

Chapter 7

Daniel 10:1 - 11:35 – Israel’s Prophetic Destiny

“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the [Gentile] reader [also] understand – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.”

– Matthew 24:15-20, insertions mine

Introduction

About 534 B.C., God gave Daniel a compelling vision that came in two installments. The first installment contained scenes from a protracted series of wars and the second consisted of another visit with the angel, Gabriel. Gabriel was sent to Daniel, who was nearing eighty years of age, to explain certain things about the wars which he saw in the first installment. Daniel received these installments about three weeks apart. When Daniel put the vision in written form, he, like all other Bible writers, did not divide his report into the chapters and verses that are found in our Bibles today. This point is made because Daniel 10 through 12 should be understood as one vision, even though it covers three chapters. A similar situation occurred in Daniel 8 and 9. Daniel 8 contains a ram, goat and horn power. Later, Gabriel was sent to Daniel with more information about Daniel 8. (Daniel 9:21)

Today, few religious leaders speak about the last chapters of Daniel. This is unfortunate because this particular vision contains valuable information for the final generation. God does not give visions to His prophets without revealing important information. As we examine this vision, keep four issues in mind:

1. Two Groups of Beneficiaries

God gave this vision to Daniel to benefit two groups of people who would live in the future. The first group lived about 600 years after this vision was given. This group consisted of Christians who lived in Jerusalem at the time of its destruction in A.D. 70. The second group of people for which this vision was given are those Christians who will live on Earth during the Great Tribulation. This vision benefits both groups because they will share a common experience. Early Christians experienced the destruction of Jerusalem, and Great Tribulation Christians will experience the destruction of Earth. Because there are distinct parallels in these two events, God gave one vision for the benefit of two groups of people. This is not unusual, because Jesus, in Matthew 24 and elsewhere in the Bible, compared the destruction of Jerusalem with the end of the world. For example, Jesus told His disciples, **“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. . . . They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.”** (Matthew 24:9-11, John 16:2,3) History reveals that many of the early Christians, like Stephen, were martyrs for their faith. (Acts 6 and 7) The Jews, including Saul of Tarsus, thought they were doing God a service by killing Christians! (See Deuteronomy 13 and 1 Timothy 1:13.) People living during the Great Tribulation will see similar parallels. Soon, God’s people will be persecuted, even martyred for their faith, and amazingly, people who persecute and martyr God’s people will think they are doing God a service! (Revelation 6:9-11; 13:1-10; 14:12,13; 16:4-7)

Other parallels in Matthew 24 merit our attention. For example, Jesus said, **“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of**

the Son of Man.” (Matthew 24:37-39) Jesus compared the disbelief and ignorance of the people who lived before the flood with the people who will be living at the end of time. Of course, ignorance is not limited to people living in Noah’s day nor at the end of the world. This is why Jesus warned His listeners to anticipate Jerusalem’s destruction, “**‘Do you see all these things [the temple complex]?’ he asked. ‘I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down... So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the [Gentile] reader [also] understand – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.’**” (Matthew 24:2,15,16; Luke 21:22, insertions mine.) Jesus quoted Daniel 11:31, because the vision in Daniel 10-12 lays out a historical sequence of events that includes the destruction of Jerusalem! Not only did early Christians benefit from Jesus’ remarks, but the final generation will also benefit from this amazing vision. Remember, God gave this vision to Daniel about 540 B.C., and it was meant to benefit *two* groups of people who would be separated by almost 2,000 years!

2. God’s Foreknowledge

The vision of Daniel 10-12, like that of Daniel 8-9, predicted Israel’s failure long *before* the seventy weeks began. One of God’s most amazing qualities is His ability to treat His children according to the principle of love, even though He knows our choices before we make them. Think this through. If you knew your child would flunk out of college, would you spend \$50,000 on his or her college education anyway? If you knew your upcoming marriage was going to end in a bitter divorce, would you still get married? God is all-knowing (omniscient). He knows everything in the past, present and future. Even more, He is also omnipotent, which means He has the power to manipulate everyone and everything in the universe to His satisfaction. However, God does not use His foreknowledge or His omnipotence to manipulate His creatures for His benefit. If He manipulated us according to His desires, He would not be a God of love; instead, He would be a self-serving God. The only way God’s creatures can live at peace with God is through trust. We have to believe that He will not violate the principle of love even though we cannot understand His ways at times. God does not ask us to trust

Him with these incredible powers without giving us good reason to trust Him. Calvary proves the Father and the Son are worthy of complete trust.

Here is a profound point. *God uses His mighty powers (omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence) to insure the principle of love will be exalted throughout the universe.* God does not use His incredible powers to keep Himself on the throne! The principle of love is essential for eternal happiness (there is no alternative). The humiliation and death of Jesus assures every created being that the principle of love will forever be the basis of God's government. In other words, if God could have resolved the sin problem without Jesus' death, He would have done so. But, **“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. . . .”** This is why John wrote, “God is love.” (1 John 4:8) What a marvelous God!

God deals with us according to His great love, even though He knows our choices may not be good. In other words, God is not like us. A selfish heart will use manipulation, deceit and any other means at its disposal to satisfy its selfish desires! God does not work this way. He is motivated by pure love. God is selfless. The vision recorded in Daniel 11 reveals Israel's failure long before the seventy weeks began. If God foreknew their failure, why did God give Israel 490 years of probationary time? (For that matter, God foreknew the failure of Lucifer and Adam and Eve, yet He gave them life and probationary time.) These examples highlight what is so amazing about God. Even though He foreknew Israel's failure, God granted seventy weeks of grace because He wanted Israel *to have the opportunity* to succeed or fail. The potential was awesome. If Israel *chose* a life of faith and submission to God, God was ready and willing to establish His kingdom on Earth at the end of the 490 years decreed in Daniel 9. If Jesus had been able to establish His kingdom on Earth, Israel would have become a kingdom of priests who served the Lord on behalf of all the nations of Earth. (Exodus 19:5,6) However, we now know that Israel *chose* the way of rebellion, and God abandoned the nation of Israel and destroyed Jerusalem. If the Jews had experienced God's love and properly understood Daniel 10-12 before Jesus came to Earth, world history would have been so different.

3. Caught in the Middle

The Daniel 10-12 vision tells the story of a series of protracted wars fought over several centuries. In a geographical, religious and political sense, Israel was trapped in the middle of endless wars between nations from the north and the south. Israel's unique position mirrors the general experience of God's people in a fallen world. Many times God's people are "caught in the middle" between opposing forces. Moreover, God forbade Israel from taking sides or making alliances for protection (Isaiah 30), because He wanted Israel to understand that they were only safe if they remained allied with Him.

Keep three entities in mind as you study this vision: the kingdom of the north, the kingdom of the south and the kingdom of God. God placed the ancient nation of Israel geographically "in the middle of the nations." (Ezekiel 5:5) He deliberately placed Israel in this strategic location to be representatives of His love and truth. God wanted the nations of the world to become acquainted with a special group of people. However, a prominent position can have adverse consequences, too. When Israel failed to honor God, He humiliated them by making them a reproach to all of the surrounding nations. (Ezekiel 5:14) God displayed His wrath against Jerusalem two times; first in 605 B.C., and again in A.D. 70.

Israel's prominent location was to be an asset or a liability, depending on their relationship with God. The vision given in Daniel 10-12 proves that God deliberately restored tiny Israel to their homeland at the end of seventy years in Babylon, but their return home put them *between* two huge warring forces. If Israel had cooperated with God, they would have had a powerful impact on the nations to the north and to the south. Israel could have used this prophecy to demonstrate the superiority of their God above the gods of the pagans, *because this vision discloses the outcome of numerous wars before they happened!* God wanted His people to be informed about *His* larger plans, and He wanted Israel to tell the nations that other than Jehovah, there are no other gods. (Isaiah 44) God did not want Israel to be afraid of the larger nations, but God's plans were not realized because of Israel's rebellion. As a result, the only group that has benefitted from this vision thus far was early Christians.

Caught Between Two Groups of People

Since we are considering Israel being caught in the middle of a series of wars, a few comments about this concept is necessary. Several parallels can be made of ancient Israel's position between the kings of the north and the kings of the south. For example, after Jesus went to Heaven, early Christians found themselves caught between Rome's hatred for the Jews and the Jew's hatred for the Romans. The Romans viewed Christians as an offshoot sect of the Jews, and the Jews viewed Christians as traitors worthy of death. Both groups hated the Christians! What a terrible place to be. God's people will have a similar experience during the Great Tribulation. As the Great Tribulation unfolds, three groups of people will appear:

1. **Religious wicked.** These will be people like the Pharisees of old. They will devise and endorse the false doctrines of Babylon. This group of people will embrace the Antichrist when he appears because they will believe that he is God. These people are identified in Daniel 11 as followers of the king of the north (Lucifer).
2. **Non-religious wicked.** These people will be like the Moabites of old. The Moabites did not worship Jehovah; they had their own gods. These people will rebel against the laws imposed by Babylon. They will refuse to submit to the laws and authority of Lucifer, the Antichrist. This group of people is described in Daniel 11 as the followers of the king of the south. Wicked people of Earth will be divided in their loyalties – the north versus the south.
3. **Saints.** The saints will make up a third group of people during the Great Tribulation. They are identified as "the holy people" mentioned in Daniel 12:7 and Revelation 11:2. The saints will oppose the false doctrines of Babylon and they will refuse to submit to the laws of Babylon because of their faith in Jesus and obedience to His commandments. Because the saints will not join either group, the groups in the north and in the south will both hate the saints. (See also Revelation 12:17; 13:7; 14:12.)

Lucifer and his angels will eliminate the kingdom of the south by killing its people. (Revelation 9:15) Many saints will also be martyred during this time. (Revelation 6:9) The net effect is that

when Jesus appears at the Second Coming, two groups of people will remain: one-third of the world's population worshipping the Lamb of God, and two-thirds of the world worshipping the Antichrist, Lucifer. (Zechariah 13:8,9)

Remember, God gave this vision to benefit two groups of people. The first section of this vision (Daniel 10:1-11:35) lays out a chronological sequence of historical events for the benefit of early Christians. By following the sequence of events in this vision, they could determine and anticipate the outcome of Jerusalem's fate. The second section of the vision (Daniel 11:26-12:13) belongs to Great Tribulation Christians. For them, this vision describes the future actions of the stern-faced King from the North (Daniel 8), as well as some information about the persecution of the saints during the Tribulation. If you understand the first section of this vision (pertaining to early Christians), the second section will make a lot more sense because there are parallels between the two sections.

4. The Region of the North

The title, "The king of the north," is used nine times, and the title, "The king of the south," is used ten times in this vision. These titles have geographic value, as well as figurative value, because the kings of the south and the north stand in opposition. Because the devil will appear as the king of the north during the Great Tribulation, review the following points about him (the Horn Power) in Daniel 8 before we proceed:

Horn Power from the North

1. The Horn Power will come out of one of the four winds.
2. The Horn Power will come out of the north, but will grow toward the south, east and west.
3. Divine destruction in the Old Testament consistently comes out of the north.
4. God's throne is located on the north side of His temple.

You may recall that King Nebuchadnezzar came out of "the north" to implement divine judgment against Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 6:1,22; 25:9) Likewise, divine judgment against Babylon came out of "the

north.” (Jeremiah 50:2,3) When the Antichrist appears, he will also come out of the north. (Daniel 8:9; 11:36-40) Finally, when Jesus returns, He will come out of the north with divine destruction. (Job 37:22; Daniel 11:44) Of course, from our point of view on Earth, which rotates in a counter-clockwise direction, Jesus will physically show up in the East!

Initial Summary

Try to keep the following four issues in mind as you examine this vision: (1) It was given for the benefit of two groups of Christians; (2) God has perfect foreknowledge, but He does not use His foreknowledge to manipulate the outcome of events; (3) God’s people will be caught in the middle of opposing forces; and (4) God will empower the Antichrist, the stern-faced king that comes out of the north, to cause great destruction because of the world’s rebellion. (2 Thessalonians 2:11,12)

What Did Jesus Mean?

Before we examine the details of Daniel 10-12, one more point needs to be presented. Jesus warned His disciples, **“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”** (Matthew 24:15:16) When Jesus spoke these words, He knew that Daniel 11:31 would be fulfilled forty years later. According to Webster, an abomination is “a despicable act, an insult having no equal, a defiant act of insolence and total disdain.” The highest insult or abomination that anyone can commit is to insult or defy God. Consider the following texts taken from the Kings James Version and notice how the Bible defines an abomination:

1. Exodus 8:25, 26 **“And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?”** The ancient Egyptians believed in the transmigration of the soul. They considered the slaughter of animals to be a grave insult to their ancestors (who

might be living in an animal). They also considered the killing of animals an abomination to their gods. Knowing this, Moses wanted to leave Egypt and offer animal sacrifices to God in the wilderness to avoid agitating the Egyptians with inflammatory behavior.

2. Leviticus 18:20-22 “Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbor’s wife, to defile thyself with her. And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.” God considers a homosexual relationship to be an abomination. He created us in His image (Genesis 1:26) and is insulted when we debase His image. God also considers a sexual relationship with an animal to be an abomination. (Leviticus 20:15)

3. Deuteronomy 17:1 “Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock, or sheep, wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness: for that is an abomination unto the Lord thy God.” When God established the ritual of animal sacrifices, He forbade anyone from presenting an offering that was considered a “second” or that had a known blemish on it. Each sacrificial animal represented the perfect “Lamb of God” who would take away the sins of the world. If any flaw was found in Jesus, He could not be man’s perfect substitute! Therefore, presenting a blemished sacrifice was an insult or abomination to God.

4. Proverbs 6:16-19 “These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” God hates these seven things because they destroy love. God will not tolerate these forms of behavior in His coming kingdom because they ruin life, and this is an insult to the Author of Life.

These few verses (and there are many others in the Bible) define certain actions that God considers an abomination. An abomination is a despicable act directed towards God. As you might expect, God may wink at our ignorance, but He does not tolerate insults very long. King Sennacherib insulted God and an angel struck 185,000 of

his soldiers dead in a single night! (2 Kings 19:35)

“...That Causes Desolation”

Now that we know that an abomination is a great insult toward God, it should be easier to make sense of the prophetic phrase, “the abomination that causes desolation.” This phrase comes from a Jewish mindset because the Jews regarded their homeland as the “holy land,” that is, land set apart or separated from other nations for Abraham’s descendants. They also considered their homeland to be God’s “holy land” because God dwelt in their land; at the temple in Jerusalem. Notice King David’s song of praise: **“He struck down all the firstborn of Egypt, the firstfruits of manhood in the tents of Ham. But he brought his people out like a flock; he led them like sheep through the desert. He guided them safely, so they were unafraid; but the sea engulfed their enemies. Thus he brought them to the border of *His holy land*, to the hill country his right hand had taken. He drove out nations before them and allotted their lands to them as an inheritance; He settled the tribes of Israel in their homes.”** (Psalm 78:51-55, italics mine)

The word *holy* means “set apart” from the common or usual. The term “holy land” defines land as that which is set apart from all other lands. God set Israel apart from Egypt as a holy nation of people. (Exodus 19:4-6) He placed Israel in the center of the nations, at a special location, called “His holy land.” (Ezekiel 5:5)

The Levites and Their Pastureland

You may recall that God did not give a share of the Promised Land to the tribe of Levi when Israel entered Canaan. **“The Lord said to Aaron, ‘You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites. I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting.’ ”** (Numbers 18:20,21) God did this because He wanted to tie the prosperity of the tribe of the Levites to their effectiveness as teachers and pastors of His flock. If the priests were faithful and taught the people the ways of the Lord, the nation would prosper, and the Levites would prosper from the increase in tithe! If the priests failed to teach the

people the ways of the Lord, the nation would suffer, and the Levites would suffer because of Israel's economic failures.

When the time came for Israel to possess the holy land, God gave Moses certain instructions about the Levites. Notice the size, place and role of the pasturelands that were set apart for the priests: **“On the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, the Lord said to Moses, ‘Command the Israelites to give the Levites towns to live in from the inheritance the Israelites will possess. And give them pasturelands around the towns. Then they will have towns to live in and pasturelands for their cattle, flocks and all their other livestock. The pasturelands around the towns that you give the Levites will extend out fifteen hundred feet from the town wall. Outside the town, measure three thousand feet on the east side, three thousand on the south side, three thousand on the west and three thousand on the north, with the town in the center. They will have this area as pastureland for the towns. Six of the towns you give the Levites will be cities of refuge, to which a person who has killed someone may flee. In addition, give them forty-two other towns. In all you must give the Levites forty-eight towns, together with their pasturelands. The towns you give the Levites from the land the Israelites possess are to be given in proportion to the inheritance of each tribe: Take many towns from a tribe that has many, but few from one that has few.’”** (Numbers 35:1-8, italics mine)

When the Israelites finally possessed the land, Joshua sanctified, or “made holy,” Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan as cities of refuge on the east side of the Jordan River, and Kedesh, Shechem and Kiriath Arba on the west side of the Jordan River. (Joshua 20:7,8) These six cities became known as “holy cities” because they were *set apart* as cities of refuge. If a murder was committed, the murderer could seek refuge by fleeing to one of these cities for either temporary or permanent safety from the avenger of blood. About four hundred years after Israel occupied the Promised Land, King David overthrew the city of Jebus and established his throne there. David renamed Jebus, “Jerusalem” (city of peace), and it became the seventh (and last) of the holy cities. After Solomon's death, the kingdom of Israel was divided into two states and in 722 B.C., the

northern kingdom was destroyed. At that time, Jerusalem became *the* only holy city remaining for the tribes in the south, Benjamin and Judah.

When each “holy city” was established, the nearby pastureland around the walls of the city was “set apart” for the Levites as a place for their gardens and flocks. They called the pastureland around the walls of each city “the holy place” or “holy ground” because it was set apart for the Levites. When Jerusalem became a holy city, the pastureland just outside the city was also set apart for the priests to use exclusively. Even after the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, God planned for the rebuilt city to have “holy ground” surrounding its walls. (Ezekiel 45:1-6) Now that you know how the language is used to describe the pastureland around the walls of the holy cities, closely examine these two texts:

1. Jesus said, “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the [Gentile] reader understand – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.” (Matthew 24:15-20, insertion mine)

2. Jesus said, “When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.” (Luke 21:20-23)

There is an interesting difference between these two texts. Both Matthew and Luke heard Jesus give the same discourse. Years later, when the gospels were written, Matthew, the Jew, wrote as a Jew would have remembered Jesus’ prediction. Luke, a Gentile

converted to Christianity, wrote according to what he understood Jesus to mean. Both men understood the meaning of Christ's words. In the Jewish mind, the city of Jerusalem was an object of highest adoration and exaltation. Jerusalem was the hub of Judaism. Jehovah's temple was located on Mount Moriah, and the Jews regarded Jerusalem as the invincible City of God. Given this ideology, the Jews considered the presence of an uncircumcised Gentile army standing in the land dedicated to the Levites to be an insult to God. Luke confirms this understanding. He interprets Jesus' words to mean "when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by foreign armies, you will know that its desolation is near." Jesus was trying to warn His followers about a future event that was something unbearable to hear! Why would God allow *His* holy city and *His* temple to be subjected to barbarians bent on destruction? *His* justification for destroying Jerusalem a second time was the same as the first destruction of the city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar. God destroyed Israel because of defiant apostasy.

Jesus quoted Daniel 11:31 saying, "**So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel . . .**" because the first section of the prophecy in Daniel 10-12 was about to reach fulfillment in A.D. 70. This portion of Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled when Vespasian set siege to Jerusalem in A.D. 68. He surrounded Jerusalem so that no one could enter or leave the city. However, Nero died shortly after the siege began, and Vespasian ordered his troops to return to Rome to secure his position on the throne. The following year, the siege was renewed under the leadership of Vespasian's son, Titus. In A.D. 70, the city of Jerusalem fell and was totally destroyed. When Vespasian lifted the siege on Jerusalem and returned to Rome because of Nero's death, a short window of time opened up. The retreat gave believers enough time to escape the city of Jerusalem. Early Christians understood Daniel's words, as well as Jesus' warning. When Titus destroyed Jerusalem the following year, few, if any, Christians perished. Thousands of Christians survived because Jesus pointed them to Daniel 11:31! Incidentally, the dispersion of thousands of Christians from Jerusalem in A.D. 69 forced the gospel into many places where it had not gone before.

A Different Commentary Style

Because the vision in Daniel 10-12 has one section applying to early Christians and a second section applying to Great Tribulation Christians, I have divided this vision into two sections. This chapter deals with early Christians and the next chapter deals with Great Tribulation Christians.

Because this vision presents several wars that can be somewhat complicated to follow, a different style of commentary will be used. According to the dictionary, a paraphrase is an attempt to clarify the meaning of an author's words by restating his or her original idea using different words. On the other hand, a translation is a direct conversion of words or their equivalent sense from one language to another. *The commentary style that follows is neither a paraphrase nor a translation.* The following commentary style should be called interlacing. The text from Scripture will be presented first, then my commentary will be interlaced with Scripture so you can follow the vision as it moves back and forth between the armies of the north and the south.

Daniel 10:1-6 (KJV) – Part I

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part I

“During the third year of Cyrus (534 B.C.), king of Persia, I, Daniel – also called Belteshazzar by the Babylonians, received a vision. This vision contained scenes of a great war and I did not understand the

vision. When the vision ended, I was sad and distressed for three weeks because of what I had seen. I petitioned the Most High God for understanding. I ate no delicious food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no cologne until the three weeks were over. Then, on Nisan 24, I had another vision to help me understand the vision of the great war. I was standing on the banks of the Tigris. I looked up toward the sky and there I saw a glorious man dressed in linen, wearing around his waist a belt of the finest gold. His body was as bright as sunlight shining on gold, his face was brighter than lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and legs had the gleam of polished bronze, and his voice could be heard for miles, like the sound of a great multitude.”

Daniel 10:7-14 (KJV) – Part II

“And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part II

“I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the glorious man. The men with me did not see Him, but when they saw His glory, they were filled with terror and fled for refuge. So, I was left alone, gazing at the glorious man; my body had no strength, my face turned deathly pale and I was utterly helpless. Then I heard him speak, and as I listened, I fell unconscious and I crumbled to the ground. An angel, Gabriel, came to me and helped me up on my hands and knees. He said, ‘Daniel, you are highly esteemed; carefully consider the words I am about to speak to you. So, stand up, for God has sent me to you.’ After he said this to me, I stood up even though I was trembling. Then Gabriel said, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the day you received the vision and began humbling yourself with fasting and prayer – requesting understanding, the Lord heard your words, and has sent me to you. I would have come sooner, but a conflict over the king of Persia thwarted my efforts for the past twenty-one days. Then Michael Himself, the archangel, came to my aid because I could not overcome the prince of darkness. Now that this crisis has passed, I have come to explain what will happen in the future, for this vision reaches far beyond the expiration of the seventy weeks.’”

Daniel 10:15-21 (KJV) – Part III

“And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part III

“While Gabriel was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then the angel touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the angel, ‘I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and have no strength; I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.’ So the angel touched me, and instantly I received strength. ‘Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,’ he said. ‘Peace! Be strong now; be strong.’ When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, ‘Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.’ Gabriel continued, ‘I have come to explain things that will help God’s people in days to come. Soon, destruction will overtake Persia, and the kingdom of Greece will rise to power. First, however, I will tell you some secrets that are written in the Book of Truth containing God’s master plan for Earth. No one else has access to these secrets except Michael, the Prince of Heaven.’”

Daniel 11:1-4 (KJV) - Part IV

“In the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.

Interlaced Commentary on Part IV

“Gabriel said, ‘According to God’s will, I began to support and protect the conquests of Darius the Mede in the first year of his reign, but due to illness, his kingdom did not last long. Three more kings will rule over Persia after the present king, Cyrus, dies. Cambyses, False Smerdis and Darius I will become kings and rule over Persia. Then a fourth king, far richer than the others, will come

to power. When Xerxes has gained much power from his wealth, he will militarily resist the developing kingdom of Grecia. Later, a mighty king, Alexander the Great, from Grecia, will ascend and rapidly gain control of the world. He will rule with astonishing power and do as he pleases. After he reigns about ten years, he will die an untimely death and God will divide his great empire into smaller kingdoms in the north, south, east and west. Alexander's empire will not go to his descendants, nor will his successors have the sweeping power he exercised. In time, God will dissolve Alexander's empire and pass the government of the world to the Romans.' ”

Historical Note: After Alexander's death, the Grecian empire was eventually divided into four kingdoms, and four generals from Alexander's empire ruled over them. Ptolemy ruled in the south, Cassander in the west, Lysimachus in the north and Seleucus in the east. After Greece was divided, the empire experienced many changes, including national borders (the four generals fought each other continuously over their borders); however, most of the border wars did not drastically affect the tiny nation of Israel. When Grecia fell in 331 B.C., Israel had completed most of its post-Babylonian restoration of Jerusalem. Naturally, the Jews in Jerusalem were concerned about the tensions that existed between the nations, because Israel occupied a strip of strategic land that served as a “land bridge” between the nations in the north and south. (Ezekiel 5:5) Because the Great Sea to the west and the Great Desert to the east were natural geographical barriers, large armies from the north or the south had no option but to march directly through Judea in their attempts to defeat each other. As a result of Israel's geographic location and the titles of the kings used in this prophecy, we can identify the kings of the north and the south without too much difficulty.

Daniel 11:5,6 (KJV) - Part V

“And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of

the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part V

“Gabriel said, ‘One of Alexander’s generals, Ptolemy I Soter, will become the king of Egypt. As king of the south, he will become strong, but a second general from Alexander’s empire, Seleucus I Nicator, will become even greater than Ptolemy. Seleucus I will extend his dominion and eventually rule over the north. After a few years, these two kings will die, but their descendants will seek peace through marriage. Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, the king of the south, will go to Antiochus II, the king of the north, to make an alliance. Antiochus II will divorce his wife, Laodice, to marry Bernice and they will produce an heir. However, the new marriage will not last long. The vacillating Antiochus II will eventually divorce Bernice, and reconcile with his first wife, Laodice. After Antiochus II and Laodice reconcile, Laodice will kill Bernice, her royal escort, and her son by Antiochus II. Laodice will then kill Antiochus II because he divorced her to marry Bernice.’ ”

Daniel 11:7-10 (KJV) - Part VI

“But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land. But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part VI

“Gabriel continued, ‘After Bernice’s death, her brother in Egypt, Ptolemy III, will come to the throne in the south. To avenge Bernice’s death, he will attack the army of Seleucus II, the king that took the place of Antiochus II. Ptolemy III will be victorious. He will

seize their gods of metal images and valuable articles of silver and gold and take them to Egypt. For some years, Ptolemy III will leave the king of the north alone. After several years pass, Seleucus II will invade the domain of the king of the south to retrieve the gold and silver that Ptolemy III took from him. However, Seleucus II will be defeated again and will return to his own country empty-handed. To avenge the defeat of their father, Seleucus III and Antiochus III, the two sons of Seleucus II, will prepare for war and assemble a great army. They will sweep through the land of the king of the south and cause damage that is like the devastation caused by an irresistible flood. The two sons will carry the battle as far as the area of Transjordan, which will be the fortress of the next king of the south, Ptolemy IV.’ ”

Daniel 11:11-13 (KJV) - Part VII

“And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it. For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part VII

“Gabriel continued, ‘Then Ptolemy IV will march out in a rage and fight against Antiochus III, the king of the north, at Raphia, and the large army of Antiochus III will be defeated. The army from the north will be humiliated and Ptolemy IV, the king of the south, will become full of arrogance and continue his mighty conquests. He will slaughter thousands as his army moves as far as the border of India, yet he will not remain triumphant. Both he and his wife will die mysteriously. In their place, Ptolemy V Euphrosyne, their five-year-old son, will ascend to the throne of the south. Meanwhile, Antiochus III, the king of the north, will muster another army, larger than the first. After several years, his forces will plunder Jerusalem and advance toward Egypt with a huge, well-equipped army.’ ”

Daniel 11:14,15 (KJV) - Part VIII

“And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part VIII

“Gabriel continued, ‘Daniel, understand that during the reign of Ptolemy IV, many people will try to rebel against this arrogant king of the south. Even some of the zealots and violent men among your own people will rebel against him in fulfillment of this vision, but they will not succeed. However Antiochus III, the king of the north, will come and build siege ramps and will capture the fortified city of Sidon. The forces of the king of the south will not be able to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to resist.’ ”

Daniel 11:16,17 (KJV) - Part IX

“But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed. He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part IX

“Gabriel continued, ‘Many years later, a new group of invaders from the north will appear and they will do as they please for a long time; no one will be able to resist them. They will eventually establish themselves as a military force all over the world, including the Beautiful Land, Israel. They will have power to destroy anyone who rebels against them. These invaders from the north will be called Romans. As ruler of the north, Julius Caesar, will come with the might of many legions and make an alliance with Ptolemy XI, the king of the south. The two children of Ptolemy XI, Cleopatra and Ptolemy XII, will be placed under the guardianship of Rome. In the

years to come, Cleopatra and Ptolemy XII, who are heirs to the throne in the south, will try to eliminate Roman control over Egypt. Cleopatra will conduct illicit love affairs with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony to gain power. But later, Julius Caesar will be assassinated and Mark Antony will be killed in battle. So her plans will not succeed or help Egypt.’ ”

Daniel 11:18-20 (KJV) - Part X

“After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part X

“The angel then told me more about Julius Caesar. ‘After an alliance is made with Ptolemy XI, Julius Caesar will make war against the people living on the islands of the coastlands of Africa and will subdue them. Thus, Julius Caesar will end the rebellion of Scipio and turn his rebellion into defeat. Julius Caesar will then return home and receive many honors and titles, but he is mortal. An assassin will kill him and he will be seen no more. Caesar’s successor, Octavius – later named Augustus – will send tax collectors all over the kingdom to maintain his royal splendor. After reigning 40 years, he too will die, not in anger or in battle, but of natural causes.’ ”

Daniel 11:21,22 (KJV) - Part XI

“And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part XI

“Gabriel continued, ‘Tiberius, a contemptible person who will not

come through the royal line, will succeed Augustus Caesar. This is possible because Augustus Caesar will adopt Tiberius, making Tiberius the legal heir to the throne. Tiberius will take the throne of the kingdom without open conflict. He will seize it through intrigue and the help of his manipulating mother, Livia. Tiberius Caesar will prove to be a brilliant general. He will be eminently successful against powerful armies that oppose him in Germany, Armenia and Parthia. During his reign, the Holy One, the anticipated Messiah, will be baptized, but Israel will reject Him. He will be cut off from His people as a criminal. The great Prince of God's everlasting covenant, the Messiah, will be murdered.' ”

Daniel 11:23,24 (KJV) - Part XII

“And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part XII

“Gabriel continued, ‘Daniel, this is a summary of Rome’s rise to power and how that kingdom will specifically affect Israel in those days. During its rise to power, Rome will offer treaties and pacts to various kingdoms throughout the world. After these kingdoms have reached a friendly agreement with Rome and spared themselves from deadly conflict, Rome will act deceitfully and betray them. With only a few people controlling its great army, the Romans will become dominant over the world and no one will be able to defend themselves against them. When the richest provinces feel secure, Rome will invade them and either destroy or dominate them. Rome’s authority will extend far beyond that of earlier kingdoms. Rome will finance its conquests by distributing the spoils of war to mercenary soldiers. Consequently, its army will become large and powerful. Rome will plot the overthrow of kingdoms everywhere, but only for a time. As with all other nations, Rome’s dominion will come to an end.’ ”

Daniel 11:25-28 (KJV) - Part XIII

“And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings’ hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part XIII

“Gabriel continued, ‘The Roman ruler, Augustus Caesar, will raise a large army with strength and courage to attack Antony, the king of the south. At the Battle of Actium (31 B.C.), Antony will wage war with a large and powerful army, but will not be able to endure the plots devised against him. Some people who are very close to Antony, even the ones who eat with him, will attempt to destroy him. Antony’s army will be ruined. However, Antony will remain in power for a little longer. Augustus and Antony, with evil in their hearts, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail. Both men want to control the world, but neither of them will attain world dominion.

Daniel, the Most High God has a great plan to exalt Jerusalem during the Roman rule. He will fulfill “Plan B” at the end of the seventy weeks *if* Israel honors His covenant. Kingdoms and empires will come and go, but the nation whose God is the Lord will remain forever. Augustus Caesar, the king of the north, will return to his own country after the Battle of Actium with great wealth from Egypt. Years later, the Jews, who are trustees of God’s holy covenant, will anger Caesar. Vespasian will be sent to attack many cities and he will specifically target Jerusalem for destruction. However, news about the death of Nero will cause him to lift the siege and return to his own country without subduing Jerusalem. This will be *the sign* to flee Jerusalem.’ ”

Daniel 11:29-31 (KJV) - Part XIV

“At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part XIV

“Gabriel continued, ‘At the appointed time, Titus, the son of Vespasian, will invade the south again with a different result. Countries with many ships from the western coastlands of Africa and Egypt will fight Titus, but he will lose his desire to fight them. Instead of retreating, Titus will turn his frustration and fury towards the rebellious city of Jerusalem, because of his hatred for the Jews. When Titus resumes the siege of Jerusalem which his father began, he will spare the lives of the Jews who will forsake their religion and join forces with him against Israel. Eventually, the forces of Titus will level the city and completely destroy the temple complex which the Jews think is impregnable. The Jews will not be able to conduct the daily temple services again after Titus destroys the temple in A.D. 70.

These things are revealed so that God’s people can know that wrath is determined upon Israel unless Israel cooperates with God. Rome will execute the wrath of God on Israel. This future desolation will occur and be fulfilled in A.D. 70, because your people will violate the covenant, and consequently, negate the grace which God granted to them.’”

Daniel 11:32-35 (KJV) - Part XV

“And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.”

Interlaced Commentary on Part XV

“Gabriel continued, ‘The Romans will corrupt the people of God with flattery and false ideas. However, a few people will resist compromise with Rome. People filled with the Holy Spirit will keep the truth about the Most High God alive in their hearts. In time, Christianity will become popular and many insincere people will become part of the church. As a result, Christianity will become corrupt. The true people of God will be persecuted with sword, flame, captivity and forfeiture of their property for a predetermined period of time – 1,260 years. Even though many people will die for the Word of God, God’s people will not entirely perish. God will give them strength to keep the torch of truth burning. Some of God’s people will stumble because they lack faith, but their failures will be lessons of refinement and purification for those who live at the time of the end. Be patient, Daniel, for the end does not come until Earth’s history reaches the appointed year set by the Most High God.’”

Summary

After reading this far, it is easy to see why Daniel described this vision as “a great war.” (Daniel 10:1) Several points in this vision warrant our consideration. First, early Christians understood the first portion of this vision well enough to escape Jerusalem when Vespasian lifted his siege in A.D. 68 and returned to Rome. Second, the predicted failure of Israel to meet God’s requirements during the seventy weeks comes as no surprise. Even though this vision mentions Israel’s failure, it also contains a much larger story that demonstrates how God uses one nation to destroy another whose cup of iniquity has been filled. This vision emphatically demonstrates why the perpetual destruction of degenerate rulers and governments never ends. God is Sovereign. He sets up kings and takes them down when they become decadent and arrogant. (Daniel 2:21; 5:20-24) Historians may report the actions of the kings of the north and south, but God manages the governments of Earth

through a phenomenon called war. (Ecclesiastes 3:8) Much could be written about this subject, but in a nutshell, God originates “the spirit of war” from time to time to accomplish His larger purposes. (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 32; Ecclesiastes 3; Isaiah 45:7) When a nation fills its cup of iniquity, God arouses and empowers another nation to destroy the decadent one. This process cauterizes the malignancy of sin. Eventually, the destroying nation also becomes decadent and is destroyed for the same reason it destroyed the earlier nation. This cathartic process explains why Jerusalem and pagan nations have been destroyed. This limiting process never ends in a fallen world! This is the core message in Daniel 10-12 for all generations to study.

The third point in this vision is that God’s people are frequently caught in the middle of political and military forces that are much greater than themselves. The world always considers God’s people to be weak, but He deliberately designed this. *God knows that it is impossible for a Christian government to function in a world of sin!* If a Christian government had been possible, Jesus would have set up His kingdom on Earth when He came the first time. Do not misunderstand the point. It is possible for a government to espouse and defend Christian principles. In fact, as long as a nation does this, God prospers such a nation! However, Bible history confirms that Israel was unable to sustain a Godly government because a majority of Israel’s population did not become born-again people! Let’s face it – this world is not our home! Christians are represented as pilgrims passing through a foreign land. Yet, we have hope. We look forward to a city whose foundation is righteousness and whose walls of love are built by God. (Psalm 89:14) Therefore, this continual and perpetual conflict between nations should not discourage God’s people. Jesus said, **“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.”** (Matthew 24:6-8, italics mine) Unfortunately, wars are a necessity in a sinful world. God causes war when He wants to “purify” various parcels of *His* Earth so that future inhabitants may have a chance to satisfy *His* purposes. (See Jeremiah 25:15-17; 27:6,7; 50:1-3; Ezekiel 38; Matthew

10:34) In this light, it is no mystery that Earth itself ends with the battle of Armageddon.