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of judgement.—As the present resurrection does not exclude the future one, so the present judgement does not exclude the future one. Daniel had foreseen the day in which ‘many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt’ (Dan. 12:2). Here it is made plain that the Son of man whom Daniel had seen in an earlier vision is to be the Agent of God in resurrection as well as in the exercise of mediatorial sovereignty. But when the day of final separation comes, and life or condemnation is apportioned to men, there will be nothing arbitrary about the judicial decision. That decision will simply be the ratification of a decision made in this life. ‘They that have done good’ are those who have come to the light; the others are those who ‘loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil’ (John 3:19-21). The former group have eternal life already; the latter are condemned already.

(To be continued)

THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL

A. NAISMITH, M.A.

III. The Ram and the He-Goat.—Chapter 8.

From the commencement of the eighth chapter of Daniel to the end of the book the language used in the original is Hebrew, as in Chs. 1:1 to 2:3, because of the close affinity of the prophecies with the future of Daniel’s people, the Jews. Some of the events symbolized in the visions given to Daniel, and some of the direct statements of predicted events, though still future in Daniel’s lifetime, have since been accurately fulfilled: others concern the ‘time of the end’, the closing years of what our Lord termed ‘the times of the Gentiles’. Chapters 8 and 9 contain outstanding examples of predictions that have already had partial fulfilment. Three important prophecies, the theme of these last five chapters (8 to 12) are communicated to the prophet in three separate visions: the Ram and the He-goat recorded in Chapter 8, the Seventy Weeks toward the end of Chapter 9, and the great final vision in Chs. 10-12.

The vision of the Ram and He-goat contains prophetic material already fulfilled and predictions whose fulfilment is still future, for there are definite and unequivocal statements concerning the interpretation of the vision, namely:

'the vision belongeth to the time of the end' (8:17—Revised Version):

'know what shall be in the latter time of the indignation' (8:19—R.V.):

'it belongeth to the appointed time of the end' (8:19—R.V.).

Care must therefore be taken to distinguish between what has become historic fact and what still remains unfulfilled, or only partially fulfilled, prophecy.

The part of the vision that has already been fulfilled coincides with the two central sections of the great image seen in dream by King Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 2)—the breast and arms of silver and the belly and thighs of brass—and the second and third great beasts of Chapter 7—the bear with three ribs in its mouth and the winged leopard,—and interpreted as the Empires of Medo-Persia and Greece. The portion of the vision concerning the little horn in verses 9 to 12 had a partial fulfilment in Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth king of the Seleucid dynasty and ruler of Syria, the land to the North of Palestine. His conquests began about 178 B.C. Another appellation given to him was 'Epimanes', the madman. The Apocryphal book of the Maccabees gives the full account of his tyrannical oppression, blasphemous speeches and practices, and sacrilegious profanation of the temple after he captured the city of Jerusalem. But, in light of the interpreter's expressions already noticed, we know that that part of the vision awaits its complete and final fulfilment in the future. The oppressions and obscenities of Antiochus Epiphanes were merely a foreshadowing of the great Tribulation when the King of the North will invade Israel which is now fast becoming a 'pleasant land' again (8:9) and 'magnify himself even to the prince of the host', our Lord Himself, Who will destroy him and his hordes when He comes to take His power and reign over the universe. It should be noted that this 'little horn', the 'king of fierce

countenance', is not identical with the little horn rising out of the ten horns of the revived Roman Empire existing in its final form (see Ch. 7:8). The little horn of Ch. 8:9 springs from a division of the third Empire, Greece, and comes from the North against the pleasant land of Israel.

As a further aid to an understanding of this prophecy, let us consider certain facts stated in relation to the Vision.

(1) *The Time of the Vision.* In the first verse Daniel tells us that he received this revelation in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar and last ruler of the Babylonian Empire. That was the same year in which Belshazzar's feast and Babylon's fall, recorded in the fifth chapter of Daniel, took place, and the vision was received probably only a short time before that event. Babylon, though at that time a besieged city, was still flourishing, and the kingdom of which it was the capital was still powerful. Therefore to Daniel the whole vision concerned events still future, and thus history was pre-written.

(2) *The Place of the Vision.* While Daniel was physically in Babylon, and residing sufficiently near the court to be brought into the royal palace to decipher the writing on the wall (Ch. 5:13), he was transported in spirit to a castle or fortress on the bank of the River Ulai in the city of Shushan which became the capital of the Medo-Persian Empire.

(3) *The Symbols in the Vision.* Future events were communicated to Daniel and to the Apostle John (vide the Apocalypse) largely through the medium of symbols: and, as students cannot fail to observe, those symbols are extremely appropriate. In this prophecy the two emblems used are a ram to represent Persia and a he-goat to represent Greece. In Dan. 10:13, 20, the angel Gabriel who was sent to minister to Daniel then well-advanced in years, mentioned the Prince of Persia who opposed him in the discharge of his mission and the Prince of Greece who was waiting to withstand him on his return. Those 'princes' are clearly not earthly potentates but powerful wicked spirits, chieftains and 'world-rulers' of the powers of darkness under the control of Satan, 'the prince of the power of the air', employed to further the

interests of the several earthly kingdoms they represent. The two princes that come in for special mention in the Book of Daniel are Persia and Greece. We would suggest that there may well be a connection between those two 'world rulers' and their corresponding signs in the Zodiac, Aries the Ram, the first of the signs, and Capricornus, the He-goat in the tenth place. And the present efforts of scientists to establish communication with the stars may well be a plot devised by Satan to hasten man's destruction. Be that as it may, it is an authenticated fact that the two-horned ram was the accepted, national emblem of Persia and the goat the acknowledged emblem of Macedon. Marcellinus mentions that the King of Persia wore, instead of a diadem, a ram's head of gold set with precious stones, and ancient Persian coins bear the image of a ram's head. The name of the Aegean Sea between Greece and Asia Minor, and the ancient city of Aegeae, are derived from Aegus, a goat. The legend is that an oracle directed the first settlers to take a goat for a guide, so they followed a flock of goats and built the city at the place where the animals halted. An ancient gem in the Florentine collection represents an engraved combination of the two emblems, the ram and the he-goat.

The horns of the ram of unequal height, the higher coming up after the other, fittingly symbolize the dominions of Media and Persia, the latter becoming the predominant power. The three directions in which the ram pushed, overcoming all opposition, have their parallel in the three ribs in the bear's mouth in Ch.7:5. The he-goat, representing Greece, had one notable horn between its eyes, symbolic of power combined with purposive intelligence. The notable horn was Alexander the Great, and the rapidity and extent of his conquests are indicated in 8:5—he 'came from the west over the face of the whole earth and touched not the ground'. 'Alexander the Great swept like a comet across human history' and conquered the civilized world centering around the Mediterranean Sea. In 334 B.C. Alexander leaped across the Hellespont, fought successful battles against the armies of Persia and in the course of a few years (for he died at the age of 32 after a career of debauchery) spread his conquests as far as the Indus in Asia and

the Nile in Africa, and subjugated Syria, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Egypt, Babylon and Persia. Thus the he-goat 'smote the ram and broke his two horns', then 'cast him to the ground and trampled on him'. At the zenith of his power, weeping because no lands remained to be conquered, Alexander died and thus 'the great horn was broken'. Then the four quarters of his vast empire fell to his four generals, the 'four notable ones' that sprang up in his place, who became the rulers of Syria in the North, Egypt in the South, Macedonia in the centre and Asia Minor on the East.

(4) *The Little Horn in the Vision.* Seemingly insignificant at first, the person whom the little horn symbolizes 'waxed exceeding great' and extended his dominion southward, eastward and right into the midst of 'Israel's pleasant land'. From this it may be inferred that, in relation to Daniel's people and their land, this potentate must have come either from the North or West. Since the description here does not fit the Roman conquest from the West, we conclude that the oppressor who has already partially fulfilled the predictions in this chapter and made history, and the 'king of fierce countenance' yet to come and to 'stand up against the prince of princes', spring from the North. In the past Antiochus Epiphanes was the wicked King of the North who, coming from Syria, violated the sanctuary in Jerusalem and oppressed the people for 2,300 literal days until Judas Maccabaeus cleansed the temple in 165 B.C. Two years later the oppressor died a miserable death.

(5) *The Interpretation of the Vision through Gabriel.* In the closing verses of Dan. 8 (vs. 15 to 27), the angel Gabriel gives the interpretation of that part of the vision that awaits fulfilment at 'the time of the end' just antecedent to the advent of our Lord Jesus in glory and power. The consideration of the symbols in the vision and of the little horn have already introduced the part of Gabriel's interpretation that is found in verses 20 to 22. Since the five last verses (23-27) are concerned entirely with the time of the end and for us in these days are still future and probably imminent, they are of the highest importance eschatologically. The revelations given to Daniel in this section of the book have to

do with his own people, the Jews, and their land during the last stage of their Pre-millennial history in relation to various forces that will then be prominent in the world, and has nothing whatever to do with the Christian Church. The present age of grace during which God by His Spirit is calling from among Jews and Gentiles a special people, heavenly in origin, character and destiny, is not contemplated in the Book of Daniel, though chronologically it is part of the period we know as 'the times of the Gentiles'. This present period, since the rejection by Israel of Jesus their Messiah, is the time of God's indignation against them. Again and again, the O.T. Scriptures make reference prophetically to this 'indignation'. In Ps. 69:24 the prayer, 'Pour out Thine indignation upon them', follows the prophetic account of the rejection of Christ, and His sufferings on the Cross. There is to be an end to this time of indignation during which Jerusalem is being trodden down by the Gentiles, and the five verses we are now considering at the close of Ch. 8 describe conditions and recount events at 'the time of the end'. This 'king of fierce countenance' the final historical successor to Antiochus Epiphanes who arose out of Syria, will be the ruler of the expanded kingdom of Assyria in which will be incorporated the lands to the North and East of Palestine with Asia Minor and possibly Russia. Several designations are given to this distinguished ruler in Scripture. He is called 'the Assyrian in Is. 8:7-8, 10:5-6, 24-25; Mic. 5:4-7, and also 'the rod of God's anger and the staff of His indignation'. As such he is to be sent against the 'hypocritical nation' of Israel. Other epithets applied to him are 'the overflowing scourge' (Is. 28:15, 18), 'the king of fierce countenance' (Dan. 8:23-25), and 'King of the North' (Dan. 11:40-45). Gabriel's description of his activities indicates that he will be a distinguished, but ruthless, military dictator, invading and devastating the land of Palestine, destroying the leaders and people of Israel, and finally pitting his power against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the 'prince of princes', when He comes as 'King of kings and Lord of lords'. This will, of course, lead to his destruction, for, when the Son of Man appears and His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4), the Northern army, driven into the desert,

will be destroyed and its leader, the King of fierce countenance, will be 'broken without hand'.

(6) *The Effect of the Vision.* The vision of the Gentile Empires rising one after another as wild beasts out of the tumultuous element of political and international strife, of the prince who will rule over the confederacy of western powers, and of their destruction at the advent of the Son of Man and the establishment of His glorious kingdom, as recorded in Ch. 7, gave Daniel many troubled thoughts that altered his physical appearance: but he kept the prophetic revelation in his heart for further cogitation. The effect of the vision of Chapter 8 and its interpretation, particularly the predicted pernicious activities of the king of fierce countenance, was more severe. Daniel's own people, God's chosen race, and their land, were to experience unparalleled affliction and tribulation; and, as he reflected on this, he was puzzled and faint with astonishment. Further reflection on the subject produced sickness from which it took him several days to recover, and, when he did, he was able to leave his bed and attend to his duties as a minister in the Babylonian court. The beginning of the chapter that follows proves that the vision had also the effect on Daniel that the consideration of it should have on each of us; it inspired him to further study of the Scriptures and drove him to his knees in prayer. This proved to be God's way of preparing him to receive further predictions, commencing with the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

E. G. ASHBY, M.A., B.D.

II. Rebuilding (chs. 3-6)

Introduction. There is something very fascinating about this section of the book. Building—or rebuilding—is essentially something constructive, like all true Christian service, whether the building up of individual believers or churches; or what is sometimes a more delicate work requiring great sympathy and tact, the rebuilding or refashioning of a work to the glory of God out of the shattered wreckage of past failure. Nehemiah here