STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

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Roy F. Cottrell

THE BLESSING OF DAILY STUDY

"The beauty and riches of the Word have a transforming influence on mind and character."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 132.

"There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. . . . If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times."—*Steps to Christ,* page 90.

My Daily Lesson Study Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

Name .....

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. Opportunity, Apostasy, and Exile
2. The King of Heaven and the Kings of Babylon
3. The King of Heaven and the Kings of Persia
4. God's Purpose for Israel After the Exile
5. Great Empires of Prophecy
6. The Great Tyrant of Prophecy
7. Christ Provides the Master Key
8. Unlocking the Mysteries of Daniel's Prophecies
9. Christ Our Great High Priest
10. The Reign of Antichrist
11. Christ Our Righteous Judge
12. Christ Our King

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Introduction

The focal point of the book of Daniel is the climax of earth's history, when time blends into eternity and the transient kingdoms of this world become the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Looking forward to that grand event, however, the angel of prophecy cautions Daniel that those who live for God and look with longing hearts for the establishment of His righteous reign on earth must pass through a period of gross apostasy and bitter persecution. Through the nations of earth Satan will oppose God's purpose and oppress His faithful people.

A careful study of the books of Daniel and the Revelation is most important in our time. Note the following:

"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."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 547.

"The light that Daniel received from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw, . . . are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass. . . .

"When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 113.

"We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Many of the prophecies are about to be fulfilled in quick succession."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 116.

"We need to study the working out of God's purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, that we may estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen; that we may learn what is the true aim of life; that, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may put them to their truest and noblest use. Thus, learning here the principles of His kingdom and becoming its subjects and citizens, we may be prepared at His coming to enter with Him into its possession."—*Education,* page 184.

It would be impossible to compress within the limited space of twelve brief lessons all that might be said about the book of Daniel. Those who wish a more complete understanding of its message for the church today will find a variety of references listed for enrichment. In a number of instances additional Scripture references are given following the notation, "See also."

Because the book of Daniel was written long ago when the Jews were still God's chosen people, its words, expressions, and concepts may often seem unfamiliar. Furthermore, much of it reflects a historical situation that is more or less strange to us, and many of its predictions have already met their fulfillment in the great empires of antiquity and down through the centuries since the fall of Rome. Historical perspective is helpful in seeing the various predictions in relation to each other. To provide such a perspective, the introductions to some lessons are somewhat longer than usual. These introductions are intended to provide a helpful background for the study of the respective lessons.

The first six chapters of Daniel are largely a narrative of Daniel's experiences during the Babylonian exile. This narrative presents God at work behind the scenes of history to accomplish His beneficent purpose for His people and for this world. The last six chapters report a series of visions concerning future events from Daniel's day down to the close of time. The first four of this quarter's lessons focus on the historical section of Daniel, with a backward glance at God's purpose for His people Israel and a forward glance at His purpose for them upon their return from exile.

Lessons 5 and 6 present a composite summary of all of the information Gabriel imparted to Daniel, without attempting (in these two lessons) to interpret it. Lessons 7 through 12 turn to the New Testament for the interpretation and application of the prophecies of Daniel given by Christ and the various New Testament writers.

Opportunity, Apostasy, and Exile

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deut. 7:6.

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 1.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 284-290; "Prophets and Kings," pages 479-490; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary" on references cited, and Vol. 4, pp. 25-38; "S.D.A. Bible Dictionary" and "S.D.A. Bible Students' Source Book" on persons, places, and events.

STUDY AIM: To review God's purpose for Israel as a nation and in the Babylonian exile, as a background for understanding the book of Daniel; to become acquainted with Daniel as God's man for the hour.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Glorious Opportunity

1. Israel's unique privilege. Ex. 19: 3-8; Deut. 7:6.
2. The covenant blessings. Deut. 28:2-13.
3. The covenant conditions. Deut. 28:1, 2, 13, 14.
4. A sacred trust. Gen. 22:18; Deut. 28:10.

II. A Dismal Failure

5. A knowledge of God's purpose. Rom. 3:1, 2; Jer. 35:15.
6. The Lord's vineyard. Isa. 5:1, 2; 27:6.
7. Wild grapes. Isa. 5:2-7; Ezek. 22:23-31.

III. Banished to Babylon

8. The reason for the Babylonian exile. Deut. 29:24-28; Dan. 9:5-12.
9. Purpose of the exile. Deut. 30:1-3; Jer. 30:11.
10. Hope for the future. Jer. 32. 37-42.

IV. God's Man for the Hour

11. Daniel in exile. Dan. 1:1-6.
12. Daniel's character and personality. Dan. 5:11, 14; 6:3, 4.
13. Qualifications for the prophetic office. Dan. 1:17.

THE LESSON

Introduction

As a background for studying the book of Daniel, this lesson reviews God's glorious purpose for Israel as His chosen people in Old Testament times, the situation that made the Babylonian exile necessary, and God's purpose in it. Attention is also given to His choice of Daniel to be Heaven's ambassador at the court of Babylon, and to be the recipient of timely messages for His people, upon their return from exile and during future generations. Understanding what the visions and the words of Gabriel meant to Daniel and his contemporaries, we may discern in them a new vividness and beauty, and thus be better prepared to gather from them their deeper lessons for ourselves today. (See *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 1.)

A Glorious Opportunity

1. To what unique privilege and favored role did God call Israel of old? Ex. 19:3-8; Deut. 7:6.

NOTE.—At Mount Sinai God invited Israel as a nation to enter into a special covenant relationship with Him. They accepted Him as their sovereign ruler and promised to be *His* people and to cooperate with His purposes for them.

"From a race of slaves the Israelites had been exalted above all peoples, to be the peculiar treasure of the King of kings."—*Patriarches and Prophets,* page 314.

"They entered into a solemn covenant with God, pledging themselves to accept Him as their ruler, by which they became, in a special sense, the subjects of His authority."—*Ibid.,* p. 303.

2. What unique blessings did God promise Israel through the covenant relationship? Deut. 28:2-13. See also 4:6; 7:12-15; 8:17, 18; 30:9.

NOTE.—God purposed to make Israel an example of the infinite superiority of the way of life that He, as man's Creator, had ordained—a living demonstration that in cooperation with Him man can attain to the loftiest heights of which he is capable, and find supreme happiness. To this end God purposed to bless His people with perfect health, vigorous intellect, and superior vocational skills. As a result, they would enjoy the highest standard of living of any nation and become, in every way, the greatest nation on the face of the earth. He would instruct them as to how they might attain these objectives, and they on their part were to cooperate with His wise instructions. To their best efforts God promised to add Heaven's richest blessing, and in life and character they were to reflect His principles to the world. See *Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 288, 289; *Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 378.

3. What conditions did God attach to the covenant privilege and blessings? What did He expect in return? Deut. 28:1, 2, 13; 14. See also Deut. 4:9; Jer. 18:7-10.

NOTE.—As with all of God's promises and warnings, the covenant blessings were conditional upon Israel's cooperation. Again and again we find the word "if" attached to the promised blessings. "It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional." —*Evangelism,* page 695.

4. What sacred trust accompanied the covenant privileges and blessings? Gen. 22:18; Deut. 28:10. See also Deut. 4:6, 7.

NOTE.—"God had separated them from the world, that He might commit to them a sacred trust. He had made them the depositaries of His law, and He purposed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself. Thus the light of Heaven was to shine out to a world enshrouded in darkness, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living God." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 314.

A Dismal Failure

5. What unique opportunity did Israel have for knowing and cooperating with God's infinite purpose for them as a nation? Rom. 3:1, 2; Jer. 35:15.

NOTE.—In the priceless gift of Holy Writ, God entrusted His people with the key to heaven's treasure-house of wisdom and knowledge. As they cooperated with His revealed word, they would realize the most amazing progress in all lines of life and endeavor. "To this people were committed the oracles of God. They were hedged about by the precepts of His law, the everlasting principles of truth, justice, and purity. Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 287, 288.

6. By what picturesque parable did Isaiah illustrate Israel's favored role in Old Testament times? Isa. 5:1, 2; 27:6.

NOTE.—"In obedience to His moral law the hearts of the people were to reflect the attributes of His character."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 289.

"This was the fruit that God desired from His people. In the purity of their characters, in the holiness of their lives, in their mercy and loving-kindness and compassion, they were to show that 'the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' Ps. 19:7."—*Ibid.,* p. 286.

"God desired to make of His people Israel a praise and a glory. Every spiritual advantage was given them. God withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of character that would make them representatives of Himself."—*Ibid.,* p. 288.

7. How did Israel respond to God's purpose for them as a nation, and to what crisis did this course of action eventually lead? Isa. 5:2-7; Ezek. 22: 23-31.

NOTE.—Instead of the mature fruit of character God sought from His people, they brought forth the same corrupt fruit as the nations about them. Occasional efforts at reform proved to be feeble and transitory, and as the centuries passed the nation lapsed ever deeper into the darkness of apostasy. "From the time of their entrance to the land of Canaan, they departed from the commandments of God, and followed the ways of the heathen. It was in vain that God sent them warning by His prophets. In vain they suffered the chastisement of heathen oppression. Every reformation was followed by deeper apostasy."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 28.

Again and again God warned His people that the result of continued disobedience would be exile from their homeland. These warnings were fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar overturned the kingdom of Judah and carried the Jews captive to Babylon.

Banished to Babylon

8. Why did God remove His people from the land He had given them to possess forever? Deut. 29:24-28; Dan. 9:5-12. See also Ezra 5:12.

NOTE.—The Hebrew people had inherited the Land of Promise by virtue of their covenant with God, but they came to think of it as theirs by right. As a last resort, and to impress them with the lesson that the covenant privileges and blessings, including the Land of Promise, were theirs only by virtue of the covenant relationship, God removed them from the land for a time.

9. What was God's purpose for Israel in the Babylonian exile? Deut. 30:1-3; Jer. 30:11.

NOTE.—"The remnant of Judah were to go into captivity, to learn through adversity the lessons they had refused to learn under circumstances more favorable." —*Prophets and Kings,* page 453.

"Had Israel been true to God, He could have accomplished His purpose through their honor and exaltation. . . . But because of their unfaithfulness, God's purpose could be wrought out only through continued adversity and humiliation."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 28.

10. What did the future hold in store for Israel if they learned the lesson the exile was designed to teach? Jer. 32:37-42. See also Deut. 30:4-10; Zech. 10:6.

NOTE.—God purposed, after seventy years of exile, to restore His people to the Land of Promise, to renew His covenant, and to carry out His original plan for them. All that had been promised might yet come to pass if they learned the lesson that bitter experience was designed to teach.

"This promise of blessing should have met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the

Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God's design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second coming."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 703, 704.

God's Man for the Hour

11. What personal information does Daniel give concerning himself as an exile? Dan. 1:1-6.

12. What character and personality traits that qualified Daniel to be God's ambassador at the court of Babylon impressed his captors and won their confidence? Dan. 5:11, 14; 6:3, 4. See also Dan. 1:4, 8, 9, 15, 17, 20; 2:14, 30, 46-48; 4:19.

NOTE.—"God brought Daniel and his associates into connection with the great men of Babylon, that in the midst of a nation of idolaters they might represent His character. How did they become fitted for a position of so great trust and honor? It was faithfulness in little things that gave complexion to their whole life. They honored God in the smallest duties, as well as in the larger responsibilities."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 487.

13. What were Daniel's qualifications for being entrusted with a revelation of God's purpose for His people after the exile? Dan. 1:17. See also Dan. 6:7-10; 9:2, 17-19, 23.

NOTE.—In addition to the basic character traits already mentioned, Daniel evidently had a thorough knowledge of God's will as revealed to His servants the prophets in times past. See Dan. 9:2, 6, 10-13. The mature philosophy of history reflected in his book characterizes him as a keen observer of God's dealings with the nations. He was wholly devoted to God's cause on earth.

Lesson 2, for January 14, 1967

The King of Heaven and the Kings of Babylon

MEMORY VERSE: "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Dan. 4:17.

SCRIPTURES: Daniel 2:1-30, 46-49; 3; 4; 5.

STUDY HELPS: "Education," pages 173-184; "Prophets and Kings," pages 491-538; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary" on references cited, and Vol. 4, pp. 751, 752; "S.D.A. Bible Dictionary" and "S.D.A. Bible Students' Source Book" on persons, places, and events.

STUDY AIM: To trace the steps by which Nebuchadnezzar was won to believe in the true God, and God's dealings with the Babylonian Empire as an illustration of the principles of His dealings with all nations.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Lord of Kings

1. Daniel as prime minister of Babylon. Dan. 1:19; 2:48.
2. Incompetence of the Babylonian gods. Dan. 2:1-25.
3. Nebuchadnezzar learns about the true God. Dan. 2:26-30, 36, 37.
4. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God's wisdom. Dan. 2:47.

II. The King's Word Changed

5. Nebuchadnezzar challenges God's revealed will. Dan. 3:1-7.
6. God frustrates Nebuchadnezzar's plan. Dan. 3:8-27.
7. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God's power. Dan. 3:28, 29.

III. The Most High Rules

8. Nebuchadnezzar ignores God. Dan. 4:4, 27-30.
9. God's purpose for civil government. Dan. 4:5-17.
10. Nebuchadnezzar learns the supreme lesson of life. Dan. 4:28-33.
11. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God's sovereignty. Dan. 4:32, 34-37.

IV. Weighed and Found Wanting

12. Belshazzar defies God. Dan. 5:1-4.
13. Belshazzar seals Babylon's doom. Dan. 5:22, 23.
14. The fall of Babylon. Dan. 5:25-31.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The historical section of the book of Daniel (chs. 1 to 6), which serves as a preface to the prophetic section (chs. 7 to 12), illustrates the true philosophy of history by providing a detailed account of God's dealings with the empires of Babylonia and Persia. An understanding of the principles here set forth helps to explain the rise and fall of the other nations presented in the prophetic section.

The first four chapters of the book narrate the steps by which God eventually won Nebuchadnezzar's wholehearted allegiance. Daniel, God's personal ambassador to the court of Babylon, is introduced as a man of vigorous health, giant intellect, tactful personality, and, above all, loyalty to principle. His outstanding character and ability won Nebuchadnezzar's esteem and confidence. Then came a series of providential episodes—the dream of the metallic image, the fiery furnace, and the seven years of insanity—through which God revealed Himself to the king. In the first of these experiences he learned that Daniel's God is "a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets"; in the second, that He is able to protect those who are loyal to Him, and to change the king's word; and in the third, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will."

With all of this Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar was acquainted, but he refused to humble his heart before God as his illustrious grandfather had done. As a result, Babylon was weighed in the divine balances, found wanting, and given by divine mandate to the Medes and the Persians.

A Lord of Kings

1. In what capacity did Daniel serve the king of Babylon? Dan. 1:19; 2:48.

NOTE.—"In the land of their captivity these men [Christian patriots, among whom were Daniel and his friends] were to carry out God's purpose by giving to heathen nations the blessings that come through a knowledge of Jehovah. They were to be His representatives."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 479.

> "Self-sacrifice is the keynote of Christ's teachings."—*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 25.

2. Relate briefly the circumstances under which God first revealed Himself to Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 2:1-25.

NOTE.—In this lesson we are concerned primarily with the narrative of Daniel 2; the interpretation of the dream of the metallic image is the subject of Lesson 5.

In order to convince Nebuchadnezzar that this dream was, indeed, a revelation from a God superior to all the gods he knew, it was first necessary to demonstrate that his gods and his wise men were powerless to provide him with the information he so eagerly desired. Things were therefore permitted to reach a climax in which the strongest possible incentives, honor or death, proved unavailing. In their extremity the wise men were finally compelled to admit that the solution to the king's dilemma lay in the hands of a God of whom they had no knowledge and over whom they had no influence. Only then was the king in a state of mind to appreciate and benefit by Daniel's solution to the problem.

3. In what tactful way did Daniel introduce Nebuchadnezzar to the true God? Dan. 2:26-30, 36, 37.

4. What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God through this experience? Dan. 2:47.

NOTE.—The fact that the wisest men of the realm failed to reveal the royal dream, but that Daniel was able to do so—completely and accurately—convinced the king of the infinite superiority of Daniel's God over his own gods. The first thing Nebuchadnezzar learned about the true God was that He is "a revealer of secrets" (ch. 2:47), not in the relatively simple sense of solving enigmas, but in the deeper sense of providing the right answers to the major problems of life and empire.

The King's Word Changed

5. By what special ceremony did Nebuchadnezzar seek to advance his rulership? Dan. 3:1-7.

NOTE.—"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. . . .

"For a time afterward, Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the fear of God; but his heart was not yet cleansed from worldly ambition and a desire for self-exaltation. The prosperity attending his reign filled him with pride. In time he ceased to honor God, and resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry.

"The words, 'Thou art this head of gold,' had made a deep impression upon the ruler's mind. Verse 38. The wise men of his 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.

"Pleased with the flattering suggestion, he determined to carry it out, and to go even farther. 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,* pages 503, 504.

6. By what experience or series of events did God indicate to Nebuchadnezzar that he could not with impunity oppose the divine will? Dan. 3:8-27.

7. Through this experience what did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God? Dan. 3:28, 29.

The Most High Rules

8. How did pride and prosperity affect the king's attitude toward what he knew about God? Dan. 4:4, 27-30.

NOTE.—Nebuchadnezzar forgot that his splendid accomplishments were not really his own, but that he was accountable to the God of heaven for the wisdom and skill that produced his brilliant military, architectural, and administrative triumphs.

9. How did God remind the king of his responsibility for the prosperity he enjoyed, especially in view of his knowledge of the divine purpose for him? Dan. 4:5-17.

10. Through what difficult experience did Nebuchadnezzar learn the supreme lesson of his life? Dan. 4: 28-33.

NOTE.—From supreme monarch, Nebuchadnezzar was to be reduced to the society of dumb beasts, to eat as they eat, and to lodge with them under the open sky. His brilliant intellect was to be reduced to the instinctive processes of their extremely limited minds. Could pride take a greater tumble?

Insanity descends upon the brilliant mind of the king, obliterating everything. Reason departs; the mental faculties fail. The light of intelligence fades from his eyes, and in its place there remains nought but the blank, glassy stare that marks the dumb brute, and with it an elemental desire for a few blades of grass to eat and a pile of straw on which to spend the night. No longer does Nebuchadnezzar envision himself as the builder of Babylon and the ruler of a vast empire whose borders touch the ends of the earth. He is an ox!

11. What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God through this experience? Dan. 4:32, 34-37.

NOTE.—"The once proud monarch had become a humble child of God; the tyrannical, overbearing ruler, a wise and compassionate king. He who had defied and blasphemed the God of heaven, now acknowledged the power of the Most High, and earnestly sought to promote the fear of Jehovah and the happiness of his subjects. Under the rebuke of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Nebuchadnezzar had learned at last the lesson which all rulers need to learn—that true greatness consists in true goodness."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 521.

Weighed and Found Wanting

12. How did the last king of Babylon demonstrate his utter defiance of the God of heaven? Dan. 5:1-4.

NOTE.—This orgy was staged in mockery of the God of Israel.

13. What attitude on the part of Belshazzar sealed Babylon's doom? Dan. 5:22, 23.

14. What divine decree was finally issued against Babylon? With what result? Dan. 5:25-31.

NOTE.—"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.

"While nations have rejected God's principles, and in this rejection have wrought their own ruin, yet a divine, overruling purpose has manifestly been at work throughout the ages."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 535.

Lesson 3, for January 21, 1967

The King of Heaven and the Kings of Persia

MEMORY VERSE: "Cyrus . . . 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." Isa. 44:28.

SCRIPTURES: Daniel 6; 9:1-25; 10:1-6, 20.

STUDY HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," pages 539-581, 607-645; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary" on references cited, and Vol. 3, pp. 67-79; "S.D.A. Bible Dictionary" and "S.D.A. Bible Students' Source Book" on persons, places, and events.

STUDY AIM: To trace God's dealings with Darius and Cyrus, and the influences that led to the royal decrees to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. God Makes Himself Known to Darius

1. Daniel at the Persian court. Dan. 6:1-4, 28.
2. God introduces Himself to Darius. Dan. 6:4-23.
3. Darius asknowledges the true God. Dan. 6:25-27.

II. Expiration of the Seventy Years of Exile

4. Exile and restoration both foretold. Dan. 9:2, 6, 11-13.
5. Daniel's intercessory prayer. Dan. 9:3-5, 17, 19.
6. God's answer to Daniel's prayer. Dan. 9:20-25.

III. The Decree to Restore and Build

7. Isaiah's prediction. Isa. 44:24-28; 45:1, 13.
8. The decree of Cyrus. Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13-15.
9. A mysterious crisis. Dan. 10:13, 20.

IV. The Work of Restoration Completed

10. The decree of Darius. Ezra 6:7, 8.
11. The temple completed. Ezra 6: 13-15.
12. The decree of Artaxerxes. Ezra 7:1, 6, 8, 11, 13.
13. The wall completed. Neh. 4:16-18; 6:1-3, 15, 16.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The fall of Babylon and the coming of Cyrus foreshadowed the imminent fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah (Isa. 44: 24-28; 45:1-13) and Jeremiah (Jer. 29:4-14). In anticipation of the release of His people and the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, God introduced Himself to Darius as He formerly had to Nebuchadnezzar. The experience of the lions' den brought Daniel favorably to the attention of the Persian rulers, and evidently opened the way for an opportunity to bring the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah to their attention (see Ezra 1:2). As Nebuchadnezzar had been God's servant in causing the exile, so Cyrus became His servant in effecting their restoration.

God Makes Himself Known to Darius

1. What was Daniel's official position and reputation under the new government of Persia? Dan. 6:1-4, 28.

NOTE.—Darius the Mede, so Daniel relates, "set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps," or local governors, to administer its affairs, and over these satraps, "three presidents, of whom Daniel was one." As might be expected, Daniel was soon "distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him." Dan. 6:1-3, R.S.V. His obvious sincerity, integrity, and faithfulness to duty, and his gracious personality won the confidence and trust of the Medes and Persians as it had that of the Chaldeans.

2. Relate the experience by which God introduced Himself to Darius. Dan. 6:4-23.

3. Through this experience what did Darius learn about the true God? Dan. 6:25-27.

NOTE.—"In delivering Daniel from the lions' den, God demonstrated His power and authority before the rulers of the Persian Empire (see ch. 6:20-23; PK 557) as He had previously before those of Babylon. An edict of Darius the Mede acknowledged 'the living God' and admitted that He is 'steadfast for ever' (v. 26). Even 'the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not' (v. 8), was obliged to yield before the decrees of 'the Most High,' who 'ruleth in the kingdom of men' (ch. 4:32)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 4, p. 752.

> "'Time is money,' and a waste of time is a waste of money to the cause of God. . . . If all would use their time to the best account, very much means would be saved to the cause of truth."—*Testimonies,* Vol. 4, p. 451.

Expiration of the Seventy Years of Exile

4. As Daniel studied the writings of Moses and the prophets, what did he learn about the exile? Dan. 9:2, 6, 11-13. Compare Deut. 4:25-31; 28:15, 63, 64.

NOTE.—As Daniel studied the writings of Moses and the prophets, especially Jeremiah—the canonical Scriptures of his day—he came to understand the reason for the captivity and God's purpose in it, and the fact that the end of the appointed time of exile was at hand. As a result, he interceded with God on behalf of his people, that the promise of release and restoration might be fulfilled.

5. What burden lay heavily on Daniel's heart? List the main points in his intercessory prayer. Dan. 9:3-5, 17, 19.

NOTE.—The ninth chapter of Daniel is dated to the first year of Darius, whose reign is thought to have lasted only about one year. The prayer experience of chapter 6 thus came within the same year as that of chapter 9. In the lions' den episode Satan evidently sought to thwart the release and restoration of the Jews by destroying Daniel, who was in a key position to influence the Persian rulers to cooperate with God's purpose.

Like Moses at Sinai, Daniel intercedes on behalf of his people. Confessing their sins, he pleads that God will cause His face to shine upon Jerusalem, which is desolate. He mentions the writings of Moses and the prophets and their predictions of the exile, its duration, and the release from it. He cites, as the reason for the exile, Israel's perverse refusal to cooperate with God. The exile was disciplinary in nature and would come to an end when those who were exiled had learned the lesson it was designed to teach. God is merciful and forgiving as well as just,

and as He once delivered His people from Egyptian slavery, so surely He will deliver them from exile in Babylon.

6. What answer came as Daniel prayed? How complete was the restoration promised? Dan. 9:20-25.

NOTE.—The moment Daniel began to pray, God began to answer his prayer. The angel Gabriel was dispatched to inform the praying prophet that the order for the release of the exiles had been issued in heaven, and that it would soon become effective in a "commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." Dan. 9:25.

The Decree to Restore and Build

7. What prediction had Isaiah made concerning Cyrus nearly two centuries prior to this decree? Isa. 44:24-28; 45:1, 13.

NOTE.—"The deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions had been used of God to create a favorable impression upon the mind of Cyrus the Great. . . . And now, just at the time God had said He would cause His temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, with which Daniel was so familiar, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty.

"As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; . . . his heart was profoundly moved, and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah." —*Prophets and Kings,* pages 557, 558.

8. What did the decree of Cyrus specify with respect to the Jews and to Jerusalem? Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13-15.

9. What allusion is made to a crisis that arose during the third year of Cyrus? Dan. 10:13, 20. Compare verses 2, 3.

NOTE.—"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; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid. . . . The victory was finally gained; the forces of the enemy were held in check all the days of Cyrus, and all the days of his son Cambyses, who reigned about seven and half years."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 571, 572.

The Work of Restoration Completed

10. When enemies hindered the work of rebuilding, what providential decree was issued? Ezra 6:7, 8.

NOTE.—The Samaritans induced the False Smerdis (an unscrupulous impostor called Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7), to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city. The work came to a halt, and discouragement pervaded the hearts of the returned exiles. But God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage them, and in faith they began to work on the temple again despite the harassment of the Samaritans and a royal edict to the contrary. Providentially, Darius Hystaspes, who had succeeded the False Smerdis on the throne of Persia, issued a decree ordering the rebuilding of the temple to proceed.

11. Under what circumstances was the temple finally completed? Ezra 6:13-15. Compare Jer. 39:1, 2, 8.

NOTE.—Jerusalem fell and was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, about July 19, 586 B.C. The temple was completed a little more than 70 years later in the sixth year of Darius the Great, or about March 12, 515 B.C.

12. What did the decree of Artaxerxes, issued in 457 B.C., specify? Who supervised its execution? Ezra 7:1, 6, 8, 11, 13.

NOTE.—The reign of Artaxerxes "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 reformations 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,* page 607.

13. Under what circumstances was the city wall completed? Who led out in this project? Neh. 4:16-18; 6:1-3, 15, 16.

NOTE.—"By messengers from Judea, the Hebrew patriot learned that days of trial had come to Jerusalem, the chosen city. The returned exiles were suffering affliction and reproach. The temple and portions of the city had been rebuilt; but the work of restoration was hindered, the temple services were disturbed, and the people kept in constant alarm, by the fact that the walls of the city were still largely in ruins."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 628, 629.

"Notwithstanding the plots of enemies, open and secret, the work of building went steadily forward, and in less than two months from the time of Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem, the city was girded with its defenses, and the builders could walk upon the walls, and look down upon their defeated and astonished foes."—*Ibid.,* p. 657.

The wall was completed in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, September 21, 444 B.C.

Lesson 4, for January 28, 1967

God's Purpose for Israel After the Exile

MEMORY VERSE: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek. 36:26.

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 9:24-27.

STUDY HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," pages 703-721; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary" on references cited, and Vol. 4, pp. 28-32.

STUDY AIM: To understand and appreciate God's purpose for the salvation of the world through the Jewish people during the restoration era that followed the Babylonian exile.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Seventy "Weeks of Years"

1. Seventy "weeks of years" allotted the Jewish nation. Dan. 9:24.
2. The restoration decree. Dan. 9:25; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:14; 7:1, 8-13.
3. Events during the seventy "weeks of years." Dan. 9:24-27.

II. The Restoration Era

4. God's purpose for the restoration era. Ezek. 36:11, 24-28.
5. All of God's promises to be fulfilled. Zech. 1:16, 17; 2:4, 5, 10-12; 6:15.
6. Israel's witness to the true God. Isa. 60:1-3.
7. The river of salvation. Ezek. 47:1-12.
8. The nations respond. Zech. 2:11; 8:20-23.

III. A Light to the Nations

IV. The Coming of Messiah

9. "Messiah the Prince." Dan. 9:25.
10. "Behold, thy King cometh." Zech. 9:9.
11. The fountain of salvation. Zech. 12:10; 13:1, 6, 7.

V. The Kingdom of Messiah

12. The establishment of everlasting righteousness. Dan. 9:24; Micah 4:1, 2, 7-10.
13. Inauguration of the Messianic kingdom. Zech. 14:1-4, 8, 9, 16.

THE LESSON

Introduction

According to Daniel 9:24, R.S.V., seventy "weeks of years," or 490 years, dating from the restoration decree, were allotted the Jews in which to fulfill their appointed mission as the covenant people. This is known as the restoration era. As the inspired writers make abundantly clear, it was God's purpose that the good news of salvation should go to all the world during this period of time, and that Messiah should come, die for His people, rise again, and establish His eternal kingdom. What God is accomplishing through His church on earth today, He originally purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, during the restoration era. See *Prophets and Kings,* pages 713, 714.

Much additional information about God's purpose for the returned exiles is provided by other Old Testament writers of the captivity-restoration era. Their perspective is helpful in understanding how, in the purpose of God, the prophecies of Daniel could—and would—have been fulfilled to literal Israel had her rulers and people proved faithful to their covenant privileges and responsibilities. This insight into what might have been, provides a firm basis for understanding the way in which Christ and the New Testament writers later interpreted and applied these same prophecies, once the Jewish nation had ceased to be God's chosen instrument for the conversion of the world.

The Seventy "Weeks of Years"

1. What period of time was allotted the Jews after the exile in which to measure up to their covenant privileges and responsibilities? Dan. 9:24.

NOTE.—The Hebrew word translated "weeks" is a derived form of the word for "seven," meaning a period of time made up of seven units or subdivisions, whether seven days or seven years—a hebdomad. In chapter 10:2 Daniel relates that he was in mourning for "three full weeks," literally, "three full hebdomads [weeks] of days." Evidently, when Daniel intended a hebdomad of days he considered it necessary to add (according to the Hebrew text) the qualifying phrase "of days" to the word "hebdomad [week]," in order to make clear that these hebdomads were "weeks" of days and not years, as in chapter 9:24. In recognition of this fact, the R.S.V. translates Daniel 9:24, "weeks of years."

Accordingly, from the going forth of the restoration decree seventy times seven

years, or 490 years, were allotted to the Jews in which to fulfill their covenant role as God's chosen instrument for the conversion of the world, in preparation for the coming of Messiah. They were to "finish"—to be done forever—with "the transgression," or apostasy, that had precipitated the Babylonian exile, and "to make an end of sins." Messiah would come "to make reconciliation for iniquity" by His death on the cross, and "to bring in everlasting righteousness" by establishing His everlasting, righteous reign. This period of time was also to witness the anointing of "the most holy," and to confirm "the vision and the prophecy" of chapter 8.

2. When were the seventy "weeks of years" to begin? Dan. 9:25; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:14; 7:1, 8-13.

NOTE.—The 490-year restoration era was to commence with "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." The decree of Cyrus was issued at most only a few months later than the episode of chapter 9. But because of the dilatory conduct of the returned exiles, a second decree, that of Darius, became necessary about 520 B.C., and eventually a third, by Artaxerxes, in 457 B.C. The very fact that a second and a third decree were required in order to complete the work of restoration testifies to the ineffective results that followed the first decree by Cyrus. For this reason we take the third decree, that of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C., as "the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" referred to in Daniel 9:25, and thus as marking the commencement of the 490 years allotted the Jewish people.

3. What events were to take place during the seventy weeks of years? Dan. 9:24-27.

NOTE.—In addition to the points listed in verse 24 (see note to question 1), Jerusalem was to be completely restored, Messiah was to come and to be "cut off," a foreign "prince" was to "destroy the city and the sanctuary," there would be war and desolation to the close of the seventy weeks of years. Then that which God had already determined would be "poured out" upon the alien prince, the desolator.

The Restoration Era

4. What was God's purpose for the Jews as a nation following the exile? Ezek. 36:11, 24-28. See also Jer. 31: 31-34.

NOTE.—"This promise of blessing should have met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God's design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second coming."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 703, 704.

Taken in their literary and historical context, all of the Old Testament promises looking forward to a future restoration were given with the return from Babylonian exile in view. All that had been promised by Moses and the prophets might yet have come to pass if leaders and people proved loyal to their covenant privileges and responsibilities. Their restoration and prosperity were to be conditional on a transformation of the heart.

5. What promises were given through the prophet Zechariah soon after the return from Babylon? Zech. 1:16, 17; 2:4, 5, 10-12; 6:15. See also 8:1-8.

A Light to the Nations

6. What witness were the Jews to bear to the nations during the restoration era? Isa. 60:1-3. See also Isa. 49:3, 6; 56:6, 7.

NOTE.—The glorious prophecies of Isaiah 40 to 66, which in their original setting applied specifically to this restoration era, provide a picture of what God purposed to accomplish in and through the Jewish nation during that time.

In Isaiah, as in Daniel and Zechariah, Messiah would come and die (ch. 53), the gospel would go to all the world (chs. 54 to 62); at His coming the Lord would destroy those who rejected His mercy (chs. 63 and 64), and establish His universal, eternal reign of righteousness (chs. 65 and 66).

7. By what figure did Ezekiel illustrate Israel's postexilic mission to the nations following the exile? Ezek. 47:1-12.

NOTE.—In a slightly different sequence, Ezekiel presents the same picture of the restoration era as Daniel, Zechariah, and Isaiah. Exile (Ezekiel 1 to 33) is followed by restoration (chs. 34 to 37). The nations will come against Jerusalem, but the Lord will fight for His people (chs. 38 and 39). The sanctuary will be reestablished (chs. 40 to 46), Messiah the Prince will come (ch. 44:1-3), the gospel will go to the nations (ch. 47), and the Lord Himself will reign in Jerusalem (ch. 48).

8. How would the nations respond to Israel's appeal? Zech. 2:11; 8: 20-23.

NOTE.—"It was God's purpose that by the revelation of His character through Israel men should be drawn unto Him. To all the world the gospel invitation was to be given. Through the teachings of the sacrificial service Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live. All who, like Rahab the Canaanite, and Ruth the Moabitess, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God, were to unite themselves with His chosen people. As the numbers of Israel increased, they were to enlarge their borders, until their kingdom should embrace the world."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 290.

The Coming of Messiah

9. In what words did Daniel foretell the coming of the Messiah? Dan. 9:25.

10. What did the prophet Zechariah say of Messiah's coming? Zech. 9:9. See also Zech. 3:8; 6:11-13.

11. What passages in Zechariah were later recognized as foretelling the Messiah's vicarious death? Zech. 12:10; 13:1, 6, 7.

NOTE.—New Testament writers specifically applied the various Messianic passages of Zechariah to Christ. Compare Zech. 9:9 with Matt. 21:4, 5; Zech. 12:10 with John 19:34; and Zech. 13:7 with Matt. 26:31.

The Kingdom of Messiah

12. What was the ultimate goal of the restoration era following the exile? Dan. 9:24; Micah 4:1, 2, 7-10. See also Jer. 3:17.

NOTE.—"If Jerusalem had known what it was her privilege to know, and had heeded the light which Heaven had sent her, she might have stood forth in the pride of prosperity, the queen of kingdoms, free in the strength of her God-given power. She might . . . have been . . . the mighty metropolis of the earth. From her walls the dove of peace would have gone forth to all nations. She would have been the world's diadem of glory."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 577.

13. How was the Messianic kingdom to be established? Zech. 14:1-4, 8, 9, 16. See also Mal. 4:1-6.

NOTE.—Had Israel been faithful to God and fulfilled her assigned role during the restoration era as God intended, His eternal kingdom would have been established at Jerusalem in the long ago. The conditional prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah concerning Israel would have met their literal fulfillment,

and Christ would have inaugurated His righteous reign as "king over all the earth." But, as a nation, the people of Israel failed to achieve the high destiny marked out for them. They rejected the Messiah when He came, and God in turn rejected them from being His people.

The theme of Lessons 5 to 12 is the way in which God's purpose, as set forth in the prophetic messages of Daniel, is actually being worked out in history.

Lesson 5, for February 4, 1967

Great Empires of Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him." Acts 17:24-27.

SCRIPTURES: Daniel 2:31-43; 7:1-7, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24; 8:1-8, 21, 22; 11:1-4.

STUDY HELPS: "Education," pages 173-184; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary" on references cited, and Vol. 4, pp. 752, 753.

STUDY AIM: To establish a basis for identifying the great tyrant of prophecy and for pinpointing the great future persecution and apostasy.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Babylon—Queen of Kingdoms

1. The head of gold. Dan. 2:32 (first part), 37, 38.
2. The lion with eagle's wings. Dan. 7:3, 4, 17.

II. The Splendor of Persia

3. The breast and arms of silver. Dan. 2:32 (second part), 39 (first part).
4. The bear that raised up itself on one side. Dan. 7:5.
5. The ram with two horns. Dan. 8:3, 4, 20.
6. Persia in Daniel 11. Dan. 11:2-4.

III. The Glory of Greece

7. Thighs of bronze. Dan. 2:32 (last part), 39 (last part).
8. The four-winged leopard. Dan. 7:6.
9. The goat with a notable horn. Dan. 8:5-8, 21, 22.
10. A mighty king; a divided kingdom. Dan. 11:2-4.

IV. The Grandeur of Rome

11. The legs of iron. Dan. 2:33, 40.
12. The dreadful beast with ten horns. Dan. 7:7, 19, 23.
13. The little horn (first phase). Dan. 8:9, 23-25.
14. The division of Rome. Dan. 2:33, 41-43; 7:7, 20, 24.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Daniel dismisses the four great empires of prophecy with scant notice, and focuses attention on the great future period of apostasy and persecution that was to culminate in the establishment of God's eternal kingdom. The great empires are mentioned primarily by way of providing a time bridge between Daniel's day and that far-off, future crisis.

Instead of taking up each of the visions separately—as is usually done in a study of Daniel—this lesson combines all of the information in all the visions for a more complete, composite picture, point by point.

"Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another.

"While the nations rejected God's principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, overruling purpose was working through all their movements."—*Education,* page 177.

Babylon—Queen of Kingdoms

1. How is the Babylonian Empire portrayed in the dream of the metallic image? Dan. 2:32 (first part), 37, 38.

NOTE.—Babylon dominated the world scene from 605 to 539 B.C. Gold was an appropriate symbol for the New Babylonian Empire. In wealth and splendor it surpassed all its predecessors. Its capital city, Babylon, was the envy of the ancient world, and today its ruins mutely confirm the Scripture narrative. Its name became the symbol for riches and grandeur.

2. How is Babylon represented in the vision of the four beasts? Dan. 7:3, 4, 17.

NOTE.—The lion, the Babylonians' own favorite decorative motif, was an appropriate symbol for ancient Babylon. Babylonian art often combined the king of beasts and the king of birds into a composite creature, usually a lion with eagle's wings, and sometimes an eagle's claws and beak as well. A lion is noted for its strength and an eagle for its powerful wings and swift flight, a fit allusion, here, to Nebuchadnezzar's brilliant conquests. Various Bible writers refer to him as a "lion."

The Splendor of Persia

3. What part of the metallic image stands for the Persian Empire? Dan. 2:32 (second part), 39 (first part).

NOTE.—Persia appears in four of the five prophetic passages of Daniel (chapters 2, 7, 8, and 11). The fifth (chapter 9) covers the Persian era as well as the eras of Greece and Rome, but without mentioning or alluding to any of them. Persia, which eventually controlled a considerably larger territory than Babylonia, ruled the world from 539 to 331 B.C.

4. What additional information about Persia is provided by the vision of the four beasts? Dan. 7:5.

NOTE.—The second beast, the bear, stood for Persia, which followed Babylonia. Daniel saw that it "raised up itself on one side." This unusual posture is doubtless a reminder of the historical fact that the Persian Empire was, in truth, a union of Media and Persia, though by the time Babylonia fell to Persian arms, Persian influence had become dominant and that of Media gradually vanished. Daniel also saw "three ribs in its mouth between its teeth," which spurred it on to "devour much flesh." It has been suggested, appropriately, that these three ribs represent conquered countries such as Babylonia, Lydia, and Egypt.

Each new victory naturally spurred the Persians on to ever greater conquests, until eventually their empire extended from central Asia to Egypt and from India into Europe—3,300 miles from east to west and 1,500 from north to south. It is less than 2,500 air miles from New York to San Francisco. Persia certainly did "devour much flesh," far more than any nation that was before it.

5. How is Persia pictured in the vision of chapter 8? Dan. 8:3, 4, 20.

6. What further facts concerning Persia are given in chapter 11? Dan. 11:2-4.

NOTE.—Cambyses, the False Smerdis, and Darius I followed Cyrus on the throne of Persia. The fourth was Xerxes (the Bible Ahasuerus), who led the great invasion of Greece in 480 B.C.

The Glory of Greece

7. What part of the metallic image stands for Greece? Dan. 2:32 (last part), 39 (last part).

NOTE.—Alexander's conquests diffused Greek language and culture throughout the eastern Mediterranean world and the ancient East, from about 331 B.C. to 168 B.C. Greek influence constituted the unifying force that bound the kingdoms of his successors together in one great civilization.

"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."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Daniel 2:39.

8. How is Greece represented in the vision of the four great beasts? Dan. 7:6.

9. What further information is given about Greece in chapter 8? Dan. 8:5-8, 21, 22.

NOTE.—The eighth chapter identifies Greece as the successor of Persia, not the Greece of the classical period, which was contemporary with Persia, but the Greece of the time of Alexander the Great and after. The symbols of chapter 8 are altogether different from those of chapter 7, but the correspondence between the ram and the he-goat of the one and the bear and the leopard of the other is so close as to leave no doubt that the same powers are represented in both. Both, for insance, present the dual aspect of the Medo-Persian Empire, and the fact that one of the two component nations eventually dominated the other. Both likewise envision a fourfold division of the power identified in chapter 8 as Greece.

10. What is said of Greece in chapter 11? Dan. 11:2-4.

NOTE.—The eleventh chapter presents a detailed outline of the Hellenistic era of Greek history. Like chapter 8, it identifies Greece by name, and mentions its first "mighty king" and a subsequent fourfold division. In verses 5 to 15 the number of contestants for Alexander's dominions is narrowed down to the "king of the north" and the "king of the south," and in verse 16 the former prevails over the latter. The detailed preview of Greek history given in chapter 11 need not detain us here.

The Grandeur of Rome

11. What part of the metallic image represents Rome? Dan. 2:33, 40.

NOTE.—Daniel identifies three of the four great empires of antiquity by name—Babylon, Persia, and Greece. Rome is not thus clearly identified; nevertheless, in a unique way the Roman Empire fulfilled the prophetic specifications for the fourth power represented as following Greece, and we assume, on the basis of history, that it is the nation here intended.

Iron was an appropriate symbol for the Roman Empire. Her famed legions ranged at will over the entire Mediterranean world and over practically all of western Europe and much of western Asia as well. As Daniel had predicted, Rome literally crushed all other nations, to become by all odds the largest and strongest empire the world had ever known.

12. How is Rome represented in the vision of the four beasts? Dan. 7:7, 19, 23.

NOTE.—As in the metallic image of Daniel 2 the iron followed the bronze, here in Daniel 7 "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly," with

"great iron teeth," follows the leopard. Like iron, the fourth metal of Daniel 2, which is said to break to pieces, shatter, and crush all things, the fourth world power of chapter 7 was to "break and crush" all others. A more fitting figurative description of the invincible Roman legions marching to and fro over Europe and the Mediterranean world could hardly be imagined.

13. Under what symbol is Rome represented in the eighth chapter? Dan. 8:9, 23-25.

NOTE.—There is no clear counterpart in Daniel 8 for the fourth, fearful beast of Daniel 7. The "little horn" of chapter 8 apparently plays the combined roles of both the fourth beast and the little horn of chapter 7. In chapter 8, for instance, the little horn elicits the same concern Daniel felt for the fourth beast of chapter 7. Furthermore, the same fearful destruction that chapter 8 attributes exclusively to the little horn, the seventh chapter attributed to the fourth beast instead of to its little horn. The fourth beast of chapter 7 and its little horn exist together to the close of time. They are judged and destroyed together, the fourth beast being punished for the "great words" its little horn speaks. In chapter 8, however, the beast representing Greece disappears before the little horn comes upon the stage of action.

14. What is said of Rome in its divided state? Dan. 2:33, 41-43; 7:7, 20, 24.

NOTE.—The old power struggle for the control of western Europe continues unabated. The fateful words of the prophet, "they will not hold together" (R.S.V.), are as accurate a description of the fragments of ancient Rome today as they were fifteen centuries ago. Modern political technology has found no way to fuse the iron and clay of Nebuchadnezzar's image together.

Lesson 6, for February 11, 1967

The Great Tyrant of Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "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: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25.

SCRIPTURES: Dan. 7:8, 11, 20-26; 8:9-13, 23, 24; 9:26, 27; 11:30-37, 45.

STUDY HELP: "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To form a composite picture of all that was revealed to Daniel with respect to a great future crisis of persecution and apostasy and the great tyrant who causes it.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Tyrant's Character

1. As described in prophecy. Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:9, 24; 9:26.
2. A confused political situation. Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:8, 9.
3. His greatness, power, and methods. Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:9, 23, 24.

II. Oppression of the Covenant People

4. An attempt to annihilate God's

people. Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:10, 13, 24; 11:33-35.
5. "A time, two times, and half a time" (R.S.V.). Dan. 7:25; 12:7.

III. Defiance of God

6. Opposition to God. Dan. 7:23-25; 11:36, 37.
7. Opposition to the Messiah. Dan. 8:11, 25.
8. The tyrant desolates the sanctuary. Dan. 8:11, 13; 9:26; 11:31.
9. An attempt to obliterate the Scriptures and true religion. Dan. 7:25; 8:12; 11:30.
10. An apostate system of religion. Dan. 8:13; 11:31; 12:11.

IV. The Oppressor Destroyed

11. "A time, times, and an half." Dan. 7:25; 12:7.
12. The oppressor annihilated. Dan. 7:21, 22, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45; 12:1.
13. A sealed prophecy. Dan. 12:4-9.

THE LESSON

Introduction

In this lesson we are concerned exclusively with the great future crisis that was to come to God's people prior to the establishment of His eternal, righteous reign. When all that Gabriel revealed to Daniel on four separate visits (chs. 7, 8, 9, and 11, 12) is brought together, a much clearer and more complete picture is possible than when each of the four visions is studied separately. The word *tyrant* aptly expresses all the various aspects of the persecutor's character and conduct as set forth by Daniel. In his dealings with God's people this villain proved to be shrewd, arrogant, treacherous, and cruel.

This lesson does not attempt to identify this great oppressor of prophecy with his historical counterpart, but limits consideration to a survey and synthesis of the information Gabriel gave Daniel. In contrast with his specific identification of the great empires of antiquity, Gabriel did not divulge the identity of this figure, but left it sealed until "the time of the end." Lesson 7 discovers the master key to this sealed prophecy, and Lesson 8 identifies the villain of Bible prophecy with its counterpart in history.

The Tyrant's Character

1. How, variously, does Daniel describe the rise of the great oppressor of prophecy? Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:9, 24; 9:26.

2. What is said of the political situation at the time of the oppressor's rise to power? Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:8, 9. Compare 2:41-43.

NOTE.—The great oppressor of God's people was to appear on the stage of history after the rise and fall of the great empires of antiquity—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. As a "little horn" in the symbolism of Daniel 7, the tyrant is represented as rising up among the ten horns on the head of the fourth beast, which stand for the fragments into which the Roman Empire spilt up when it fell. Prophecy thus clearly pinpoints the breakup of ancient Rome as the time when, and western Europe as the locality where, the cruel tyrant presented to Daniel would rise to power.

3. What is said of the tyrant's greatness, power, and methods? Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:9, 23, 24.

NOTE.—Comparatively "little" to begin with, this oppressor of the saints would eventually become "greater" and "stronger" than his "fellows," that is, than the nations represented by the other ten horns. In fact, he would grow "exceeding great" and would "prosper" in his evil plot to annihilate God's people. All who bar his way would be cut down without mercy. The tyrant was thus to dominate the political scene in western Europe following the downfall of the Roman Empire.

Oppression of the Covenant People

4. How does Daniel describe the oppressor's attempt to annihilate the covenant people? Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:10, 13, 24; 11:33-35.

NOTE.—As Daniel watched, a great persecuting power made war with the saints, prevailed over them, and wore them out. He cast them down to the ground, and trampled upon them in a determined attempt to shatter and destroy them. The focal point of his savage attack on the saints was to be their loyalty to God and to His revealed will. In that future time of trouble, affliction, distress, and anguish such as the world had never seen, it appeared that they would be utterly swept away before him and broken.

5. For how long was this era of persecution to continue? Dan. 7:25; 12:7.

NOTE.—As we have seen, the oppressor was to appear on the stage of history during the breakup of the Roman Empire. According to the eighth and eleventh chapters of Daniel, the climax of his reign of terror would come in the latter days, at the time of the end. In Daniel the term latter days refers to the remote or distant future, and the time of the end to a relatively brief period immediately preceding the close of the present age. This time of the end was to be marked by climactic events destined to prepare the world for the inauguration of God's eternal reign of righteousness. Between the fall of Rome and the time of the end, then, the opposer or truth was to appear on the stage of history and carry out his sinister plot against the truth and those who remain loyal to it.

The length of time during which the oppressor would torment God's people is given cryptically as "a time, two times, and half a time," or three and a half times. It will be recalled that the seven times during which Nebuchadnezzar lapsed into a state of insanity proved to be seven years of literal time. Practically all authorities, ancient and modern, thus understand the word here translated *time*. The three and a half times would then be three and a half years. An equivalent expression in Revelation 12:14, "a time, and times, and half a time," is defined earlier in the same chapter as one thousand two hundred and sixty days. On the basis of thirty days to the month and twelve months to the year, the 1260 days prove to be exactly three and a half years.

Bible usage points to the conclusion that, in symbolic prophecy such as we find in Daniel 7 and 8, a day of prophetic time stands for a full year of actual time. This day-for-a-year principle in predictive prophecy first appears in Numbers 14:34 and is illustrated again in Ezekiel 4:6.

Defiance of God

6. What is said of the oppressor's attitude toward the true God? Dan. 7:23-25; 11:36, 37.

7. What is said of the oppressor's attitude toward Messiah the Prince? Dan. 8:11, 25.

NOTE.—Satan repeatedly sought to destroy Christ during His life on earth, but Christ triumphed over him. Since our Lord's ascension, Satan has been able to war against Christ only by attacking His professed people on earth. Both aspects of Satan's opposition to Christ are clearly set forth in Revelation 12:1-5, 12-17.

8. What would this cruel power do to the sanctuary and its services? Dan. 8: 11, 13; 9:26; 11:31.

NOTE.—The spotlight of prophecy in the book of Daniel focuses on an attack by this same oppressor on the sanctuary and its services. See Lesson 10. The ancient sanctuary, or temple, and its services figuratively represented Christ at work for the salvation of the world. This work of salvation now centers in Christ's high-

priestly ministry in the great sanctuary in heaven. This is the subject of Lesson 9.

The sanctuary, or temple, in ancient Jerusalem was the hub of Jewish religious life. But that structure was completely destroyed in A.D. 70, and its services permanently discontinued. They have never been resumed. As we shall see, however, the New Testament writers speak of a "sanctuary" in heaven where Christ now ministers as our great High Priest, and specifically declare that it replaced the earthly sanctuary when He died on the cross and rose again. It is evidently to this great heavenly "sanctuary" that the words of the prophet now apply. See *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Dan. 11:31.

9. How does Daniel describe the attitude and policy of the oppressor toward the Holy Scriptures and the worship of the true God? Dan. 7:25; 8:12; 11:30.

NOTE.—How would this diabolical power go about defying God? The angel declared that his heart would "be set against the holy covenant" between God and His loyal people, and that he would "be enraged and take action against" it. Dan. 11:28, 30, R.S.V. In pursuit of this policy he would "think to change the times and the law." (Dan. 7:25, R.S.V.), that is the sacred religious observances appointed by God and the divine revelation that has come from God, the Holy Scriptures. He would not actually be able to make such changes, of course, since no human being can alter the divine precepts, but he would endeavor to do so. He would enact religious precepts and requirements of his own and attempt to force men to comply with them instead of with those ordained by God. He would thus effectively "cast down . . . to the ground" the "truth" as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

10. What false religious system would the tyrant substitute for that of the true God? Dan. 8:13; 11:31; 12:11.

NOTE.—The great impostor would not be content to proscribe true worship, the angel went on to say. He would also prescribe and enforce a false system of his own. Daniel calls this apostate form of worship "the transgression that makes desolate," or "the abomination that makes desolate" (R.S.V.). The inauguration of this apostate form of worship would make the sanctuary in heaven "desolate," inasmuch as it would deprive men of the merits of Christ's atonement and compel them to accept a counterfeit way of salvation. See Lesson 8, question 7, note.

The Oppressor Destroyed

11. For how long would God permit this foe of His people to prosper? Dan. 7:25; 12:7.

12. What promise of eventual deliverance from the oppressor's power is given? Dan. 7:21, 22, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45; 12:1.

NOTE.—There is a happy ending to the long reign of terror. When it seems that the great oppressor is on the point of triumph, God intervenes in the course of history to deliver His people, to destroy their wily foe, and to inaugurate His own righteous reign on earth. By the verdict of the supreme court of the universe, those who have suffered at the hands of the great persecuting power will eventually be awarded eternal justice.

13. What aspects of Daniel's prophecy were "closed up and sealed till the time of the end"? Dan. 12: 4-9.

NOTE.—Gabriel had identified three of the great empires of prophecy by name, and had also revealed a considerable body of information about the then future tyrant and the time of tribulation and apostasy. But the angel had not identified this power, nor had he made clear the precise time in the stream of history, nor the

particular historical circumstances, under which the great tribulation and apostasy would come. For the time being, these aspects of the prophecy were to remain "closed up and sealed." See Lessons 7 and 8.

Lesson 7, for February 18, 1967

Christ Provides the Master Key

MEMORY VERSE: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43.

SCRIPTURES: Matthew 21:33-45; 23:27-38; 24:1-5, 14-22, 27-31.

STUDY HELPS: "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 294-296; "The Desire of Ages," pages 627-636; "The Great Controversy," pages 24-29; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To discover how Christ interpreted and applied the prophecy of Daniel to the new historical situation, with the Christian church as the chosen instrument of God's purpose on earth.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Israel Repudiates the Covenant

1. Israel's progressive departure from God. Mal. 1:6, 7, 12, 13; 2:8, 13, 14, 17; 3:8, 9, 13, 14.
2. Israel's spiritual condition in Christ's day. Matt. 16:4; Mark 7:6-9.
3. Israel's rejection of Christ as the Messiah. John 1:10, 11; Matt. 23:37.

II. Israel Rejected as the Covenant People

4. The parable of the vineyard. Matt. 21:33-39.
5. God's rejection of Israel. Matt. 23:36-38; 21:40-45.

III. A Nation Bringing Forth the Fruits

6. The new chosen people. Matt. 21:43.
7. Paul presents the new Israel. Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:24-26; Gal. 3:28, 29.
8. The Christian church "an holy nation." 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

IV. When Shall These Things Be?

9. A great future apostasy. Matt. 24:1-5, 15.
10. A great future tribulation. Matt. 24:14-22, 27-31.
11. Signs associated with the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24, 25.
12. The great apostasy and tribulation pinpointed. Matt. 24:15, 21, 22, 29, 30; Mark 13:24-26.

THE LESSON

Introduction

As Daniel's last interview with Gabriel came to a close he asked the angel *when* and *how* the great future crisis of apostasy and persecution would meet its fulfillment in history. Dan. 12:6-8. Gabriel had already explained everything *except* the precise time when, and the manner in which, the crisis would come. Information on these matters, he replied, was "closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Verses 4, 9. Seventy "weeks of years" had been alloted the Jewish people to fulfill their role as God's

chosen instrument for the salvation of the world, and prior to their close and the nation's final decision to accept or reject the Messiah, the precise time and circumstances in which the climactic events of the prophecy would work out in history could not be made known.

Toward the close of the seventy "weeks of years" allotted the Jews, Messiah came, as Daniel had said. It was "last of all" that God "sent unto them His Son," but they "caught Him, . . . and slew Him." Matt. 21:37, 38. In the supreme tragedy of all time, He "came unto His own" people, but they "received Him not." John 1:11. During His last debate with the Jewish leaders, only three days before the crucifixion, Jesus repeated Isaiah's parable about Israel as the Lord's vineyard, and elaborated upon it in such a way as to place squarely before them the significance of their rejection of Him as the Messiah. He concluded the parable with the solemn announcement: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43. At the close of this discourse (Matthew 21 and 22), and following a formal pronouncement of woe upon the Jewish leaders (Matthew 23) because they had rejected Him, Jesus closed His public ministry with the fateful declaration, "Behold, your house [the temple] is left unto you desolate," and departed from the temple forever. Matt. 23:38; 24:1.

Now that the transfer of the covenant promises and responsibilities to the nascent Christian church had been made, further information could be given concerning *when* and *how* Daniel's prophecy would be fulfilled. It is worthy of special note that, on the very day the Jewish leaders officially rejected Jesus as the Messiah, He directed His disciples' attention to the book of Daniel and told them that *now* those who read the prophecy should be able to understand (Matt. 24:15) what had previously been "closed up and sealed." His great discourse on the signs of His coming (Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21), in answer to the disciples' questions about when and how Daniel's prophecy would come to pass, is His interpretation and application of that prophecy to the changed historical situation in which the church has become the new chosen instrument of God's purpose on earth. Jesus here places in our hands the master key for unlocking the mysteries of Daniel that had hitherto been "closed up and sealed."

In this lesson we consider Christ's interpretation and application of Daniel's prophecy. In Lessons 8 to 12 we will explore what the various New Testament writers have to say on the matter. By thus letting the New Testament interpret the Old for us, we shall have an inspired, authoritative commentary on the book of Daniel as it applies to the Christian church, and thus to our time.

Israel Repudiates the Covenant

1. What does Malachi say of Israel's spiritual state a century after the return from exile, four centuries before the coming of Christ? Mal. 1:6, 7, 12, 13; 2:8, 13, 14, 17; 3:8, 9, 13, 14.

NOTE.—"Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, of Ezra, and of Nehemiah they [the returned exiles] repeatedly covenanted to keep all the commandments and ordinances of Jehovah. The seasons of prosperity that followed, gave ample evidence of God's willingness to accept and forgive; and yet, with fatal shortsightedness, they turned again and again from their glorious destiny, and selfishly appropriated to themselves that which would have brought healing and spiritual life to countless multitudes.

"This failure to fulfill the divine purpose was very apparent in Malachi's day."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 705.

2. How did Christ describe Israel's state of spiritual declension in His day? Matt 16:4; Mark 7:6-9. See also Matt. 23:13-15, 25, 27-35.

3. What was Israel's attitude toward Jesus as the Messiah? John 1:10, 11; Matt. 23:37.

Israel Rejected as the Covenant People

4. By what parable did Jesus illustrate God's rejection of Israel as

the covenant people? Matt. 21:33-39. Compare Isa. 5:1-7.

5. In what portentous words did Jesus announce the rejection of Israel as the covenant people? Matt. 23:36-38; 21:40-45. See also Matt. 24:2.

NOTE.—"The cloud that had been gathering through ages of apostasy and rebellion, now black with woe, was about to burst upon a guilty people; and He who alone could save them from their impending fate had been slighted, abused, rejected, and was soon to be crucified. When Christ should hang upon the cross of Calvary, Israel's day as a nation favored and blessed of God would be ended. . . . As Christ looked upon Jerusalem, the doom of a whole city, a whole nation, was before Him—that city, that nation, which had once been the chosen of God, His peculiar treasure."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 20, 21.

A Nation Bringing Forth the Fruits

6. Who were to be God's new chosen people? Matt. 21:43.

NOTE.—"Not by any temporary failure of Israel, however, was the plan of the ages for the redemption of mankind to be frustrated. Those to whom the prophet was speaking might not heed the message given, but the purposes of Jehovah were nevertheless to move steadily forward to their complete fulfillment."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 705, 706.

God's ultimate purpose never changes; but when those who have been called refuse persistently to cooperate, He changes the manner in which He will eventually carry His purpose forward to success, the precise time of its culmination, and the human instruments He will use. The Bible record is replete with instances of the reversal of promised blessings and threatened judgments, involving both nations and individuals.

7. How does Paul describe the new Israel? Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:24-26; Gal. 3:28, 29.

NOTE.—The Christian church became God's chosen instrument for the salvation of the human race. Though the basic features of God's plan for the world remained unchanged, this transition from literal Israel to spiritual Israel involved also a profound change in the manner in which some aspects of the plan would now have to be worked out in history. See Introduction to Lesson 9.

8. In what words does Peter set forth the role of the church as God's chosen people? 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

NOTE.—"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 713.

When Shall These Things Be?

9. How did Christ apply Daniel's prophecy concerning the desolation of the temple and a great future apostasy? Matt. 24:1-5, 15. Compare Dan. 8:11, 13; 9:26; 12:11.

NOTE.—"Jesus did not answer His disciples by taking up separately the destruction of Jerusalem and the great day of His coming. He mingled the description of these two events. Had He opened to His disciples future events as He beheld them, they would have been unable to endure the sight. In mercy to them He blended the description of the two great crises, leaving the disciples to study out the meaning for themselves. When He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, His prophetic words reached beyond that event to the final conflagration in that day when the Lord shall rise out of His place to punish the world for their iniquity, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and

shall no more cover her slain. This entire discourse was given, not for the disciples only, but for those who should live in the last scenes of this earth's history."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 628.

In His discourse on the Mount of Olives, Christ thus applies Daniel's prophecy both to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 *and* to the end of the world; to literal Israel *and* to the church. Evidently this dual application was also latent in Daniel's prophecy to begin with, and all that Daniel foretold, which might have been fulfilled to literal Israel in the long ago had they accepted Jesus as the Messiah, is now to be fulfilled to the church.

10. How did Christ apply Daniel's prophecy with respect to the tyrant and his oppression of God's people? Matt. 24:14-22, 27-31. Compare Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:10, 14; 9:26; 10:14; 11: 33-35.

NOTE.—"Jesus declared to the listening disciples the judgments that were to fall upon apostate Israel, and especially the retributive vengeance that would come upon them for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah. . . . When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight."—*The Great Controversy,* pages 25, 26.

"From the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ passed on rapidly to the greater event— . . . the coming of the Son of God in majesty and glory. Between these two events, there lay open to Christ's view long centuries of darkness. . . . For more than a thousand years such persecution as the world had never before known was to come upon Christ's followers."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 630, 631.

11. What special signs did Jesus give by which to locate the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy? Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24, 25.

NOTE.—"The Saviour gives signs of His coming, and more than this, He fixes the time when the first of these signs shall appear: 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.' "—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 631, 632.

12. What indication did Christ give of the time when Daniel's prediction of a great future apostasy and persecution would take place? Matt. 24:15, 21, 22, 29, 30; Mark 13:24-26.

NOTE.—After the destruction of Jerusalem, after the great apostasy, after the great persecution—then what? Christ now introduces an important fact that Daniel did not mention, and presents it as *the* major sign of His coming and of the close of the age. This sign is to be given *after* the great apostasy and the great tribulation, but *before* His coming and the end of the world. Then—after this sign—said Jesus, "all the tribes of the earth . . . shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." And what is the sign? "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven." Matt. 24:29, R.S.V.

This prediction, confirmed by its fulfillment in history, stands as Christ's own clue to the answer to Daniel's unresolved question about how long it would be till the end of these wonders. The fact that these astronomical phenomena were to come immediately after the tribulation of those days—or even more exactly, "in those days, after that tribulation," as Mark has it—thus provides the approximate terminal point for the time of trouble here envisioned.

The time periods of Daniel are the subject of Lesson 10.

"As you repeat the confidence you have in Jesus, Satan will flee; for he cannot bear the name of Jesus."—*Historical Sketches,* page 141.

Lesson 8, for February 25, 1967

Unlocking the Mysteries of Daniel's Prophecies

MEMORY VERSE: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

SCRIPTURES: 2 Thess. 2:3-12; Rev. 13; 16:12-19; 17:1-6, 11-17; 19:11-21.

STUDY HELP: "The Great Controversy," pages 49-60, 563-581.

STUDY AIM: To discover how New Testament writers interpret and apply the prophecies of Daniel.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Warnings of Apostasy and Persecution

1. False christs and false prophets. Matt. 24:4, 5, 11, 23-26.
2. The man of sin to be revealed. 2 Thess. 2:3-12.

II. The Revelation Unseals the Mystery of Daniel

3. The leopard-like beast. Rev. 13:1, 2, 5-7.
4. The great harlot, Babylon. Rev. 17:1-6, 18.

III. The Tyrant Identified

5. His historical counterpart.
6. A time of great tribulation.
7. A time of great apostasy.

IV. The Last Great Conflict

8. War with the remnant. Rev. 12:17; 13:3, 4, 7, 13-17.
9. Issues in the conflict. Rev. 12:17.
10. The supreme test. Rev. 13:15-17.
11. Deliverance. Rev. 18:20; 19:2.
12. The fate of mystical Babylon. Rev. 16:19; 17:16; 18:8, 21.
13. The forces of evil annihilated. Rev. 19:19-21; 20:7-10.

THE LESSON

Introduction

How the sealed portion of the prophecy of Daniel might have been fulfilled in history, had the Jews remained loyal to their covenant privileges and responsibilities, is beyond our ken. Nor is it important for us to know. With the transition from literal Israel to the Christian church, however, the latter fell heir to the covenant promises, privileges, and responsibilities that formerly belonged to the literal descendants of Abraham.

The prophecies of Daniel envisioned the coming of a great tyrant who would oppress God's people, enforce error and apostasy as his official policy, and ruthlessly persecute those who refused to comply. In A.D. 70 Roman legions destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and slew countless thousands of Jews. Literal Israel was then the victim of Satan's wrath, but henceforth spiritual Israel was to be the target of his attacks. The prophecies of Daniel 7 and 8 envision his oppression of both. Satanic opposition to truth has always taken two forms—the dissemination of error, and the persecution of those who reject it.

Christ and the New Testament writers present a preview of how these aspects of Daniel's prophecy were yet to work out in history, between the first and second advents of Christ, as Satan went forth in anger to make war on those who should

choose to remain loyal to God. Christ and the apostles often use the very words, expressions, or ideas of Daniel as they draw this picture of coming events. Christ specifically declared His delineation of the future to be an outline of how Daniel's prophecy is to be fulfilled, with His followers as heirs to the covenant promises, privileges, and responsibilities.

Warnings of Apostasy and Persecution

1. What warning against future apostasy and persecution did Christ give His disciples? Matt. 24:4, 5, 11, 23-26. Compare Dan. 11:31-35.

NOTE.—"Many false messiahs will appear, claiming to work miracles, and declaring that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation has come. These will mislead many. Christ's words were fulfilled. Between His death and the siege of Jerusalem many false messiahs appeared. But this warning was given also to those who live in this age of the world. The same deceptions practiced prior to the destruction of Jerusalem have been practiced through the ages, and will be practiced again."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 628.

2. How did Paul speak of the coming apostasy? 2 Thess. 2:3-12. See also Acts 20:29, 30; 1 Tim. 4: 1. Compare Dan. 11:31, 36, 37.

NOTE.—"Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, 'the mystery of iniquity' carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. . . .

"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. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 49, 50.

The Revelation Unseals the Mystery of Daniel

3. What points identify the power represented by the leopard-like beast of Revelation 13, with the tyrant of Daniel? Rev. 13:1, 2, 5-7. Compare Dan. 7:4-8, 11, 20, 25.

NOTE.—Like its counterpart in the book of Daniel, the leopard-like beast of Revelation 13 defies God, demands recognition of its own religious authority, and persecutes all who refuse to comply with its will. Also like its counterpart in Daniel, it is eminently successful. Except for those who choose to be loyal to God, it eventually wins at least the nominal allegiance of the whole world.

4. Under what other symbol does John refer to the tyrant of the book of Daniel? What additional information is thereby given? Rev. 17:1-6, 18. See also 1 John 2:18-22. Compare Dan. 7:25; 8:24.

NOTE.—John also presents the villain of the prophecies of Daniel under the symbol of mystical Babylon, the great harlot of prophecy. Like her counterpart in the book of Daniel, mystical Babylon represents consummate apostasy, of which harlotry is the usual Biblical symbol. For examples, see Ezekiel 16 and 23. Babylon the Great attempts to coerce the people of earth into drinking the wine of her apostasy, and sets out to slay all who refuse to do so. The role assigned to mystical Babylon in the Revelation is identical with that attributed to the great tyrant in Daniel's prophecy.

The Tyrant Identified

5. To what power in history does the Bible point as the historical counterpart of the great antichrist?

ANSWER.—A summary of the information given by Daniel, Christ, Paul, and John (Lessons 6 to 8) provides the following composite picture by which to identify the antichrist of Bible prophecy:

A. It would rise to power during the decline and fall of the ancient Roman Empire, eliminating three troublesome competitors in the process, and dominate the political and religious scene in western Europe for approximately 1260 years. Supernatural signs in the heavens would herald the close of its long period of supremacy. It would then suffer what appeared to be a mortal wound, but would recover, regain its former power, and flourish briefly prior to the second advent of Christ. See also question 8.

B. This religiopolitical organization would come into being as the result of a great apostasy within the Christian church, and would usurp the prerogatives and authority of Christ over the church. It would defy God, and for practical purposes, deify itself. Its policy and course of action would constitute rebellion against the Most High. It would arrogate to itself the right to alter, and even abolish, the divine precepts and sacred observances, and would substitute its own authority for that of the Holy Scriptures. It would suppress the knowledge and practice of the way of salvation in Christ as set forth in the Bible, and demand compliance with its own counterfeit teachings and system of salvation.

C. This sinister power would impose its authority over the peoples and nations of the civilized world, and wage a determined and ruthless war of extermination against all who chose to remain loyal to God. The result would be a long era of unprecedented suffering and hardship for God's people.

The precise fulfillment by the papacy of every specification marked out by the inspired writers of the Bible conclusively identifies it as the power foretold. As successor to the Roman Empire, the Roman Church took over its name, its language, its territory, its capital, its pattern of administrative organization, its authority, and its legal status. Like the fabled phoenix, the Roman Church rose from the ashes of the Roman Empire, and the empire lived on, reincarnate, in the church. It would be difficult to imagine a more exact correspondence between the specifications of Bible prophecy and their fulfillment in history.

It should be noted that when Roman Catholics speak of "the Church," they refer to the hierarchial organization, and not to those who profess the Catholic faith. We here use the term "Church" in the Roman Catholic sense, of the organization as an organization, and not of the millions of Catholics who are entirely sincere in their beliefs and devoted in their practice of religion, either collectively or as individuals. The Spirit of Christ leaves no room whatever for prejudice or bigotry of any kind, or in any degree. We come to a study of this aspect of Bible prophecy with charity for all and malice toward none.

6. How has papal policy toward God's people down through the centuries fulfilled the predictions of Daniel and John?

ANSWER.—Throughout the history of Western civilization, the Church of Rome has distinguished herself by a spirit of intolerance toward all who dissent from her authority. It is a simple fact of history that she has been responsible for the torture and death of more Christians than all the pagan powers of earth—not as an occasional, temperamental outburst, but as the result of a fixed policy to eradicate dissent whenever and wherever possible, by whatever means promised to be most effective.

7. To what unscriptural papal dogmas did Daniel and John allude?

ANSWER.—The difference between the teachings of the inspired Bible writers and those of the Roman Church with respect to Christ's infinite sacrifice on Calvary, His continuing priestly ministry in heaven, and the means by which we become recipients of divine grace is so profound and far-reaching as to render the two systems mutually exclusive.

For example, the Bible teaches that Christ's sacrifice on Calvary was all-sufficient to atone for sins; according to Catholic theology, that sacrifice must be repeated thousands of times every day around the world, in what Catholic theologians call the sacrifice of the mass. The

Bible teaches that, since His ascension, Christ has been ministering in the heavenly sanctuary as our High Priest, and that we are to come directly to Him (see Lesson 9); the Roman Church has interposed a human priesthood that bars men from direct access to Christ. The Bible presents Christ as our only mediator before God, and directs us to confess our sins directly to Him; the Roman Church denies men the privilege of confessing their sins directly to Christ, and requires instead that sins be confessed to human priests. In place of our *one* Intercessor and Mediator before God, the Roman Church has substituted the Virgin Mary and attributed to her honor hardly distinguishable from that which the Bible reserves to Christ alone, and, with her, a host of patron saints.

Many unscriptural teachings and practices might be mentioned: such as the doctrine of purgatory, prayers for those supposed to be suffering torment there, the canonization and veneration of saints, the rosary, penance, indulgences, and the seven so-called sacraments. Sufficient evidence has been cited to demonstrate that the Church of Rome has wandered far indeed from the pure gospel originally proclaimed by Christ and the apostles. This wholesale departure from their teachings has properly been called "the great apostasy."

By depreciating Christ's sacrifice and priestly ministry, and then substituting another system of its own devising, the Church of Rome has, in effect, profaned the heavenly sanctuary of which the inspired writer of the book of Hebrews speaks, and blasphemed God's dwelling as John foretold. She has so effectively deprived millions of people of a knowledge of these fundamental Bible truths and of the benefit of their saving power, that for them the plan devised in heaven has, for practical purposes, ceased to exist.

The Last Great Conflict

8. How does John describe the last great struggle between good and evil? Rev. 12:17; 13:3, 4, 7, 13-17. See also Rev. 16:13-16; 17:11-17; 19:11-21.

9. What issues are at stake in this conflict? Rev. 12:17. See also Rev. 14:6-12; 18:4.

NOTE.—"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition."—*The Great Controversy,* page 582.

"When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his power in the earth." —*Ibid.,* p. 584.

10. Through what supreme test will God's people finally pass? Rev. 13:15-17. See also Rev. 12:17; 17:6; 18:24.

NOTE.—"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' (Revelation 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death."—*The Great Controversy,* page 604.

11. What is said of the saints' deliverance from their foes? Rev. 18:20; 19:2. See also Rev. 15:2, 3.

12. Describe the fate of mystical Babylon. Rev. 16:19; 17:16; 18:8, 21.

13. What assurance is given of the ultimate annihilation of the forces of evil? Rev. 19:19-21; 20:7-10. See also Rev. 13:10.

Lesson 9, for March 4, 1967

Christ Our Great High Priest

MEMORY VERSE: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:1, 2.

SCRIPTURES: Heb. 7:11, 12, 23, 24; 8:1-10; 9:11, 12, 23, 24; 10:9-14, 19-22.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pages 409-432; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: An understanding and appreciation of Christ's ministry as our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, especially as a basis for Lessons 10 and 11, "The Reign of Antichrist" and "Christ Our Righteous Judge."

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. From Judaism to Christianity

1. A new chosen people. Matt. 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9, 10.
2. A new "promised land." Acts 1:8; Rev. 21:1, 2.
3. A new covenant. Heb. 8:6-10.
4. A new revelation of God's purpose. Heb. 1:1, 2.

II. The Sanctuary in Heaven

5. A new sanctuary. John 4:21; Heb. 8:1, 2; 10:9 (last part).
6. The new in relation to the old. Heb. 8:5; 9:23.

III. Our Great High Priest

7. A new priesthood. Heb. 7:11, 12, 23, 24; 8:4.
8. A new priestly ministry. Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 10:12.
9. Christ's priestly qualifications. Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15; 8:3.
10. Christ ministers His own sacrifice. Heb. 9:11, 12; 10:12, 14.
11. A gracious invitation. Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22.

IV. Christ and Antichrist

12. Antichrist defies Christ. Dan. 8:11, 25; 11:22.
13. Antichrist usurps Christ's priestly ministry. Dan. 8:11, 13.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The transition from ancient literal Israel to the new spiritual Israel had profound and far-reaching effects. To be sure, God's basic plan did not change; eventually His purpose to banish evil from the universe and to establish His own eternal, righteous reign in the hearts and lives of all created beings will prevail. But when those who have been called refuse persistently to cooperate, God changes the manner in which He will eventually carry His plan forward to success, the precise time of its culmination, and the human instruments He will use. Furthermore, Satan's strategic defeat at the cross escalated the great struggle between the forces of good and evil to a new pitch of intensity (see Rev. 12:13-17); and the conflict, which hitherto had been limited largely to Palestine, spread to all nations, and people everywhere became involved in the struggle. Bible prophecy is a declaration of God's purpose, and its fulfillment in any particular historical context is contingent upon the cooperation of His church on earth.

Now, instead of a literal nation composed of the literal descendants of Abra-

ham, the chosen people would henceforth be an international body, the church universal, a spiritual "nation" called out of all nations. The world replaced the land of Palestine as the stage for God's efforts in behalf of the human race, and the New Jerusalem in heaven replaced literal Jerusalem as the focal center of the believer's hope. A new covenant replaced the old, and a new revelation of the divine purpose was given, adapting the former revelation to the new historical situation.

The heavenly sanctuary on Mount Zion replaced the literal sanctuary on Mount Moriah as the place to which all who choose the worship and service of the true God were to come to find mercy and grace to help in time of need. The infinite priesthood of Jesus Christ replaced a human priesthood, to mediate between repentant sinners and God, and now all men might come directly to Him, by faith. The infinite sacrifice on Calvary superseded the animal sacrifices which pointed forward to it, and the worship of God in spirit and in truth replaced the formalism that often characterized worship through types and ceremonies.

In this lesson we focus attention on Christ's ministry as our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, as a basis for understanding its role in the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy.

From Judaism to Christianity

1. What did the transition from Judaism to Christianity involve with respect to the chosen people? Matt. 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9, 10. See also Rom. 2:28, 29; 10:12, 13.

2. What did this transition involve with respect to Jerusalem and the land of Palestine? Acts 1:8; Rev. 21: 1, 2. See also Acts 10:34, 35; Gal. 4: 25, 26.

NOTE.—Whereas God sent literal Israel into the land of Palestine and established them there, Christ sent His followers forth to all the world, which in the age to come would be their permanent home.

3. What did this transition involve with respect to the covenant? Heb. 8:6-10.

4. What did this transition involve with respect to the Old Testament as a revelation of God's purpose? How is the New Testament related to the Old? Heb. 1:1, 2. See also 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Cor. 3:14; Luke 24:27, 32; John 16:13.

NOTE.—In pre-Christian times the Old Testament was able to make men wise unto salvation, and it is still essential for instruction in righteousness. But after Christ came in fulfillment of the Old Testament, it was no longer sufficient, alone and of itself, to acquaint the reader with a full knowledge of the way of salvation. For this reason God provided a new revelation, in and through Jesus Christ, and the New Testament is a record of that revelation. He has spoken unto us by His Son, even as in times past He spoke unto the fathers by the prophets. As the Old Testament is interpreted to us by the New, we can understand and appreciate the fullness of God's revealed will and His purpose for us today.

The Old Testament prophecies are still to be fulfilled in principle, though not necessarily in every detail, owing to the fact that many details were dependent on Israel as a literal nation situated in the land of Palestine. Obviously such details could not in any literal sense apply to a spiritual "nation" scattered all over the world. Thus, only when the New Testament makes a clear application, or reinterpretation, of such an Old Testament passage, to the new situation with the church as God's chosen instrument, do we have infallible guidance as to its import for us.

Consequently, we should first examine such an Old Testament prophecy in terms of its original, historical application to literal Israel before going to the New Testament to discover its application to spiritual Israel. Where the New Testament

has not thus clearly spoken, it is our privilege to compare scripture with scripture in an endeavor to understand more perfectly the mind of the Spirit. But to go beyond that which Inspiration has clearly set forth—in the immediate context of the passage concerned, in the New Testament, or in the spirit of prophecy—is to substitute personal opinion for a plain "thus saith the Lord." For centuries God has guided His people in the study of His Holy Word, and He is still able to do so.

The Epistle to the Hebrews provides us with just such an inspired guide to the deeper lessons implicit in the ancient sanctuary and its services. To these lessons we now turn.

The Sanctuary in Heaven

5. What did the transition from Judaism to Christianity involve with respect to the sanctuary and its services? John 4:21; Heb. 8:1, 2; 10:9 (last part).

NOTE.—The earthly sanctuary and its services were designed to represent, on a finite scale and by finite means, the infinite realities of the plan of salvation. Its services all pointed forward to Christ, first as the sacrificial victim on Calvary, and then as the priestly minister of that sacrifice in heaven above. At best this earthly representation was imperfect, for nothing finite can possibly equal its infinite counterpart. Nevertheless, God ordained the ancient sanctuary and its services, and through them we are able to understand better Christ's infinite ministry on our behalf.

6. What relationship does the sanctuary in heaven sustain to its ancient counterpart on earth? Heb. 8:5; 9:23.

NOTE.—"The sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. God placed His Spirit upon the builders of the earthly sanctuary. . . .

"The matchless splendor of the earthly tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple where Christ our forerunner ministers for us before the throne of God. . . . [The earthly copy was] but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory. Yet important truths concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the great work there carried forward for man's redemption were taught by the earthly sanctuary and its services."—*The Great Controversy,* page 414.

Our Great High Priest

7. What did the transition from Judaism to Christianity mean with respect to the priesthood and the priestly ministry? Heb. 7:11, 12, 23, 24; 8:4.

8. Ascending to heaven forty days after the resurrection, upon what phase of His ministry did Christ enter? Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 10:12.

NOTE.—On Calvary Christ fulfilled the role of the sacrificial victim in the ancient sanctuary service, providing the vicarious atonement necessary to reconcile all sinners to God. In heaven above He fulfills the role prefigured by the ministration of the priests in the earthly sanctuary, ministering to us individually the infinite benefits of that one vicarious sacrifice. According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, both aspects of His ministry are essential to our salvation.

9. How did Christ qualify to serve as our great High Priest? Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15; 8:3. Compare Heb. 7:27.

NOTE.—A priest is man's representative before God. As man's intermediary, he must have a sympathetic understanding of those whom he represents, in order to be merciful as well as just. To qualify as our High Priest, Christ became one of us, lived with us, and fought the battle

against sin and temptation as we must fight it. He was tempted in all points as we are tempted, yet without sin.

10. How is Christ's priestly ministry in heaven related to His sacrificial ministry on Calvary? Heb. 9:11, 12; 10:12, 14.

NOTE.—A priest must have an offering to present to God on the sinner's behalf. The Saviour provided that sacrifice by His own death on Calvary.

11. As our great High Priest, what does Christ do for us? What gracious invitation does He extend to us? Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22. See also 1 John 2:1.

Christ and Antichrist

12. What policy did Daniel say the tyrant, antichrist, would pursue with respect to our great High Priest? Dan. 8:11, 25; 11:22. Compare Matt. 2:13, 16; Luke 23:44-46; Rev. 12:4, 7-9.

NOTE.—Throughout His life on earth Satan sought to destroy Jesus—in His infancy, continuously through temptation, and by the hands of those who hated Him. But Christ was "caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Rev. 12:5), and since that time Satan has been unable to touch Him directly. By attacking His faithful representatives on earth, however, Satan is, indirectly, accomplishing the same objective. See Zech. 2:8; Matt. 25:35-45.

13. What would antichrist's policy be with respect to the heavenly sanctuary and its ministration? Dan. 8:11, 13. Compare 1 Tim. 2:5; Eph. 2:8, 9.

NOTE.—Satan cannot interfere directly with Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, but he has been eminently successful in keeping from men a knowledge of that saving ministry, and thereby has prevented them from benefiting by it. See Lesson 8, note to question 7. For practical purposes, the effect is the same. Such was the result of the great apostasy that began in the early Christian centuries. The Dark Ages were dark because the light of heaven had been effectively shut out from the minds and hearts of men. By depreciating Christ's sacrifice and priestly ministry and substituting a counterfeit system of its own devising, the Church of Rome has, in effect, profaned the sanctuary in heaven above. She has so effectively deprived millions of people of a knowledge of these fundamental Bible truths, and thus of the benefit of their saving power, that for them the plan devised in heaven has, for practical purposes, ceased to exist.

Lesson 10, for March 11, 1967

The Reign of Antichrist

MEMORY VERSE: "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: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25.

SCRIPTURES: Dan. 7:25; 8:13, 14; Matt. 24:15-30; Rev. 10:1 to 11:1; 14:6-12.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pages 317-342; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To obtain a clearer understanding of the great prophetic time periods of Daniel.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Time, Two Times, and Half a Time

1. Length of the career of antichrist. Dan. 7:25; 12:7.
2. Christ locates the reign of antichrist. Matt. 24:15, 21, 22, 29, 30.
3. Warnings of apostasy. Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thess. 2:3-12.
4. Revelation clarifies the time, times, and half a time. Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5.

II. The 2300 "Evenings and Mornings"

5. The 2300 "evenings and mornings" (R.S.V.). Dan. 8:13, 14.
6. A day for a year. Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6.
7. Ninth chapter explains the eighth. Dan. 8:27; 9:21-23.
8. The starting point. Dan. 9:25.

III. The Judgment-Hour Message

9. Expiration of the 2300 days.
10. Cleansing of the sanctuary. Dan. 8:14.
11. The time periods sealed. Dan. 12:4, 7.
12. The time periods unsealed. Rev. 10:1 to 11:1.
13. The three angels' messages. Rev. 14:6-12.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Three basic prophetic time periods are brought to view in the prophetic portion of the book of Daniel—"a time and times and the dividing of time" (ch. 7:25; 12:7), "two thousand and three hundred days" (ch. 8:14), and "seventy weeks" (ch. 9:24). The first marks the tyrant's defiance of God, his persecution of the saints, and his attempt to obliterate a knowledge of God's revealed will and the worship of God. The second is the period of time during which the little horn of Daniel 8 would desolate the sanctuary, interrupt its services, and substitute in their place his own apostate form of worship. The third is the period of time allotted the Jews as a nation in which to fulfill their covenant obligations. Each of these three time periods is clarified by comparison with the others, and by Christ and the New Testament writers. A correct understanding of them is basic to a valid interpretation of Daniel.

A Time, Two Times, and Half a Time

1. For how long was the tyrant—antichrist—to defy God, persecute the saints, and think to change God's law? Dan. 7:25; 12:7.

2. Where in the stream of history did our Lord locate the reign of antichrist? Matt. 24:15, 21, 22, 29, 30.

NOTE.—Our Lord locates the "great tribulation," or "time of trouble" caused by the tyrant, between the destruction of Jerusalem and certain celestial signs which would herald His return in power and glory. These signs in the heavens would come "immediately after the tribulation of those days," and be followed in close sequence by the coming of the Son of man. (Note the word "then" in v. 30.) Mark 13:24, 25 locates the first of the celestial signs "in those days, after that tribulation." The Dark Day of May 19, 1780, was a telling fulfillment of our Lord's prediction. See "Dark Day" in *S.D.A. Bible Students' Source Book*. Our Lord thus foretold the coming of antichrist after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and prior to the appearance of the signs in the heavens.

3. What warnings against future apostasy were given by New Testament writers? Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thess. 2:3-12.

4. How does the book of Revelation apply and clarify the period of time Daniel assigned to antichrist? Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5. Compare Dan. 7:25.

NOTE.—The Revelation explains the three and a half "times," or years, of Daniel as being equivalent to 1260 prophetic "days," which would be as many literal years. See Lesson 6, note to question 5. The 1260 years of papal supremacy may be reckoned from A.D. 538 to 1798.

The 2300 "Evenings and Mornings"

5. For how long was the sanctuary to suffer under the tyrant's heel? Dan. 8:13, 14.

NOTE.—At the end of 1260 "days" God's people were to be delivered from the tyrant's hand; but at the end of 2300 "days" the sanctuary was to be "cleansed." Lesson 11 considers what was to take place at the close of the 2300 "days"; here we are concerned only with the period of time itself, and its correlation with the events of history.

6. What precedent is there for considering these "days" to represent as many literal years? Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6.

NOTE.—Bible usage points to the conclusion that, in symbolic prophecy, a "day" of prophetic time stands for a full year of actual time. This day-for-a-year principle in predictive prophecy first appears in Numbers 14:34 and is illustrated again in Ezekiel 4:6.

7. Why do we look to Daniel 9 for a clue to the beginning of the 2300 days, or years? Dan. 8:27; 9:21-23.

NOTE.—In his interpretation (8:16-27) of the vision (8:2-14) the angel Gabriel gives no explanation of the 2300 "days" of verse 14. As verse 27 implies, however, this was not because he had nothing further to say on the subject, but because Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days" as a result of being "astonished at the vision." That Gabriel had not been able to complete his explanation seems evident from Daniel's specific notation that there were still some things about the vision that he did not understand. But inasmuch as Gabriel had been commissioned to "make this man [Daniel] to understand the vision" (8:16), we would expect him, at some time or other, to complete his assignment. That he did so becomes evident from a careful comparison of the ninth chapter with the eighth. Note the following points of relationship between the two:

A. It was Gabriel who came to Daniel with both messages (8:16; 9:21). In his introduction (9:20-23) to Gabriel's message of chapter 9:24-27, Daniel indentifies Gabriel as "the man . . . whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning." The only preceding occasion on which Daniel mentions having seen Gabriel is in connection with the vision of chapter 8 (8:16-19).

B. Gabriel's message in chapter 9:24-27 is accompanied by no vision of its own, as are the messages of chapters 2, 7, and 8. Yet chapter 9 repeatedly refers to "the vision." See verses 21, 23, and 24. This vision, of which verses 24-27 are specifically declared to be an explanation (9:23), can be no other than that of chapter 8.

C. Daniel explicitly states (ch. 8:27) that he did not understand the vision of chapter 8, even after Gabriel's explanation recorded in verses 20-26. A comparison of the vision of verses 3-14 with the explanation in verses 20-26 reveals that everything was explained in chapter 8 *except* the tyrant's attack on the sanctuary and its services, and the period of time after which it was to "be cleansed." But these points *are* clarified in chapter 9:24-27, where it is specifically stated that the sanctuary would be destroyed, that what God had already determined would, eventually, be "poured out on the desolator" (R.S.V.), and that "the most holy" place would again be anointed, or dedicated. Furthermore, chapter 9 provides a starting point for the 2300-day period of chapter 8.

D. Gabriel greeted Daniel in chapter 9 with the announcement that he had "now come forth to give" Daniel "skill and un-

derstanding," evidently with respect to that which the prophet has just said (ch. 8: 27) he did not understand. If chapter 9 does not complete the explanation of chapter 8, then the Bible leaves the 2300 "days" a mystery, and the angel Gabriel never complied fully with his commission to explain the vision to Daniel.

E. Daniel's importunate appeal in chapter 9:19 to "defer not" the implementation of His promise through Jeremiah the prophet that Jerusalem (and the temple) would be restored after seventy years, may be construed as implying that Daniel misunderstood the 2300-day desolation of chapter 8:14 to portend a lengthening of its desolate state.

It thus appears that Gabriel intended the "seventy weeks of years" of chapter 9:25 to explain the first part of the 2300 "days" of chapter 8:14.

8. What event was to mark the starting point of the seventy "weeks of years" (R.S.V.) and the 2300 days? Dan. 9:25. Compare Ezra 6:14; 7:1, 8, 11-26.

NOTE.—For an explanation of why the decree of Artaxerxes issued in 457 B.C. is accepted as "the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem," refer to Lesson 4, note to question 2. In view of the fact that the seventy weeks of years of chapter 9:25 were given in explanation of the 2300 days of chapter 8:14, it is evident that the two time periods are related in some way to each other. Inasmuch as Gabriel specifices the beginning of the seventy weeks, we may assume that this marks also the beginning of the 2300 days. Were the two time periods not closely related, then Gabriel, and the Bible, leave the 2300 days floating, as it were, and not anchored in any way to the events of history.

The Judgment-Hour Message

9. When would the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 expire?

ANSWER.—1844.

NOTE.—"Thus far every specification of the prophecies is strikingly fulfilled, and the beginning of the seventy weeks is fixed beyond question at 457 B.C., and their expiration in A.D. 34. . . .

"From this data there is no difficulty in finding the termination of the 2300 days. 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 extended to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844."—*The Great Controversy,* page 328.

10. What event was foretold as taking place at the end of the 2300 days? Dan. 8:14.

NOTE.—In Lesson 9 we found that while the great tyrant of prophecy could not directly influence the sanctuary in heaven, he could, and did, succeed in depriving countless millions of people of a knowledge of the saving ministry of our great High Priest there. For them, the effect was the complete desolation of the sanctuary in heaven. The context of Daniel 8:14 requires that this cleansing include a restoration of the damage done by the little horn in desolating the sanctuary. At the end of the 2300 prophetic days, or years, a knowledge of the full ministry of Christ there, and access to His ministry, was to be restored. Gabriel told Daniel (12:4) that the book was to be shut up and sealed "even to the time of the end," that is, the end of the "time, times, and a half" or 1260 years, about A.D. 1798.

The angel also assured Daniel that at that far-off "time of the end" "many" would "run to and fro, and knowledge" concerning the sealed portions of the book of Daniel would "be increased." Daniel 12:4. Just before and after 1798 the prophecies of Daniel came in for more thoroughgoing study by more people than ever before. This study pointed to the year 1844 as marking the close of the 2300 days, or years. The angel of Revelation 10 came to announce the unsealing of the book of Daniel, to proclaim its time periods to be at an end, and to summon men to a study of the sanctuary. See Rev. 10:1 to 11:1.

11. What was Daniel instructed to do with the prophetic messages accorded him? Dan. 12:4, 7. Compare Dan. 7:1.

12. What graphic portrayal of the unsealing of Daniel's prophecy was given John the revelator? In connection with the unsealing of Daniel, what subject, in particular, was to receive attention? Rev. 10:1 to 11:1.

NOTE.—"This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 7, p. 971.

The fateful announcement that "there should be no more delay" (R.S.V.) heralds the arrival of "the time of the end" foretold by Daniel. God's message for this "time of the end" is mentioned in the opening verses of Revelation 11, where John, still speaking of God's people at the time of the end, "was given a measuring rod like a staff," and told, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there." Rev. 11:1, R.S.V. It was to be a message concerning Christ as our great High Priest ministering in the sanctuary in heaven above and concerning God's people on earth "who worship there" by faith. The message in Revelation 11 about the sanctuary in heaven is closely related to that of chapter 14:7 announcing the arrival of the great hour of God's judgment.

13. What solemn messages were to be proclaimed to the world at the close of the 2300 years? Rev. 14:6 12.

NOTE.—The first of these three messages is a call to worship God according to the provisions of the "everlasting gospel," in view of the fact that the solemn hour of His judgment has come. The second angel's message is a warning against all substitute gospels. The third angel warns against being indentified in any way with the great tyrant of Bible prophecy, or antichrist, and graphically portrays the fearful fate of those "who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." His reign is coming to an end, the judgments foretold in the books of Daniel and Revelation are about to be poured out, and God calls His people to come out of Babylon. Rev. 14:9-11 and 18:1-4 announce the end of antichrist's reign, and appeal to all of God's people who have not yet done so, to "come out of her" in order not to be adjudged accomplices in her sins and as deserving of her plagues.

Lesson 11, for March 18, 1967

Christ Our Righteous Judge

MEMORY VERSE: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10.

SCRIPTURES: Dan. 7:9-14, 26, 27; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 20:11-15.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pages 479-491; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: An understanding of the nature, purpose, and scope of the judgment of the last great day.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Day of Judgment

1. The judgment scene. Dan. 7:9, 10.
2. The decisions rendered. Dan. 7:11, 13, 14, 22, 26, 27; Rev. 11:15.
3. All nations judged. Joel 3:2, 11-17.
4. Christ as judge. John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:30, 31.

II. Judgment of the Great Tyrant

5. God's people delivered. Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45; 7:11, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45.
6. Divine venegance upon the tyrant. 2 Thess. 2:8.
7. The judgment of mystical Babylon. Rev. 16:19; 17:1, 14-17; 18:8, 20, 21.

III. The Judgment of God's People

8. All must appear. 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 4:17.
9. Righteous as well as wicked judged. Matt. 22:11-13; 25:31-34, 41, 46.
10. Proclamation of the judgment. Rev. 14:6-11.
11. Judged by God's moral law. James 2:10-12.

IV. Sentence Executed

12. The verdict issued. Matt. 16:27; Rev. 22:11, 12.
13. Sentence executed on the impenitent. 2 Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 15:1; 20:11-15.
14. The saints awarded eternal life. Matt. 25:34; 1 Cor. 12:51-54.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Christ qualified to be our righteous Judge by being "made like unto His brethren" "in all things," and by being "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 2:17; 4:15. The Father has "given Him authority to execute judgment . . . because He is the Son of man." John 5:27.

By "the judgment," in this lesson, we refer to the entire process by which God intervenes to bring the course of this world's history to a halt, to separate the righteous from the wicked, and to mete out to each group the reward for which it has qualified. To be sure, God needs no judicial procedure by which to determine a person's eligibility for eternal life. The Bible writers make use of the human judicial process to illustrate the fact that God is not arbitrary in deciding individual destiny, but infinitely fair and just. God's own people stand before His judgment bar that their right to eternal life may be authenticated—the wicked, that God may demonstrate their characters to be irreformably out of harmony with the principles of heaven.

The Day of Judgment

1. Describe the great day of divine judgment portrayed in Daniel 7. Dan. 7:9, 10.

NOTE.—In the judgment scene presented in Daniel 7 the fourth beast and the little horn are arraigned before the bar of divine justice, charged with defiance of God and with the persecution of His people on earth. The Judge of the universe wrests the kingdom of this world from their power and awards it to the Son of God and to His faithful people. Seventh-day Adventists have also thought of this scene as a portrayal of the judgment of individuals, as well as of organized human opposition to God and the saints.

2. What matters are considered, and what decisions rendered, in the judgment of Daniel 7? Dan. 7:11, 13, 14, 22, 26, 27; Rev. 11:15.

3. How is this day of judgment presented by the prophet Joel? Joel 3:2, 11-17.

NOTE.—Joel presents the execution of divine sentence upon the wicked nations of earth in terms of the way in which things would have worked out had Israel as a nation remained faithful to God and to her appointed mission. See Lessons 1 and 4. It is appropriate to think of the scene presented in Joel 3, with respect to literal Jerusalem, as illustrative of that described in Revelation 20, where the hosts of the wicked surround the New Jerusalem and God sits upon His throne to execute judgment upon them.

4. What is Christ's role in the judgment? How did He qualify for this role? John 5:22, 27; Acts 17: 30, 31.

Judgment of the Great Tyrant

5. In what various ways does Daniel refer to the judgment of the great tyrant of prophecy? Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45; 7:11, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45. Compare Dan. 12:1.

NOTE.—These descriptions all reflect: (1) an act of judgment that is supernatural, for no human hand is lifted in defense of the guilty, nor is any needed to execute the sentence; (2) an act of judgment that is universal; it eliminates all earthly opposition to God and to His people; (3) an act of judgment that takes place at the close of human history, and inaugurates God's eternal, righteous reign on earth.

6. How does Paul speak of God's judgment of the tyrant? 2 Thess. 2:8.

NOTE.—"The words of this verse have sometimes been used to describe the destruction of the wicked at the second coming of Christ. It is true that the wicked living at that time will suddenly be slain, but Paul is here dealing with the fate of 'that Wicked,' 'the wicked one,' not with that of the wicked in general."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 2 Thess. 2:8.

7. How, variously, does John describe the judgment of Babylon the Great and her accomplices? Rev. 16: 19; 17:1, 14-17; 18:8, 20, 21.

The Judgment of God's People

8. Who else must appear before God's judgment bar? Why? 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 4:17.

NOTE.—The Scriptures present God's own people as also appearing before the bar of divine justice. Their cases come before the Judge of heaven and earth, not in order that He may be informed of their innocence or guilt, but in order to attest their eligibility for receiving the gift of eternal life and for admission to His righteous kingdom.

9. How did Christ present this aspect of the judgment? Matt. 22:11-13; 25:31-34, 41, 46.

NOTE.—"By the king's examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, 'to give every man according as his work shall be.' Rev. 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man's work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ's followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 310.

10. What solemn proclamation immediately precedes the day of judgment? Rev. 14:6-11.

NOTE.—God has entrusted to His remnant church the responsibility for proclaiming His judgment-hour message. The first angel of the heavenly trio announces that the hour of God's judgment has come. The second introduces the villain who is to be judged—Babylon the Great. The third issues the indictment of those who are to suffer divine wrath: They have espoused the cause of antichrist, and so must perish with him. For this reason God summons His people still in Babylon to "come out of her" in order to avoid participation in her sins and in the "plagues" meted out to her. Rev. 18:4.

11. By what divine standard does God measure the lives of men? How thorough is the divine tribunal? James 2:10-12. See also Eccl. 12:13, 14.

NOTE.—"Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel.

"The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment."—*The Great Controversy,* page 482.

Sentence Executed

12. What verdict is finally issued by the Judge of the universe? When will this occur? Matt. 16:27; Rev. 22:11, 12. See also Rom. 2:6-11.

NOTE.—This solemn decree (Rev. 22:11, 12) reflects the fact that, by his own choice, every man's character has been fixed for eternity. The sun of divine mercy sets, the long day of salvation comes to a close, God withdraws His Spirit from the earth, mercy no longer pleads with hard hearts, and human probation is at an end.

13. How is sentence executed upon the perversely impenitent? 2 Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 15:1; 20:11-15.

NOTE.—The outpouring of divine wrath in the seven last plagues has the effect of drawing a clear line of demarcation between the righteous and the wicked. God's people maintain their loyalty to Him despite the great time of trouble through which they pass, whereas the wicked blaspheme God and repent not of their deeds. Rev. 16:9, 11, 13, 14, 21.

At the close of the millennium "the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people."—*The Great Controversy,* page 666.

"The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them."—*Ibid.,* p. 668.

14. What award is granted God's faithful people? Matt. 25:34; 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

How many Branch Sabbath Schools does your Sabbath School operate?

Christ Our King

MEMORY VERSE: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

SCRIPTURES: Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45; Rev. 21:1-5; 22:1-5.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pages 674-678; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

STUDY AIM: To create a vivid picture of Christ as King of kings, and of life with Him under His eternal, righteous reign.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Christ in the Book of Daniel

1. Christ as the "stone." Dan. 2:34, 44, 45.
2. Christ as Son of man. Dan. 7: 13, 14.
3. Christ as "Prince." Dan. 8:11, 25; 9:25, 26.
4. Christ as Michael, the Deliverer. Dan. 12:1.

II. Parables of the Kingdom

5. Christ as Son of man. Luke 19:10.
6. Christ coming as Son of man. Matt. 24:27, 30; 25:31; 26:64.
7. Christ as King. Matt. 25:31-34.

III. Christ in the Revelation

8. Christ watches over His church. Rev. 1:13-16.
9. Christ as King of kings. Rev. 17: 14; 19:11-16.
10. Christ coming in the clouds of heaven. Rev. 1:7; 14:14; 19:11.
11. The marriage feast. Rev. 19:7-9.

IV. A Glorious Future

12. Christ receives His kingdom. Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 3:21; 11:15.
13. The saints inherit the kingdom with Christ. Dan. 7:18, 27; Matt. 25:34.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Each of the great lines of prophecy presented in the book of Daniel closes with the annihilation of the forces of evil and with the establishment of the universal, righteous kingdom of God on earth. Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14; 8:25; 9:24, 27; 11:45 to 12:3. The same is true with the successive lines of prophecy in the book of Revelation. Rev. 3:21; 4:11; 5:13; 7:15-17; 11:15-17; 19:11, 16; 20:11; 22:1, 5. Nearly every one of the Old Testament prophets closes his message with a scene from the eternal kingdom, and some, like Isaiah, return to this theme at the close of each section of their prophetic message. In His parables and other discourses Christ repeatedly pointed forward to the establishment of His kingdom. The writers of the New Testament do likewise. He who accepts Christ as his Saviour today and his King tomorrow can afford to endure patiently the trials and vicissitudes of this life in the realization that, in God's own time, right will triumph.

Christ in the Book of Daniel

1. By what symbol is Christ portrayed in the dream of the metallic image? Dan. 2:34, 44, 45.

2. By what title does Daniel refer to Christ? In what setting? Dan. 7:13, 14. Compare Dan. 3:25.

NOTE.—"Instead of the translation 'a son of man' the translation 'One, human in form' would more adequately represent the Aramaic phrase. God chose to present His Son in prophetic vision with special emphasis on His humanity (see MB 14).

"At the incarnation the Son of God took upon Himself the form of humanity (John 1:1-4, 12, 14; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; etc.) and became the Son of man (see on Mark 2:10), so uniting divinity with humanity by a tie never to be broken (DA 25)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Dan. 7:13.

3. By what title does Daniel refer to Christ in His conflict with the great tyrant? Dan. 8:11, 25; 9:25, 26.

NOTE.—As the title "Son of man" identifies Christ as the incarnate Son of God, a true human being, so the title "Prince of princes" identifies Him as a divine Being, ruler of heaven and earth. Isaiah had already declared the coming Messiah to be the "Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6, 7. He is also called the "Prince of the covenant" (Dan. 11:22), and "Prince of the host" (ch. 8:11).

4. What title does Daniel use of Christ in His role as deliverer of His people? Dan. 12:1. Compare Dan. 10:13; Rev. 12:7-9.

NOTE.—"*Michael.* Heb. *Mika'el,* literally, 'who [is] like God?' He is here described as 'one of the chief princes [Heb. *sarim*].' Later He is described as Israel's particular protector (ch. 12:1). His identity is not definitely stated here, but a comparison with other scriptures identifies Him as Christ. Jude 9 terms Him 'the archangel.' According to 1 Thess 4:16, the 'voice of the archangel' is associated with the resurrection of the saints at the coming of Jesus. Christ declared that the dead will come forth from their graves when they hear the voice of the Son of man (John 5:28). It thus seems clear that Michael is none other than the Lord Jesus Himself (see EW 164; cf. DA 421). The name Michael [as applied to Christ] appears in the Bible only in apocalyptic passages (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7). Moreover, it is used only in instances where Christ is in direct conflict with Satan. The name in Hebrew, signifying 'who is like God?' is at once a question and a challenge. In view of the fact that Satan's rebellion is essentially an attempt to install himself on the throne of God and 'be like the Most High' (Isa. 14:14), the name Michael is a most fitting one for Him who has undertaken to vindicate the character of God and disprove Satan's claims."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Dan. 10:13.

Parables of the Kingdom

5. By what favorite title did Christ usually refer to Himself? Luke 19:10.

NOTE.—"Jesus was literally 'the Son of man,' both in a purely historic sense (see Luke 1:31-35; Rom. 1:3, 4; Gal. 4:4) and in a higher sense. The title, Son of man, designates Him as the incarnate Christ (see John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8). It points to the miracle whereby Creator and creature were united in one divine-human person. It testifies to the truth that sons of men may indeed become sons of God (John 1:12; Gal. 4:3-7; 1 John 3:1, 2). Deity was identified with humanity in order that humanity might be made over again into the image of divinity (DA 25). Concerning Jesus as the Son of God, see on Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3; and as Son of man, on Luke 2:49, 52; John 1:14; see Additional Note on John 1."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Mark 2:10.

6. In what setting is Christ's use of the title "Son of man" reminiscent of Daniel's use of the term? Matt. 24:27, 30; 25:31; 26:64.

7. In which of His parables does Christ speak of Himself as King? How does He refer to the establishment of His eternal kingdom? Matt. 25:31-34.

NOTE.—"*Throne of his glory.* Or, 'His glorious throne.' Christ was seated upon the throne of the universe prior to His incarnation (DA 22, 23). Upon His ascension He was once more enthroned (AA 38), as Priest and King (Zech. 6:13; AA 39), and shared His Father's throne (DA 832; Rev. 3:21). At the completion of the work of investigative judgment, begun in 1844 (see on Rev. 14:6, 7), Jesus will receive 'His kingdom' (GC 426, 613, 614; EW 55, 280). The final coronation and enthronement of Christ as King of the universe takes place at the close of the millennium, before all men—those who are subjects of His glorious kingdom and those who have refused allegiance to Him."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Matt. 25:31.

Christ in the Revelation

8. How does John present Christ in His role as Lord of the church? Rev. 1:13-16.

NOTE.—"When the glorified Christ manifested Himself to John in celestial splendor He still appeared to him in the likeness of a human being. Although Christ was eternally pre-existent as the Second Person of the Godhead, and ever remains so, His assumption of humanity is for all eternity to come (see Vol. 5, pp. 917-919)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 1:13.

9. By what other titles does John refer to Christ in His role as deliverer of His people? What is said of His second coming in power and glory? Rev. 17:14; 19:11-16. Compare Dan. 12:1, 2.

NOTE.—The title "King of kings and Lord of lords" belongs to Christ in a special way at the time when "the kingdoms of this world" have "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." Rev. 11:15. Christ has completed His ministry as our great High Priest and now stands up to receive His kingdom and to deliver His beleaguered people.

10. How does John describe Christ's second coming in power and glory? Rev. 1:7; 14:14; 19:11.

11. What symbolic description of the establishment of Christ's kingdom is reminiscent of one of His parables? Rev. 19:7-9. Compare Matt. 22:2-14.

NOTE.—"The wedding here referred to consists of the reception by Christ of His kingdom, as represented by the New Jerusalem, and His coronation as King of kings and Lord of lords, in heaven at the close of His priestly ministry before the plagues are poured out (EW 55, 251, 280, 281; GC 427, 428; see on ch. 17:14). As in the parable of the Ten Virgins, the waiting saints are represented as guests invited to the wedding (ch. 19:9; GC 426, 427; cf. Matt. 25:1-10)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Rev. 19:7.

A Glorious Future

12. In what language do Daniel and John refer to Christ's receiving His kingdom? Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 3:21; 11:15.

NOTE.—"In Luke 19:12-15 Christ is represented as a nobleman who took his journey into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. At the close of His priestly ministry in the sanctuary, while still in heaven, Christ receives the kingdom from His Father and then returns to earth for His saints (see GC 428; EW 55, 280)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Dan. 7:14.

13. What glorious future awaits those who remain loyal to Christ? Dan. 7:18, 27; Matt. 25:34. See also Rev. 3:21; 21:3, 4; 22:3-5.

NOTE.—"There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries

of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body."—*The Great Controversy,* page 677.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

March 25, 1967

Far Eastern Division

The Far Eastern Division is to benefit from the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering overflow the first quarter of 1967. This will be the twelfth time that it has benefited since World War II. During the previous eleven times, it has received the grand total of $630,760.56. This has meant much to the various projects that have benefited.

The division has eighteen medical institutions, not to mention an even larger number of clinics. During these past twenty years only five of its medical institutions have been helped by a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering overflow. A total of $157,698.78, or 25 percent of the total received, has gone into medical work. This year the Seoul Sanitarium and Hospital is to benefit by one third of the overflow.

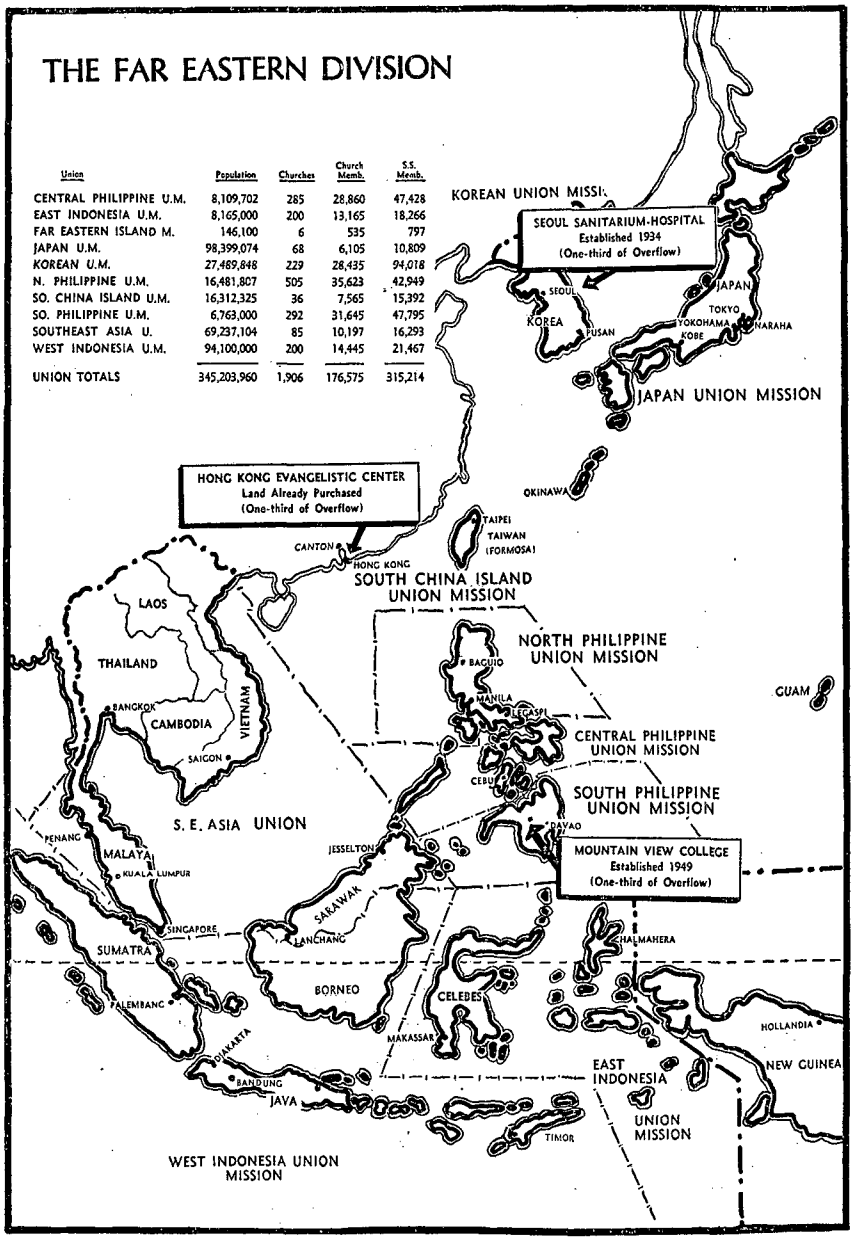
Since 1946, twelve of our thirty-eight colleges and secondary schools have been assisted through the overflow gifts. The total assistance thus received amounted to $235,000, or better than 37 percent of the total received during this same period. Mountain View College on Mindano in the Philippines will benefit from this quarter's overflow.

For years the Far Eastern Division has been trying to find a suitable location for an evangelistic center in the city of Hong Kong, with its almost four million people. The site has been secured, and the third portion of the overflow will help in establishing this much-needed lighthouse in this great city. Give generously on March 25.

Lessons for the Second Quarter, 1967

Sabbath School members who have failed to receive a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the second quarter of 1967 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the series is, "Selected Lessons from the Life of Christ." The title of the first lesson is "The Reception of Jesus." The memory verse is Luke 2:10, 11. The study helps are *The Desire of Ages,* pages 44-67, and the *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* Vol. 5. The texts to be studied are:

Ques. 1. Luke 2:8-12.
Ques. 2. Luke 2:13, 14.
Ques. 3. Luke 2:15-18.
Ques. 4. Luke 2:21; Matt. 1:21.
Ques. 5. Luke 2:24; Lev. 12:6-8.
Ques. 6. Luke 2:22, 23; Num. 3:13.
Ques. 7. Luke 2:27-32, 34, 35.
Ques. 8. Luke 2:36-38.
Ques. 9. Matt. 2:1, 2.
Ques. 10. Matt. 2:3-6; Micah 5:2.
Ques. 11. Matt. 2:7-12.
Ques. 12. Matt. 2:13-15.
Ques. 13. Matt. 2:16-18.
Ques. 14. Matt. 2:19-23; John 1:46.

THE FAR EASTERN DIVISION

Union	Population	Churches	Church Memb.	S.S. Memb.
CENTRAL PHILIPPINE U.M.	8,109,702	285	28,860	47,428
EAST INDONESIA U.M.	8,165,000	200	13,165	18,266
FAR EASTERN ISLAND M.	146,100	6	535	797
JAPAN U.M.	98,399,074	68	6,105	10,809
KOREAN U.M.	27,489,848	229	28,435	94,018
N. PHILIPPINE U.M.	16,481,807	505	35,623	42,949
SO. CHINA ISLAND U.M.	16,312,325	36	7,565	15,392
SO. PHILIPPINE U.M.	6,763,000	292	31,645	47,795
SOUTHEAST ASIA U.	69,237,104	85	10,197	16,293
WEST INDONESIA U.M.	94,100,000	200	14,445	21,467
UNION TOTALS	345,203,960	1,906	176,575	315,214