

THE KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH : PART ONE

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Rome, Babylon The Great Whore, The False Prophet, Roman Catholicism, John Paul II, Nostradamus, Judaism, Jeremiah In Prison, King Nebuchadnezzar And The Babylonian Empire, The Medo-Persian Kings, Alexander The Great, The Roman Empire, Constantine, The Ten Toes, The Heavenly City, The Seleucid Kings, Beersheba, The Kings Of The North And The South

Within eschatological circles, there exists a wide range of interpretations concerning the possible identity of the Endtime political leader known as the Beast, the false religious system which embraces the politics of the Beast known as Babylon the Great Whore, and the deceptive spiritual leader known as the False Prophet who heads that false religion. One school of thought suggests that the government of the Beast will arise from the city of Rome. Similar to this view is one which states that the false religion of the Endtime is represented by Roman Catholicism. This then leads to the obvious assumption that the pope must be the False Prophet. According to the Book of Revelation, the religious Whore will ride upon the political Beast committing spiritual fornication with the world:

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND

ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Revelation 17:1-5)

Thus we see God's once-faithful Bride prostituting herself with the merchants and political leaders of the world. This view of Roman Catholicism is embraced by those who strongly oppose the worldwide religious, political and financial power of Vatican City which indeed appears to rely upon a marriage of convenience between religion and politics. These critics include, but are not limited to, certain Protestant and Baptist denominations, organizations and individuals. The fact that John Paul II has not only acquired quite a reputation for his views on human rights and the plight of the poor, but also because he has been extremely effective at contributing to the downfall of some oppressive regimes, has served to fuel the animosity which some feel towards the tremendous power which he and the Roman Catholic church yield. Having just concluded his historic 1998 visit to Cuba, it would be wise to keep an eye on that island nation to see if it follows in the footsteps of other totalitarian governments which have met their demise following a visit by the outspoken pope.

Religionists are not the only ones who hold to these views concerning Roman Catholicism. They are also embraced by those who accept the validity of the quatrains of the sixteenth century French physician and astrologer, Nostradamus. According to certain interpretations of the quatrains, it is said that there will only be two more popes to sit in the Vatican chair following John Paul II, who is already seventy-seven years of age and suffering from Parkinson's Disease. While the pope may have escaped an assassin's bullet, in God's time, he too will go the way of all flesh. Following his successor, the adherents of this second belief group believe that the final pope will be the False Prophet who will compromise with the political Beast. While I find these interpretations interesting, I share them with a note of caution. These same followers of Nostradamus also claimed that the passage of Comet Hale-Bopp in 1997 signalled that the current pope would be assassinated within a certain time frame. That time frame has already passed and the pope is still alive. I encourage you to read my article entitled 'Nostradamus: Prophet Of God Or Messenger Of Satan?' for my additional thoughts concerning Nostradamus.

In the thirteenth chapter of his Revelation, the Apostle

John describes the political Beast of the Endtime in the following manner:

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."
(Revelation 13:1-3)

In the very same chapter, the religious False Prophet who works in conjunction with the political Beast, is symbolized by a second beast rising up out of the Earth. In a sense, the False Prophet will act as the Beast's propaganda agent:

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."
(Revelation 13:11)

In the previous chapter of Revelation, we discover that the 'dragon' which gives this great power to the Beast and the False Prophet is none other than Satan himself:

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." (Revelation 12:9)

In my article 'Revelation's Babylon The Great Whore', I propose that Jerusalem might be the mysterious Babylon the Great Whore which is destroyed by the Beast and the ten nations in league with him, that is, the Ten Horns. To reiterate what I said in that article, my strongest argument for this position is based upon the following verses which describe the sins of Jerusalem and Babylon:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto

yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
(Matthew 23:29-38)

In the above verses, Jesus is clearly stating that the blood of the Prophets is found in the streets of Jerusalem. This satanic attack against God's children culminated in the Death of our Saviour. However, the blood on the hands of the leadership of Jerusalem did not end there. The Book of Acts clearly testifies that the Sandhedrin continued to persecute and kill the followers of the young new Church, as in the case of the martyr Stephen in Acts chapter seven. In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John describes the guilt of mysterious Babylon the Great Whore in the very same manner:

"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."
(Revelation 18:24)

The Prophets that the above verses are referring to are the Jewish Prophets of the Old Testament who were mocked, persecuted, imprisoned, tortured and slain for daring to preach the Word of the Lord against the corrupt spiritual and political leadership of their day. It was at their Jewish descendants that Jesus pointed an accusatory finger when He called them 'the children of them which killed the prophets'. Therefore, considering Jesus' own words, which were later repeated by John, it makes a lot more sense to me that Jerusalem is the mysterious Babylon the Great Whore, and NOT Rome as is supposed by some. We know that Rome was indeed responsible for the martyrdom of literally thousands

of the Lord's children during the First Century. To this day, beneath the streets of modern Rome can be found rows upon rows of the sepulchres of the Saints. While this is indeed compelling evidence, the fact still remains that both Jesus and John were referring to the Old Testament Prophets who were murdered by their Jewish brethren. At the time these Prophets were slain, Rome had not even become a dominant power yet.

Even if we were to accept that Rome is the Beast's seat of authority, it doesn't seem likely that he would destroy his own powerbase. At this point some may argue that this is precisely what Nero did when he burned Rome in the latter half of the First Century. Thus, they claim that these prophecies have already been fulfilled. However, I submit that it is an error to interpret the burning of Babylon the Great as the destruction of Rome several decades before John wrote the Book of Revelation. John was clearly writing of a future event at the end of the world, and NOT of something which had already occurred as the verb tense in the following verses makes clear:

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast...And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."
(Revelation 17:12, 16-18)

In the above verses, John is writing of the final Beast, the eighth king, the leader and empire which, together with ten other Endtime nations, will destroy Babylon the Great Whore just prior to Christ's Second Coming. I discuss this more fully in part two of this article, as well as in my six-part series 'The Seven Heads' and other Endtime articles. While some eschatologists are quick to recognize the blatant sins and shortcomings of the Roman Catholic church, and thus point to her as being Babylon the Great of the Endtime, they fail to recognize that Judaism is even more of a false religion because, while the Jews have rejected the Saviour,

they still have the audacity to claim that they are the chosen people of God. This, in my view, is an even greater deception than Roman Catholicism; and many people, including some Christians, have fallen for it. In a sense, Judaism is a half-religion because it has accepted the promises for a Messiah in the Old Testament, while fully rejecting the fulfillment of those same promises in the New Testament. Because of this and other factors I have already explained, I maintain that Jerusalem still best fits the description of Babylon the Great. Time will certainly reveal the truth.

For those who suggest that ancient Babylon may have been the Great Whore referred to by John, allow me to point out that this also is inaccurate simply due to the fact that the Babylonians did not kill the Prophets of old. In fact, as is verified by the example of Jeremiah, the Prophets were treated with honor and favor by the Babylonians due to the fact that not only did they not resist the occupation, but they also encouraged the Jewish leadership and people to humbly surrender to the overwhelming forces of King Nebuchadnezzar, and to accept it as a chastisement from the Lord. It was because of this unpopular message that Jeremiah was thrown in prison on more than one occasion by his own Jewish brethren after being accused of being a traitor and a spy:

"Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison."
(Jeremiah 37:15)

"Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison." (Jeremiah 37:21)

"Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." (Jeremiah 38:6)

As can be seen by the above verses, even though King Zedekiah freed Jeremiah after his first imprisonment, in the

very next chapter, he allowed the Prophet's enemies to cast him into prison a second time. The reason he did this is because he feared his own people, just like many political leaders today who manplease the public in order to stay in office:

"Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you."
(Jeremiah 38:5)

"And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me." (Jeremiah 38:19)

Thanks to Jeremiah's friend Ebed-melech, Zedekiah again consented to allowing the Prophet to be pulled out of the mirey dungeon; however, he still had to remain in the court of the prison:

"So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison...So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was there when Jerusalem was taken." (Jeremiah 38:13, 28)

Once the siege against Jerusalem had been completed, Jeremiah was completely freed, not by his Jewish brethren, but by the Babylonians themselves under direct orders of King Nebuchadnezzar. Not only was Jeremiah freed, but he was given a financial reward and permitted to go wherever he chose:

"Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rabsaris, and Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's princes; Even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people." (Jeremiah 39:11-14)

"And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to

come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go. Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go." (Jeremiah 40:4-5)

Returning to the topic of the true identity of the Beast, as can be seen, trying to properly interpret Endtime prophecy is no easy task. Even though we have the same Scriptures available to us, and a wide variety of historical sources to refer to, eschatologists have still found it difficult to arrive at a common interpretation of the ancient prophecies. The best thing that we can all do is to remain open to the Lord's Spirit. As the Lord reveals more to us, we should be willing to update our writings to reflect those new points of view. The Lord might reveal new things to us through additional study of the Scriptures, through comparing notes with other Christians, or perhaps through seeing actual fulfillments in the world press.

In trying to understand Endtime prophecy and what is yet to be fulfilled, it is important to know what has already been fulfilled in times past. By identifying these early markers of where we have already been, we can uncover the early roots of the Beast, and thus arrive at more educated conclusions concerning his possible place of origin in our current day. One of the best places to begin our search is in the prophetic Book of Daniel. In the following verses, we discover that Daniel was numbered among the Jewish children who were carried off to Babylon when King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah. This was about twenty years before the final fall of Jerusalem in about 587 B.C.:

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his

god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego." (Daniel 1:1-7)

Soon after being appointed to the court of the Babylonian king, the young child Daniel proves himself to be a gifted interpreter of dreams and visions. In the second year of his reign, King Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by a dream which he was unable to remember:

"And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof." (Daniel 2:1-6)

When all seems lost, the Lord provides Daniel with not only the forgotten dream, but also with the interpretation of the same. Thus Daniel is given a great opportunity to glorify

God before Nebuchadnezzar for the wonderful gift he has been given:

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

After making sure that Nebuchadnezzar understands that this miracle of interpretation is a gift of God and not something which he himself has produced, Daniel then proceeds to interpret the night vision for the king. In part he says:

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay...Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."
(Daniel 2:31-33, 37-38)

In chapter seven, which takes place during the first year of the reign of Belshazzar, Daniel also has a night vision. In his dream, he sees four beasts rising up out of the sea:

"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." (Daniel 7:2-3)

From the following verse taken from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, we know that winds in the Bible sometimes represent spiritual forces:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of

disobedience:" (Ephesians 2:2)

We also know that the four beasts in Daniel's dream represent earthly kingdoms and their leaders because this is the interpretation given to Daniel by one of the angelic messengers later on in the same chapter:

"I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth."
(Daniel 7:16-17)

By comparing Scripture with Scripture, we can also determine that the sea from which these four beasts arise represents the peoples and nations of the Earth. This explanation is found in the Book of Revelation:

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

Thus we see that Daniel is actually witnessing the spiritual forces which influence the peoples and nations of the world to produce the various rulers and their dominions. In the very next verse, Daniel then describes Nebuchadnezzar as the first of these four beasts, just as he was the head of gold in the image of chapter two:

"The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." (Daniel 7:4)

In Daniel chapter four, we discover that the wings of the lion being plucked represent King Nebuchadnezzar's seven-year abasement by the Lord due to his failure to recognize God as the Supreme Sovereign who gives power to the kings of the Earth. I explore this in much more detail in 'The Seven Heads' series where I present some interesting possibilities as to how this might relate to the Endtime. Nebuchadnezzar's reign lasted approximately forty-three year from about 605 B.C. to 562 B.C. In 561 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by Evil-Merodach who was responsible for releasing the Jewish King Jehoiachin from prison after

thirty-seven years of captivity. After less than three years, Evil-Merodach was assassinated by Neriglissar, or Nergal-sar-usur, his brother-in-law, in about the year 558 B.C. Neriglissar was succeeded four years later in about 554 B.C. by his young son, Labasi-Marduk, who reigned nine months before being assassinated. Those involved in the conspiracy then elected Nabonidus, or Nabu-na'id, to the throne.

At this point, one source states that Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon and ruled from about 555 B.C. to 539 B.C. However, another source states that Belshazzar succeeded Nabonidus to the throne around 537 B.C. making him the final king. While other historical sources say that he was the son of Nabonidus, the Bible states that Belshazzar was the son of Nebuchadnezzar. However, it should be noted that the Hebrew word 'ab' doesn't always mean one's physical father, but is also applied to one's forefathers or predecessors. Regardless of whose son he was, the Bible clearly states that Belshazzar was indeed in power when Darius the Mede took over the kingdom. This overthrow took place the very same night of the famous 'Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin' writing on the wall:

"In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old." (Daniel 5:30-31)

It is important to note that, except for a few rare occasions, such as the sudden demise of Belshazzar, the reigns of these different rulers and their kingdoms was not a cut and dry process. In other words, one empire didn't just suddenly end one day and another spring up to take its place. These kingdoms waxed and waned overlapping each other in their influence as well as in the lands and peoples they each dominated. For this reason, it should come as no surprise for example, that Nebuchadnezzar spoke or at least understood Syriac, the language of the Assyrian empire which had dominated the area before him:

"Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation." (Daniel 2:4)

We find the same thing over one hundred years later when

Artaxerxes, king of Persia, likewise ruled from Babylon; so it is evident that the Syrian language was a widely-spoken language. I discuss this in more detail in 'The Seven Heads'. As you will also see in that series, the Assyrians and the Babylonians were actually of the same ethnic stock and shared the same religion as well:

"And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue."
(Ezra 4:7)

The overthrow of the Babylonian Empire by the Medes and the Persians was in direct fulfillment of the dreams and visions seen by both King Nebuchadnezzar and the Prophet Daniel. In the description of the image in chapter two, Medo-Persia is described as the breast and arms of silver, thus showing the dual nature of the empire.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,...And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." (Daniel 2:32, 39)

In the seventh chapter where Daniel has the vision of the four beasts rising up out of the sea, Medo-Persia is represented by a bear raised up on one side:

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." (Daniel 7:5)

Cyrus the Great was the founder of the united Medo-Persian Empire. He was known to the Jews as Kowresh or Koresh, pronounced ko'-resh, which means 'posses thou the furnace'. In his native Persian tongue, Cyrus was known as Koorush, or Korrush II. He was the son of Cambyses I. Notice that the bear is raised up on one side. This is probably because Persia was the stronger half of this dual empire. While Darius the Mede actually took control of Babylon at first, he was under the authority of Cyrus the Great. As I will explain in a moment, the three ribs in the bear's mouth may

represent the three kings who ruled prior to Xerxes I, the richest of the Medo-Persian kings. In Daniel chapter eight, we find yet another description of the Medo-Persian Empire:

"Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great...The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." (Daniel 8:3-4, 20)

Finally, in Daniel chapter eleven, Daniel is given a glimpse into the future concerning the Persian kings who will succeed Darius the Mede, the current viceroy of Babylon under Cyrus:

"Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew 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." (Daniel 11:1-2)

Based on the assumption that the Darius the Mede mentioned in the above verse is the same Darius who took the kingdom from Belshazzar in Daniel chapter five, according to secular historical records, this fourth Persian king is most likely Xerxes who ruled from about 486 B.C. to 465 B.C. As I explain in 'The Seven Heads' series, the succession of Medo-Persian kings is a bit confusing, and there are conflicting views held amongst historians. Part of this confusion is due to the fact that these kings were known by different names by different cultures; plus there were a number of different rulers by the name of Darius, Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. The Darius in the above verse is believed to have ruled for a short period as viceroy of Babylon under Cyrus the Great. Following is a short table which shows the proper sequence of the Persian kings with whom we are concerned, along with their alternative names. Please note that Darius the Great is not the same Darius who ruled at the same time as Cyrus the Great:

Ruler's Name:	Date:	Persian Name:	Bible Name:
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Cyrus The Great (Cyrus II)	539-530	Koorush	Cyrus
Cambyses II (Kambeses II)	530-521	Cambujieh or Kamboodhia	Ahasuerus
Pseudo Smerdis	521	Berooyeh Doroughi	Artaxerxes
Darius the Great (Darius I)	521-486	Darryoosh or Dayara-Vahusha	Darius
Xerxes	486-465	Khashayar or Khashayarshah	Ahasurerus
Artaxerxes I	464-423	Ardehier Deraz Dast	Artaxerxes

Cambyses II was the son and successor of Cyrus the Great, who is undoubtedly the most well-known and well-loved of Persian kings due to the fact that he not only founded the Persian Empire after uniting the Medes and the Persians, but also because it was during his reign that the Jews obtained their freedom from Babylonian rule after serving their Seventy Years of Captivity. This is discussed in an article of the same name as well as in 'The Seven Heads' series. It was up to Cyrus's son Cambyses II, who was named after his grandfather, to bring Egypt under Persian dominion.

It was while Cambyses II was away in Egypt that a usurper named Pseudo Smerdis temporarily ascended to the Persian throne pretending to be Smerdis, another son of Cyrus the Great. It appears that Cambyses II died during the return trip to Persia. It is believed that Pseudo Smerdis may be the Artaxerxes mentioned in the Book of Ezra who temporarily halted the Jews' work in Jerusalem. Considering that he was a usurper, it makes perfect sense that he would be the one to try to frustrate the work in Jerusalem which had been ordered by Cyrus, and then continued by his son Cambyses II.

While Pseudo Smerdis was defeated and killed by Darius the Great after serving only a few months as the Persian monarch, it still took Darius several years to squelch the

local rebellions. This was made easier by the fact that the Persian army had remained loyal to him despite the trouble caused by Pseudo Smerdis. Once Darius had firmly established his power, he began the work at Persepolis, the ruins of which can still be found today about thirty miles north of Shiraz, Iran. The main hall bears the inscription, 'I am Darius, great king, king of kings, king of lands who constructed this palace'. This work was later finished by Xerxes and Artaxerxes.

Like Cyrus the Great, Darius the Great was also a great king. It was during his reign that the darik, also known as the dram or drachma, was probably introduced to Israel. This is discussed in more detail in 'Mondex And The Mark Of The Beast'. As the legal heir of the Persian Empire, Darius also began to groom his son Xerxes to succeed in his footsteps. According to one source, Darius the Great was killed during the sixth year of his reign in the Battle of Marathon where he was beheaded by the Athenians. However, other historians challenge this view stating that he actually ruled until 486 B.C. when his son Xerxes became the next legitimate king of the Persian Empire.

According to the prophecy given to Daniel, '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'. This seems to be perfectly fulfilled in Xerxes. As can be seen by the above table, Xerxes, who was known to the Jews as Ahasuerus, was indeed the fourth king following Cyrus the Great. The beginning of the book of Esther seems to confirm Xerxes' wealth, power, fame and the vastness of his empire with the following opening verses:

"Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:) That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace, In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him: When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days. And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the

palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;" (Esther 1:1-5)

The fact that the young Jewess Esther actually married this great king who was a descendant of Cyrus and Darius, who themselves had shown great kindness to her people, is in my view another confirmation that Xerxes, or Ahasuerus, was indeed the fourth Persian king prophesied by Daniel. The prophecy also states that he would stir up his empire against the Grecians. According to one source which I mentioned earlier, because of his father's early death at the hands of the Athenians, (if it is to be believed), Xerxes invaded Greece and demolished many of the temples in the city of Athens. However, this source then states that he suffered a naval defeat at the Battle of Salamis after which he fled back to Persia. It is then that we get into the very interesting story of Xerxes and Artaxerxes which is explained in detail in the article 'The Seventy Weeks Prophecy Of Daniel'.

Notice that while the prophecy states that from Darius the Mede there would be three more Persian kings followed by a fourth king who would be the richest of them all, it does not state that he would be the final Persian king. From the historical record, we know that there were in fact several more kings after Xerxes. Following a bit of political treachery, it is believed that Xerxes, (or Ahasuerus), was eventually succeeded to the throne by his 'son' Artaxerxes. It is this Artaxerxes who issued the final proclamation to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon following its destruction over one hundred years before by Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus the Great and Darius the Great had likewise issued similar proclamations; however, the feat wasn't actually accomplished unto the reign of Artaxerxes due to strong interference from the enemies of the Jews. Again, this is discussed more fully in 'The Seven Heads' series which I encourage you to read:

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

You may have noticed that I placed the word 'son' in quotes in the previous paragraph. The reason I did this is because some serious questions have been raised concerning the true identity of Xerxes and Artaxerxes. As I explain in the article 'The Seventy Weeks Prophecy Of Daniel', there is some speculation which suggests that these two kings may have actually been one and the same person who, partially due to Persian tradition, and partially due to political deceit in order to protect himself, may have changed his name. If Xerxes/Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes were indeed one and the same person, that is, Xerxes the king who simply changed his name, then it is easy to understand why, in the twentieth year of his reign after having married Esther, he would be motivated to issue the final decree to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. Could it be that the queen mentioned in the following verses is actually referring to Queen Esther who married him as Xerxes/Ahasuerus, but now continues to be his Queen even though he calls himself Artaxerxes?:

"And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time." (Nehemiah 2:1-6)

What I also find strange is that in the previous verse from Ezra we are told 'and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia'. Considering that Xerxes/Ahasuerus was the son of Darius who supposedly reigned BEFORE Artaxerxes, why is he not mentioned here? It seems odd that he would marry Esther, show great favor to

the Jews, yet do absolutely nothing during his twenty-one year reign to allow them to resume their work in Jerusalem as had been commanded by both his father Darius, and earlier by Cyrus the Great, a distant relative. If we accept the traditional historical record, absolutely nothing would be done to allow the Jews to resume their work in Jerusalem until twenty years into the reign of Artaxerxes, the supposed 'son of' Xerxes. To suggest then that at least forty-one years had passed before this occurred seems rather unusual to me. Thus, I think there might be something to the Xerxes/Artaxerxes deception. For more details concerning this deception, please refer to 'The Seventy Weeks Prophecy Of Daniel'.

Following the reign of Artaxerxes, also known as Artaxerxes Longimanus due to his 'long hand', there were possibly as many as seven more Persian kings before Persia was absorbed by the Grecian Empire. These were the following:

Ruler's Name:	Approx. Dates:
Xerxes II	425-424 B.C.
Sogdianos	424-423
Darius II the Bastard	423-404
Artaxerxes II the Mindful	404-359
Artaxerxes III.	359-338
Arses	338-336
Darius III	336-330

As can be seen, before Darius II ascended to the Persian throne, there was a bit of a power struggle going on which resulted in two interim kings. Darius II, who was the son of Artaxerxes, was also known as Ochus or Nothus. It is believed that he may possibly have been the Darius who ruled during the days of Nehemiah. It was during the reign of Darius III, also known as Codomannus, in about the year 333 B.C., that Alexander the Great invaded Iran, then known as Persia, thus ending Persian domination.

In the image of Daniel chapter two, we see the Greece was the third empire represented by the belly and thighs of brass:

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,...And after

thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." (Daniel 2:32, 39)

In Daniel chapter seven, we find Greece represented by a four-headed leopard having four wings on its back:

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it."
(Daniel 7:6)

In the above verses, the fact that Greece is represented by a leopard with four wings is very significant as it symbolizes the great speed with which Alexander conquered the known world of his day. His rise to power and rule over the Grecian empire only lasted about thirteen years, from about 336 B.C. to 323 B.C. At the height of his power, his empire was divided into four smaller weaker kingdoms as represented by the four heads. In Daniel chapter eight, we see a picture of the Medo-Persian ram pushing against the Grecian he-goat and then being crushed by the Grecian king:

"And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven...And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." (Daniel 8:5-8, 21-22)

Notice again that the he-goat does not touch the ground. This probably signifies the speed with which Alexander the Great conquered the known world of his day. Alexander is

symbolized by the 'notable' or 'great horn', the first king of Greece. As I explain in 'The Seven Heads' series, Alexander the Great was also known as 'The King of Javan' being as the Greeks were descended from Javan as per the Book of Genesis. In the above verses we see a very graphical picture of the horns of Medo-Persia being totally defeated by the overwhelming forces of Alexander the Macedonian. This conflict between Medo-Persia and Greece began in the days of Darius the Great, (a.k.a. Darius I), and finds its conclusion with the defeat of Darius Codomannus, or Darius III, as I explained earlier.

Up to this point, we have been discussing a lot of ancient history which may seem irrelevant to our quest to discover the place of origin of the Endtime Beast. However, with the demise of the Grecian Empire, we begin to close in on some important events which tie in directly with the roots of the Beast. If there is one thing we know from history, it is that no world power lasts forever. As stated above, upon Alexander's death, his empire was subsequently divided into four land areas, each ruled by a different general. This fact is repeated again a third time in chapter eleven right after we read the prophecies concerning the four Persian kings:

"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." (Daniel 11:3-4)

Notice the words 'and not to his posterity.' This corresponds to the words 'but not in his power' in the previous verses in chapter eight. Following Alexander's demise, the four key heirs of his empire are believed to have been Ptolemy I of the southern kingdom of Egypt, Seleucus I of the eastern area of Babylonia, Antigonus of the northern kingdom comprised of Syria and Asia Minor, and finally, Antipater of the western area of Macedonia and Greece.

Returning to Nebuchadnezzar's vision in Daniel chapter two, we discover that below the belly and thighs of brass, there

are two legs made of iron:

"His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay... And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." (Daniel 2:33, 40)

Chapter seven follows with a very similar image of this fourth kingdom describing it as a terrible beast with great teeth of iron:

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns... Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." (Daniel 7:7, 23)

Taking a look at the historical record, we know that following the demise of the Grecian Empire, the next great power to dominate Europe and the Middle East was the Roman Empire. However, as I will explain later in this article, Rome's rise to dominance did not occur immediately following the division of the Grecian Empire in about 323 B.C. For almost two hundred years, the successors of Alexander the Great continued to war against each other in their quest for dominance over the Middle East. The iron fist of Roman rule was solidly felt in Israel on Yom Kippur of 63 B.C. when Roman general Pompey marched down from his conquests in Syria, and conquered Jerusalem for Caesar Augustus. For the next four hundred years, Israel would remain under the domination of Rome, until about the year 330 A.D. While the rule of the Caesars was indeed harsh, it created a period of relative peace over much of the known world. In fact, it was at the height of the Roman Empire, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, (42 B.C. to 37 A.D. approximately), that our Saviour was born. This is discussed in more detail in part two of 'The Seven Heads' series.

The year 330 A.D. is very significant to the prophecies of Daniel, for it was around that year that the prophecy

of the two legs of iron was fulfilled when the Roman Empire was divided into East and West. This division was due in part to the strong influence that the Early Church was having on Roman citizens. With the proclamation of the 'Edict of Milan', Christianity was declared a 'religio licita', or legal religion, and Constantine established himself as the emperor of the eastern 'Christianized' half of the empire which became known as the Byzantine Empire. He ruled from the ancient Greek city of Byzantium which he renamed Constantinople. Today it is called Istanbul, Turkey.

As I discuss in other articles, over the next several hundred years, an 'approved' form of Christianity continued to spread throughout the Roman Empire. Eventually, central authority returned to Rome and the Roman Empire became known as the Holy Roman Empire. The emperors of Rome became known as the popes, the 'Founding Fathers' of the Roman Catholic Church, who ruled the territories of central Italy known as the Papal States until 1870. In 1929, Vatican City was declared a sovereign papal state. Considering Constantine's original hatred of Christians, this sudden turn-around has left historians open to a lot of speculation as to exactly how this reversal came about. Some claim that a miraculous military victory resulted in his conversion to the faith. Others speculate that it was simply a marriage of convenience between religion and politics brought about by the craftiness of Constantine's underlings. As I stated at the beginning of this article, it is for this reason that some consider Roman Catholicism to be the epitome of Babylon the Great Whore riding the seven-headed political Beast of the Book of Revelation.

Having now established the historical background and prophetic significance of the prophecies of Daniel, we are now going to probe a bit deeper and take a look at some things which are still a bit muddled in the minds of most eschatologists. I myself have been mystified by these things for a good many years. While some claim that most, if not all of the Daniel prophecies, have already been fulfilled and form a part of history, others like myself insist that there are still some major events which are yet to occur, quite possibly in the very near future! In continuing to read from the Book of Daniel, we are provided with a prophetic picture of what will happen to the remnants of the Roman Empire:

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."
(Daniel 2:41-43)

In a historical sense, the above description might be a reference to the many smaller kingdoms, states and countries which resulted from the breakup of the Roman Empire. I accept this interpretation along with the thought that the iron and the clay probably represent two different types of governments. It has been proposed by some that they might represent democracies and dictatorships. Following this line of reasoning, democracies would be represented by the clay, since a democratic society is supposed to be one ruled by the people, and people are made from clay. On the other hand, iron would be a more tough-fisted form of government since, while it is likewise taken from the ground, it is a much harder and more durable substance. The fact that the iron and clay don't mingle could be an obvious reference to the fact that democracies and dictatorships just don't mix very well; although in this day and age, some democratic societies like the United States of America, are known to secretly support such strongmen if it helps to achieve their political agenda. While this interpretation is quite valid, further thinking and studying has led me to consider other possibilities. You will discover them in 'The Seven Heads'.

Considering the bulk of the information we have covered thus far, it is easy to interpret the above verses as being a part of ancient history, that is, the demise of the Roman Empire. However, this view should be held with some reservation as the Prophet Daniel makes it very clear that his prophecies will find their completion in the Last Days of the kingdoms of men:

"So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall

be the vision." (Daniel 8:17)

"And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." (Daniel 8:19)

"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up." (Daniel 8:23)

"And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days." (Daniel 8:26)

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision." (Daniel 10:1)

"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." (Daniel 10:14)

"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." (Daniel 11:6)

"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." (Daniel 11:27)

"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." (Daniel 11:35)

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and

knowledge shall be increased." (Daniel 12:4)

"And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." (Daniel 12:8-9)

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." (Daniel 12:13)

Considering such a preponderance of Scriptures which all contain these similar phrases, I find it difficult that anyone would view the prophecies of Daniel as dealing solely with events of the ancient past. As I stated at the beginning of this article, the challenge then is to try to separate what has already happened from that which is yet to be fulfilled. Without a good knowledge of history, or at least a good source of historical resources, this can be a difficult task. What makes it even more difficult is that some prophecies seem to have intermediate fulfillments, and then an ultimate fulfillment. One example I have cited before is that of Adolf Hitler. While he was not the Beast, Hitler may have been a foreshadow of the final Beast yet to come.

One thing which immediately stands out in the prophecies of Daniel is the mention of the Ten Toes in the image of chapter two. Some have suggested that they might be a modern-day extension of the Roman Empire such as some of the countries which form a part of the European Union. Whether they are or not, one thing we do know is that in chapter seven we have Daniel calling them Ten Horns, the very same term used by the Apostle John when discussing the ten kings who temporarily give their power to the Beast in Revelation. These two books were written hundreds of years apart, so this connection can only be something which was foreordained by God. Besides the connections which I show in this current article, part one of 'The Seven Heads' deals with the same topic. As to exactly when these ten kings will be in existence, Daniel makes it clear that it will be at the very end of time when the Lord sets up His eternal Kingdom:

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay,

the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth...And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." (Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45)

Following my practice of comparing Scripture with Scripture, we discover that this Stone is referring to none other than Jesus Christ who will someday return to destroy the governments of man and set up His own Kingdom of Heaven on Earth:

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10:4)

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" (Ephesians 2:20)

In a spiritual sense, God's Kingdom has been filling the Earth like a great mountain since Jesus's Victory on the Cross of Calvary almost two thousand years ago. As Jesus Himself said:

"...The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20b-21)

However, this has not happened in a physical sense, and will not happen until Christ returns to subdue all Earthly governments, including the reign of the Beast, the False Prophet and the ten nations who follow them. Daniel made clear that it would happen 'in the days of these kings', meaning at the end of man's system in the days of the Ten

Toes or Horns. Once that is accomplished, the Lord will rule and reign on the Earth for one thousand years during the Millennium. He will be setting up His physical Kingdom on Earth, just as He prayed to His Father: 'Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven'. When all of this will have been accomplished in a spiritual sense, the stone growing into a mountain will be manifested in a physical sense when the Heavenly City, New Jerusalem, descends from God to settle on or just above the surface of the New Earth. In fact, like Daniel, John described it being shaped somewhat like a mountain, possibly a pyramid:

"And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." (Revelation 21:16)

The only way its height could be the same as its length and breadth would be if it were a perfect cube, or else a pyramid-like structure, possibly with the Throne of God at the apex! It is interesting to note that the American seal on the back of a one dollar bill contains just such a pyramid. In fact, like the Heavenly City, this pyramid contains twelve levels. There has been a lot of speculation made regarding this Great Seal. Some attribute evil connotations to it, while others suggest the exact opposite.

Having now established that Daniel chapter two extends from the time of the Babylonian Empire all the way up to the Endtime, we must ask ourselves if it isn't possible that the remaining chapters might not do the same as well. After describing Rome as a terrible beast quite diverse from all of the other beasts in chapter seven, Daniel then proceeds to further describe the Ten Horns on the Beast which, as we now know, must exist towards the very end of our current worldly systems:

"I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things...And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." (Daniel 7:8, 24)

Here we see a picture of an eleventh horn appearing in the midst of the first Ten Horns. This king is quite different from the first ten. Three of the horns being plucked up may represent three Endtime nations either being subdued or destroyed so that the Beast can come to power. The fact that all ten give their power over to him in order to destroy Babylon the Great, would indicate that they are merely subdued or coerced and not totally destroyed. I take a more in-depth look at these possibilities in 'The Seven Heads' series. The fact that this horn, the Beast, will speak against God is supported by quite a few other verses throughout the Bible beginning in Daniel itself:

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."
(Daniel 7:25)

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done." (Daniel 11:36)

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." (Revelation 13:5-6)

From Daniel to Revelation, we see that this 'little horn', the Beast, is one and the same person speaking blasphemies against God for a period of three and a half years, forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days. Just as we saw the end of man's earthly rule and the setting up of God's Kingdom in Daniel chapter two, the same scenario is repeated in chapter seven after the destruction of the Beast and the Ten Horns:

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion

taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time...But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."
(Daniel 7:11-12, 26)

The above verses are almost identical to the fate described for the Beast and the False Prophet in the Book of Revelation:

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Revelation 19:20)

Notice that in Daniel 7:12, the Prophet describes the Ten Horns as 'beasts.' Following the destruction of the Beast, Daniel then proceeds to describe how God's Kingdom will be established, just as he did in chapter two. Notice that just as John described both God the Father and Jesus the Son in the Heavenly City, here too Daniel describes the 'Son of man' coming to the 'Ancient of days':

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed...But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever...And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 27)

In Daniel chapter eight, we find yet another mention of this same 'little horn' who wars against the Saints of the Most High. In previous verses from chapter eight, I showed how Alexander the Great's empire was divided into four land areas by his generals. In the following account, we make the connection between the past and the near future as the Beast arises from one of the four political divisions of the

Grecian Empire:

"And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered...And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." (Daniel 8:9-12, 23-25)

At this point, it is important to again remind the reader that some prophecies appear to have a partial fulfillment, and then a final fulfillment. In the case of the above verses, one school of thought suggests that this mention of the 'little horn' might be referring to Antiochus IV Epiphanes who invaded Israel, referred to here as 'the pleasant land'. He is said to have stopped the Jewish 'daily sacrifice', (that is, the 'continual burnt offering' prescribed by the Lord through Moses), and defiled the Temple by offering swine on the Temple altar, which was in direct contradiction to the Torah, the Jewish books of the Law given to Moses. This is believed to have occurred around 168-167 B.C. This would indeed be 'in the latter time of their kingdom' as Rome was beginning to flex its muscles and would soon become the dominant power. These verses will be given additional discussion further on in this article.

At this point, we are now going to return to Daniel chapter eleven where we discussed the four Persian kings, followed by the demise of Alexander the Great and the Grecian Empire. It is interesting to note that the following revelation

concerning the kings of the north and south, and the rise and reign of the Beast, was so important, that a three-week battle in the spiritual realm ensued while Daniel faithfully fasted waiting for the revelation. Considering the spiritual warfare which was waged to keep these truths from us, should we not all strive to understand them?:

"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks."
(Daniel 10:2)

"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." (Daniel 10:12-13)

To reiterate what I said earlier, following the demise of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., his empire was divided by his generals into four land areas: Ptolemy I took the southern kingdom of Egypt, Seleucus took the eastern area of Babylonia, Antigonus took the northern kingdom comprised of Syria and Asia Minor, (now known as Turkey) , and Antipater took the western area of Macedonia and Greece.

Based on the above, in the following prophecies, the king of the south must be referring to the various leaders of the Egyptian kingdom who went by the name of Ptolemy, while the king of the north must pertain to the Seleucid kings who ruled over Syria and Asia Minor, their powerbase being in Seleucia, located in northwestern Syria. In fact, in the book of Jeremiah, even Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is referred to as coming from the north, which would put him in the same league as the Seleucid Kings: Seleucus, Antiochus, etc. I have much more to say about this in 'The Seven Heads' series. You definitely don't want to miss it!

When I first wrote this article, I did not rely upon very much supplementary data to confirm the countries identified with these two dynasties. As I've stated before, the Bible is self-interpreting in many places if one just knows how to find the connecting verses. If something can be proven directly from the Bible, and then secular history serves to further confirm what God has already revealed in His Word,

this adds even more to the veracity of the Scriptures as being the inspired and inerrant Word of God. As the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Timothy 3:16)

The Apostle Peter also wrote along these same lines when he said the following:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

While some Bibles actually use the names Egypt and Syria in these prophecies, the 1611 Authorized King James Version of the Bible does not; thus, I was totally in the dark as to who these two kings might be. When I later discovered that others had come to the same consensus as myself, it was truly a thrill for me. To show how I came to the conclusion that Egypt was the southern kingdom mentioned in Daniel, allow me to present the following information. My first lead was found in the following verses which discuss the queen of Sheba, the queen of the south who went to see and experience the glory and wisdom of King Solomon:

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions." (1 Kings 10:1)

"And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built,..." (1 Kings 10:4)

"And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon." (1 Kings 10:10)

"And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants." (1 Kings 10:13)

In discussing these famous encounters between King Solomon

and the Queen of Sheba, Jesus had the following to say:

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

(Matthew 12:42)

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

(Luke 11:31)

As can be seen, Jesus equated the queen of the south with the queen of Sheba because they are one and the same person. This then leaves us with one question: where or what is Sheba? Again, the Bible is self-interpetting and provides the answer for us in the Book of Genesis:

"And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan." (Genesis 10:7)

The above verse demonstrates that Sheba was the grandson of Cush, and the great grandson of Ham, who was one of the three sons of Noah. In essence, he belonged to the races which eventually settled in north Africa.

In the twenty-first chapter of Genesis, we find the story of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael. At Sarah's insistence, Abraham sent away Hagar and her son Ishmael after Ishamel had mocked them:

"And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac...And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba." (Genesis 21:9-10, 14)

As I explain in other articles, it is this very same Ishmael

who later married an Egyptian woman and became the father of the princes of the modern-day Arabs:

"And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt." (Genesis 21:21)

It is in this same chapter that Abraham has problems with Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, when Abimelech's servants steal a water well which had been dug by Abraham's servants. They come to an agreement, and Abraham calls the place Beersheba:

"Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they swear both of them." (Genesis 21:31)

Some of these wells were eventually filled in with dirt by the trouble-making Philistines until the servants of Isaac re-discovered them:

"For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth...And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."
(Genesis 26:15, 32-33)

In the following verse from the Book of Joshua, we make another important discovery concerning Sheba and Beersheba:

"And they had in their inheritance Beersheba, or Sheba, and Moladah," (Joshua 19:2)

So, in the above verses, we see that Beersheba and Sheba are one and the same place, and that it was re-named this by Isaac after his servants had re-discovered the well first dug there by his father Abraham. The name Beersheba, pronounced be-ayr' sheh'-bah, actually means 'well of the sevenfold oath'. Abraham first named it this because of the precise agreement he had made with Abimelech:

"And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For

these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well."
(Genesis 21:28-30)

Looking at any ancient map of the area found in most Bibles will quickly confirm that Beersheba is located in a region which was formerly the northern border of the Egyptian Empire. In fact, at one time, it reached up to and included Syria as well. Thus, in the following prophecy, without using any external sources, we see that Daniel's mention of the 'daughter of the south' and the 'king of the south' is a reference to the leadership of Egypt. As I stated earlier, in some Bibles, the translators have already replaced 'king of the south' with Egypt, and 'king of the north' with Syria. In my view, this practice can be a bit dangerous because too much personal interpretation added in by the translator can pollute the Scriptures and detract from their actual meaning and intent. I personally feel that it is better to allow the Bible student to search the Scriptures, comparing verse with verse, to draw their own conclusions.

Just as I suggested that the Ten Toes/Ten Horns and the eleventh 'little horn' may represent the Beast and ten Endtime nations, I am likewise going to suggest that the following verses may have had a partial fulfillment in ancient history, and then possibly a final application in our modern day. According to one historical perspective, the following verses may be describing the events surrounding what are referred to as the Seleucid Wars. As I mentioned earlier, the Seleucids were six dynastic kings who ruled over Asia Minor and Syria from about 312 B.C. to 64 B.C. Most notable among them was Seleucus I who ruled from about 306 B.C. to 280 B.C. The last of these six kings fell to the Roman general Pompey who arrived at Jerusalem a year later:

"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."
(Daniel 11:5)

Following the 'Seleucid Wars' interpretation, the above verse may be indicating that one of the princes of Egypt would overcome the king, possibly through a coupe or rebellion, and become much more powerful than him. This may be a reference to Ptolemy I who began ruling Egypt upon

Alexander the Great's death. Ptolemy I ruled from about 323 B.C. to 285 B.C. In the next verse we read:

"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." (Daniel 11:6)

According to some historians, in 252 B.C., Ptolemy II, the king of Egypt, gave his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus II, then the king of Syria. This was in order to conclude a peace treaty between the two kingdoms. It appears though that things did not work out as planned. Berenice was murdered in Antioch, Syria by Laodice, the former wife of Antiochus II, thus thwarting the plans of Ptolemy II and weakening his hand. The prophecy then continues:

"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." (Daniel 11:7-9)

After her death, Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III, ascended to the Egyptian throne. He declared war on the Seleucids of Syria hoping to avenge his sister's death. He was victorious against the Syrian king and carried off the spoils to Egypt. It appears that Ptolemy III either outlived the Syrian king, or else remained in power longer than him. However, this isn't where the story ends:

"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." (Daniel 11:10)

In verse ten above, it appears that the sons of the Syrian king, possibly Seleucus II this time, assembled a great army

to come again against Ptolemy III, king of Egypt, to take revenge for the defeat of their father. In so doing, it appears that their mighty army passed through the land of Israel. Whether Israel allowed this, or whether she was pillaged during this event is not made clear. this results in the Egyptian king doing the following:

"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." (Daniel 11:11)

After this attack on Egypt by the sons of the Syrian king, the king of Egypt, possibly Ptolemy IV, again sends his forces to fight against the Syrian king. The Syrian sends out a great army against the Egyptian forces, but nevertheless, Ptolemy prevails. With this victory over the king of the north, The Egyptian king becomes lifted up in his pride and appears to slaughter tens of thousands as the verse below demonstrates:

"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." (Daniel 11:12)

Ptolemy's victory only lasts a few years as the king of the north again comes against him with an even greater army than before. This particular king of the north may be a reference to Antiochus III the Great who was later defeated by the Roman legions in a battle at Magnesia:

"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. 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." (Daniel 11:13-14)

In verse fourteen above, it appears that there is also rebellion against the Egyptian ruler from other quarters, possibly other nations who joined Antiochus in his campaign against Egypt. Considering that Ptolemy repeatedly defeated the king of the north, and then continued to kill or at least subdue tens of thousands of others, it isn't difficult

to understand why he would become unpopular. The reference to 'the robbers of thy people' is still a bit of a mystery to me. We know that 'thy people' must be referring to the Jews since this is a prophecy Daniel was given regarding the future of his own people. Some have suggested that 'the robbers' might be referring to Jewish insurgents, but this is not made very clear. We then read:

"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. 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."

(Daniel 11:15-16)

In the verses above we see the defeat of the Egyptian forces by the Syrian king. The strongest Egyptian cities are taken, and it appears that even Ptolemy's best fighters, ('his chosen people?'), were unable to stop the Syrian. This phrase, 'chosen people,' is commonly used to denote the Jews, so it could also mean that the Jews sided with the Egyptians but were still not able to withstand the Syrian invasion. It could be for this reason that part of the Syrian king's campaign was to also wreak havoc in and subdue Israel, here referred to as 'the glorious land'. In verse seventeen, we see what appears to be a bit of inside treachery from one of the parties involved:

"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."

(Daniel 11:17)

This verse is a bit puzzling. Some have suggested that this is referring to the king of the north, Antiochus, forming an alliance with the king of Egypt and giving him a daughter in marriage. The idea put forth is that she would work from within to defeat the king of Egypt. However, according to this interpretation, she turns against the Syrian and the plan fails. In my view, the previous verse, (v16), implies that the conquest of Egypt has already been accomplished, so this interpretation doesn't make much sense, unless of

course it wasn't a total conquest. Verse sixteen ends with the Syrian king entering Israel and pillaging it. Up until that point, it seems to me that Israel was just being used as a stepping stone to gain the ultimate prize: Egypt. Perhaps verse seventeen in implying that Antiochus decides to go in with his full force and completely take over Israel once and for all since they have resisted him. Because of the way the verse is written, it is difficult to tell who is the 'he' and 'him' in each case. The part regarding corrupting the daughter of women is still beyond my current understanding. In the following verses we read:

"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." (Daniel 11:18-19)

After conquering, Israel, Egypt and the surrounding area, this king of the north then sought to expand his powerbase out into the islands of the Mediterranean Sea and possibly further. However, it sounds as if treachery from someone within his own ranks eventually caused his downfall when he sought to return to his own land. Again, the details are a bit hazy here. This might be a reference to Antiochus's defeat by the Roman legions at Magnesia. Following the downfall of the one we are assuming to be Antiochus III the Great, another ruler arose who committed the grave mistake of raising taxes, an issue which apparently didn't sit too well with those he sought to rule. Some historians believe this new ruler was Antiochus III's successor, Seleucus IV, who sent Heliodorus into Israel in order to rob and desecrate the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem:

"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." (Daniel 11:20)

Following the short-lived rule of Seleucus IV, who died by unknown means, we finally come to verse twenty-one where we encounter the last of the six Seleucid kings, who is believed to have been Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the brother of Seleucus. Some say that Antiochus IV purposely won favor with the Romans through flatteries in order to take over his

brother's position as the new king of Syria, and thus resolve the leadership crisis which occurred at his brother's death:

"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."
(Daniel 11:21)

Those who embrace this interpretation of the Scriptures point back to Daniel 7:8 as a confirmation that the 'little horn' speaking great things is likewise referring to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. As noted, I prefer to look at the 'little horn' as being the coming Beast. Considering what he did, (described shortly), perhaps Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a foreshadow of the Endtime Beast:

"And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant." (Daniel 11:22)

The historical interpretation for this verse is that through military maneuvers, conspiracy, and whatever means were available to him, Antiochus IV Epiphanes swept away anyone who opposed him. This included the Jewish opposition, which at that time is believed to have been spearheaded by the Maccabees. The 'prince of the covenant' is believed to refer to Jason. According to this interpretation of events, Jason was removed as a result of the Hellenist High Priest, Menelaus, conspiring with Antiochus IV against those Jews who still devoutly followed the Torah. Those who support this view claim that Daniel 8:10-11 is referring to this same event and not to the Beast of the future. Concerning the 'prince of the covenant', I will offer an interesting perspective in part two of this article. The next verse reads:

"And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people." (Daniel 11:23)

Here again we see what some believe to be Antiochus IV's conspiracy with Menelaus and others who helped to bring about the downfall of Jason and traditional Jewish Temple worship. Some also say that this view is supported by Daniel

8:25. In the second part of this article I will offer an alternative scenario for who these 'small people' might be in the Endtime. Verse twenty-four then goes on to describe his tactics for winning favor with the common people by sharing the wealth. It also tells how for a set time Antiochus continued to expand his power base:

"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." (Daniel 11:24)

The next two verses then mention how Antiochus IV Epiphanes went against the king of Egypt, possibly Ptolemy IV, just as his predecessors had done. As before, this final Seleucid king was victorious against the king of the south. It appears that there was treachery from within the very household of the king of Egypt which facilitated his defeat. Whether this was a family conspiracy or just his own military forces abandoning him, we cannot really tell; but in either event, it resulted in many dead as the Syrian forces invaded:

"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." (Daniel 11:25-26)

This appears to have resulted in an attempt at some type of peace accord or treaty based on nothing but lies and mischief by both parties. But, God is in control, and everything transpired according to His perfect will:

"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." (Daniel 11:27)

The twenty-eighth verse seems to indicate that some kind of agreement was worked out which involved Israel. The fact

that the covenant was called 'holy' indicates it might have had something to do with Temple worship; however, as the previous verse indicated, although Antiochus signed or confirmed this treaty, his heart was really not in it. After further pillaging Israel, he returned to Syria:

"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." (Daniel 11:28)

Sometime later, we again see Antiochus IV heading south to plunder the land. This time however, he was met with opposition from naval forces from Chittim, or Kittim. This is a reference to Cyprus and is probably referring to Roman forces. Because of this, Antiochus IV was temporarily forced back which angered him even more and made him become further upset with the holy covenant he had signed with the Jews and the King of Egypt. He then conspired with others, possibly Jews, who had also turned against the covenant:

"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." (Daniel 11:29-30)

This conspiracy involving disloyal Jews resulted in another invasion of Jerusalem and the desecration of the Second Temple. This event is believed to have occurred in about the year 168/167 B.C. Menelaus was set up as Antiochus's puppet High Priest and pigs were slaughtered on the Temple altar totally defiling it according to Jewish law. While some disloyal Jews were won over to the Syrian king through his smooth talking, many faithful Jews resisted and were slain by the forces of Antiochus IV of Epiphanes. It is believed that this incident may be what has become known as the Maccabean Revolt recorded in the Apocrypha:

"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. 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." (Daniel 11:31-35)

Having defeated the Maccabean resistance, Antiochus becomes even more lifted up in his pride and exalts himself above every idol and every god, including above the God of gods:

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain."
(Daniel 11:36-39)

In the above verses, some have interpreted the phrase 'God of forces' as 'God of fortresses' or 'God of munitions', possibly meaning that he worshipped the god of military might. I offer more insight into this possibility in part two. As in previous verses, we are again told that one of his policies was to divide the spoils between those who supported and assisted him in his conquests.

It is at this point in verse forty that some eschatologists believe that the Prophet Daniel suddenly leaves Antiochus IV of Epiphanes in the past, and quickly zooms in on events of our current time -- which these eschatologists believe is the Endtime -- for the final confrontations between the last kings of Egypt and Syria. This is because verse forty begins with the phrase "And at the time of the end". This is referred to as the Futurist theological perspective.

As I explain in some of my other articles, for forty years of my life, I embraced this very same perspective, and I was quite persuaded that certain of Daniel's prophecies regarding these kings of the north and the south were yet to be fulfilled. But that all began to change a number of years ago when I began to more closely examine some of my beliefs regarding what is commonly referred to as Endtime prophecy. Having said that, please avail yourself of some of the articles and series which are listed below, in order to understand my current position.

With these thoughts I will bring this article to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?

In the Ages to Come

Abomination of Desolation: Explained!

Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?

When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?

Who Hindered the Antichrist?

Sorry . . . Jesus is Not Coming at Any Moment

Revelation's Babylon the Great

Age of Deception, Age of Delusion

The Great Tribulation and the Rapture

The Misguided End of the World Predictions of Harold Camping

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