Nation in 130 BC, the people in the Holy Land are of **two distinctive types**. **Israelite Jews** who were in covenant relationship with God, and **Edomites, now called “no other than Jews”**, as we read in Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 13, chapter 9, para. 1.

Daniel 11.32 (RSV) He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant; but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.

Knowledge of **Romans 1.28** can help explain the meaning of this verse:

Romans 1.28 (AV) And even as they that did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave then over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

1.28 (RSV) And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct.

When considering the two types of people brought to our attention in Daniel 11.32 it is helpful to remember other passages of Scripture, namely: **Jeremiah 30.10-11** and **Jeremiah 46.28**, also **Malachi 1.1-2**.

Returning to Daniel 11.32:

Daniel 11.32 He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know

their God shall stand firm and take action.

It is interesting to notice that **both Josephus and Gibbon write about two distinctive types of people in the Jewish Nation at this time.** Some do not stir up trouble but act righteously, and others who do not.

Josephus, in his *Wars of the Jews* Book II, Chapter 14, writes about the **Roman procurators.** Heading the chapter we read the following summary:

FESTUS SUCCEEDS FELIX, WHO IS SUCCEDED BY ALBINUS, AS HE IS BY FLORUS; WHO, BY THE BARBARTY OF HIS GOVERNMENT, FORCES THE JEWS INTO THE WAR.

Festus made it his business to correct those who made disturbances in the country. He caught many of the robbers. Josephus goes on to say that Albinus, who followed Festus was more corrupt and took bribes and otherwise plundered the people. In paragraph 2 of this chapter 14 we read that Albinus was followed by **Gessius Florus**, who was worse than those who went before him.

In paragraph 5 of this same chapter 14 Josephus writes about the **“sober and moderate part of the Jews”** when aroused by Florus, “thought it proper to have recourse to the governor”, whereas the **seditious part were vehemently inflamed to fight.**

We can read also in Gibbon about **two types of Jews.** Despite Gibbon’s reputed scepticism regarding the Christian religion, he makes the following remarkable statement in chapter 16 of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. (Volume ii, page 88 of Bury

edition). Gibbon is writing about Nero's persecution of the Christians:

Under the appellation of Galilaeans, two distinctions of men were confounded, the most opposite to each other in their manners and principles; the disciples who had embraced the faith of Jesus of Nazareth, and the zealots who had followed the standard of Judas the Gaulonite. The former were the friends, the latter were the enemies of human kind.

Let us pause for a moment before continuing with this quote from Gibbon. Gibbon called some Jews, who followed Judas the Gaulonite "the enemies of human kind." This is most interesting because Paul in I Thessalonians 2.15 also writes of Jews who were "contrary to all men."

So it appears that Paul and Gibbon agree that there are in the Holy Land people who differ markedly.

Continuing the quote from Gibbon:

The only resemblance between them [the two groups] consisted in the same inflexible constancy which, in the defense of their cause, rendered them insensible to death and tortures.

The followers of Judas, who impelled their countrymen into rebellion, were soon buried under the ruins of Jerusalem; whilst those of Jesus, known by the more celebrated name of Christians, diffused themselves over the Roman Empire.

Verse 32 is saying the same thing that there are two very different people in the Holy

Land, some who do know their God, and some given over to a reprobate mind.

Romans 1.28 tells of the principle of God giving the wicked over to a reprobate mind. This can be seen to operate among the residue of the Jews who reject the true Messiah. Filmer makes this point on p. 130 of his book *Daniel's Predictions*.

This principle may be seen in operation among the residue of the Jews who reject the true Messiah. In **AD 132** they were deluded into following a false messiah named Bar-Kochbar, whose name was also written Bar Kochab, meaning "son of a star". On account of this he claimed to fulfill the messianic prophecy in **Numbers 24.17**: A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall ~~rise~~ rise out of Israel." With the support of Akiba, the leading Jewish rabbi of the time, he quickly mustered an army of 200,000 men with which he took control of Jerusalem. The Romans were obliged to send a powerful force to restore their authority, and in AD 135 the revolt was suppressed and Bar Kochbar slain. No Jew was ever again allowed within sight of Jerusalem, which was razed to the ground, and a new Roman city with a temple dedicated to Jupiter was built.

In contrast to this catastrophic end to those who rejected Christ, the prophecy goes on to describe the fortunes of "the people who do know their God". During the first century of

the Christian era, the gospel had been preached throughout the known world, while the second and third centuries are notable for the names of the early fathers who witnessed in defense of the faith against pagan philosophies.

UNQUOTE

Maybe there is a reason for the rejection of God's covenant by the unrighteous faction, and that reason may be that many were of the Edomite faction among the Israelite Jews who had come into the Jewish nation following their conquest by John Hyrcanus in 130 BC.

We discussed the previous verse 31 in the last issue (878) of these Notes where the forces (RSV) or Arms (AV) were understood to be those forces of Rome, culminating in the First Jewish-Roman War of 66-70. (The Roman **General Pompey** [Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus] had conquered the Jewish Nation in 63 BC and made it part of the Roman conquest of Syria. The Romans ruled Judea by Roman Procurators who were responsible for the collection of the annual tax.)

The unrighteous and the Christian factions of the Jewish nation now show their different destinies. The one was evicted from the Land altogether after the second rebellion of 132. The other, the Christians, spread rapidly and went from strength to strength bringing in with them the previously cast off (gentilised) 10 tribes of Israel, many of whom lived beyond the Roman Empire and not lost.

Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 11, chapter. 5, heads the chapter: HOW XERXES, THE SON OF DARIUS, WAS WELL DISPOSED TO THE JEWS; AS ALSO CONCERNING ESDRAS AND NEHEMIAH. In paragraph 2 in this chapter Josephus writes:

“There are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.” (Emphasis added)

Daniel 11.33 (RSV) And those among the people who are wise shall make many understand, though they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days.

11.34 When they fall, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flatteries;

11.35 And some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the time appointed.

The methods that caused the fall of the wise were: “by the sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days”

Eusebius tells that part of the reason for the persecutions was infighting between different factions or sects. The persecution was to cleanse them. These were Christians suffering under the **Roman Empire** who were probably the only martyrs recognized by the Roman so-called Catholic Church. It is unlikely that they would recognize the later Christian who suffered under the popes! P These later Christian martyrs suffered severely for the long **TIME, TIMES AND HALF A TIME**, (1260 years) under the Popes. This suffering we read about in the Book of Revelation.

The respite or “little help” suggested in Daniel 11.34, is the help from Constantine after the persecution of Diocletian:

11.34 (AV) When they shall fall, they shall receive a little help.

That this is the right interpretation is supported by the next sentence of the same verse 34:

And many shall join themselves to them with flatteries.

The wording is much the same in the RSV.

This is exactly what happened. After the emperor Constantine professed Christianity it became fashionable to be Christian.

The Hebrew word from which flatteries is translated is *chalaqlaqqah*. It occurs four times in Scripture and is translated “slippery” twice, and “flatteries” twice. The meaning conveyed here is obviously “slimy”, “cunning”, “sneaky”, deceitful, “duplicitous”. How true the prophecy is! There was a great swelling of the ranks of *nominal* Christians joining for reasons of policy rather than God given desire.

11.35 And some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the time appointed.

Some clarification of this verse 35 is gained from a verse 10 in the next chapter 12.

Daniel 12.10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

We repeat that Eusebius believed that it was in-fighting amongst the Christians that brought about the need for cleansing.

It is interesting to read in Daniel 12.10 that the wicked are contrasted not with the righteous, but with the wise. i.e. The righteous are made wise.

To be continued God willing.

A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO LIVE ALONE

I live alone, dear Lord, stay by my side,
In all my daily needs, be Thou my guide.
Grant me good health, for that indeed I pray,
To carry on my work from day to day.
Keep pure my mind, my thoughts, my every
deed,
Let me be kind, unselfish in my neighbour's
need.
Spare me from fire, and flood and from
malicious tongues,
From thieves, from fear and evil ones.
If sickness or an accident befall, then humbly
Lord, I pray, hear Thou my call.
And when I'm feeling low, or in despair,
Lift up my heart, and help me in my prayer.
I live alone, dear Lord, yet have no fear,
Because I feel Your presence ever near.
Amen.

Author unknown.