



Ambassador College

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

An International Course of Biblical Understanding



Ruins of Ancient Babylon

LESSON 10

What OUR STUDENTS SAY

I am really enjoying the Bible Correspondence Course, which helps me to understand what the Bible *really* says. So many of us go along believing what other "wiser" men tell us the Bible says, without ever checking to see if they are telling us the truth. Then the real clincher comes when "educated" men tell us there is no absolute truth, no absolute wrong or right, no absolute marriage, no absolute family — no absolute anything! Lately I have been checking with the Bible which gives us absolutes. I have been finding truths in the Bible which are the exact *opposite* of what I have been told the Bible says. Teaching the average layman what the Bible really says is what the Bible Correspondence Course, *The PLAIN TRUTH*, and the radio and television broadcasts are all about.

— Student, Baird, Texas

I want to thank you for all the supplementary literature that you offer in conjunction with the Bible course. After taking about eight other Bible courses, I have found that the Ambassador College Correspondence Course is the only one that brings out the truth from the Bible so that I can understand it.

— James S., Columbus, Ohio

Your Correspondence Course has really opened my eyes to things in the Bible that I had never understood before. I have studied the Bible a lot in my 58 years, but have never had anything to help me like these lessons. I am on my 8th one and intend to keep right on studying them until I complete the course.

— Student, Ellisville, Mississippi

I received Lesson 7 a few days back. It is certainly very interesting and eye-opening. But the biggest surprise was Lessons 5 and 6. I never dreamed that these truths were in my Bible all the time. I review the lessons and study them twice.

— Darius B., Knoxville, Tennessee

I have received Lesson 6 of the Bible Correspondence Course, and as usual, it is spellbinding, fantastic, exciting and a joy to pursue. As other students have expressed, I can't thank you enough for this service. It certainly makes life worthwhile. Please accept my enclosed small donation toward your wonderful work.

— J. S., Utica, New York



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LESSON 10

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EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Garner Ted Armstrong

DIRECTOR

David Jon Hill

MANAGING EDITOR

Richard H. Sedliacik

Staff Writers

Lawson C. Briggs William F. Dankenbring

Art Editor

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United States: P. O. Box 111, Pasadena, California 91123.

Canada: P. O. Box 44, Station A, Vancouver 1, B.C.

Latin America: Institución Ambassador, Apartado Postal 5-595, México 5, D. F.

United Kingdom, Europe, India, Africa and West Indies: P. O. Box 111, St. Albans, Herts., England.

South Africa: P. O. Box 1060, Johannesburg, Transvaal, R.S.A.

Australia and Southeast Asia: G. P. O. Box 345, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia.

New Zealand: P. O. Box 2709, Auckland 1, New Zealand.

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About Our Cover . . .

Only ruins remain of the ancient city of Babylon and the world-ruling Chaldean

Empire. This empire was the first in a series of prophesied empires and governments which were to follow. The Bible reveals an amazing panorama of human history — written thousands of years in advance! Just what some of its major prophecies are, what they mean, and *how* they relate to *you*, we will begin to explain in this lesson.

Matson Photo Service

THE AMAZING PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

About one third of the Bible is prophecy, and most of that prophecy applies to our time, NOW — the world in which you live. In this lesson we begin a new series on Biblical prophecy which will explain additional remarkable KEY prophecies of the Bible, showing how they will apply to YOUR LIFE!

WHAT IS prophecy? Why was it written? Should we study prophecy merely for the purpose of titillating our curiosity about the future?

Prophecy is not a matter of setting dates. Nor is it a way of looking into a crystal ball, or determining the future by the movements of the stars.

Prophecy may be defined as history written (or spoken) *in advance* under divine inspiration. It may also be defined as God's WARNING MESSAGE given in advance to people or nations of what He intends to do.

God's WARNING Message

God inspired the Prophet Amos to tell us, "The Lord Eternal never does anything without telling his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7, Moffatt).

Before God intervenes in the affairs of a nation, or the world, He first warns those who will be directly affected what He intends to do. Why does He do this? To give them a chance to CHANGE their ways — TO REPENT of their sins — so that the prophesied calamity *need not come to pass*.

God is absolutely fair, just and righteous. He never punishes, without first sending a WARNING, and giving people this *chance* to repent. Keep this vital key in mind as we study God's warnings for our generation with this and the following lessons on Biblical prophecy.

The Purpose of Prophecy

The purpose of prophecy, therefore, is twofold: First, it is given in love to encourage people to repent of their evil ways so they can *escape* punishment. Second, it is given for those who don't repent at first, so that when their punishment comes, they will *then* acknowledge their sins and repent toward the God who will then deliver and rescue them! (Deut. 4:25-31.)

When ancient Israel trampled on God's warnings, they were carried away into captivity by the Assyrians (721-718 B.C.). When ancient Judah

likewise rebelled, they, too, were deported — to Babylon (beginning about 604 B.C.).

In the second book of Kings we read: "Yet the Eternal warned Israel and Judah by all his prophets and seers, saying, 'Turn from your evil ways and obey my commandments and rules, in terms of all the law which I enjoined upon your fathers and imparted to you by my servants the prophets.' However, *they would not listen*. . . . So the Eternal was furious with Israel and REMOVED them from his sight. . . ." (II Kings 17:13-14, 18, Moffatt).

But God is not concerned with Israel and Judah only. He is concerned about all the peoples of the world, and the same principles regarding the warnings of prophecy apply to all.

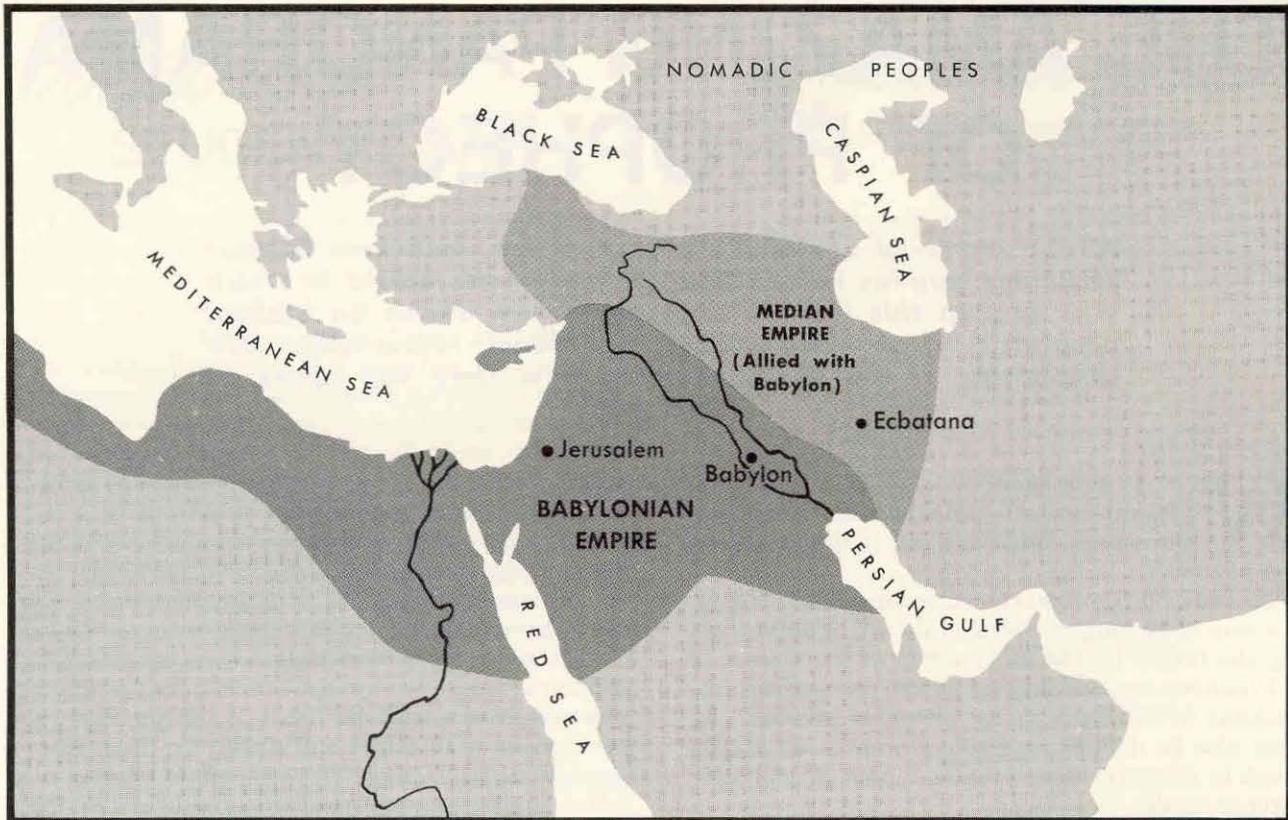
And so it was that in Babylon, where Judah had been carried captive, God began to reveal through His prophet Daniel an astounding forty-five hundred year outline for the future of much of the world, including a FINAL awesome political revival of the Babylonian system, which — believe it or not — is destined to *startle* modern Western civilization!

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

One night King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that greatly impressed and troubled him. By morning he had forgotten the exact nature of the dream, so he called his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers and demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed and what it meant. But of course they could not.

Then Daniel, a young Jewish captive to whom God had given understanding of visions and dreams (Dan. 1:17), was brought before the king.

Daniel disclaimed having any more human ability to interpret dreams than the Chaldean magicians. "But," Daniel declared, "there is a GOD in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (Dan. 2:28). Then Daniel, through God's inspiration, interpreted the dream for the king.



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THE CHALDEAN EMPIRE (625-539 B.C.)

The purpose of the dream was twofold. First, to reveal God's government — the fact that *God rules* over all. Second, to reveal what was to happen from then on into "the latter days," reaching all the way down to our twentieth century space

age! For this same purpose, Daniel was later given several visions and dreams of the future.

So now let's consider the amazing portent of these visions and what they mean for *all of us today!*

LESSON 10

The Great Image

As a picture of the future, from Daniel's day forward, God caused King Nebuchadnezzar to dream of a huge, four-sectioned *image*. Its four parts, as we shall see, represented four consecutive world-dominating kingdoms. Let's understand that dream as God inspired Daniel to explain it.

1. What did the "terrible image," with its four connecting sections, look like? Dan. 2:31-33.

COMMENT: This great image was in the form of a man to show that it represented *man's* government — in contrast to the Kingdom of God which will succeed it (verses 34-35, 44).

2. Which kingdom did the head of gold represent? Verses 36-38.

COMMENT: The *first* kingdom, or empire, here symbolically described as the "head of gold," was

Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was located in the same geographical location as the ancient "Babylonian" kingdom of Nimrod, who forsook God's ways soon after the Flood. And his kingdom continued the same old anti-God system promulgated by pagan Nimrod! Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom — the CHALDEAN EMPIRE with its capital at Babylon — ruled from 625 to 539 B.C.

At the time this vision was given to Nebuchadnezzar, his empire had just conquered the kingdom of Judah and was in the process of transporting the Jews into captivity. Previously, in cooperation with the Medes, Babylon had conquered the earlier Assyrian Empire. In the division of the spoils, the Medes were given the rule over Asia Minor and Assyria proper, into which the ten-tribed "House of Israel" had been taken, while Babylon took all the rest. And so Babylon had become a *world-ruling* empire.

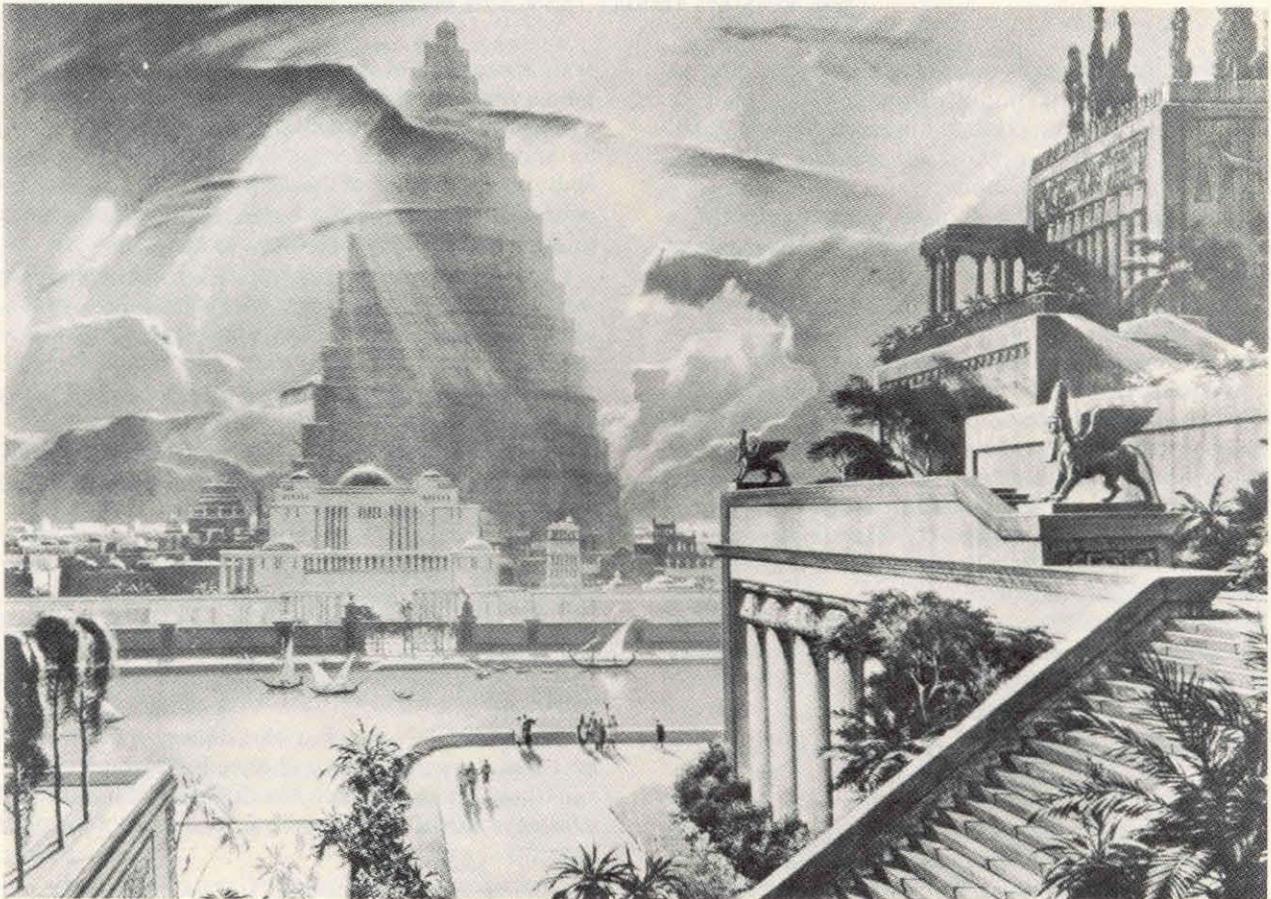
The Babylonian triumph, however, was not the result of Nebuchadnezzar's greatness. But that hard lesson Nebuchadnezzar still had to learn. He had to learn that Almighty God rules in the affairs of men (Dan. 4:25, last part) and that God was the One who had decreed that His people Israel should be taken into slavery, thus denying them for some time to come the position of WORLD RULE which they could have had.

Why was rulership taken from Israel and Judah? Because they had utterly failed in their God-given mission to be a light to the world (Deut. 4:4-10, 23-27). Had they obeyed God, and qualified to rule, God would ultimately have put them in a position of world rulership. But now *Nebuchadnezzar* was offered the opportunity and the responsibility of ruling the world God's way — an opportunity to rule the world *for* and *under* God.

Of course God knew Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians would likewise utterly fail. He knew, because of their carnal-minded nature (Rom. 8:7), they also would disobey Him. So He predicted still other world empires that would succeed each

BABEL — Artist's conception of ancient Babylon with hanging gardens in foreground and the Tower of Nimrod in background.

Wide World Photo



other after the fall of the Babylonian Empire.

3. How was the second great world empire represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Dan. 2:32. Would it be inferior to his empire? Verse 39.

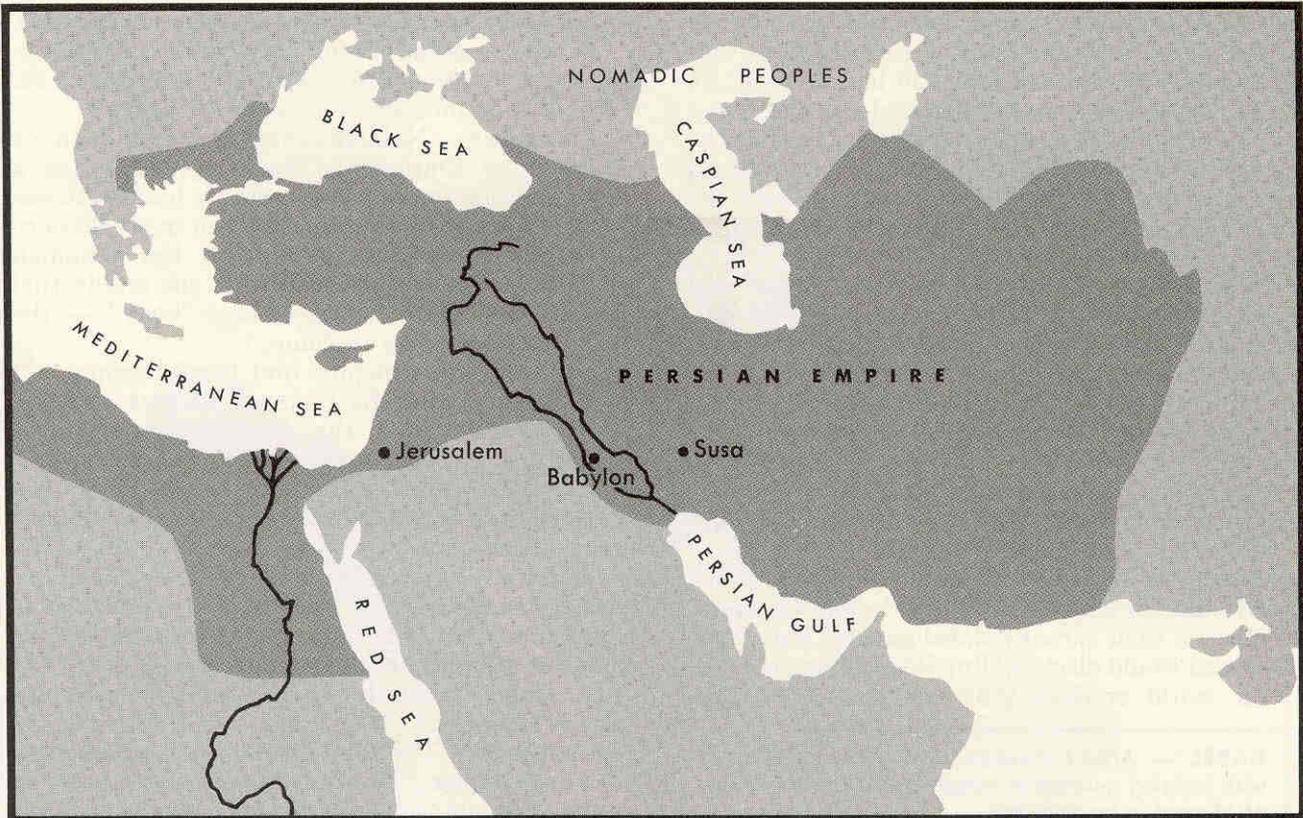
COMMENT: Nebuchadnezzar's Chaldean or Babylonian Empire had been represented as a *head* of GOLD (verse 38) — not only because it was first, but because it was superior in many ways to those which were to follow. Also, like a human "head," it was in a position to set the intellectual and moral course for the whole "body" — the empires which were to come.

We know from history that the following, *second* kingdom was the PERSIAN EMPIRE (539-330 B.C.), often called the Medo-Persian Empire because it was composed of the Medes and Persians. This *dual* monarchy composed of *two* nations was represented by the *two arms* and breast of SILVER.

It did not have the excellence of the "head" as did Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, just as silver is inferior to gold, but it was *stronger* militarily as silver is stronger than gold.

4. How was the third world-ruling empire portrayed? Dan. 2:32, 39.

COMMENT: The third kingdom was a "kingdom of brass [bronze]." In some ways it was inferior to both the Chaldean and the Medo-Persian



THE PERSIAN EMPIRE (539-330 B.C.)

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Empires, but *stronger* militarily than both, just as brass or bronze is much stronger than gold or silver. This was the GREEK kingdom (334-31 B.C.) of Alexander the Great of Macedonia, who conquered the Persian Empire.

Belly and thighs (or hips) were particularly appropriate to designate the habits and morals of the Greek Hellenistic civilization.

5. How was the fourth kingdom represented? Verse 33. Was it to be the strongest of all, yet have the least real value? Verse 40.

COMMENT: The fourth kingdom was the ROMAN EMPIRE (first emperor, 31 B.C.). Compared to the preceding kingdoms of gold, silver and brass, it exhibited the continuing tendency of man's civilization, under the invisible sway of the devil, to *degenerate* with regard to spiritual, moral and esthetic values, while at the same time increasing in misdirected military strength and technical capability to DESTROY. (Exactly what the "toes" of the image represent will be explained thoroughly in the next lesson.)

Nebuchadnezzar's Mistake — and Madness

God first pictured the succession of world-ruling governments from Nebuchadnezzar's time onward as a great imposing image of a man. This civilization

was a product of *man's mind and heart* (intelligence and emotions).

So proud was Nebuchadnezzar of the fact that he and his kingdom were its HEAD, he erected in Babylon in honor of himself an actual image of *gold*, and commanded all the people to worship it or face the penalty of a fiery death (Dan. 3).

However, Nebuchadnezzar was not allowed to remain in his haughty grandeur for long. He was suddenly cut down by God, and given the mind of a *wild beast*.

Let's notice exactly what happened to King Nebuchadnezzar:

1. Did Nebuchadnezzar have a second dream which troubled him greatly? Dan. 4:4-5. Could the magicians, astrologers, etc., interpret the dream? Verses 6-7.

2. What was the dream? Dan. 4:10-18. Who was the dream about? Verses 20-22. What was going to happen to King Nebuchadnezzar? Verses 24-26. What did Daniel urge the king to do so that the dream would not come to pass? Verse 27.

COMMENT: Note that the dream was given at first as a warning, with a chance for Nebuchadnezzar to repent and escape the dire punishment. God is always faithful to give man a chance to repent before He punishes.

3. How long was the king to live with the beasts



Historical Pictures Service

CYRUS THE GREAT — Persian ruler. Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., as prophesied by Isaiah over 150 years before (Isa. 44:28; 45:1).

of the field and eat grass like an ox, if he didn't repent? Verse 25.

COMMENT: "Seven times," in prophetic language, means seven years. Nebuchadnezzar was to live and act like a wild beast for seven literal years before his strange madness would pass.

Nebuchadnezzar, during his insanity, symbolized the real nature of the prophesied Gentile empires. No longer with any real understanding, cut off from God, ignorant of the *purpose* for man's being on earth, these empires, like *wild predatory beasts*, would fight and struggle, wage war, tear and devour, down through the centuries!

Since much of Biblical prophecy is **DUAL**, the seven years of Nebuchadnezzar's personal punishment became a *type* of the duration of this world's human governments and their wild beast-like ways. But in the antitypical fulfillment in the succession of human empires, each one of the "seven *times*" becomes not a literal year, but a symbolic or prophetic year of 360 days, and each such "day" itself stands for a literal year — according to the well-known principle given in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:4-6, which show that each symbolic day represents an actual year in fulfillment.

And so the "times" of God's punishment on the

Gentiles — allowing them to go their own way and reap the natural consequences of sin — would last for a period of 2520 *years* (7 x 360). During this time the world's kingdoms would act like wild beasts until they, too, finally learn, as Nebuchadnezzar did, that God Almighty rules in the affairs of men.

The next prophecy in the book of Daniel makes this period of punishment even plainer.

The Handwriting on the Wall

One of the most interesting revelations of the entire panorama of prophecy is found in the fifth chapter of Daniel. It also concerns the duration of the Gentile world empires which had been revealed previously.

Nebuchadnezzar had suffered a punishment for "seven times [years]." Yet his kingdom was kept safe while insane (Dan. 4:26, 36), after which he resumed his rule until his death. Following this, several other kings reigned and died (Jer. 27:6-7).

1. Did the time finally come for this first phase (Chaldean) of world government to end, and for the kingdom to be transferred to the Medes and Persians? Dan. 5:30-31. Did the still unsuspecting King Belshazzar that very night make a great feast for his lords and ladies? Verses 1-4. Then what happened? Verses 5-6.

2. Could the king's astrologers and wise men explain the strange writing on the wall? Verses 7-

8. But could Daniel? Verse 17. Be sure to read all of this chapter.

3. What was the writing and its meaning? Verses 25-28.

COMMENT: God inspired Daniel to reveal that the strange writing, "mene, mene, tekel, upharsin" was a *sentence* — a judgment. *Mene* was a word which meant "numbered" (verse 26). *Tekel* meant "weighed" (verse 27). And *peres* (the root of the word *upharsin*) meant "divided" (verse 28).

So Daniel interpreted these words to mean that Belshazzar's Chaldean Empire had received a divine sentence. Its days were "numbered." It had been "weighed in the balances," by God. And it was soon to be "divided" up among its enemies, the Medes and Persians!

This prophecy, however, like most of Bible prophecy, is DUAL. It not only referred to Belshazzar's kingdom and its impending doom; it also refers to the entire Babylonish system and its final destruction at Christ's return! (Dan. 2:34, 44.)

The fact that the word *mene* is used *twice* in the strange message suggests the *dual* nature of the prophecy. To understand its meaning and significance for today, we must do as the words themselves instruct us — we must "number," "weigh" and "divide." Here is how it may be done.

Each one of these words is a Hebrew measurement of weight. According to the message, we first "number" (add up or count up) these units of weight and "divide" (meaning of the word *peres*) them into *gerahs* — the smallest unit used by the Hebrews. A *mene* is the well-known *māneh*, which equaled 50 shekels. *Tekel* was simply the Babylonian spelling of the Hebrew *shekel*. *Peras* in Hebrew usage meant half a *māneh*, or 25 *shekels*. And each "shekel of the sanctuary" was itself equal to and may be "divided" into 20 *gerahs* (Ex. 30:13), the smallest unit of weight among the Hebrews. Thus:

one <i>mene</i>	= 50 shekels	= 1000 <i>gerahs</i>
another <i>mene</i>	= 50 shekels	= 1000 <i>gerahs</i>
half a <i>mene</i> (<i>peras</i>)	= 25 shekels	= 500 <i>gerahs</i>
a <i>tekel</i>	= 1 shekel	= 20 <i>gerahs</i>
	Total	2520 <i>gerahs</i>

Adding them all up, the number of *gerahs* is 2520 — the number of years of God's sentence on this Babylonian system!

(You may notice that the translators mistakenly supplied the word *shekel* in I Kings 10:16 and II Chronicles 9:15-16 instead of *bekah* which is only half as much. This has caused many to misunderstand the value of the shekel.)

The Vision of Four Beasts

Another revealing prophecy concerning world governments was given to Daniel. It is found in chapter seven.

1. What was the *description* of the four

"beasts" God showed Daniel in vision? Dan. 7:3-7. Did these four beasts clearly represent four *consecutive* bestial-minded, world-ruling kingdoms that were to arise? Verses 17, 23.

COMMENT: The word "king" is synonymous with kingdom, as is clearly shown in verses 17 and 23. Therefore Daniel 7 reveals that these "beasts" — wild animals which came into view one "after" another (verses 5-7) — symbolize *consecutive* world governments or world empires.

2. Was the first beast (kingdom or empire) like a lion (which is often called the "king of beasts") and like an *eagle* (the "king" of birds)? Verse 4. Did it have a man's heart (mind)? Same verse.

COMMENT: This beast corresponds to the "head of gold" of the figure Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream — the Chaldean Empire. When Nebuchadnezzar recovered his senses, the heart (mind) of a man again replaced his "beast" heart (Dan. 4:16, 34).

However, his kingdom did not continue. Some years later, in the days of his grandson Belshazzar, the Chaldean kingdom was overthrown and replaced by the Medo-Persian Empire, as we already learned.

3. What manner of beast symbolized the Medo-Persian Empire? Dan. 7:5.

COMMENT: The bear is notorious for its ponderous and unpredictable action, for crushing and devouring its prey. This bear devoured three kingdoms — Babylon, Lydia and Egypt — represented by the "three ribs."

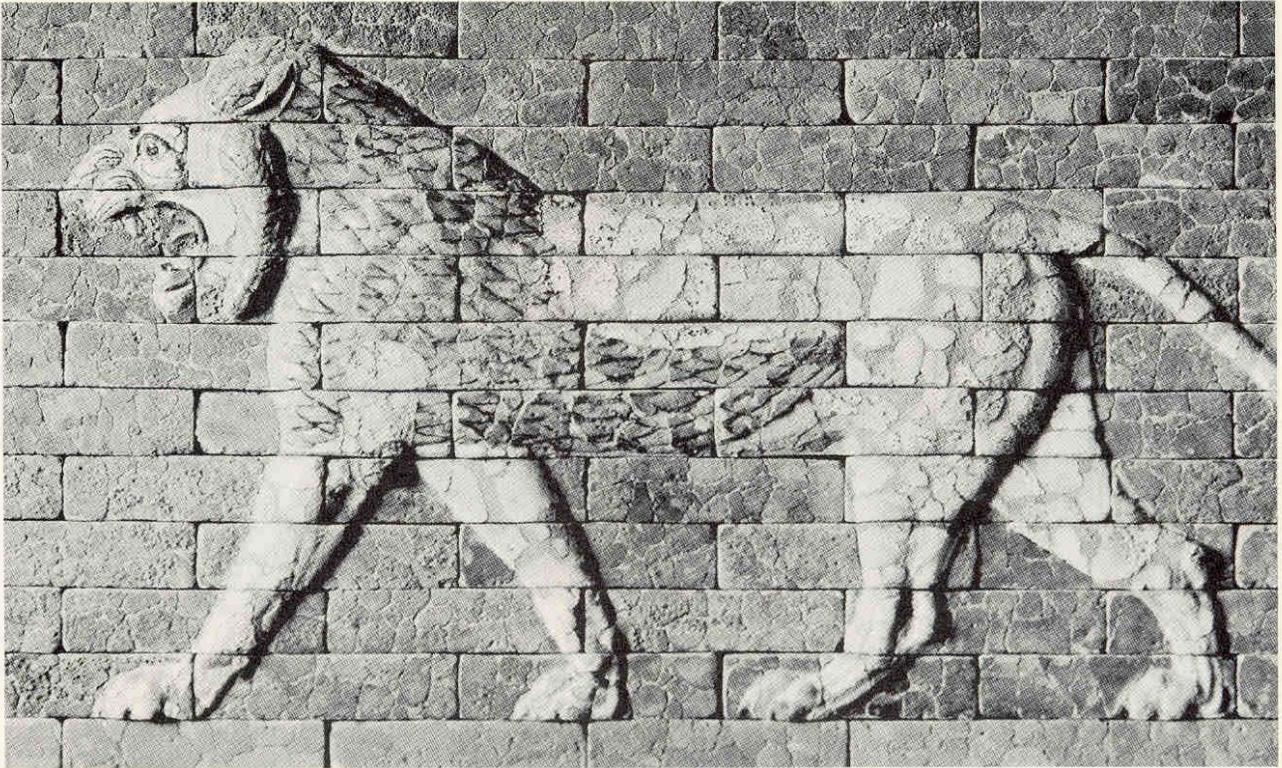
4. What animal represented the third "beast" kingdom? Verse 6.

COMMENT: The leopard is *swift*. This one was even swifter than usual, being pictured with four wings with which it skimmed over the ground. Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire in a lightning-like advance across Asia that the slow-moving Persians could not counter.

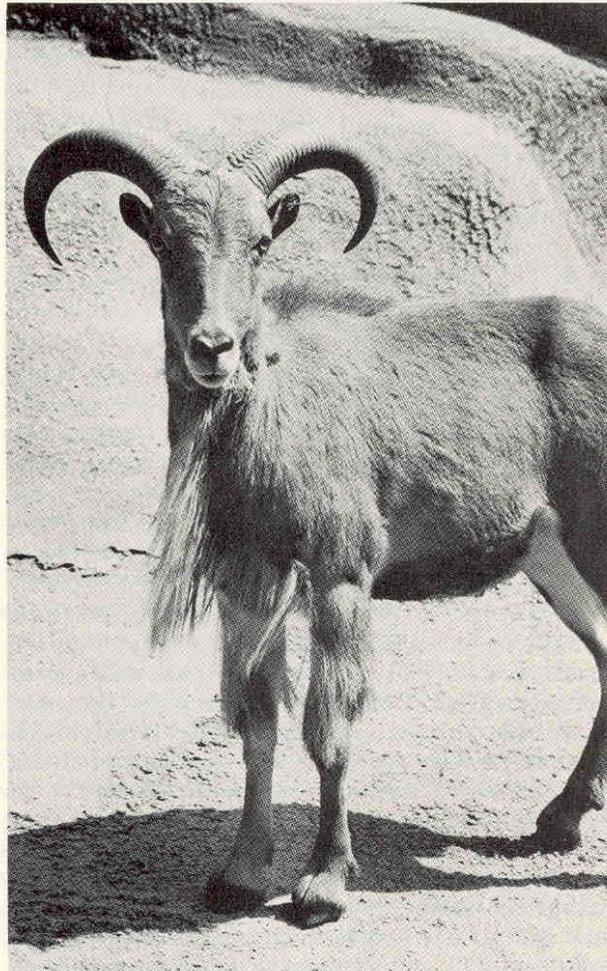
But Alexander lived only a short time after completing his swift conquest. Four of his generals divided his vast empire into four regions: Macedonia and Greece, Thrace and Western Asia, Syria and territory east to the Indus River, and Egypt. Therefore this beast is pictured as having *four heads*, each of which perpetuated Greek culture.

5. Was the fourth beast — the Roman Empire — "dreadful and terrible [looking], and *strong exceedingly*; and . . . DIVERSE [different] from all the beasts that were before it"? Dan. 7:7, 23. Notice the words "devour the *whole* earth" in Dan. 7:23. Now compare these verses with Daniel 2:40.

COMMENT: The Roman Empire, which the fourth beast represents, began at Rome, then spread out and gradually absorbed — "devoured and brake in pieces" — the four heads (divisions) of the preceding Grecian kingdom, occupied most of their territory, and conquered large additional areas in Africa and Europe. (The significance of



Above, Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston;
Left, A. Devaney, Inc. N.Y.



SYMBOLS OF EMPIRES — Above, well-preserved glazed brick lion in the ruins of Babylon is symbolic of the Chaldean Empire pictured in the prophecy of Daniel 7. Mountain goat at left is symbolic of the Grecian Empire (Dan. 8).

the “ten horns” of the fourth beast will be covered in the next lesson.)

The Ram and the He-Goat

Another amazing prophecy was revealed to Daniel in a vision (Dan. 8:1) in which he saw the rise of the Medo-Persian Empire and its destruction by the king of Greece.

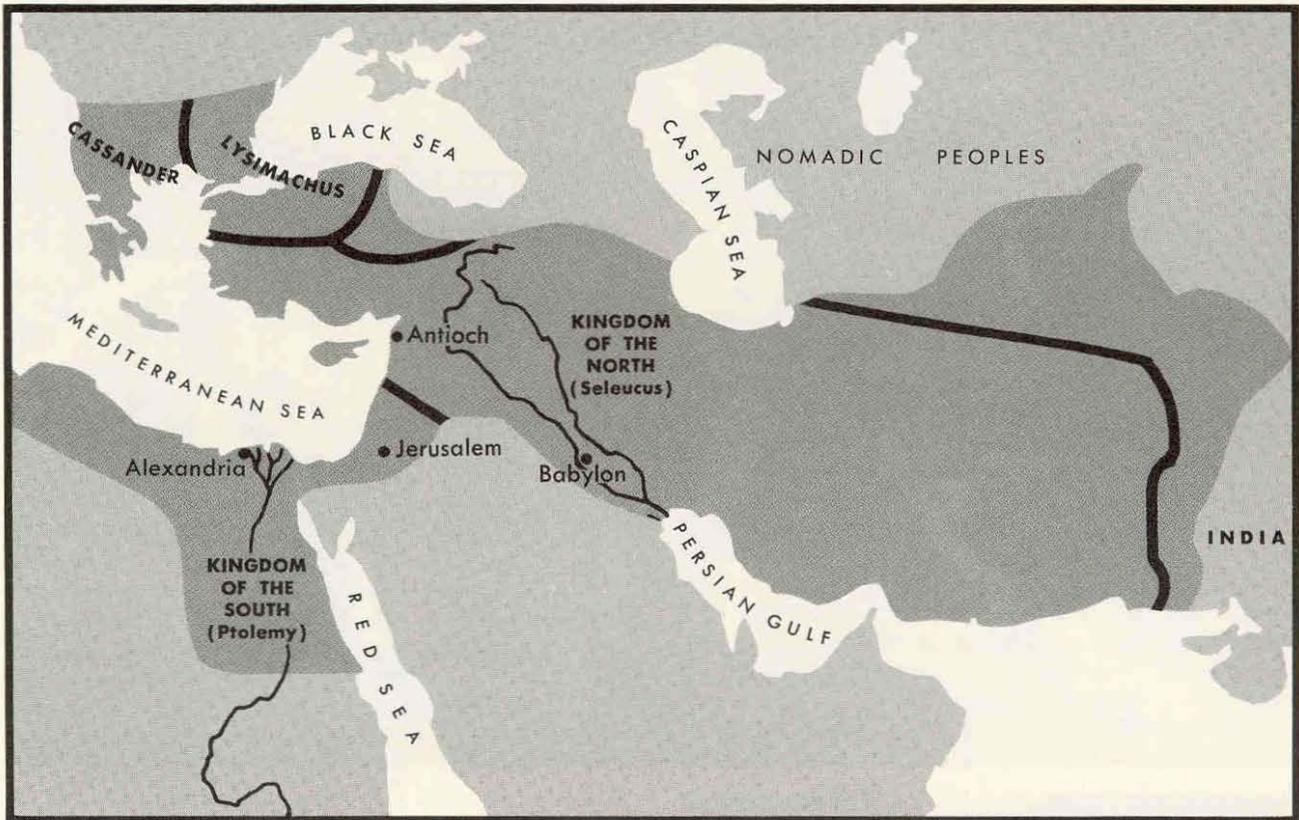
1. What symbol did God use to portray for Daniel the dual monarchy of the Medo-Persian Empire? Dan. 8:3-4, 20.

COMMENT: The ram was a common Persian symbol. Ancient Persian coins picture the head of a ram on one side, and a ram reclining on the other. In the vision, the horns and “pushiness” of the ram illustrated a characteristic feature of the Persian regime.

The horn which came up first represented the Medes, who had a major part in the destruction of Nineveh and Assyria a century earlier. The second horn, which came up *highest*, represented the Persians who later became more important than the Medes and dominated the empire.

2. Who attacked the ram as Daniel watched? Verses 5-7, 21.

COMMENT: The Greek or Aegean lands, sur-



THE GRECO-MACEDONIAN EMPIRE (334-31 B.C.)

Ambassador College Art

rounding the Aegean Sea, which was believed to have received its name from the Greek word for "goat," are here symbolized. A he-goat is just as stubborn, but more *active*, than a ram. This goat, representing the attack of Alexander the Great (verse 21), moved so fast he seemed not to touch the ground (verse 5). He broke the two horns of the ram (the Medo-Persian monarchy) and stamped it into the ground.

3. When the he-goat became very great, what happened to its one horn (Alexander)? Verse 8. How many horns took its place? Verses 8, 22.

COMMENT: These four horns were the governments of Macedonia, Thrace, Egypt and Syria (including most of the territory of the old Persian Empire) under Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus, respectively. This fourfold division of Alexander's empire was not finalized until 301 B.C., *over 200 years after Daniel's death!* (The heavy black line on the map above shows the approximate borders of these four kingdoms.)

Later, in 281 B.C., Seleucus overthrew Lysimachus and completely controlled the North. Thereafter the two dominant areas of the empire were the Kingdom of the South under the Ptolemies, and the Kingdom of the North under the Seleucidae (Dan. 11). The struggles between these two kingdoms, and other events actually extending down to our day — this 20th century — are

described in Daniel 11, which is the longest prophecy in the Bible. Suffice it to say here that Rome later swallowed up, took the place of, and for the purposes of this prophecy, *became* the "king[dom] of the north."

4. Did the vision of Daniel 8 also extend to the second coming of Christ? Verses 23-25. The expression "Prince of princes" in verse 25 refers to Christ.

5. Out of one of the four divisions (specifically, out of the "king[dom] of the north," the kingdom which was continued by the Roman Empire mentioned above), was a "little horn" to arise? Verses 9-11.

COMMENT: This will be explained further in the next lesson. But notice here that *partially* — and in type — the prophecy of the "little horn" was fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes, "king of the north" (175-163 B.C.).

More than just a king, this man was a great *religious leader*. He called himself by the name Epiphanes, meaning "god made visible." His wicked deeds are recorded in Daniel 11:31. According to various historical accounts, he entered the Jewish sanctuary at Jerusalem, polluted it with an idol, and offered swine's blood on the altar of God. He required all to support this unclean sacrifice, persecuted the Jewish religion, and burned the scrolls of the Law — all a *type* of what *another* is prophesied to do in our end-time!

John's Vision of the Roman Empire

Now let's move along to the Roman Empire itself, and to the times of the New Testament. The Apostle John, in his later years, was given a series of visions in which he saw this mighty empire pictured symbolically — its future fall, *resurrections* and final destruction.

So important is the knowledge of this empire to the people of God, that the Bible deals with it in great detail. For this prophetic "beast" is to *exist once again in our time!*

1. What was the description of the COMPOSITE BEAST God showed John in vision? Rev. 13:1-2.

COMMENT: Here, again, is described a very strange and mysterious-looking animal! God showed John a symbolic beast which looked as though it were composed of three different animals — a lion, a leopard, and a bear. It included the most powerful parts of the very animals by which God had pictured the Chaldean, the Persian and Grecian empires to Daniel. Therefore the beast John saw here represented the characteristics of all these empires in *one!*

When Daniel wrote — about 650 years before John's vision — three of the four empires pictured by the four beasts had not yet come to power. But by the time of John's vision — about 96 A.D. — all of these world empires, except one, had existed and fallen. Therefore, the beast John saw represented specifically that **FOURTH** empire then extant — the Roman Empire which had swallowed up all vestiges of the other three, conquering and occupying their former territories.

The Roman Empire was the greatest war-making machine the world had ever seen, for it had the *strongest part* of the "lion," the **HEAD** and jaws; it had all the massiveness and power of the most powerful part of the "bear," the **LEGS**; and it possessed the *swiftness*, the *cunning*, and the *cruelty* of Alexander's army, symbolized by the **BODY** of the "leopard."

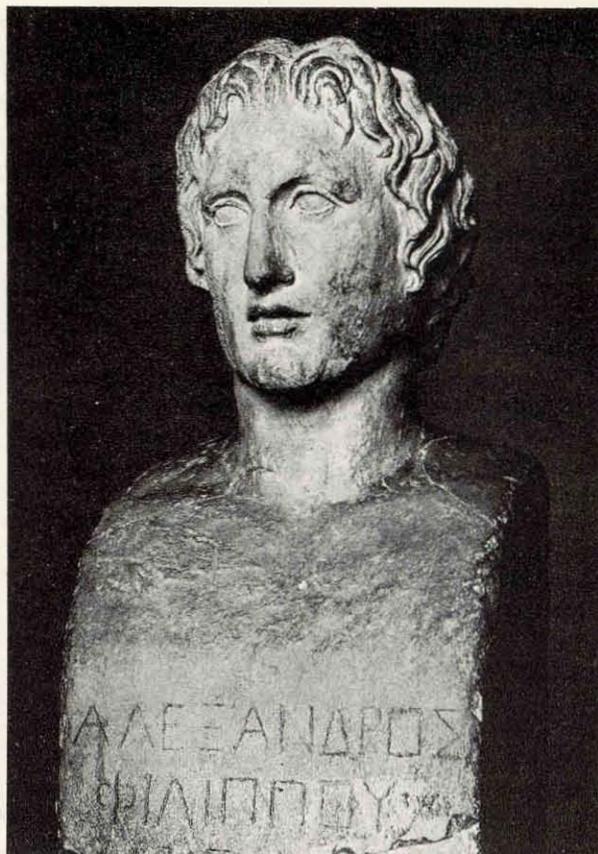
Notice further proof of the identity of this mysterious-looking beast:

2. How many heads and horns did this beast have? Rev. 13:1.

COMMENT: The Roman Empire, represented by the beast John saw in Revelation 13, had absorbed and therefore included the three empires before it which were described in Daniel 7. Thus this beast was seen with all six **HEADS** of the first three beasts (including the four heads of the third beast), plus its own. So this beast of Revelation 13 has **SEVEN HEADS**. It was the fourth beast Daniel saw, only, which had ten horns, and the beast John described had ten horns.

Therefore, if we allow the Bible to interpret the Bible, we must conclude that the beast of Revelation 13 is the **ROMAN EMPIRE!**

John, like Daniel, pictures this beast — not as a



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ALEXANDER THE GREAT — of Macedon. Greek letters on bust read: "Alexander [son] of Philip."

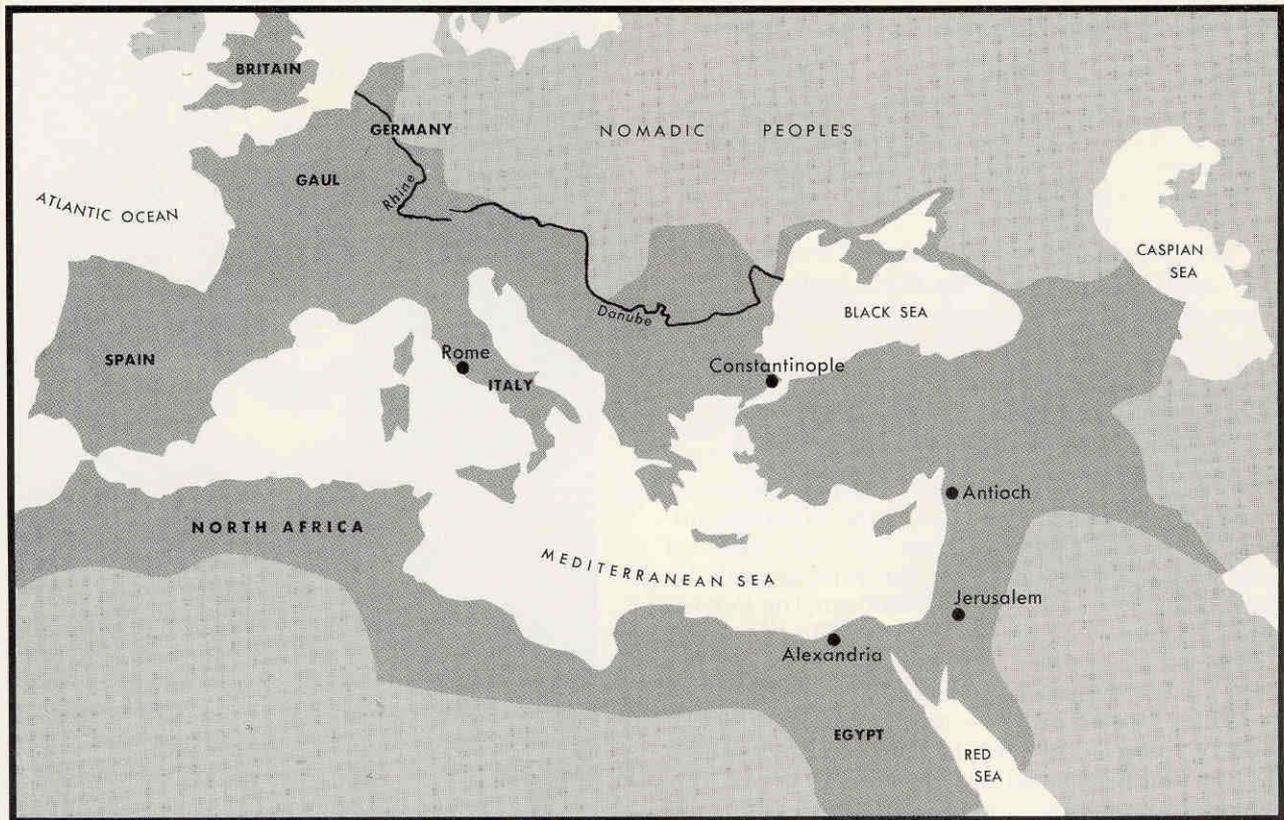
religious institution — but as a powerful government having a tremendous army. For "they worshipped the beast, saying... who is able to make *war* with him?" (Rev. 13:4.)

3. Did one of the heads of this great beast receive a *deadly* wound? Rev. 13:3. This wound was *fatal!* The head that was wounded died! But was the "deadly wound" healed? Same verse.

COMMENT: For administrative ease, the sprawling Roman Empire was *divided*, first in 285 A.D., and permanently during the fourth century. There were then, in effect, two "Roman" Empires, the Western with its capital at Rome, and the Eastern with its capital at Constantinople. (This fact is also pictured by the two legs of Nebuchadnezzar's great image described in Daniel 2.)

The Roman Empire in the west *ceased to exist* in the fifth century as a result of Germanic invasions. However, Emperor Justinian from the east "revived" the empire in 554 A.D. in what historians call the "Imperial Restoration." From that time on, through *successive revivals* till the time of Napoleon, that empire continued to exist! (A more detailed explanation of these events will be given in the next lesson.)

4. Was the devil the deadly motivating force



THE ROMAN EMPIRE (First emperor, 31 B.C.)

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which directed and empowered this strange-looking "beast"? Rev. 13:2; 12:9.

COMMENT: The Roman Empire was one of the greatest of the political instruments through which the god of this world, Satan the devil (II Cor. 4:4), has worked in deceiving and dominating mankind. For that reason Satan himself was represented to John as having seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 12:3). And in the near future Satan will once more guide a *final revival* of this same political system which had its root beginnings in the ancient "Babylon" of Nimrod! (This revival will be the main topic of our next lesson.)

Beast Persecutes God's People

1. After the beast's "deadly wound" was healed, how long was it to continue? Rev. 13:5. What principle did God reveal which enables us to determine the length of this symbolic period of time? Ezek. 4:4-6 and Num. 14:34.

COMMENT: Again, using the Biblical day-for-a-year principle, we find that "forty and two months" equal 1260 days (42 times 30), or 1260 years — the length of time God allowed the "healed" beast to continue. Thus the beast continued in existence from its restoration in 554 A.D. to the fall of Napoleon in 1814.

2. During this time (the Middle Ages), did the

"beast" have a great "mouth" which blasphemed God and everything holy? Rev. 13:5-6. Did it also persecute and "make war" on true Christians and *kill* them? Verses 7-10.

COMMENT: The early Romans (even before the days of the empire) had great reverence for the state. Then as the empire developed, the concept of emperor worship came to Rome from the eastern Mediterranean region, where deification of rulers had long been the custom. Animal sacrifices were performed to the honor of the emperor. His word became law in *religious* matters.

Regarding this emperor worship, Robinson's *Medieval and Modern Times*, a college textbook, says:

"The worship of the emperor: In a word, the Roman government was not only wonderfully organized . . . everyone was required to join in the worship of the emperor because he stood for the majesty and glory of the dominion . . . all were obliged, as good citizens, to join in the official sacrifices to the head of the state, as a god."

The head of state, the Roman Emperor, was worshipped "AS A GOD"! And thus the Roman world actually worshipped SATAN who inspired the emperor and empowered the empire (Rev. 13:2, 4).

But the *original* Roman Empire fell. When it was later revived, it had changed. It had become a

union of church and state! The “beast” — the empire — continued on into the Middle Ages actually making war (verse 7) on God’s people — demanding that they worship only according to the dictates of the established *state* religion.

This revived Roman Empire was represented as the “Kingdom of God on the earth.” Those who refused to accept or endorse the new state religion were persecuted, systematically hunted down, and killed. Thus the beast’s “mouth as a lion” (verse 2) not only spoke blasphemies (verses 5-6), claiming to be “God’s Kingdom” — but also *devoured* God’s servants as a figurative “lion,” being used of Satan the devil (compare I Peter 5:8).

But what of this *religion* which had allied itself with the “beast”? Was it also prophesied?

Yet Another Beast Appears

1. Did God, in vision, show John another “beast”? Rev. 13:11.

COMMENT: *Do not confuse* this beast with the first beast of Revelation 13 which represents the civil Roman Empire.

2. What does this second beast appear to be “like”? Rev. 13:11. What does a “lamb” symbolize in the Bible? John 1:29; Rev. 17:14. But is this beast’s *true character* that of the DEVIL? Rev. 13:11; 12:9.

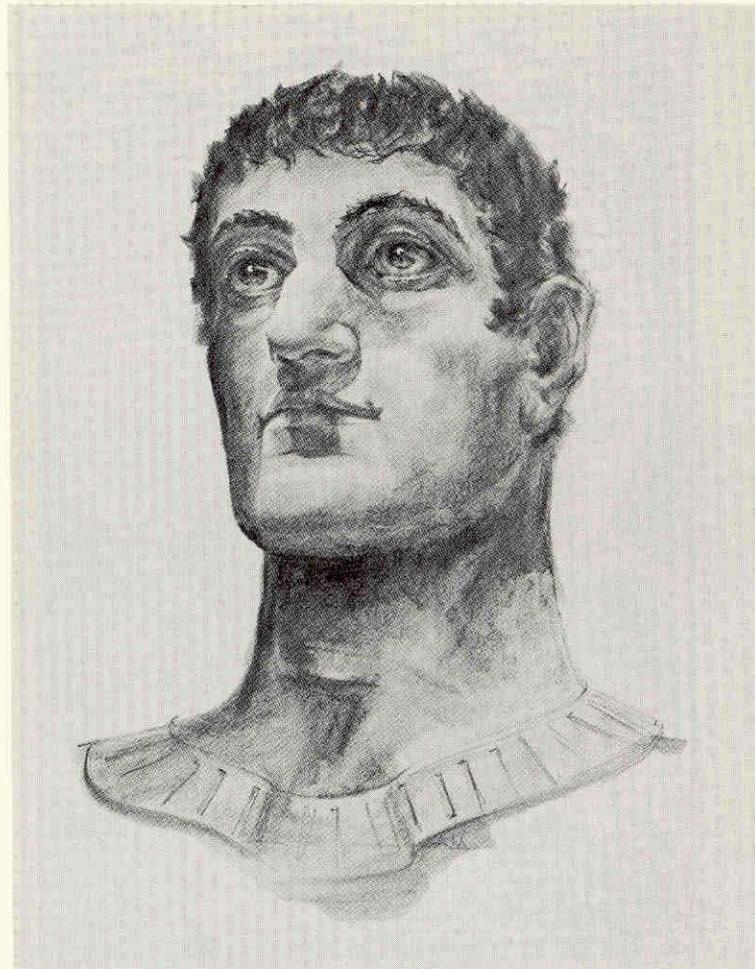
COMMENT: This beast is clearly a religious power masquerading *as* a lamb, claiming to represent Christ. It is *not* the United States as some erroneously assume. This beast began to arise in the days of the apostles (see II Cor. 11:13-15).

3. Was this second beast, this religious power, to utilize all of the power of the first beast before it — that is, all the power of the *civil government* of the Roman Empire? Rev. 13:12. Did the second beast also cause the world to continue to worship the first beast? Same verse.

COMMENT: The second beast, a great religious power, arose *after* the Roman Empire and dominated the empire, causing the people to continue the *same pagan practices* as before, but now under the guise of “Christianity” (see II Cor. 11:13-15 once again). History tells us the emperors became subservient to the “new” religion. And the empire itself continued to be regarded as the “kingdom of God on the earth.”

But let’s understand how and when this second beast began to exercise the first beast’s power. Turn to and read Revelation 13:3. During the days of Emperor Constantine (313-337 A.D.), who first issued an “edict of toleration” which in effect put the emperor’s blessing on “Christianity,” the church began to grow in authority and power. The Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) bolstered that newly won power and millions of pagans began flocking into the ranks of the established church.

Then, following the death of Constantine,



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EMPEROR CONSTANTINE — The man who commanded Sunday observance, and later legalized “Christianity” in the Roman Empire — establishing it as the state religion.

Roman imperial authority in the Western Roman Empire — including the city of Rome — began to weaken. But as that authority weakened, the bishop of Rome began to assume temporal power as well as spiritual rulership over the people of Italy (see Langer, *Encyclopedia of World History*, p. 123).

After the *first* beast — the Roman civil government — received a “deadly wound” when the barbarians overran the Western Roman Empire and the city of Rome in the fifth century, this religious government increasingly became the only stable power to which the people of Italy could look. After the “deadly wound” was “healed” by Justinian’s restoration of the Roman government in 554 A.D., this religious government began, step-by-step, to achieve *dominance over* the civil empire.

Prior to 554 A.D., Justinian, emperor of the Eastern division of the Roman Empire, had



Pip Photo

EMPEROR JUSTINIAN — The ruler who is reported to have thought of himself as a second Constantine in exalting the power of the Roman church. Politically, he healed the “deadly wound” of the first beast of Revelation 13.

written a letter to the bishop of Rome acknowledging that bishop’s supremacy over the leaders of the church in other regions: “It having been at all times our great desire to preserve the unity of your apostolic chair, and the constitution of the holy churches. . . . Therefore we have made no delay in subjecting and uniting to your holiness all the priests of the whole East. . . . We cannot suffer that anything which relates to the state of the church, however manifest and unquestionable, should be moved without the knowledge of your holiness, who is THE HEAD OF ALL THE HOLY CHURCHES: for in all things as we have already declared, we are anxious to increase the honor and authority of your apostolic chair” (*Codex Justinianus*, lib. 1, tit. 1).

About the same time, Justinian also wrote to Epiphanius, bishop of Constantinople, referring to the bishop at Rome as the “head of all bishops and

the true and effective *corrector of heretics*” (George Croly, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 170).

Justinian then set about making his state religion supreme in the East (now called the Byzantine Empire), and *uprooting* the barbarian kingdoms of heretical Arian belief which had been established on former Roman soil. It is said that Justinian thought of himself as a second Constantine in thus exalting the power of the Roman Church.

It should be noted here that the bishop of Rome also received *political authority* — he became a “king” over a considerable portion of Central Italy which was thereafter known as the Papal States. This *political* government was symbolized by one of the second beast’s “two horns” (Rev. 13:11). Now notice the meaning of the second horn.

Religious Government Based on Civil Pattern

1. Did the second beast of Revelation 13 make an “image” of the first beast? Verse 14. Notice what this “image” of the first beast really is:

COMMENT: According to the dictionary, an image is a “copy, representation, model, semblance, counterpart.” It is a “likeness.”

So here were religious leaders making an image — a model, a copy — of the civil Roman government! They patterned their *ecclesiastical* government after the most efficient political government they knew — after the Roman civil government, with its provinces, etc.

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “The Roman Church as a whole preserves in the spiritual sphere the spirit and much of the organization of the Roman Empire, so [also] the administration of the Curia carries on the tradition of Roman government” (11th ed., art. “Roman Catholic Church”). Much the same thing might be said of its college of cardinals who are the “princes and senators of the Church” (*ibid*).

In the article “Church History,” the 11th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* speaks further of “the metropolitan system, or the grouping of the churches of a province under a single head, who was usually the bishop of the capital city. . . . The [Roman] Church thus followed in its organization the political divisions of the empire. . . . Canon 12 of the Council of Chalcedon [451 A.D.] . . . forbids more than one metropolitan see in a province; also canon 17 of the same council: ‘And if any city has been or shall hereafter be newly erected by imperial authority, let the arrangement of ecclesiastical parishes follow the political and municipal forms’” (emphasis ours).

States Myer’s *Ancient History*, page 582: “. . . the church set up, within the Roman Empire, an ecclesiastical state [or government] which, in its constitution and its administrative system, was shaping itself upon the imperial model.”

As prophecy foretold, so history relates that during the days of the Roman Empire, a religious system grew strong, prevailed, and made a governmental model, a religious counterpart, an "image" of the civil Roman Empire. Thus the second "horn" of the second beast of Revelation 13 refers to its *religious* government.

2. What was the second beast prophesied to *cause* to be done to those who would not "worship" (serve, reverence, honor) the "image" it had made of the first beast? Rev. 13:15.

COMMENT: This was done by condemning religious opponents for "heresy," then turning them over — it was termed "relaxing them" — to the *civil* authority (that of the emperor) for punishment!

Daniel's "Little Horn"

1. What was prophesied to come up among the ten horns of the *fourth* beast in Daniel's vision? Dan. 7:8, 20. What did it do to God's saints — true Christians? Dan. 7:21. Was this "horn" somehow *different* — more durable — than the other ten horns? Verse 20.

COMMENT: This extra horn, which was not one of the ten horns but came up *among* them, represents the same *religious* power or government of the "second beast" described in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. The ten horns, as we will see in the next lesson, represented successive revivals of the *civil* Roman government.

2. While speaking great things against God Almighty, did this "little horn" even claim authority to *change* God's "times and laws"? Dan. 7:25. What is one major "time" and "law" that has been "changed"? Ex. 20:10 — note the word "*seventh*."

The "Mark" of the Beast

1. What did the second beast of Revelation 13 cause people to receive in their foreheads and right hands? Rev. 13:16-17. What was this "mark"? See comment.

COMMENT: The original Roman Empire, by authority of Emperor Constantine, had required empire-wide observance of Sunday — the day of the sun — the first day of the week. It was a requirement of the civil government of the empire, the "beast," and thus became a sign or "mark" of the people of the Roman Empire.

2. Is the seventh-day Sabbath called the "sign" of the true people of God? Ex. 31:13-17. But did the religious government — the second beast of Revelation 13 — *accept* instead and *further* the "mark" of the beast — the observance of the day of the sun? Revelation 13:16-17 once again.

COMMENT: Thus the "mark" of the beast stands identified as the observance of Sunday as the day of rest and worship! Sunday observance

was imposed on the Roman world by the emperor of the "beast," and thus became its "mark." All residents of the empire were forced to conform, whereas previously only the worshippers of Mithra, whose cult was imported into the Roman Empire from the East, and those who professed a counterfeit form of Christianity (II Cor. 11:13-15) observing both Saturday and Sunday, had taken any notice of Sunday observance. (For more information about the true Sabbath Day, write for our free Sabbath literature.)

The "Number" of the Beast

1. What else besides the "mark" would qualify people to buy or sell in the kingdom of the beast — the Roman Empire? Rev. 13:17. What is this mysterious number? Verse 18.

COMMENT: One had in some way to bear the "mark," the "name" or the "number" of the *beast* in order to conduct business — to "buy and sell."

Notice that this mysterious number, 666, is the number of the beast's *name*. It is also the number of a *man*. We are told to *COUNT* this number — that is, add it up. Here is how that may be done:

Most of us are familiar with Roman numerals. Instead of our present system of Arabic numbers, the ancient Romans used letters as numbers. But many do not know that the Greek language, in which this numeric identification in the book of Revelation was written, also used alphabetical letters for numbers — the same letters that were used for spelling words *and* names.

Now the name of the beast was "Roman" or "Latin." Originally, the city of Rome was settled by the people known as *Latins*. The Latins received their name from their original ancestor, founder and king, Lateinos. His name, the name of a MAN, also became the name of the people — Latin.

The Greek values of the letters composing the word Lateinos — Latin -- are as follows: *L* is 30, *A* is 1, *T* is 300, *E* is 5, *I* is 10, *N* is 50, *O* is 70, *S* is 200. These numbers add up to exactly 666!

The expression "the Latin kingdom," as written in Greek, also adds up to the same total.

Thus, the "number" of the "beast" of Revelation further identifies the beast as the Roman Empire!

(To be continued in Lesson 11)

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

- | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 5. A | 9. D | 13. T | 17. D |
| 2. C | 6. B | 10. D | 14. T | 18. I |
| 3. C | 7. C | 11. F | 15. F | 19. A |
| 4. A | 8. B | 12. F | 16. F | 20. H |

Rate Yourself

- 19-20 correct excellent
 16-18 correct good
 13-15 correct fair

TEST YOUR MEMORY

This quiz is designed to help you remember the important facts you learned in the lesson. You simply circle or underline each correct answer. After you've finished the test, check your choices with the correct answers listed on page 15, and then rate yourself.

1. Why study prophecy? **A.** Only because it is an interesting study. **B.** Because of the historical facts we can learn from fulfilled prophecies. **C.** To titillate our curiosity about the future. **D.** To learn God's message for our time.

2. A prophetic outline of human governments was **A.** known to all generations from the time of Adam. **B.** given through each of the major prophets of the Old Testament. **C.** revealed through Daniel and the Apostle John. **D.** meant only for King Nebuchadnezzar to understand.

3. Why did God cause King Nebuchadnezzar to have prophetic dreams? **A.** To encourage him. **B.** Just to let him know the future. **C.** To begin teaching him that God Almighty rules in the affairs of men. **D.** To prove to him that God exists.

4. God **A.** revealed the future political configuration of Western civilization through prophetic dreams and visions. **B.** meant the "head of gold" of Nebuchadnezzar's image to be the beginning of His divine Kingdom. **C.** revealed that the Gentile nations would carry on His divine rule on earth. **D.** made it plain that human governments would improve as time went on.

5. Nebuchadnezzar's seven years of madness symbolized the **A.** wild beast attitude of the Gentile empires to come. **B.** duration of Israel's punishment. **C.** duration of Judah's punishment. **D.** nothing of prophetic significance.

6. The handwriting on the wall in Belshazzar's palace **A.** symbolized only the events of that night. **B.** had a dual message. **C.** fixed a time period of an additional 1290 days for the duration of the Babylonian Empire. **D.** was composed of *unknown* words.

7. Which of the following is not one of the four main parts into which the empire of Alexander the Great was divided after his death? **A.** Egypt. **B.** Syria. **C.** India. **D.** Macedonia.

8. The prophecies of Daniel and John **A.** conflict. **B.** overlap. **C.** show no relationship. **D.** were written about the same time.

9. The Roman Empire **A.** became the Kingdom of the South. **B.** fought all the other empires pictured by the four beasts of Daniel seven. **C.** was militar-

ily the weakest of the series of empires. **D.** swallowed up and included the strongest parts of all the preceding world empires.

10. The beast which had the "deadly wound" **A.** was definitely not the Roman Empire. **B.** had 11 horns. **C.** died from its wound and never existed again. **D.** was "revived" in 554 A.D. by Emperor Justinian and lasted until 1814 A.D.

TRUE OR FALSE

11. The beast with seven heads (Rev. 13) symbolizes an ecclesiastical institution. **T F**

12. After its revival in 554 A.D., the Roman Empire ceased to persecute true Christians. **T F**

13. The second beast described in Revelation 13 symbolizes a religious power. **T F**

14. The second beast of Revelation 13 caused an "image" to be made of the first beast — an ecclesiastical government patterned after the civil Roman Empire. **T F**

15. The "mark" of the beast had nothing to do with Sunday observance. **T F**

MATCHING

Draw a line from each phrase in the left-hand column to the correctly related phrase in the right-hand column.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 16. Image of a man | A. Medo-Persian Empire |
| | B. Assyrian Empire |
| 17. Head of gold | C. Egypt |
| | D. Babylonian Empire |
| 18. Legs of iron | E. U.S.S.R. |
| | F. Human government |
| 19. Bear | G. U.S.A. |
| | H. Macedonian Empire |
| 20. He-goat | I. Divided Roman Empire |
| | J. Communist China |