

CHAP. 44 - IN THE LIONS' DEN

"The wicked opposition to God's servant was now completely broken. 'Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.' [Dan 6:28] And through association with him, these heathen monarchs were constrained to

acknowledge his God as 'the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'"

{Prophets and Kings, 545.1}



CHAP. 45 - THE RETURN OF THE EXILES

"The advent of the army of Cyrus before the walls of Babylon was to the Jews a sign that their deliverance from captivity was drawing nigh. More than a century before the birth of Cyrus, Inspiration had mentioned him by name, and had caused a record to be made of the actual work he should do in taking the city of Babylon unawares, and in preparing the way for the release of the children of the captivity. Through Isaiah the word had been spoken: {PK 551.1}

with the prophecy outlining the manner of Babylon's capture and fall were the words: {PK 552.1}

"Cyrus, he is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.' I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.' **Isaiah 44:28; 45:13.** {PK 552.2}

"Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him;... to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.' **Isaiah 45:1-3.** {PK 551.2}

"Nor were these the only prophecies upon which the exiles had opportunity to base their hope of speedy deliverance. The writings of Jeremiah were within their reach, and in these was plainly set forth the length of time that should elapse before the restoration of Israel from Babylon. 'When seventy years are accomplished,' the Lord had foretold through His messenger, 'I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.' **Jeremiah 25:12.** Favor would be shown the remnant of Judah, in answer to fervent prayer. 'I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.' **Jeremiah 29:14.** {PK 552.3}

"In the unexpected entry of the army of the Persian conqueror into the heart of the Babylonian capital by way of the channel of the river whose waters had been turned aside, and through the inner gates that in careless security had been left open and unprotected, the Jews had abundant evidence of the literal fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sudden overthrow of their oppressors. And this should have been to them an unmistakable sign that God was shaping the affairs of nations in their behalf; for inseparably linked

"Often had Daniel and his companions gone over these and similar prophecies outlining God's purpose for His people. And now, as the rapid course of events betokened the mighty hand of God at work among the nations, Daniel gave special thought to the promises made to Israel. His faith in the prophetic word led him to enter into experiences foretold by the sacred writers. 'After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon,' the Lord had declared, 'I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return... I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.' **vss10-13.** {PK 553.1}

"Shortly before the fall of Babylon, when Daniel was meditating on these prophecies and seeking God for an understanding of the times, a series of visions was given him concerning the rise and fall of kingdoms. With the first vision, as recorded in the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel, an interpretation was given; yet not all was made clear to the prophet. 'My cogitations much troubled me,' he wrote of his experience at the time, 'and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.' **Daniel 7:28.** {PK 553.2}

"Through another vision further light was thrown upon the events of the future; and it was at the close of this vision that Daniel heard 'one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision?' **Daniel 8:13.** The answer that was given, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed' (**vs.14**), filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years' captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God's sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, 'The vision... shall be for many days,' he

fainted away. 'I Daniel fainted,' he records of his experience, 'and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.' **vss.26, 27.** {PK 554.1}

'Still burdened in behalf of Israel, Daniel studied anew the prophecies of Jeremiah. They were very plain--so plain that he understood by these testimonies recorded in books 'the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.' **Daniel 9:2.** {PK 554.2}

"With faith founded on the sure word of prophecy, Daniel pleaded with the Lord for the speedy fulfillment of these promises. He pleaded for the honor of God to be preserved. In his petition he identified himself fully with those who had fallen short of the divine purpose, confessing their sins as his own. {PK 554.3}

"'I set my face unto the Lord God,' the prophet declared, 'to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession.' **vss.3, 4.** Though Daniel had long been in the service of God, and had been spoken of by heaven as 'greatly beloved,' yet he now appeared before God as a sinner, urging the great need of the people he loved. His prayer was eloquent in its simplicity, and intensely earnest. Hear him pleading: {PK 555.1}

"'O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. {PK 555.2}

"'O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of

Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee... {PK 555.3}

"To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.' 'O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. {PK 555.4}

"Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. {PK 556.1}

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.' **vss.4-9, 16-19.** {PK 556.2}

"Heaven was bending low to hear the earnest supplication of the prophet. Even before he had finished his plea for pardon and restoration, the mighty Gabriel again appeared to him, and called his attention to the vision he had seen prior to the fall of Babylon and the death of Belshazzar. And then the angel outlined before him in detail the period of the seventy weeks, which was to begin at the time of 'the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.' **vs.25.** {PK 556.3}

"Daniel's prayer had been offered 'in the first year of Darius' (**vs.1**), the Median monarch whose general, Cyrus, had wrested from Babylonia the scepter of universal rule. The reign of Darius was honored of God. To him was sent the angel Gabriel, 'to confirm and to strengthen him.' **Daniel 11:1.** Upon his death, within about two years of the

fall of Babylon, Cyrus succeeded to the throne, and the beginning of his reign marked the completion of the seventy years since the first company of Hebrews had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar from their Judean home to Babylon. {PK 556.4}

"The deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions had been used of God to create a favorable impression upon the mind of Cyrus the Great. The sterling qualities of the man of God as a statesman of farseeing ability led the Persian ruler to show him marked respect and to honor his judgment. And now, just at the time God had said He would cause His temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, with which Daniel was so familiar, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty. {PK 557.1}

"As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; as he read the message addressed to him by the Ruler of the universe, 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me;' as he saw before his eyes the declaration of the eternal God, 'For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me;' as he traced the inspired record, 'I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward,' his heart was profoundly moved, and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. **Isaiah 45:5, 6, 4, 13.** He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah. {PK 557.2}

"In a written proclamation published 'throughout all his kingdom,' Cyrus made known his desire to provide for the return of the Hebrews and for the rebuilding of their temple. 'The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth,' the king gratefully acknowledged in this public proclamation; 'and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in

Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem,... and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (He is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering.' **Ezra 1:1-4.** {PK 558.1}

"Let the house be builded,' he further directed regarding the temple structure, 'the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem.' **Ezra 6:3-5.** {PK 558.2}

"Tidings of this decree reached the farthestmost provinces of the king's realm, and everywhere among the children of the dispersion there was great rejoicing. Many, like Daniel, had been studying the prophecies, and had been seeking God for His promised intervention in behalf of Zion. And now their prayers were being answered; and with heartfelt joy they could unite in singing:

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like them that dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the heathen,
The Lord hath done great things for them.
The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad.'
Psalms 126:1-3. {PK 558.3}

"The chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised'--these were the

goodly remnant, about fifty thousand strong, from among the Jews in the lands of exile, who determined to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity offered them 'to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.' Their friends did not permit them to go empty-handed. 'All they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things.' And to these and many other voluntary offerings were added 'the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem;... even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer,... five thousand and four hundred' in number, for use in the temple that was to be rebuilt. **Ezra 1:5-11.** {PK 559.1}

"Upon Zerubbabel (known also as Sheshbazzar), a descendant of King David, Cyrus placed the responsibility of acting as governor of the company returning to Judea; and with him was associated Joshua the high priest. The long journey across the desert wastes was accomplished in safety, and the happy company, grateful to God for His many mercies, at once undertook the work of re-establishing that which had been broken down and destroyed. 'The chief of the fathers' led out in offering of their substance to help defray the expense of rebuilding the temple; and the people, following their example, gave freely of their meager store. See **Ezra 2:64-70.** {PK 559.2}

"As speedily as possible, an altar was erected on the site of the ancient altar in the temple court. To the exercises connected with the dedication of this altar, the people had 'gathered themselves together as one man;' and there they united in re-establishing the sacred services that had been interrupted at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Before separating to dwell in the homes they were endeavoring to restore, 'they kept also the Feast of Tabernacles.' **Ezra 3:1-6.** {PK 560.1}

"The setting up of the altar of daily burnt offerings greatly cheered the faithful remnant. Heartily they entered into the preparations

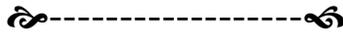
necessary for the rebuilding of the temple, gathering courage as these preparations advanced from month to month. They had for many years been deprived of the visible tokens of God's presence. And now, surrounded as they were by many sad reminders of the apostasy of their fathers, they longed for some abiding token of divine forgiveness and favor. Above the regaining of personal property and ancient privileges, they valued the approval of God. Wonderfully had He wrought in their behalf, and they felt the assurance of His presence with them; yet they desired greater blessings still. With joyous anticipation they looked forward to the time when, with temple rebuilt, they might behold the shining forth of His glory from within. {PK 560.2}

"The workmen engaged in the preparation of the building material, found among the ruins

some of the immense stones brought to the temple site in the days of Solomon. These were made ready for use, and much new material was provided; and soon the work was advanced to the point where the foundation stone must be laid. This was done in the presence of many thousands who had assembled to witness the progress of the work and to give expression to their joy in having a part in it. While the cornerstone was being set in position, the people, accompanied by the trumpets of the priests and the cymbals of the sons of Asaph, 'sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel.'

vs.11. {PK 563.1}

{Prophets and Kings, 551.1 to 563.1}



CHAP. 46 - "THE PROPHETS OF GOD HELPING THEM"

While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God's people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid. 'The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days,' Gabriel declares; 'but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.' **Daniel 10:13.** All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained; the forces of the enemy were held in check all the days of Cyrus, and all the days of his son Cambyses, who reigned about seven and a half years. {PK 571.2}

This was a time of wonderful opportunity for the Jews. The highest agencies of heaven were working on the hearts of kings, and it was for the people of God to labor with the utmost activity to carry out the decree of Cyrus. They should have spared no effort to restore the temple and its services, and to re-establish themselves in their Judean homes. But in the day of God's power many proved unwilling. The opposition of their enemies was strong and determined, and gradually the builders lost heart. Some could not forget the scene at the laying of the cornerstone, when many had given expression to their lack of confidence in the enterprise. And as the Samaritans grew more bold, many of the Jews questioned whether, after all, the time had come to rebuild. The feeling soon became widespread. Many of the workmen, discouraged and disheartened, returned to their homes to take up the ordinary pursuits of life. {PK 572.1}

During the reign of Cambyses the work on the temple progressed slowly. And during the reign of the false Smerdis (called Artaxerxes in **Ezra 4:7**) the Samaritans induced the unscrupulous

impostor to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city. {PK 572.2}

{Prophets and Kings, 571.2 to 572.2}



70 = 1260 (=2520 = 2300)

CHAP. 59 - "THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL"

Today the church of God is free to carry forward to completion the divine plan for the salvation of a lost race. For many centuries God's people suffered a restriction of their liberties. The preaching of the gospel in its purity was prohibited, and the severest of penalties were visited upon those who dared disobey the mandates of men. As a consequence, the Lord's great moral vineyard was almost wholly unoccupied. The

people were deprived of the light of God's word. The darkness of error and superstition threatened to blot out a knowledge of true religion. God's church on earth was as verily in captivity during this long period of relentless persecution as were the children of Israel held captive in Babylon during the period of the exile.

{Prophets and Kings, 714.1}



MARCH 14, 1907 THE RETURN OF THE EXILES--NO. 1

THE END OF SEVENTY YEARS (TO BE CONCLUDED)

"Soon after the fall of Babylon and the beginning of the universal empire of Medo-Persia, in the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, Daniel the prophet 'understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.' {par. 1}

"Daniel and his companions had been taken to Babylon 'in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah.' They were members of the first company of captives whom Nebuchadnezzar brought from Jerusalem into the land of Shinar. Daniel was well acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah at the time they were given, and he had passed through the periods immediately succeeding the first and the second sieges of Jerusalem, when many false prophets had arisen with the claim that the captivity was to be of short duration. {par. 2}

"In the fourth year of Jehoiakim,' very soon after Daniel was taken to Babylon, Jeremiah predicted the captivity of many of the Jews, as their punishment for not heeding the word of the Lord. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise his disobedient people. Their punishment was to be in proportion to their intelligence and to the warnings they had despised. 'This whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment,' the prophet declared; 'and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.' {par. 3}

"In the light of these plain words foretelling the duration of the captivity, it seems strange that any one should hold that the Israelites would soon return from Babylon. And yet there were in Jerusalem and in Babylon those who

persisted in encouraging the people to hope for a speedy deliverance. God dealt summarily with some of these false prophets, and thus vindicated the truthfulness of Jeremiah, his messenger. {par. 4}

"To the end of time, men will arise to create confusion and rebellion among the people who profess to obey the law of God. But as surely as divine judgment was visited upon the false prophets in Jeremiah's day, so surely will the evil workers of today receive their full measure of retribution, for the Lord has not changed. Those who prophesy lies, encourage men to look upon sin as a light thing. When the terrible results of their evil deeds are made manifest, they seek, if possible, to make the one who has faithfully warned them responsible for their difficulties, even as the Jews charged Jeremiah with their evil fortunes. {par. 5}

"Those who pursue a course of rebellion against the Lord can always find false prophets who will justify them in their acts, and flatter them to their destruction. Lying words often make many friends, as is illustrated in the case of these false teachers among the Israelites. These so-called prophets, in their pretended zeal for God, found many more believers and followers than the true prophet who delivered the simple message of the Lord. {par. 6}

"In view of the work of these false prophets, Jeremiah was directed by the Lord to write letters to the captains, elders, priests, prophets, and all the people who had been taken captive to Babylon, bidding them not to be deluded into believing their deliverance nigh, but to submit quietly, pursue their vocations, and make for themselves peaceful homes among their conquerors. The Lord bade them not to allow so-called prophets or diviners to deceive them with false expectations. Through his servant Jeremiah he assured them that after seventy years' bondage they should be delivered, and should return to Jerusalem. God would listen to their prayers and

show them his favor, when they would turn to him with all their hearts. 'I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.' {par. 7}

"With what tender compassion did God inform his captive people of his plans for Israel! He knew what suffering and disaster they would

have to undergo, were they led to believe, according to the prediction of the false prophets, that they should be speedily delivered and brought back to Jerusalem. He knew that this belief would make their position a very difficult one. Any effort on their part to regain freedom would awaken the vigilance and severity of the king, and their liberty would be restricted in consequence. The Lord desired them to submit quietly to their fate, and make their servitude as pleasant as possible. {par. 8}

{RH, March 14, 1907 par. 8}



MARCH 21, 1907 THE RETURN OF THE EXILES -- NO. 1

THE END OF SEVENTY YEARS (CONCLUDED)

"A copy of the letters sent by Jeremiah to the Hebrew captives in Babylon, and of the letters sent by the false prophets to these captives and to the authorities of Jerusalem, together with a story of the controversy between the true and false, is found in the twenty-seventh to the twenty-ninth chapters of Jeremiah. {par. 1}

"It was immediately after this interchange of letters between Jeremiah and the elders of the Israelites in captivity, that the prophet was instructed to write in a book all that had been revealed to him regarding the restoration of Israel. This is recorded in the thirtieth and the thirty-first chapters of Jeremiah. {par. 2}

"These, with the prophecies of the twenty-fifth chapter, are the letters and the records that Daniel the prophet, during 'the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede,' prayerfully studied, three-score years and more after they were written. Daniel was familiar with the circumstances connected with Jeremiah's testimonies given very soon after the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. He well knew that the promise of the return was sure; and yet, a short time before, 'in the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar,' the

angel of the Lord had instructed him in vision, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.' {par. 3}

"Daniel 'sought for the meaning' of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years' captivity to the twenty-three hundred years that were to elapse before the cleansing of God's sanctuary. Gabriel gave a partial interpretation; and when he declared that the vision 'shall be for many days,' Daniel fainted. 'I Daniel fainted,' the prophet writes, 'and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision; but none understood it.' {par. 4}

"In his perplexity, Daniel studied anew the prophecies of Jeremiah. They were very plain,--so plain that he 'understood' by these testimonies recorded in books 'the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.' {par. 5}

"With faith founded on the sure word of prophecy, Daniel pleaded with the Lord for the speedy restoration of the captive exiles to the land

of their fathers. 'I set my face unto the Lord God,' he declares, 'to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession.' 'We have sinned,' he acknowledged; 'neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.' {par. 6}

"O Lord, according to all thy righteousness,' the prophet pleaded, 'let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, harken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.' {par. 7}

"The prayer of Daniel was not offered in vain. Even before he had finished pleading with God, Gabriel again appeared to him, and called his attention to the vision he had seen prior to the fall of Babylon at the death of Belshazzar. The angel then outlined in detail the period of the seventy weeks, beginning at the time of 'the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.' {par. 8}

"Daniel's prayer in behalf of his people, as recorded in the ninth chapter, was 'in the first year of Darius' the Mede. Darius was favored of heaven; for in the first year of his reign the angel Gabriel 'stood up to confirm and to strengthen him.' It was this king who, early in the establishment of the Medo-Persian empire, 'set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princess, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first... This Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.' {par. 9}

"Darius reigned over Medo-Persia two years after the fall of Babylon. During this time, Daniel was cast into the lions' den and came out unharmed. This deliverance led Darius to write 'unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion in my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.' {par. 10}

"Thus, while those who had remained loyal to God in the midst of Babylon were seeking the Lord and studying the prophecies foretelling their deliverance, God was preparing the hearts of kings to show favor to his repentant people. {par. 11}

{RH, March 21, 1907 par.1-11}



MARCH 28, 1907 THE RETURN OF THE EXILES--NO. 2

THE DECREE OF CYRUS

"Over a century before the birth of Cyrus the Great, the prophet Isaiah was inspired to mention this ruler even by name, and to write a prophecy outlining his work, as recorded in the forty-fifth of Isaiah: -- {par. 1}

"Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have summoned thee, though thou hast not known me. {par. 2}

"I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.' {par. 3}

"Cyrus, he is my shepherd,' the Lord declared, 'and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.' I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.' {par. 4}

"The year that Cyrus succeeded Darius the Mede to the throne of Medo-Persia marked the completion of seventy years since the first company of Hebrews had been carried captive to

Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, who was familiar with the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah regarding the duration of the captivity, and with the prophecies of Isaiah regarding the restoration by decree of Cyrus, was still living, and was occupying a position of leading responsibility in the Medo-Persian court. His faith in these prophecies led him to plead with God in behalf of his people. And now, when the time came for the temple in Jerusalem to be rebuilt, God moved upon Cyrus as his agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty. And furthermore, Cyrus furnished them the necessary facilities for rebuilding the temple of the Lord. {par. 5}

"In the book of Ezra is found an account of this work of Cyrus, and a copy of his decree:-- {par. 6}

"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.' {par. 7}

"Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof

threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is in Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and placed there in the house of God.' {par. 8}

"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. All kings, all nations, are his, under his rule and government. His resources are infinite. The wise man declares, 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.' {par. 9}

"Those upon whose actions hang the destinies of nations, are watched over with a vigilance that knows no relaxation by him who 'giveth salvation unto kings,' to whom belong 'the shields of the earth.' {par. 10}

"There were faithful servants of the Most High who were prepared to respond to this decree. Over threescore years before, the Lord had declared that 'after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return... Then shall ye call upon me,' the Lord declared, 'and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will harken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.' Those who were seeking the Lord were prepared to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity afforded them by Cyrus to return to their homes and to restore the temple of God. {par. 11}

"Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in

Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered. {par. 12}

"Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.' {par. 13}

"The company that returned to Jerusalem was led by Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar), a descendant of King David, and appointed by the king as governor of the restored Israelites. Associated with him were Joshua the high priest, and several of 'the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites.' 'The whole congregation together' that returned to the land of their fathers, under Zerubbabel, 'was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, beside their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women. Their horses were seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five; their camels, four hundred thirty and five; their asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty. {par. 14}

"And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord which is at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place: they gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pounds

of silver, and one hundred priests' garments. So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.' {par. 15}

"Soon after their return, in 'the seventh month,' 'the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Joshua the son of Josedech, and his brethren,... and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God. And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. {par. 16}

"They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; and afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were

reconsecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the Lord. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord. {par. 17}

"But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid. {par. 18}

"They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.' {par. 19}

"The faithful remnant who had returned were greatly cheered and encouraged by the re-establishment of the daily burnt offerings; and they now entered heartily into the preparation necessary for the rebuilding of the temple, in order that they might restore all the ancient services of the house of God. {par. 20}

{RH, March 28, 1907 par.1-20}



CHAPTER 13 - THE HISTORY OF THE DECREES (CHAPTER 11:1, 2)

XERXES

In giving this history to Daniel, these details were omitted, and Daniel did not live to see them carried out. To him the angel said, speaking in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, 'Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all.' {170.2}

The three kings who followed Cyrus were Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, and Darius. These, and their part in the history of the Jews, we have already seen. The fourth king of Persia after Cyrus the Great was noted for his wealth, and the great

army he raised against the Greeks. This king was Xerxes, who came to the throne on the death of Darius, in the year 486 b.c. Our interest lies in the record of his dealings with the Jews, and to that history one entire book of the Bible is devoted. Xerxes is the Ahasuerus of **Esther 1**, and the book of Esther is the record Margin of the acts of this king with reference to the people of God who were still living in the kingdom of Babylon, over which Xerxes was sole monarch. {170.3}

{1901 SNH, SDP 170.3}



THE ADVENT HERALD, AND SIGNS OF THE TIMES REPORTER
BEHOLD! THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH!! GO YE OUT TO MEET HIM!!!
VOL. VIII. NO. 12. BOSTON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1844.

THE TENTH CHAPTER OF DANIEL

By a careful examination of the **10th chapter of Daniel's** prophecy, we are forced to the conclusion that it has a more intimate connexion with the previous chapters, and consequently that the **11th and 12th chapters** of Daniel are more intimately connected with the vision recorded in the **8th**, than we had previously supposed. {94.23}

We had been of the opinion that the first year of Darius, in which Gabriel in answers to Daniel's prayer more fully explains to him the vision of the 2300 days, synchronized with the first year of Cyrus; and that consequently the third year of Cyrus in which Gabriel gave to Daniel the revelation in the **11th and 12th chapters**, was two years subsequent to the revelation of the seventy weeks. But we are now satisfied that it was an immediate event. {94.24}

"Calmet, and Dr. Clark, both assert that the third year of Cyrus (**Daniel 10:1**,) and the first year of Darius (**Daniel 19:1**) synchronize with each

other. If this can be proved, the revelation recorded in each chapter must necessarily have been in the same year. {94.25}

Dr. Jarvis says of Darius, 'that as he was the uncle, and father-in-law of Cyrus, it is more probable that in the attack upon Babylon, Cyrus, commanding the united forces of the Medes and Persians, acted for his uncle; and that they reigned two years jointly till the death of Darius. The first year of Darius, here dates, as all agree, not from his ascending the throne of Media, which was many years previous; but from the conquest of Babylon. Dr. Hales says, that the canon of Ptolomy 'dates the accession of Cyrus, not from the capture of Babylon itself, but from his decisive victory over the king of Babylon about two years before, when he defeated him in a pitched battle and drove the Babylonians into their city.' From this battle the seige of Babylon lasted two years; and as Dr. Hales says, 'the Chaldeans might date the sovereignty of Cyrus from that decisive victory.' If this is correct

it will follow that the third year of Cyrus, **Dan. 10:1**, is the same as the first year of Darius, **Dan. 8:1**. Thus all is plain. {94.26}

"If then we go back to the ninth of Daniel, we find the prophet seeking 'by prayer, and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes,' for a more full explanation of the vision of the 2300 days; which Gabriel had been commanded by Michael, and had promised to make Daniel understand. In answer to Daniel's supplications, Gabriel came and showed him the manner of the time, which alone of all the symbols of the vision had been unexplained at the time the vision was seen. He also shows him from what event the reckoning of the time is to commence; and that Jerusalem, after the seventy weeks, is to be desolated till the consummation of the 2300 days; and then leaves him. {94.27}

"Daniel has here had a full explanation of all the symbols of this vision--a knowledge of its great outline; but no information respecting the particulars of its fulfillment. Accordingly the next thing we learn of Daniel is, in the **10th chapter** that, (as we have seen) in the same year he is mourning three full weeks, or twenty-one days, when Gabriel again appears and gives the particulars of the prophecy of that vision. The question then is, when did Daniel begin his mourning of twenty-one days? {94.28}

"Calmet, and Dr. Clark both give it as their opinion, that Daniel began his last immediately after his interview with Gabriel, as recommended in the **9th chapter**, and that the twenty-one days date from the time Gabriel then departed from Daniel. {94.29}

"Speaking of the cause of Daniel's fasting, Calmet says:-- {95.1}

"I am persuaded that it arose principally from the obscurity which the prophet found in the prophecies revealed to him, which indeed may be

collected from the angel's touching on no other cause of mourning. In consequence of Daniel's fasting, etc., he appears and explains to him in a clearer manner, what had been more obscurely marked in the previous visions.' {95.2}

"When Daniel had fasted twenty-one days, there appeared to him a man clothed in linen; and from the description of him, which is so similar to that of Christ in **Revelation 1:13-17**, it could be none other than Michael. As, however, the mission of explaining the vision had been put upon Gabriel, it was necessary that he should come and fulfill it. But Gabriel was on another mission with Cyrus, the king of Persia, probably endeavoring to persuade that prince to restore the Jews, and re-build the temple as had been predicted of him. From the first day Daniel began to pray, his words were heard; but Cyrus withstood Gabriel,--resisted his secret influences to induce him to fulfill the prophecy,--for twenty-one days, when Michael appeared to Daniel. Still it would not answer for Gabriel to leave Cyrus unless some one should take his place, with the prince of Persia. Therefore Daniel falls into a deep sleep, **vs.9**, Michael leaves him and goes to the assistance of Gabriel with the king, **vs.13**, and Gabriel leaving Michael in his place with Cyrus, comes to Daniel, finds him in his sleep, and lifts him up, **vs.10**. He then gives Daniel, according to his request, the more minute particulars of the vision of the 2300 days, as recorded in the **11th and 12th chapters**. {95.3}

"If the above views are correct, this latter revelation was given in such immediate connection with the explanation of the seventy weeks, which were cut off from the vision, that there can be no question but that from the **8th to the 12th chapters** of Daniel inclusive, were all revealed in connection, and in immediate reference to each other; and extend over a period of 2300 years from the meridian glory of the Medo Persian empire to the end of the world. {95.4}

{Oct 30, 1844 JVHe, HST 94.27 to 95.4}