

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS  
HALF YEAR 2021

HEAVENLY MESSAGES IN  
**THE BOOK OF  
DANIEL**

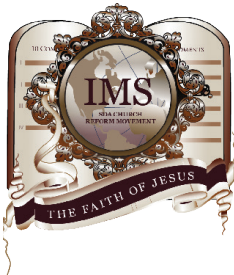


# SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

## 2021

**HALF YEAR**  
**JANUARY - JUNE**

### Heavenly Messages in *The Book of Daniel*



General Conference

International Missionary Society  
Seventh-day Adventist Church,  
Reform Movement

625 West Avenue Cedartown, GA 30125 / USA  
Tel.: +1-770-748-0077 Fax: +1-770-748-0095  
Email: [info@sda1844.org](mailto:info@sda1844.org)  
[www.sda1844.org](http://www.sda1844.org)

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Author: Anonymous

Review: General Conference Ministerial  
Department

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Conference Publishing Department

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# Introduction

One who has ever had to walk in pitch dark or drive in dense fog understands what a blessing light is. How grateful we should therefore be that the Lord created both physical and spiritual light to save us from the serious dangers of darkness. The Scriptures say of the prophetic word: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” 2 Peter 1:19.

The book of the prophet Daniel, written in the sixth century B.C., contains heavenly messages for the last days—our days. “... Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4. And the writings of the Spirit of prophecy confirm this: “... Since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 356.

The counsel is more appropriate today than ever before: “Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. God alone is represented as great. In the vision of the prophet He is seen casting down one mighty ruler, and setting up another. He is revealed as the monarch of the universe, about to set up His everlasting kingdom—the Ancient of days, the living God, the Source of all wisdom, the Ruler of the present, the Revealer of the future. Read, and understand how poor, how frail, how short-lived, how erring, how guilty is man in lifting up his soul unto vanity.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1166.

So, let us note carefully what has been written, for the prophetic messages are especially for us: “The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass.” —(Letter 57, 1896) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1166.

Since the seal was removed from this important book, important knowledge has been imparted to every humble searcher; and we have the promise that, as the very last events approach, more light will shine from these inspired pages. Furthermore, "When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 114.

As the most awesome events press upon us, it will become increasingly clear what a solemn time we live in. Let us be motivated now to study these heavenly messages and "understand" history in the light of prophecy and also to be among those "many" who will "be purified, and made white, and tried" (Daniel 12:10) for the soon coming of our Lord.

—*The Brothers and Sisters  
of the General Conference*

## LESSON 1

Sabbath, January 2, 2021

# The Prophetic Word Is a Light



"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

**2 Peter 1:19.**

### SUNDAY

**1. What did the Lord do so as not to leave His children in uncertainty? Through whom did He speak to mankind?**

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**Genesis 18:17** *And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;*

**Amos 3:7** *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

**1 Samuel 9:9** *(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.)*

"'The Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants and prophets.' While 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,' 'those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.' Amos 3:7; Deuteronomy 29:29. God has given these things to us, and His blessing will attend the reverent, prayerful study of the prophetic scriptures." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

"'The secret things,' says Moses, 'belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever;' and the Lord declares by the prophet Amos, that He 'will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.' Deuteronomy 29:29;



Amos 3:7. The students of God's word may, then, confidently expect to find the most stupendous event to take place in human history clearly pointed out in the Scriptures of truth." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 324.

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## GUIDELINES FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

### MONDAY

#### **2.**What is important for us to do immediately when God speaks?

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📖 *Psalm 46:10* Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

📖 *1 Samuel 3:10* And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

"The language of the meek is never that of boasting. Like the child Samuel, they pray, 'Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.' 1 Samuel 3:9. When Joshua was placed in the highest position of honor, as commander of Israel, he bade defiance to all the enemies of God. His heart was filled with noble thoughts of his great mission. Yet upon the intimation of a message from Heaven he placed himself in the position of a little child to be directed. 'What saith my lord unto His servant?' (Joshua 5:14), was his response. The first words of Paul after Christ was revealed to him were, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' Acts 9:6." –*The Sanctified Life*, p. 15.

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### TUESDAY

#### **3.**What counsel did the apostle Peter give so one may benefit from the precious light of prophecy?

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📖 *2 Peter 1:19-21* We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: <sup>20</sup>Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

"The apostle was well qualified to speak of the purposes of God concerning the human race; for during the earthly ministry of Christ he had seen and heard much that pertained to the kingdom of God.

"Yet convincing as was this evidence of the certainty of the believers' hope, there was another still more convincing in the witness of prophecy, through which the faith of all might be confirmed and securely anchored." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 534.


## THE MOST ESSENTIAL LIGHT

### WEDNESDAY


**4. Who alone knows and is able to foretell the future? To whom are a great number of wonderful prophecies addressed?**

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 **Isaiah 41:21-23** Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. <sup>22</sup>Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. <sup>23</sup>Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may

know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

 **1 Peter 1:10-12** Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: <sup>11</sup>Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. <sup>12</sup>Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

"The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. 'All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.'" –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 436, 437.


"The time of Christ's coming, His anointing by the Holy Spirit, His death, and the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles, were definitely pointed out. It was the privilege of the Jewish people to understand these prophecies, and to recognize their fulfillment in the mission of Jesus. Christ urged upon

His disciples the importance of prophetic study. Referring to the prophecy given to Daniel in regard to their time, He said, 'Whoso readeth, let him understand.' Matt. 24:15. After His resurrection He explained to the disciples in 'all the prophets' 'the things concerning Himself.' Luke 24:27. The Saviour had spoken through all the prophets. 'The Spirit of Christ which was in them' 'testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' 1 Peter 1:11." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

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## THURSDAY

### **5. What prophetic book of the Old Testament contains the most exact information in regard to the time of the end?**

 **Daniel 12:4** But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

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"Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'" –*Evangelism*, p. 196.

"In view of the testimony of Inspiration, how dare men teach that the Revelation is a mystery beyond the reach of human understanding? It is a mystery revealed, a book opened. The study of the Revelation directs the mind to the prophecies of Daniel, and both present most important instruction, given of God to men, concerning events to take place at the close of this world's history." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 341.

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## THE SEAL OF CONFIRMATION ON BIBLE PROPHECY


### FRIDAY

### **6. Who imprinted the divine seal on the book of Daniel?**

stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand).

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 **Matthew 24:15** When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,

 **Mark 13:14** But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

"... Christ directed His disciples to the words of the prophet Daniel concerning events to take place in their time, and said: 'Whoso readeth, let him understand.' Matthew 24:15." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 341.

## SABBATH

### 7. What is reported about Daniel as a person?

**[L]** *Daniel 1:3, 6 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 'Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:*

"Daniel was a prince of Judah." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 148.

"It was their conscientious observance of the commands of Holy Scripture, that in the days of Jeremiah's ministry brought to Daniel and his fellows opportunities to exalt the true God before the nations of earth. The instruction these Hebrew children had received in the homes of their parents, made them strong in faith and constant in their service of the living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. When, early in the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar for the first time besieged and captured Jerusalem, and carried away Daniel and his companions, with others specially chosen for service in the court of Babylon, the faith of the Hebrew captives was tried to the utmost. But those who had learned to place their trust in the promises of God found these all-sufficient in every experience through which they were called to pass during their sojourn in a strange land. The Scriptures proved to them a guide and a stay." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 428.

"Daniel and his companions were captives in a strange land, but God suffered not the envy and hatred of their enemies to prevail against them. The righteous have ever obtained help from above. How often have the enemies of God united their strength and wisdom to destroy the character and influence of a few simple persons who trusted in God. But because the Lord was for them, none could prevail against them. Only let the followers of Christ be united, and they will prevail. Let them be separated from their idols and from the world, and the world will not separate them from God." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 139.



## FOR PERSONAL STUDY

• *Jeremiah 1:4-9.* • *Revelation 1:1.*

## LESSON 2

Sabbath, January 9, 2021

# A Lost Opportunity and Its Results



"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season...." **2 Timothy 4:2.**

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both [shall be] alike good."

**Ecclesiastes 11:6.**

### A KING'S TEST

#### SUNDAY

**1.** What did the Lord permit to happen to King Hezekiah?

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**[L] 2 Kings 20:1, first part** In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord,

"In the midst of his prosperous reign King Hezekiah was suddenly stricken with a fatal malady. 'Sick unto death,' his case was beyond the power of man to help." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 340. pág. 241.

#### MONDAY

**2.** What dire message did he receive from the prophet?

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**[L] 2 Kings 20:1, second part** Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

"And the last vestige of hope seemed removed when the prophet Isaiah appeared before him with the message, 'Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.' Isaiah 38:1." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 340.

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## HEALING AND INGRATITUDE

### TUESDAY

**3. What did Hezekiah do in his anguish? What wonderful miracle resulted from his earnest prayers and tears?**

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**[L] 2 Kings 20:2-6** Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, <sup>3</sup>I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and

with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. <sup>4</sup>And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, <sup>5</sup>Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. <sup>6</sup>And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

"The outlook seemed utterly dark; yet the king could still pray to the One who had hitherto been his 'refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' Psalm 46:1. And so 'he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.' 2 Kings 20:2, 3....

"He whose 'compassions fail not,' heard the prayer of His servant. Lamentations 3:22....

"Gladly the prophet returned with the words of assurance and hope. Directing that a lump of figs be laid upon the diseased part, Isaiah delivered to the king the message of God's mercy and protecting care." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 340-342.

"When Hezekiah was sick, the prophet of God brought him the message that he should die. He cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard His servant and worked a miracle in his behalf, sending him a message that fifteen years should be added to his life. Now, one word from God, one touch of the divine finger, would have cured Hezekiah instantly, but special directions were given to take a fig and lay it upon the affected part, and Hezekiah was raised to life. In everything we need to move along the line of God's providence." —*Counsels on Health*, pp. 381, 382.

## WEDNESDAY

**4. Was the king grateful for the great benefit he had received? How did his attitude and actions plant a seed that resulted in the Babylonian captivity?**

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**[L] 2 Chronicles 32:25-27** But Hezekiah rendered not again according

to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>26</sup>Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. <sup>27</sup>And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasures for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels;

"The Bible does not condemn the rich man because he is rich; it does not declare the acquisition of wealth to be a sin, nor does it say that money is the root of all evil....

"The Scriptures teach that wealth is a dangerous possession only when placed in competition with the immortal treasure. It is when the earthly and temporal absorbs the thoughts, the affections, the devotion which God claims, that it becomes a snare....

"Like other gifts of God, the possession of wealth brings its increase of responsibility, and its peculiar temptations. How many who have in adversity remained true to God, have fallen under the glittering allurements of prosperity. With the possession of wealth, the ruling passion of a selfish nature is revealed. The world is cursed today by the miserly greed and the self-indulgent vices of the worshipers of mammon." —(*The Review and Herald*, May 16, 1882) *Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 138, 139.

## RESULTS OF THE SIGN

### THURSDAY

**5. What sign did Hezekiah request as proof that his life would be prolonged? Who else saw this sign?**

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**[L] 2 Kings 20:7-10, 12** And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.<sup>8</sup> And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? <sup>9</sup>And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken:

shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? <sup>10</sup>And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. <sup>12</sup>At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had

heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

 **2 Chronicles 32:31** Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

"In the fertile valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates there dwelt an ancient race which, though at that time subject to Assyria, was destined to rule the world. Among its people were wise men who gave much attention to the study of astronomy; and when they noticed that the shadow on the sundial had been turned back ten degrees, they marveled greatly. Their king, Merodachbaladan, upon learning that this miracle had been wrought as a sign to the king of Judah that the God of heaven had granted him a new lease of life, sent ambassadors to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery and to learn, if possible, more of the God who was able to perform so great a wonder." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 344.

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## A LOST OPPORTUNITY

### FRIDAY


**6. What holy opportunity was thus presented to the king? How did he use it?**

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 **Psalms 66:16; 40:9, 10** Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. <sup>40:9</sup>I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. <sup>10</sup>I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

"The visit of these messengers from the ruler of a far-away land gave Hezekiah an opportunity to extol the living God. How easy it would have been for him to tell them of God, the upholder of all created things, through whose favor his own life had been spared when all other hope had fled! What momentous transformations might have taken place had these seekers after truth from the plains of Chaldea been led to acknowledge the supreme sovereignty of the living God!...



"Had Hezekiah improved the opportunity given him to bear witness to the power, the goodness, the compassion of the God of Israel, the report of the ambassadors would have been as light piercing darkness. But he magnified himself above the Lord of hosts. He 'rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up.' Verse 25....

"Hezekiah had grievously sinned; 'therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.' Verse 25." –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 344, 346.

## SABBATH

### **7. What terrible mistake did he make? What results would follow?**

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**[L] 2 Kings 20:13-18** *And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. <sup>14</sup> Then came Isaiah the prophet unto*

*king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. <sup>15</sup> And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. <sup>16</sup> And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord. <sup>17</sup> Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. <sup>18</sup> And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.*

"But pride and vanity took possession of Hezekiah's heart, and in self-exaltation he laid open to covetous eyes the treasures with which God had enriched His people.... Not to glorify God did he do this, but to exalt himself in the eyes of the foreign princes. He did not stop to consider that these men were representatives of a powerful nation that had not the fear nor the love of God in their hearts, and that it was imprudent to make them his confidants concerning the temporal riches of the nation...

"To Isaiah it was revealed that the returning ambassadors were carrying with them a report of the riches they had seen, and that the king of Babylon and his counselors would plan to enrich their own country with the treasures of Jerusalem." –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 344-346.

"The solemn, sacred truth—the testing message given us of God to communicate to the world—lays every one of us under the strongest obligation to so transform our daily life and character that the power of the truth may be well represented. We should have a continual sense of the shortness of time and of the fearful events which prophecy has declared must speedily take place." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 612.



**FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

• *Isaiah 38:1-22; 39:1-8.*

## LESSON 3

Sabbath, January 16, 2021

# The Captivity of Judah



"... For our iniquities have we ... been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands."

**Ezra 9:7.**

## PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT

### SUNDAY

#### **1. Who prophesied that the Babylonians would take the people of Judah captive?**

**📖 Jeremiah 25:8-11** *Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, <sup>9</sup>Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my*

*servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.<sup>10</sup> Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.<sup>11</sup> And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*


"Within a few years this terrible judgment was to be visited upon Jehoiakim; but first the Lord in mercy informed the impenitent nation of His set purpose. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign 'Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,' pointing out that for over a score of years, 'from the thirteenth year of Josiah,... even unto this day,' he had borne witness of God's desire to save, but that his messages had been despised. Jeremiah 25:2, 3. And now the word of the Lord to them was:

"... 'And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.'" —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 430, 431.

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## MONDAY

**2. According to the Biblical record, when did the first assault against Jerusalem occur?**

 **Daniel 1:1** *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.*

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"The overthrow of Jerusalem recorded here was predicted by Jeremiah, and was accomplished in 606 B.C. Jeremiah 25:8-11.... Nebuchadnezzar set out on his expedition near the close of the third year of Jehoiakim, from which point Daniel reckons. But the king did not accomplish the subjugation of Jerusalem until about the ninth month of the year following, from which year Jeremiah reckons." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 1944 Edition, p. 19.

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## TAKEN CAPTIVE

### TUESDAY

**3. Who were among the first captives? What is recorded concerning them?**

*tain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; <sup>4</sup>Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. <sup>6</sup>Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah:*

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 **Daniel 1:3, 4, 6** *And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring cer-*

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"When, early in the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar for the first time besieged and captured Jerusalem, and carried away Daniel and his companions, with others specially chosen for service in the court of Babylon, the faith of the Hebrew captives was tried to the utmost. But those who had learned to place their trust in the promises of God found these all-sufficient in every experience through which they were called to pass during their sojourn in a strange land. The Scriptures proved to them a guide and a stay." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 428.

## DISOBEDIENCE, BLINDNESS, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

### WEDNESDAY

**4. Did God's judgment cause repentance and change among the people who remained in Jerusalem? What was the result?**

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**2 Kings 24:8-11, 14-16** Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done.<sup>10</sup> At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of

Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.<sup>11</sup> And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.<sup>14</sup> And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.<sup>15</sup> And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.<sup>16</sup> And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

"Within a few short years the king of Babylon was to be used as the instrument of God's wrath upon impenitent Judah. Again and again Jerusalem was to be invested and entered by the besieging armies of Nebuchadnezzar. Company after company—at first a few only, but later on thousands and tens of thousands—were to be taken captive to the land of Shinar, there to dwell in enforced exile." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 422.

### THURSDAY

**5. What consequence of King Zedekiah's spiritual blindness occurred in the third conquest? What prophecy concerning him was thus fulfilled?**

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**2 Kings 24:17-19; 25:1, 2, 6, 7** And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.<sup>18</sup> Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.<sup>19</sup> And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.<sup>25:1</sup> And it came

to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. <sup>2</sup>And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. <sup>6</sup>So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. <sup>7</sup>And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out

the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

**[L] Ezekiel 12:13, 14** My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there. <sup>14</sup>And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

"Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah—all these Jewish kings were in turn to become vassals of the Babylonian ruler, and all in turn were to rebel. Severer and yet more severe chastisements were to be inflicted upon the rebellious nation, until at last the entire land was to become a desolation, Jerusalem was to be laid waste and burned with fire, the temple that Solomon had built was to be destroyed, and the kingdom of Judah was to fall, never again to occupy its former position among the nations of earth." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 422, 423.

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## CONSEQUENCES OF PLAYING WITH SIN

### FRIDAY

**6. Even who recognized that the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity came from the Lord's hand as the consequence of apostasy? During this time, what happened to the ark of the covenant?**

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**[L] Jeremiah 40:2, 3** And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. <sup>3</sup>Now the Lord hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.

**[L] 2 Chronicles 36:14-16** Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. <sup>15</sup>And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had com-

*passion on his people, and on his dwelling place: <sup>16</sup>But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*

"Among the righteous still in Jerusalem, to whom had been made plain the divine purpose, were some who determined to place beyond the reach of ruthless hands the sacred ark containing the tables of stone on which had been traced the precepts of the Decalogue. This they did. With mourning and sadness they secreted the ark in a cave, where it was to be hidden from the people of Israel and Judah because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hidden. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 453.

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#### **SABBATH**


**7. From these experiences, what may we learn about the consequences of disobedience and sin?**


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 **Proverbs 14:34** Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

 **Deuteronomy 28:1, 2, 15** And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: <sup>2</sup>And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. <sup>15</sup> 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:

"We are far from being the people God would have us to be, because we do not elevate the soul and refine the character in harmony with the wonderful unfolding of God's truth and His purposes. 'Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.' Proverbs 14:34. Sin is a disorganizer. Wherever it is cherished—in the individual heart, in the household, in the church—there is disorder, strife, variance, enmity, envy, jealousy, because the enemy of man and of God has the controlling power over the mind. But let the truth be loved and brought into the life, as well as advocated, and that man or woman will hate sin and will be a living representative of Jesus Christ to the world." —*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 377.



**FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

• *Ezra 9:7-15; 2 Samuel 22:49.*



## LESSON 4

Sabbath, January 23, 2021

# At the Babylonian Court



"... The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you...."

**2 Chronicles 15:2.**

### CHOSEN AND PROVEN SUNDAY

**1.** What order did the Babylonian king give Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs? What else did he command?

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**[L] Daniel 1:3-5** And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; <sup>4</sup>Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. <sup>5</sup>And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

"At the very outset of their career there came to them a decisive test of character. It was provided that they should eat of the food and drink of the wine that came from the king's table. In this the king thought to give them an expression of his favor and of his solicitude for their welfare."  
—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 481.


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## MONDAY

### 2. Who were among the selected ones? What did their names signify?

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 **Daniel 1:6** Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

"In the Hebrew, Daniel signified, 'judge for God;' Hananiah, 'gift of the Lord;' Mishael, 'who is what God is;' and Azariah, 'whom Jehovah helps.'" – Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 23.

"Among those who maintained their allegiance to God were Daniel and his three companions--illustrious examples of what men may become who unite with the God of wisdom and power. From the comparative simplicity of their Jewish home, these youth of royal line were taken to the most magnificent of cities and into the court of the world's greatest monarch.... "Seeing in these youth the promise of remarkable ability, Nebuchadnezzar determined that they should be trained to fill important positions in his kingdom. That they might be fully qualified for their lifework, he arranged for them to learn the language of the Chaldeans and for three years to be granted the unusual educational advantages afforded princes of the realm." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 480.

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## SIGNIFICANT RESOLVE

## TUESDAY

### 3. What names did the master of the eunuchs give them? What did these names mean, and to what did they refer?

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 **Daniel 1:7** Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego.

"This change of names was probably made on account of the signification of the words.... Since these [Hebrew] names had some reference to the true God and signified some connection with His worship, they were changed to names which had definitions linking them to the heathen divinities and worship of the Chaldeans. Thus Belteshazzar, the name given to Daniel, signified 'prince of Bel;' Shadrach, 'servant of Sin' (the moon god); Meshach, 'who is what Aku is' (Aku being the Sumerian

equivalent of Sin, the name of the moon god); and Abednego, 'servant of Nebo.'" – Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 23. These new names referenced heathen deities.

"The names of Daniel and his companions were changed to names representing Chaldean deities. Great significance was attached to the names given by Hebrew parents to their children. Often these stood for traits of character that the parent desired to see developed in the child..."

"The king did not compel the Hebrew youth to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry, but he hoped to bring this about gradually. By giving them names significant of idolatry, by bringing them daily into close association with idolatrous customs, and under the influence of the seductive rites of heathen worship, he hoped to induce them to renounce the religion of their nation and to unite with the worship of the Babylonians." – *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 480, 481.

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## WEDNESDAY

### **4. What resolution did Daniel make in his heart? Who looked upon this resolution with pleasure and impressed the mind of the king's officer?**

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**[L]** *Daniel 1:8, 9 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. <sup>9</sup>Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.*

"But a portion having been offered to idols, the food from the king's table was consecrated to idolatry; and one partaking of it would be regarded as offering homage to the gods of Babylon. In such homage, loyalty to Jehovah forbade Daniel and his companions to join. Even a mere pretense of eating the food or drinking the wine would be a denial of their faith. To do this would be to array themselves with heathenism and to dishonor the principles of the law of God.

"Nor dared they risk the enervating effect of luxury and dissipation on physical, mental, and spiritual development. They were acquainted with the history of Nadab and Abihu, the record of whose intemperance and its results had been preserved in the parchments of the Pentateuch; and they knew that their own physical and mental power would be injuriously affected by the use of wine.

"Daniel and his associates had been trained by their parents to habits of strict temperance. They had been taught that God would

hold them accountable for their capabilities, and that they must never dwarf or enfeeble their powers.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 481, 482.

#### THURSDAY


**5. What did Daniel propose to the king's steward? What was the result after ten days had passed?**

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 **Daniel 1:12-15** Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.<sup>13</sup> Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.<sup>14</sup> So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. <sup>15</sup> And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.


“Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon.” —*The Youth's Instructor*, August 18, 1898. “This officer saw in Daniel good traits of character. He saw that he was striving to be kind and helpful, that his words were respectful and courteous, and his manner possessed the grace of modesty and meekness. It was the good behavior of the youth that gained for him the favor and love of the prince.” —*The Youth's Instructor*, November 12, 1907.

#### FRIDAY

**6. What did the steward do after making this experience? How did the Lord reward the faithfulness of His children?**

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 **Daniel 1:16, 17** Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. <sup>17</sup> As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

“The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of the Hebrew youth, and their purity of motive; and His blessing attended them.... The promise was fulfilled, ‘Them that honor Me I will honor.’ 1 Samuel 2:30. As Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of

prophetic power came upon him. While receiving instruction from man in the duties of court life, he was being taught by God to read the mysteries of the future and to record for coming generations, through figures and symbols, events covering the history of this world till the close of time." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 484, 485.

## SABBATH

### **7. What conclusion did the king draw after his final examination of these young men?**

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**[L] Daniel 1:18-20** Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup>And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. <sup>20</sup>And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

"Read the Old and New Testaments with a contrite heart. Read them prayerfully and faithfully, pleading that the Holy Spirit will give you understanding. Daniel searched the portion of the Old Testament which he had at his command, and made the word of God his highest instructor. At the same time he improved the opportunities that were given him to become intelligent in all lines of learning. His companions did the same...." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 357, 358.

"... Their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and they lived their prayers. They placed themselves where God could bless them.... And God Himself was their teacher." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 486.



## **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

• *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 478-490.

## LESSON 5

Sabbath, January 30, 2021

# A Panoramic Dream



"For God speaketh once, yea twice.... In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed."

**Job 33:14, 15.**

### SUNDAY

#### **1. What happened to King Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign?**

**[L]** *Daniel 2:1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.*

"In the same year that Daniel and his companions entered the service of the king of Babylon events occurred that severely tested the integrity of these youthful Hebrews and proved before an idolatrous nation the power and faithfulness of the God of Israel.

"While King Nebuchadnezzar was looking forward with anxious forebodings to the future, he had a remarkable dream, by which he was greatly troubled, 'and his sleep brake from him.' Daniel 2:1. But although this vision of the night made a deep impression on his mind, he found it impossible to recall the particulars." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 34.

### HUMAN VS. DIVINE WISDOM

#### MONDAY

#### **2. Whom did the king call to relate and explain his dream? How did his counselors try to hide their incompetence?**

**[L]** *Daniel 2:2-4 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. <sup>3</sup>And the*

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king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. <sup>4</sup>Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

"He applied to his astrologers and magicians, and with promises of great wealth and honor commanded them to tell him his dream and its interpretation. But they said, 'Tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.' Verse 4.

"The king knew that if they could really tell the interpretation, they could tell the dream as well. The Lord had in His providence given Nebuchadnezzar this dream, and had caused the particulars to be forgotten, while the fearful impression was left upon his mind, in order to expose the pretensions of the wise men of Babylon." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 34.


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## TUESDAY

### **3.** Into what crisis did the king place these men? What request did they once again make of the ruler?

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 *Daniel 2:5-7* The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make

known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. <sup>6</sup>But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. <sup>7</sup>They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.


"Dissatisfied with their evasive answer, and suspicious because, despite their pretentious claims to reveal the secrets of men, they nevertheless seemed unwilling to grant him help, the king commanded his wise men, with promises of wealth and honor on the one hand, and threats of death on the other, to tell him not only the interpretation of the dream, but the dream itself." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 492.

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## WEDNESDAY

### **4.** What did the angry king threaten? What confession were the wise men and astrologers forced to make?

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 *Daniel 2:8-11* The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. <sup>9</sup>But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying

and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof. <sup>10</sup>The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the

king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. <sup>11</sup>And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

"Nebuchadnezzar [was] now thoroughly aroused and angered by the apparent perfidy of those in whom he had trusted,...


"Filled with fear for the consequences of their failure, the magicians endeavored to show the king that his request was unreasonable and his test beyond that which had ever been required of any man." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 492.

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## THE CONSEQUENCE OF RISKING ONE'S LIFE

### THURSDAY

#### **5. In his fury, what did King Nebuchadnezzar command?**

 **Daniel 2:12** For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.


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"The monarch was very angry, and threatened that they should all be slain if, in a given time, the dream was not made known." –*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 34, 35.

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### FRIDAY

#### **6. Who was included in the vengeful decree?**

 **Daniel 2:13** And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

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"Daniel and his companions were to perish with the false prophets; but, taking his life in his hand, Daniel ventures to enter the presence of the king, begging that time may be granted that he may show the dream and the interpretation." –*The Sanctified Life*, p. 35.



## SABBATH

### 7. What did Daniel do, and to whom did he present his petition?

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**[L] Daniel 2:14-16** Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon:<sup>15</sup> He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. <sup>16</sup>Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.

"Among those sought for by the officers who were preparing to fulfill the provisions of the royal decree, were Daniel and his friends. When told that according to the decree they also must die, 'with counsel and wisdom' Daniel inquired of Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, 'Why is the decree so hasty from the king?' Arioch told him the story of the king's perplexity over his remarkable dream, and of his failure to secure help from those in whom he had hitherto placed fullest confidence. Upon hearing this, Daniel, taking his life in his hands, ventured into the king's presence and begged that time be granted, that he might petition his God to reveal to him the dream and its interpretation." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 493.

"When the decree went forth from an angry, furious king, commanding that all the wise men of Babylon should be destroyed, Daniel and his fellows were sought for to be slain. Then Daniel answered, not with retaliation, but 'with counsel and wisdom,' the captain of the king's guard, who was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon. Daniel asked, 'Why is the decree so hasty from the king?' He presented himself before the king, requesting that time be given him, and his faith in the God he served prompted him to say that he would show the king the interpretation." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 373.



#### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- *The Faith I Live By*, p. 10.

## LESSON 6

Sabbath, February 6, 2021

# God Honors Those Who Honor Him



"... Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

**1 Samuel 2:30.**

### A PROMPT ANSWER TO PRAYER

#### SUNDAY

**1. To whom did Daniel and his friends turn to have the secret revealed? What did the Saviour say about mutual prayer?**

known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: <sup>18</sup>That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

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**[L] Daniel 2:17, 18** Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing

**[L] Matthew 18:19** Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

"To this request the monarch accedes; and now Daniel gathers his three companions, and together they take the matter before God, seeking for wisdom from the Source of light and knowledge. Although they were in the king's court, surrounded with temptation, they did not forget their responsibility to God. They were strong in the consciousness that His providence had placed them where they were; that they were doing His work, meeting the demands of truth and duty. They had confidence toward God. They had turned to Him for strength when in perplexity and danger, and He had been to them an ever-present help." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 35.


"Together they sought for wisdom from the Source of light and knowledge. Their faith was strong in the consciousness that God had placed them where they were, that they were doing His work and meeting the demands of duty. In times of perplexity and danger they had always turned to Him for guidance and protection, and He had proved an ever-present help. Now with contrition of heart they submitted themselves anew to the Judge of the earth, pleading that He would grant them deliverance in this their time of special need." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 493, 494.

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## MONDAY

### **2. How did the Omnipotent One answer their humble plea?**

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 *Daniel 2:19* Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

"And they did not plead in vain. The God whom they had honored, now honored them. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon them, and to Daniel, 'in a night vision,' was revealed the king's dream and its meaning." — *Prophets and Kings*, p. 494.

"Nehemiah humbled himself before God, giving Him the glory due unto His name. Thus also did Daniel in Babylon. Let us study the prayers of these men. They teach us that we are to humble ourselves, but that we are never to obliterate the line of demarcation between God's commandment-keeping people and those who have no respect for His law. "We all need to draw near to God. He will draw near to those who approach Him in humility, filled with a holy awe for His sacred majesty, and standing before Him separate from the world." —(*Manuscript 58*, 1903)


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## HEARTFELT GRATITUDE


### TUESDAY

### **3. What was the first thing Daniel did after receiving the answer? What teaching of the apostle Paul should always be remembered?**

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 *Daniel 2:20-23* Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: <sup>21</sup>And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: <sup>22</sup>He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. <sup>23</sup>

*I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.*

 **Ephesians 5:20** *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

"The Christian should live so near to God that he may approve things that are excellent, 'being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.' His heart should be attuned to gratitude and praise. He should be ever ready to acknowledge the blessings he is receiving, remembering who it is that has said, 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me.'" –*My Life Today*, p. 153.

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### WEDNESDAY

**4. With what request did Daniel go to Arioch? What did Arioch do after receiving this good news?**

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 **Daniel 2:24, 25** *Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation. <sup>25</sup>Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.*

"Wonderful is the work which God designs to accomplish through His servants, that His name may be glorified. God made Joseph a fountain of life to the Egyptian nation. Through Joseph the life of that whole people was preserved. Through Daniel God saved the life of all the wise men of Babylon. And these deliverances were as object lessons; they illustrated to the people the spiritual blessings offered them through connection with the God whom Joseph and Daniel worshiped. So through His people today God desires to bring blessings to the world. Every worker in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 227.


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## THURSDAY

**5.** What anxious question did the ruler of the mightiest world empire address to Daniel?

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 **Daniel 2:26** The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

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## HUMILITY AND FAITH


### FRIDAY

**6.** How humbly did Daniel reply?

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 **Daniel 2:27, 28** Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; <sup>28</sup>But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

"Behold the Jewish captive, calm and self-possessed, in the presence of the monarch of the world's most powerful empire. In his first words he disclaimed honor for himself, and exalted God as the source of all wisdom." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 494.


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## SABBATH

**7.** What promise is given to God's humble children?

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 **1 Peter 5:5, last part** ... for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

"As God made known His will to the Hebrew captives, to those who were most separate from the customs and practices of a world lying in wickedness, so will the Lord communicate light from heaven to all who will appreciate a 'Thus saith the Lord.' To them He will express His mind. Those who are least bound up with worldly ideas, are the most separate

from display, and vanity, and pride, and love of promotion, who stand forth as His peculiar people, zealous of good works—to these He will reveal the meaning of His word. The very first exhibition of God’s power to the Hebrew captives was in showing the defective wisdom of the great ones of the earth. The wisdom of men is foolishness with God. The magicians revealed their ignorance of the light before the Lord revealed His wisdom as supreme. The wisdom of human agents who had misappropriated their God-given talents, God showed to be foolishness.”  
—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 101, 102.



**FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 13.

## LESSON 7

Sabbath, February 13, 2021

# The Prophetic Dream



"... There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known ... what shall be in the latter days."

**Daniel 2:28.**

### RELATING THE DREAM

#### SUNDAY

**1. What was the king thinking about when the Lord gave him the dream? For what purpose did Daniel receive the same dream?**

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**[L] Daniel 2:29** *As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.*

"Consider the experience of Daniel. When called to stand before King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel did not hesitate to acknowledge the source of his wisdom. Did that faithful recognition of God detract from Daniel's influence in the king's court? By no means; it was the secret of his power; it secured for him favor in the eyes of the ruler of Babylon. In God's name Daniel made known to the king the heaven-sent messages of instruction, warning, and rebuke, and he was not repulsed. Let God's workers of today read the firm, bold testimony of Daniel and follow his example." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 151.


## MONDAY

### 2. What did the king see in his very special dream? Of what was the image made?

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 **Daniel 2:31 - 33** Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. <sup>32</sup>This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, <sup>33</sup>His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

"The dream of the great image, opening before Nebuchadnezzar events reaching to the close of time, had been given that he might understand the part he was to act in the world's history, and the relation that his kingdom should sustain to the kingdom of heaven." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 503.

"Nebuchadnezzar, a worshiper of the gods of the Chaldean religion, was an idolater. An image was an object which would at once command his attention and respect. Moreover, earthly kingdoms, which, as we shall hereafter see, were represented by this image, were objects of esteem and value in his eyes.

"But how admirably adapted was this representation to convey a great and needful truth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. Besides delineating the progress of events through the whole course of time for the benefit of His people, God would show Nebuchadnezzar the utter emptiness and worthlessness of earthly pomp and glory. How could this be more impressively done than by an image whose head was of gold?" —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 38


## TUESDAY

### 3. Even though image in the dream was very impressive, what was to happen to it and to the kingdoms which it represented?

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 **Daniel 2:34, 35** Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. <sup>35</sup>Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.



"Below this head was a body composed of inferior metals descending in value until they reached their basest form in the feet and toes of iron mingled with miry clay. The whole was then dashed to pieces, and made like the empty chaff. It was finally blown away where no place could be found for it, after which something durable and of heavenly worth occupied its place. So would God show to the children of men that earthly kingdoms are to pass away, and earthly greatness and glory, like a gaudy bubble, will break and vanish. In the place so long usurped by these, the kingdom of God shall be set up and have no end, while all who have an interest in that kingdom shall rest under the shadow of its peaceful wings forever and ever." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 38, 39.

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## THE HEAD OF GOLD

### WEDNESDAY


#### 4. What does the head of gold represent?

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 *Daniel 2:36 - 38 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. <sup>37</sup>Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. <sup>38</sup>And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.*

"God exalted Babylon that it might fulfill this purpose. Prosperity attended the nation until it reached a height of wealth and power that has never since been equalled—fitly represented in the Scriptures by the inspired symbol, a 'head of gold.' Daniel 2:38." –*Education*, p. 175.

"God has presented to me the case of Nebuchadnezzar. The Lord worked with power to bring the mightiest king on the earth to acknowledge Him as King over all kings. He moved upon the mind of the proud king until Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged Him as 'the most high God,' 'whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation.'" –(Letter 132, 1901) *Evangelism*, p. 88.

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## THURSDAY

### **5.**When did this mighty empire begin? Who built it up to its height of power?

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**[L]** *Genesis 10:8-12* And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. <sup>9</sup>He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. <sup>10</sup>And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech,

and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. <sup>11</sup>Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, <sup>12</sup>And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.

**[L]** *Daniel 4:26, 27* And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. <sup>27</sup>Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

"God exalted Babylon that it might fulfill this purpose. Prosperity attended the nation until it reached a height of wealth and power that has never since been equalled—fitly represented in the Scriptures by the inspired symbol, a 'head of gold.' Daniel 2:38." —*Education*, p. 175.

"The Babylonian Empire rose to power under the general who also became king, Nabopolassar. When he died in 604 B.C. his son Nebuchadnezzar became king....

"The character of the Babylonian Empire is indicated by the head of gold. It was the golden kingdom of a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its successors. Situated in the garden of the East; laid out in a perfect square said to be sixty miles in circumference, fifteen miles on each side; surrounded by a wall estimated to have been two hundred to three hundred feet high and eighty-seven feet thick, with a moat, or ditch, around this, of equal cubic capacity with the wall itself; divided into squares by its many streets, each one hundred and fifty feet in width, crossing at right angles, every one of them straight and level; its two hundred and twenty-five square miles of enclosed surface laid out in luxuriant pleasure grounds and gardens, interspersed with magnificent dwellings—this city, with its sixty miles of moat, its sixty miles of outer wall, its thirty miles of river wall through its center, its gates of solid brass, its hanging gardens rising terrace above terrace till they equaled in height the walls themselves, its temple of Belus three miles in circumference, its two royal palaces, one three and

a half and the other eight miles in circumference, with its subterranean tunnel under the River Euphrates connecting these two palaces, its perfect arrangement for convenience, ornament, and defense, and its unlimited resources—this city, containing in itself many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder.” —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 41-43.

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## BABYLON’S GLORY, DECLINE, AND FALL

### FRIDAY

**6. What expressions did the prophet Isaiah employ to describe Babylon’s glory?**

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📖 *Isaiah 13:19, first part* And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency,...

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“There, with the whole earth prostrate at her feet, a queen in peerless grandeur, drawing from the pen of inspiration itself this glowing title, ‘The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency,’ stood this city, fit capital of that kingdom which was represented by the golden head of this great historic image.

“Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar in the prime of life, bold, vigorous, and accomplished, seated upon its throne, when Daniel entered within its walls to serve as a captive in its gorgeous palaces for seventy years. There the children of the Lord, oppressed more than cheered by the glory and prosperity of the land of their captivity, hung their harps on the willows by the Euphrates, and wept when they remembered Zion.” —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 43.

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### SABBATH

**7. With what words did he outline the future of this glorious city? How long did the Babylonian Empire last?**

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📖 *Isaiah 13:19-22* And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>20</sup>It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shep-

herds make their fold there. <sup>21</sup>But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. <sup>22</sup>And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

"In the first year of Neriglissar, only two years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, broke out that fatal war between the Babylonians and the Medes, which resulted in the overthrow of the Babylonian kingdom.... According to all human calculation, they had good ground for their feelings of security. Never, weighed in the balance of earthly probability, could that city be taken with the means of warfare then known. Hence they breathed as freely and slept as soundly as though no foe were waiting and watching around their beleaguered walls. But God had decreed that the proud and wicked city should come down from her throne of glory. And when He speaks, what mortal arm can defeat His word?

"... In the drunken revelry of that fatal night, these river gates were left open,... The entrance of the Persian soldiers was not perceived.... Thus the first empire, symbolized by the head of gold of the great image, came to an ignoble end." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 44, 45, 47, 48.

"In the unexpected entry of the army of the Persian conqueror into the heart of the Babylonian capital by way of the channel of the river whose waters had been turned aside, and through the inner gates that in careless security had been left open and unprotected, the Jews had abundant evidence of the literal fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sudden overthrow of their oppressors." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 552. After dominating the world for only a short time, from 606 to 538 B.C., the Babylonian Empire came to its end.



#### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- *Isaiah chapters 13, 14, 47.*
- *Jeremiah chapters 50, 51.*
- *Daniel 5:1-31.*
- *Prophets and Kings, pp. 514, 535.*

## LESSON 8

Sabbath, February 20, 2021

# The Prophetic Dream, Continued



"I will ...  
open before him the two leaved gates;  
and the gates shall not be shut."

**Isaiah 45:1.**

### THE BREAST AND ARMS OF SILVER

#### SUNDAY

**1.** What was below the head of gold? What kingdom was represented by this part of the image?

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"The succeeding kingdom, Medo-Persia, answered to the breast and arms of silver of the great image. It was to be inferior to the preceding kingdom." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 51.

#### MONDAY

**2.** What other prophets foretold the destruction of Babylon and the rise of a new world power?

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□ □ *Daniel 2:32, middle part, 39, first part ...his breast and his arms of silver...<sup>39</sup>And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee...*

□ □ *Isaiah 13:17, 18 Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. <sup>18</sup>Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.*

□ □ *Jeremiah 51:11 Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the Lord*

*hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it;*

*because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple.*

"Instead of being a protector of men, Babylon became a proud and cruel oppressor. The words of Inspiration picturing the cruelty and greed of rulers in Israel reveal the secret of Babylon's fall and of the fall of many another kingdom since the world began ...." –Education, p. 176.

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## FREEDOM TO RETURN GRANTED TO THE EXILES


### TUESDAY

#### **3. What did the Lord call the conqueror of the Babylonian world empire?**

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 *Isaiah 44:28; 45:1 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. <sup>45:1</sup> Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;*

"More than a century before the birth of Cyrus, Inspiration had mentioned him by name, and had caused a record to be made of the actual work he should do in taking the city of Babylon unawares, and in preparing the way for the release of the children of the captivity. Through Isaiah the word had been spoken:


"Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; . . . to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.' Isaiah 45:1-3." –Prophets and Kings, p. 551.

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### WEDNESDAY

#### **4. When did Cyrus give the Jews permission to return to their land? Did all the captives take advantage of this opportunity?**

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 *Jeremiah 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.*

📖 *Ezra 1:1-4; 2:1, 64* 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, <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>2:1</sup>Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; <sup>64</sup>The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.

"As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; as he read the message addressed to him by the Ruler of the universe,... his heart was profoundly moved,' and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. Isaiah 45:5, 6, 4, 13. He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah." –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 557, 558. This command was given in 736 B.C.

"These, however, in comparison with the hundreds of thousands scattered through the provinces of Medo-Persia, were but a mere remnant. The great majority of the Israelites had chosen to remain in the land of their exile, rather than undergo the hardships of the return journey and the reestablishment of their desolated cities and homes." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 598.

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## DISCERNMENT OF WHAT IS HELP AND WHAT IS NOT

### THURSDAY

**5.** Who offered their help to the weak people of God in rebuilding the city and temple? Was this seemingly well-meant offer accepted?

📖 *Ezra 4:1-3* Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; <sup>2</sup> Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which

brought us up hither. <sup>3</sup>But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

“Only a remnant had chosen to return from Babylon; and now, as they undertake a work seemingly beyond the strength, their nearest neighbors come with an offer of help. The Samaritans refer to their worship of the true God, and express a desire to share the privileges and blessings connected with the temple service.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 568.

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## FRIDAY

**6. Why could the leaders of the people not accept this offer? How was the true character of these pretenders revealed?**

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**[L] Deuteronomy 14:2** For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.

**[L] Ezra 4:4, 5** Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, <sup>5</sup>And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

“But had the Jewish leaders accepted this offer of assistance, they would have opened a door for the entrance of idolatry. They discerned the insincerity of the Samaritans. They realized that help gained through an alliance with these men would be as nothing in comparison with the blessing they might expect to receive by following the plain commands of Jehovah....

“... Those who had recently rededicated themselves to the Lord at the altar set up before the ruins of His temple, realized that the line of demarcation between His people, and the world is ever to be kept unmistakably distinct. They refused to enter into alliance with those who, though familiar with the requirements of God’s law, would not yield to its



claims.... Never can we afford to compromise principle by entering to alliance with those who do not fear Him....

"By false reports they aroused suspicion in minds easily led to suspect."  
—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 568, 570, 571.

## SABBATH

### 7. What warning of inspiration is appropriate for us today in regard the lines of demarcation?

📖 **1 Corinthians 10:11** Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

📖 **2 Corinthians 6:14** Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

"It is not the open and avowed enemies of the cause of God that are most to be feared. Those who, like the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, come with smooth words and fair speeches, apparently seeking for friendly alliance with God's children, have greater power to deceive. Against such every soul should be on the alert, lest some carefully concealed and masterly snare take him unaware." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 570, 571.

"The Lord's injunction, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers' (2 Corinthians 6:14), refers not only to the marriage of Christians with the ungodly, but to all alliances in which the parties are brought into intimate association, and in which there is need of harmony in spirit and action. Exodus 34:12-14." —*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 121.

## FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.
- *The Signs of the Times*, June 2, 1881, found in the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1001.



## LESSON 9

Sabbath, February 27, 2021

# The Jewish People in the Medo-Persian Empire




"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." **Ezra 6:14.**


### OPPOSITION

#### SUNDAY

**1. What did the people who had returned begin to do with great zeal? What happened to the temple construction work because of the difficulties caused by their enemies?**

 **Ezra 3:8, 10, 11** Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the

Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. <sup>10</sup>And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. <sup>11</sup>And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the.

 **Haggai 1:1, 2** In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came

the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,

<sup>2</sup>Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.

"The opposition of their enemies was strong and determined, and gradually the builders lost heart. Some could not forget the scene at the laying of the cornerstone, when many had given expression to their lack of confidence in the enterprise. And as the Samaritans grew more bold, many of the Jews questioned whether, after all, the time had come to rebuild. The feeling soon became widespread. Many of the workmen, discouraged and disheartened, returned to their homes to take up the ordinary pursuits of life." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 572.

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## ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE LORD

### MONDAY

**2. Whom did the Lord raise up in this crisis? What message did the Lord issue through them?**

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📖 **Ezra 5:1** Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them.

📖 **Haggai 1:3-11** Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, <sup>4</sup>Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? <sup>5</sup>Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts;

Consider your ways. <sup>6</sup>Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. <sup>7</sup>Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. <sup>8</sup>Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. <sup>9</sup>Ye looked for much, and, lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. <sup>10</sup>Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. <sup>11</sup>And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

"But even this dark hour was not without hope for those whose trust was in God. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah were raised up to meet the crisis. In stirring testimonies these appointed messengers revealed to the people the cause of their troubles. The lack of temporal prosperity was the result of a neglect to put God's interests first, the prophets declared. Had the Israelites honored God, had they shown Him due respect and courtesy, by making the building of His house their first work, they would have invited His presence and blessing....

"For over a year the temple was neglected and well-nigh forsaken. The people dwelt in their homes and strove to attain temporal prosperity, but their situation was deplorable. Work as they might they did not prosper....

"The desire to escape poverty has led you to neglect the temple, but this neglect has brought upon you that which you feared. 'Ye have sown much, and bring in little;...' "—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 573, 574.


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## SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT

### TUESDAY

### **3.** Did this message have results? When was the prophecy of Haggai fulfilled?

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 *Haggai 1:12-14; 2:6-9* Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord. <sup>14</sup>And the Lord


*stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, <sup>2:6-9</sup>For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; <sup>7</sup>And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. <sup>8</sup>The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. <sup>9</sup>The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.*

"For centuries the Jews had vainly endeavored to show wherein the promise of God given by Haggai had been fulfilled; yet pride and unbelief blinded their minds to the true meaning of the prophet's words. The second temple was not honored with the cloud of Jehovah's glory, but with the living presence of One in whom dwelt the fullness of the God-

head bodily—who was God Himself manifest in the flesh. The ‘Desire of all nations’ had indeed come to His temple when the Man of Nazareth taught and healed in the sacred courts. In the presence of Christ, and in this only, did the second temple exceed the first in glory.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 24.

### WEDNESDAY

## **4. By whom and when was the second decree given to continue the rebuilding of the temple?**

 **Ezra 6:1-12** Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. <sup>2</sup>And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: <sup>3</sup>In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; <sup>4</sup>With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: <sup>5</sup>And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God. <sup>6</sup>Now therefore,

Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shetharboznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: <sup>7</sup>Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. <sup>8</sup>Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. <sup>9</sup>And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: <sup>10</sup>That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. <sup>11</sup>Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. <sup>12</sup>And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.

“The king further decreed that severe penalties be meted out to those who should in any wise alter the decree.... Thus the Lord prepared the way for the completion of the temple.

"For months before this decree was made, the Israelites had kept on working by faith, the prophets of God still helping them by means of timely messages, through which the divine purpose for Israel was kept before the workers. Two months after Haggai's last recorded message was delivered, Zechariah had a series of visions regarding the work of God in the earth. These messages, given in the form of parables and symbols, came at a time of great uncertainty and anxiety, and were of peculiar significance to the men who were advancing in the name of the God of Israel. It seemed to the leaders as if the permission granted the Jews to rebuild was about to be withdrawn; the future appeared very dark. God saw that His people were in need of being sustained and cheered by a revelation of His infinite compassion and love." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 579, 580.

It was around the year B.C. 519 that Darius gave the decree that the Jews should continue building the temple. See Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 208.

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## ANOTHER TEST AND ITS RESULTS

### THURSDAY

**5. What challenge did the Lord send through the prophet to His people who still remained in Babylon? What happened to those who were still there for convenience' sake in spite of the divine call and repeated royal decree?**

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**[L] Zechariah 2:7** Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.

**[L] Esther 3:8-11** And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. <sup>9</sup>If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. <sup>10</sup>And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. <sup>11</sup>And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

"Meanwhile conditions in the Medo-Persian realm were rapidly changing. Darius Hystaspes, under whose reign the Jews had been shown marked favor, was succeeded by Xerxes the Great. It was during his reign that those of the Jews who had failed of heeding the message to flee, were called upon to face a terrible crisis. Having refused to take ad-

vantage of the way of escape God had provided, now they were brought face to face with death....

"The Lord foresaw the troublous times that were to follow during the reign of Xerxes—the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther—and He not only wrought a change of feelings in the hearts of men in authority, but also inspired Zechariah to plead with the exiles to return." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 600, 598, 599.

## FRIDAY

### **6. Who issued the third and last decree? When? What written document did this ruler give to Ezra the priest?**

**Ezra 6:14; 7:7, 8, 11-26** And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. <sup>7:7</sup>And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. <sup>8</sup>And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. <sup>11</sup>Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel. <sup>12</sup>Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. <sup>13</sup>I make a decree, that all they of the people of Isra-

el, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. <sup>14</sup>Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand; <sup>15</sup>And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, <sup>16</sup>And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem: <sup>17</sup>That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem. <sup>18</sup>And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. <sup>19</sup>The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. <sup>20</sup>And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house. <sup>21</sup>And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of



the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, <sup>22</sup>Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. <sup>23</sup>Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? <sup>24</sup>Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of

God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them. <sup>25</sup>And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not. <sup>26</sup>And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.

"About seventy years after the return of the first company of exiles under Zerubbabel and Joshua, Artaxerxes Longimanus came to the throne of Medo-Persia. The name of this king is connected with sacred history by a series of remarkable providences. It was during his reign that Ezra and Nehemiah lived and labored. He is the one who in 457 B.C. issued the third and final decree for the restoration of Jerusalem. His reign saw the return of a company of Jews under Ezra, the completion of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah and his associates, the reorganization of the temple services, and the great religious reforms instituted by Ezra and Nehemiah. During his long rule he often showed favor to God's people, and in his trusted and well-beloved Jewish friends, Ezra and Nehemiah, he recognized men of God's appointment, raised up for a special work." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 607.

## DECLINE OF THE SECOND EMPIRE

### SABBATH

## 7. What led to the fall of the Medo-Persian Empire?


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 *Esther 1:1-9* Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:) <sup>2</sup>That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace, <sup>3</sup>In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinc-



es, being before him: <sup>4</sup>When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days. <sup>5</sup>And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace; <sup>6</sup>Where were white, green, and blue, hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver,

upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble. <sup>7</sup> And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. <sup>8</sup>And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure. <sup>9</sup>Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.

"Had the king maintained his royal dignity by practicing habits of temperance, he would never have made this command. But his mind was affected by the wine that he had used so freely, and he was not prepared to act wisely.... Occasions of indulgence such as are pictured in the first chapter of Esther, do not glorify God....

"Through the experience that brought Esther to the Medo-Persian throne, God was working for the accomplishment of His purposes for His people. That which was done under the influence of much wine worked out for good to Israel." —(MS 39, 1910) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1139. This world empire was in power from 538 to 331 B.C.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- Zechariah chapter. 4.
- Haggai chapters 1, 2.
- Prophets and Kings, pp. 593-617.



## MISSIONARY REPORT FROM VENEZUELA

To be read on Sabbath, February 27, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering  
will be gathered on Sabbath, March 6, 2021

Dear brethren, people of God, and pilgrims all over the world, we wish you the richest blessings and with you cry, "Maranatha!" Christ is coming, and we long for the day when we will be together and all barriers will be removed.

Venezuela—officially Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela—located in the northern part of South America, consists of a continental area and a large number of small islands and islets in the Caribbean Sea. The capital city is Caracas. The continental territory is bordered on the north by the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, on the west by Colombia, on the South by Brazil, and on the east by Guyana.

Venezuela's population is 32,778,230. According to a 2017 survey (GIS XXI), 88 percent of the population is Christian, mainly Catholic (71 percent), and 17 percent is Protestant. Venezuelans who claim no religion are 4 percent (2 percent atheists and 2 percent agnostic or nothing). About 8 percent of the population follows some other religion (1 percent subscribe to spiritualism).

The work in Venezuela began on May 22, 1947, when Sister Rita Camacho de Reina visited the city of San Cristóbal, in the state of Táchira, and the home of a woman who professed the evangelical faith. The woman's husband was the minister of his church, and he did not view Adventists favorably. Nevertheless, the lady kept the books that she bought from Sister Rita, the canvasser, and informed her about an Adventist lady named Sister Irene Chacón.

Sister Rita did not hesitate to visit Sister Irene, and she was very well received there. Later she would say, "This home was an oasis for me." She was there only a few minutes when she received a phone call from the son of another lady. He told her that his father had seen the books and was so angry that he threatened to throw them out in the street if his son did not get rid of them immediately. It was a tense moment. But soon the Lord opened a door, because Sister Irene offered gently to accompany Sister Rita to get the books and bring them home. They prayed and set out to find the books. At dusk they held the first family service in that home.

In the days that followed, Sister Rita met other Adventist believers. On Sabbath they went to church, where Sister Rita was invited to present the service and spoke about the earnestness that God's people must have toward their food while waiting for the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sister Rita related: "Everyone liked what I said, because they recognized that they were careless on this point, and some even said to me: 'Sister, we need a revival.' This first meeting was very encouraging to me."

A short time later, on September 11, 1947, Elder José del Carmen León, leader of the Colombian Union, came to Venezuela, and he rejoiced to find a group of 14

people who were very excited and eager to be baptized. Under his direction, the following day, the Venezuelan Field was organized. After that, many brothers and sisters joined to spread Heaven's message.

God's blessings accompanied these heralds of the gospel, and their commitment was rewarded by the winning of souls; more than a thousand members were added to the Venezuelan Union. However, now the crisis that the country is currently going through has resulted in poverty, hunger, and the exodus of millions of Venezuelans. Although hundreds of members and sympathizers have also emigrated and membership has dropped considerably, God's work is not stopping. According to the most recent report, the Venezuelan Union has 781 members, 320 interested souls, and 459 children.

The Lord's work in Venezuela is no stranger to the ravages of this crisis. Sadly, many of our church buildings have deteriorated so much in the last few years that they are uninhabitable. One of the most serious cases is that of the mission church of Maracaibo, a city in northwestern Venezuela, where the plaster has broken off on some sides of the building and part of the atrium is not secure, because part of it has collapsed. Because of the poor financial state of the Union, it has not been able to send missionaries to this city, which is one of the most populous in Venezuela, with more than two million people. There may be many faithful souls there who have not heard the three angels' messages and will surely accept the divine invitation with joy. Furthermore, there are many members in Venezuela who have hearing disabilities and require extra attention and preparation.

There is also a church and mission in Catia la Mar, in the State of La Guaira, about thirty kilometers from Caracas; over time, the structure of the church and mission has been seriously damaged, and it is necessary for missionary personnel to be sent to work for the souls in that place, since the building is not habitable. The population of the city is approximately one hundred thousand, which is a very significant number of people who are open to evangelization.

On the other hand, in the city of Guasdualito in Apure State, there is another church in the same condition as the ones above. Furthermore, in the rainy season, the building is flooded, so it needs to be cleaned out; the walls, roof, windows, and doors need to be repaired; and the property needs to be made secure. That city has a population of approximately one hundred and thirty thousand people.

The crisis that this country is going through has made it very difficult for us to take care of the missions and address deteriorating conditions with other properties, for which reason we are unable to transfer personnel to these places. However, just as it seems that the light is about to be extinguished, interested souls have arisen. Therefore, we ask you to help us to uplift the banner of the International Missionary Society, which is being torn down in certain areas of the country. Please help us in the name of the Lord so that the light will continue to shine in these places. We wish and pray that the Eternal will multiply the contributions seventy times seven that you make for the advancement of the work in Venezuela!

*—The brethren in Christ of the Venezuelan Union*

Special Sabbath School Offering for  
**Venezuela**  
*Let your offering be an expression of love and gratitude!*

## LESSON 10

**Sabbath, March 6, 2021**

# Subsequent Empires



"... After ... a third kingdom of brass,  
which shall bear rule over all the earth.  
And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron."

**Daniel 2:39, 40.**

## THE THIRD EMPIRE

### SUNDAY

**1. What empire followed that of Medo-Persia? How was the prophecy fulfilled?**

**[L]** *Daniel 2:32, last part, 39, second part ... his belly and his thighs of brass, <sup>39</sup>...and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*

"Few and brief are the inspired words which involved in their fulfillment a succession in world rulership. In the ever-changing political kaleidoscope, Grecia came into the field of vision, to be for a time the all-absorbing object of attention, as the third of what are called the universal empires of the earth.

"After the battle which decided the fate of the empire, Darius endeavored to rally the shattered remnants of his army, and make a stand for his kingdom and his rights. But he could not gather out of all the host of his recently so numerous and well-appointed army a force with which he deemed it prudent to hazard another engagement with the victorious Grecians. Alexander pursued him on the wings of the wind. Time after time Darius barely eluded the grasp of his swiftly following foe." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 52.


## MONDAY

### **2. What is reported about the triumphal procession of Alexander the Great? What was the cause of his premature death? What were the consequences for the kingdom?**

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 **Proverbs 31:4, 5; 16:32** It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: <sup>5</sup>Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.<sup>16:32</sup> He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

"Alexander the Great, inheriting his father's newly expanded Greco-Macedonian kingdom, set out to extend Macedonian dominion and Greek culture eastward, and conquered the Persian Empire. The prophecy represents the kingdom of Greece as following Persia, because Greece never became united into a kingdom until the formation of the Macedonian Empire, which replaced Persia as the leading world power of that time (for parallel prophecies see on chs. 7:6; 8:5-8, 21, 22; 11:2-4). "The last reigning king of the Persian Empire was Darius III (Codomanus), who was defeated by Alexander at the battles of Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.), and Arbela, or Gaugamela (331 B.C.)." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 774.

"Alexander found it much easier to subdue kingdoms than to rule his own spirit. After conquering nations, this so-called great man fell through the indulgence of appetite—a victim of intemperance." —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 29.

"With contemptible arrogance, he claimed for himself divine honors. He gave up conquered cities, freely and unprovoked, to the mercy of his bloodthirsty and licentious soldiery. He often murdered his friends and favorites in his drunken frenzies. He encouraged such excessive drinking among his followers that on one occasion twenty of them died as the result of their carousal. At length, having sat through one long drinking spree, he was immediately invited to another, when, after drinking to each of the twenty guests present, he twice drank, says history, incredible as it may seem, the full Herculean cup containing six of our quarts. He was seized with a violent fever, of which he died eleven days later, June 13, 323 B.C., while yet he stood only at the threshold of mature life, in the thirty-second year of his age." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 53, 54.

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## THE FOURTH EMPIRE

### TUESDAY

#### **3.**What are we told about the fourth empire? How far did it extend?

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**[L] Daniel 2:33, first part, 40** His legs of iron, ... <sup>40</sup>And the fourth king-

“The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.”

“At the opening of the Christian Era, this empire took in the whole south of Europe, France, England, the greater part of the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the south of Germany, Hungary, Turkey, and Greece, not to speak of its possessions in Asia and Africa...”

“The empire of the Romans filled the world,...” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 54, 55.

dom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

**[L] Luke 2:1** And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

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## THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT IN WORLD HISTORY

### WEDNESDAY

#### **4.**What important event took place under the rule of the Roman Empire? Were the leaders of God's chosen people prepared for this event?

**[L] Luke 2:4-7** And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) <sup>5</sup>To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. <sup>6</sup>And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. <sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

**[L] John 1:5, 11** And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. <sup>11</sup>He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

"An angel visits the earth to see who are prepared to welcome Jesus. But he can discern no tokens of expectancy. He hears no voice of praise and triumph that the period of Messiah's coming is at hand. The angel hovers for a time over the chosen city and the temple where the divine presence has been manifested for ages; but even here is the same indifference." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 314.

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## GREAT JOY FOR THOSE WHO WERE WAITING

### THURSDAY

#### **5.** Why were the shepherds presented with these glad tidings?

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**[L] Luke 2:8, 9** *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

"There is no evidence that Christ is expected, and no preparation for the Prince of life. In amazement the celestial messenger is about to return to heaven with the shameful tidings, when he discovers a group of shepherds who are watching their flocks by night, and, as they gaze into the starry heavens, are contemplating the prophecy of a Messiah to come to earth, and longing for the advent of the world's Redeemer. Here is a company that is prepared to receive the heavenly message." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 314.

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### FRIDAY

#### **6.** What was the theme of the heavenly message?

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**[L] Luke 2:10, 11** *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

"And suddenly the angel of the Lord appears, declaring the good tidings of great joy. Celestial glory floods all the plain, an innumerable company of angels is revealed, and as if the joy were too great for one messenger to bring from heaven, a multitude of voices break forth in the anthem which all the nations of the saved shall one day sing: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' Luke 2:14." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 314.

## 7. Who else was watching for the fulfillment of the prophecy?

**📖 Luke 2:25-38** And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. <sup>26</sup>And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup>And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup>Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, <sup>29</sup>Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: <sup>30</sup>For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, <sup>31</sup>Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; <sup>32</sup>A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. <sup>33</sup>And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. <sup>34</sup>And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;

"In the land of the heathen also were those that looked for Him; they were wise men, rich and noble, the philosophers of the East. Students of nature, the Magi had seen God in His handiwork. From the Hebrew Scriptures they had learned of the Star to arise out of Jacob, and with eager desire they awaited His coming, who should be not only the 'Consolation of Israel,' but a 'Light to lighten the Gentiles,' and 'for salvation unto the ends of the earth.' Luke 2:25, 32; Acts 13:47. They were seekers for light, and light from the throne of God illumined the path for their feet." —The Great Controversy, p. 315.

and for a sign which shall be spoken against; <sup>35</sup>(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. <sup>36</sup>And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; <sup>37</sup>And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. <sup>38</sup>And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

**📖 Matthew 2:1, 2** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

**📖 Numbers 24:17** I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- Matthew 2:1-12. • Luke 2:1-38.
- The Desire of Ages, pp. 31-49.



## LESSON 11

Sabbath, March 13, 2021

# Fall of the Roman Empire



"... The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron....  
And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of  
potters' clay, and part of iron,  
the kingdom shall be divided...."

**Daniel 2:40, 41.**

## THE PRINCE OF PEACE AND THE ROMAN EMPIRE

### SUNDAY

**1. What beautiful promise was expressed by the angels to the shepherds when Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was born? What contrasting condition existed at the time?**

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**[L] Luke 2:13, 14** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, <sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

"'When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son.' Providence had directed the movements of nations, and the tide of human impulse and influence, until the world was ripe for the coming of the Deliverer. The nations were united under one government. One language was widely spoken, and was everywhere recognized as the language of literature. From all lands the Jews of the dispersion gathered to Jerusalem to the annual feasts. As these returned to the places of their sojourn, they could spread throughout the world the tidings of the Messiah's coming."  
—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32.

## MONDAY

### 2. What world power confirmed and carried out the death sentence pronounced against God's Son?

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 **Matthew 27:24-31** When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. <sup>25</sup> Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. <sup>26</sup> Then re-

leased he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. <sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. <sup>29</sup> And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! <sup>30</sup> And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.


"In the judgment hall of Pilate, the Roman governor, Christ stands bound as a prisoner. About Him are the guard of soldiers, and the hall is fast filling with spectators. Just outside the entrance are the judges of the Sanhedrin, priests, rulers, elders, and the mob. "After condemning Jesus, the council of the Sanhedrin had come to Pilate to have the sentence confirmed and executed." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 723.


## PILATE'S CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

### TUESDAY

### 3. What did Heaven do to try to protect Pilate from the terrible guilt he would take upon himself by condemning Jesus unjustly? How did Pilate's career and life end?

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 **Matthew 27:19** When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

 **Job 20:4-7** Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, <sup>5</sup> That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? <sup>6</sup> Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; <sup>7</sup> Yet he shall

perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?

📖 **2 Corinthians 4:7-11** But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. <sup>8</sup>We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>Persecuted,

but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup>Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. <sup>11</sup>For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

"If at the first Pilate had stood firm, refusing to condemn a man whom he found guiltless, he would have broken the fatal chain that was to bind him in remorse and guilt as long as he lived. Had he carried out his convictions of right, the Jews would not have presumed to dictate to him. Christ would have been put to death, but the guilt would not have rested upon Pilate. But Pilate had taken step after step in the violation of his conscience. He had excused himself from judging with justice and equity, and he now found himself almost helpless in the hands of the priests and rulers. His wavering and indecision proved his ruin....

"Pilate yielded to the demands of the mob. Rather than risk losing his position, he delivered Jesus up to be crucified. But in spite of his precautions, the very thing he dreaded afterward came upon him. His honors were stripped from him, he was cast down from his high office, and, stung by remorse and wounded pride, not long after the crucifixion he ended his own life. So all who compromise with sin will gain only sorrow and ruin. 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' Proverbs 14:12." –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 732, 738.

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## FATAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE

### WEDNESDAY

#### **4.**What happened to the Jews after they rejected the Prince of Peace?

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📖 **Luke 19:41-44** And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, <sup>42</sup>Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from

thine eyes. <sup>43</sup>For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, <sup>44</sup>And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

📖 **Matthew 22:4-7** Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and

my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. <sup>5</sup>But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: <sup>6</sup>And the remnant took his servants, and entreat-

ed them spitefully, and slew them. <sup>7</sup>But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

"Thus the Jewish people sealed their rejection of God's mercy. The result was foretold by Christ in the parable. The king 'sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.' The judgment pronounced came upon the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the nation." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 308, 309.


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## PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS

### THURSDAY

#### **5. From the time of Nero on, how did Rome treat the followers of Christ?**

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 **1 Corinthians 4:7-11** 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? <sup>8</sup>Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have

reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. <sup>9</sup> For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. <sup>10</sup> We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. <sup>11</sup> Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

"During Paul's imprisonment the converts to Christianity had become so numerous as to attract the attention and arouse the enmity of the authorities. The anger of the emperor was especially excited by the conversion of members of his own household, and he soon found a pretext to make the Christians the objects of his merciless cruelty." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 487.

"These persecutions, beginning under Nero about the time of the martyrdom of Paul, continued with greater or less fury for centuries. Christians were falsely accused of the most dreadful crimes and declared to be the cause of great calamities—famine, pestilence, and earthquake. As they became the objects of popular hatred and suspicion, inform-

ers stood ready, for the sake of gain, to betray the innocent. They were condemned as rebels against the empire, as foes of religion, and pests to society. Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in the amphitheaters. Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs. Their punishment was often made the chief entertainment at public fetes. Vast multitudes assembled to enjoy the sight and greeted their dying agonies with laughter and applause." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 40.

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## DIVISION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

### FRIDAY

**6.** How did prophecy portray the end of the Roman Empire? When was this iron monarchy divided?

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📖 *Daniel 2:33, 41* His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. <sup>41</sup>And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

"Here, then, is a division presented; and what have we in the symbol to indicate it? Nothing but the toes of the image. Unless they do, we are left utterly in the dark on the nature and extent of the division which the prophecy shows did exist. To suppose this would be to cast a serious imputation upon the prophecy itself. We are therefore held to the conclusion that the ten toes of the image denote the ten parts into which the Roman Empire was divided.

"This division was accomplished between A.D. 351 and 476. The era of this dissolution thus covered a hundred and twenty-five years, from about the middle of the fourth century to the last quarter of the fifth. No historians of whom we are aware, place the beginning of this work of the dismemberment of the Roman Empire earlier than A.D. 351, and there is general agreement in assigning its close in A.D. 476." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 57, 58.

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### SABBATH

**7.** What does history present about the division of the Roman Empire?

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📖 *Daniel 2:42, 43* And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. <sup>43</sup>And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"Earthly powers are shaken. We need not, and cannot, expect union among the nations of the earth. Our position in the image of Nebuchadnezzar is represented by the toes, in a divided state, and of a crumbling material, that will not hold together. Prophecy shows us that the great day of God is right upon us. It hasteth greatly." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 360.

"The ten nations which were most instrumental in breaking up the Roman Empire, and which at some time in their history held respectively portions of Roman territory as separate and independent kingdoms, may be enumerated (without respect to the time of their establishment) as follows: Huns, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 58.



### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- *The Desire of Ages*, p. 34.
- *Prophets and Kings*, p. 514.

"Of the second ruler of Rome, Numa Pompilius (B.C. 716-673) history tells us he built a temple for Janus.... This temple was to be open in times of war and shut in times of peace. Under Numa himself, the temple was always closed. After Numa, during the whole period of the Roman Republic, this occurred only two more times—the first time after the end of the first Punian war and then again at the beginning of the reign of Caesar Augustus, the first Caesar." –Dr. Starke, *Römische Geschichte (Roman History)*, p. 9.

## LESSON 12

Sabbath, March 20, 2021

# The Everlasting Kingdom



"How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation."

**Daniel 4:3.**

## A HOLY KINGDOM

### SUNDAY

**1. To what kingdom did Daniel point after showing the temporal nature of the earthly kingdoms? Whom did this stone represent?**

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**[L]** *Daniel 2:34, 44, 45* Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. <sup>44</sup>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. <sup>45</sup>Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

**[L]** *Isaiah 28:16* Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

"Exalted to the pinnacle of worldly honor, and acknowledged even by Inspiration as 'a king of kings' (Ezekiel 26:7), Nebuchadnezzar nevertheless at times had ascribed to the favor of Jehovah the glory of his kingdom and the splendor of his reign. Such had been the case after his dream of the

great image. His mind had been profoundly influenced by this vision and by the thought that the Babylonian Empire, universal though it was, was finally to fall, and other kingdoms were to bear sway, until at last all earthly powers were to be superseded by a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, which kingdom was never to be destroyed." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 514.

## MONDAY

### 2. To what event did this point? What strong deception will take place before this event?

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**[L]** *John 14:3* And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

**[L]** *Matthew 24:23-27* Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. <sup>24</sup>For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. <sup>25</sup>Behold, I have told you before. <sup>26</sup>Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. <sup>27</sup>For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

## TUESDAY

### 3. What alone will keep a person from accepting this strong delusion?

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**[L]** *John 5:39, first part* Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life:

**[L]** *2 Peter 3:14* Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.



"Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses?" –*The Great Controversy*, p. 625. "Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 216.

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## THE SAVIOUR'S COMING IN THE CLOUDS

### WEDNESDAY

**4. How will Christ's second coming occur? What request in the Lord's prayer will then be fulfilled? Who alone can become a citizen of that kingdom?**

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📖 *Revelation 1:7* Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see

him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

📖 *Matthew 6:10, first part* Thy kingdom come,

📖 *John 3:3, 5* Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. <sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

"Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man....

"The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 640-642.

"... The full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world. 'The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' is to be given to 'the people of the saints of the Most High.' Daniel 7:27. They

shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them 'from the foundation of the world.' Matthew 25:34. And Christ will take to Himself His great power and will reign." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 108.


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## THE KING'S REACTION

### THURSDAY

**5.** What impression did the interpretation of the dream make upon Nebuchadnezzar? What did he acknowledge?

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 **Daniel 2:46, 47** Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. <sup>47</sup> The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.

"Nebuchadnezzar felt that he could accept this interpretation as a divine revelation; for to Daniel had been revealed every detail of the dream. The solemn truths conveyed by the interpretation of this vision of the night made a deep impression on the sovereign's mind, and in humility and awe he 'fell upon his face, and worshipped.'...


"Nebuchadnezzar saw clearly the difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the most learned men of his kingdom." —(*The Youth's Instructor*, September 8, 1903) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 169

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### FRIDAY

**6.** What rewards did the king bestow on Daniel?

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 **Daniel 2:48** Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

"Daniel was a faithful statesman in the courts of Babylon; for he feared, loved, and trusted God; and in time of temptation and peril he was preserved by the power of God. We read that God gave Daniel wisdom, and endowed him with understanding." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 204, 205.

"When all his business transactions were subjected to the closest scrutiny, not one faulty item could be found. The record of his business life, incomplete though it is, contains lessons worthy of study. It reveals the fact that a businessman is not necessarily a scheming, policy man. He may be a man instructed of God at every step. Daniel, while prime minister of the kingdom of Babylon, was a prophet of God, receiving the light of heavenly inspiration. His life is an illustration of what every Christian businessman may be." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 248.

## SABBATH

### 7. Of whom did Daniel think even when he was honored?

 **Daniel 2:49** Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

"The case of Daniel was presented before me. Although he was a man of like passions with ourselves, the pen of inspiration presents him as a faultless character. His life is given us as a bright example of what man may become, even in this life, if he will make God his strength and wisely improve the opportunities and privileges within his reach. Daniel was an intellectual giant; yet he was continually seeking for greater knowledge, for higher attainments. Other young men had the same advantages; but they did not, like him, bend all their energies to seek wisdom—the knowledge of God as revealed in His word and in His works. Although Daniel was one of the world's great men, he was not proud nor self-sufficient. He felt the need of refreshing his soul with prayer, and each day found him in earnest supplication before God. He would not be deprived of this privilege even when a den of lions was opened to receive him if he continued to pray." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 569.



#### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- Matthew 25:34.
- John 18:36.
- Christ's Object Lessons, p. 350.

*"Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that the fact might be determined whether it would fulfill the purposes of the Watcher and the Holy One. Prophecy has traced the rise and progress of the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with the nations of less power, history has repeated itself. Each has had its period of test; each has failed, its glory faded, its power departed." —Prophets and Kings, p. 535.*

## LESSON 13

Sabbath, March 27, 2021

# A Fiery Test




*"Then ... answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men."*

**Acts 5:29.**

### THE BABYLONIAN KING'S IMAGE AND DECREE

#### SUNDAY

**1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar do at the pinnacle of his power? What motivated him to make this command?**

 **Daniel 3:1** *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.*

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"In time he ceased to honor God, and resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry....

"The wise men of the realm, taking advantage of this and of his return to idolatry, proposed that he make an image similar to the one seen in his dream, and set it up where all might behold the head of gold, which had been interpreted as representing his kingdom....


"Instead of reproducing the image as he had seen it, he would excel the original. His image should not deteriorate in value from the head to the feet, but should be entirely of gold—symbolic throughout of Babylon as an eternal, indestructible, all-powerful kingdom, which should break in pieces all other kingdoms and stand forever." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 504.

## MONDAY

**2. Who were called to the dedication of the image? When all were assembled, what command did the king's herald issue?**

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 **Daniel 3:2-6** Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. <sup>3</sup>Then the princes, the gover-

nors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.<sup>4</sup>Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup>That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: <sup>6</sup>And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

"And it is not surprising that in a land where idol worship was of universal prevalence, the beautiful and priceless image in the plain of Dura, representing the glory of Babylon and its magnificence and power, should be consecrated as an object of worship. This was accordingly provided for, and a decree went forth that on the day of the dedication all should show their supreme loyalty to the Babylonian power by bowing before the image." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 505, 506.


## THREE YOUNG MAN STAND FOR GOD

### TUESDAY

**3. What did the representatives of the conquered nations do under this incredible pressure? But who could not worship this image?**

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 **Daniel 3:7-12** Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. <sup>8</sup>Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. <sup>9</sup>They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king,

live for ever. <sup>10</sup>Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: <sup>11</sup>And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst

of a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup>There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

"To Nebuchadnezzar, flushed with triumph, was brought the word that among his subjects there were some who dared disobey his mandate. Certain of the wise men, jealous of the honors that had been bestowed upon the faithful companions of Daniel, now reported to the king their flagrant violation of his wishes." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 506, 507.


"The appointed day has come, and the vast company is assembled, when word is brought to the king that the three Hebrews whom he had set over the province of Babylon, had refused to worship the image. These are Daniel's three companions, who had been called by the king, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Full of rage, the monarch calls them before him, and pointing to the angry furnace, tells them the punishment that will be theirs if they refuse obedience to his will." —*The Review and Herald*, February 1, 1881.

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## WEDNESDAY

### 4. What further opportunity did the king offer the young men?

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 **Daniel 3:13-15, first part** Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they

brought these men before the king. <sup>14</sup>Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? <sup>15</sup>Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made;

"He would give them another trial. If only they would signify their willingness to unite with the multitude in worshiping the image, all would be well with them;..." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 507.

"The forbearance of the king is shown in his granting Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego another trial after their first failure to comply with his requirements. Doubtless the matter was thoroughly understood. They could not plead ignorance. They knew what the king wanted, and their failure to fulfill his command was an intentional and deliberate refusal to obey him. With most kings this would have been enough to seal


their fate. But no, said Nebuchadnezzar, I will overlook this offense if upon a second trial they comply with the law. But they informed the king that he need not trouble himself to repeat the test." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 73.

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#### THURSDAY

### **5. What threat did the king say he would carry out if they refused his command?**

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 *Daniel 3:15, second part* ...but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

"If only they would signify their willingness to unite with the multitude in worshipping the image, all would be well with them; 'but if ye worship not,' he added, 'ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.' Then with his hand stretched upward in defiance, he demanded, 'Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?'" –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 507.


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#### HOLY ADHERENCE TO PRINCIPLES

#### FRIDAY

### **6. In whom did the three young men trust?**


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 *Daniel 3:16, 17* Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup>If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

"We have marked illustrations of the sustaining power of firm, religious principle. Even the fear of death could not make the fainting David drink of the water of Bethlehem, to obtain which, valiant men had risked their lives. The gaping lions' den could not keep Daniel from his daily prayers, nor could the fiery furnace induce Shadrach and his companions to fall down before the idol which Nebuchadnezzar set up. Young men who have firm principles will eschew pleasure, defy pain, and brave even the lions' den and the heated fiery furnace rather than be found untrue to God. Mark the character of Joseph. Virtue was severely tested, but its triumph was complete. At every point the noble youth endured the test. The same lofty, unbending principle appeared at every trial. The Lord was with him, and His word was law. Such firmness and untarnished principle shines brightest in contrast with the feebleness and inefficiency of the youth of this age." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 43.

## SABBATH

### **7. What possibility did they nevertheless have to consider? What decisive stand did they take despite the terrible threat?**

 **Daniel 3:18** But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

"From the history of their fathers they had learned that disobedience to God results in dishonor, disaster, and death;..." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 508.

"Their answer was both honest and decisive. 'We are not careful,' said they, 'to answer thee in this matter.' That is, you need not grant us the favor of another trial; our minds are made up. We can answer as well now as at any future time; and our answer is, We will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Our God can deliver if He so desires; but if not, we shall not complain. We know His will, and we shall render Him unconditional obedience." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 73.



### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- Messages to Young People, pp. 27, 28.

"In the history of Joseph, Daniel, and his fellows we see how the golden chain of truth may bind the youth to the throne of God. They could not be tempted to turn aside from their course of integrity. They valued the favor of God far above the favor and praise of princes, and God loved them, and spread His shield over them. Because of their faithful integrity, because of their determination to honor God above every human power, the Lord signally honored them before men. They were honored by the Lord God of hosts, whose power is over all the works of His hand in heaven above and the earth beneath. These youth were not ashamed to display their true colors. Even in the court of the king, in their words, their habits, their practices, they confessed their faith in the Lord God of heaven. They refused to bow to any earthly mandate that detracted from the honor of God. They had strength from heaven to confess their allegiance to God." —*My Life Today*, p. 120.



## LESSON 14

Sabbath, April 3, 2021

# A Wonderful Revelation of Divine Power



*"... Through faith ... quenched  
the violence of fire."  
Hebrews 11:33, 34.*

### SUNDAY

**1. What did the enraged monarch command? Who was ordered to cast the servants of the Almighty into the furnace?**

**[L] Daniel 3:19-21** *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach,*

*Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. <sup>20</sup>And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. <sup>21</sup>Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*

"The king's wrath knew no bounds. 'Full of fury,' 'the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,' representatives of a despised and captive race. Directing that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than its wont, he commanded the mighty men of his army to bind the worshipers of Israel's God, preparatory to summary execution." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 508.

"Daniel and his fellow-companions ... and many others were witnesses for God in their captivity. The Lord scattered them among the kingdoms of the earth that their light might shine brightly amid the black dark-

ness of heathenism and idolatry. To Daniel God revealed the light of His purposes, which had been hidden for many generations. He chose that Daniel should see in vision the light of His truth, and reflect this light on the proud kingdom of Babylon. On the despot king was permitted to flash light from the throne of God. Nebuchadnezzar was shown that the God of heaven was ruler over all the monarchs and kings of earth. His name was to go forth as the God over all gods. God desired Nebuchadnezzar to understand that the rulers of earthly kingdoms had a ruler in the heavens. God's faithfulness in rescuing the three captives from the flames and vindicating their course of action showed His wonderful power." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1169.

## MONDAY


**2. What happened to the men who carried out this command? What suddenly caused Nebuchadnezzar's face to turn pale?**

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 **Daniel 3:22-25, first part** Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup>And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. <sup>24</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. <sup>25</sup>He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt;

"But the Lord did not forget His own. As His witnesses were cast into the furnace, the Saviour revealed Himself to them in person, and together they walked in the midst of the fire. In the presence of the Lord of heat and cold, the flames lost their power to consume.

"From his royal seat the king looked on, expecting to see the men who had defied him utterly destroyed. But his feelings of triumph suddenly changed. The nobles standing near saw his face grow pale as he started from the throne and looked intently into the glowing flames. In alarm the king, turning to his lords, asked, 'Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?'..." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 508, 509.

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## PROTECTED AND RESCUED

### TUESDAY


#### **3. What did the king say about the fourth Man in the fire? What did the monarch do?**

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 *Daniel 3:25, last part, 26 ...and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. <sup>26</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.*

"How did that heathen king know what the Son of God was like? The Hebrew captives filling positions of trust in Babylon had in life and character represented before him the truth. When asked for a reason of their faith, they had given it without hesitation. Plainly and simply they had presented the principles of righteousness, thus teaching those around them of the God whom they worshiped. They had told of Christ, the Redeemer to come; and in the form of the fourth in the midst of the fire the king recognized the Son of God." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 509.

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### WEDNESDAY

#### **4. What did the government officials discover about the young men? What impression did this make on the ruler? What confession did he make?**

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 *Daniel 3:27, 28 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the*

*king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. <sup>28</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.*

"Forgotten was the great golden image, set up with such pomp. In the presence of the living God, men feared and trembled." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 510.

"John was cast into a caldron of boiling oil; but the Lord preserved the life of His faithful servant, even as He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 570.

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## RECOGNITION OF THE TRUE GOD

### THURSDAY

**5. What decree did Nebuchadnezzar issue to the then-known world? How did the Lord reward His servants' steadfastness?**

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 **Daniel 3:29, 30** *Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. <sup>30</sup>Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.*

"It was right for the king to make public confession, and to seek to exalt the God of heaven above all other gods; but in endeavoring to force his subjects to make a similar confession of faith and to show similar reverence, Nebuchadnezzar was exceeding his right as a temporal sovereign. He had no more right, either civil or moral, to threaten men with death for not worshipping God, than he had to make the decree consigning to the flames all who refused to worship the golden image. God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 510, 511.


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### FRIDAY

**6. According to the testimony of the Spirit of prophecy, what happened because of these young men's faithfulness? What thought should be uppermost in our minds?**

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 **1 Samuel 14:6, last part ...for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.**

"The tidings of their wonderful deliverance were carried to many countries by the representatives of the different nations that had been invited by Nebuchadnezzar to the dedication. Through the faithfulness of His children, God was glorified in all the earth." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 512. "Great light shone forth from Daniel and his companions. Glorious things were spoken of Zion, the city of the Lord. Thus the Lord designs that spiritual light shall shine from His faithful watchmen in these last days. If the saints in the Old Testament bore such a decided testimony of loyalty, how

should God's people today, having the accumulated light of centuries, shine forth, when the prophecies of the Old Testament shed their veiled glory into the future." –(Letter 32, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1169.

## AN EXAMPLE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

### SABBATH


**7.** In the last days, what similar circumstances will confront God's people?

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 **Revelation 13:14, 15** And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. <sup>15</sup>And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"Important are the lessons to be learned from the experience of the Hebrew youth on the plain of Dura. In this our day, many of God's servants, though innocent of wrong doing, will be given over to suffer humiliation and abuse at the hands of those who, inspired by Satan, are filled with envy and religious bigotry. Especially will the wrath of men be aroused against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and at last a universal decree will denounce these as deserving of death....

"As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right." –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 512, 513.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 503-513.
- *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 1169, 1170.

## LESSON 15

Sabbath, April 10, 2021

# Nebuchadnezzar's Pride and Humiliation



"... Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

**Luke 14:11.**

### ANOTHER PROPHETIC DREAM

#### SUNDAY

**1. What explanation did King Nebuchadnezzar give for writing his testimony? What had he experienced?**

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**[L] Daniel 4:1-5** *Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the ear-*

*th; Peace be multiplied unto you.<sup>2</sup> I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. <sup>3</sup>How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation. <sup>4</sup>I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: <sup>5</sup>I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.*

"Nebuchadnezzar's noble conception of God's purpose concerning the nations was lost sight of later in his experience; yet when his proud spirit was humbled before the multitude on the plain of Dura, he once more had acknowledged that God's kingdom is 'an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation...."

"It is not surprising that the successful monarch, so ambitious and so proud-spirited, should be tempted to turn aside from the path of humility, which alone leads to true greatness...."


"In mercy God gave the king another dream, to warn him of his peril, and of the snare that had been laid for his ruin." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 514, 515.

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## MONDAY

### **2. Who were called to explain the dream? Who alone could explain it?**

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 *Daniel 4:6-9* Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup>Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers:

*and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof. <sup>8</sup>But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my God, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying, <sup>9</sup>O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.*

"Greatly troubled by the dream, which was evidently a prediction of adversity, the king repeated it to 'the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers;' but although the dream was very explicit, none of the wise men could interpret it.

"Once more in this idolatrous nation, testimony was to be borne to the fact that only those who love and fear God can understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The king in his perplexity sent for his servant Daniel, a man esteemed for his integrity and constancy and for his unrivaled wisdom." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 516.


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## A PERSONAL APPLICATION

### TUESDAY

### **3. What did the Lord reveal to the king in this second dream? What impression did the dream told to him by Nebuchadnezzar make upon Daniel?**

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 *Daniel 4:10-19* Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst

*of the earth, and the height thereof was great. <sup>11</sup>The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth:<sup>12</sup> The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.<sup>13</sup> I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;<sup>14</sup>*

He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth:<sup>16</sup> Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. <sup>17</sup>This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever

he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. <sup>18</sup>This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee. <sup>19</sup>Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.


"A still greater humiliation than that narrated in the second chapter was brought upon the magicians. At that time they boasted that if they only knew the dream they could make known the interpretation. Upon this occasion Nebuchadnezzar distinctly remembered the dream and related it to them, but his magicians ignominiously failed him again. They could not make known the interpretation, and once again the king turned to the prophet of God." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 81.

"To Daniel the meaning of the dream was plain, and its significance startled him....

"The prophet realized that upon him God had laid the solemn duty of revealing to Nebuchadnezzar the judgment that was about to fall upon him because of his pride and arrogance.... And although its dreadful import had made him hesitate in dumb amazement, yet he must state the truth, whatever the consequences to himself." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 517.

## WEDNESDAY

### 4. How did Daniel explain the dream's meaning? What urgent counsel did he extend to the king?

 **Daniel 4:20-27** The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; <sup>21</sup>Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: <sup>22</sup>It is thou, O king, that art grown



and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. <sup>23</sup>And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; <sup>24</sup>This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: <sup>25</sup>That they shall drive thee from men,

and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. <sup>26</sup>And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. <sup>27</sup>Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.


"Nebuchadnezzar had given a minute statement of his dream, and as soon as Daniel informed him that the dream applied to him, it was evident that the king had pronounced his own sentence. The interpretation which follows is so plain that it needs no explanation. The threatened judgments were conditional. They were to teach the king 'that the Heavens do rule,' the word 'heavens' here being put for God, the ruler of the heavens. Hence Daniel took occasion to give the king counsel in view of the threatened judgement. But he did not denounce him in a harsh and censorious spirit. Kindness and persuasion were the weapons he chose to wield: 'Let my counsel be acceptable unto thee.'" —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 83, 84.

"Having faithfully interpreted the dream, Daniel urged the proud monarch to repent and turn to God, that by right doing he might avert the threatened calamity." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 518.

## A FORGOTTEN WARNING

### THURSDAY

**5. Did the monarch heed the advice? Not long afterward, what did he exclaim in his pride?**

 *Daniel 4:28-30; 5:19, 20* All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

zar. <sup>29</sup>At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. <sup>30</sup>The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? <sup>5:19, 20</sup>And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he

would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. <sup>20</sup>But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

"For a time the impression of the warning and the counsel of the prophet was strong upon Nebuchadnezzar; but the heart that is not transformed by the grace of God soon loses the impressions of the Holy Spirit. Self-indulgence and ambition had not yet been eradicated from the king's heart, and later on these traits reappeared. Notwithstanding the instruction so graciously given him, and the warnings of past experience, Nebuchadnezzar again allowed himself to be controlled by a spirit of jealousy against the kingdoms that were to follow. His rule, which heretofore had been to a great degree just and merciful, became oppressive. Hardening his heart, he used his God-given talents for self-glorification, exalting himself above the God who had given him life and power.

"For months the judgment of God lingered. But instead of being led to repentance by this forbearance, the king indulged his pride until he lost confidence in the interpretation of the dream, and jested at his former fears." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 519.

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## A LESSON FOR ALL TIME

### FRIDAY

**6. What happened even before the king had finished his boasting? How exactly were the prophetic words fulfilled?**

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**[L] Daniel 4:31-33** While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is

spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. <sup>32</sup>And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. <sup>33</sup>The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

"Man may have brilliant intellect; he may be rich in the possession of natural endowments. But these are all given him by God, his Maker. God can remove the gift of reason, and in a moment man will become as Nebuchadnezzar, de-

graded to the level of the beasts of the field. This God does because man acts as though his wisdom and power had been gotten independently of Him.” –*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 297.

“The time had come for Nebuchadnezzar’s humiliation. A voice from heaven again announced the threatened judgement, and divine providence proceeded immediately to execute it. His reason departed. No longer the pomp and glory of his great city charmed him. God with a touch of His finger took away his capability to appreciate and enjoy it. He forsook the dwellings of men, and sought a home and companionship among the beasts of the field.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 85.

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## A LESSON FOR ALL TIME

### SABBATH

## 7. When could the Lord help the king again? What did Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge after his humiliation?

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 **Daniel 4:34-37** And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his king-

dom is from generation to generation: <sup>35</sup>And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? <sup>36</sup>At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. <sup>37</sup>Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

“For seven years Nebuchadnezzar was an astonishment to all his subjects; for seven years he was humbled before all the world. Then his reason was restored and looking up in humility to the God of heaven, he recognized the divine hand in his chastisement....

“God’s purpose that the greatest kingdom in the world should show forth His praise, was now fulfilled. This public proclamation, in which Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the mercy and goodness and authority of God, was the last act of his life recorded in sacred history.” –*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 520, 521.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1170.
- *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 129, 130.
- *Prophets and Kings*, p. 514.

## LESSON 16

Sabbath, April 17, 2021

# Belshazzar's Sacrilege



"... If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin ... to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him...."

**Matthew 24:48-50.**

### FORGETTING ONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

#### SUNDAY

**1. What did the last king of Babylon do? What do wine and strong drink cause?**

**[L] Daniel 5:1** *Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.*

**[L] Proverbs 20:1** *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*

"To us the warning is given, 'All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' Mark the influence of their extremes and fanaticism in the service of the great master worker, Satan. As soon as the wicked one had the people under his control, there were exhibitions of a satanic character. The people ate and drank without a thought of God and His mercy, without a thought of the necessity of resisting the devil, who was leading them on to the most shameful deeds. The same spirit was manifested as at the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar. There was glee and dancing, hilarity and singing, carried to an infatuation that beguiled the senses; then the indulgence in inordinate, lustful affections—all this mingled in that disgraceful scene. God had been dishonored; His people had become a


shame in the sight of the heathen. Judgments were about to fall on that infatuated, besotted multitude. Yet God in His mercy gave them opportunity to forsake their sins." –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 101, 102.

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## MONDAY

### 2. What warning is given to us?

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 *Proverbs 23:29-35* Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? <sup>30</sup>They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. <sup>31</sup>Look not thou

upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. <sup>32</sup>At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. <sup>33</sup>Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. <sup>34</sup>Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. <sup>35</sup>They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

"Let every soul remember that he is under sacred obligations to God to do his best for his fellow creatures. How careful should everyone be not to create a desire for stimulants. By advising friends and neighbors to take brandy for the sake of their health, they are in danger of becoming agents for the destruction of their friends. Many incidents have come to my attention in which through some simple advice, men and women have become the slaves of the drink habit....

"With the awful results of indulgence in intoxicating drink before us, how is it that any man or woman who claims to believe in the word of God, can venture to touch, taste, or handle wine or strong drink? Such a practice is certainly out of harmony with their professed faith." –*Temperance*, p. 42.


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## AN UNINVITED GUEST OBSERVED THE PROCEEDINGS

## TUESDAY

### 3. What command did the inebriated King Belshazzar give? How did the uninvited Guest reveal His presence?

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 *Daniel 5:2-6* Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. <sup>3</sup>Then they brought the golden vessels that were

taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.<sup>4</sup> They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.<sup>5</sup> In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against


the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.<sup>6</sup> Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

"Little did Belshazzar think that there was a heavenly Witness to his idolatrous revelry; that a divine Watcher, unrecognized, looked upon the scene of profanation,..." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 527.

"The inhabitants of the Noachian world were destroyed because they were corrupted through the indulgence of perverted appetite. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed through the gratification of unnatural appetite, which so benumbed the intellect that they could not discern the difference between the sacred claims of God and the clamor of appetite. The latter enslaved them, and they became so ferocious and bold in their detestable abominations that God would not tolerate them upon the earth. God ascribes the wickedness of Babylon to her gluttony and drunkenness." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 162.

## WEDNESDAY

### 4. What experience did the king make? Who remembered someone who could help?

 **Daniel 5:7-12** The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.<sup>8</sup> Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.<sup>9</sup> Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him,

and his lords were astonished.<sup>10</sup> Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:<sup>11</sup> There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;<sup>12</sup> Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

"Terror seized the king, for his conscience accused him. Although he could not read the writing, he knew it was no message of peace and blessing that was traced in glittering characters upon his palace wall. The description the prophet gives of the effect of the king's fear cannot be excelled in any particular. The king's countenance was changed, his heart failed him, pain seized upon him, and so violent was his trembling that his knees smote one against another. He forgot his boasting and revelry. He forgot his dignity. And he cried aloud for his astrologers and soothsayers to solve the meaning of the mysterious inscription." –*The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 90. "But of no avail was his appeal to his trusted advisers, with offers of rich awards. Heavenly wisdom cannot be bought or sold. 'All the king's wise men ... could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.' They were no more able to read the mysterious characters than had been the wise men of a former generation to interpret the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 527.

## INTERPRETING THE SENTENCE


### THURSDAY

**5. What promise was Daniel given? What impression did the promise of great gifts and distinction make upon him?**

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 **Daniel 5:13-17** Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? <sup>14</sup>I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods

is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. <sup>15</sup>And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing: <sup>16</sup>And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. <sup>17</sup>Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

"Before that terror-stricken throng, Daniel, unmoved by the promises of the king, stood in the quiet dignity of a servant of the Most High, not to speak words of flattery, but to interpret a message of doom." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 529.



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## FRIDAY

### **6. How did Daniel begin the explanation of the handwriting? What was the message from heaven?**

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**[L] Daniel 5:18-28** O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:<sup>19</sup> And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.<sup>20</sup> But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:<sup>21</sup> And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body

was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.<sup>22</sup> And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;<sup>23</sup> But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:<sup>24</sup> Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.<sup>25</sup> And this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.<sup>26</sup> This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.<sup>27</sup> Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.<sup>28</sup> Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

“The prophet first reminded Belshazzar of matters with which he was familiar, but which had not taught him the lesson of humility that might have saved him. He spoke of Nebuchadnezzar’s sin and fall, and of the Lord’s dealings with him—the dominion and glory bestowed upon him, the divine judgments for his pride, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the power and mercy of the God of Israel; and then in bold and emphatic words he rebuked Belshazzar for his great wickedness. He held the king’s sin up before him, showing him the lessons he might have learned but did not. Belshazzar had not read aright the experience of his grandfather, nor heeded the warning of events so significant to himself. The opportunity of knowing and obeying the true God had been given him, but had not been taken to heart...” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 529.




## RAPID EXECUTION OF THE SENTENCE


### SABBATH

**7. What happened that night?  
What had the prophet  
Jeremiah foretold more than  
one hundred years before?**

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 **Daniel 5:29-31** Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.<sup>30</sup> In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.<sup>31</sup> And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

 **Jeremiah 51:9** We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.

“Even while he and his nobles were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah and praising their gods of silver and gold, the Medes and the Persians, having turned the Euphrates out of its channel, were marching into the heart of the unguarded city.... Their triumphant shouts could be heard above the despairing cries of the astonished revelers.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 531.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- Exodus 32.
- Isaiah 22:13, 14.
- *The Adventist Home*, pp. 59, 60.

## LESSON 17

Sabbath, April 24, 2021

# In the Lions' Den



"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell."

**Psalm 27:1, 2.**

### ENVOIOUS PEERS

#### DOMINGO

**1. How did King Darius change the government after conquering Babylon? What change did he desire to make? Why?**

**[L] Daniel 5:31; 6:1-3** And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years

*old. <sup>6:1-3</sup>It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; <sup>2</sup>And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. <sup>3</sup>Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.*

"What an impression was produced upon Darius by the conduct of Daniel! Daniel lived a pure and holy life. God was first with him. Whenever real Christianity reigns in the heart, it will be revealed in the character. All will take knowledge of such, that they have been with Jesus. The undivided affections must be given to God." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 443.


"Daniel was a statesman; heavy responsibilities rested upon him; yet three times a day he sought God, and the Lord gave him the Holy Spirit." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 423.

## MONDAY

### 2. What did the government officials realize when they wanted to go against Daniel and hinder the king's plan? What is envy capable of?

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 *Daniel 6:4-7* Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was

faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. <sup>5</sup>Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. <sup>6</sup>Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. <sup>7</sup>All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. *de ti, oh rey, sea echado en el foso de los leones.*

"The honors bestowed upon Daniel excited the jealousy of the leading men of the kingdom, and they sought for occasion of complaint against him. But they could find none,...

"Daniel's blameless conduct excited still further the jealousy of his enemies." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 539.

"Envy is one of the most satanic traits that can exist in the human heart, and it is one of the most baleful in its effect." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 385.

## SPYING AND ACCUSATION


### TUESDAY

### 3. What did the unsuspecting king think of the proposed law? Did Daniel change his habits in view of this new danger?

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 *Daniel 6:8-10* Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. <sup>9</sup>Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. <sup>10</sup>Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

"In the conspiracy thus formed, Satan had played an important part. The prophet was high in command in the kingdom, and evil angels feared that his influence would weaken their control over its rulers. It was these satanic agencies who had stirred the princes to envy and jealousy; it was they who had inspired the plan for Daniel's destruction; and the princes, yielding themselves as instruments of evil, carried it into effect....

"He [Daniel] did not change his course in a single particular. Why should he cease to pray now, when he most 'heeded to pray?... Before those who were plotting his ruin, he would not allow it even to appear that his connection-with Heaven was severed." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 540-542.


### WEDNESDAY

#### **4. What did the king do after he realized for whom the trap was laid? How did the princes nullify the king's attempts to save Daniel?**

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 **Daniel 6:11-15** Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. <sup>12</sup>Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within

thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. <sup>13</sup>Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. <sup>14</sup>Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. <sup>15</sup>Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

"Daniel's position was not an enviable one. He stood at the head of a dishonest, prevaricating, godless cabinet, whose members watched him with keen, jealous eyes, to find some flaw in his conduct. They kept spies on his track, to see if they could not in this way find something against him. Satan suggested to these men a plan whereby they might get rid of Daniel. Use his religion as a means of condemning him, the enemy said." —(*The Youth's Instructor*, November 1, 1900) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1171.

## IMMUTABILITY OF THE DIVINE LAW

### THURSDAY

**5. Whose law is truly unchangeable? What command did Darius finally give? In whom did he have full confidence?**

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☞ *Matthew 5:18* For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

☞ *Luke 16:17* And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

☞ *Daniel 6:16, 17* Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.<sup>17</sup> And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

"Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside; then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves it immutable." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 466.

"In all ages God's appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth's sake. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 575.

### FRIDAY

**6. Was the king and Daniel's trust rewarded? What happened to the cunning accusers?**

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☞ *Daniel 6:18-24* Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and

his sleep went from him. <sup>19</sup>Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. <sup>20</sup>And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? <sup>21</sup>Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. <sup>22</sup>My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in

me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. <sup>23</sup>Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. <sup>24</sup>And the king command-

ed, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

"God did not prevent Daniel's enemies from casting him into the lions' den; He permitted evil angels and wicked men thus far to accomplish their purpose; but it was that He might make the deliverance of His servant more marked, and the defeat of the enemies of truth and righteousness more complete. 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee' (Psalm 76:10), the psalmist has testified. Through the courage of this one man who chose to follow right rather than policy, Satan was to be defeated, and the name of God was to be exalted and honoured." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 543.

## SABBATH


**7. What wonderful message did the king send out to his entire kingdom after this experience? What did Daniel experience?**

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 **Daniel 6:25-28** Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. <sup>26</sup>I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. <sup>27</sup>He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. <sup>28</sup>So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

"Study the history of Joseph and of Daniel. The Lord did not prevent the plottings of men who sought to do them harm; but He caused all these devices to work for good to His servants who amidst trial and conflict preserved their faith and loyalty....

"We need not keep our own record of trials and difficulties, griefs, and sorrows. All these things are written in the books, and heaven will take

care of them. While we are counting up the disagreeable things, many things that are pleasant to reflect upon are passing from memory, such as the merciful kindness of God surrounding us every moment and the love over which angels marvel, that God gave His Son to die for us. If as workers for Christ you feel that you have had greater cares and trials than have fallen to the lot of others, remember that for you there is a peace unknown to those who shun these burdens. There is comfort and joy in the service of Christ. Let the world see that life with Him is no failure." –*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 487, 488.



#### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- *Proverbs 26:27.*
- *Ecclesiastes 10:8.*
- *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 90, 487.

## LESSON 18

Sabbath, May 1, 2021

# Another Power



"... That horn ... had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows."

**Daniel 7:20.**

### FOUR SYMBOLIC BEASTS

#### SUNDAY

**1.** What did Daniel experience in the first year of King Belshazzar's reign?

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**[L]** *Daniel 7:1-3* In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. <sup>2</sup>Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. <sup>3</sup>And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

#### MONDAY

**2.** What do wind and waters signify in the Bible's symbolic language? What did the four beasts represent?

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**[L]** *Jeremiah 25:32, 33* Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. <sup>33</sup>And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.



📖 **Revelation 17:15** And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

📖 **Daniel 7:17** These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

"Seas, or waters, when used as a Bible symbol, represent peoples, and nations, and tongues. Said the angel to the prophet John, 'The waters which thou sawest ... are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.' Revelation 17:15.

"The definition of the symbol of the four beasts is given to Daniel before the close of the vision: 'These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth.' Verse 17. With this explanation of the symbols, the field of the vision is definitely opened before us." —*The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 106.

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## IDENTIFICATION OF THE BEASTS

### TUESDAY

**3. What kingdom was represented by the first beast? Looking at the second beast, what did the three ribs signify?**

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📖 **Daniel 7:4, 5** The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. <sup>5</sup>And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

"In the vision of Daniel 7, the first beast seen by the prophet was a lion. For the use of the lion as a symbol, read Jeremiah 4:7; 50:17, 43, 44. The lion as first seen in the vision before us had eagle's wings. The symbolic use of wings is impressively described in Habakkuk 1:6-8, where it is said that the Chaldeans should 'fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.'

"From these symbols we may easily deduce that Babylon was a kingdom of great strength, and that under Nebuchadnezzar its conquests were extended with great rapidity....

"As in the image of Daniel 2, so in this series of symbols a marked deterioration is noticed as we descend from one kingdom to another. The silver of the breast and arms is inferior to the gold of the head. The bear is inferior

to the lion. Medo-Persia fell short of Babylon in wealth, magnificence, and brilliance. The bear raised itself up on one side. The kingdom was composed of two nationalities, the Medes and the Persians.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 107, 108.

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## WEDNESDAY

**4. What did the four wings and four heads of the third beast denote? What did the fourth beast look like, and how many horns did it have?**

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 **Daniel 7:6, 7** After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. <sup>7</sup>After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

“The third kingdom, Grecia, is here represented by the symbol of a leopard. If wings upon the lion signified rapidity of conquest, they would signify the same here. The leopard itself is a swift-footed beast, but this was not sufficient to represent the career of the nation here symbolized. It must have wings in addition. Two wings, the number the lion had, were not sufficient; the leopard must have four. This would denote unprecedented celerity of movement, which we find to be a historical fact in the Grecian kingdom.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 108.

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## THE FOURTH BEAST AND THE LITTLE HORN


### THURSDAY

**5. What occurred to the fourth beast? What was of special interest to Daniel? What explanation did the heavenly messenger give of the fourth kingdom?**

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 **Daniel 7:8, 19, 23** I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. <sup>19</sup>Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his

nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; <sup>23</sup>Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

"Inspiration finds no beast in nature to symbolize the power here illustrated. No addition of hoofs, heads, horns, wings, scales, teeth, or nails to any beast found in nature will answer. This power is diverse from all the others, and the symbol is wholly different from anything found in the animal kingdom.

"The foundation for a volume is laid in verse 7, but for lack of space we are compelled to treat it briefly here. This beast corresponds to the fourth division of the great image—the legs of iron. In the comment on Daniel 2:40 are given some reasons for believing this power to be Rome." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 110.

"In chapter 13 (verses 1-10) is described another beast, 'like unto a leopard,' to which the dragon gave 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.'... This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 439.

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## A PEACEFUL KINGDOM OF LOVE

### FRIDAY

**6. What great event took place during the time of the fourth kingdom?**

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📖 *Luke 2:1* And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

📖 *Galatians 4:4* But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

"The germ in the seed grows by the unfolding of the life-principle which God has implanted. Its development depends upon no human power. So it is with the kingdom of Christ. It is a new creation. Its principles of development are the opposite of those that rule the kingdoms of this world. Earthly governments prevail by physical force; they maintain their dominion by war; but the founder of the new kingdom is the Prince of Peace. The Holy Spirit

represents worldly kingdoms under the symbol of fierce beasts of prey; but Christ is 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' John 1:29. In His plan of government there is no employment of brute force to compel the conscience. The Jews looked for the kingdom of God to be established in the same way as the kingdoms of the world. To promote righteousness they resorted to external measures. They devised methods and plans. But Christ implants a principle. By implanting truth and righteousness, He counterworks error and sin." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 77. "To Daniel was given a vision of fierce beasts, representing the powers of the earth. But the ensign of the Messiah's kingdom is a lamb. While earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power, Christ is to banish every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion. His kingdom was to be established to uplift and ennoble fallen humanity." —(Letter 32, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1171.

## SABBATH

### 7. What did Daniel want to know more about? What was the explanation?


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 *Daniel 7:20, 24, first part* And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. <sup>24</sup>And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise:

"... Enough has already been said respecting the fourth beast (Rome) and the ten horns, or ten kingdoms, which arose out of this power. The little horn now more particularly demands attention. As stated in comments on verse 8, we find the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning this horn in the rise and work of the papacy. It is a matter of both interest and importance, therefore, to inquire into the causes which resulted in the development of this arrogant power." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 119.



## FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- *The Great Controversy*, p. 439.
- *Prophets and Kings*, p. 547.

Please read the Missionary Report  
from Tanzania on page 115.

## LESSON 19

Sabbath, May 8, 2021

# The Little Horn



*"... There came up among them another little horn,... and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."*

**Daniel 7:8.**

## A HORN WITH EYES AND A MOUTH

### SUNDAY

**1** Since the ten horns were all political powers, what power alone could be described as 'diverse from the first'? How powerful was the papal power to become?

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**[L]** Daniel 7:24, 20, last part And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. <sup>20</sup>... even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.


"Popery had become the world's despot. Kings and emperors bowed to the decrees of the Roman pontiff. The destinies of men, both for time and for eternity, seemed under his control. For hundreds of years the doctrines of Rome had been extensively and implicitly received, its rites reverently performed, its festivals generally observed. Its clergy were honored and liberally sustained. Never since has the Roman Church attained to greater dignity, magnificence, or power....

"A striking illustration of the tyrannical character of this advocate of infallibility was given in his treatment of the German emperor, Henry IV. For presuming to disregard the pope's authority, this monarch was declared to be excommunicated and dethroned.... In company with his wife and a faithful servant he crossed the Alps in midwinter, that he might humble himself before the pope. Upon reaching the castle whither Gregory had withdrawn, he was conducted, without his guard into an outer court, and there, in the severe cold of winter, with uncovered head and naked feet, and in a miserable dress, he awaited the pope's permission to come into his presence. Not until he had continued three days fasting and making confession, did the pontiff condescend to grant him pardon." —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 60, 57, 58.

## MONDAY

**2. What happened to the three horns that were in its way? What do the words "eyes like the eyes of man" and "mouth" indicate?**

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 *Daniel 7:20, 8* And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the


*other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. <sup>8</sup>I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.*

"Another step in papal assumption was taken, when, in the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII proclaimed the perfection of the Roman Church. Among the propositions which he put forth was one declaring that the church had never erred, nor would it ever err, according to the Scriptures.... The proud pontiff also claimed the power to depose emperors, and declared that no sentence which he pronounced could be reversed by anyone, but that it was his prerogative to reverse the decisions of all others." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 57.

## SPEAKING BLASPHEMY

### TUESDAY

**3. Against whom would this power strive and initially conquer? Of what do his blasphemies consist?**

 *Daniel 7:21, 25, first part* I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; <sup>25</sup> And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws:

📖 **Matthew 23:8, 9** But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. <sup>9</sup>And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

📖 **Ephesians 4:15, 16; 5:23** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: <sup>16</sup>From whom

the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. <sup>5:23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

"Century after century the blood of the saints had been shed. While the Waldenses laid down their lives, upon the mountains of Piedmont 'for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,' similar witness to the truth had been borne by their brethren, the Albigenses of France. In the days of the Reformation its disciples had been put to death with horrible tortures.... The brave Huguenots, battling for those rights which the human heart holds most sacred, had poured out their blood on many a hard-fought field. The Protestants were counted as outlaws, a price was set upon their heads, and they were hunted down like wild beasts....

"It is one of the leading doctrines of Romanism that the Pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ, invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world. More than this, the pope has been given the very titles of Deity. He has been styled 'Lord God the Pope,' and has been declared infallible. He demands the homage of all men." —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 271, 50.

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## ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE GOD'S LAW

### WEDNESDAY

**4.** What did Jesus say about God's law? Contrary to Jesus' teaching, what did prophecy state that the papacy would attempt to do?

📖 **Matthew 5:18** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

📖 **Luke 16:17** And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

📖 **Daniel 7:25, middle part** ... ,and think to change times and laws:

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"The papacy has attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law,

and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath.... An intentional, deliberate change is presented: 'He shall think to change the times and the law.' The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfills the prophecy." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 446.

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## A LONG PERIOD OF SUPREMACY

### THURSDAY


**5. According to what key is prophetic time calculated? For how long was the papacy to exercise its persecuting power?**


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 **Ezekiel 4:6** *And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.*

 **Daniel 7:25, last part** *...and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time..*

 **Revelation 13:5; 12:6** *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. <sup>12:6</sup>And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

 **Numbers 14:34** *After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

"The periods here mentioned—'forty and two months,' and 'a thousand two hundred and threescore days'—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 439, 266.



## FRIDAY

**6. What did God in mercy do for His people? How does the Lord comfort His people today?**

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**[L] Daniel 11:34** Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

**[L] Matthew 24:21, 22** For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.<sup>22</sup> And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

"The persecution of the church did not continue throughout the entire period of the 1260 years. God in mercy to His people cut short the time of their fiery trial. In foretelling the 'great tribulation' to befall the church, the Saviour said: 'Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.' Matthew 24:22. Through the influence of the Reformation the persecution was brought to an end prior to 1798." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 266, 267.

**[L] Daniel 7:9-14, 22** I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.<sup>10</sup> A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.<sup>11</sup> I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.<sup>12</sup> As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.<sup>13</sup> I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.<sup>14</sup> And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.<sup>22</sup> Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

## TIME OF THE JUDGMENT


### SABBATH

#### 7. To what did the Lord direct the prophet's attention?

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 **Daniel 7:26, 27** But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. <sup>27</sup>And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

"When amid the storms of the migration of nations the empire fell to ruins, the nations looked up in respect to the Roman bishop's throne, which alone stood upright in the midst of all the destruction." —Emil Staub, A. Zimmermann, *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte* (Pictures from Church History), p. 43.

"The first pastors or bishops of Rome enjoyed a respect proportionate to the rank of the city in which they resided. For the first few centuries of the Christian Era, Rome was the largest, richest, and most powerful city in the world. It was the seat of empire, the capital of the nations. 'All the inhabitants of the earth belong to her,' said Julian; and Claudian declared her to be the 'fountain of laws.' 'If Rome is the queen of cities, why should not her pastor be the king of bishops?' was the reasoning these Roman pastors put forth. 'Why should not the Roman Church be the mother of Christendom? Why should not all nations be her children, and her authority their sovereign law? It was easy,' says D'Aubigne, from whom we quote these words, 'for the ambitious heart of man to reason thus. Ambitious Rome did so' (from Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. I, p. 8)." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 119, 120.

Arius, the Presbyterian from Alexandria, "taught that Christ was not an equal being with God, but was merely His first creation." —Emil Staub, A. Zimmermann, *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte* (Pictures from Church History), p. 30.

The following claims are made for the papacy: (1) "The pope is the Vicar of God and Christ upon earth." (2) "As such he is lord of all the earth, and all countries belong to him. The kings and princes borrow them from him, and he can, if they do not obey him, dethrone them and give their land to a prince more obedient." —Textbook of World History, by Prof. F. Noesselt, p. 81.



## MISSIONARY REPORT FROM TANZANIA

To be read on Sabbath, May 8, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering  
will be gathered on Sabbath, May 15, 2021

Tanzania is a sovereign country located on the east coast of Africa. It has an area of 947,300 square kilometers (365,756 square miles). It shares borders with Kenya and Uganda on the north; Rwanda, Burundi, and the D.R. of Congo on the west; Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique on the south; and the Indian Ocean on the east. The country has a population of about 60 million people. It gained its independence from England in December 1961. Before British rule, this country was a German colony known as Duetch Oestafrika up until 1918. Under British rule, the name was changed to Tanganyika. In 1964, Zanzibar, the island colonized by Oman Arabs, became free and chose to join Tanganyika to form what is today the United Republic of Tanzania.

This country is composed of 60 percent Christians and 36 percent Moslems, with the rest practicing other traditional religions. The government grants its citizens freedom of worship. The Adventist message came to Tanzania in 1903, while the Reformation message was first introduced in Tanzania in December 1974 by Elder Simon Schmidt, who was then a Secretary of the General Conference. Thanks to God, the message spread throughout the country, and today the Tanzanian Union has 1,302 members.

In addition to church buildings, the Union has three primary schools. Now the main goal of the Union is to establish a standard college to meet local and international needs. Called Kibaha Berea Missionary Institute, the college is intended to provide advanced learning structured to promote the spiritual and moral standards of the students in their chosen fields. The main subjects to be taught will be:

1. Missionary Work: This is a series of courses to prepare those who desire to become Bible workers and ministers in God's cause.
2. Medical Missionary Work: This is a series of courses to prepare those students to become Naturopathic Doctors, trained professionals with an accredited degree.
3. Languages: English, Spanish, French, and Swahili. These are widely used languages in Africa. We greatly need language professionals in Africa.
4. Information Technology: This will cover computer and media-related subjects.
5. Polytechnic: This includes technical and art subjects, such as masonry, carpentry, welding, tailoring, art, and music.
6. Business Administration: This covers Accounting, Entrepreneurship, Marketing and Advertising, and Business subjects

This institution will make it possible for us to train professionals who are recruited from the church, as well as to win others from outside the church to enroll as non-member students. We desire to make this college a lighthouse for Heaven's message. We want the public to believe that we can prepare people to change society. We are dedicated to collaborating fully with the African Division and the General Conference to ensure that this college will benefit the youth in the African Division and elsewhere.

The construction of the facilities is under way, and it is our desire that the work will be speeded up by your generous gifts for the Special Sabbath School Offering this coming week. The college will begin operation in phases, and it is our sincere desire that the first phase will begin by the middle of this year 2021. More information about this project will be made available in General Conference publications and media.

"In the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one, for in education, as in redemption, 'other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' 'It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell.' 1 Corinthians 3:11; Colossians 1:19, R.V....

"Under changed conditions, true education is still conformed to the Creator's plan, the plan of the Eden school. Adam and Eve received instruction through direct communion with God; we behold the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Christ....

"The great principles of education are unchanged. 'They stand fast forever and ever' (Psalm 111:8); for they are the principles of the character of God. To aid the student in comprehending these principles, and in entering into that relation with Christ which will make them a controlling power in the life, should be the teacher's first effort and his constant aim. The teacher who accepts this aim is in truth a co-worker with Christ, a laborer together with God....

"Wherever in Israel God's plan of education was carried into effect, its results testified of its Author. But in very many households the training appointed by Heaven, and the characters thus developed, were alike rare. God's plan was but partially and imperfectly fulfilled....

"To meet this growing evil, God provided other agencies as an aid to parents in the work of education. From the earliest times, prophets had been recognized as teachers divinely appointed.... For the training of such a class of teachers, Samuel, by the Lord's direction, established the schools of the prophets....

"These schools were intended to serve as a barrier against the wide-spreading corruption, to provide for the mental and spiritual welfare of the youth, and to promote the prosperity of the nation by furnishing it with men qualified to act in the fear of God as leaders and counselors. To this end, Samuel gathered companies of young men who were pious, intelligent, and studious. These were called the sons of the prophets. As they studied the word and the works of God, His life-giving power quickened the energies of mind and soul, and the students received wisdom from above....

"The pupils of these schools sustained themselves by their own labor in tilling the soil or in some mechanical employment. In Israel this was not thought strange or degrading; indeed, it was regarded as a sin to allow children to grow up in ignorance of useful labor. Every youth, whether his parents were rich or poor, was taught some trade. Even though he was to be educated for holy office, a knowledge of practical life was regarded as essential to the greatest usefulness. Many, also, of the teachers supported themselves by manual labor." —*Education*, pp. 30, 45-47.

May God inspire your heart as you support this modern effort to reestablish the schools of the prophets, which were ordained of God.

—Parmenas N. Shirima  
*College Project Coordinator, Tanzania Union*

## LESSON 20

**Sabbath, May 15, 2021**

# A Struggle for Power



"... I lifted up mine eyes, and,... behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns:... And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west...: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.... And when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones.... And out of one of them came forth a little horn,..." **Daniel 8:3, 5, 8, 9.**

### SUNDAY

**1. What happened two years after Daniel received the vision described in chapter 7? What did the prophet see first? What power did this represent?**

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**[L] Daniel 8:1-4, 20** *In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. <sup>2</sup>And I*

*saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai. <sup>3</sup>Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. <sup>4</sup>I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. <sup>20</sup>The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.*


"In verse 20 an interpretation of this symbol is given in plain language: 'The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.' We have only therefore to consider how well the power answers to the symbol in question. The two horns represented the two nationalities of which the empire was composed. The higher came up last. This symbol-

ized Persia, which at first was simply an ally of the Medes, but later came to be the leading division of the empire. The directions in which the ram pushed denote the directions in which the Medes and Persians carried their conquests." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 150.

"The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass." —(Letter 57, 1896) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1166.

## MONDAY

**2. What did the second beast look like, and what did it do? What power is represented by this symbol, and what was the name of its first king?**

 **Daniel 8:5-7, 21** And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the


ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. <sup>6</sup>And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. <sup>7</sup>And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. <sup>21</sup> And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

"The 'goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth.' That is, Greece lay west of Persia and attacked from that direction. The Greek army swept everything on the face of the earth before it.

"The goat 'touched not the ground.' Such was the marvelous celerity of his movements that he seemed to fly from point to point with the swiftness of the wind. The same characteristic of speed is indicated by the four wings of the leopard in the vision of Daniel 7, representing the same nation." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 152.

## TUESDAY

**3. What happened to this horn symbolically and thus to this great empire in reality?**

 **Daniel 8:8, 22** Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. <sup>22</sup> Now that being broken, whereas

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*four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.*

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"The ram, Medo-Persia, became 'great;' the goat, Greece, became 'very great.' 'When he was strong, the great horn was broken.' Human foresight and speculation would have said, When he becomes weak, his kingdom torn by rebellion, or weakened by luxury, then the horn will be broken, and the kingdom shattered. But Daniel saw it broken in the prime of its strength, at the height of its power, when every beholder would have exclaimed, Surely, the kingdom is established, and nothing can overthrow it. Thus it is often with the wicked. The horn of their strength is broken when they think they stand most firm....

"Four notable horns were to come up toward the four winds of heaven in place of the great horn that was broken. These were Cassander, who had Greece and the neighboring countries; Lysimachus, who had Asia Minor; Seleucus, who had Syria and Babylon, and from whom came the line of kings known as the 'Seleucidae,' so famous in history; and Ptolemy, son of Lagus, who had Egypt, and from whom sprang the 'Lagidae.' These held dominion toward the four winds of heaven. Cassander had the western parts, Lysimachus the northern regions, Seleucus the eastern countries, and Ptolemy the southern portion of the empire. These four horns may therefore be named Macedonia, Thrace (which then included Asia Minor, and those parts lying on the Hellespont and the Bosphorus), Syria, and Egypt." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 153, 155.

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### WEDNESDAY

**4. What did Daniel see emerge from one of these horns, or states, and what was said about it? How early in history was this nation "of fierce countenance" prophesied, and what did it represent?**

 **Daniel 8:9, 23** And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. <sup>23</sup>And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

"A third power is here introduced into the prophecy. In the explanation given to Daniel by the angel this symbol is not described as definitely as are Medo-Persia and Greece....

"It has been an easy matter to show that the little horn does not denote Antiochus Epiphanes. It will be as easy to show that it does denote Rome....

"The little horn waxed great toward the south. This was true of Rome....

"The little horn waxed great toward the east. This also was true of Rome."  
—Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 156, 158, 159.

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## THURSDAY

### 5. Who was to feel the force of this power? Whom did the stars represent?

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📖 *Daniel 8:10* And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and

of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

📖 *Revelation 12:4, first part* And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth...

📖 *Daniel 12:3* And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

"The little horn 'waxed great, even to [against, margin] the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground.' Rome did this also. In this expression two figures are introduced, 'the host' and 'the stars.' When used in a symbolic sense concerning events taking place on earth, these figures refer almost always to the people of God and their leaders." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 159.

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## FRIDAY

### 6. Even whom did pagan Rome attack? Who was this Prince?

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📖 *Daniel 8:11, first part* Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away,...

📖 *Matthew 27:11, 26* And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.  
<sup>26</sup>Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.



"The little horn 'magnified himself even to the Prince of the host.' Rome alone did this. In the interpretation (verse 25) the little horn is said to 'stand up against the Prince of princes.' This is clearly an allusion to the crucifixion of our Lord under the jurisdiction of the Romans." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 159.

## SABBATH

### **7. What else was to be destroyed by this power? Who spoke about the fate of Jerusalem and the temple?**

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**📖 Daniel 8:11, last part** ...and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down.

**📖 Luke 19:41-44** And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, <sup>42</sup>Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. <sup>43</sup>For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, <sup>44</sup>And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

"The little horn waxed great toward the pleasant land. So did Rome. Judea is called 'the pleasant land' in many scriptures. The Romans made it a province of their empire in 63 B.C., and eventually destroyed the city and the temple, and scattered the Jews throughout the earth." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 159.

"For nearly forty years after the doom of Jerusalem had been pronounced by Christ Himself, the Lord delayed His judgments upon the city and the nation. Wonderful was the long-suffering of God toward the rejectors of His gospel and the murderers of His Son....

"The longsuffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus they rejected the last offer of mercy. Then God withdrew His protection from them...." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 27, 28.



### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- Matthew 24:15-20.
- Mark 13:14-18.
- Luke 21:20-24.

## LESSON 21

Sabbath, May 22, 2021

# Rise of the Papacy



"Let no man deceive you by any means:  
for that day shall not come,  
except there come a falling away first...."

**2 Thessalonians 2:3.**

## APOSTASY

### SUNDAY

**1. What change occurred in Rome in the fourth century A.D.? What else was cast down by this power, and in what way?**

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man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; <sup>4</sup>Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

**[L] Daniel 8:12, 25** And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. <sup>25</sup>And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

**[L] 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4** Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that

"Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

"This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of 'the man of sin' foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God....


"The Bible would exalt God and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be concealed and suppressed. This logic was adopted by the Roman Church. For hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible was prohibited. The people were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses, and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over church and state.

"Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator and that none could approach God except through him; and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 50, 51, 55.

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## MONDAY

**2. Who helped the papacy become so powerful?**  
**What question did an angel ask after this symbol was described?**

 *Daniel 8:24, 13 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. <sup>13</sup>Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?*

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"The archdeceiver had not completed his work. He was resolved to gather the Christian world under his banner and to exercise his power through his vicegerent, the proud pontiff who claimed to be the representative of Christ. Through half-converted pagans, ambitious prelates, and world-loving churchmen he accomplished his purpose." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 53.

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## A VERY LONG TIME PERIOD

### TUESDAY

#### **3. What was the answer? Did Daniel understand everything about this?**

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**[L] Daniel 8:14, 15** And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. <sup>15</sup>And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

“How long shall be the vision?” Both the question and the answer are placed upon record, which is prima facie evidence that this is a matter the church should understand. This view is further confirmed by the fact that the answer was addressed to Daniel, as the one whom it chiefly concerned, and for whose information it was given....

“We have already mentioned Daniel’s longing to understand these things. He sought for the meaning. Immediately there stood before the prophet one who had the appearance of a man. Daniel heard a man’s voice, that is, the voice of an angel as of a man speaking.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 162, 187.

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### WEDNESDAY

#### **4. How did the Lord fulfill his desire? When did the angel return with another message?**

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**[L] Daniel 8:16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.

“It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, ‘His angel,’ whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John; and a blessing is pronounced on those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written therein. Revelation 1:3.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.

“The commandment was given to make this man Daniel understand the vision. It was addressed to Gabriel, a name that signifies ‘the strength of God,’ or ‘man of God.’ He continues his instruction to Daniel in chapter 9. Centuries later this same angel was commissioned to announce the birth of John the Baptist to his father Zacharias, and that of the Messiah to the virgin Mary. Luke 1:26. To Zacharias, he introduced himself with these words: ‘I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God.’ Luke 1:19.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 187.

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## A VISION FOR THE TIME OF THE END

### THURSDAY

**5.** In what period of time does the vision of the 2,300 days belong?

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 *Daniel 8:17-19* So he came near where I stood: and when he came,


*I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.<sup>18</sup> Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.<sup>19</sup> And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.*

### FRIDAY

**6.** What impression did the presence of this high-ranking angel make upon Daniel? Was Gabriel able to carry out his commission to explain the vision completely?

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 *Daniel 8:18, 27* Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.<sup>27</sup> And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

"... The angel Gabriel, though commanded to make Daniel understand the vision, gave him only a partial explanation. As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time."  
—*The Great Controversy*, p. 325.

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## THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

### SABBATH

**7.** How did William Miller fare when he studied the verse in Daniel 8:14?

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"Miller accepted the generally received view that in the Christian age the earth is the sanctuary, and he therefore understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14 represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ. If, then, the correct starting

point could be found for the 2300 days, he concluded that the time of the second advent could be readily ascertained....

"In the eighth chapter of Daniel he could find no clue to the starting point of the 2300 days;..." –*The Great Controversy*, 324, 325.



### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- Early Writings, pp. 54-56.
- The Story of Redemption, pp. 375-379.

*"During the year 330 Constantine moved his governmental headquarters from Rome to Byzantium (Constantinople).... This move was of far-reaching significance for the church. It facilitated the unhindered development of the papal power in Rome...." –Großer katholischer Katechismus (Great Catholic Catechism), p. 243.*

*"We are told of King Clovis and the Franks that they joined the church in the fifth century: 'It was important to note that the powerful Franks did not join the Arians, but generally acknowledged the confession, which was called the Catholic Confession for that reason. Because the Franks conquered gradually one German tribe after another, this meant at the same time the victory of the Catholic Church over the Arians.'" –Emil Staub, A. Zimmermann, Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte (Pictures from Church History), p. 44.*

## LESSON 22

Sabbath, May 29, 2021

# Response to a Humble Prayer



"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

**James 5:16.**


### SEARCHING FOR UNDERSTANDING

#### SUNDAY

**1. What did Daniel see come to pass in fulfillment of the vision given in Chapter 8? With what thought was he preoccupied?**

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** Daniel 5:30, 31; 9:1, 2** In that night was Belshazzar the king of the

Chaldeans slain. <sup>31</sup>And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old. <sup>9:1, 2</sup>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; <sup>2</sup>In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

"Daniel's prayer had been offered 'in the first year of Darius' (verse 1), the Median monarch whose general, Cyrus, had wrested from Babylonia the scepter of universal rule. The reign of Darius was honored of God. To him was sent the angel Gabriel, 'to confirm and to strengthen him.' Daniel 11:1.... "The answer that was given, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,' filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation


sustained by the seventy years' captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare would elapse before the cleansing of God's sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, 'The vision ... shall be for many days,' he fainted away." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 556, 554.

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## MONDAY

### **2. How did he go about his search for more understanding? What did he recognize as the reason for what had happened to his people?**

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 *Daniel 9:3-8* And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: <sup>4</sup>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; <sup>5</sup>We

"In his petition he identified himself fully with those who had fallen short of the divine purpose, confessing their sins as his own....

"Though Daniel had long been in the service of God, and had been spoken of by heaven as 'greatly beloved,' yet he now appeared before God as a sinner, urging the great need of the people he loved. His prayer was eloquent in its simplicity, and intensely earnest. Hear him pleading:..." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 555.

have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.


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## PRAYER AND CONFESSION

### TUESDAY

### **3. To what did he cling? What law did he remember?**

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 *Daniel 9:9-13* To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; <sup>10</sup>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.<sup>11</sup>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.<sup>12</sup>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.<sup>13</sup>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.*

"Have not we as great need to call upon God as had Daniel? I address those who believe that we are living in the very last period of this earth's history. I entreat you to take upon your own souls a burden for our churches, our schools, and our institutions. That God who heard Daniel's prayer will hear ours when we come to Him in contrition. Our necessities are as urgent, our difficulties are as great, and we need to have the same intensity of purpose, and in faith roll our burden upon the great Burden-bearer. There is need for hearts to be as deeply moved in our time as in the time when Daniel prayed." –*Conflict and Courage*, p. 256.

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### WEDNESDAY

#### **4. What had been said to Moses concerning this law? What divine characteristic did Daniel acknowledge in his prayer?**

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*which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:<sup>36</sup>The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.<sup>37</sup>And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.*

**[L] Deuteronomy 28:15, 36, 37** *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*

**[L] Daniel 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.*

"To this point Daniel's prayer is employed in making a full and heartbroken confession of sin. He vindicates fully the course of the Lord, acknowledging the sins of his people to be the cause of all their calamities, as God had

threatened them by the prophet Moses.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 195.

“The prophet Daniel was an example of true sanctification. His long life was filled up with noble service for his Master. He was a man ‘greatly beloved’ (Daniel 10:11) of Heaven. Yet instead of claiming to be pure and holy, this honored prophet identified himself with the really sinful of Israel as he pleaded before God in behalf of his people: ‘We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies.’” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 470.

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## NO RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE’S OWN

### THURSDAY

#### **5. Being conscious of the sins the people had committed, what was his fervent request?**

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**📖 Daniel 9:15-18, first part** 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. <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name...

“Daniel makes no plea on the ground of his own goodness, but he says: ‘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 righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies.’ Daniel 9:18. His intensity of desire makes him earnest and fervent. He continues: ‘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.’” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 271.

## FRIDAY

**6. Upon what could neither he nor his people depend? Therefore, what did he rely on?**

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📖 *Daniel 9:18, last part, 19 ...for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.<sup>19</sup> 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.*

"The prophet now pleads the honor of the Lord's name as a reason why he desires his petition to be granted... Not that God is moved with motives of ambition and vainglory; but when His people are jealous for the honor of His name, when they evince their love for Him by pleading with Him to work, not for their own personal benefit, but for His own glory, that His name may not be reproached and blasphemed among the heathen, this is acceptable with Him. Daniel then intercedes for the city of Jerusalem, called by God's name, and His holy mountain, for which He has had such love, and beseeches Him, for His mercies' sake, to let His anger be turned away. Finally, his mind centers upon the holy sanctuary, God's own dwelling place upon this earth, and he pleads that its desolations may be repaired." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 196.

## A RAPID RESPONSE

### SABBATH

**7. What wonderful experience did he make through this prayer? What commission was now to be completed?**

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*the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.<sup>23</sup> At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. <sup>8:16</sup> And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.*

📖 *Daniel 9:20-23; 8:16 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before*

"Heaven was bending low to hear the earnest supplication of the prophet. Even before he had finished his plea for pardon and restoration, the mighty Gabriel again appeared to him,..." –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 556.

"Yet God had bidden His messenger: 'Make this man to understand the vision.' That commission must be fulfilled. In obedience to it, the angel, some time afterward, returned to Daniel, saying: 'I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding;' 'therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.' Daniel 8:27, 16; 9:22, 23, 25-27. There was one important point in the vision of chapter 8 which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time—the period of the 2300 days;..." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 325.



### **FOR PERSONAL STUDY**

- *In Heavenly Places*, pp. 75, 87.
- *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 353.
- *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, pp. 193-196.

## LESSON 23

Sabbath, June 5, 2021

# Light Imparted to a Humble Petitioner



"Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer,  
even the man Gabriel,... informed me,  
and talked with me, and said, O Daniel,  
I am now come forth to give thee skill  
and understanding."

**Daniel 9:21, 22.**

### SEVENTY WEEKS ARE SET APART

#### SUNDAY

- 1. How much time was granted to the Jews before great events would take place? According to what key is prophetic time calculated?**
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**[L] Daniel 9:24, first part** *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression,...*

**[L] Numbers 14:34** *After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

**[L] Ezekiel 4:6** *And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.*

"Seventy Weeks. These are the first words the angel uttered to Daniel in imparting to him that instruction which he came to give. Why did he thus abruptly introduce a period of time? We must again refer to the vision of Daniel 8. We have seen that Daniel, at the close of that chapter, says that

he did not understand the vision.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 201.

“Following his rule of making Scripture its own interpreter, Miller learned that a day in symbolic prophecy represents a year (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6);...” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 324.

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## MONDAY

### 2. What was to happen at the end of this time period?

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📖 *Daniel 9:24, last part* ...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.

The German Menge Translation says: “Seventy weeks [equaling year-weeks; i.e., weeks of seven years instead of days] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and to make an end of their sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness [salvation] and to seal up the vision and the [statement of the] prophet and to anoint [consecrate] the most holy.”

“Seventy weeks, then, or 490 days of the 2300, were allotted to Jerusalem and the Jews. The events which were to be consummated within that period are briefly stated. The transgression was to be finished, that is, the Jewish people were to fill up the cup of their iniquity, which they did in the rejection and crucifixion of Christ. An end of sins, or of sin offerings [The Hebrew word, *chattath*, translated ‘sins’ in Daniel 9: 24, denotes either sin or sin offering], was to be made. This took place when the great offering was made on Calvary. Reconciliation for iniquity was to be provided. This was accomplished by the sacrificial death of the Son of God. Everlasting righteousness was to be brought in, the righteousness which our Lord manifested in His sinless life. The vision and the prophecy were to be sealed, or made sure.” –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 203.

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## THE BEGINNING DATE

### TUESDAY

### 3. What event marked the beginning point of this prophecy? Where do we find this command? When was it given?

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📖 *Daniel 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,...

📖 *Ezra 6:14; 7:11-28, 7* And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded,

and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.<sup>7:11-28</sup> Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel.<sup>12</sup> Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand;<sup>15</sup> And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem,<sup>16</sup> And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem:<sup>17</sup> That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God.<sup>19</sup> The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.<sup>20</sup> And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house.<sup>21</sup> And I, even I Artaxerxes

the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily,<sup>22</sup> Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much.<sup>23</sup> Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? <sup>24</sup> Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.<sup>25</sup> And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.<sup>26</sup> And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.<sup>27</sup> Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem:<sup>28</sup> And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.<sup>7</sup> And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

"The word here translated 'determined' (Daniel 9:24) literally signifies 'cut off. Seventy weeks, representing 490 years, are declared by the angel to be cut off, as specially pertaining to the Jews. But from what were they cut off? As the 2300 days was the only period of time mentioned in chapter 8, it must be the period from which the seventy weeks were cut off; the seventy weeks must therefore be a part of the 2300 days, and the two periods must begin together. The seventy weeks were declared by the angel to date from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. If the date of this commandment could be found, then the starting point for the great period of the 2300 days would be ascertained...."

"These three kings, in originating, reaffirming, and completing the decree, brought it to the perfection required by the prophecy to mark the beginning of the 2300 years. Taking 457 B.C., the time when the decree was completed, as the date of the commandment, every specification of the prophecy concerning the seventy weeks was seen to have been fulfilled." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 326, 327.

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## EVENTS PREDICTED FOR THE SEVENTY WEEKS

### WEDNESDAY

**4. Who was to come on the scene after 69 weeks (483 years), and in what year? What was to happen during the 70<sup>th</sup> week?**

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**[L] Daniel 9:25, 27, first part** 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. <sup>27</sup> 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, ...

"From this date, 483 years extend to the autumn of A.D. 27. At that time this prophecy was fulfilled. The word 'Messiah' signifies 'the Anointed One.' In the autumn of A.D. 27 Christ was baptized by John and received the anointing of the Spirit.... The 'week' here brought to view is the last one of the seventy; it is the last seven years of the period allotted especially to the Jews. During this time, extending from A.D. 27 to A.D. 34, Christ, at first in person and afterward by His disciples, extended the gospel invitation especially to the Jews." –*The Great Controversy*, p.327.



## THURSDAY

**5. How was this carried out in the labors of Christ as well? What was to happen in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, or 31/2 years after Jesus' anointing?**

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woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. <sup>23</sup>But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. <sup>24</sup>But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

☞ *Matthew 10:5, 6; 15:22-24* A 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: <sup>6</sup>But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>15:22-24</sup>And, behold, a

☞ *Daniel 9:26, first part, 27, middle part* And after 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... <sup>27</sup>... and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, ...

"'In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.' In A.D. 31, three and a half years after His baptism, our Lord was crucified. With the great sacrifice offered upon Calvary, ended that system of offerings which for four thousand years had pointed forward to the Lamb of God. Type had met antitype, and all the sacrifices and oblations of the ceremonial system were there to cease." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 327, 328.

## FRIDAY

**6. What event marked the end of the 70 weeks (490 years)? What year was that?**

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☞ *Acts 8:3-8; 10:1-5, 26-28, 34, 35; 22:21* As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. <sup>4</sup>Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. <sup>5</sup>Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. <sup>6</sup>And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. <sup>7</sup>For unclean

spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.<sup>8</sup> And there was great joy in that city. <sup>10:1-5, 26-28, 34, 35</sup> There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, <sup>2</sup>A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.<sup>3</sup> He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. <sup>4</sup>And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. <sup>5</sup>And now

send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:<sup>26</sup> But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.<sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. <sup>28</sup>And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. <sup>34</sup>Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: <sup>35</sup>But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. <sup>22:21</sup>And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.


"The seventy weeks, or 490 years, especially allotted to the Jews, ended, as we have seen, in A.D. 34. At that time, through the action of the Jewish Sanhedrin, the nation sealed its rejection of the gospel by the martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution of the followers of Christ. Then the message of salvation, no longer restricted to the chosen people, was given to the world. The disciples, forced by persecution to flee from Jerusalem, 'went everywhere preaching the word.'" –*The Great Controversy*, p. 328.

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## THE REMAINING PORTION OF TIME

### SABBATH

**7.** How much time remains when the 70 weeks (490 years) are subtracted from the 2,300 years? To what year does this bring us? Will the old city of Jerusalem and the Jews, as a nation, again play a role in the plan of salvation?

 *Daniel 9:26, last part ... and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

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"The seventy weeks—490 days—having been cut off from the 2300, there were 1810 days remaining. After the end of 490 days, the 1810 days were still to be fulfilled. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 328.

"Then I was pointed to some who are in the great error believing that it is their duty to go to Old Jerusalem, and think they have a work to do there before the Lord comes... I also saw that Old Jerusalem never would be built up; and that Satan was doing his utmost to lead the minds of the children of the Lord into these things now, in the gathering time, to keep them from throwing their whole interest into the present work of the Lord, and to cause them to neglect the necessary preparation for the day of the Lord." —*Early Writings*, pp. 75, 76.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

*"Through His chosen agencies God will graciously make known His purposes. Then the grand work of redemption will go forward. Men will learn of the reconciliation for iniquity and of the everlasting righteousness which the Messiah has brought in through His sacrifice. The cross of Calvary is the great center. This truth acted upon will make Christ's sacrifice effectual. This is that which Gabriel revealed to Daniel in answer to fervent prayer. It was of this that Moses and Elijah and Christ talked at His transfiguration. By the humiliation of the cross He was to bring everlasting deliverance to all who would walk after Him, giving positive evidence that they are separated from the world." —(Letter 201, 1899) Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, pp. 1172, 1173.*

*"Every action, every word, and every moment of our lives should bear the impress of our holy faith. The end of all things is at hand, and we have no time to be idle or to live in pleasure, at cross-purposes with God....*

*"To every person is committed some peculiar gift or talent which is to be used to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. All God's responsible agents, from the lowliest and most obscure to those in high positions in the church, are entrusted with the Lord's goods. It is not the minister alone who can work for the salvation of souls. Those who have the smallest gifts are not excused from using the very best gifts they have, and in so doing their talents will be increased. It is not safe to trifle with moral responsibilities nor to despise the day of small things. God's providence proportions His trusts according to the varied capabilities of the people." —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 618.*

## LESSON 24

Sabbath, June 12, 2021

# The Time of His Judgment Has Come



"Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

**Revelation 14:7.**

### SERVICES IN THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY

#### SUNDAY

- 1. How was the earthly sanctuary partitioned? What did the repentant sinner do under the sacrificial system?**
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**[L] Hebrews 9:2-5** For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. <sup>3</sup>And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; <sup>4</sup>Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about

with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; <sup>5</sup>And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

**[L] Leviticus 4:27-29** And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; <sup>28</sup>Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. <sup>29</sup>And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.

"The repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle, and placing his hand upon the victim's head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. By his own hand the animal was then slain, and the blood was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 354.

## MONDAY

**2. What happened to the sanctuary when sin was transferred like this? On what day did the cleansing of the sanctuary occur each year?**

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**Leviticus 23:26-32** And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>27</sup>Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. <sup>28</sup>And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. <sup>29</sup>For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>30</sup>And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. <sup>31</sup>Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. <sup>32</sup>It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

"The sins of Israel being thus transferred to the sanctuary, the holy places were defiled, and a special work became necessary for the removal of the sins." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355.

"Once a year, on the great Day of Atonement, the priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary. The work there performed, completed the yearly round of ministration...." —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 198.

## THE SERVICE OF CLEANSING


### TUESDAY

**3.** How did the symbolic cleansing take place? What did the high priest do after he finished the service in the most holy place? Was sin actually blotted out through the blood of animals?


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 **Leviticus 16:15, 16, 20-22** Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: <sup>16</sup>And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the

children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. <sup>20</sup>And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: <sup>21</sup>And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: <sup>22</sup>And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness

 **Hebrews 10:3, 4** But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. <sup>4</sup>For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

"On the day of atonement the high 'priest, having taken an offering for the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, above the tables of the law. Thus the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied. Then in his character of mediator the priest took the sins upon himself, and leaving the sanctuary, he bore with him the burden of Israel's guilt. At the door of the tabernacle he laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, and confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' And as the goat bearing these sins was sent away, they were with him regarded as forever separated from the people." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 356.

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## CLEANSING OF THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

### WEDNESDAY

**4. Who gave Moses the plan for the construction and the services of the sanctuary? After what were they patterned? Who is the High Priest in the real sanctuary?**

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📖 *Exodus 25:9, 40* According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments

"What is the cleansing of the sanctuary? That there was such a service in connection with the earthly sanctuary, is stated in the Old Testament Scriptures. But can there be anything in heaven to be cleansed? In Hebrews 9 the cleansing of both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary is plainly taught.... "The cleansing, both in the typical and in the real service, must be accomplished with blood: in the former, with the blood of animals; in the latter, with the blood of Christ....

"He [Christ] asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne." –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 206.

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### THURSDAY

**5. Who was represented by the animal sacrificed under the old covenant? When did the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary begin?**

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thereof, even so shall ye make it. <sup>40</sup> And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

📖 *Hebrews 8:5, 1, 2* Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. <sup>1</sup>Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; <sup>2</sup>A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

📖 *John 1:29* The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

📖 *Daniel 8:14* And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

"As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded....

"Thus those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform the closing work of atonement preparatory to His coming."  
—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 421, 422.

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## TIME OF THE JUDGMENT

### FRIDAY

#### **6.** How did Daniel portray these events?

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**[L]** *Daniel 7:9, 10, 13 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. <sup>10</sup>A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. <sup>13</sup>I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*

"The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 479.



## 7. What special message did the Lord send to those who would live from this time forward? Upon whom will the sins that were confessed and forgiven through Jesus' blood ultimately be placed?

 **Revelation 14:6, 7** And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, <sup>7</sup>Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

"When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty. The scapegoat was sent into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 422.

"But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is,... These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell." —*Early Writings*, p. 63.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

- *Leviticus*, chapter 16.
- *Hebrews*, chapters 7, and 9.
- *The Great Controversy*, p. 433.

"The cleansing was not a removal of physical impurities, for it was to be accomplished with blood, and therefore must be a cleansing from sin.

"But how could there be sin connected with the sanctuary, either in heaven or upon the earth?

"As the sins of the people were anciently transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary by the blood of the sin offering, so our sins are, in fact, transferred to the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Christ. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. This necessitates an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement.

"Then [in the great day of final award] by virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven." —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 206.

## LESSON 25

Sabbath, June 19, 2021

# War in the Invisible World



"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood 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."

**Daniel 10:13.**

### APPEARANCE OF A GLORIOUS, POWERFUL BEING

#### SUNDAY

**1. What did the Jews experience after they received permission from King Cyrus to return to Jerusalem in B.C. 536 and began the restoration? What did the prophet Daniel think about this?**

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*Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. <sup>4:4, 5</sup>Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, <sup>5</sup>And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

**[L] 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.*

**[L] Ezra 3:8; 4:4, 5** *Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of*

"When the temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt in the days of Ezra, the Samaritans wished to join the Jews in its erection. This privilege was refused them, and a bitter animosity sprang up between the two peoples. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Here they worshiped in accordance with the Mosaic ritual, though they did not wholly renounce idolatry." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 188.

"This verse [Daniel 10:1] introduces the last recorded vision of the prophet Daniel, the instruction imparted to him at this time being continued through Daniel 11 and 12." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 225.

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## MONDAY

**2. What did the prophet experience? Where do we find a similar description? Who was this?**

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a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: <sup>6</sup>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.

**[L] Daniel 10:4-6** And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; <sup>5</sup>Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold

**[L] Revelation 1:13-15** And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. <sup>14</sup>His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; <sup>15</sup>And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.


"No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. This description is similar to that given by John when Christ was revealed to him upon the Isle of Patmos. Our Lord now comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days. This knowledge was given to Daniel and recorded by Inspiration for us upon whom the ends of the world are come." –(The Review and Herald, February 8, 1881) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1173.

## TUESDAY

### 3. What effect did this revelation have on Daniel? What else happened at this time, and who lifted him up?

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 **Daniel 10:7-12** 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. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>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, and my face toward the ground. <sup>10</sup>And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.


"After Daniel had fallen at the majestic appearance of Christ, the angel Gabriel, obviously the speaker in verses 11-13, laid his hand upon him to give him assurance and confidence. He told Daniel that he was a man greatly beloved. Wonderful declaration! A member of the human family, one of the same race with us, loved, not merely in the general sense in which God loved the whole world when He gave His Son to die for mankind, but loved as individual, and that greatly! Well might the prophet receive confidence from such a declaration as that! He tells him, moreover, that he is come for the purpose of an interview with him, and he wishes him to bring his mind into a proper state to understand the words. Being thus assured, the holy and beloved prophet stood trembling, before the angel." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 227.


## EVIL ANGELS HINDER THE WORK

## WEDNESDAY

### 4. Why did Daniel not receive an answer during three weeks of earnest prayer and supplication? Who else spoke of such a Prince?

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 **Daniel 10:13, first part** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days...

 **Ephesians 6:11, 12** Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For we wres-

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*tle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

"While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God's people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus;..." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 571, 572.

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#### THURSDAY

### **5. Only when was the victory won in this battle between good and evil angels? What else was Daniel shown?**

 *Daniel 10:13, last part, 14 ...but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup> 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.*

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"... Before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid.... All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained;..." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 572.

"By this we see that heavenly agencies have to contend with hindrances before the purpose of God is fulfilled in its time. The king of Persia was controlled by the highest of all evil angels. He refused, as did Pharaoh, to obey the word of the Lord. Gabriel declared, He withstood me twenty-one days by his representations against the Jews. But Michael came to his help, and then he remained with the kings of Persia, holding the powers in check, giving right counsel against evil counsel. Good and evil angels are taking a part in the planning of God in His earthly kingdom. It is God's purpose to carry forward His work in correct lines, in ways that will advance His glory. But Satan is ever trying to counterwork God's purpose. Only by humbling themselves before God can God's servants advance His work. Never are they to depend on their own efforts or on outward display for success." —(Letter 201, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1173.

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## STRENGTH AND LIGHT IMPARTED


### FRIDAY

#### **6. What happened again? Did Satan and his angels finally give up?**

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 **Daniel 10:15-21** And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. <sup>16</sup>And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. <sup>17</sup>For


how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. <sup>18</sup>Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, <sup>19</sup>And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. <sup>20</sup>Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. <sup>21</sup>But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

"The prophet is at length strengthened to hear in full the communication which the angel has to make. Gabriel says, 'Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee?' Do you understand my purpose so that you will no more fear? He then announced his intention to return, as soon as his communication was complete, to fight with the king of Persia." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 230.

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### SABBATH

#### **7. Who else was shown the resistance of the evil one at that time? What work of evil powers is described as preceding Christ's coming?**

 **Zechariah 3:1-5** Me And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. <sup>2</sup>And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? <sup>3</sup>Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup>And he answered and spake unto

those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.<sup>5</sup> And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.

**Revelation 16:14** For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

"Then the Lord sent them messages of encouragement, declaring that He would deliver them from their captivity and restore them to His favor. It was this that Satan was determined prevent. A remnant of Israel had already returned to their land, and Satan was seeking to move upon the heathen nations, who were his agents, to utterly destroy them.

"As Joshua humbly pleads for the fulfillment of God's promises, Satan stands up boldly to resist him. He points to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why that people should not be restored to the favor of God. He claims them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to be destroyed....

"If the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world could be lifted, and the people of God could behold the great controversy that is going on between Christ and holy angels and Satan and his evil hosts concerning the redemption of man; if they could understand the wonderful work of God for the rescue of souls from the bondage of sin, and the constant exercise of His power for their protection from the malice of the evil one, they would be better prepared to withstand the devices of Satan." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 467, 468.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

"A most majestic being visited Daniel on this occasion. The description here given of him is almost parallel to the description of Christ in Revelation 1:14-16. Also, since the effect on Daniel was similar to that experienced by Paul and his companions when the Lord appeared to them on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-7), we conclude that Christ Himself appeared to Daniel. We learn in verse 13 that Michael had come to assist Gabriel in influencing the Persian king. How natural then that He should show Himself to Daniel on this occasion." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 226.

"The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass." —(Letter 57, 1896) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1166.

Please read the Missionary Report  
for Radio Programming on page 158.

## LESSON 26

Sabbath, June 26, 2021

# Daniel's Last Vision



*"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Daniel 12:1.*

In the eleventh chapter of the book of Daniel is a detailed description of the different rulers of the world empires briefly described in chapters 2, 7, and 8. Because in their general lines we have already studied them, we will focus on the most important events for the time of the end.

## PERSECUTION

### SUNDAY

**1. What was the fate of many faithful people of God during the 1,260-year period of papal persecution? What did the Lord in mercy send to His children?**

**[L] Daniel 11:33, 34, first part** *And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.<sup>34</sup> Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help:...*

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"The long period of papal persecution against those who were struggling to maintain the truth and instruct their fellow men in ways of righteousness, is here brought to view. The number of the days during which they were thus to fall is given in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5. The period is called 'a time, and times, and the dividing of time;'



time, times, and a half; 'a thousand two hundred and threescore days;' and 'forty and two months.' All these expressions are various ways of denoting the same 1260 years of papal supremacy." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 279.

## MONDAY

### **2. What did Jesus say concerning this time of persecution? How did Satan seek to destroy the work of Reformation?**

📖 **Matthew 24:21, 22** For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.<sup>22</sup> And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

📖 **Daniel 11:34, last part** ... but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

📖 **Acts 20:30** Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

"The persecution of the church did not continue throughout the entire period of the 1260 years. God in mercy to His people cut short the time of their fiery trial. In foretelling the 'great tribulation' to befall the church, the Saviour said: 'Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.' Through the influence of the Reformation the persecution was brought to an end prior to 1798....

"But Satan was not idle. He now attempted what he has attempted in every other reformatory movement—to deceive and destroy the people by palming off upon them a counterfeit in place of the true work. As there were false christs in the first century of the Christian church, so there arose false prophets in the sixteenth century.

"A few men, deeply affected by the excitement in the religious world, imagined themselves to have received special revelations from Heaven, and claimed to have been divinely commissioned to carry forward to its completion the Reformation which, they declared, had been but feebly begun by Luther. In truth, they were undoing the very work which he had accomplished....

"The Romanists now regained their confidence and exclaimed exultingly: 'One last struggle, and all will be ours.'" –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 266, 267, 186, 187.

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## TUESDAY

### 3. Did the persecution finally end?

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 **Daniel 11:35** And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

"In Revelation 12, where this same papal persecution is brought to view, we read that the earth helped the woman by opening her mouth and swallowing up the flood which the dragon cast out after her. The Protestant Reformation let by Martin Luther and his co-workers furnished the help here foretold. The German states espoused the Protestant cause, protected the reformers, and restrained the work of persecution carried on by the papal church. But when the Protestants were helped, and when their cause began to be popular, many were to cleave unto them with flatteries, or embrace the faith from unworthy motives....

"Though restrained, the spirit of persecution was not destroyed. It broke whenever there was opportunity." –Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 279.

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## FRANCE'S ROLE

### WEDNESDAY


### 4. What did France earn for its crimes in the service of the papacy? Who took military power for himself in the middle of this confusion?

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himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. <sup>37</sup>Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. <sup>38</sup>But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. <sup>39</sup>Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.

 **Daniel 11:36-39** And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify

"The cruelties that were inflicted upon the innocent Protestants by the Catholics accumulated in a weight of retribution, and in after centuries wrought the very doom they had predicted to be impending, upon the king, his government, and his subjects;... It was ... the suppression, of Protestantism, that, three hundred years later, was to bring upon France these dire calamities....

"The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror, did wage such a war against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed....

"'Intimately connected with these laws affecting religion, was that which reduced the union of marriage—the most sacred engagement which human beings can form, and the permanence of which leads most strongly to the consolidation of society—to the state of a mere civil contract of a transitory character, which any two persons might engage in and cast loose at pleasure.'" —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 226, 227, 273, 270.

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## KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH

Beginning the section of Daniel 11:40-43, which makes reference to "the time of the end," the following comment is given: "After a long interval, the king of the south and the king of the north again appear on the stage of action." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 289.

### THURSDAY

**5. What will the king of the north do at the end of time in a battle that is still in the future? What important sign is this for the believers?**

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**[L] Daniel 11:44, 45; 12:1, first part** But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. <sup>45</sup>And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. <sup>12:1</sup>And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble

"As we see the divine predictions meeting their fulfillment in history, our faith is strengthened in the final accomplishment of God's prophetic word.

"The prophecy of verse 45 centers in that power known as the king of the north...

"It is predicted of the king of the north that 'he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' Just how and when and where his end will come, we may watch with solemn interest, knowing that the hand of Providence guides the destiny of nations." —Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 299.

This prophecy points to the fact that the king of the north in the time of the end will transfer his seat ("the tabernacle of his palace") to Jerusalem. This city, according to the Scriptures, is represented as the holy mountain situated between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea.

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## FINAL EVENTS

### FRIDAY

#### **6. What will then end, and what will begin? What will happen before Jesus returns?**

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**[L] Revelation 22:11** *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be right-*

*eous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

**[L] Daniel 12:1 last part, 2, 3 ... and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. <sup>2</sup>And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. <sup>3</sup>And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.**

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.... Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose....

"Graves are opened, and 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. 'They also which pierced Him' (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient." —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 614, 637.

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## EARNEST STUDY AND PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

### SABBATH

#### **7. What was to happen to the vision? What assurance was given to the faithful servant of God?**

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**[L] Daniel 12:4, 8-13** *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. <sup>8</sup>And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these*

things? <sup>9</sup>And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup>And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken

away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.<sup>12</sup>Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. <sup>13</sup> But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures.... The promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. 'The wise shall understand' (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God's people all through the centuries, the promise is, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.' Revelation 1:3." —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 547, 548.



### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

*"The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which every one should understand. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves."* —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 949.

*"All should see the necessity of understanding the truth for themselves individually. We must understand the doctrines that have been studied out carefully and prayerfully. It has been revealed to me that there is among our people a great lack of knowledge in regard to the rise and progress of the third angel's message. There is great need to search the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation, and learn the texts thoroughly, that we may know what is written."* —*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 392.

*"When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart."* —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 114.



## MISSIONARY REPORT FOR RADIO PROGRAMMING

To be read on Sabbath, June 26, 2021

The Special Sabbath School Offering  
will be gathered on Sabbath, July 3, 2021

Dear brothers and sisters in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world, receive my cordial greetings from the word of God in Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

In today's world, the church faces a tremendous challenge related to the influence of newly developed means of mass communication—radio, television, Internet, cell phones, social networks, and more. New technologies in these areas have modified and globalized people's lifestyles. The church needs to take advantage of these opportunities immediately.

Media provide a platform, a broader pulpit, to reach wide audiences. These advances in communication allow the church to reach areas that have been closed until now and speak to people who could hear the gospel in no other way.

Using the Zoom platform during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have had the opportunity to reach audiences of more than a thousand attendees. We have reached not only church members but also supporters and people who joined us for the first time to hear the heavenly message.

Being able to reach large numbers of people with a single message is something exciting, something that should inspire us to reach every corner of the cities, towns, and villages in every country. We praise God that today we thus enter houses, offices, factories, schools, and even cars. Through radio transmission, many people who would not dream of entering a church, attend a missionary campaign, or open the doors of their homes to a gospel messenger hear the message of Christ without prejudice. We are sure that many of these listeners, through the work of the Holy Spirit, will come to the faith and bear witness to the changes made in their lives after hearing a radio or Internet program.

At present, it is not possible for us to have our own radio stations, for the cost is high. Every time a broadcast is sent out, our brethren must pay for the

radio spots to preach the gospel message in new areas. The results of such radio programs are seen in the new souls who have been baptized.

Taking into account the effectiveness of radio projects carried out in various countries, the General Conference wishes to support these initiatives to promote the progress of the work. However, paying monthly costs is in many cases impossible. That is why today we want to touch the hearts of each one of you so that you can support these programs worldwide. If each of us contributes a small amount to sustain the proclamation of the gospel through mass media, we will be carrying out the church's mission and thus hastening our Saviour's soon return, which is our most important task.

Therefore, we extend to all of our fellow believers and friends a cordial invitation to give a generous offering next Sabbath for this ministry. Your contributions will contribute to the spread of the gospel to every nation, tribe, language, and people and will be recorded in the heavenly treasury.

May the Eternal One bless every freewill, loving contribution and fulfill His promise, "Give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6:38), in every heart that responds to this appeal today. Christ is coming soon! God bless all of His people.

—Humberto Avellaneda Blanco  
General Conference Vice President



HEAVENLY MESSAGES IN  
**THE BOOK OF  
DANIEL**

The book of the prophet Daniel, written in the sixth century B.C., contains heavenly messages for the last days—our days. "... Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. And the writings of the Spirit of prophecy confirm this: "... Since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 356.

