

The Scripture of Truth

Daniel 11, 12

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Daniel 11

Daniel 11 One of our sages, the founder of inductive philosophy, distinguishes between divine prophecies, and such as have been of certain memory and from hidden causes. These were no better than probable conjectures or obscure traditions that many times turn themselves into prophecies. Lord Verulam undoubtedly was a man of profound thought, and (whatever his sad failure) a great deal wiser than those who now in effect deny divine prophecy altogether, and merely show themselves out as unbelievers. Now unbelief is an insult to God and His word and not merely so, but along with it goes as the rule ignorance of Christ and of redemption. Everything is shaken thereby; for the moment you begin to cavil at Scripture, where is the line to be drawn? It is no better if you question the beginning. You may begin with Genesis; for the same principle is apt to carry the mind in doubt throughout the Bible to Revelation. There is abundant evidence for Scripture, more by far than for any books of antiquity; but evidence of an external sort never raises you to faith. Scripture claims to be the written word of God and carries its own evidence as light to the conscience. Unless received on its own divine authority, men do not really believe it savingly. They may readily allow that it has a character intrinsically superior to other so-called sacred books. But this makes it only a question of old Hebrew sages or of those who wrote in Christian times, who were better or abler men. THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH In the prophecy which now claims our attention we have as nearly as possible the language of history. We have seen the symbolic style in the earlier visions of the book. Dan. 9 is transitional, the weeks being in a measure enigmatic; the rest plain language with figures interspersed, as in all the interpretations. The peculiarity of Dan. 11 and 12, like Dan. 9, is in leaving symbolic form for the language of every day on historical matters. Thus we have a succession of kings in a double contemporary series, north and south of the holy land, which was beyond controversy God's centre on the earth. We must therefore look up or down from that fixed point.

Here we find a striking introduction before we hear of kings of the north and the south. "And now will I show you the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia." Cyrus was then the great ruling personage. Darius was in honour only as a sort of complementary king; the conqueror of Babylon put him forward in recognition of the Medes who joined his standard, whatever may have been the exact family tie which bound them together. For scripture is silent, and the facts are by no means cleared by the profane writers of history. As Ctesias says that Cyrus made his own grandfather, the dethroned king of the Medes a satrap, it is not improbable that he is Darius the Mede of the prophecy. Probable it seems that Astyages' daughter Mandane married Cambyses II., father of Cyrus, whom Herodotus mentions as a Persian noble, the monuments as the king, which appears to have been

the fact. However this be, Cyrus was a man of real and widely extended power. Thenceforward Scripture proof of the succession appears in Ezra 4.

First we have Ahasuerus, the unworthy son of a great father, here (Ezra 4: 6) called Ahasuerus, or Cambyses as he is named in ordinary history. It was not he that disturbed the Jewish remnant, after their restoration, but the usurper who followed him when the Samaritan enemies of Israel appealed to stop the work of rebuilding the temple and the city. This work Artaxerxes (Smerdis Magus) (Ezra 4: 7-23) was the more ready to thwart, as he being a Mede paid no regard to the policy of Cyrus, whose son, Cambyses, did; he would be disposed naturally to reactionary measures. Darius Hystaspis became king on the revolt which set aside the pseudo-Smerdis; and he is the king of Persia who confirmed the decree of Cyrus. See Ezra 5: 5, 24, and chs. 5, 6. This Darius H. is the third in Dan. 11: 2, that is, the third after Cyrus the Great.

"The fourth," it is said, "shall be far richer than they all." This proverbially rich king of Persia was Xerxes, who tried to follow his father's enmity to Athens (defeated at Marathon, B.C. 490), and strike the Greeks a death-blow. "And when he is waxed strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia." He likewise was defeated at the famous battles of Salamis and Plataea, B.C. 480, 479. How exact and terse is the prophet's sketch! "By his strength through his riches." It was not skill or force of arms, but wealth that mustered the vast hosts of barbarians. But his enormous armies, far greater than those of his father Darius, were unavailing. Luxury had enervated those once hardy warriors. And now also they had overstepped their limits. Whilst they pushed their dominions through Western Asia, God in His providence was with them; but when they sought the sea and Europe, by rushing into Greece, they laid the foundation of that enmity which found its vent in Alexander the Great, who led the Greeks and his own Macedonian forces against the East. The great battles at the Granicus, and at Issus, and at Arbela resulted in the total overthrow of the Persian empire. See how clearly this is set out in a few words in Dan. 11: 3: "And a mighty king (Alexander) shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will." But what about his own dynasty? "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; but not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion wherewith he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides these" (Dan. 11: 4). This was all verified to the letter.

Thus are we brought to the desired two out of the four parts of Alexander's kingdom — Syria in the North, Egypt in the South. And a most characteristic sketch it is. Gibbon, the sceptical historian, says in his sneering way that Daniel "is too exact for a prophet." "The four empires are clearly delineated: the expedition of Xerxes into Greece; the rapid conquest of Persia by Alexander; his untimely death without posterity; the division of his monarchy into four kingdoms, one of which, Egypt, is mentioned by name; then various wars and inter-marriages; the persecution of Antiochus; the profanation of the temple; and the invincible arms of the Romans are described with as much clearness as in the histories of Justin and Diodorus. From such a perfect resemblance the artful infidel would infer that both alike were composed after the event" (G. to Hurd, Works, v. 365).

Certain it is that the Lord does authenticate "Daniel the prophet" to every believer, who finds here in short compass a sketch more simple, consecutive, and correct than in all the historians put together, and with slight exception in the common style of history. This is admittedly a feature unusual in prophecy; and because of this some have rashly yielded to incredulity. Dr. Arnold was thus misled; for no piety can quite undo the poisonous effects of unbelief.

But no Christian can doubt that it is as easy for God to give a consecutive anticipation as a single luminous picture. It is the general way of prophecy, no doubt, to hurry on to the judgment, and the

blessing that follows the Lord's intervention at the close, as being of supreme importance. But there was good reason in His eyes to give at this junction an account of the kings, north and south of Palestine, and their mutual struggles and alliances, sometimes sought to be cemented by marriage. We have these movements traced with precision; nothing in history can be more exact. Name if you are able any great writer on that time, who gives facts with as great accuracy, simplicity, and clearness, as this chapter.

Take the following curt summary: Dan. 11: 5 presents Ptolemy Lagi, one of Alexander's chief captains, in remarkable strength; yet another about to be stronger than he, and to have a great dominion, the first Seleucus surnamed Nicator. In Dan. 11: 6 after an indicated space we hear of an endeavour to patch up the jealousy which from earliest days had arisen about the land which lay between these powers, when Ptol. Philadelphus gave his daughter Berenice to Antiochus Theus. But Laodice, the injured first wife, brought all to nought and worse than ever by restoration to the northern king's favour, when she poisoned those from the south as well as her husband and Berenice's son. Dan. 11: 7 and 8 tell us of "a shoot" from Berenice's roots, Ptol. Euergetes, avenging her wrongs, when Sel. Callinicus reigned in the north, and gained great successes over the north, surviving his adversary and returning to his own land (Dan. 11: 9). Then in Dan. 11: 10 we have the efforts of Sel. Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great against the south, the latter of whom alone recovered Seleucia; so that even Ptol. Philopator, inert as he was, got enraged (Dan. 11: 11), and Antiochus after various successes sustained an utter rout at Raphia (Dan. 11: 12). But no fruit remained to the Egyptian king, especially as he oppressed the Jews; but Ant. waited till he could fall on his infant nephew when the Jews revolted (Dan. 11: 13, 14), and he took Sidon (Dan. 11: 15), notwithstanding all Egypt could do to hinder (defeated at Panium), and he visited the land of beauty (Dan. 11: 16). In Dan. 11: 17 we hear of his fair words but foul intrigues through Cleopatra, who thwarted his craft; as in Dan. 11: 18 his invasion of the isles of Greece was stopped by a Roman chief in the person of Quinctius the Consul at the Isthmus. Inglorious defeat sealed his stumble and fall (Dan. 11: 19). Dan. 11: 20 briefly tells us of his son Sel. Philopator, overloaded with tribute, as is here strikingly noticed, who fell through his "exactor," Heliodorus. From Dan. 11: 21 to 32 inclusively follows the account of his brother Antiochus Epiphanes with a detail beyond all before, as being the foe not only of the Jews but of their God, the living God. Demetrius was the true heir. "A person vile" indeed was their supplanter. His deceit was as great against his nephew of Egypt as against his brother. At length "ships of Chittim came against him" (Dan. 11: 30), as against his ancestor. The Romans compelled him to retire from Egypt; and he vented his indignation on the Jews; as later on by his order "the abomination that maketh desolate" was set up in the temple through apostates that helped him, though valiant opposition was not wanting.

If one ventured to enter into the details of those successive kings, it would take considerably more space than can be now given. But the last king of the north stands out from all the rest.

Many were bad enough, violent or corrupt. Sons did not mind marrying their sisters or other nearest relations. Some led deplorably abominable lives, and were a curse to their subjects and neighbours, even more than to their enemies. God had said that Egypt was to be a base kingdom, and no ruler of their race was to reign any longer. No wonder that those kings of the south failed; for instead of raising up Egypt to their own fancied superiority as foreigners, they sunk it to the uttermost, naturally turning to most unnatural evils. Such was the race of Ptolemy.

The worst of the Seleucidæ was Antiochus Epiphanes, called by others Epimanes or the madman. This man went far in his endeavours to stamp out not only the Jews but also the Jewish religion. He placed a statue of Zeus Olympius in the most holy place, and did what none but the most profane men would have thought of — put swine's flesh and blood in the sanctuary of God. The consequence is that

his history is dwelt on with greater minuteness than anyone's. But the resistance to his aim at the close of his history led to a famous revival amongst the Jews. The Maccabees, as the Jewish heroes were called, resisted his generals, which is what is meant by "arms shall stand on his part" — a sufficiently definite way of describing a general acting for him against the Maccabees. Their history is given among the uninspired books that compose the Apocrypha. These Maccabees were no models of piety or long-suffering; but, as Daniel says, they were strong and "did [exploits]." No phrase could more accurately characterize them (Dan. 11: 32). "The people that do know their God shall be strong and act." They were far from possessing the martyr spirit in their ways, such as will be found in the godly remnant by-and-by at the end of the age. Then indeed none but those willing to lose their lives for the truth's sake will be owned by the God of Israel. Their strength will be in their weakness, they themselves ready to suffer — yea, even unto death for Him Who died and, little known by them, is now in glory. It is needless to say that such suffering is a far harder thing, and entails more blessing from God than anything of power displayed in the theatre of the world.

Here then we have those that were persecuted by their enemy — Antiochus Epiphanes. "And they that understood (or, are wise) among the people shall instruct many" (Dan. 11: 33). The phrase means "the" many. It is to be regretted that the article is not conveyed in English where it stands in the Hebrew. For there are the two varieties: the word "many" sometimes with, and sometimes without, the article. The Revisers have taken no notice of the difference, any more than the A.V. "And they shall fall by the sword, and by the 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" (Dan. 11: 33, 34). So it came to pass that Antipater, the Edomite father of Herod, got in. For the family had not a shadow of right to reign over the Jews. Only he stood with the last unworthy scion of the Maccabees, and through Roman help also slipped into power. But such retributions were allowed in God's providence, in order to the humiliation of His guilty people.

"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 the time appointed" (Dan. 11: 35). Just here it is where the text itself shows an interruption of the history till we come to "the time appointed" — "the time of the end." Throughout the prophecy will be found a similar break. Even this remarkably successional chapter discloses such an interruption both at the beginning and at the end. The first undeniably occurs at the end of Dan. 11: 2, after the defeat of Xerxes, and before Alexander the Great. What left room for it is Xerxes stirring up all against the realm of Greece. After a century and a half this entailed the return blow by Alexander. All the intervening history was passed over.

In the same way the Spirit of God has brought us down to the time that follows Antiochus Epiphanes. No notice is here taken of the successive kings that reigned in the north and south; for the next we shall see to be king in the land between the two countries, a king who had not yet come to the throne. After Antiochus Epiphanes we do hear of certain Jews making a bold stand to maintain their law against the apostates, and with trials of all kinds till "the time of the end." That time is still future; but it shall assuredly come, the great crisis for the Jew, which the wise and prudent ignore, and therefore count all the rest of the chapter "too fabulous for a contemporary historian." The truth is that it is all future, but will surely be fulfilled in its season. There is a perfect answer in the past history to all we have seen up to Dan. 11: 35, but to nothing more.

Yet it is not to be allowed that the words from Dan. 11: 36 are indeterminate in the least degree. The only appearance of it (and this is intentional vagueness, if such a phrase be permitted here) is in the words, "until the time of the end." It already covers an intervening space of something like 2000 years. The blank at any rate occurs there.

In Dan. 11: 36 we read, "And the king shall do according to his will." This is no king of either north or south, but quite another monarch who is called simply "the king." No other designation was required. Every intelligent Jew would at once know, as every Christian ought to know, who that portentous ruler is. O.T. prophecy prepares us for an awful time that is to befall the nation before the Messiah comes in power and glory. They boast much about their boundless charity to their own people; but how little they enter into what David calls the "kindness of God!" Christians are called by their Saviour to love their enemies. I wonder if every Christian here loves his enemies, no matter how unjust they may be? It is just our opportunity of showing that grace makes us to be above spite and evil. Should we be able to sing at midnight in prison, with our feet in the stocks? What can be done with such people? The world finds them invincible. No wonder that they are to reign with Christ by-and-by, seeing that by His grace they now conquer in the irresistible might of weakness. Exploits are all well for Puritans as for Maccabees; but they suit not the Christian. Stonewall Jackson in America and Havelock in India were too like the Maccabees. They had an imperfect idea of the true place of the Christian. They had not learnt to bear all, and endure all, not only in passive obedience to their earthly rulers, but in grace to such as shamefully injured them. THE ANTICHRIST Here it is supposed that the readers know there is to be at the time of the reigning in Judea an apostate potentate. Having rejected the True Light, the Jews do not realize that they are the very people to be governed by this self-exalting enemy of God. They would not deny that there will surely arise an audacious and wicked king in the land of Israel; but they forget that they are to be his subjects, accomplices, and victims. So far from being king of the north or of the south, we see here that he is attacked by the then kings of both those lands. He is simply called "the king," as neither of those powers is ever called. He bears that name, as being then king of the land between the north and the south. The text affords demonstrable proof of this. "The king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself." This may be no uncommon quality; but he manifests it to an unheard of degree: "He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god." What pretension! Did he not then require to eat, drink, and sleep like any other poor creature? Surely this ought to have convinced him how far he must be from God, or even an angel, had he not been blinded by Satan's power. Nay, he shall "speak marvelous things against the God of gods." Not this only, but we are told that which gives astonishing evidence of long-suffering till judgment come; we are told that he "shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done." What a solemn way of God it is to let one go on in blasphemous pride, that wickedness may fully come out, and its downfall may be all the more just and complete! God is righteous. But what is man? What are the Jews, and particularly then?

How came such a king to reign over Judea? They refused Him that came in His Father's name. They will then receive one that comes in his own name. Here we read what he is and does. "Like king, like people" we may say, as one of the earlier prophets said, "As the people, so the priest." They will be in that day one evil lump. The difference is only in degree. Lawlessness will have reached its height. "And he will not regard the God of his fathers." This shows, according to scripture language, he is a Jew. Nobody but a Jew can correctly be described thus: a simple, but incontrovertible proof for such as know the Bible. Where do we find anything like it?

An Englishman who believes may speak of God as his Father; but he cannot talk of "the God of his fathers" except as imitating the phrase of a Jew. This reference of course is to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are the true fathers whom God chose to be the depositories of promise, on behalf of their seed and land, yet to be verified under Messiah: a most happy time for the world, after its hitherto sinful and sad history. I do not of course speak of the gospel, founded on Christ's cross and calling us as the church to heavenly glory. But there is a bright and blessed time for the earth when Israel shall be truly the people of Jehovah exalted above all nations and a blessing to them. The church will have a

glorious place in heaven, and will reign over the earth, but not on it. This is the mistake often made in rendering Rev. 5: 10. It ought to be not "on" but "over." There is an idiom in the construction which bears this out. Why it should have been over looked by many excellent scholars seems strange; for the usage is plain enough.

Neither shall this king, to take the next characteristic, regard "the desire of women." The phrase alludes to the well-known expectation that a maiden of Israel would be the mother of Immanuel (Isa. 7). "Nor [will he] regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all." So excessive is his lawless self-exalting presumption that prevalent idolatry he repudiates in his self-assertion. Yet he is an idolater after all — this man who pretends to be the Most High God. "In his estate shall he honour the god of forces." We can readily understand how everything at such a time will turn to the worship of material force. Never has there been such a rage for arming to the teeth as at the present moment. There have been many epochs when a countless host of barbarians has swept over the civilized world, but never a time when such vast armies stood confronting one another, though their own lands groan under the necessary taxation, afraid of breaking the peace, but ready for war if they saw the opportunity to seize the coveted prize.

Such is the strained condition west and east. Not only is it the fact, but the very powers which thus arm excessively are confessedly perplexed and most anxious under the ever increasing burden, which they necessarily incur on all sides through these bloated armaments. It is the unwitting preparation for the changes and conflicts which precede the great day when the self-exalting king in the Holy Land is worshipped, yet worships "the god of fortresses." People do not worship what they do not prize or covet. The most audacious in pride knows his own nothingness and bows down to some unworthy superstition. Such a secret but enslaving power is unbelief. The wilful one that sets up in Jerusalem and the temple may so far remind us of Napoleon, who, however inordinate in his vanity, unscrupulous in conscience of heart, and insatiable in his ambition, worshipped his own star. The anti-Messiah will worship the god of fortresses.

"Thus shall he do in the most strongholds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory, and he shall cause them to rule over the many, and shall divide the land for gain" (Dan. 11: 39). There again we see the unmistakable marks of a Jewish king in the land. We recognize in "the many" the technical word for the mass of the Jews; as "the land" in Daniel can legitimately be no other than Palestine. THE CLOSING SCENE "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships" (Dan. 11: 40). Can there be more positive proof sought that "the king" in these verses is quite distinct from the two contending lines hitherto described? Here it is beyond doubt that on the contrary the kings of the north and of the south attack him. How could he be the same as either of the assailing parties?

But there is a yet more important series of details to point out now, about which there have been often great disputes in the minds of Christians, simply because they have looked at the wrong time and place. The Spirit of God says a little more here about this lawless king. We learn that the king of the south appears to be the first in opposing him. This is resented by the king of the north who comes down with still greater resources, indeed, as it is said, "like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships." From this point to the end of the chapter the account is of the king of the north. Impossible to ask fuller proof that it is no longer the wilful king in the land, but the king of the north that is described henceforth, ravaging but destroyed beyond help, as in the end of Dan. 8.

One may be asked why "the king" should be dropped here without telling what becomes of him.

Great pains had been taken elsewhere to mark him out as devoted to destruction when the Lord shines from heaven at His appearing. Of course one does not heed the disgusting fiction, with which the Talmud speaks of Armillus. But the Jews, apart from traditions, were aware they will have to do before Messiah comes with a terrific and lawless chief in the land. Whence did they get the ground of their ingrafted fables? Isa. 11 clearly reveals him, and his end at that time: "With the breath of his lips shall he (Messiah) slay the wicked (one)." This is the man. The text is referred to and applied by the apostle in 2 Thess. 2: 8, "And then shall the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the appearing of his coming." The king is the same person who is designated "the wicked" in our version of Isa. 11 and "the lawless one" in the R.V. of 2 Thess. 2. It is a single individual, and "lawless" more precisely describes him than "wicked." He is the man who defies all law, all authority of whatever sort, every object of reverence, every heathen god, yea the true god, in order to set up himself above all. Not merely does he trample upon law and gospel, but on God Himself, and his image he sets up in the temple of God. As he reigns over the Jews, it is natural that for this he should choose the holy place in Jerusalem. "The prince that shall come," or Roman emperor in the coming day, of whom you were hearing in Dan. 9 is not referred to in this passage. But the prince of Rome in the latter day is to support the lawless king of the Jews, as its chief had the guilt of gratifying the Jews in crucifying the true King. The Roman prince or emperor of that day will be a strong ally of the Antichrist that reigns over "the land." Rome will then have got clear of the Popes; but instead of being better, it also will rush to perdition. The Roman emperor with his satellite kings will have turned upon Babylon, consumed her flesh, and destroyed her with fire.

Here evidently the Protestant school are at fault; for they cannot deny that it is absurd to suppose the Pope would lead his vassals to destroy Babylon, whether as "city" or as "whore." Yet it is certain that the Beast and his horns are to do so. This is intelligible and plain when we believe that the Beast is the revived Roman empire, to which even the most corrupt religious power is obnoxious. The Beast in Rome is as wilful as the king in Palestine, and will not brook the harlot's interference. Babylon is therefore destroyed by him and his horns. The Beast is the coming Roman prince. The empire will be reconstituted, as surely as anything, little as politicians expect it; and Dan. 7: 8, lets us know somewhat of the progress to supreme power of a king with a small beginning, before whom three of the first horns were rooted up. It is not for any man to say which these are to be: least of all should we prophesy, who simply believe the prophets. Setting up to prophesy is a great sin, unless you are a prophet in the inspired sense. But it is a shame for a Christian not to believe those whom such a man as king Agrippa durst not say he disbelieved.

Here, however, we have divine ground to know that the "little horn" of the west is at first to be a small power among the other ten; and that he only becomes great by destroying three of his contemporary powers. He becomes at last not only the possessor of these three kingdoms but the suzerain of all the rest. This is the form in which he becomes emperor of the western powers. It is not a profitable even if a hopeful inquiry, to conjecture the special power which thus from little becomes so ominously great. How sad for Italy if the bad pre-eminence is to be hers! But in that verse in the progress as clearly as the facts can make it is the future, as far as God has revealed in His wisdom. There will be, it would seem from Rev. 13, a sea of confusion for the powers, out of which the Roman empire will reappear.

In that day will be the startling new policy of the latter day, when the western powers will no longer be, as now, striving after a balance one against another. We are sufficiently familiar with the balance of power that has ruled in Europe for many hundreds of years, some trying to unite with others in order to hinder predominance. By-and-by that will be abandoned. God will allow Satan to have his

own way for a short time; and all authority and power will be at the back of this chief, the emperor of Rome. At that time he is allowed to dictate to the whole of them. He wields the forces of all the western powers, among the rest, sad to say, of Great Britain. This country once came under that empire. When that empire will be restored, all the divided kingdoms will have their share in the awful catastrophe.

When the Roman prince shall go to support the Jewish king, against the king of the north, they must march at his bidding. It will be, in effect, with the Lamb that they have to fight, as Rev. 17 and 19 make plain. The king of the north is the leader of the north-eastern powers, though there appears to be another behind, which (Gog) is still greater than he, that comes up afterwards to his own destruction. The king of the north is so angry at the king of the south meddling with Jerusalem, that he leaves his campaign unfinished to punish the land of Egypt and its supporters. Half of Jerusalem shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city, as we have it stated in Zech. 14: 2. It is expressly the coming of Jehovah's day when all nations gather against Jerusalem to battle. But there are very distinct events which occur within the compass of "that day." "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." A third part in all the land had been spoken of in Zech. 13: 9, as brought through the fire, refined as silver and tried as gold; who call on Jehovah and are heard. He will say, Thou art My people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God. Thus while we find extreme trouble, no less clear is the work of God in a remnant.

It is the Assyrian or King of the north who acts as the overflowing scourge from without, and at first is successful against the wilful king and the apostate mass of the Jews. But God shields the righteous remnant. While the king of the north goes down to deal with the king of the south, the Lord appears to the destruction of the wicked king, now reinforced by the beast from the west and his kings and their armies, which is described in Rev. 19. But it is omitted in Dan. 11, in order to pursue the conflicts of the north and the south about the land and its chief, and then to give the return of the king of the north into the land to find his dismal end, as the others had before.

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him [the wilful king]; and the king of the north shall come against him [the same] like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown. But these shall be delivered out of his hand, Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" (Dan. 11: 40, 41). Beyond question he is not king of the glorious land, because he enters it as an enemy. Demonstrably it is the king of the north, and not the wilful king who is here before us. "He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape" (Dan. 11: 42). This proves he cannot be the king of the south, because he attacks Egypt and spoils it. "But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps" (Dan. 11: 43). The conquered are compelled to fight under his banner. "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him," that is, out of his own country. I have little doubt that the tidings are about the movement of the ten tribes, in whom God is working to return from these parts to the land of their fathers. They were transplanted by the king of Assyria of old. And now the last holder of that power is on the alert to oppose their return. Much may be found in Isa. 10 which looks onward to the Assyrian in what Daniel calls "the last end of the indignation." Sennacherib was but a type.

The dealings of God with the ten tribes come out in a very remarkable way, as we may read in Hosea 2 and Ezek. 20. It appears that God is to bring them through the wilderness again; where they

are purified by a process of spiritual discipline through which the Lord will put them in those days.

Certain it is that tidings trouble the Assyrian out of the north and east, and he hurries back to Palestine. "And he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." Already the proud powers of the west had gathered there for their doom, but this he does not consider if he knew it. Men are easily blinded by their passions; and there will also be the special delusion of Satan. The Lord shining from heaven will have destroyed Anti-Christ or the wilful king of the land, as he also destroys the beast solemnly, slaying the kings and their armies that came up to support him. The emperor of the west and his ally in the holy land are both cast alive into the lake of fire, called in the Revelation "the beast" and "the false prophet," for this king in the land pretends to be a prophet as well as to be Messiah and God. Those at the head of the western powers as well as their armies that follow them are slain on the spot, to be judged another day when raised.

After this comes up the king of the north at the head of a vast force. Then shall the Lord go forth at the head of His people "as in the day of battle." So we find it stated in Zech. 14: 3. Before that it was the Lord coming from heaven that dealt with the beast and the false prophet. Now He will have taken up His people Israel. It is the rod of His power from out of Zion, as Ps. 110 expresses it, dealing with the head of a great country, who comes to the same end as the beast and the false prophet before him. This is described in the end of Isa. 30. For the king also [not "yea"] it is prepared, that is, for "the king" in the land as well as for the Assyrian. You will see that from the beginning of Dan. 11: 36, it is entirely a future time that is referred to. Never has been anything like it; but God here reveals that it must be.

Daniel 12

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people [the Jews without doubt]; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered (v.1). But notoriously since the time of the Babylonish captivity, no matter what trouble may have come upon them (and how many and varied their trials!) they have never been delivered. Nebuchadnezzar's blows were heavy, and at length he carried them into captivity. Still more severe was it when Titus the Roman destroyed the city and sanctuary, and sold or scattered over all the western world in particular those whom he was weary of slaying. From another authority we have the retributive fact that Titus crucified the Jews (who had crucified their own Messiah), until there was not wood left capable of torturing another Jew. Then indeed they became the dispersed of Judah to the four corners of the earth. They attempted a stand in the days of Hadrian the Roman emperor and again they were slaughtered without mercy, instead of being delivered. And so it has been since. But it remains to be verified in their last and sorest tribulation, "At that time thy people shall be delivered." Can there be a doubt to any believer that Daniel reveals a deliverance never yet accomplished? Not, it is true, for the mass but for the godly remnant, "thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." This is assuredly before them. There may be only a little remnant left; but "the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation: I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time," according to the words of Isaiah. The word of God ought to silence all difficulties. It is only the righteous who will then be delivered. But it is a deliverance by publicly displayed power in the earth, and in no way by the gospel, when the mass of the Jews shall be destroyed, only those delivered, who are then under the holy banner of God's Messiah. At that time, as God says by Isaiah, "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever." Is this not Israel?

But we have more of detail here. The Jews in the land are the persons spoken about hitherto; but what about their brethren that were away and lost to their knowledge. Here we have a striking description of them — and an end put to that anomalous state. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." It appears that up to that time their resurrection as a nation had not taken place. From the days of Hosea, and Isaiah, the figure of death had been used, and their rising again promised. So we find it elaborately in Ezek. 37. Many have applied this to the literal resurrection of the body, but when viewed in its connection, it will be found to be only a figure of Israel re-appearing after a long slumber of death. In Ezekiel we hear of the valley filled with dry bones, and of the graves being opened, with other metaphors. It is the same truth as here; not the literal dead raised, but Israel coming up again and standing on their feet, an exceeding great army, whom Jehovah brings into the land of Israel. How could all this describe men rising from the dead? God will bring them out of their utter inaction and impenetrable obscurity.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Those who learn of God, and such as labour for God, shall not lose their reward. They shall shine as the stars, instead of changing like the moon. But it is "the many," or wicked Jews, that are here intended, who are not really turned to righteousness. So that the true fact is, "they that instruct the mass in righteousness"; and they are rewarded for their fidelity, whatever the result may be.

In conclusion let it be observed, that it was the eleventh verse of this chapter our Lord referred to in Matt. 24: 15: not Matt. 11: 31 which had long before been accomplished, but a future act of similar kind which will bring down divine judgment signally, "And from the time that the continual [or daily sacrifice] shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred, and ninety days." The days here are, I believe, so many literal days. Three times and a half, or one thousand, two hundred, and sixty days, had been spoken of in Dan. 12: 7, and in Dan. 7: 25, as occupied with the evil wrought by the Beast or Roman Prince. To this thirty days are here added. The Lord draws particular attention to the facts as calling for understanding on the part of the reader. It is not the Roman siege already accomplished according to Luke 21 as far as v. 24, though the times of the Gentiles are not yet exhausted. From v. 25 all is future. And the final siege will divide into two parts. The first shows us the king of the north partially successful. The second is marked by utter destruction; and no wonder. For the Lord will have taken His place at the head of His people, and sends the rod of His power out of Zion. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days" (Dan. 12: 12).

This is blessing on the earth; but at the same time there is better still. For those saints like Daniel that have fallen asleep are not forgotten in that great day. "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, like all the dead that are Christ's, will then obtain "a better resurrection." "He hath swallowed up death" for ever. Christ's victory is ours, for the heavens, as His victory triumphs over Israel's enemies for the earth.