

Faithbuilders Fellowship

Proclaiming Christ's Parousia
and the coming Millennial Kingdom
July, August 2008

What is Salvation?

"He that endures to the end shall be saved"
(Matthew 10:22).

When Christians speak of being saved, they frequently think of a text like Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Less often do they think of a text like Matthew 10:22, cited above, which makes salvation contingent upon our faithfulness through life.

Salvation, in the New Testament, can refer to the beginning of our Christian life, when we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus. But it can also refer to our final deliverance at the close of a devoted Christian life. Paul uses the word saved in this latter sense in Romans 5:10. "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Notice the distinction. After being reconciled to God, which comes by accepting the merit of Christ through faith, at some future time "we shall be saved by his life." We were redeemed by the death of Christ, but developed in character through our experiences thereafter by the resurrected Christ who serves as our helper, advocate, priest. At the end of our life we are finally "saved" by receiving the reward of the righteous at the resurrection of the dead. In this sense, salvation is a hope for the future. Thus "we are saved by hope" (Romans 8:24).

Conditions

There is a condition for receiving this reward of the righteous, namely, to follow holiness through our life. "He that endures to the end" receives the reward. Note the requirements in the scriptures below. In each case the promise is to one who overcomes.

- "He that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26).
- "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment [symbolizing our righteousness in the resurrection]; and ... I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Revelation 3:5).

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- "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear" (Revelation 3:21, 22).

Salvation in the First Sense

Salvation in the first sense refers to our redemption. This takes place when we believe into Christ, consecrate our life to God, and determine to live from then on as a disciple of Christ.

This is not the same as responding to an altar call, or a cry from a revivalist preacher, or even a prick in the heart that we should turn toward Christ. All of these might be useful steps in drawing to God if the heart is sincere in its response.

But becoming a disciple of Christ is more than the mood of a moment. It means a reflective and intentional decision to follow Christ in our daily life, even if and when it involves sacrifice. Discipleship means both self-denial and cross bearing (Matthew 16:24).

When a believer approaching God makes this kind of decision, then it is appropriate for that person to go in private prayer, and mentally commit himself or herself to God for the rest of his or her life. Brethren often refer to this process as "making a consecration to God."

The term "consecration" is drawn from the Old Testament practice of "consecrating" the priests of Israel to serve God thereafter. (See Exodus 28:3, 41, 29:9, 29, 35, 30:30, Leviticus 8:33, 16:32.)



*Baptism into water represents our
Baptism into Christ.*

After consecrating our life to God, it is appropriate to witness this decision to others by the outward sign of water baptism. The word “baptism” is from the Greek word *baptizo*, which means to immerse or submerge something completely. (So mere “sprinkling” is not a good method.) Baptism into water represents our agreement to be completely immersed into the will of God.

The term of enlistment is for a lifetime. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10). “If any man turn back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Hebrews 10:38).

Those who come to Christ in this way, he receives warmly into fellowship with himself, his Heavenly Father, and all those who are likewise consecrated, or devoted, to God. “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).

It is God who calls us to this relationship. “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” (John 6:44). This call is extended to us through an awareness of the Truth of the Christian message. When we realize that God beckons us to be reconciled to Him through His son Jesus Christ, then the decision is ours to make — will we proceed, or will we not? “Many are called,” but relatively few proceed to consecrate their lives and become one of God’s “chosen” ones. Thus the words of our Lord Jesus, “many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14).

When God sees the sincerity of our commitment in response to this drawing, then we are received by him, and redeemed. This means that the sacrifice of Christ is applied to us, so that we are no longer condemned with the world. In this sense we are “justified by his blood” (Romans 5:9), and “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

Then, as a child of God, we have the assurance of His care, direction, and overruling of all things for our welfare. This does not mean riches and fame and ease, for this is not best for us. We are called to a new life, a spiritual life, and the purpose of the years remaining in our present life as humans in the flesh is to develop the likeness of Christ in our heart and mind. Jesus was completed in character by the things which he suffered (Hebrews 5:8, 9). So the stresses of life which are common to all people are used by God to develop character in us. If we were relieved of these stresses in some miraculous way, then we would not have the opportunity to develop character through them. Responsibly providing for the needs of ourselves and our dependents is part of how we develop Christian character.

The redemption we have in Christ gives us a legal standing before God, for the claims of the curse of God against us as children of Adam are resolved. In this sense we “saved” at the beginning, when we enter the Christian life.

Salvation in the Second Sense

Even though we are redeemed from the curse, our new creature, our new life, our spiritual mind, is still housed in fallen flesh. We still experience the afflictions common to the world. This was part of the penalty of Adam’s sin, passed on to successive generations.

So, though we have “peace with God” — and that is a remarkable privilege — we nevertheless are not yet delivered in the full sense. We still “groan within ourselves, waiting” for our deliverance (Romans 8:23).¹ That is why Paul says “we shall [future tense] be saved from wrath through him.” That deliverance comes at our resurrection into the reward of the righteous, in the courts of heaven.

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There will be two classes of the Lord's people in the heavenly resurrection. (1) Those who are faithful, and receive the reward we are called to, which is membership in the elect "Bride" class. They will reign with Christ during the Millennium, and bless the entire world of mankind from heaven.

(2) The "Great Company" class. This refers to those who are called in the "one hope of our calling," but through negligence fail to build with the "gold, silver, precious stones" of divine principles and values during their life. In some cases they allow sins to pile up, not repented of, not cleansed, not cared for. God will test us all. If these do prove loyal to God and Christ, then even though they miss the honor of attaining the "Bride" class, they will be given life in heaven on a lesser plane of existence. This class is described in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 as building with "wood, hay, stubble" and they "suffer loss." But even these will be [future] saved. "But he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire [the trials which purge and test them]."

Saved by Grace

It is "by grace ye are saved" (Ephesians 2:5). It is grace, because God sent his son to die for us, to redeem us from the condemnation justly imposed on Adam and his race. Nothing we do could save us from this condemnation. Without Jesus dying on our behalf, then whenever we would die, we would simply remain dead. In fact Adam himself remains dead to this day, waiting for the proper time in God's Plan for him to be raised from the dead, as a consequence of Jesus taking the death penalty of Adam, upon himself.

Grace is sometimes defined as "unmerited favor." We did nothing to merit this gift from God of His "only begotten son" to die on our behalf. Without that, we would have no life beyond the present few years. "By grace are ye saved ... it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

The Ransom

The key to it all is the Ransom. This word appears three times in Scripture. Matthew 20:28 is the first of these. "The Son of man came ... to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." The word ransom here is from the Greek word *lutron*. This word is formed as a union of two parts, the verb *luo*, which means to loose, and the ending *tron* which means some object described by the other part of the word. (For example the English word "elec-tron" means a particle having an electric charge.) *Lutron* thus means the thing which provides a loosing. In this case it refers to the human life of Jesus, given as a value to settle the account against Adam and his race. This "looses" us from the penalty of sin, which is death.

The life of physical creatures is represented by the blood which sustains them. So the life which Jesus sacrificed for us is represented by his blood. His blood shed

Two Heavenly Classes

- **The Bride Class.** "To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). "I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand" (Revelation 7:4). "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Revelation 3:21).

- **The Great Company Class.** "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues ... they came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ... they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his [heavenly] temple" (Revelation 7:9, 15).

means his life sacrificed for us. The life of Jesus as a perfect human being is the value needed to release Adam, and us his children, from condemnation.

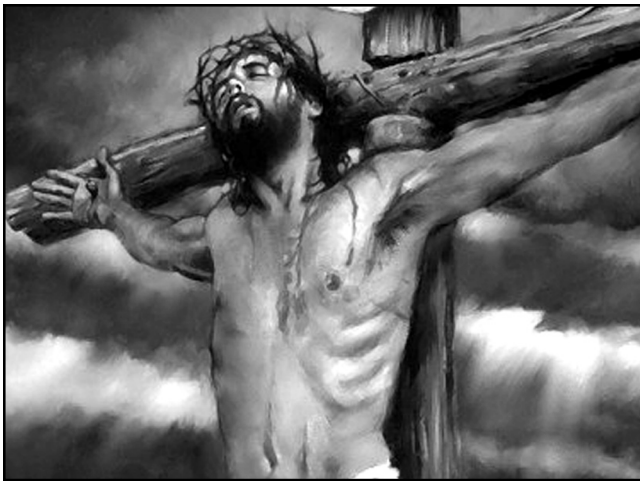
This redemption, this release from the penalty of death, includes every man, woman and child who receive their life through Adam, passed on from generation to generation from the beginning. In other words, the entire world. But it is for Jesus to determine, in accord with his Heavenly Father's Plan of the Ages, when and under what circumstances to apply that value to redeem and justify people.

In the present Gospel Age, Jesus uses that value to atone for those who consecrate their lives to God and become part of the "body of Christ." This was represented centuries ago in the Day of Atonement offerings of Ancient Israel. On that sacred day, the Blood of Atonement was applied first for the priests (Leviticus 16:11). So Christians now, called to be priests of God during the Millennium, are the first ones to receive the atoning value of the blood, the life of Christ. Notice these scriptures on this point.

- "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24). The remainder of the world waits until the Millennium, before the blood of Christ is applied for them.

- "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom **we** have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:11).

On that special "Day of Atonement" in ancient times there was another, second, application of the blood for



The Ransom Jesus provided is used for redemption in Two ages.

others, beside the priests. This was for the entire camp of Israel. This represents that the entire world of mankind will also receive the blood of Christ on their behalf. That will be during the Millennium, so near at hand — only a brief 35 years distant, as it now appears from the history of the Hebrew Old Testament.

John the Apostle said that Jesus was the satisfaction for our sins, “and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). The value of Jesus’ sacrifice is applied to us now in the Gospel Age, and to the world later in the Millennial Age.

Differences in Applying the Ransom

There are substantial differences in each case. During this age, only those who consecrate their lives to God receive the merit of Christ applied to them. Only the consecrated ones are redeemed. Only those who believe into Christ and accept him by faith receive the redemption available now.

For the world during the Millennium it will be different. Then, the ransom price given by Jesus will be used to cancel the sin of Adam. By this means the entire race will be relieved of the curse even before they exercise faith in Christ. One can see this easily when it comes to the resurrection of the dead of past ages. Not until the penalty is remitted, can they be raised. But not until they are raised can they understand what has happened and exercise faith in the redeemer.

When they are raised from the dead, presumably they will be raised whole, and cured of the effects which caused them to die. But to regain perfection of life, youth, and vigor, they will need to express repentance, faith, and obedience. In response to their progress in removing sin from their hearts, and conducting themselves in righteous ways, they will grow gradually back to perfection, without decay, disease, or aging. In response to faith, they will attain human perfection as Adam and Eve had while in the Garden of Eden. If obedient during the Little Season of testing closing the Millennium, then

they will attain everlasting life, here, on Earth, as perfect human beings.

This makes apparent another difference between the two ages. When we are redeemed now, we are no longer condemned before God — but we do not actually return to perfection of human nature. Rather, we yield our justified humanity in sacrifice to God. We expend it, as Jesus did, in service to our Heavenly Father, even unto death, in order to attain a new nature, a heavenly resurrection. “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him” (2 Timothy 2:11, 12).

The world in the Millennium will become obedient, but they will not sacrifice their lives with Christ for a spiritual reward later. Instead, their works of repentance, obedience, and service will result in an improved human life, which they will enjoy forever.

What Salvation Means

Our Salvation in Christ means to be saved from the curse imposed upon Adam. In the beginning, Adam was perfect and did not need salvation. There was nothing to be saved from. Salvation only has meaning after his fall into sin, when the sentence was imposed on him — “Dying, thou shalt die” (Genesis 2:17, rendering from the margin).

Jesus saves us from that curse by accepting it upon himself, so that it can be remitted from us. He dies — we go free. To be saved from this condemnation does not intrinsically mean anything about going to heaven, and this is a great confusion in the minds of many Christian people. The whole world will be saved during the Millennium, but they will not go to heaven. Revelation 22:3 says “And there shall be no more curse” — yet the world will still be here on Earth — a wonderful, perfected Earth, but nevertheless Earth. The world will still be flesh and blood, human beings.

Therefore being “saved” does not necessarily mean we go to heaven. Adam and Eve were never called to heaven even when they were still perfect and without sin. They were promised to live forever, but no call to receive a change of nature, and such a hope is never mentioned in the entire Old Testament.

The Heavenly Calling, the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” is a special privilege, and a special calling. It is only extended during the present Gospel Age. It requires consecration to enter, and faithfulness to receive. Paul distinguishes between our redemption in Christ, and our call to glory, in Romans 5:1, 2.

Verse 1 — “Therefore being justified by faith [in Christ], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” That is redemption. It brings peace, because we have our account settled before God. We are legally redeemed — but of course we need to continually seek forgiveness for our sins and imperfections, to keep in good standing. But then Paul goes on to the next step.

Verse 2 — “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” When he says “by whom also,” he means that in Christ we have a second, additional blessing, over and above our redemption in Christ. This second feature is also by grace. It is our heavenly calling, which allows us to “rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” We are called to the spiritual plane of being, to have a change of nature, and enter into the courts of God to behold his glory, and share the privilege of reigning with Christ from heaven, during the Millennial Age.

(1) Romans 8:23 says we are waiting for our “redemption.” But this does not mean our redemption from sin, for we are redeemed at the beginning of our life in Christ. The Greek word which is rendered “redemption” here is *apolutrosin*, which means a release or deliverance. We have been released from condemnation. But we are not released from the effects of sin and death within us until we are raised as spirit beings in the resurrection.

Christian Discipleship

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).

Being a disciple of Christ means living the principles of Christ — honesty, diligence, kindness, patience, and charity toward others. Many other words describe the facets of Christian character, such as “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Galatians 5:22). Expressing these qualities in our conduct is the work of a Christian life.

But there is another dimension to the Christian life. That is sacrifice. It is related to love because love can be measured by service and sacrifice. God so loved the world that he gave his son to redeem us. Christ loved us sufficiently to suffer and die for us.

Jesus speaks about this dimension, sacrifice, in our lead text, Matthew 16:24, and distinguishes two parts of sacrifice — self denial and cross bearing. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” Self denial looks at the passive side, a giving up of things which might appeal to us by nature, in the interest of pursuing spiritual things instead. Cross bearing is the more active side, engaging in service and activity in the cause of Christ on behalf of others.

A third part to the Christian life is study of God’s word, so that we can know His plans and purposes. This is a great privilege, and it is everywhere commended in scripture. “Study to show thyself approved of God ... rightly dividing the word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). Paul chided the Hebrew brethren a little on their lack of growth in understanding. “When, for the time, ye ought

to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God” (Hebrews 5:12). It is not uncommon for youths to learn deep things in school, but to pass by the most important knowledge of all, a knowledge of the Word of God. And it is not uncommon for adult Christians, however capable and intelligent they may be, to let years pass by without growing deeply in the Truth.

Sometimes we summarize these three parts of a Christian life as Character, Service, and Study. Like a stool of three legs, the Christian life will be stable if we develop all three areas. Most of the development comes to us through the normal days of a Christian life, and less through exceptional circumstances, though the latter do also play a part.

Therefore, “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). This “patience” refers to persistently setting our affections on things above, weaning away from earthly attractions, and applying a Christian spirit while discharging our daily responsibilities — earning a living, supporting ourselves, our dependents, helping our families. It also includes meeting regularly with the Lord’s people, and regularly reading the Scriptures, reflecting on them, studying them.

Melchizedek

“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110:4)

Melchizedek is mentioned only twice in the Old Testament. One case is in Psalms, quoted above. The other is in Genesis chapter 14, where he is introduced as the king of Salem and also a priest, “the priest of the Most High God” (Genesis 14:18). This is unique, for never before or after do we read of a king who was also a priest of God.

The narrative in Genesis proceeds from verse 18 through verse 24, a mere seven verses. We might skip over it in passing, but for the fact that God referred to Melchizedek when giving an oath to his chosen king, David, who is a figure of Christ. This he does in our lead text, Psalms 110:4.

Probably it is this text that caught Paul’s notice that there was some deep meaning to Melchizedek. In Hebrews, chapters five and seven, Paul tells us Melchizedek was a type, or picture, of Christ.

Three Parts of Christian Life

- Character
- Service
- Study

David also was a picture of Christ. Jesus in his resurrected glory received the throne of David. In this way God fulfilled His promise to David of an everlasting throne (2 Samuel 7:12, 13). Thus it is appropriate that Melchizedek, who is a type of Christ, and David, who is a type of Christ, are related to each other as well.

His Name and Office

The name Melchizedek is composed of two Hebrew words, namely **melchi** and **zedek**. The first word means king, and the second one means righteous. “King of righteousness” is the combined meaning, and it was a good name for this honorable, righteous “priest of the most high God” who was also a King.

Paul noted the meaning of this word and saw that it also describes our Lord Jesus. The city that Melchizedek ruled was Salem, which means peace. So the office he held means “king of peace.” Paul observed both the meaning of his name, and the meaning of his office, in Hebrews 7:2. “First being by interpretation, King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace.” Paul saw that both expressions are good ones to describe Christ Jesus, whom Melchizedek represents.

Why God Compared David to Melchizedek

Psalms 110 also consists of seven brief verses, like the account of Melchizedek in Genesis chapter fourteen. This Psalm seems to be about David, but of course the deeper meaning is about Christ, whom David pictured. Melchizedek was king of Salem — and more than 800 years later, David was the first Jewish king of the same city. (Jerusalem means city of Salem, that is, city of peace.) David conquered the city early in his reign, and made it the capital city of his kingdom. In this way he became like Melchizedek, “king of Salem.”

Like Melchizedek, David was devoted to the worship of God. David had the ark of the covenant brought to Jerusalem, so that the holy representation of the presence of God, where Israel was to seek the guidance and direction of God, would be there at the capital city of Israel. In this way David did a religious service for Jerusalem, as Melchizedek did for the city so many years before.

David himself was from Judah, the kingly tribe, so he could not literally be a priest of the kind that came from Aaron, who was from the tribe of Levi. The priest of that day who was faithful to King David had a name which is meaningful — Zadok. Hebrew is written without vowels, which are inserted in our English version to assist reading and vocalization. So the name Zakok, in the original, would be written in three letters, corresponding to our letters zdk. One could just as well write the vowels as the letter “e,” in which case the name would be Zedek.

If one combines the title of David — king, or in Hebrew **melchi** — with the name of his priest, **Zedek**, one

Melchizedek

- **Meaning of the Name** — Melchi (king), Zedek (righteous). The “righteous king” or “king of righteousness” is a fitting description of our Lord Jesus.

- **The City he Ruled** — Salem means “peace,” so Melchizedek was “king of peace.” This also is a fitting description of Jesus.

- **The Dual Offices he Held** — Melchizedek was both a king and a priest. So Jesus is both our King and our High Priest.

- **In the Millennium** — The saints will rule with Christ (as kings), and be “priests of God” to bring mankind back to God. So during the Millennium the saints join with Christ in his role as “Melchizedek” for the world.

has the name of his illustrious predecessor, Melchizedek. This is another way of showing that David was in measure a fulfillment of Melchizedek. Of course Christ, the heir of the throne of David, was the grand fulfillment of both.

The Lessons Paul Draws from Melchizedek

When Paul wrote his various epistles, which comprise 14 of the books of our New Testament, one of the main issues he was concerned about was freedom from the Jewish Law for the new Gentile converts. For Jews who had grown up under the Law of Moses, it was understandable for them to continue the same customs, imbued with the sanctity of centuries. As Paul noted, “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12).

But even the Jews were to recognize that the new age of grace, brought by our Savior Jesus, was of a higher order than the old law given through Moses. Certainly the new Gentile converts should not feel obliged to keep the rituals and holy days — and even Jewish Christians should look beyond the Law and realize that the things represented and typified there were fulfilled in Christ, our high priest and redeemer.

That is one of the lessons Paul teaches in the book of Hebrews, addressed to his fellow Jewish Christians. In reasoning on this point, Paul appeals to the subject of Melchizedek as evidence for the superiority of the Gospel of Christ over the rudimentary laws of Moses.

In Hebrews 5:6, Paul applies Psalms 110:4 to Jesus. According to Paul, when God said “Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek,” this was prophetic of Christ Jesus. This means that Jesus became a priest



Melchizedek brought forth Bread and Wine for the people of Abraham — symbolic of Christ providing his flesh and blood (his life) for our redemption.

like Melchizedek — not a kind like Aaron. Melchizedek was a higher kind of priest than Aaron, so the priesthood of Jesus is a higher kind than the priesthood of Aaron. Thus the ministry of Jesus supersedes the priesthood of Aaron and the Law it was part of. So we are no longer obligated to keep the offerings of the Law. Instead, we honor the offering Christ made for our redemption — not the life of animals, but the life of Jesus given for us.

In several ways, Paul shows that Melchizedek was of more honor than Aaron.

- Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, showing that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham. But Aaron, and his grandfather Levi, descended from Abraham, making him also lower than Melchizedek. “As I may so say, Levi ... payed tithes [to Melchizedek] in Abraham” (Hebrews 7:9), showing that he was inferior to Melchizedek.

- Melchizedek blessed Abraham, “and without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better” (Hebrews 7:7).

- Psalms says Jesus would be a priest “for ever,” whereas Aaron and his sons died and left the office to a successor. In this way also the priesthood of Jesus is superior to that of Aaron (Hebrews 7:8).

- Psalms 110:4 establishes Jesus’ priesthood “with an oath,” but no oath was used establishing Aaron and his sons. “Those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath ... The Lord swore ... Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 7:21).

In Hebrews 7:12, Paul tells us the point of all this. If Jesus supersedes the priesthood of Aaron, then the entire Law which was intertwined with the priesthood of Aaron must be set aside. “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law” (Hebrews 7:12).

For all of us, this is wonderful. If we still had to sacrifice animals, keep the holy days, and observe the rituals, we would still be keeping the rudimentary things that were merely shadows of the blessings to come in Christ. Instead, we have the actual Gospel of Christ which supersedes the Law. Why would anyone bind themselves to the regulations of Moses, now that all the blessings that Law represented are available in Christ?

A Hidden Comparison

Because we do not read Greek, which is the language of the New Testament, we must rely on translations of the Greek into English, or some other language. Usually this is not a problem. But on occasion, the translation obscures something valuable which we miss, unless we check closely.

There is something Paul says about this subject that we missed for many years, as a result of the translation in our common version. The text is Hebrews 7:11. Paul says that if “perfection were by the Levitical priesthood ... what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”

So far, the point is clear. Psalms 110:4 was written more than 500 years after the Levitical priesthood commenced in the Law of Moses, yet this scripture speaks prophetically of Jesus becoming a different kind of priest — a Melchizedek priest. So evidently the priests of the Law were not destined to provide the real blessings of life.

Now notice the part of verse 11 which we omitted, where we used ellipses in the quotation. It is Paul’s parenthetical expression — “for under it [the Levitical priesthood] the people received the law.”

Marshall’s Interlinear renders it this way. “For under it the people has-been-furnished-with-law.” The five words with hyphens come from a single word in the Greek, *nenomothetetai*. This word appears again in Hebrews 8:6. “But now hath he [Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry [than the service of the Law], by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which **was established** upon better promises.”

Marshall’s Interlinear gives this rendering: “which **has-been-enacted** on better promises.” The Greek word for “has-been-enacted” is *nenomothetetai*, the same word used in Hebrews 7:11 for “has-been-furnished-with-law.”

When we see that Paul used the same word in each text, then the contrast Paul intends is made clear. The Levitical priesthood began when the Law covenant was enacted and began to operate. Now we have a new kind of priest — Jesus, our Melchizedek priest. So a new ministry has begun. A new arrangement has superseded the old. A new service, with a new covenant, has replaced the old service and the old covenant.

Jesus does not minister an earthly tabernacle, where the blood of animals is applied in a physical location. Jesus is a minister of the “true tabernacle,” the spiritual realities “which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Hebrews 8:2).

Jesus’ ministry is greater and more wonderful. His ministry supersedes the ministry of the Law. “Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry ... he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises,” such as the oath of Psalms 110:4. Christ serves us not through the old covenant, but through a better covenant which supersedes the old.

The old covenant was established, or enacted, when Moses delivered it to Israel and initiated the Levitical priesthood. The better covenant was established, or enacted, when Jesus delivered it to us and initiated the Melchizedek priesthood.

Bread and Wine

Presently, Christ Jesus in glory serves as a priest for us, to reconcile us to God. What does he have to offer to reconcile us? He has the value of his sacrifice.

Jesus gave his life in death, but he did not forfeit the value of it. He retains the right to use that sacrificed life in whatever way he chooses, and of course he chooses to use it according to the plan of redemption designed by God, his heavenly father.

Paul makes this point in Hebrews 13:20. There he says that “the God of peace” — that would be Jehovah, our heavenly Father — “brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, **with** the blood of the everlasting covenant.”¹

In other words, when Jesus ascended into heaven, he had with him the value of his sacrifice, in order to use it for our atonement. Jesus sacrificed his life. But he did not forfeit it. He uses the value of it for our redemption.

That value of his life is the value of a perfect human life. That was the same value that was lost by Adam, as punishment for his sin. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). So Jesus has exactly the price necessary for our release from the penalty. He applies this to those who believe into him during this age. He will apply it to the remainder of the world in the coming Millennial Age.

On the last night of our Lord’s earthly life, he kept a last supper with his disciples. During that last supper, Jesus instituted a memorial of his death — or more precisely, a memorial of the sacrifice he provided for all of us.

There were two emblems used, bread and wine.² The bread represented the body of Jesus, and the cup represented the blood of Jesus. By these two symbols the wholeness of the sacrifice of Jesus’ human life was represented, his “flesh and blood.”

Jesus did not have to invent these symbols, for these are the items which Melchizedek offered so many years

ago to Abraham and his men, to sustain and nourish them. “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God” (Genesis 14:18).

Jesus is our Melchizedek, and we are the spiritual seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:29). Jesus sustains us with the value of his sacrifice, produced at such great cost.

We Will Join Jesus

Jesus is heir to the throne of David, rules his people as king, and serves his people as priest. Like Melchizedek of old, who was both king and priest, the two offices have been joined in Christ.

But there is another age to follow, and there is another dimension to the subject of Melchizedek. During the Millennium, we will reign with Christ and be priests with Christ, to serve the world. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

The offices filled by Christ now, will be filled by Christ and his “Bride” class then. The saints who are “faithful unto death,” who “overcome” in the race for the prize of the high calling, will serve with Jesus as priests like Melchizedek, to reconcile the world back to God.

The “bread and wine” they give the world will be the ransom value of the sacrifice of Jesus. With him, we will guide, teach, and instruct the world, from our place in heavenly glory. It will be pleasurable work and noble work. It will all be done for the good of the human race, and to the glory of God.

“I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear” (Isaiah 45:23).

(1) The word **with** is rendered “through” in the common version. It is from the Greek word *en* which can mean “in” or “by” or “through” or “with” depending on context. In this context, Paul clearly means “with.” This is apparent by comparing this text with Hebrews 9:25, where Paul speaks about the same subject. There he says that Jesus does not offer himself repetitively, “as the high priest entered into the holy place every year **with** blood of others.” The word **with** there is the Greek *en*, as in Hebrews 13:20. The priest went into the most holy with the blood of atonement. So Jesus ascended into heaven itself **with** the blood of atonement. Rotherham renders Hebrews 13:20 “**with** the blood of an age-abiding covenant.” The American Standard Version has “**with** the blood of an eternal covenant.”

(2) Actually the narrative says “fruit of the vine.” Whether it was lightly fermented, as in wine, or non-fermented, as in grape juice, does not affect the symbolism. It was the “blood of grapes” as we sometimes call it, representing the blood of Jesus shed for us. In today’s society, some Christian people choose to abstain from alcoholic beverage in order to avoid anything in the direction of intoxication, or looseness of conduct or speech. We personally follow this example and recommend it as good practice, though we cannot say there is a scriptural mandate respecting it.

Three Ransom Scriptures

“The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28).

The whole Plan of God revolves around the Ransom. This refers to the price that our Lord Jesus gave for us, and for the whole world of mankind, when he suffered and died on Calvary’s cross to pay the penalty for our sins.

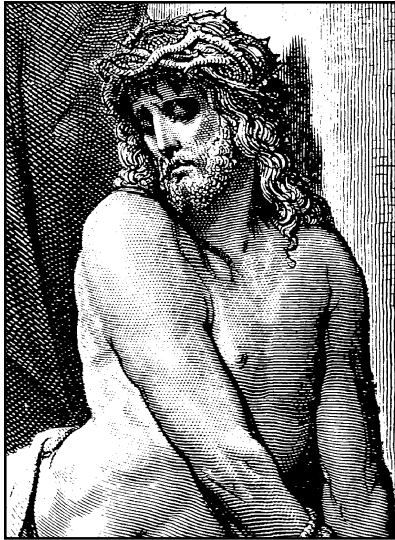
The penalty for Adam’s sin was death. “The wages of sin is death.” Death is at it seems to be — the cessation of life. When one dies, he is really dead. He does not go somewhere (except into the state of death). He does not see, feel, eat, talk, think — he is dead. “His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalms 146:4). There one remains, in the condition of death, non-existence, until one is brought back to life in the resurrection.

It is the hope of resurrection that Christ secures for the world by giving his perfect, sinless, uncondemned life. In other words, he accepted the death penalty so that we could be freed from it. When Jesus died, he died as a human being to redeem Adam, who was a human being. When Jesus was raised from the dead, he was no longer human. He became a spirit being of the highest order, and remains so forever after. His human life is no more. That he gave up in order to settle the account of justice against the human race.

First Text

The first of three texts in the New Testament that uses the word “ransom” is Matthew 20:28, cited above. The word ransom is from the Greek *lutron*, and this word is discussed on page three. But there we did not consider the word “many” in detail. That word is from the Greek *pollon*.

We should not suppose that by “many,” the text limits the value of the ransom to only part of the human race. No, the ransom applies to every person, of every age, of every country — men, women, and children alike. In this age it applies to the elect, Christians who suffer with Christ now and



“Christ ... once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death flesh, but made alive spirit” (1 Peter 3:18).

reign with him in the Millennium. Then, during Christ’s Millennial Kingdom, the ransom will apply to the remainder of Adam’s race also.

That the ransom applies to all of Adam’s race is clear from texts such as 1 John 2:2, which says Jesus is the satisfaction for the sins of the “whole world”; 1 Timothy 4:10, which says God is the “Saviour of all men”; and 1 Timothy 2:6, which says the ransom is “for all.”

The Old Testament also has scriptures which apply the blessings of Christ’s kingdom to the entire world, which can only be so if the Ransom applies to everyone. “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:18). “All people, nations, and languages” will serve Christ (Daniel 7:14). “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

Matthew 20:28 says “many” because the world is composed of many people, and all of this “many” will be released from the curse by the Ransom Jesus gave. Romans 5:15 uses the same word when it speaks of those who die as a consequence of Adam’s sin. “Through the offence of one [Adam’s original sin], many be dead.” Many here is *polloi*, a different form of the same word in Matthew 20:28. But everyone dies, not merely some. “Many” does not mean to limit the number, it only affirms that the number is large.

Second Text

The second New Testament text using the word Ransom is Mark 10:45. It is Mark’s account of the same expression of our master, and it uses the same language.

Third Text

The third text is 1 Timothy 2:5, 6, “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

Here the word Ransom, in the Greek, is a little different. Both Matthew and Mark say *lutron anti pollon* — ransom for many. But in Timothy, we have *antilutron huper panton* — ransom for all. We commented already on the “many” and the “all” — two ways of describing the entire world. But what of the other differences?

In Timothy, the word *antilutron* expresses the clearest thought about the ransom itself. The prefix *anti* literally means “facing.” Here is a comment from Vine’s Expository Dictionary, under “Additional Notes,” speaking of *anti* and *huper*.

“The basic idea of *anti* is ‘facing.’ This may be a matter of opposition, unfriendliness or antagonism, or of agreement.” He then gives several examples of *anti* used as a prefix in compound words.

Then he speaks about *anti* when used as a separate word. “There is no instance of the uncompounded preposition signifying ‘against’ ... In the majority of the occurrences in the New Testament, the idea is that of ‘in the

place of,' 'instead of,' or of exchange" (page 256). He cites the following examples.

- "an eye *anti* an eye" (Matthew 5:38)
- "evil *anti* evil" (Romans 12:17)
- "reviling *anti* reviling" (1 Peter 3:9)
- "hair *anti* covering" (1 Corinthians 11:15)

In each case, one item stands for another. So in Matthew and Mark, the ransom Jesus gives corresponds to, applies to, the many who need redemption. In Timothy, it is not an independent word. It is a prefix to *lutron*, which describes that as a "corresponding" price of release. The *hyper* which follows means "on behalf of." It may be rendered, "a corresponding price of release on behalf of all."

Antiochus Epiphanes

(Series on Daniel). "And in his place 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).

In the previous installment of this series, we saw that Daniel 11:20 precisely describes the reign of Seleucus Philopator, and that verse 21 describes his successor, the infamous Antiochus Epiphanes. As the text suggests, he was not in the line of succession to the throne, for he was a brother, rather than a son, of his predecessor Seleucus Philopator. Antiochus obtained the kingdom by flatteries and intrigue rather than by force of battle. All of this we saw last time.

Verses 22 through 40 continue a lengthy treatment of Antiochus Epiphanes, the longest assigned to any king in this lengthy prophecy of three chapters. There is a reason for the emphasis on this ruler. He was the greatest persecutor of the Jewish people, of all the centuries from Alexander to Christ.

This prophecy takes us through six generations of rulers following Alexander and closes its detailed analysis with this ruler. This infamous persecutor himself becomes an example, picture, foreshadow, of two persecuting forces to follow. The first would be pagan Rome, who broke the nation of Israel, burned their temple, scattered their people, and turned their persecuting zeal upon the newly developing Christian Church. The second would be Papal Rome, an even greater persecutor which came centuries later. Both Daniel and Revelation predict the tyrannical rule of that system for a period of 1260 years (Daniel 7:25, 12:7, Revelation 11:2,3, 12:6,14, 13:5).

These later persecutors, Pagan Rome and Papal Rome, are second and third fulfillments of the prophecy from verse 31 onward. We will see the evidence for this in following installments, from the very words of our Lord Jesus and of the Apostle Paul. Here we trace the history of Antiochus Epiphanes through verse 30.

A Resume

Antiochus Epiphanes entered his reign at about the age of 40, ruling for 11 years, from 175 to 164 BC. His original name was Mithridates, but on taking the throne he assumed the name Epiphanes, which means illustrious. Because of his undignified ways, some refer to him with the mocking name Epimanes, the mad one.

Twice this king invaded Egypt. The first invasion was in the year 169 BC, and this invasion is referred to in verse 25. The king of Egypt at the time was his nephew, Ptolemy Philometor. (Remember that Epiphanes was the son of Antiochus Magnus, who gave his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to Ptolemy Epiphanes, described in verse 17. Ptolemy Philometor was their son.)

Trouble began to brew in the year 170 BC. Epiphanes would have been about 45 years old, and his nephew, king of Egypt, about 16. Egypt at the time was governed by two regents who demanded the restoration of southern Canaan, which had fallen to Syria a generation earlier under Magnus, father of Epiphanes. This territory had traditionally been subject to Egypt. Further, when Magnus made a marriage alliance with Egypt by giving his daughter Cleopatra, he agreed to return those lands to the jurisdiction of Egypt as a dowry, but he failed to do so. Now Cleopatra had passed away, her husband Ptolemy Epiphanes had passed away, and the new regents for his young successor requested Antiochus Epiphanes to return those lands to Egypt.

Antiochus Epiphanes saw this as a cause for war. (One source said Egypt actually declared war.) As a preemptive move, Epiphanes invaded southward in 169 BC and took Pelusium at the border of Egypt. He then marched to Memphis (near modern Cairo), then north-west to siege Alexandria, where peace was negotiated.

At one time during the experience, Antiochus Epiphanes was crowned head of Egypt. But to avoid the concerns of Rome, he withdrew from this claim in deference to his nephew Philometor. Philometor shared power with his sister, Cleopatra II (she was also his wife), and also with his brother Ptolemy Physcon ("pot-belly"), preferred by the Egyptians of Alexandria. Thus the Egyptians avoided civil war, which Philometor's uncle Antiochus Epiphanes had hoped would weaken these rulers and augment his own power in the region.

This first invasion of Egypt by Antiochus Epiphanes is described in verses 25-28. Verse 28 says that after his retreat from Egypt, "his heart shall be against the holy covenant." This describes the first offensive of Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jews at Jerusalem.

His second invasion of Egypt is mentioned in verse 29. Again he was successful and again he pressed his campaign to Alexandria. But now Rome directly intervened and this made all the difference. "It shall not be in the latter time as it was in the former" (American Standard Version). Verse 30 explains the difference. Ships from Chittim would come with Roman ambassadors

presenting Epiphanes an ultimatum. He was forced to abandon his conquest. Rome counted on grain from Egypt to supply their population and did not wish any disruption in their supplies (compare Acts 27:6, 38). Also, Rome was expanding its control over the Mediterranean. They had recently conquered Macedonia at the Battle of Pydna, June 168 BC, and were not pleased to see the Seleucid kingdom expand into Egypt.

Again, Antiochus Epiphanes exacted his anger upon the Jews. After he returned home, he sent an armed force southward into Judea. “Therefore he shall be grieved, and return [home], and [then] have indignation against the holy covenant ... and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.” Verse 31 says this was the occasion of desecrating the Jewish worship in horrific ways. (This verse will have deeper meanings later to Pagan Rome, and again to Papal Rome. Here we note its immediate application in the days of Antiochus.)

No Prior Successful Invasions of Egypt

Now pause a moment to observe the engaging precision of this prophecy. It specifies two invasions of Egypt by one king of Syria. This is unique. There were six wars between Syria and Egypt, and these two campaigns of Epiphanes into Egypt constitute the sixth of those wars. The others were as follows.

The **first** was a conflict between Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus Soter, not mentioned in the prophecy. The **second** was between the same Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus Theus, resolved by the marriage alliance described in Daniel 11:6. The **third** was between Ptolemy Eugertes and the newly ascended Callinicus, described in Daniel 11:7. Verse nine shows that it would eventually involve an abortive campaign by Callinicus into Egypt. “And he [Callinicus] shall come into the realm of the king of the south [Eugertes], but he shall return into his own land” (American Standard Version). This was the first distinct invasion into Egypt proper by Syria, and it was evidently unsuccessful.

The **fourth** saw Antiochus Magnus move southward during the reign of Ptolemy Philopator. At first he was unsuccessful, but later he pushed on to Raphia in Gaza,

where he was stopped in the landmark Battle of Raphia. The **fifth** would see Antiochus Magnus revive his efforts, this time against Ptolemy Epiphanes. In this case Magnus threatened the conquest of Egypt, but decided upon a marriage alliance instead, supposing (incorrectly) that he could influence Egypt through his daughter. That is the famous marriage alliance of Daniel 11:17.

Notice — in all these wars, there was no successful invasion of Egypt by Syria. But now it is different. Now, twice in one reign, that of Antiochus Epiphanes, there is explicit mention of invasions by Syria into Egypt. Both of them were successful, save for concern about Rome’s attitude toward them. These invasions are unique in the history of these powers, and clearly mark the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes as the subject of the prophecy.

No Third Invasion

There is no historical record of a third invasion of Egypt by Antiochus Epiphanes. Some suppose that verse 40 speaks of a third invasion. The ancient commentator Porphyry, who imagined the prophecies were histories written after the fact, claims verse 40 refers to a third invasion. But as far as we can determine, there is no historical evidence for such a third campaign. Also, it would be contrary to Epiphanes’ fear of Rome, which caused him to vacate Egypt after his second campaign on their insistence.

That understanding of verse 40 misapprehends the intent of that crucial verse. It is a misapprehension still reflected in some modern renderings of the text, such as the New International Version, and leads interpreters into difficulties which some acknowledge are without a solution. The challenge is to properly identify to whom the pronouns in verse 40 refer. We will discuss this as we move forward in future installments.¹

Verse by Verse Details

With this overview, now we consider verses 22 through 30 verse by verse with comments. Bible Students who have studied these verses before, know that verse 31 is a key text pointing to the Papal abomination of the mass. As we comment on these verses from the standpoint of Antiochus Epiphanes, keep in mind that verse 31 applies on three levels. We will comment on how it applies to Pagan Rome, and again to Papal Rome, in future installments. Antiochus Epiphanes, the infamous persecutor of the Jewish people and desecrator of their temple, was himself a picture, forerunner, prototype, of these later and mightier desecrators.

Verse 22. “With the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant.” Antiochus secured the kingdom by subtlety, but he needed support. He received this from Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus, brother of Eumenes. They were the object of the “flatteries” (verse 21), as well as the Syrians and the Romans.

Six Syrian Wars

274-271 BC	Philadelphus / Antiochus Soter
260-253 BC	Philadelphus / Antiochus Theus
246-241 BC	Eugertes / Seleucus Callinicus
219-217 BC	Philopator / Antiochus Magnus
202-195 BC	Epiphanes / Antiochus Magnus
170-168 BC	Philometor / Antiochus Epiphanes

Here is a comment from Thomas Newton, in his *Disertations on the Prophecies* (published about 1758). “He flattered Eumenes king of Pergamus and Attalus his brother, and by fair promises engaged their assistance, and they the more readily assisted him, as they were at that juncture jealous of the Romans, and were willing therefore to secure a friend in the king of Syria. He flattered too the Syrians, and ... obtained their concurrence. He flattered also the Romans, and sent ambassadors to court their favour, to pay them the arrears of tribute, to present them besides with golden vessels of five hundred pounds weight” (page 282).

The American Standard Version renders verse 22 a little differently than the King James version. Rather than say the arms of a flood were on behalf of Antiochus, it says “the overwhelming forces shall be overwhelmed from before him.” The Septuagint says, “And the arms of the overflower shall be overflown from before him.” This probably matches the circumstances better. These versions do not require that Antiochus had overwhelming support, merely that his supporters overcame the arms against his cause.

Again Thomas Newton’s comment. “ ‘The arms which were overflown from before him,’ were those of his competitors for the crown, Heliodorus the murderer of Seleucus and his partizans [sic], as well as those of the king of Egypt, who had formed some designs upon Syria, were vanquished by the forces of Eumenes and Attalus, and were dissipated by the arrival of Antiochus, whose presence disconcerted all their measures” (page 283).

The “prince of the covenant” refers to Onias, high priest in Jerusalem, famous for his piety and just rule. He was deposed from his office not long after Antiochus took the throne. As described in 2 Maccabees 4, Jason, brother of Onias, bribed Antiochus in order to replace Onias as high priest. Jason was later replaced by another brother, Menelaus, who offered a larger bribe. Subsequently Onias denounced a theft of temple riches, drawing the wrath of Menelaus. While Epiphanes was away quelling a revolt, Menelaus induced the regent Andronicus to have Onias killed, which he did through treachery so unjust that it roused the indignation of both Jews and Gentiles who heard of it. Andronicus subsequently paid his life for this offense. (The conspiracy against Onias may be a foreshadow of the conspiracy against the purest man who ever lived, our Lord Jesus.)

Isaac Newton had this comment. “Antiochus being thus made King by the friendship of the King of Pergamus, reigned powerfully over Syria and the neighbouring nations, but carried himself much below his dignity ... frequenting the meetings of dissolute persons to feast and revel ... in public festivals jesting and dancing with servants and light people ... This conduct made some take him for a madman [so fulfilling verse 21] ... In the first year of his reign he deposed Onias the high priest, and sold the high-priesthood to Jason the younger

brother of Onias” (*The Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse*, 178-179, Printland Publishers, Hyderabad, 1998).

Verse 23. “And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: [and] he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people” (the second “and” is from the NIV, NASB, Rotherham, and other versions).

Verse 24. “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.”

Isaac Newton applied the “league” of verse 23 to an agreement between Syria and Egypt. In the first year of Antiochus Epiphanes, Ptolemy Philometor of Egypt was entering more formally upon his kingly office. He had come to the throne five years before as a small child of perhaps five or six, and his mother governed the land as joint ruler. This continued for four years until she died in 176 BC. When she passed away, because Philometor was still young, Egypt became controlled by two regents, Eulaeus and Lenaeus. After awhile, perhaps concerned that Rome might intervene, they considered it timely for a more formal recognition of Philometor. That is the backdrop for these comments by Isaac Newton.

“Then the King [Antiochus] sending one Apollonius into Egypt to the coronation of Ptolemy Philometor [2 Maccabees 4:21] ... knowing Philometor not to be well affected to his affairs in Phoenicia, provided for his own safety in those parts, and for that end came to Joppa and Jerusalem, where he was honourably received. From thence he went in like manner with his little army to the cities of Phoenicia, to establish himself against Egypt, by courting the people, and distributing extraordinary favours amongst them. All which is thus represented by Daniel 11:[23, 24] ... ‘And after the league made with him (the king of Egypt, by sending Apollonius to his coronation) he shall work deceitfully against the King of Egypt, for he shall come up and shall become strong (in Phoenicia) with a small people. And he shall enter into the quiet and plentiful cities of the province (of Phoenicia), and (to ingratiate himself with the Jews of Phoenicia and Egypt, and with their friends), he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers’ fathers, he shall scatter among them the prey and the spoil, and the riches (exactd from other places) and shall forecast his devices against the strongholds (of Egypt) even for a time. These things were done in the first year of his reign ... and thenceforward he forecast his devices against the strongholds of Egypt, until the sixth year [when he invaded Egypt in 169 BC]” (Isaac Newton, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse*, pages 179-180).

— *To be continued*

(1) The key is that the king of the south and king of the north, in verse 40, are distinct from the persecutor which they bring low.