

Faithbuilders Fellowship

Proclaiming Christ's Parousia
and the coming Millennial Kingdom
January, February 2009

The Seed of the Woman

"I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20).

This statement in Genesis 3:15 came from God immediately following the sin of Adam and Eve. Probably they remembered it long and often, as a hope that someday God would reverse the curse of sin and death that came through disobedience, induced by Satan.

But this hope was expressed cryptically. Now we know that the "seed of the woman" was Jesus, born of a woman, 3956 years later. And from the text in Romans 16:20, cited above, we understand that the Church class which is being called and developed during the present Gospel Age to reign with him from heaven, are counted as part of that seed. If we are Christ's, then we are counted together with him. The "seed of the woman" which will crush Satan includes the "Bride" class of consecrated, overcoming Christians.

The time for crushing Satan follows the "Little Season" of testing for the world, which follows the Millennial Age. Then "the devil that deceived them [is] cast into the lake of fire," which represents unending death (Revelation 20:3, 14).

Crush and Strike

The word "bruise" in Genesis 3:15 is from the Hebrew word *shuwph*, Strong's word number 7779. Strong defines the word as "properly to gape, i.e. snap at; figuratively, to overwhelm." It appears twice in Genesis 3:15. The NIV version in the first instance says "crush," and in the second instance "strike." The apparent sense is that the serpent (representing Satan) would be destroyed, but he would meanwhile inflict suffering upon Christ and his Church.

When Paul cites this text in Romans 16:20, the Greek word rendered "bruise" is Strong's word number 4937, *suntribo*, "to crush completely, to shatter." This refers to the time when Satan will be destroyed.

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The strike of the serpent at the heel is a metaphor which follows what a snake might do to someone walking by. A wound to the heel can be very painful. This represents the painful afflictions Satan would bring upon Christ and his followers during the Gospel Age. Jesus himself suffered painful crucifixion. Roman crucifixion at least in some cases involved a spike through the heels, so there might have been a literal application to our Lord Jesus.

But the affliction of Satan against Jesus was more than only his closing ordeal. The affliction was for the entire three and a half years of Jesus' ministry. Even at the first, when Jesus was in the wilderness after his baptism, Satan tempted Jesus and encouraged him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple.

After the triumph of Jesus, Satan brought persecutions against the Church whenever he could — by Jews against Christians, by Roman Emperors who killed Christians, and by Roman Pontiffs who organized campaigns to hunt down "heretics" who did not obey them. Millions of Christians died as a consequence, but Satan could not harm the spiritual interests of these saints. Now, because we are in the Harvest or ending period of the Gospel Age, God's faithful saints have been raised to glory with Christ, and when others pass into death they are raised to join them "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:52). This class ultimately will destroy Satan and those of his followers which will not reform. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20).

Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham

Adam and Eve could not know that God would send his son Jesus to redeem the world, or that God would then take 2000 years to develop an elect “Bride” class to join with Jesus as part of the “seed” that would rescue the world. But apparently they grasped that some child of the woman, or some descendant of her child, would bring deliverance by some means.

We note that God did not say the seed of Adam, but the seed of the woman. This may be a veiled reference to the fact that the redeemer would not receive his life from Adam, even though he would be born of a woman. We now know that it was vital that our redeemer not be of condemned Adamic stock. “None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him” (Psalms 49:7). Our redeemer must be unstained with sin or its curse, in order to freely take the penalty of our sin upon him. “The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom” (Matthew 20:28).

But the deliverer would be born of a woman. The specifics were not clear to our first parents. But they did grasp that the promise would be fulfilled in some way through one of their children. Of whose line would this come?

When Cain killed Abel, it seemed apparent that Cain was disqualified. Abel being dead, apparently without child, would not be the one. (Though Abel was a type, or picture, of our deliverer Jesus, as Paul indicates in Hebrews 11:4, 12:24).

Eve then had another son, Seth, which means “appointed.” She said, “God ... hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew” (Genesis 4:25). Probably she recognized that the deliverer would come through the line of Seth.

Eve was correct, for from Seth, eight generations later, came Noah, the only patriarch brought through the flood. Necessarily, the promise would go through the line of Noah. From Noah’s son Shem came Abraham, nine generations later, and God promised Abraham that the deliverer would come through him. Abraham had to leave his homeland and his father’s house in order to qualify, and this he did. He came into the land of promise, and there God confirmed His agreement: “Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem [Shechem] ... and Jehovah appeared unto Abram” and confirmed that his seed would receive the promise (Genesis 12:6, 7).

More than half a century passed, and God called on Abraham to offer his son — a most difficult test — but Abraham did. At the last moment an angel restrained the hand of Abraham. The sacrifice of Isaac was a picture, representing that God would give his son for the redemption of the world. Then no angel would intervene and Jesus would indeed die for our sins. By that death the blessing of “all the families of the earth” (Genesis 28:14) would be assured.

That salvation would come in two ages. First, during the present Gospel Age, the spiritual classes are redeemed, namely the Church and the Great Company. These will receive everlasting life in heaven. Second, during the coming Millennial Age, the remainder of the world will be redeemed and granted everlasting life on earth. These two conditions — spiritual and earthly — are represented in the promise God made to Abraham when Isaac was offered. “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven [spiritual], and as the sand which is upon the sea shore [earthly] ... And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:16, 17).

Just as the “seed of the woman” who will deliver the world from the curse is specifically Christ Jesus, but includes those who will reign with him, so it is with the “seed of Abraham.” That seed is specifically Christ Jesus. “Now to Abraham ... He saith ... to thy seed, which is Christ” (Galatians 3:16). But it also includes the Church. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29). “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Galatians 4:28).

Thus not only is Jesus the heir of all the riches God has for him (as Isaac was of Abraham), but the Church, called to share the throne of Christ, are co-heirs with him of those riches. We are “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:17). It is hard to grasp the full value of this remarkable offer. If we commit to follow our Lord Jesus during this lifetime, develop and exhibit Christian character, focus on the will of God for us, responsibly fulfill our duties to family and dependents, study and serve the Truth and our Christian brethren, the rewards are remarkable. More than we can fully appreciate.

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No wonder Paul hoped that we would be enlightened, to “know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:18). “In the ages to come he [will] shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7).

The first privilege of the saints will be to restore the entire world to life and fellowship with God. That will be their work from heaven during the Millennium. Thereafter, for the ages of eternity, God will have other abundant opportunities for their noble, pleasurable, productive employment in the courts of glory, though the specifics are not disclosed as yet.

Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David

The line through which the redeemer would come passed from Abraham to Isaac. “In Isaac shall thy seed be called” (Genesis 21:12). Thereafter it went to Jacob, who purchased the birthright from his elder brother Esau. Of the 12 sons of Jacob, the privilege passed to his fourth son, Judah, because his elder brothers Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, were disqualified by their conduct (Genesis 49:4, 5). “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise ... The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [Jesus] come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:8, 10). The word Shiloh means tranquil, peaceful, something like the name Solomon, son of David. Solomon’s reign of peace was a figure of Jesus, the “prince of peace,” whose reign will become universal (1 Chronicles 22:9, Isaiah 9:6).

King David was from the tribe of Judah, and Messiah who would be the everlasting king of Israel would come from David (2 Samuel 7:14, Hebrews 1:5, Psalms 89:4, 29, 36, 37, Isaiah 55:3). From the genealogy of Jesus listed by Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke (chapter 3), we learn that Joseph, the legal guardian of Jesus, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, both descended from David.¹ So whether in a legal sense (Joseph), or an actual sense (Mary), Jesus came through the proper line to fulfill all of the promises God made to his various ancestors.

Every link of descent, from Eve to Jesus, is itemized in the scriptures. The leading persons in that genealogy are intertwined with some of the most important history of the Old Testament.

The Permission of Evil

God did not cause Satan to deceive our first parents. However, God did permit it. God could have prevented Satan from deceiving Eve at all. God could have prevented mankind from learning, by this means, the natural consequences of sin and disobedience. But God wisely saw that this was the best means for people to learn what they must learn — to trust God’s moral laws as always best for their highest good. Only by this can man achieve, and fully benefit from, everlasting life.



Adam and Eve, expelled from the Garden.

A parent may tell a young child not to touch a hot oven, but information alone is not always sufficient. The child may hear that it is bad, but without knowing first hand, the lesson is not deeply impressed. Once the child touches the hot oven, he will never forget the lesson. So with mankind. The lesson of 6000 years of sin and death has been a difficult one, but a necessary one. In all the ages of eternity following the Millennium, the world will have faith, trust, and obedience to God written indelibly in their hearts. They will know, from experience, both the consequences of sin (in this life), and the blessings of righteousness (in the next life). They will know, first-hand, the wisdom of following God’s counsel, which is always best for His creatures.

Meanwhile, this brief period of sin and difficulty yields another benefit. It allows God to develop the Church class through trial and difficulty, as it was with our Lord Jesus. They develop and manifest their faith through trial now, so that God may grant them a superior privilege in the heavenly resurrection.

In addition, the present experience of the human race is a lesson by observation for the angelic hosts, who witness the unfolding plan of God (1 Peter 1:12).

Also, this method shows to everyone the true character of God — just, loving, wise, capable — ever planning for the highest good. When God’s Plan is appreciated by the entire world, after sin and death have passed, only the pleasant fruits of righteousness will remain from the bitter experience. Then everyone will see the wisdom of God for following the plan He does.

(1) Both Joseph and Mary descended also from Zerubbabel (Matthew 1:12, Luke 3:27). He was of the kingly line, a grandson of Jehoiachin, the second to last king of Judah. Zerubbabel was appointed by Cyrus as governor of the Jews who returned to Israel after their Babylonian captivity. The temple at Jerusalem was re-founded the year after their return, but was opposed by the enemies of Israel, and the work languished for 19 years, before the work was resumed in the second year of Darius Hystaspes of Persia (Ezra 4:24). Then work on the temple resumed at the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah (Ezra 5:1). The books of Haggai and Zechariah begin with exhortations to the Israelites to put their zeal and energy to the temple construction again, and they did. The temple was completed about four years later at the close of the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 6:15).

Zechariah 4:9 says, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house [in the second year of Cyrus]; his hands shall also finish it [in the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes]." That temple represents the Church, the "temple of the living God" (2 Corinthians 6:16). Its builder, Zerubbabel, is a picture of our Lord Jesus who builds the spiritual temple. Thus it is fitting that Zerubbabel is listed in the genealogy of Joseph (as given in Matthew) and Mary (as given in Luke).

Walk Honestly

"Cast off the works of darkness ... walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting, drunkenness ... not in strife and envying" (Romans 13:12, 13).

Honesty is a foundation for every other development of Christian character. It is also one of the first things others evaluate about us, who claim to follow Jesus. Christians should have "a good report of them which are without" (1 Timothy 3:7). If we are careless about our words, or misrepresent things when it is to our advantage in a temporal way, people will observe this. They know this is not compatible with Christian conduct.

Most Christian people are aware enough to avoid coarser forms of dishonesty — theft, lying, bearing false witness against another. Sometimes even these might creep in among Christians, but if they do, they are so clearly against right principles, that we will know we have erred. Our conscience will tell us. Then the question becomes, do we wish to make amends for this error? For example, returning illicit gain, correcting a false testimony, and apologizing for what we have done.

Our conscience might press us, but perhaps we do not have the moral courage to take this next step, to rectify the misdeed. Perhaps we will say privately to ourselves, "I will be more careful next time." That part is good, the press of conscience will improve us, our conduct will improve, and we will grow. Whereas, if we do not resolve to avoid that fault in the future, then the sin will grow less odious to us and our resistance for the future will be reduced. Our defense will be broken down. Our conscience will be dulled. Our conduct will suffer accordingly.

But it is best of all if we do also correct the misdeed, if it is practical to do so. This helps us remain honest for the future, and it develops humility, for it is not easy to recognize a fault in a public way. Because it is not easy, people who see us correct a past sin will probably remember that noble effort inwardly, even if they do not expressly commend it outwardly. They will see that we value what is right even when it is painful, uncomfortable, or embarrassing to us.

Most matters involving honesty are fought in the mind, personally, and only observed secondarily by others, if at all. Usually, honestly evaluating our faults, and overcoming them, is personal.

Honesty in our Faith

Honesty in our faith is also important. This begins with a sincere wish to know what is true about God, His character, and His plan. If we are indifferent to the Truth, then we will not pursue it, and not gain its privileges or its rewards. There is value in knowing what God is doing, so that we may be sympathetic to His program, and shape our activities in accord with it.

In *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, page 13, is this observation by Pastor Charles Russell. "While thorough and orderly study is necessary to the appreciation of any of the sciences, it is specially so in the science of Divine revelation ... No work is more noble and ennobling than the reverent study of the revealed purposes of God, 'which things the angels desire to look into' (1 Peter 1:12)."

Honesty is a factor in coming to a knowledge of the Truth. Honesty is also a factor in speaking the Truth when we have learned it. If Stephen had not honestly proclaimed his faith, he might have escaped persecution. But then he would not be hailed as the first Christian martyr after our Lord Jesus, which for the ages of eternity will be a testimony on his behalf. The Apostles could have escaped beatings (Acts 5:18, 40, 41), but they would have missed being counted worthy to be the 12 foundation stones of New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14).

Our experiences may not be as remarkable as the apostles. But we do have the privilege of representing the Truth of the coming Kingdom to others. If we are honest in our testimony, then in the ages to come when the Truth is abroad everywhere, will we not be glad we exposed ourselves for the Truth? Will we ever then regret the disciplines of the Christian life, or the sacrifice of time, talents, possessions, of the present? No, we will be glad for them. Whatever we experience now on behalf of honesty, integrity, faithfulness to principle, will be forever after a badge of honor in our memory, and in our characters, which are built through experience.

Recently we read the experiences of brethren in Romania, who during the days of the Communist rule in that country were sent to prison for years at a time, for the simple offense of believing, and not recanting, their faith in God's Plan of the Ages. Sometimes they were "convicted" because of their service, travels, and labor for other brethren of "like precious faith." But they walked "honestly, as in the day." They respected authority, but would not yield their conscience against what they knew was right.

Sometimes they feared, became sick, and fainted from the harshness and inhumane conditions. But when released, they were joyful for the privilege, and ever after have the testimony in themselves, that they were pleasing to God.

Let the courage of people like these men and women of faith move us, in matters great or small, to "walk honestly, as in the day."

Adam in the Garden

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed" (Genesis 2:8).

Sometimes we have been asked how long Adam was in the Garden before he and Eve were expelled for eating of the forbidden tree. The question is significant, because the scriptures begin the count of years with the age of Adam (Genesis 5:3), not directly with the expulsion of Adam from the Garden. So if 6000 years from Adam end with the year 2043 AD, are we sure that 6000 years of sin and death also end in that year? And if the Millennial Age begins after 6000 years of sin and death, would this begin some time after 2043 AD?

Our answer is that the time in Eden was relatively brief. Probably Adam and Eve were expelled in the same year that they were created. It is dubious that Satan would have long delayed his temptation of mother Eve.

The time of new life in the northern hemisphere is spring. If Adam was created at that season, and if perhaps three months or so passed while he became familiar with his home, explored the territory, perhaps traced the river of Eden to its four headwaters (Genesis 2:10-14), and named the various animals he encountered, this would be ample time to feel the lack of a suitable companion. "Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:20).

If Eve was then formed, as Genesis 2:21 describes, and another like period was spent in delightful company with each other, developing communication between them, Adam showing Eve all he knew, together exploring further, this would bring them to the season of autumn. By then Eve would be familiar with things and the initial wonder and excitement could be past. Might this have been about the time the tempter approached the woman, with a new proposition?

Autumn in the northern hemisphere is the season of decay. It may be that about this time is when disobedience entered, our parents were expelled from their Edenic home, and the process of decay began to set in among them as well. It is at least of interest to observe that when God established his Law Covenant with Israel, the Day of Atonement was established to coincide with the season of autumn.

In this case, the year of Adam's Creation, according to the calendar customary among us today, would be the same as the year of Adam's disobedience. If Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden in the autumn of the year, then 6000 years thereafter would conclude with the autumn of 2043 AD.

How precisely this will mesh with specific prophetic events in the establishment of the Millennium, we will see when the time comes.

The Year of Adam

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

These simple statements constitute the record God provides about the earliest beginning of the human race. Adam was not born, he was created. His body was formed from the elements of the earth, oxygen from the atmosphere was forced into his lungs, circulated through his body, animated all his faculties, and man became a living being — a "living soul." He began to think, see, smell, feel. He was alive.

Contrariwise, when a man dies he ceases to be a living being. "His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalms 146:4). Only because God provides the price of release from death for the human race, do we have hope of a resurrection from the dead. God accepts the human life of his son Jesus as atonement for the condemned life of Father Adam. Therefore all who share Adam's condemned life — that includes the entire world — have hope of life again.

If we consider the calendar year in which Adam was created as year one of Adam, then the calendar year 2009 AD would be year **5967** of Adam. The year 2043 AD would be year 6001 of Adam. If Adam was expelled from the Garden in the autumn of his "year one," then the autumn of "year 6001" would be the close of 6000 years under the curse of death. In other words, with the autumn of **2043 AD** we would enter, chronologically, the Seventh Millennium from the fall of man into sin. Christians for centuries have identified that period as the Thousand Year Reign of Christ of Revelation, chapter 20.

That time will not immediately bring peace, for it will be introduced through some final, troublous, birth pangs through which the new order is born. Those last troubles, closing this harvest or ending period of the Gospel Age, constitute the last of the "seven plagues" of Revelation chapter 16.

About this time Israel will experience an invasion into her land by Gog and his allies from the north (Ezekiel 38:1-9). The Bride class will be completed in glory. The Ancient Worthies will be raised to guide Israel. The nominally Christian world will be shaken to a fall (Revelation 16:19). The Great Company class will pass through its last cleansing trials (Revelation 7:9, 14, 15).

When the dust from these calamities subsides, "a still small voice" of peace will call to the nations of earth (1 Kings 19:12). It will be the voice of Christ's Kingdom, sweetly beckoning to a troubled world. It will call outward from Israel, where the Kingdom will begin (Micah 4:1-2). Perhaps a hesitation of uncertainty will delay their response, but soon the world will see that God has begun a wonderful work of blessing for "all the families of the earth" (Genesis 28:14).

Scriptural Doctrines

"The Father of Glory ... give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him ... that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1:17, 18).

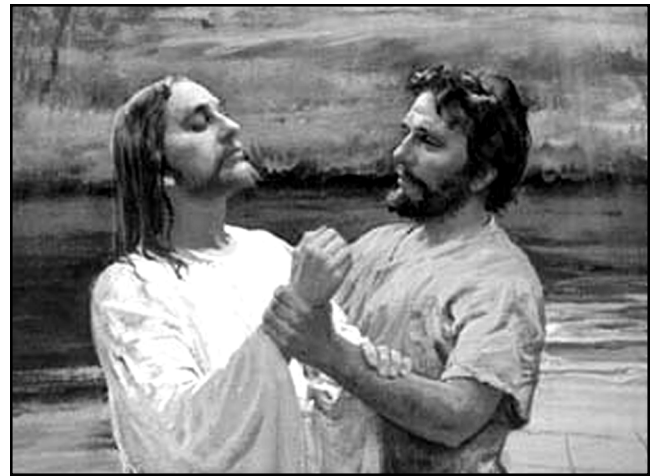
Many of our readers are relatively new to this journal. These have not had the previous issues of Faithbuilders Fellowship journals, or other Truth materials, which cover many subjects about God's Plan. So here, below, we summarize briefly the Truth on several subjects which come up now and then in correspondence.

If our readers have any questions about these or other points of Truth, feel free to email or write at any time for further clarification. Unlike some of the zealous Jews of Paul's day, we want to have zeal supported by an accurate knowledge of the specifics of God's plans. (Romans 10:2). We want to be established upon the first principles of doctrine, and then "go on to maturity" in understanding even the deeper things of God's word (Hebrews 6:1).

Two Ages of Redemption. A vital key to God's Plan of the Ages is that there are two separate and distinct ages of Redemption — the present Gospel Age, and the coming Millennial Age. The present age is for calling the elect "Bride class" who will rule the world with Christ from heaven (Revelation 3:21, 20:6, Daniel 7:27). The Millennial Age will be for bringing the remainder of the world back to God. All the dead of past ages will be raised to life again in order to learn the Truth and walk up the "Highway of Holiness" during that Millennial Kingdom of Christ (Isaiah 35:10).

The High Calling. The opportunity to be part of the "Bride class" (Revelation 19:7, 8) is called by Paul the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14, Luke 14:22, 23). This is the most remarkable invitation ever extended by God to human beings. It remains open to this day. We enter this by personal consecration of our lives to God, made in private prayer to Him, and then living according to Christian principles. Consecration requires something of us — character development, self denial, cross bearing, study of the scriptures, and service for the Truth (Romans 12:1-1, Matthew 16:24, Luke 14:27-35, Romans 6:1-3).

Water Baptism is a symbol of our consecration to God. When one decides to devote his life to God by personal consecration, and has done this in private prayer with God, then it is appropriate to witness this by baptism. The word baptism comes from the Greek *baptizo*, which means immersion. It is a symbol of our immersion into the will of God. Paul, in Romans 6:1-3, says that it also represents our agreement to be dead with Christ now, so that we may live with Christ in glory. (Romans 6:1-3, Revelation 20:6, Romans 8:17, 2 Timothy 2:12).



Water Baptism represents immersion into the will of God.

The Second Coming of Christ. Jesus has already returned as a powerful invisible spirit being. He is now supervising a transition of the ages that will result in the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom. Three signs of his second advent have been apparent for many years. They are: (1) an increased understanding of the Scriptures, so that we now understand God's Plan of the Ages (Luke 12:36, 37, Revelation 3:20). (2) The return of Israel to their ancient homeland (Acts 3:21). (3) A time of trouble greater than any before in history, so far two world wars, with Armageddon impending (Daniel 12:1).

The date of Jesus' return is given in the closing time prophecy of Daniel (Daniel 12:12). The 1335 years of that prophecy take us to 1874 AD. That was the beginning of the present "Harvest" period. It was followed 40 years later by the Time of Trouble.

There are Two Parts to the Second Coming. The first is called the *parousia*, a Greek word that means "presence." It refers to the presence of Christ ever since his return in 1874. The second part is the *apokalupsis*, a Greek word that means "revealing." Christ is now present as a "thief in the night" (Matthew 24:45, 39). At the close of the harvest he will be revealed to the world through the judgments of Armageddon (Luke 17:30, Matthew 24:30, 2 Thessalonians 1:9), and by the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom. Jesus is a glorious spirit being, invisible to the human eye. He will be made known through the Ancient Worthies, who will be the earthly representatives of the Kingdom of Christ.

The Harvest. The harvest is the closing period of the Gospel Age (Matthew 13:39). We have been in the end of the age ever since our Lord's return in 1874. Jesus is now present as the Lord of Harvest (Revelation 14:14). The "sickle" by which he gathers the wheat class is the Truth of God's Plan of the Ages, which attracts the Lord's people to the message and to a common fellowship. Thus our interest in spreading the Truth as widely as possible through the Christian world, for the benefit of as many of God's people as will appreciate it.

2043 AD. According to the record of the Hebrew Old Testament, 6000 years of human history will close about a generation future, 34 years away, with the year 2043 AD. That will introduce the Seventh Millennium, which Christians for centuries have anticipated would be the Thousand Year Reign of Christ (Revelation chapter 20). Psalms 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 tell us a day with God is a thousand years. By this measure, the six working days of the week represent 6000 years of labor under sin and death, and the sabbath day, the seventh, a day of rest, represents the Millennial Age when mankind can rest from sin and the curse (Ezekiel 46:1).

That Kingdom will be God's time for reclaiming the entire world back into fellowship with Him. It will be a large work. It will begin with the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies. Their first work will be to turn Israel to their Messiah, our Lord Jesus (Micah 5:5, Zechariah 12:10). After Israel comes into harmony with the Kingdom, then it will expand gradually outward to encompass the entire world (Zechariah 14:8, 9, 16, 17, Micah 4:1, 2).

Death. When a person dies, he or she is really dead. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalms 146:4). They do not "go somewhere," except into the state, or condition, of death. That is the meaning of the Hebrew word "sheol" and the Greek word "hades," which are sometimes mistranslated "hell."

When people die they do not think, see, speak, feel, or anything else (Ecclesiastes 9:10). "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything" (Ecclesiastes 9:5). They are simply dead, like Lazarus was for four days. However, they will all live again when they are raised to life in the Resurrection.

Ransom. The penalty for sin was death (Genesis 2:17, Romans 6:23). Adam incurred that penalty because he disobeyed, and passed on his dying life to all of us through procreation. In order to release all of us, the penalty justly imposed upon Adam had to be paid by some other perfect human being who was not already condemned.

That is why Jesus had his life transferred from heaven above, to be born as a human being, grow to manhood, and give his life a "ransom" for Father Adam (and the race which came from Adam). "The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). "There is ... one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5, 6).

Resurrection. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:28, 29). "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15). For consecrated Christians, that resurrection will be as spirit beings, in heaven (1 Corinthians 15:49, 50). For all others, that resurrection will be as human beings, on earth.

Because we are now in the Harvest, or ending period of the Gospel Age, the heavenly resurrection has already begun. If we are faithful unto death, we will be raised "in a moment" to be with Christ (1 Corinthians 15:52). However, the resurrection of the world waits for the Millennial Age. The first ones back will be the Ancient Worthies, raised to perfect human life as a reward for their faith. Later, after the world comes into harmony with Christ's Kingdom, the resurrection of the dead of past times will begin. They will be raised whole and grow to perfection over time, as they come into personal accord with the principles of the Kingdom.

Two Spiritual Classes. If consecrated Christians build their faith and character life properly, with "gold, silver, and precious stones" such as divine principles, truth, service, and obedience, they will become part of the Bride class that we are called to.

However, if we are slack, and build with "wood, hay, stubble," worldly values, then God will purge us. Our work may be burned, but we will be "saved, yet so as by fire" of trial (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). Bible Students refer to this as the Great Company class. It is described in Revelation 7:9, 14, 15, as a "great multitude" who are washed, cleansed, purged, and afterward receive heavenly life to serve God in his spiritual temple.

The Permission of Evil. God permits 6000 years of sin, death, and evil, because this is the best method for them to learn the natural results of disobedience. But this is only for a limited time. It seems long, because 6000 years is so much greater than a single lifespan. But it is only a small part of eternity, which all may enjoy who learn the lesson.

After these 6000 years close, then it will be time for the blessings of righteousness. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4). The world will respond wonderfully. "It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is Jehovah; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isaiah 25:9).

Privilege of Sisters in the Church. In many places where this journal goes, there is vibrant interest in the Truth by women. Studying the Truth, and contributing comments and questions in Truth studies, is open to women as well as men. All have the same privilege of the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In these respects "There is neither bond nor free ... male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). We warmly encourage all interested women to study the truth deeply, and take up the privilege of personal consecration of their lives to God, and thus become sisters in Christ — just as much as we warmly encourage the same for men to become brothers in Christ.

Leadership in the Church. According to the advice of the New Testament scriptures, and the examples mentioned in the New Testament, leadership in the Church, and open teaching in the full congregation, is allocated to consecrated brothers. However, this does not debar sisters from leading sisters meetings, or from contributing as study participants. Some of the best minds are among the sisters. Their study and comments are very helpful. Specially is this so when they wear “the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Peter 3:4). Not only Aquilla, but also his wife Priscilla, helped the accomplished orator Apollos to understand the Truth better (Acts 18:26).

Brothers and Sisters in Christ. We freely use the term “brother” or “sister” in our correspondence with other Christians, as a pleasant term of Christian fellowship. We do not necessarily know if the person we address is only a little interested in spiritual things, or thinking about consecration, or fully committed in devotion to God. Properly, it is the latter ones — consecrated, thus redeemed by Jesus — who are truly brothers and sisters in Christ.

A deeper treatment of the basic issues of the Plan of the Ages can be found in the book *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, volume one of the “Studies in the Scriptures” series by Pastor Charles Russell. Any reader who does not have a copy of this book, and wishes one, may have one. We will send a copy with the next issue of Faithbuilders Fellowship. Email your request to DavRice@aol.com, and provide your name and mailing address.

Daniel 11:40

“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; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over” (Daniel 11:40).

Our series on Daniel comes to the closing verses of the rich and dramatic prophecy of Daniel chapter eleven. Verse 40 describes the decline of Papacy, the great persecutor of saints described in verses 31 through 39. Papacy is the king which “shall do according to his will” (verse 36), the “Man of Lawlessness” of 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

This Christian apostasy grew in authority after the days of Constantine (325), mingled with politics in the days of Justinian (539), ruled the Christian world from Rome, and persecuted the saints. Their political authority endured for 1260 years (539 to 1799).

Papacy is depicted as a harlot in Revelation chapter 17, because rather than remaining a chaste virgin for their Lord Jesus as his spiritual Bride to be, they joined with the kings of earth in unholy rulership. Papacy made

the nations “drunk with the wine of her fornication” (verse 2), and was herself “drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (verse 6). She sat on seven hills, which identifies the location as Rome. She became a “great city” or government which “reigns over the kings of the earth” (verse 18).

Daniel 11:40 introduces the “time of the end” when that system would decline. It happens in two steps, and both are referred to in the same verse. The first is a “push” against Papacy from the south, the second a “whirlwind” from the north which overflows the countries which supported Papacy.

Pushed at from the South

The “push” from the south came from the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans ruled from Turkey, and had previously overrun Constantinople. From the years 1511 to 1518 they subdued the Muslim world, Egypt falling to them in 1517, the same year that Martin Luther posted his 95 theses against indulgences, opening the Reformation. The Ottomans thereafter pushed into Catholic Europe, and this distraction may be one of the factors which allowed the Reformation movement in Germany to develop without being rapidly crushed.

In 1521 an Ottoman army took Belgrade (of Serbia). Wikipedia (Ottoman Wars in Europe) gives 1526-1566 as a period of attack by Ottoman forces against the Hapsburg Empire. In 1538 they invaded Moldavia, and in 1541 they took Buda and Pest (which later merged to form Budapest). Successive threats followed to Vienna and elsewhere, until at last they were decisively repulsed at the siege of Vienna in 1683, being relieved by the famous assistance of John III Sobieski of Poland.

In 1684 a “Holy League” against the Ottomans was formed between Austria, Venice, Poland-Lithuania, Tuscany, Malta, and Papacy. In 1686 a Hapsburg army retook Buda from the Turks, whose fortunes receded thereafter. (www.history-net.com gives a good review of this history.) Thus closed the first threat to Papacy, the “push” from the south. But an overwhelming disaster would follow a century later.

Overwhelmed from the North

The next major impact against Papacy was the French Revolution (1789), and succeeding Napoleonic Wars. In 1796 Napoleon, as commander of French forces in Italy, defeated Papal forces, whereupon Pope Pius VI sued for peace, which was concluded on February 19, 1797. Later disruptions brought the French back to Italy under General Berthier, who entered Rome unopposed on February 10, 1798. He placed the Pope under sanctions which were refused, whereupon Berthier took him captive. On February 20 began a series of travels from place to place until the pope arrived in Valence, France. There he died after six weeks, on August 29, 1799, ending a pontificate of 24 years (the longest of any pope up to that time.)

Pius VII, his successor, would take office nearly half a year later (March 14, 1800). But the Pope would never again be the leader of nations. The 1260 years of Papal authority (from 539 to 1799, Daniel 7:25), had closed. In 1801, Pius VII suffered the seizure of ecclesiastical properties to compensate a number of German princes for their losses in war. The Papal States were taken by the French about 1808, and Pius VII became a prisoner for six years. He returned to Rome May 24, 1814, after allied forces freed him while pursuing Napoleonic forces. Papacy would regain some status at the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815), but never again be the ruling or persecuting force of former years (Wikipedia, Pius VII).

In the interim, Napoleon turned the armies of France against every major European power and dominated continental Europe through a series of military victories, pushing as far as Moscow in 1812. Thus did he “enter into the countries, and ... overflow and pass over” (Daniel 11:40).

South and North

Verse 40 attributes the “push” against Papacy to the “king of the south,” and the overwhelming whirlwind to the “king of the north.” The point of reference for the these designations is presumably the seat of authority for Papacy, namely, Rome. The Ottoman Empire came from Turkey, and spread its rule through Arabia and into Egypt, all lands which are east, but also **south**, of Rome. France, the nation which swept through Catholic lands and ended Papacy’s 1260 years of control, was west, but also **north**, of Rome. Therefore the designations described in the prophecy fit properly.

The enigma of verse 40 which has troubled commentators is understanding to whom the second pronoun “him” refers. Because so much of the earlier portion of chapter eleven recounts conflicts between the king of the north and the king of the south (Syria and Egypt in those earlier cases), it is often supposed that verse 40 also refers to a conflict between these two parties.¹

We suggest that the only harmonious solution to the prophecy is to recognize that the “kings” of verse 40 are not fighting each other, but are two powers which successively fight against the diabolical “king [which] shall do according to his will” mentioned in verse 36.

Thus — “At the time of the end shall the king of the south [the Ottoman Empire] push at him [Papacy]: and [subsequently] the king of the north shall come against him [Papacy] like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries [which Papacy had dominated], and shall overflow and pass over.”

In other words, the Ottomans would push at Papacy from the South, then France from the north would overwhelm Papacy and sweep through her lands with an overflowing force.

“He Shall Enter”

Verse 41 begins with the pronoun “he.” This refers to the king of the north who overwhelmed the countries of Papacy. The individual most identifiable here is Napoleon Bonaparte. Verse 41 does not claim to narrate the exploits of Napoleon which followed those of verse 40. It merely speaks of other things which Napoleon also does. Inasmuch as Napoleon’s campaigns in Europe continued to the close of his career, the narrative of verse 41 about his non-European campaigns necessarily preceded the others.

“He shall enter also into the glorious land [Israel], and many² shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.” Napoleon marched his forces up through Israel from the south, after his conquest of Egypt. But he did not go eastward to trouble himself with Edom, Moab, or Ammon. (Which, incidentally, are listed in the order Napoleon would pass them by, in a south to north direction.)

Verse 42, “He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.” As in verse 41, this text also does not give a time sequence to these activities. In fact the land of Egypt was invaded before Napoleon’s journey northward through Israel. Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798, passed through Israel in 1799, and was thwarted in his siege of Acre in the north of Israel on the coast. He then returned to Egypt, and then returned to France, where he became ruler of the country and later subdued much of Europe.

Verse 43, “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.” Napoleon did take Egypt with its treasures. Probably Libya and Ethiopia being “at his steps” means they were accessible to him, or that they recognized his authority. Perhaps these areas are mentioned because they were adjuncts to Egypt. At one time in history, Egypt’s Pharaohs were of Libyan descent.³ At another time in history, Egypt’s Pharaohs were of Nubian descent.⁴ (The word for Ethiopia, Kush, probably refers to Nubia in the southern reaches of upper Egypt.)

Verse 44, “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.” While in Egypt, Napoleon learned in 1799 that hostilities had resumed between France and other European countries. The Second Coalition against France included England, Russia, Austria, the Ottoman Empire, and various German and Italian states. Relative to France, these coalition countries were north (such as England) and east (such as Russia and Austria). “In August, Napoleon decided to return to Europe, hearing of the political and military crisis in France. Leaving his army behind with Kleber in command, he sailed through the British

blockade to return to Paris and take control of the government there in a coup” (French Revolutionary Wars, Wikipedia). Then followed the great Napoleonic Wars against those enemies.

Verse 45, “And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” This text does not say Napoleon’s campaign into Israel followed his furious campaigns against Europe. It merely identifies that he did establish a presence even in Israel — as though to evidence his military prowess even in this notable reach of the world — but none of this would enable him ultimately to prevail. He would come to his end, and none would help him.

So it happened. Though Moscow was taken in 1812, his retreat from the disastrous Russian cold decimated his forces and he never fully recovered. Paris was taken by the Sixth Coalition in March 1814, and Napoleon surrendered the following month. He was exiled to the island of Elba, but escaped from there on February 26, 1815, returned to France, induced the army to follow him, lost at the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815, and surrendered July 15, 1815. He was exiled to the island of Saint Helena far out in the Atlantic where he died six years later, deserted, alone, abandoned.

Probably the two seas of verse 45 are the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, and the glorious holy mountain refers to Jerusalem.⁵ Napoleon apparently did not camp at Jerusalem itself, so the meaning may be, as Rotherham has it, “between the seas, towards the beautiful holy mountain.”⁶

Antiochus Epiphanes

All of the above pertains to the deep, far reaching meaning of the prophecy, in which the great persecuting system is Papacy and the persecuted ones are devoted Christians during the Gospel Age. But as readers of this series know, the immediate application was to Antiochus Epiphanes, the great persecutor of the Jewish people in the second century BC. How do verses 40 through 45 apply on that level?

Those who pushed at Antiochus from the south were the Jews during the Maccabean revolt. But they never overwhelmed the Seleucid kingdom, the Syrian fragment of Alexander’s former empire ruled by Antiochus. Rome would do that. Rome was west, but also north, of Seleucia, the capital of the Seleucid Empire. Rome was the “king of the north” of verse 40.

In the greater application, verse 41 narrates the exploits of a notable individual, Napoleon, master of France. It is similar in this more immediate application. Verse 41 narrates the exploits of a notable individual, Julius Caesar, master of Rome. The parallels between the two men, regarding the activities of verses 41 to 45, are striking.

Julius Caesar came to Egypt on October 2, 48 BC, landing in Alexandria with 4000 legionnaires. He had

come pursuing his rival Pompey, who, however, had been killed already by the Egyptians. Though Caesar’s force was relatively small, it was adequate to control Alexandria for a time, and because he represented mighty Rome, the Egyptians recognized his authority — for awhile.

To him appealed the young queen Cleopatra, and her younger brother Theos Philopator, she perhaps 20 or 21, and he perhaps 14. Their father, then deceased, had intended that they share power. But disagreements arose and armed conflicts followed in a kind of civil war. Caesar found his forces outnumbered, but he escaped many dangers and at last prevailed. The year following, in 47 BC, Caesar left Egypt to attend to concerns in Syria. He travelled overland for a ways up through the land of Israel, before taking ship for the remainder of his journey. Thus, as Napoleon took Egypt in 1798, and the following year travelled northward up through the land of Israel, Julius Caesar did the same thing centuries earlier. By this means he also meets the descriptions in verses 41 to 45.

And there is more. There is something engaging about the timing of these two fulfillments. The two years in which Caesar fulfilled these texts were 48 to 47 BC. The two years in which Napoleon fulfilled these texts were 1798 to 1799 AD. The span of time between these two sets of dates is 1845 years — the same number of years as between the first and second advents of Christ.

As we will note in a later issue when we discuss Daniel 12:1, that text speaks of the time when “Michael shall stand up,” that is, present himself as God’s anointed ruler. Jesus did that in one sense when he was baptized of John at Jordan at his first advent. Jesus did that in a fuller sense when he returned vested with kingly authority at his second advent, in 1874.⁷

In other words, Julius Caesar fulfilled the closing verses of Daniel chapter 11 as many years before the first advent of Christ, as Napoleon Bonaparte fulfilled those verses before the second advent of Christ. Thus the parallels are not only of kind, but also of timing. This seems to fortify the conclusion that we are applying these prophecies correctly.

The death of Julius Caesar is famous. He was killed in the Roman Senate, taken by surprise, March 15, 44 BC. Despite his rise to the height of power, “yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” (Daniel 11:45).

Three Levels

In past issues, we discussed that from Daniel 11:31 forward, there are three legitimate levels of meaning. (1) Antiochus Epiphanes would pollute the sanctuary of the Jews in the first level, (2) Rome would destroy the temple in 70 AD in the second level, and (3) Papacy would pollute the spiritual temple, the Church, during the dark ages, in the third level. Foregoing, we have discussed two of these — the meaning as it applies to Antiochus (immediately above), and the meaning as it applies to

Papacy (earlier above). What about the remaining level, which applies the persecutor to Pagan Rome?

That this is a correct meaning for the prophecy seems clear from Jesus' comment in Matthew 24:15, which evidently refers to Daniel 11:31, and shows that the Roman invasion of Judea would be, at least on some level, a fulfillment of this text.

Yes, the persecutor of Daniel 11:31-39 also applies to Pagan Rome. Therefore, verses 40-45 should have some meaning to the decline of Pagan Rome, which was overthrown by Constantine, who raised Christianity out of a persecuted state into an elevated and respectable status. This overthrow of Pagan Rome is referred to in the second trumpet period of Revelation, in symbolic language, as a "great mountain burning with fire [of God's judgment]" (Revelation 8:8).

Julius Caesar and Napoleon

48 BC	Julius Caesar invades Egypt
47 BC	He camps "Between the two seas, towards the holy mountain"
29 AD	Michael "stands up" at first advent, 75 years later
1798	Napoleon invades Egypt
1799	He camps "Between the two seas, towards the holy mountain"
1874	Michael "stands up" at second advent, 75 years later

As the prophecy pertains to the overthrow of Pagan Rome, Constantine is evidently the "king of the north" who overwhelmed the Pagan emperor of Rome, Maxentius. This occurred in the year 312, at the famous battle at the Milvian Bridge, which spanned the Tiber River, north of Rome. Constantine had fled political dangers in Rome in the year 305, joined his father in Gaul, and passed with him into Britain. His father died of illness the following year, July 25, 306. "Before dying, he declared his support for raising Constantine to the rank of full Augustus," which was a coveted position of highest rank (Wikipedia, Constantine). The barbarian king Chrocus proclaimed Constantine as Augustus,⁸ loyal troops agreed, and "Gaul and Britain quickly accepted his rule" (Wikipedia, Constantine). Thus Constantine became king of these northern regions, and so became the "king of the north" of Daniel's prophecy.

Meanwhile, in Italy, Maxentius, jealous of Constantine's rise to authority, took the title of emperor on October 28, 306. Galerius did not recognize this, but he was

unable to unseat him. The father of Maxentius, namely Maximian, was induced to come out of retirement by his son's rebellion. He went to Gaul to confer with Constantine in late 307 and offered his daughter Fausta in marriage to Constantine, and an elevation to the rank of "Augustus" in exchange for his support for Maxentius. Constantine accepted. But as time passed, his power grew in the west, tensions brewed, and ultimately this "king of the north" overwhelmed Maxentius and his forces.

Who, then, was the southern power, the "king of the south," that had pushed at Rome earlier? That would be the Sassanid empire. In the early 200s, Ardashir the First founded this empire, after the defeat of the Parthian empire. Both of these were from the area once ruled by the old Persian empire. The leader of the Sassanids "raided Mesopotamia [which had been annexed to the Roman Empire in 198 AD], and Syria [annexed many years earlier] in 230 AD, and demanded the cession of all the former territories of the Achaemenid [Persian] Empire" (Wikipedia, Roman-Persian Wars, subhead Roman-Sassanid Wars).

Decades of conflict followed. "However, Galerius crushed the Persians in battle in 298 ... the resulting peace settlement gave the Romans control ... this was the most decisive Roman victory for many decades; all the territories that had been lost, all the debatable lands, and control of Armenia, lay in Romans hands" (same reference).

Subsequently Constantine, from the north, subdued Rome, and began to change it from Pagan to nominally Christian. Constantine still did not control the whole empire, however. He was master of the West, and Licinius was master of the East, for a few years. But tensions would come and go, until in 324 "Constantine moved to the attack, and overwhelmed his enemy in major battles by land and sea" (The Roman Emperors, Michael Grant, page 228). Constantine was now in full control.

The empire he thus acquired already controlled the land of Israel and Egypt. By this means Daniel 11:41-43 were fulfilled in his case.

Constantine's mother, Helena, was put in charge of a journey to the holy land to gather Christian relics and travelled for perhaps parts of two years. She established the traditional sites (not necessarily the correct sites) of various Bible events — Mount Sinai, the cave of the nativity, and the location of Jesus' sepulchre, are three well known examples. By this means the first part of verse 45 was fulfilled.

"Tidings out of the east and out of the north" (verse 44) may refer to earlier successive provocations from Germany, France, and Italy which moved Constantine to advance against the Allemanni (Germany), Maximian (France), and Maxentius (Italy).⁹ "Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many" (latter part of verse 44).¹⁰

As Constantine made decrees favorable to Christians, and unfavorable to Pagans, the balance of power in the ecclesiastical heavens shifted. The battle for religious mastery was not yet ended, but it was well under way. A few years later the Julian the Apostate would reign, but he would be the last of the pagan emperors.

The fall of paganism was a major development in the history of God's program, well deserving of this notice in the prophetic testimony. Bible Students have long observed that the struggle between paganism and Christianity is symbolized in Revelation chapter 12 as a "war in heaven." It would be won by the forces of Christianity, represented by "Michael and his angels" (Revelation 12:7). In this sense was Daniel 12:1 fulfilled, "Michael" would stand in commanding authority, and prevail.

(1) That view sees the king who does according to his will, of verse 36, to be the same as the king of the north referred to in verse 40. However, the expression "king of the north" is last used in verse 15 when Antiochus Magnus was the subject. Neither his successor Seleucus Philopator (verse 20), nor his successor Antiochus Epiphanes (introduced in verse 21) are expressly given this designation in the prophecy. Antiochus Epiphanes continues to be the subject through verse 31.

At that point, as discussed in previous articles in this series, there are three threads of fulfillment — Antiochus, Rome, and Papacy. Considering the thread which applies to Antiochus, we observed in a previous article that if one supposes Antiochus is the "king of the north" of verse 40, then we have a forbidding problem. For that would mean Antiochus successfully invaded Egypt a third time — for which there is no historical evidence. The early pagan commentator Porphyry is reported to have said there was a third such invasion, but many now suppose he said this because he thought that the prophecy required it, and he esteemed the passage not as true prophecy, but as history written after the fact.

Whereas, if verse 40 refers to two kings, or powers, which successively bring down the great persecuting force described through verse 39, the prophecy seems to disclose a credible meaning on all three levels.

(2) The word "countries" in the King James version is in italics, which means it is supplied by the translators and is not in the original.

(3) The powerful 22nd Dynasty was Libyan. Their leader Shoshenk the First is usually thought to be Shishak of 1 Kings 14:25, the one who looted Jerusalem five years after the death of Solomon.

(4) The powerful 25th Dynasty was Nubian. It lasted from about 747 BC to 656 BC. The Egyptians called the main Nubian kingdom, Kush.

(5) Jerusalem is called "thy holy mountain" (Daniel 9:16), and "the holy mountain" (Zechariah 8:3, 1 Maccabees 11:37).

(6) The NIV study Bible footnote suggests as an alternate, "between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain." In this case the sea would be the Mediterranean. The NASB says "between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain." The meaning of this is not transparent, unless in this case "seas," plural, stands for the great waters of the Mediterranean.

(7) For new readers not familiar with this date, 1874 is the year which Bible Students have recognized for more than a century as marked in prophecy for the second advent of Christ. The date is

computed as the closing year of the 1335 years of Daniel 12:12. It is computed by beginning these years at the same point as the earlier prophecy of 1260 years (3½ times of 360 years each, Daniel 7:25, 12:7), which runs from 539 AD to 1799 AD. Thus 1335 years from 539 AD close with the year 1874 AD. We will discuss this further when we come to the 12th chapter formally.

There the "harvest," or closing period of the present Gospel Age, commenced. Thereafter sprang up the Bible Student Movement, renewing to the Church the understanding of God's Plan of the Ages. About that time also began the early regathering of Israel to their land, which 70 years later would result in the establishment again of the State of Israel, preparatory to the Kingdom. This was followed later by World War I, initiating the Time of Trouble which Daniel 12:1 says would attend the return of Christ.

We are still in this "harvest" of the Gospel Age, and anticipate it will continue for another 34 years until the Seventh Millennium commences with the year 2043 AD.

(8) The Emperor Galerius (there were various joint emperors in those days) was incensed by the news, but to avoid open conflict, he agreed to acknowledge Constantine the title "Caesar," a rank lower than "Augustus." Constantine accepted this, glad for the legitimacy this formal recognition accorded his rule.

(9) Here is a resume of these conflicts. "At the Conference [of emperors] of Carnuntum in 308 ... Constantine was required to relinquish the rank of Augustus and become Caesar again ... but he refused. Shortly afterwards, he successfully defended the Rhine frontier against the incursions of German tribes ... but returned to Gaul [France] when he heard that Maximian had turned against him and captured Massilia [Marseilles, southeast coast of France] ... When Galerius died in 311, Constantine became involved in open warfare with Maxentius [and invaded Italy]" (*The Roman Emperors*, Michael Grant, page 228).

The history of those times can be confusing, because according to the plan of government instituted by Diocletian, there were four joint emperors — two of the rank "Augustus," one senior and one junior, and two of the lesser rank "Caesar." Diocletian's scheme had benefits, but conflicts between the emperors caused the arrangement to collapse.

(10) It remains to determine how the close of verse 45 applies. "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Everyone dies, of course. But this text seems to call for something notable about the circumstances of one's passing. Napoleon died as an exile in isolation, and Julius Caesar was assassinated without defenders. In these cases the application is easy to make. But with Constantine it is less apparent. He died of an unexpected illness while in otherwise prosperous condition after a full life of 65 years (February 27, 272 to May 22, 337), with his empire intact.

Sometimes when a passage has more than one level of meaning, the immediate fulfillment is more precise. For example, the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 about a virgin giving birth was fulfilled in its most important sense in Mary bearing Jesus, yet it applied immediately to a young unmarried lady in Isaiah's day who then bore a child by apparently natural means. The details in the surrounding verses fit readily in the immediate setting, but less clearly in events surrounding our Lord's birth. Possibly this applies respecting Constantine and Daniel 11:45 as well.

However, there are two aspects about his "end" which did frustrate his goals. (1) His plans for subduing the Persian Sassanid empire were precluded by his last illness. (2) His plan for the peaceful co-rule of three sons and two nephews after he was gone were thwarted. (The three sons killed the two nephews and then went to war with each other.) Perhaps one or both of these fulfill the ominous tone of the closing part of Daniel 11:45.