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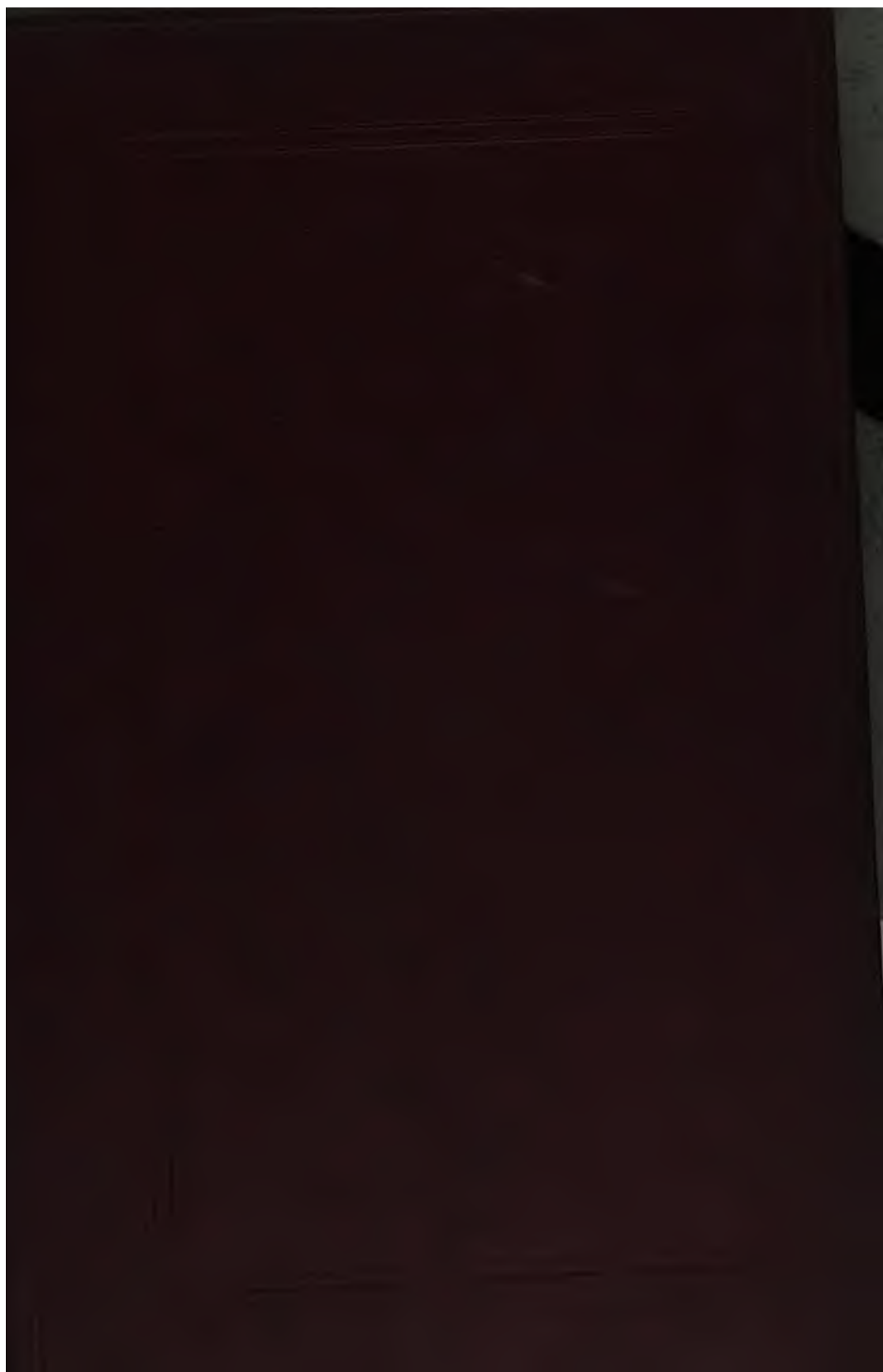
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# THE PROPHET DANIEL EXPLAINED

IN A SERIES OF READINGS FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

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By the late Professor Gussen, of Geneva.

“Whoso readeth Daniel the Prophet, let him understand.”—*Matt.* xxiv, 15.

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TRANSLATED BY  
MARGARET BLACKSTONE.



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PREFACE BY TRANSLATOR.

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**T**HOSE who are acquainted with PROFESSOR GAUSSEN'S Work in the Original, do not need any recommendation of it: but as the French edition is out of print, this Translation may be found useful; especially for those persons not familiar with the French language, and for the instruction of English youth. The lamented Author did not live to complete the Book of Daniel; but another volume might be translated, should the Public desire it. The Translator commends the present volume to the blessing of God upon her endeavors.

M. B.

*Ovingdean,*

*March 6th, 1873.*



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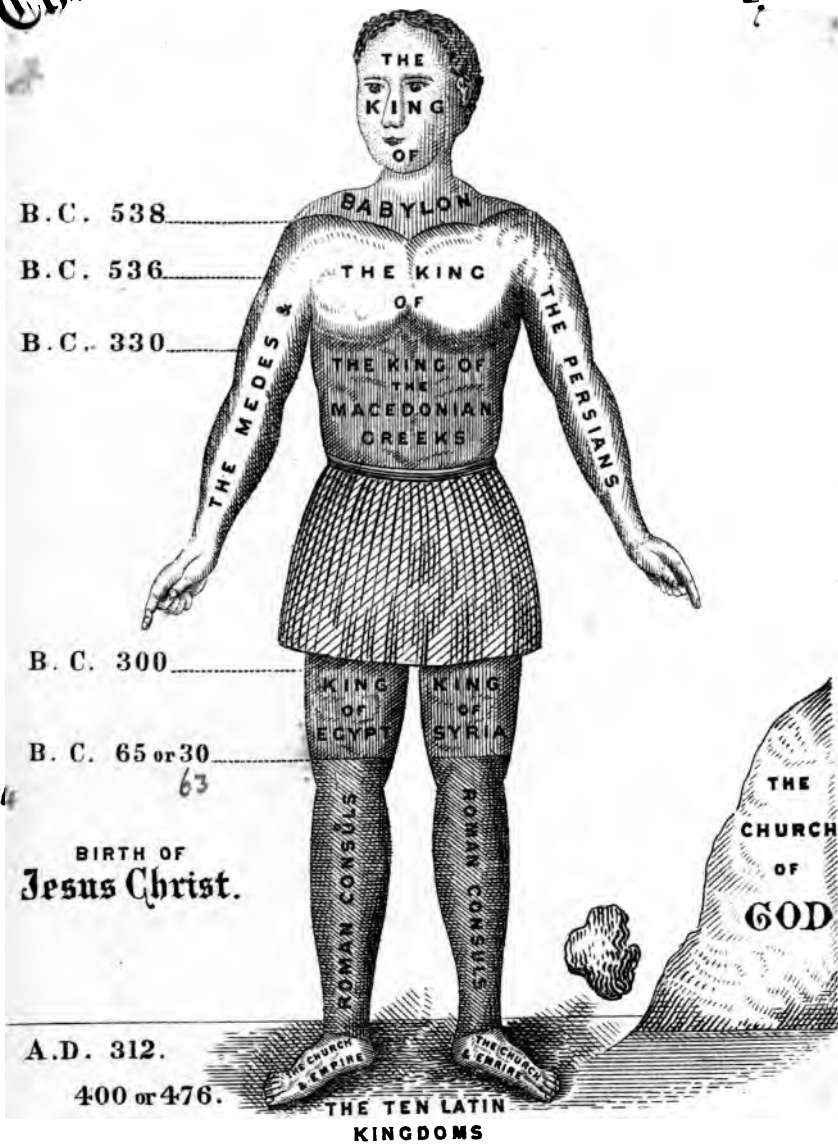
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# The Vision of Nebuchadnezzar

B.C. 605.



B.C. 538

B.C. 536

B.C. 330

B.C. 300

B.C. 65 or 30

BIRTH OF  
Jesus Christ.

A.D. 312.

400 or 476.

THE TEN LATIN  
KINGDOMS

THE  
CHURCH  
OF  
GOD

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# THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

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## LESSON I.

DANIEL I. 1—9.

**MAY** this lesson begin in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost! Amen.

We begin to-day the holy Book of Daniel. Give me your full attention; let me see its expression in your faces; and look reverently on him who speaks to you of the word of the living God. Myself also, dear children, on opening this ancient and sacred book of prophecy, I lift up my heart to the God who inspired His servant Daniel to write it 2400 years ago; and I entreat Him to give to all of us the help of the same Spirit: to me, that I may discover its true meaning; and to you, that you may understand it, and may learn to pray, believe, and obey, as from his early years Daniel had done, who, in chapter x. 11, 19, is called "greatly beloved" by God. In fact, one of the reasons which made me fix on this Book of Daniel, was that his piety is shown from childhood. I thought that his words and his example would have an especial charm for you, on hearing that at the age of thirteen or fourteen, his young heart had already turned toward Heaven, and given itself to God's service.

It is thought that he was only in his fourteenth year when the King of Babylon besieged Jerusalem, slaughtered his relations, and took him prisoner. At such a tender age he was weighed in the balance and not found wanting. He had seen the terrible Chaldean cavalry appear before the city of his fathers; he had been a witness of all the horrors of a long siege; he had been led captive, far from the country of his childhood, into an idolatrous land, ignorant of its language, and into a house of bondage. Daniel's condition must besides have been much more painful to him than it would have been to you; for

he was one of the royal family. Imagine how unhappy you would be if foreign armies—breaking down our walls, slaughtering our fellow-citizens, and burning our city—were to seize some of you, and take you, loaded with chains, into the heart of Austria, or Poland, or Siberia, to serve foreign masters. But yet it was much worse for Daniel; he had hitherto lived in the midst of grandeur; he was the child of kings; and it is thought that the great Hezekiah was his grandfather. Could it have been believed a short time before the arrival of the Babylonian army, that this child, hitherto the object of so much love and care, would be so early made acquainted with the most frightful events and the bitterest sorrows of this life?

Before going farther, I want to tell you something about these dealings of God. He often sees fit that here below, children should bear the consequences of their fathers' sins. Daniel's being carried captive into the land of Shinar, was a fulfilment of the judgement pronounced long before by God against his grandfather, Hezekiah. He, in the days of Isaiah, being sick unto death, but wishing to get well, turned his face towards the wall, and poured out his heart in fervent prayer. Then God, moved with pity, told him, through Isaiah, that He would add unto his days fifteen years. Yet very soon afterwards Hezekiah fell into sin. The king of Babylon, who lived many hundred miles from Jerusalem, having sent ambassadors to congratulate him on his recovery, he showed them all his treasures. I think that if you had been in the palace, you would have walked through its rooms, and admired the riches that were in them, like the ambassadors, without perceiving that something very evil was in the heart of Hezekiah. But sin is often invisible, because it is in the thoughts, which God alone can see. And Scripture tells us that He saw in the heart of this king feelings of pride and ingratitude, which highly displeased Him; for He looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart; and when He thus judges our inward motives, He never does so without at the same time taking account of the instructions and favours which we have received. Consequently, the Almighty had declared that Hezekiah's sin should not go without punishment; that a great lesson should be given to his country, to his family, and to all future ages; that his treasures, of which he was too proud, should be carried away by the king of Babylon; and that even his sons should become slaves to the idolatrous monarchs, whose admiration he had so foolishly sought to obtain. Read Isaiah xxxix, and 2 Chronicles xxxii, 25-31.

Thus it was that young Daniel had to bear the iniquity of his fathers. But do you think this unjust? Oh, no. Do you remember what children should say who are unhappy, like Daniel, through circumstances, in which the faults of a father or grandfather may have placed them? (I told you a few days ago, when speaking of Achan's sin.) They ought to say three things. The first?—O my God! I am very unhappy; but I have deserved by my sins to be a thousand times more so.—Doubtless! In this way, Daniel might say, "I have no right to complain, for I am a sinner, O my God! Thou hast sent me into Chaldea; but I deserved for my faults to go rather into hell; and Thou hast delivered me from it by Thy mercy." Such will always, dear children, be the first thought of Christians suffering through the faults of others; they will begin by humbling themselves, and recalling their own ingratitude; they will be ready to receive everything from *that* Hand, which is full of justice as well as of mercy.

But further, what should be their second reflection?—O my God! I am very unhappy; but Thou wilt certainly turn this great affliction to the good of my soul. Yes, dear children, it often happens that in the time of our sharpest sorrow, we are most blest by God; for then He gives us holy thoughts; we take up our Bible; we find our treasure and our refuge therein; we learn humility, we hold by the Cross; we come back to prayer; and we say, with David, "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, and to whom the Lord imputeth not sin."

Did not God thus favour Daniel in a land of strangers? Yes; never was any young man more helped, nor more blessed by Him, than Daniel. Truly he became in his captivity the holiest of God's servants, as we shall presently see. While submissively enduring it, he asked his Heavenly Father to sanctify this affliction; and certainly, in the last day, he will have greater cause of thankfulness for those years of sorrow, than for all those of his prosperity.

But now tell me the last of the three thoughts which should be in your mind if God were to see fit to send you, like Daniel, trials in consequence of others' sins.—O my God! I am very unhappy; but Thou wilt comfort me Thyself before long. Yes, but "a little while," and Jesus Christ will come and wipe away all the tears of His faithful servants. His reward is with Him; and the sufferings of the present time are not to be weighed against the glory which shall be revealed

in the children of God. We are only in this world for a very short time; and you know where we shall go if we have served God?—To Heaven surely.

If then we are going to Heaven, may we not greatly rejoice even in the midst of the severest trials? If a young Englishman were in America, in the far west, away from all belonging to him, and heard suddenly that he was recalled to his country and his family, and that all the joy which a loving heart can expect on earth, was preparing for him, would he not rejoice, even though to get back from the shores of America he had to make the voyage in a bad ship, and to pass many uncomfortable days and nights, with bad food, bad clothing, and bad companions? do you think he would be unhappy, and complain of his lot? would he wish to be anywhere else? No, no! He would say, I am the most fortunate of men. I am going home: my country, my family, all will be restored to me! No more crying nor sorrow, for those whom I love will soon wipe away all tears from my eyes!

Remember then, my children, these three thoughts, and these three consolations. Before entering on the explanation of this wonderful book, I think it well to make you observe what Holy Scripture tells us of Daniel's character; because you will then surely read more attentively the prophecies of this servant of God. I do not think that in the whole Bible there is anyone of whom the Holy Spirit has spoken more honourably; for he seems to place him higher than all the men of old. I will quote some proofs of this. Turn first to the tenth chapter, and read what the Angel Gabriel calls him in the 11th and 19th verses. Then open the Book of Ezekiel. It will show you what exceeding respect this man of God (who though living at the same time with Daniel was yet many years older) had for our prophet. Let us rather say, it will show us how highly God Himself esteemed His servant. Read aloud chapter xxviii. 2, 3, where Ezekiel reproves the pride of the King of Tyre, speaking to him from the Lord.

Thus you see, that "to be wiser than Daniel," was in the opinion of Ezekiel, and the men of his time, to have reached the summit of wisdom and knowledge—to be at least the first of men; and take notice, that it was in the thirty-third year of Daniel, that Ezekiel pronounced these words on the banks of Chebar. But here are others still more striking, if possible: *Ezekiel* xiv. 13 - 20. Pray observe with what a rare measure of grace the Lord must have filled the heart

of Daniel, before he caused such words to be spoken of him in his life-time—nay, even in his eighteenth year only! He places him beside the two greatest men of prayer that had ever lived. He, in order to find in sacred history two persons to compare with him, finds Job, who lived nine hundred, and Noah, seventeen hundred years before him. Think what Daniel must have been, for God thus to think of him; still more, thus to speak of him in his lifetime by the mouth of a prophet.

Well dear children, you see what the child Daniel became. Unhappy, it is true, in his youth; taken from his parents, and brought as a captive into a strange land. But what was the result? It was that he gave his heart so much the more fully to the Lord his God; that he loved his holy Word deeply, and studied it earnestly; God giving him more and more grace.

If then there should be here among those who listen to me, any children tried by pain, or called to mourn, I entreat them to do the same; let them read their Bible, like Daniel, and let them hope in the same God.

In order that you may fully understand the Book of Daniel, you must be able to form an exact idea both of the *place* which he inhabited, and of the *time* when he lived. What is the science called which treats of the knowledge of *places*?—Geography. And of the knowledge of *times*?—Chronology. I shall then require often your attention to the geography and chronology of the holy Book of Daniel. Its *time* was in the days of the great Nebuchadnezzar; and the *place* was the far-off country of Babylon, on the banks of the Euphrates. Let us speak of the *time* first. The Jewish nation had become so corrupted, that God resolved to overthrow their city, to burn their temple, and to condemn their miserable remnant to seventy years of slavery and exile in a distant country. The prince by whom God chose to punish them was the emperor of Babylon, the great Nebuchadnezzar, a sort of Bonaparte. But, at the same time that God determined to chastise them by this warrior, he prepared an immense comfort for them in those long years of their captivity, in the person of Daniel. For the chronology of this book, I have written a short table of the chief secular epochs of history; and as for its geography, ask to be shown in a map of Asia, on the banks of the Euphrates, far away from Jerusalem, the province of Babylon, also called the land of

Shinar, in the country of Chaldea. Now look at my table of dates. I have put in round numbers the most useful ones. What is a century?—One hundred years.—The passage of the Red Sea took place B. C. 1500 : how many centuries were there between Moses and Jesus Christ?—Fifteen.—In what year before Christ was the Temple built?—In 1006.—Now we will come to Daniel and the Jews' captivity at Babylon : how many years from that event to the Christian Era?—Six hundred and six.—I have marked also some of the principal events which it is well to remember between Daniel and Jesus Christ. What happened sixty-four years after Jesus Christ?—St. Paul was beheaded at Rome.—And six years afterwards?—The Jews having revolted against the Romans, the Emperor Titus burned their city, and dispersed them over the world.—They are still scattered : but how long has this dispersion lasted?—Eighteen hundred years.—And when will it end?—When the time shall come in which, according to the promises, all Israel shall be saved.

#### TABLE OF DATES (FIRST).

YEARS  
B.C.

BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

- 2000.—Noah had just died ; and Abraham was just born.  
 1700.—Jacob had been in Egypt six years.  
 1500.—The Israelites passed through the Red Sea, nine years after ;  
 and the Jordan fifty years after.  
 1200.—Siege of Troy, six years later.  
 1100.—Samuel was forty years old.  
 1000.—David had been dead fifteen years ; and Solomon's Temple  
 dedicated six years.  
 900.—Elijah preaches.  
 800.—Jonah prophesies.  
 700.—Isaiah near his end.  
 600.—Daniel has been six years at Babylon.  
 500.—Jews restored to Jerusalem thirty-six years previously ;  
 second Temple consecrated.  
 400.—Malachi, the last prophet, died.  
 300.—Greek Empire divided into four.  
 200.—Romans begin to destroy it.  
 100.—Cæsar born six years after Pompey.  
 65.—Pompey conquers Syria ; and two years later, Jerusalem.  
 40.—Herod, descended from Esau, appointed King of the Jews,  
 by the Romans.

**YEARS**                    **DURING THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CENTURY.**  
**A.D.**

- 14.—Cæsar Augustus dies, and Cæsar Tiberius succeeds him.  
 24.—Pontius Pilate was, two years later, appointed governor of Judea.  
 34.—Jesus Christ was crucified.  
 44.—Herod Agrippa, king of the Jews, dies at Cæsarea, eaten by worms.  
 54.—Claudius Cæsar dies, after a reign of thirteen years; succeeded by Nero.  
 64.—St. Paul beheaded at Rome; six years later Jerusalem destroyed by the Romans; Jews dispersed.

**YEARS**                    **AFTER THE CHRISTIAN ERA.**  
**A.D.**

- 312.—The emperor Constantine embraces Christianity.  
 400.—The Latin empire invaded by barbarians, and about to be divided into ten kingdoms.

Now let us begin the first verse of the first chapter. Who was this Jehoiakim? and who Nebuchadnezzar?—I must answer these two questions before going farther, for it is absolutely necessary, in order to understand the Book of Daniel, that you be able to see clearly what was the state of the Jewish people, and that of the heathen world, at the time when this boy went out of the holy city in the midst of the Chaldean soldiers, and took the road to the land of Shinar. You must know that the world at that time was approaching a more violent crisis than perhaps it had ever known since the days of the Flood. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar was the beginning of the power of Babylon. It opened by the taking of Jerusalem; but while God was chastising His own people, He was also preparing His most terrible judgements to fall upon the heathen nations. The chief empires of the world were about to disappear. That ancient kingdom of Assyria, which went back almost to the days of Noah, was to be annihilated; its famous capital, that "city of three days' journey," (as Jonah called it) the Nineveh of Semiramis, Sennacherib, Salmanezer, was in four years to be entirely destroyed; having nothing left but the remembrance of its greatness and ruinous heaps lying even now along the east bank of the Tigris for twenty or thirty miles.

Proud Tyre, in spite of her thousands of ships, and her ramparts in the deep sea, was to be destroyed after a siege of thirteen years; and immediately afterwards, even Egypt, that mysterious kingdom, so long



the terror and admiration of the world, would fall, to be for ever subject to foreign rulers, according to prophecy. The kingdoms of Damascus, Ammon, Moab, Edom, were to suffer the same fate. In short, Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylon were then rising to the summit of greatness. Observe that God had strikingly foretold all these judgements by His prophets before, and in the days of Daniel; he had even pointed out their execution by Nebuchadnezzar, as "My chosen;" (*Jer.* xlix. 19.) "My sword;" (*Ezekiel* xxx. 24-26.) "The rod of My anger;" (*Isaiah* x. 5.) "The razor that I have hired;" (*Isaiah* vii. 20.) "The hammer of God, to break all the nations;" (*Jer.* l. 23; and li. 20.) But what was to be the signal of all this ruin? Alas! the early sorrows of Daniel. Yes, all was to begin by them; all these terrible judgements. From his captivity, in the year 606, B.C., was to date that fatal period which our Lord called "the times of the Gentiles;" and from his first sorrow, four years previously, at the death of the good king Josiah, his relation, protector, and guide, were to begin all the humiliations of the Jewish people.

I will tell you how. In the year 610 B.C., Daniel, hardly eleven years old, was living in peace at Jerusalem; when suddenly loud cries were heard in the palace of his fathers, and soon the whole city answered them by tears and groans. What had happened? Why, even then, did the Prophet Jeremiah come forward into the midst of the crowd, and join his lamentations to those of the people? Alas! a messenger had just entered the holy city, crying, Josiah is dying! an arrow has pierced his loins in the battle; he is returning, laid bleeding on his war-chariot."

This excellent Josiah had reigned for thirty-one years, and seemed another David on the throne. In spite of the general corruption and the abominable examples of Ammon his father, and Manasseh his grandfather, he had been pious from childhood. At eight years old—listen my children!—he turned to God with all his heart. As soon as he knew anything of God's Word, he received it into an honest and good heart; he shed tears of penitence, and God told him, by Huldah the prophetess: "Because thou hast humbled thy heart, Josiah, I will not bring the day of vengeance on Jerusalem, till after I have gathered thee to the graves of thy fathers in peace."

Many prophets had been sent by God to help him—Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and the great Jeremiah, who was only one year older than

himself. How good it was for Daniel, to have such a king for a kinsman, and such prophets for teachers! But what a greater blessing was it, to have received from on high, ears to hear holy things, and a heart to feel and love them.

Josiah, being still young, seemed to give promise to his kingdom of a long and happy reign; when suddenly, the powerful king of Egypt, Pharaoh-Necho, approached the frontier of Judah, in his rapid march towards the Euphrates, against the then Assyrian town of Carchemish. Josiah wanted to stop him, and the two armies met in the plain of Megiddo. Alas! it was in vain that in the hour of battle he took off his royal robes, in order to be in less danger; an arrow from the Egyptian ranks overthrew him in his chariot! "Carry me away," said he to his officers, "for I am sore wounded." His attendants, moving him immediately into another carriage near at hand, brought him dying to Jerusalem. The battle was lost; the king of Egypt gained from this day a fatal ascendancy over the affairs of Judah; and the eldest son of Josiah fell into his hands.

As soon as the fatal wound of this king was known throughout the kingdom, deep sorrow filled every heart; for all loved in Josiah the effects of religion, though they no longer all loved that religion which should have reformed themselves. "All the people mourned for him," says the Second Book of Chronicles. "Jeremiah lamented for him; all the singing men and singing women chant of him to this day, in their lamentations; and the custom has continued in Israel." More than once has the Holy Spirit recalled this national mourning in order to express deep and general sorrow: the Prophet Zechariah in particular, has made use of it to paint the future despair of the Jews, when, acknowledging their crime, they shall be converted. (*Zech.* xii. 10, 11.)

Well, dear children! this was the sorrow which Daniel, at the age of eleven, had seen and felt. Poor child! imagine his grief—the Jews were all weeping for the best of *kings*; but he for the best of relations, his guide and his pattern! He knew all the foretold calamities of Jerusalem. (2 *Kings* xxi. 12, 13.) Picture to yourselves the sad scene. Was there ever a more touching sight than this beloved king lying pale and bleeding in his chariot, passing through the midst of his sorrowing subjects, to reach, if possible, not his royal palace, but the sepulchres of his fathers! Dear children! the kings of this

world are but men, and their hearts do not beat differently from those of the meanest of their subjects; but the sight of death in them seems to us more awful, and its power greater, when *they* are struck down by it; when the voice of command is silenced by it, and the arm which had just borne the sword and the sceptre is powerless. This, then, was what Daniel had seen four years only before the time of our text; and yet this was but the beginning of sorrows. As soon as Josiah had breathed his last, the nation hastened to give him a successor in his second son, because the eldest doubtless had already fallen into the hands of the king of Egypt. This young prince reigned but three months, though long enough to set a shameful example, and to experience all the troubles of a high station. Pharaoh-Necho, having by some pretext enticed him into the city of Riblah, and secured his person, had sent him, loaded with chains, to end in captivity his fortune and his life; and put in his place at Jerusalem, his eldest brother Eliakim, to whom, from that time, he gave in token of vassalage the name of Jehoiakim.

You now know who was the first person named in the first verse. The reign of this king did not begin or end better than that of his brother. He was twenty-five years old, a bad man, an enemy of good people, and a persecutor of the prophets. One day, as he was sitting in his winter palace, he was impious enough, in his rage against Jeremiah, to cut to pieces and throw into the fire the book of prophecy which this man of God had given to Baruch. Therefore terrible judgements were denounced against him; he was to fall out of the hands of the king of Egypt, into those of the king of Babylon.

Enough of Jehoiakim. I proceed to Nebuchadnezzar. Most of you have doubtless learned at school, that the most famous of the world's ancient kingdoms was that of Assyria. Its capital, great Nineveh, was seated on the left bank of the Tigris. This empire contended with Egypt in antiquity, arts, sciences, and riches; generally it also gained the victory in power, greatness, and prowess in war. Nineveh was magnificent; Diodorus Siculus, who in the time of Julius Cæsar, after having travelled much to get information, wrote a universal history, part of which we have still, tells us that this city was fifty miles round, and that its walls were in every part one hundred feet high, without reckoning one thousand five hundred towers two hundred feet high. You must ask to be shewn on a good map, the position of this great city, and of its vast provinces: on the north,

Armenia; on the east, Media and Persia; on the west, Mesopotamia, between the Euphrates and the Tigris; and Aram or Syria from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean; to the south, on the Euphrates, not far from its confluence with the Tigris, Babylonia, or the land of Shinar (as it is called in your lesson); farther south, on the right bank of the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf, Chaldea, or the country of Chasidim.

Ancient Babylon, founded first by Nimrod, under the name of Babel, had long been in possession of the Assyrians of Nineveh. The famous Semiramis took it into her head to rebuild Babylon entirely, on both banks of the Euphrates, and to make it the wonder of the world. If one may believe Diodorus Siculus, she employed two millions of men in its construction; it was surrounded by a wall forty miles round and three times as high as a church steeple, so thick that six chariots could go abreast upon it; and flanked by two hundred and fifty brick towers, cemented by asphalt harder than stone; over the river was so magnificent a bridge, that none had ever been made comparable to it; its length was three thousand feet; its enormous stones were fixed with pieces of iron; its wide floor was of cedar and cypress wood; at each end of it was a quay of great height, extending ten miles on each side.

This Semiramis had carried the Assyrian arms as far as the banks of the Indus; but in the time of one of her successors, the Medes, led by Arbaces; and the Chaldeans by Belesis, having revolted against Nineveh, two new kingdoms were formed independent of Assyria: that of the Medes at Ecbatana, and that of the Chaldeans at Babylon. At the same time, the prophets Obadiah, Joel, Micah, and above all, the great Isaiah, had visions from God; Romulus founded Rome; and Nabonassar became the first regular king of Babylon. The dismemberment of the kingdom of Assyria took place about the year 763, the foundation of Rome in 753, and the era of Nabonassar in 747. The Assyrians of Nineveh, in spite of this disruption, continued powerful in Asia; and you know how much harm their kings Shalmanezzer, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, were to do to the people of God. Nevertheless, in the time of king Josiah, it happened that the Scythians, who came out of the country inhabited now by the Russians and down from the valleys of the Caucasus, having invaded all Upper Asia and governed it for twenty-eight years, had singularly weakened the Empire of Nineveh. It was for that reason, that Pharaoh-Necho,

king of Egypt, wanting to profit by the misfortunes of the country, had marched against Carchemish ; but just then, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, rose up against him ; and in order to oppose Pharaoh-Necho with more advantage, took with him his young son, whose brilliant talents were already displaying themselves. This young man's character announced the future hero : ardent, energetic, magnanimous, indefatigable ; a great statesman, and a great warrior, he appeared in the East, as one of those commanding geniuses, whom God raises up in stormy times, to master political tempests, and to fulfil, without knowing it, His great providential designs. No sooner was Nebuchadnezzar put at the head of the Babylonian armies, than he marched from victory to victory ; putting to flight Pharaoh's army in front of Carchemish, he took that fortress by assault, drove the Egyptians before him as far as the Red Sea ; and at last marched against Jerusalem, there to chastise Jehoiakim. You will see by-and-bye, that he took it three times ; overthrew Nineveh, subjugated Egypt, put down the Medes, and carried his arms into the west as far as Spain, and into the east as far as the banks of the Indus.

These then are the two personages named in our first verse, and whom the child Daniel had seen ; the one within the ramparts of Jerusalem, the other in front of its walls ; the one besieged, the other besieging : the one in the third year of his reign, the other in the second. You are now acquainted with Jehoiakim and Nebuchadnezzar, and will fully understand this *1st verse* ; the latter is called *king*, because his father had, two years before his death, united him to himself in the government ; he besieged Jerusalem towards autumn of the year 606. Daniel then saw under the walls of the city, this terrible conqueror, with his cavalry, his war-chariots, his formidable archers (who had recently learned from the Scythians the perfected use of their murderous weapon), and his war engines (borrowed from the Assyrians) for attacking cities, his battering-rams, his wheeled towers. Terraces were raised, according to custom, in front of the walls ; their steep inclination was paved with large flat stones, so that enormous covered carriages could go up, bearing, suspended within, iron-headed rams, wielded by invisible soldiers, and which demolished the strongest walls.

*Verse 2.*—Have you remarked these words of the Holy Spirit—“The Lord gave Jehoiakim into his hand ?” He will not let us think that these disasters only happened through the chances of war, and

the force of arms. No, no, my dears! The men of that time, on hearing the news, were perhaps, like those of ours, foolish enough only to see in these events the arm of flesh, and the blind freaks of fortune. "What is said of the troops? Can Jehoiakim sustain a siege? Are his soldiers brave? his generals skilful?" without, alas! looking higher; without seeing the Hand which rules the world; without remembering that He "killeth and maketh alive," "removeth kings and establisheth them."—See also *Prov.* xxi. 31; and *Psalms* cxxvii. 1. Listen to the words of the Holy Spirit in this verse: He does not say, "Jehoiakim and all the treasures of the Temple *fell* into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar,"—but the Lord *gave* them."—All kings and all others should know this truth; and this reminds me of the great Luther's words—"If Alexander the Great had always Homer under his pillow, so should kings now-a-days do still better, and have Daniel, not under their head, but in their heart: for he would soon teach them, that it is God alone who gives and who governs, who upholds, and who takes away; all things being in His Hand, and moving by His power, like the cloud in the sky, or the vessel on the sea."—Thus it was then, that, in order to punish the sins of the Jews, and warn them by this previous humiliation, before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple nineteen years later, the Lord gave to the king of Babylon, the princes of Judah, the vessels of the Sanctuary, and the treasure of the nation. Nebuchadnezzar at that time took only a part, to carry into the land of Shinar, and place, as a sign of triumph, in the house of his god. But this was not all. Not satisfied with depriving Jerusalem of her sacred vessels, and of thus humbling Jehoiakim, the conqueror, in order to make more show of his victory, and doubtless also, to get hostages who would be responsible for the submission of the Jews, commanded his head chamberlain to carry away from Jerusalem some of the noblest, the most beautiful, and the most intelligent of the young lads, to make them pages in his palace.

*Verses 3, 4.*—The kings of Babylon and of Nineveh had always in attendance on them three military officers, who ranked first among their courtiers; one was called the Rab-Saris, or chief of the eunuchs; another the Rab-Shakeh, or chief of the butlers; and the other, the Rab-Tabbâkia, or chief of the cooks. Here they are all three at the court of Babylon: Ashpenaz, Melzar, and Arioch. As soon as Jerusalem was taken, Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to Ashpenaz (his

Rab-Saris) to bring in some young boys of royal blood, who might adorn his court. Ashpenaz, having chosen Daniel, gave him into the charge of the Rab-Shakeh Melzar, with orders that he should for three years be taught the language and learning of the Chaldeans, so that he might be fit to stand before the king. Three years! that was a long time! Had it been the language only of the Chaldeans properly so called, it would have been an easy study for our young Hebrews; because the Chaldeans, from the days of Abraham to those of Daniel, had continued speaking Aramean, which was only a dialect of the language spoken at Jerusalem, and which differed as little from Hebrew as the patois of our villages from French. Hebrew, Carthaginian, Aramean or Chaldean, Arabic, Syriac, even Ethiopic, were only dialects, more or less differing, of the same family of languages called *Semitic*. Those who could speak one soon learned the others. But the difficulty for these young captives was to get acquainted with the various languages which the Chaldeans used in the government of their one hundred and twenty provinces. In fact, besides the alphabet used at Babylon and Nineveh, as also by the Medes and Persians, being strange and complicated (made up of nail-heads oddly combined), dialects of an entirely different family, belonging to the Sanskrit, and come from India, were spoken among the Medes and Persians, beyond the Tigris; so that the kings of Babylon, when they issued any decree, were very careful to have it written in the divers idioms of their immense empire. You understand now, why it was hard work to learn the Chaldean tongue, and why this study was to continue for three years.

*Verses 5-7.*—The names of these four young captives were Hebrew ones, and had each a meaning, as is almost always usual in countries where a mother-tongue is spoken. Daniel signified, "God is my judge;" Azariah—"The Lord is my help;" Hananiah—"The grace of the Lord." But Ashpenaz was determined that henceforth, in token of their being servants of his king, they should bear new names, borrowed from the language spoken at the court of Babylon. These names have puzzled the learned as to their derivation: it is possibly Scythian, as the Babylonish dynasty might well at that time belong to that nation, which had kept under its yoke for twenty-eight years all the kingdoms of Upper Asia, and, therefore, perhaps, its mother-tongue was spoken at court, whilst Aramean was spoken by the lower classes, just as Clovis, Charlemagne, and their successors, long spoke German at the court of Paris or of Soissons, while the people spoke French.

Have you been able, my children, to see here the wonderful ways of God?—The piety of Daniel was so much the more valuable in an age of universal unbelief and immorality : who would not have thought, at his departure from Jerusalem, that he was done for—lost, forsaken by God? What will become of him?—But do not forget how young Joseph also was taken captive into Egypt, only in order one day to rule there, and to save his father's family alive. In the same way, God led Daniel to great power; and made use of him to turn the greatest monarch on earth to the true God, and to glorify Him. Daniel was to govern two empires, and to be trusted by the kings of Chaldea, Media, and Persia; he was to protect the people of God, and to prepare their restoration; to lead many of the heathen to the knowledge of the true and living God; and he was to honour His holy Word among the Gentiles, during a long life of ninety years.

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## LESSON II.

### DANIEL I. 8—16.

**THERE** is a passage in St. Luke, which often recurs to my mind when I study a child's face—"What manner of child shall this be?" This was said of the little John Baptist on the day of his circumcision, miraculous signs having accompanied his birth. Again, this thought arises in our mind, on seeing you come into this church with the Bible in your hands; and it is difficult not to ask, "What manner of children shall these be? will they become true Christians? will they go to Heaven?" None of us, doubtless, can answer these questions with certainty, since God alone knoweth them that are His. Nevertheless, there is, in the 20th chapter of Proverbs, another passage which has often struck me:—"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." It is clear, that the Almighty, if He will, can convert the most immoral of His creatures; can turn the heart of a wilful child, or even that of a wicked old man on the edge of his grave. But it is not less certain, that when we see a young heart turned heavenwards, obeying the Word of God in all things, and trying to please Him; when, for instance, we see such a one sorry, after committing a fault, not from



fear of punishment, but for having offended God his Saviour; when we plainly see such a disposition in a child, we may say, with almost certainty, this is an immortal being, whose place will one day be in Heaven among the blessed; for is not the Holy Spirit already working in that heart, and preparing it for the everlasting mansions? Is not such "a child already known by his doings?"—Well, my children, such was Daniel at the age of fourteen.

It is especially interesting to mark the beginning of his history. We find him seeking God from his earliest years, as Josiah had done; and we find himself also, in those same years, experiencing in his own person the truth of these words, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and "chooseth them in the furnace of affliction." While only a child, he is subjected to the trials of men; torn from his parents, and not knowing what will become of him, he is taken captive into Chaldea. But, child as he is, the love of God is in his heart; and you will see that he has given that heart to God, and that he is already intending to serve him faithfully. "He purposed"—something—"in his heart;" (*Verse 8.*) What will he do, on being sent away into Chaldea; will he give himself up to despair? No! he will trust, and lift up his heart to his God, and say, "My God! Thou wilt be my Father!" "He purposed in his heart," it is written, "not to defile himself," but to be faithful to the Lord. Dear children, if God should call any of you to the sorrow of losing, like Daniel, your father and mother, or even *both* parents, then do like Daniel; and in your grief also, seek for strength, happiness, and hope, in being a child of God, by faith in Jesus Christ: say, "Thou art my Father! Hast Thou not said, 'Like as a Father pitieth His children, so art Thou merciful to them that fear Thee.'" Consider carefully what is told us in *verse 8.* This poor young prisoner, who had no one to whom he could confide his thoughts, surrounded only by harsh soldiers, strangers, and idolaters, "purposed, in the secret of his heart," to take God for his portion, and to shew himself in everything His obedient child. It is certainly not what we eat, nor what we drink, which defiles or purifies us; "the kingdom of God," says St. Paul, "does not consist in meat or drink, but in righteousness, peace, (the peace of God,) and joy (the joy of salvation which God puts into the heart) by the Holy Ghost." (*Rom. xiv. 17.*) Why, then, would not Daniel eat of the meat which the king ate, nor drink of the wine which the king drank? The reason was this: the rich food with

which the monarch's table was covered, and the fine wine which was poured into his cup, had been consecrated to idols before being brought into the royal palace. From that time, Daniel's partaking of either would have made him appear a heathen; he would have had fellowship with the idols worshipped by the Babylonians; he would have defiled himself. Although "meek and lowly in heart," he was firm in purpose not to defile himself. He wished it to be known, as soon as he was in Chaldea, that although he was only a child and a captive, he was, nevertheless, determined to be a servant of the true and living God. How touching is this conduct, from its contrast with that of the society into which the young Israelite was thrown. The great men of Babylon were almost all immoral; history tells us much of their luxury and of their infamous lives; but now, in the midst of them, lives a young prisoner of fourteen, who had received the Word of God into his heart, who will have nothing to do with idols, and who seeks, from the first day of his captivity, to avoid the temptations, and to shun the bad examples by which he is surrounded; for he will have henceforth to pass his time with all the young pages of that pompous and corrupt court, in the service of those idolatrous princes who lived only for their evil desires, and thought only of earthly things. Daniel resolved to keep himself pure at any risk; but you will see that God preserved him, and gave him abundant blessings. He was like Nathanael, "without guile—a true Israelite." You remember that Nathanael was "under the fig tree," purposing in his heart to give himself to God; and you know that our Lord said to him, "I saw thee under the fig tree." Well! thus also he saw Daniel when, going away to Babylon, and when under some tree in the country, or in some private room in the palace, he purposed in his honest and good heart not to defile himself, but to live for his God. Do the same, my children!

Consider carefully, I pray you, all which young Daniel's resolution implied. First, he must, if he would confess his faith, fear no more the reproach or ridicule of men. He must say to himself, I am a poor slave; never mind! they shall know that I serve the true God, Him whom they blaspheme, and whose temple they have burned; they shall know who I am.—Well! a young Christian ought to be at Geneva, or anywhere else, what Daniel was at Babylon; he should not hesitate to shew that he fears God, and keeps his commandments. "I am a Christian; you may laugh at me if you like, but so I am."

“If anyone is ashamed of Jesus Christ, or of His words, in this crooked and perverse generation, He will be ashamed of him before His Father, and the angels.” Secondly, Daniel might have feared that his resolution might seem a great affront to the king of Babylon. Fancy a young slave of thirteen or fourteen, to whom the honour had been done of sending him meat and wine from the table of his prince, declaring that he would only eat vegetables, and drink water, for three years! And why this refusal? He dares answer, “I should fear to defile myself; that food would be unclean.” Certainly to dare using such language, required brave resolution in a young lad, who was moreover, as you will soon see, so gentle, humble, and full of respect towards his superiors. Thirdly, observe how exemplary it was in a young prince brought up in kings’ palaces, to resolve to eat and drink vegetables and water only, for three years, in the midst of all the sumptuous fare of the court of Babylon! How different from the behaviour of so many children, who are disobedient, angry, and even untrue, in order to satisfy their greediness! How often have I seen them restless, begging and crying for such or such a dish, whereas Daniel *intreated* not to be given the dainties of the royal table. “I beseech you,” he said, “give me pulse and water only.” See what strength of mind God can give to the child who puts his trust in Him. Fourthly, and lastly, Daniel did not fear even death, to which he exposed himself by his refusal. The king of Babylon, like all Eastern monarchs, had the heads of persons who displeased him, cut off as readily as a child would those of poppies. In one moment of displeasure he would throw whole families under the sword of the executioner. But the true Christian will not fear death, nor “those who can kill the body only,” because he looks to “Him who only can cast both body and soul into hell.” “He it is whom you should fear,” said Jesus Christ—“Fear Him only.”

You have thus seen Daniel’s conduct: now observe the reward of it. It is said that the Lord inclined the hearts of all the young captive’s superiors in his favour. When Daniel had made his request, first to Ashpenaz, and afterwards to Melzar, God caused them to shew kindness to Daniel, from “tender love” for him. The Hebrew word marks a love mixed with pity, a heartfelt love. Such were the feelings which the Almighty put into the heart of this officer, who was probably stern, but who was moved by tender love, on seeing the gentleness, amiability, and conscientious obedience of this young Israelite. For,

take good heed! Daniel had, it is true, resolved in his heart rather to die than offend his God; but do not imagine that he then shewed a gloomy and morose piety, an arrogant faithfulness; or that he in any way braved his superiors. No, you see on the contrary that he *intreated* Ashpenaz: "I beseech you not to oblige me to do a thing which is against my conscience;" and God inclined the heart of this man to grant his request.—This is an important lesson for us; for we too often let ourselves be drawn into sin, by the fear of losing the favour of such or such a person. If I did as you say, I should excite ill-will towards me. A relation who takes care of me, a brother or sister, or friend, would forsake or repulse me. Otherwise, do not think that I would refuse to fulfil the duty which you recommend to me; but I cannot alienate that friend! this was not Daniel's language; his thoughts went much higher.—Above all, may God be for me! If I need the favour of men, He is able to give it me; and if He takes it from me, *His* is enough for me; if "He is for me, who can be against me?"—It is written (*Prov. xxi. 1*) "The heart of man is in the hand of the Lord, and that like as the course of a river is turned, He inclineth the will of kings, according to His liking." Observe the fulfilment of these words in the case of Daniel. God first gave him the love of Ashpenaz, then that of Melzar, afterwards that of the emperor Nebuchadnezzar, still later, that of Darius the old king of the Medes, and at length, that of the great king of Persia, the victorious Cyrus. All hearts were bowed to him; and Scripture tells us that this inclination of men towards him was an effect of the favour and power of God.

Which of you can tell me the name of another young man, towards whom the Almighty thus inclined all hearts at a time when his youth was even more tried than was perhaps that of Daniel?—It was Joseph at the time of his imprisonment.—Whose affection did he gain?—The jailer's.—Prison rulers generally think themselves obliged to be stern, because most of their prisoners are wicked men; but, nevertheless, God inclined towards Joseph the heart of his keeper, and soon afterwards even that of the great king of Egypt. Do not such examples show us that we must seek first, and at all times and cost, not the favor of men, but that of God?—Yes, if we have God for us, we have all for us.—Yet, my children, you must not think that Daniel, in saying to himself, God is for me! would have won the hearts of all his masters, if at the same time he had been haughty in manner,

satisfied with himself and discontented with others, proud, rude, or obstinate. No! God did indeed conciliate men's hearts to him, but it was by giving him gentleness and good temper, by making him humble, diligent, and faithful in his everyday work. He was learning the language and literature of the Chaldeans; and doubtless he pursued his studies with as much docility towards his masters, as devotedness to his God. You can observe here his modest gentleness. We have already heard him "*intreat*" Ashpenaz for a favour; and when this man said to him, "I fear the king my master, who hath appointed your meat and drink; why should he see your faces worse liking than the children of your sort? then shall ye endanger my head,"—Daniel replied, "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink; and afterwards look upon our faces," and thou wilt see, if, by the favour of God, these faces are not in as good condition as those of the other young captives brought into the court of Babylon.

But I would have you remark here something else. Daniel was so full of love to his God, that he had exercised the holiest influence upon his three young companions in misfortune. He had induced them to live like him. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, had purposed the same thing in their hearts, and had, like Daniel, asked that they might be "proved." Now what they expected happened exactly. At the end of ten days these four faithful lads were so peaceful and happy in their minds, in having chosen God for their portion, that the joy of their hearts reflected on their noble countenances, made them look still handsomer. You know that they had been chosen out of the noblest and most beautiful children of Jerusalem, because the kings of Assyria, wishing to make their court brilliant and magnificent, admitted into their palace only young men of noble birth, of great beauty, and of good health. They wished all around them to present the appearance of prosperity, and to increase the pomp of their ceremonies. These good lads, who were to be called afterwards to such a severe trial (for they were thrown into a burning furnace on account of their faith), were, by refusing, like Daniel, those luxuries of life, which too often enervate a young mind, thus preparing themselves, without knowing it, for the hard time of trouble. They came out of it conquerors, they glorified God; and in the last day, they will know the blessedness of those who were persecuted for righteousness sake." "Rejoice," said our Lord, "and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven."

## LESSON III.

## DANIEL I. 17—21.

My young friends, it seems to me that all this first part of the history of Daniel is singularly suited to make a strong and wholesome impression upon young Christians. We heard last Sunday of the resolution, temperance, and respectful gentleness of this royal child: you will learn to-day what was his reward. He had put his trust in his Heavenly Father; he had taken Him for his portion on earth; he had perhaps said to Him, "My God! I am separated from my earthly parents, be Thou to me in their stead! Oh! I know that Thou wilt be far more to me! Above all, grant me Thy favour, Thy pardon, Thy kingdom and its righteousness!" And God *does* take care of him, blesses him in his ways, prospers him in his studies, gives him "knowledge and skill in all learning," and moreover, puts "wisdom" into his heart, a holy wisdom "coming from above." He confers upon him even miraculous power, which makes him, at the age of seventeen, famous throughout the world, and gains for him the favour of the most powerful monarch of antiquity, the great Nebuchadnezzar.

Before beginning the explanation of our verses for to-day I wish to call your attention to what is said of Daniel in the *last* verse of this first chapter, because you will thereby be able to judge how young he must have been, when the Chaldeans carried him away from Jerusalem to Babylon. It appears that he could not be older than from twelve to fifteen, because you will see by this verse, and by the 1st of the tenth chapter, that he was still living seventy-three years afterwards, so that if he was as much as fifteen when he was taken captive, he must, at his death, have reached at least the great age of eighty-eight or ninety. In fact, we read in the 21st verse of chapter i., that "Daniel continued unto the first year of king Cyrus." Now, as we know that the captivity of Babylon, beginning by the taking of Daniel, and ending by the accession of Cyrus, lasted seventy years; we must conclude that Daniel, if he were thirteen or fifteen when made prisoner, was eighty-three or eighty-five when he withdrew from the court. But, moreover, we read in the beginning of the tenth chapter, that he had a wonderful vision, "in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia," and that the Lord appeared to him then on the banks of the great river Hiddekel. You see, therefore, that he was at that time eighty-six or eighty-eight, if he were even as much as thirteen or fourteen at the beginning of his captivity.

But to return to our 17th *verse*. Here are *four* gifts of God to these four loyal young Jews, as a reward for their faithfulness: first, "knowledge;" second, "skill in all learning," that is to say, in all branches of literature, and of human acquirements; third, "wisdom" in all their conduct; and fourth, at least to Daniel, something super-human, the gift of prophecy, and miraculous knowledge of the secrets of God. Doubtless, in order to get learning, these four lads studied diligently, were steady, and rose early; they were docile, liked their teachers, and won their affection. But these noble boys did more; they knew that after all, it is God who gives knowledge, and that without Him, as Scripture says, "it is vain to rise up early, to sit up late;" so doubtless, they asked Him to bless their studies, praying fervently every day, and saying, perhaps, "O my God! give us success, not for our own glory, but for Thine! O my Saviour! let my teachers be satisfied with my progress and my conduct, so that they may speak good of Thy holy Word, and acknowledge its influence upon me." You will see, in the course of this story, that such was the habit of these young Jews, and that they were careful to lift up their hearts together unto God, that they might be helped by Him. (*Chap. ii, verses 17-23.*)

Yes, my young friends, I say to you all, if you wish to gain knowledge in your calling, be diligent certainly, docile and conscientious in work, but also pray earnestly every day for God's indispensable help. See what great wisdom He gave to young Solomon, because, said He, "Solomon had asked for wisdom rather than for anything else." Read aloud 1 *Kings*, iv. 29-34, and also what this great king wrote himself in *Eccles.* ii. 26. In applying these precepts to you, I do not speak only to those among you who, at school or college, learn Latin, Greek, History, or any other branch of human learning; no! I speak equally to those who perhaps are already wishing to fit themselves for a profession, or for a laborious apprenticeship.—It is still God, who also in these cases gives skill and success. Do you not remember what the Almighty said more than once of Bezaleel? Read aloud *Exodus* xxxi. 1-6. But, perhaps, you will say, are there not also pious and diligent young people who have no success, because they are little gifted; have no cleverness, nor power of attention, nor memory? Remember that God can give those things also, and does often grant them to those who ask Him. See what is written in *verse 17*. Who gives intelligence? who gives or takes away memory? who gives the

power of attention? You see here, and you know besides, that it is God.—Well, then, do not be discouraged. I have seen instances of God's answering prayer in these matters. Only you must not ask for genius, or quickness in learning and understanding, for the sake of shining in the sight of men, or of rising above others, of gratifying earthly ambition. No! doubtless! for asking Him for such success in such a spirit, would be like praying for the power of offending Him. But if in your requests on this subject, you seek His glory, and the happiness of serving Him, in obedience to His Word, then be sure that He will always give you all that He sees needful for you. I knew a poor man of fifty years old, whose heart had lately turned to God, and who never having learnt to read, wished earnestly to be able to do so; but this desire was not for the sake of promotion or gain in this world, but for that of studying himself the Word of God, in order to know his Redeemer better, and to be more able to make Him known to others. It is very difficult at fifty to learn to read, and to learn without a teacher; but what did this worthy man do, with the help of God? He put some hymns into the crown of his hat, after they had been repeated to him till he knew them by heart; then, while he was working in his vineyard, he might have been seen to sit down now and then near his tools, to take his hymn-book, after commending himself to God, and repeating from memory each verse, line after line, follow the words with his eyes, till he could make out every letter and every syllable. Thus in a short time he learnt to read, and God taught him even to know the New Testament so well, that he became one of the first carriers of the Bible sent by our Churches into France, and also one of the most respectable and successful among them, and was called by them their father. I remember also, being told by a Missionary, with what unexpected readiness he had, in the Institution at Bâle, learnt a great number of languages, because, said he, "God, on whom I called, was with me." And I was told by the Inspector that he himself was struck by the readiness with which his young pupils, whose only motive was the love of Christ, attained the knowledge of holy learning. Yet remember that the deepest knowledge, the greatest genius, the quickest understanding, would be only fearful wretchedness and poverty for one whose heart was prayerless, and far from God; whose conscience was burdened with sin, and whose life was without God.

Thus we are told, *thirdly*, that "God gave to these four children," not only "knowledge and skill in learning," but yet farther, "wisdom."



And what is wisdom? "True wisdom," it is written, "is that which comes from above." "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, *that* is understanding." (*Job* xxviii. 23.) True wisdom is to know God, to love Him, to wish to imitate Him, to become like Him. See how St. James has described it in his third *chap.* 17th *verse*; and see in *chap.* i. 5-7, how it may be obtained. See, moreover, in *Prov.* iii. 13-18, the happiness of those who have found it. Such, then, were the blessings which God gave to these four Jewish lads, thus rewarding them for the faithfulness of their united resolution to live according to His word, and to suffer anything rather than break any one of His laws.

But there was a farther gift for Daniel, who had been the first to "purpose secretly" this holy conduct, and who, by his example, had exercised such a right influence on the others. God gave to *him* not only "knowledge, skill in learning, and wisdom," but also the spirit of prophecy. He enabled him, like Joseph of old, to understand and interpret "visions and dreams." You will better understand this last phrase, if you read the words spoken by the Almighty to Aaron and Miriam, after their rebellion against Moses. (*Num.* xii. 6-8.) There was, you see, a two-fold way in which God at that time made Himself known to His prophets. He sent them "visions," that is to say, that when *awake*, they, by Divine power, saw invisible objects passing before them, as if their eyes had really beheld them; or else *He spoke to them in dreams*; that is to say, that during their *sleep* they heard and saw such wonderful things, that it was impossible to confound them with common dreams. We shall see in the following chapters, wonderful instances of Daniel's privileges, for it was not only given to him to have visions and dreams, and to understand their prophetic meaning; but it was farther revealed to him, as to Joseph, what dreams other persons had had, and what God meant to make known by them.

But we have now reached the most important moment in the young life of these captives. The 18th *verse* brings us to the end of their third year of study, to the day when their chief, Melzar, was to bring them into the king's presence. What a fearful hour! and what an exciting scene for most young persons! to appear for their last examination, before this great monarch! Put yourselves in the place of these lads; but they presented themselves with hearts full of another Monarch, much greater and more to be feared, of the King of kings,

the Lord of lords, who reigns over the earth as well as in Heaven. I said that the having to appear before this king might well be an awful thing for young lads; for perhaps there was never among heathen nations a monarch more surrounded by glory than Nebuchadnezzar. Although still young, he had already done great things, and was one of the most talented among the rulers of nations. Besides being a great warrior, a rapid conqueror, an indefatigable statesman, he shewed uncommon greatness of mind and heroic feelings. He united, as it were, the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander in the same person. During these three years which Daniel and his companions had employed in study at Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar had made vast conquests, and done great works. When he took Jerusalem, and brought Daniel away (in the year 606 B.C.) his father was still living. He then defeated the powerful king of Egypt, and conquered all his possessions in Syria; the following year, hearing of the death of his father, he returned to Babylon, in order soon to make it the finest city that ever was seen. Afterwards, having married the daughter of the king of Media, he went with him to besiege Nineveh, a city so large, as we read in the Book of Jonah, that it took three days' journey to go round it; he destroyed it, and overthrew for ever the ancient empire of the Assyrians; he then returned to Babylon loaded with spoils. Then it was that the good Melzar brought out four Israelites into the king's presence; and what satisfaction his master's reception must have given him! for it is said in *verses* 19, 20, that "the king communed with them," and that among all the young men presented to him "were found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." The king then examined them himself, it may have been on learned subjects, or in languages, or on the affairs of government, because he was himself a man of genius and learning, and liked to see everything with his own eyes. "And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians" (the learned men) "and astrologers that were in all his realm."

We are not told how long Daniel's three friends remained at court; but of himself it is said in your last verse, that he "continued" there till the "first year of king Cyrus," seventy years afterwards, so that he lived long enough to see the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the miraculous deliverance of the Jews, as his venerable predecessor, Jeremiah, had foretold in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. (*Jer.* xxv. 1-12.)

## LESSON IV.

## DANIEL II. 1—24.

DEAR children, striking things are made known to us in this chapter : God revealed to Daniel the course of events which were to stir the world more than one thousand years after his time ; and which even in our days are still unfolding themselves. These sublime manifestations of God's glory are also clear and easy to understand, if we study them with respectful attention, and devout and prayerful hearts. You must then listen most heedfully to my explanations, which will be suited to the youngest among you ; but you will need to think them over at home, repeat them to your parents, and ask someone to shew you on a map the countries of which we shall speak ; and on a chronological table, the course of years in which the events foretold by the prophet were to be accomplished. God had plainly two purposes in revealing these things to Daniel, and by him to the whole Church : *First*, He would honour Daniel from early youth ; because He intended to make him not only a guide, a light, a comfort, to His people Israel, during their long captivity ; but also to employ him as a means of eternal blessing to many souls among the heathen of those distant ages. *Secondly*, God would, by the striking exactness of Daniel's prophecies, put a fresh seal of Divine Inspiration upon Holy Scripture. People in future ages would be obliged to say, when reading it, "This wonderful Book is certainly from God ! how should it be otherwise ? Has it not, so to say, His mark and signature, since it contains the anticipated history of nations for many centuries beforehand ?" Let us see how, in order to fulfil these purposes, the Lord opened Daniel's way by a striking miracle : He did for him, what he had formerly done for Joseph ; He revealed to him the secret thoughts of a king, as well as the secret events of the future !—One night, Daniel was resting quietly in his bed ; Nebuchadnezzar, having returned to Babylon after his great conquests, was also sleeping on his splendid royal couch ; when suddenly, God troubled the sleep of this powerful monarch by a dream such as had never been known before ; a frightful dream ; "a form terrible to behold ;" (*verse 31*.) a dream so striking that "his spirit was troubled," and that, in the morning, although he could not remember what he had seen, he was impressed with the thought that great things had been revealed to him ; that this dream was not like common fanciful ones ; and that what he had seen was sent by God Himself. Therefore he was determined, at any price, to

learn its mysterious meaning : he could sleep no longer, but sent for the magicians and sorcerers ; for heathen kings, both in ancient and modern times, were always surrounded by men addicted to these abominable doings. But observe his folly in requiring them to relate his dream, as well as to tell the meaning of it. In vain did the Chaldean enchanters twice answer him in their *own* language, that is the Aramean or Syriac (for the king and his court, as I have told you, spoke another language) : “The king requireth an impossible thing ! no ruler ever asked such a thing ; none but the gods can reveal such secrets.”—The king answered in his fury, that there was then one decree for them all ; they should be cut in pieces and their houses made a dung-hill !

But before going farther, I would have you observe that Daniel in the 4th *verse* ceases to use the *Hebrew* language, and that having quoted the Chaldeans’ answer, spoken, he says, “in *Syriac*,” he from that time speaks Aramean himself during the remainder of the second chapter, and even through the five following ones. The Prophet Ezra also used the Aramean dialect in the four chapters where he had to recite the Aramean letters of the Jews to the king of Persia and those of their enemies ; as likewise the edicts of Darius and Artaxerxes in their favour.—You know that all the rest of the Old Testament is written in *Hebrew*, but that after the Babylonian Captivity, the *Aramean* or *Chaldean* language, which was spoken in Chaldea and in Aram (or Syria), became the common dialect of the Jewish people ; so that it was in this language that our Saviour spoke when on earth ; and in this language also, did all the Jewish Rabbies write their targums (or translations and paraphrases of the Bible) ; as also their commentaries and liturgies. It scarcely differs, except in writing and pronunciation, from what has been since called Syriac ; and, besides, it is easy for any one who knows Hebrew, to understand it after a little study.—I think that you will now see why Daniel wrote these six chapters in Aramean. It was because this part of his book was of particular importance to the Chaldeans, who would find in it the prophecies which concerned themselves, the fate of Babylon, the proclamations of their monarchs, and the miracles done in the midst of them. Their own language was therefore suitably now employed ; whilst at a later period, in the eighth chapter, when they are no longer mentioned, Daniel takes up his Hebrew again, to the end of his book.

Let us here remark the wisdom of God, Who in all ages caused His ministers to speak the language best understood by the people; and Who would thus condemn beforehand, the use of an unknown tongue for prayer and religious service; for instance, of Latin for reading the Bible to the French or English, for teaching them to pray, or for administering the Holy Communion to them. God has never set apart a consecrated language for holy doings; the holiest in His ears was always that best understood by the people; and even when His Apostles, who till then had spoken only Hebrew-Aramean, were to write the New Testament, He made them give up their own language and adopt that of the Gentiles, because Greek was at that time almost universally used in the civilised world.

But let us return to Daniel, who was "sought to be slain." I wish to show you first, how he was able, in the midst of danger, really to *trust* in the help of his God; secondly, how he asked in fervent *prayer* for that help in which he trusted; and thirdly, how, after having obtained it, he blessed the Lord with lively *thanksgiving*.

Yet, before going farther, it may be well to recall the age of this young and noble prophet, at the time of these striking events.—Perhaps you remember the greatest number of years that Daniel could have lived, when he was taken from his parents and carried to Babylon?—Fifteen at most. And which of you can tell me how much older he was when Nebuchadnezzar had his wonderful dreams? Have I not told you that this prince lost the king, his father, in the year after the taking of Daniel? He then began to reign alone; and we are told that it was in the "second year of his reign," that he had this vision from above. We read besides, in *Jeremiah* xxv. 1, that "the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first of Nebuchadnezzar;" because this young prince reigned only jointly with his father, two years before the latter's death. Daniel, therefore, was at this time only seventeen or eighteen at most; but the Almighty had already gifted his mind as well as his heart, with wonderful wisdom, because he had been faithful in the use of his first gifts.

Remember then, dear children, that Daniel was taken in the year 606 B.C.; that Nebuchadnezzar began to reign alone in 605, and that he had his dream in 604. I have written down for you the principal dates of his story and of his times. It may be useful to you, not only

as regards Daniel, but in reading intelligently the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as also the end of the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

But let us now return to our verses. The bloody decree of the king had been proclaimed in Babylon, that the wise men should be slain; and Daniel and his companions were sought out for the same purpose. They were all condemned without exception, for not having done what was impossible; all even to the innocent Daniel: what savage cruelty, what senseless tyranny, in a king who had in other respects a great mind, and a generous heart! But alas! such is the weakness of the soul in too great authority, or too long prosperity! Nebuchadnezzar needed to be humbled. See also how unhappy are the people who live under a despotic government, where the life of each is at the mercy of one alone; where a mad and hasty impulse of a tyrant's will is enough to cause the death of whole families; and be grateful to the King of kings, for having made you to be born in a land of liberty: for in fact, though it is sad to groan under the yoke of a wicked king, it is much worse to tremble under a revolutionary government, which instead of one tyrant, makes a thousand, turning the people themselves into blood-thirsty executioners.

You have perhaps read *The Loss of the Kent*. While the ship was in the midst of a storm, it took fire, and the crew expected every moment, either to sink into the sea or to spring into the air; but on board were Christians, calm in those awful hours, committing themselves to God, and commending their souls to Him. Well! my dear children, we also are on board a vessel threatened by storms and by hidden fires, which at any moment may burst forth: let us ask God to spare us; but above all to grant, that if former dangers should return, we may be found like the Christians in "The Kent," and like Daniel in Babylon, full of wisdom and calmness, full of faith and prayer.—But we must not forget that although the king of Babylon's decree against the magicians was unjust and cruel on his part, their punishment was only too well deserved. These wretched men practised an abominable trade: they were deceivers and poisoners. False prophets are an abomination to the Lord. Read *Deut.* xviii. 10—12, and *Leviticus* xx. 27.—The astrologers and sorcerers of Babylon, on hearing the decree pronounced against them, probably tried to hide themselves; but Arioch, captain of the king's guard, sent forth soldiers to search for and to slay them: he sought

likewise for Daniel, though so young and a stranger, and in whom the king "had found ten times more wisdom than in all the magicians and astrologers of his realm." (*Chap. i. verse 20.*) But Nebuchadnezzar thought of nothing but gratifying his furious anger; and besides, although he admired the precocious wisdom of the young Jew, he was far from imagining that one so little beyond childhood could be better able to enlighten him about his dreams than all the wise men of his kingdom.

Now look at Daniel in his faith, and courageous firmness proceeding from that trust in God; combined with calmness, gentleness, and pious wisdom. He neither runs away, nor hides himself, but goes straight to Arioch, who "was gone forth to slay all the wise men of Babylon," and who sought his own life also.—We are told in *verse 14*, that "Daniel answered Arioch, with counsel and wisdom," and thus delayed the execution of the decree. For that purpose he needed much discretion and strength of mind; for in his prayer (*verse 23*) he said, "O God of our fathers! I praise and thank Thee, who has given me wisdom and might." He goes to Arioch, and accosts him with the calmness of an honest and good heart—"Why," said he, "is the decree so hasty from the king?"—Arioch then explains the whole matter, of which Daniel was ignorant; he did not meddle with the astrologers; he was occupied in study and prayer, with his three young companions: and it seems that he had not yet heard anything about the fearful dream which troubled Nebuchadnezzar.—But now he quickly decides on going to the king: why is he not afraid? because he looks to a greater King than he who reigns in Babylon; because he has put his trust in God. Strong in faith, he "desired of the king time, that he might shew him the interpretation." Observe his holy boldness; he is persuaded that God will not forsake His servant who wishes to glorify Him, and who trusts in Him alone.—But farther, observe a *second* feature of his conduct. Why does he ask for time? Is it to consult others? No! he only wants to pray fervently with his brethren. Herein lie his wisdom, counsel, and strength. He trusts in God for deliverance, but he prays also. Confidence without prayer is a lying delusion; prayer without confidence is also false and vain. Probably he encouraged himself, as St. Paul did the Philippians. (*Chap. iv. verse 6.*)

The King of Babylon, who was reminded of the uncommon wisdom of Daniel, and who perhaps repented of his own haste, granted the delay: the young prophet returned to his house (*verse 17*), and then

made the thing known to his friends. And why? "that they" (*verse 18*) "might implore together the mercies of God." What a touching sight was that of these four young friends, kneeling before the God of their fathers in their chamber at Babylon, praying with one heart! committing themselves to God, both for life and death: encouraging, comforting, strengthening one another as brethren in tender and holy affection.—I am sure they were very happy, even in that time of trouble: for it is true happiness to have God with us, for us, in us!—*You* also need such friends as Daniel's; who pray, who are not for this world only, but for Heaven. You need such as you may go to in any trouble, and say—"My friends, I am in sorrow! let us pray together for the mercy of God in my trouble!" Such are *true* friends: love all men: but seek only such as are godly for *friends*: after all, Jesus Christ Himself must be the best and dearest of your friends.

Now listen to their prayer: they came to God as humble sinners (pious though they were), imploring *mercy* concerning this secret of the king; intreating God, that according to Daniel's trust, might be made known to him the mysterious dream of Nebuchadnezzar.—Mark well again, in this prayer, (for as I have told you before, it signifies much,) that although Daniel trusted that God would reveal the dream to him, he did not remain idle, expecting the favour. No! he prayed till God had pity on him. Thus should Christians do—believe, and pray without ceasing. But now see how the faith of these young Hebrews was honoured by God. Their expectation was not deceived, and their prayers were not fruitless.—It seems that in the night, Daniel was not sleeping, for it was not a dream, but a vision, that was sent him: suddenly, Daniel saw a terrible form pass before his eyes, and it was exactly the same as that which the king had seen in his dream. Picture to yourselves an immense man of an imposing look, and like a brilliant metallic statue; majestic and terrible to behold. His head was of gold, his breast of silver, his belly of brass, but his feet were of iron: towards the close of the vision, this image was by a terrible blow overthrown, broken to pieces and reduced into dust; a great mountain took its place, and filled the whole earth! This then was Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which Daniel could now tell him; but that was not enough; the meaning was also required; and in the same vision, *how* we know not, this meaning also was revealed to him by God.



This meaning will occupy us in our following lessons : but we must now return to the 19th *verse*, which contains the third and last point in the conduct of Daniel which I invited you to imitate. When "the secret was revealed to him, he blessed the God of Heaven." You have seen his faith, and heard his prayers : now listen to his thanksgivings. See how fervent is his spirit in the expression of his gratitude : he is as eager to thank as to ask. He does not wait till morning, but immediately rises "to bless the God of Heaven." He does not even wait till he has seen the king, and heard him say that the dream and the vision are the same. No! "God of my fathers," he cries, "I praise Thee, I glorify Thee!" Read *verses* 20—23. This should be a lesson to you, my dear children ; perhaps when you were in trouble, you were willing enough to pray ; but too often, when God has helped you out of it, your relief seemed quite natural, and you forgot to thank Him.—A Danish sailor fell one day from the top of the main-mast ; "God ! God ! save me !" he cried when falling ; but being caught by a yard with its ropes, he called out immediately, "no need ! no need !" What think you of this man ? He was doubtless silly, and his folly may make you smile ; but how often have you, and also we all, been like this silly man, by the stupidity not of our minds, alas ! but of our hearts ! How often have we failed to acknowledge the help which we implored in the hour of danger ! How often might Jesus Christ say to us, as heretofore on the ship, to His disciples who were forgetful of His works—"Do you not understand ? do you not remember ?" (*St. Mark* viii. 17, 18.)

Time presses ; but I would say farther : whenever you remember Daniel, and his fervent prayers, and his lively gratitude for "the revelation of the secret," think what should be *our* gratitude for the revelation of the mystery of Jesus Christ : "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men ;" (*Ephesians* iii. 5) a mystery, the knowledge of which is "Eternal Life !" (*St. John* xvii. 3.)

#### TABLE OF DATES (SECOND).

YEARS  
B.C.

DURING THE TIME OF DANIEL.

610.—The good king Josiah dies after living 39 years, and reigning 31. Jehoahaz, his second son, succeeds him, at the age of 23.

At his death { Jeremiah, priest, aged 40, had preached for 18 years.  
Ezekiel, priest, aged 14.  
Daniel, prince of Judah, aged 11.

YEARS  
B.C.

609.—Pharaoh Necho, returning from Carchemish, takes Jehoahaz (second son of Josiah) into Egypt, and puts in his place Jehoiakim, aged 25.

Zephaniah and Habakkuk ended their ministry.

608.—Jehoiakim begins his reign.

Jeremiah having spoken his threats in the Temple, was seized by the priests. (*Jer.* xxvi., xxvii.)

607.—Uriah, the prophet, is killed by Jehoiakim. (*2 Kings* xxiii.; *2 Chron.* xxxvi.)

The young Jehoiachin, aged 8, is associated by his father in the title of king.

The young Nebuchadnezzar reigns jointly with his father, who was still alive. (It is from this time that the Jews generally count the years of his reign.)

606.—Nebuchadnezzar invades Judæa, besieges Jerusalem, and takes Daniel and other young nobles to Babylon. He defeats Pharaoh, and takes from him Carchemish on the Euphrates.

The Rechabites retreat into Jerusalem. (*Jer.* xxxv. 6-11.)

Jeremiah, who had been prophesying for 23 years, then foretells a captivity of 70 years. (*Jer.* xxv. 11; xxix. 10.)

605.—The father of Nebuchadnezzar dies, towards the end of the fourth year of Jehoiakim, who in the ninth month cuts with the pen-knife and throws into the fire the book of the prophecies which Jeremiah had given to Baruch. God declares terrible judgements upon him. (*Jer.* xxxvi, 9-32.)

604.—Daniel is presented to the king.

The terrible dream of the image is sent to Nebuchadnezzar.

603.—Jehoiakim rebels against him.

Nebuchadnezzar sends armies to destroy Judah. (*2 Kings* xxiv. 2.)

602.—Daniel and his friends are promoted to high offices.

Nebuchadnezzar and Cyaxares, king of the Medes, unite their forces against Sarak, king of Assyria, kill him, and destroy Nineveh completely.

601.—Cyaxares, called in Scripture Darius the Mede, grandson of Cyaxares, and destined by God to overthrow, jointly with his nephew Cyrus, the empire of Babylon, in Chaldæa, is born in the mountains of *Media*.

YEARS  
B. C.

- 600.—Cyrus, equally called by God to execute great judgements, *is born* in the mountains of *Persia*.
- 599.—Jehoiakim, after 3½ years rebellion, was taken to Babylon in fetters, and ended miserably. "He had the burial of an ass," aged only 36. (*Jer.* xxii. 18, 19.)
- 598.—Jehoiachin, his son (also called Coniah, or Jeconiah), who succeeded him at the age of 18 (*2 Kings* xxiv. 8.) reigned only 3 months and 10 days. Loaded with chains, he was taken, with his mother, his court, and his treasures, to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. (*2 Kings* xxiv. 12.) Zedekiah, his uncle, son of the good Josiah, was set on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar, who made him swear fidelity by the Name of God. (*2 Chron.* xxxvi. 13.)  
Jeremiah has his vision of the figs. (*Jer.* xxiv. 1.)
- 594.—Ezekiel, a priest, the son of Buzi, begins to prophesy on the banks of the Chebar, at the age of 30; or, at least, 30 years after the reform made by Josiah. (*2 Chron.* xxxiv.)
- 590.—Zedekiah, in the third year of his reign, revolts against Nebuchadnezzar, who marches with all his host against Jerusalem, encamps and builds forts around it. (*Jer.* lii. 4.)  
Nebuchadnezzar departs from Jerusalem for a time, in order to go against the king of Egypt. (*Jer.* xxxvii. 5.)
- 589.—Nebuchadnezzar defeats Pharaoh.  
Jeremiah is shut up in the court of the prison.
- 588.—Jerusalem is taken after a frightful siege in August.  
The Temple is burnt; the king's sons are slain in his presence; his eyes are put out, and he goes bound with fetters to Babylon. (*2 Kings* xxv. 2-10.)  
Jeremiah is taken out of prison by order of Nebuchadnezzar. (*Jer.* xxxix. 11.)
- 587.—He is taken into Egypt, and foretells there the conquest of that kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar. (*Jer.* xliii. 6-13.)
- 584.—Nebuchadnezzar takes fresh captives into Chaldæa.
- 583.—The three friends of Daniel are cast into the furnace.
- 572.—Ezekiel foretells that God will give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as reward for his labour against Tyre. (*Ezekiel* xxix. 17-20.)  
Tyre is taken after a thirteen years' siege.

YEARS

B. C.

- 572.—Egypt and its great treasures fall into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.
- 571.—His heart being proud of so much prosperity, he learns by a terrible dream that he will soon lose his reason, and become like a beast during seven years. (*Daniel* iv.)
- 570.—He becomes mad.
- 568.—He is restored, and gives glory to God.
- 562.—He dies, after a reign of 43 years. His son, Evil-Merodach, who reigns only 2 years, restores Jehoiachin, aged 55, and in prison for 37 years, to honour, and sets his throne above those of the other captive kings at Babylon. (*2 Kings* xxv. 27.)
- 558.—Cyrus, son of a Persian prince, allies himself, with his uncle Cyaxares, the Mede, against Babylon.
- 556.—Cyrus kills in battle Neriglissar, king of Babylon, and forces his successor to shut himself up within the walls of his capital. He twice challenges this new king to single combat, and ravages his country.
- 555.—Belshazzar, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, becomes king.  
Daniel has in Babylon his famous vision of the four great beasts. (*Daniel* vii.)
- 553.—Daniel has in Shushan, capital of Persia, his great vision of the rough goat and the king of Javan. (*Daniel* viii. 1-13.)
- 541.—Cyrus, having conquered all Asia, besieges Babylon.
- 538.—Belshazzar, at his feast by night, sees a threatening hand come forth and write upon the wall.  
Babylon is taken by surprise that same night.  
Cyaxares the Second, called Darius the Median, maternal uncle of Cyrus, and aged 62, reigns over the united empire of the Medes and Babylonians. (*Daniel* v. 31.)  
Daniel's fasting and prayer after reading Jeremiah. (*Daniel* ix.)  
His prophecy of the seventy weeks.
- 537.—He is thrown into the den of lions. (*Daniel* vi.)
- 536.—Cyrus, at the age of 64, succeeds Darius the Mede.  
Cyrus decrees the re-establishment of the Jews.
- 535.—First altar again set up at Jerusalem. (*Ezra* iii. 1, 2.)
- 534.—Foundation of the Temple. (*Ezra* iii. 8-13.)  
Last vision of Daniel. (*Chapters* x. and xii.)

YEARS  
B. C.

- 530.—Cyrus dies.  
 522.—Darius, son of Hystaspes, becomes king.  
 515.—Dedication of the Temple. (*Ezra* vi. 14-22.)  
 486.—Xerxes becomes king.  
 464.—Artaxerxes becomes king. Xenophon places his accession nine years earlier.  
 457.—He makes his first decree in favour of Jerusalem. (*Ezra* vii.)  
 445.—He makes his second decree. Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem.  
 420.—Malachi, the last of the prophets, preaches in Jerusalem.

## TABLE OF DATES (THIRD).

IN ROUND NUMBERS, FROM THE CREATION TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

YEARS B. C.

- 4000.—Creation of man.  
 3000.—Enoch has just been taken by God.  
 2000.—Recent death of Noah, and birth of Abraham.  
 1000.—Solomon dedicated his Temple six years before.  
 900.—Elijah preaches.  
 800.—Jonah prophesies.  
 700.—Isaiah dies soon after.  
 600.—Kings:—Nebuchadnezzar reigns at Babylon; Pharaoh-Necho in Egypt; Jehoiakim at Jerusalem.  
 „ Prophets:—Jeremiah, prophesies at Jerusalem; Daniel, at Babylon; Ezekiel, at the river Chebar.  
 500.—Second Temple of Jerusalem just consecrated by Jehoshua, Zerubbabel, Haggai, and Zechariah.  
 400.—Malachi, the last of the prophets, just dead.  
 300.—The Greek-Macedonian empire is divided into four.  
 200.—The Romans begin to overthrow the third Empire.  
 100.—Pompey and Julius Cæsar are born; the one to take Jerusalem, the other to begin the Roman Empire.  
 1.—Birth of Jesus Christ, from whence dates the Christian Era.

## LESSON V.

DANIEL II. 25—36.

IN our last Lesson we heard Daniel saying to the king, (not fearing to go before him,) "Give me time and not only will I tell you the forgotten dream which has troubled your sleep, but I will give you the interpretation thereof." Then this young man returned to his dwelling, and having called his companions in captivity, they prayed together so earnestly, that in the following night, the fearful visions of the king were revealed to Daniel, and that he was able to discern in them, by his prophetic eye, the most distant events of the future.

To-day, my children, we are going to follow the young prophet in his return to Nebuchadnezzar, and to study the first half of the revelation which the imperious monarch required of his wise men.—Why do I say the first half?—Because the king ordered them to tell him, first his dream, and then its meaning.—Was not the first as impossible for man to do as the second?—Each required a revelation from God.—Our lesson will then take you as far as *verse* 36; that is to say, that you will see *to-day* what this wonderful dream had been; but that we must reserve for our following lessons, the exposition of the long future, revealed in it to the king by the Holy Spirit. Then will unroll themselves before us the events of the ages after Daniel, even to yet future revolutions of empires. But I hope, dear children, that none of you have neglected the two-fold work which I gave you to do—I mean the learning the geography and chronology of these events; that, is the knowledge of the respective position of the countries where they took place, and of the number of years passed away between them. Now, in order to reckon them more conveniently, it is usual to start from the birth of Jesus Christ, and to say such an event took place so many years before, or so many years after, our Lord. For instance, we say, that in the year 1869, *after* Jesus Christ, we are studying the Book of Daniel; and we say also that he interpreted the dreams of the king of Babylon in the year 605 *before* Christ. How many years, then, between us and Daniel?—605 added to 1869, make 2474.—It was, then, 2474 years ago that Daniel, at the age of seventeen, went into the new palace of the king, on the west bank of the Euphrates, to explain to him the thoughts of his heart. It was in order to make this study of chronology easier to you that I gave you in my last Lesson a second Table of Dates, containing the principal events in Daniel's time.

It is an imperative duty of all Christians to try and understand the Old Testament, of which the prophets form so great a part. I entreat you, therefore, to neglect nothing which can make the understanding of these sacred books clearer to you. The ignorance of many Christians now-a-days, of the Old Testament in general, and of the prophecies in particular, is truly disgraceful. What! has God spoken for no purpose? He has said that "*All Scripture,*" &c. (2 *Tim.* iii. 16.) Jesus Himself said, "Search the Scriptures,"—of the *Old Testament*, for the New did not then exist; and shall we dare to neglect such a book? Even those who do *read* the Prophets, do not give themselves any trouble to understand them better. They open the books at hap-hazard, without order or study, seeking only idle or vague profit. They read them here and there, to make a sentimental application to themselves, without regard to the real and literal meaning put therein by the Holy Spirit; and they are busier in finding a meaning suitable to their vain thoughts of the moment, than in searching for those of God. Certainly there is no reverence in this fashion of reading; how, then, should a blessing be found in it?—One point of neglect, which in many persons makes the reading of the Prophets little profitable, is the not having sufficiently studied their cotemporary history. Well, it is to show you how to connect the study of facts with that of the prophecies that I have arranged Tables of Dates for you.

I will at once point out to you some of the events most necessary to be known, in order to read intelligently the history and the prophecies of Daniel. It must not be forgotten that there were living at that time *three kings*, of whom Scripture often speaks; and *three prophets*, who are among the holiest and most famous of the Old Testament. I have already made you acquainted with these three kings; but before speaking of the three prophets, it is perhaps needful to remind you that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem three times during the life of Daniel. He took it the first time, when he conquered the king of Egypt, subjected Jehoiakim, and brought Daniel to Babylon, in the year 606 B.C. He took it the second time, seven years afterwards, to punish Jehoiakim for have revolted against him, and made a fresh alliance with the king of Egypt. At that time, he caused to be transported to Babylon, loaded with double chains of brass, the young king Jehoiachin, who had succeeded his father Jehoiakim for three months, and he put on the throne, instead of him, his uncle Zedekiah, brother to Jehoiakim, and third son of the good king Josiah. It was after the

second siege that the prophet Ezekiel was led captive to the river Chebar, which runs into the Euphrates. He took it the third and last time eleven years later, after Zedekiah had rebelled against him. At that time, he killed the children of that prince in his presence, he put out his eyes, and sent him loaded with fetters into prison at Babylon; he burnt the Temple at Jerusalem, and destroyed that city altogether.

Let us now say a few words on our three great prophets. There were also others at Jerusalem in those lamentable days—Habakkuk, Obadiah, Baruch, Zephaniah; but Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, were the most illustrious. They knew each other, and read each other's prophecies, but they were appointed to live very far from one another, and to lead very different kind of lives. Jeremiah might at that time be forty-five years old, Daniel seventeen, Ezekiel twenty. Jeremiah had to prophesy in tears, under persecution, in prison, in poverty, living with the poor, and clothed in camel's hair. Daniel was to prophesy in a royal palace, surrounded with splendour, clothed like the great men of the kingdom, and treated as one of the princes; but he was holy, humble, gentle, praying in the midst of grandeur, eating nothing but vegetables, and drinking water only. He lived near to God, and was dear to Him, (Scripture tells us,) as Noah, Moses, and Job, had been. Ezekiel, on the contrary, had to prophesy in the sorrow and humiliation of exile, amid the captives who had been transported to the river Chebar. At the time of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, this prophet, as well as Jeremiah, was still with the Jews at Jerusalem; but seven years after, he was in his turn carried away like Daniel, while Jeremiah remained among bad people in the ruins of Judea. It is even said, that after having been taken by force into Egypt, Jeremiah was there put to death; and it is also said, that the Jews in Mesopotamia, irritated by the prophecies of Ezekiel, dragged him over stones till his skull was fractured, and his brains scattered. I would also remind you, that in the year before Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Jeremiah had foretold the Jews of this prince's return against Jerusalem, of its overthrow, and of their captivity in Babylon for seventy years. Daniel knew this prediction, which had been sent by letter to the Jews in Babylon; and you will see in his ninth chapter how earnestly he studied the writings of Jeremiah.

But now to return to the order of our verses; you see in the *twenty-fifth*, that Arioch quickly brought in Daniel before the king,



saying that he had at last found a man who could make known the dream. But does it not seem by his words as if Arioch had taken great pains to *find* an interpreter? And yet, in fact, the only trouble he had taken was to seek out this innocent young man in order to kill him. The king's words, in *verse 26*, seem to shew surprise and distrust at the sight of such a youth offering himself to reveal what the wise men of Chaldea were unable to discover. But thus in all ages, God is pleased to "choose the weak things of the world to confound the strong." Listen now to the beautiful answer of the young prophet, shewing already the calm dignity and gentle majesty, which from one end to the other of the holy Book of Daniel, characterize his words and actions—(*verses 27-30*). First, he declares the impossibility of any *man's* satisfying the senseless demands of the king; and secondly, the power of God to do what is impossible to man. Remember that he is addressing a heathen king, a worshipper of idols, and one willing to be adored as a divine being himself. Observe also, how earnestly he tries to make known to him the true and living God—with what calm and noble courage this young believer gives all glory to his Master: "There is a God in Heaven who revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king what shall be in the latter days." This is not a vain imagination in sleep, but a grand revelation. And thirdly, Daniel declares his nothingness, and his own powerlessness. Here, again, he desires that God alone may be honoured. "I am going to make known this thing," but how? Think not that it is "for any wisdom that I have more than any living man:" no! "this secret has been revealed to me, in order that the king may know the thoughts of his heart," and may give glory to the God of Heaven. Well, my children, we must have the same thoughts as to the revelation of the Gospel; for, firstly, it also contains things impossible to be understood by the natural man; secondly, it is God who reveals them; and thirdly, it is not "because of any wisdom which may be in us more than in others," but because of His great mercy; it is "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

*Let us pray.*

O God our Father! grant that we may know the things that belong unto our peace, the secrets which Thou alone, God of Heaven, canst reveal to us. Thou hast said in Thy Word, that "there are things which the natural man receives not, comprehends not, and which would not have entered into his heart: none knoweth the Father, but the Son; and none knoweth the Son, but he to whom the Son hath re-

vealed Him." But Thou, O God! dost condescend to make Thyself known to those who seek Thee in sincerity, in a humble feeling of their ignorance, their spiritual poverty, and their deep unworthiness. And when Thou thus makest Thyself known to them, Thou teachest them that it is not for any good, or merit, or power, or "wisdom in them more than in any living," but out of Thy pure mercy. Grant, then, to all of us, Lord, to understand Thy holy Word; to seek Thee in it studiously, conscientiously, prayerfully; and in the blessed assurance, that the more we study it, the more shall we be made like Thee. We ask this in the Name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour. Amen.

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## LESSON VI.

### DANIEL II. 37-46.

ONE day, upon the Mount of Olives, our Lord Jesus Christ, having just quoted this prophet Daniel, whom we have been studying for some weeks past, suddenly interrupted Himself in order to say these remarkable words:—"Whoso readeth, let him understand!" or pay attention (*St. Matt.* xxiv. 15.)—Well! this exhortation of our Master I give to you here in the presence of God, my dear children, and equally to all who accompany you into this house of prayer.—Yes! let everyone who reads the Book of Daniel pay attention to it! as commanded by our Lord. And if it was a duty eighteen hundred years ago, how yet more imperative a one is it for us, who living in the latter times, are able to recognize the exact accomplishment of many of the prophet's words; who can see, as it were, with our eyes, and touch with our hands, the seals of the living God attached to this sacred book!—Oh, then! let everyone who reads Daniel, pay attention! I hope, my friends, that you have all prayed to be attentive this morning; and although I am well aware that there are among you *some* children who do not yet know enough of the history and geography of the nations mentioned; yet I only ask you to be attentive, and I am sure that by God's help, I shall be able to make myself understood by the youngest of you, and that the understanding of these wonderful revelations of

Daniel will even give them the key of the world's history; and will also make them better understand the other prophecies of Holy Scripture. The proud king of Babylon had then arisen from his royal couch, troubled and full of fear. An inexpressible dream still chilled him with dread, although he had entirely forgotten its circumstances; he only remembered its awfulness and horror. Never had anything similar, in the mysteries of sleep, shaken his mind; it was evidently sent from Heaven. But what did it mean?—How could he tell, since he no longer knew even what he had seen?—He therefore desired earnestly to know these two things; first, the dream, and secondly, its meaning. Then said Daniel, "There is a God who revealeth secrets;" and this secret was made known, to him Daniel, "not on account of any wisdom found in him more than in any living;" but in order that he might be able to give the king its solemn interpretation. This was the dream.—The king, during the night, had seen, all at once, a great image appear. "Terrible to behold," said Daniel; whether from its dazzling brightness, or the attitude and height of the figure, or from the threatening expression of its face. But what had caused the greatest fear in this vision was its end.—While the king was beholding this image, a stone, cut without hands, had detached itself from the mountain, rolled on, and struck this colossus on its feet and toes; and behold it fell, reduced entirely to fine powder, like chaff winnowed in a summer threshing-floor, and carried away by the wind. Afterwards, what had happened? This stone had become a great mountain, and had filled the whole earth. Have you formed any idea of this wonderful scene? Can you fancy the great Nebuchadnezzar on his throne, listening to this young man's telling him his secret thoughts, and the mysteries of the future? All the terrors of his dream appear again before his eyes; he had forgotten them, but now he recognizes them: his heart beats violently; he holds his breath; he devours the prophet's words. Daniel has revealed to him the hidden things of the past; and now he is going to tell him those of the future! He is then a messenger from Heaven! the Spirit of God is with him! Behold then this proud king, who had just built great Babylon; this conqueror who had already filled the world with the terror of his name; this Bonaparte of ancient time; this demi-god adored by twenty nations of Asia; behold him (*verse 46*) descending from his golden throne, and falling on his face before Daniel!—And why all this reverence, and full persuasion that Daniel's interpretation is indeed the truth? You doubtless understand that the king felt that since Daniel knew the

secrets of the past, he could also penetrate the mysteries of the future; he has been able to relate the dream, why should he not also interpret it? for which is more difficult to say: "Oh, king! this is what will happen in five hundred years;" or, "these are the secret thoughts which thou hast forgotten, but which arose in thy heart during that night of trouble."

But I must return to the course of the verses, and explain them one after the other. In order thoroughly to understand the 36th, 37th, and following verses, you must recollect what was said in the 28th and 29th. We learn by these words that this dream was intended to acquaint Nebuchadnezzar with "what should come to pass hereafter;" and even "what should be in the latter days;" and you see, by the 29th verse, that the king, who had a powerful mind was meditating in his bed, upon the events which might agitate the world in future, when suddenly God revealed to him "what should come to pass;" that is to say, the course of empires and revolutions, which should, by shaking each nation in its turn, decide the fate of God's chosen people. This is what I am going to try to make you comprehend. I think that most of you have already heard of the four monarchies (Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman,) as also of their four founders, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, and Cæsar-Augustus. But should there be any who are ignorant of them, they must not be disheartened, nor think that they need not attend; for the explanation of this very Book of Daniel will teach them these things; and I hope not to say anything here too hard for them. Yet before going farther, I wish to make two general remarks necessary for the understanding of these prophecies. Listen to them very attentively; for I shall question you on them next Sunday, in order to be sure that you have understood and remembered them.

The first is this: in the history of nations there are always two kinds of interests and of facts distinct one from the other, although having great influence one over the other; the one are political events, the other religious ones: the first concern kings and governments; the second, souls and the Church of God. Who will rule Europe in ten years? the French, the English, or the Prussians? Kings or Emperors, Revolutionists or Republicans? these are political events, which have been called the history of the State. But what will be thought in Europe of the Gospel in ten years? will the consciences of the

Spaniards, Italians, French, English, and Germans, submit themselves to Christianity? or will they disavow all religion? These are religious events; this is the history of the Church. Thus, when an author wishes to write a complete history of a nation, he must mention *both* kinds of events; and then his book will be called a history of Church and State.

Well, then! you will find in the Book of Daniel these two subjects, these two sets of facts, these two histories; that of the Church, and that of the State.—Yet, while relating the two together, the Spirit of God never confounds them. Thus, for instance, though he describes the four monarchies in his second chapter, he will again speak of them at great length, in his seventh, and again in his eighth; but then he will do it with a different aim. Here it is the history of the State which he has specially in view; and he speaks of religion only in order to complete the political history. Also, to whom does he first address the restoration of it? To Nebuchadnezzar, to a king, even to a heathen king. But on the contrary, in the seventh and eighth chapters, it is the history of religion which the Spirit of God has above all in view; and he speaks of empires only for the better completion of the history of the Church; and then to whom does He make it known? no longer to a heathen king, but to a man of God, His beloved Daniel.

This, then, is my *first* remark; and now for the *second*. What political histories should we expect to find in the Book of Daniel? the history of all nations? of the Americans, Chinese, Africans, Scythians?—No, certainly; of those nations only who have had to do with the people of God.—First of the Babylonians, then of the Medes and Persians; then of the Greeks and Romans; then of the ten Gothic nations, and of the Saracens and Turks; then of the Papal and Democratic governments of the Latins; then of the Russians, the people of Ros (or Gog,) Meshech, and Tubal.

And now, I am sure that you may all understand why the Almighty, sending a dream to the king of Babylon, caused him to lose the recollection of the vision which had so greatly troubled his mind. Which of you will tell me?—It was to give Daniel the opportunity of revealing it to him.—Yes, it was to give the king a plain proof that God was with Daniel, and that the revelation of the meaning of the vision was not less certain, nor less divine, than the discovery of the vision itself. Daniel informs him at once of the two secrets; that of

the past and that of the future. When the king heard that of the past, he knew it again; how then could he doubt concerning that of the future? Therefore when Daniel had spoken, "the king fell on his face before him." *We* also have the same reasons, and still more and stronger ones, to kneel in worship of the God of Daniel when we are reading the wonderful prophecies of this man of God. Indeed for us, as well as for Nebuchadnezzar, these predictions contain two parts, the first of which ought to make us adore, in the second, the power and goodness of the God of Heaven, who is the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." Listen, and you will see what I mean. I said that for the king there were two parts in the words of Daniel; the first was in the past, the dream itself; the second was entirely in the future, the events which the dream represented, and which Daniel told him were "to come to pass after him." [There would be yet three empires succeeding his own, and after them would arise a fifth, that of Jesus Christ, which would "fill the whole earth," and "stand for ever."]

Well, dear children, this prophecy, which to the king was all in advance of him in the future, is in part behind us in the past. *We* have seen these following kingdoms, which the king expected; they arose each in its time, to oppress in its turn the people of God; and they arose with the exact circumstances of detail, foretold by the prophet twenty-four centuries ago.—Thus you see, *we* have every reason to worship God as Nebuchadnezzar did.—We must first adore in the past, the power and truth of God, who proves to us by fresh and striking testimonies, the divinity of the Scriptures; and we must adore in the future, that mercy which is promised us in it; we must wait with steadfast confidence, with reverence and prayer, for that glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ, which will fill "the people of the saints of the most High," with joy, and which will as surely come to take its place in the world as the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Barbarians, have done in their turn. We must expect it, hope for it, be prepared for it; and for that purpose we must "abide in Christ," that "we may be able to stand before the Son of 'Man,' and not be ashamed when He shall appear at His coming." Having then "girt up the loins of our mind, and being sober, let us hope to the end, for the grace which is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Be ye holy, for He is holy."

## LESSON VII.

## DANIEL II. 37, 38.

How wonderful is this Book of Daniel ! and how, the more closely we study it, does a voice come forth from it, crying to us : Man of Earth ! it is the God of Heaven Who speaks to thee in this Book ; listen then humbly to Him, Who calls thee in order to give thee life !

Last Sunday, you heard the man of God relating the future to the king of Babylon ; and although I have not yet begun to unfold these astonishing prophecies, yet you may have already understood how divine they are. As an eagle flying as high as the clouds above the top of the Alps, would already see far off the countries of Italy, their rivers, lakes, forests, cities, towards which he was taking flight ; so Daniel, in his sublime revelations, lifted above the present, in the heights of faith, calmly hovers over the future ; he discerns from afar the kings, empires, and revolutions, which were to agitate its successive generations ; and while his prophetic far-seeing eye takes in the whole course of ages from Nebuchadnezzar to the last coming of our Lord, he shews us the scenes of the future, as if they were those of the past. Our God thus foretells the future of nations, because He is as supreme in His Providence, as He is over nature. He foresees as infallibly the revolutions of empires, as the immense circuits of the starry worlds ; He knows what the passions of kings and people will bring forth, as well as He could tell us what the many attractions of the stars, and their most distant courses, will produce in the firmament.

This thought has often struck me lately, while reading in an almanack the details of an eclipse of the moon, expected next week : I said to myself, One and the same God, then, rules both stars and nations ; He leads the people who move restlessly on the surface of the earth, as well as the worlds which run in the space of the sky ; “He stilleth the waves of the sea, and the passions of the people ;” like as “He gathers up our tears into His bottle ;” He holds the hearts of kings in His hand, even as “He counts all the stars, and calls them by their names.” This is why Daniel, the Spirit of God being within him, could foretell the revolutions of empires, even as the great Newton, when holding his telescope in his left hand, and his powerful pen in his right, could announce ten centuries beforehand,

the courses, the perturbations, and the long revolvings of the most distant planets, in the same firmament, where we ourselves move 500,000 leagues every day.

Thus you see that this eclipse which we expect next week had been announced for centuries; the astronomers of Babylon might have foretold it two thousand or three thousand years ago: and yet you know that the moon travels more than two hundred millions of leagues in a year; she is, like ourselves, carried through space sixty times faster than a cannon ball; and thus ceases not, day nor night, to fly four hundred leagues in a minute! Yet all the movements of these flying worlds have been foreseen with such exactness, that an astronomer, at the top of a high tower called an observatory, would be able to say to us: "I am going to fix a telescope in this window, with two spider-threads crossed at its focus; and I assure you, that, if no one come and meddle with my arrangements, during one thousand years, I can announce the hour, minute, second, at which such and such stars will, at the end of these thousand years, pass by the crossing of these two spider-threads, after having run over millions and millions of leagues in all directions of space. I will even tell you, at what distance such and such a planet will be from the earth, at the end of these thousand years." Why is it that an astronomer is made capable of such marvellous predictions? It is because Almighty God would show us by His enduring laws in the sky, that He is the God of order and of truth; that there is no uncertainty in Him; and "that what it pleased Him to begin, His Hand unwearied finishes."

Well, my friends, God is as true and all-powerful in the Bible, as He is true and all-powerful in the sky. And like as an astronomer can, with a telescope in his hand, foretell, ten centuries beforehand, the positions of the planets, their movements, departures, returns, eclipses; so also can a Christian, with the book of prophecy in his hand, see beforehand the changes of kingdoms and empires. Yes, if God has caused them to be written in His Holy Book, they will come to pass more surely than the rising of the sun will happen to-morrow; for a time is to come, when that light will be no more, and when the moon will no longer shine, "when heaven and earth shall pass away:" but as to the words of the Lord, they "must be fulfilled to the least tittle."

I would fain have time, ere going farther, to give you a striking example of this. Daniel here foretells that after Nebuchadnezzar,



“who is the head of gold,” shall arise a second kingdom inferior to the first,” which shall overthrow the powerful empire of Babylon, and which is represented by the breast and two arms of silver. I have already told you by anticipation, that this kingdom was to be, seventy years later, that of the Medes and Persians; and that it would be founded by a king named Cyrus, who yet was unborn, when Daniel made known to the king of Babylon his dream and its interpretation.

But listen now to something besides. There had been a prophet, who (two hundred years before Daniel, in an age when the Persians were only a small nation of mountaineers, unknown in the world, and especially among the Jews), had not only foretold the fall of Babylon, but who had even gone so far as to point out *by name*, this king Cyrus, who was to be born in this unknown land, and who was *not* to be born (mark well) till 240 years after the prophecy. This prophet was Isaiah, in his forty-fourth and forty-fifth chapters. Thus my children, you see, that persons then living at Jerusalem, and reading the Book of Isaiah, could know that Babylon would be over-thrown by one named Cyrus; just as now astronomers with a telescope can predict an eclipse.

How wonderful then is the God of the Bible! how powerful! how true! In this Book of Daniel, you will hear the prophet not only announcing future events, but marking their dates and duration. For instance, he says, that the captivity in Babylon should last seventy years; and it *did* so; that between the decree of the King of Persia, and the death of Jesus Christ, seventy weeks of years should pass away; and 490 years *did* so pass away: and many other periods, which have been, or must be, all accomplished, like our expected eclipse. Indeed, the greatest astronomer, the most powerful intellect which has ever shone among men, the famous Isaac Newton, having set himself to consider these prophecies, became so full of admiration of them, that he said to himself, I have long studied the stars, and the glory of God in astronomy; henceforth, I will study Daniel, and the glory of God, in the predictions of His Word!

What had probably filled this great mind with such deep admiration of the prophecies, was this: he had undertaken to fix accurately, by means of eclipses, the chronology of ancient times; and this was how he did it. He said to himself: I will search in ancient history for all the accounts given of the days in which the sun was seen to

extinguish itself at mid-day, or the moon to become dark and blood-coloured (for these strange sights terrifying the men of old, they hardly ever failed to record them in their books); and then, as I can by means of my calculations, tell with certainty, in what year, day, and hour, every eclipse has taken place, I am able to fix the exact date of all the contemporary events. Thus, for instance, when I read in the historian Plutarch, that the sun was eclipsed in Italy, in the year when Romulus founded the city of Rome; I can certify that this eclipse happened in the year 753 B.C., on the 5th July, at 4 p.m.

But you may say, what had all this to do with the prophecies? Thus much. Newton, in giving himself up to these studies, observed two things which filled him with veneration for the Holy Scriptures, First, he saw that in counting by this means the years with the greatest exactness, the epochs pointed out by Daniel for future events (for instance, that of seventy weeks of years, of which we shall speak by-and-by), were exactly fulfilled. Secondly, he had made use, in his calculations, of a list of eclipses made out by a very ancient astronomer, named Ptolemy, a heathen, who lived in Egypt, 140 years only after Jesus Christ; and who had recorded in his books astronomical observations made at Babylon during a long course of years, and already collected, three hundred years before his time, by the famous Hipparchus of Nicea. Now, what must have been Newton's admiration of Daniel, when he saw that the pagan Ptolemy had, in order to mark the years of his eclipses, divided ancient times in exactly the same way as the Prophet Daniel had done 745 years before him; that is to say, that Ptolemy had seen the four monarchies behind him in the past, as Daniel had seen them before him in so distant a future. One would say, in reading Daniel, that he had Ptolemy's books before his eyes; or when reading Ptolemy, that he had copied Daniel. In fact, just as this man of God, when viewing in future ages, these four great empires which were to convulse the world, considered them under the figure of a single statue, as forming, so to say, one kingdom only, which should begin with the king of Babylon, continue first by the kings of Persia, then by the Grecian monarchs, and finally by the Latin Emperors; so likewise did the pagan Ptolemy, 740 years after Daniel. This astronomer, wanting to make a list of dates, in order to number the eclipses according to the different rulers of the world, has reckoned them in relation to the same four monarchies which Daniel saw by the eye of faith in future ages. For this purpose, Ptolemy viewed them

as one course of empires, begun by the kings of Babylon, continued by those of Persia, by Alexander, and the Grecian kings of Egypt, and ended by the Roman Emperors. But moreover—like as in the statue in Daniel, each of the four monarchies is reckoned to begin from the time only when it takes the place of the preceding one ; so Ptolemy, in his catalogue of kings, counts those of Persia only from the year when they became masters of Babylon ; the kings of Macedon only from the time of their overthrowing the Persians ; and the rulers of Rome only from the time when they took the place of Alexander's successors. He takes no account of the previous existence of any of them : no more did Daniel. Can you not understand now, why Newton, who had so much to do with Ptolemy's catalogue, when studying eclipses, was struck with admiration of Daniel's prophecies ? If you have not all been able to follow me entirely, I hope you will all remember at least the general idea, which in few words, is this. God guides nations, as he guides the world ; He shews His power and truth equally in prophecy as in astronomy ; He makes Himself known in the revolutions of nations, foretold by Him, as He records Himself in the revolutions of the stars in their appointed courses.

But now, I will take up again the course of our verses, beginning at the 28th, in which you will see that this prophecy extends to those distant and glorious days, called in Scripture, "the last times," "the time of the end ;" that is, the time when our Saviour shall establish His blessed kingdom upon earth, after having replaced His people Israel in Jerusalem. This is why, before going farther, it is well to compare this prophecy with that of our Lord, in St. Luke xxi. 24. Read it aloud. He speaks of the time during which the Jews were to remain subject, and scattered among the Gentiles : and during which also, the Gentiles were to possess Jerusalem. "The time of the Gentiles,"—that is, the time given to them in which to exercise their power.

*Verse 31.* Observe here three things : 1st. The monarchies represented in this vision were to be idolatrous, and all their kings would be worshipped : therefore they were shewn to Nebuchadnezzar under the form of a statue or image, that is, of one of those idols which he was accustomed to worship. 2nd. These monarchies were to be powerful and much feared ; therefore the image is represented as a living being, as standing up, as having threatening features, and an

imposing appearance: "the form thereof was terrible." 3rd. These monarchies were to be surrounded by all the splendour of the world; and therefore "the brightness' of the statue was excellent." (*Verses* 32, 37, and 38.) "'Thou'—not only thyself but thy dynasty, thy family, thy son and thy grandson who will reign after thee." "Thou who art a king of kings."

Nebuchadnezzar was the successor of the kings of Assyria, which had been the most ancient and noblest of monarchies; but by the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, this kingdom had become the empire of Babylon; and the Chaldeans and Assyrians formed but one nation. The young king Nebuchadnezzar had had from the first months of his reign unheard of success; all had bent before him; he had become "a king of kings." As he was led, too naturally, by his victories, to think himself the author of all his greatness, and a demi-god; Daniel, when recalling his power, takes care to tell him, "The God of heaven hath *given* thee a kingdom." The prosperity of this prince is perhaps unexampled in history; and whatever in after ages may have been the glory of Cyrus, Alexander, or the Cæsars, that of the king of Babylon was still more striking. "He was the head of gold." His magnificence became a proverb. The greatest monarchs who followed in later times, aspired only to imitate, in a lower degree, its incomparable splendour. His reign lasted forty-five years (or forty-three, reckoning them only from the death of his father); but when very young, he began it by uninterrupted triumphs. He took Jerusalem three times; he destroyed Nineveh, that ancient and strong capital of Assyria, that city of "three days' journey;" he conquered Elam, Susianna, and even that very Persia, whence was to come forth afterwards the conqueror of Babylon, foretold by Isaiah; he brought to nothing the famous Tyre, the queen of the seas; he joined to his empire part of Arabia, and soon afterwards, mighty Egypt with all her riches. In short, two Greek historians go so far as to say, that he surpassed the famous Hercules in the greatness of his exploits; and that he pushed his conquests on the north, as far as Thrace; and on the west as far as the whole northern coast of Africa, and even into Spain.

I shall have to tell you about Babylon by-and-bye. Apparently, there was never anything like it under the sun; it was 20 leagues round, had walls 350 feet high, and 87 broad; quays not less prodigious; one hundred brazen gates; a tower for the idol Bel, 600 feet high; magazines stored with provisions for twenty years; hanging-

gardens (as they were called), rising terrace above terrace, on piled arches, planted with the rarest and most exquisite fruit-bearing trees ; a bridge under the Euphrates, like the Thames Tunnel. The traveller Herodotus, and the physician Ctesias, who had seen Babylon with their own eyes, have left us the most exact descriptions of it ; as also the geographer Strabo, and Diodorus of Sicily, who both lived before Jesus Christ, and who had both travelled in Asia. I should like to shew you a plan of this wonderful city. It formed a perfect square, and all its immense parallel streets crossed each other at right angles. Its two royal palaces, built one upon the right bank of the Euphrates, and the other on the left, were the admiration of the world. That on the west, near the hanging-gardens, was defended by a triple rampart and was itself three leagues round, and appeared impregnable. That on the east, rose near the magnificent temple of Bel, in which Nebuchadnezzar had placed the sacred vessels of Jerusalem, and which was founded upon the ancient Babel of the children of Noah. From the top of its tower, 600 feet high, you would have seen the grandest sight that the labour and power of man had ever brought into view. At your feet, Babylon, "the golden city," "the glory of kingdoms ;" its immense streets, its temples, its palaces, its gardens, and that noble river Euphrates, which traversed its whole length, and contributed to its strength as well as to its beauty, by the flowing of its fresh and abundant water into wide and deep ditches all round the walls. Beyond these ramparts, a still more magnificent scene would have been offered to your sight, in the unparalleled fertility of the country, in its vast lakes hollowed by the hand of man, but above all, in its innumerable and often gigantic canals, which, receiving by turns the waters of the Euphrates and of the Tigris,\* intersected the whole plain, shedding

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\* "The waters of the Tigris rise from November till May, by means of the rain of Armenia, and fall from May to August. But as the Euphrates rises earlier than the Tigris, and flows less quickly, the canals dug between the two rivers sometimes carry the water of the Euphrates into the Tigris, and sometimes that of the Tigris into the Euphrates. Nothing gives a higher notion, than these canals, of the immense resources which this country must have possessed under the rule of the Assyrians. I do not think that any work, ancient or modern, can be compared to them, for the greatness of the labour, and its enormous expense, except, perhaps, our railroads. The steep banks of these gigantic trenches, are in many places 80 feet high, and not less wide at their base. These works could not be kept up, except under a regular and able government. What an idea do their remains give us of the greatness of Babylon ! By means of these canals, deserts were turned into fertile provinces, and beautified by all the treasures of the vegetable world ; a powerful population hastened there from all sides, and a continuous number of cities rose upon their banks."

"It is remarkable," adds the same author, "that many of these canals are much higher than the highest waters of the river. It was then necessary, in order to fill them, that the water should be raised by the labour of man, or by machinery."—*From Wellsted's Travels.*

unheard of abundance on their banks, and making the whole of Mesopotamia and Chaldea into one vast garden. Nevertheless, all this magnificence was to come to an end ; and Daniel does not hide it from the king. From the interior of one of his most obscure provinces, a prince should arise, who in sixty-six years to come should overthrow the kingdom, and put to death the children of Nebuchadnezzar.

*Verse 39.* This weak province of Persia was of little importance in the days of Daniel ; but "it shall arise," said he ; it shall become the second monarchy ; and yet, in spite of the greatness to which it will then attain, this kingdom will never reach the splendour of thine ; it will be of "silver, and inferior to thine."

Observe attentively, that this second empire is represented by "the breast and the two arms, which were of silver." (See *verse 32.*) Why is this detail? It is far from being unimportant: you will find, in fact, that this monarchy could not have been better represented ; it was *one* alone, although at first consisting of the two distinct nations of Persians and Medes, who had joined together, in order to overthrow the empire of Babylon. As in the human body, the two arms are joined together above the breast ; so the Persians, allied to the Medes, soon united themselves to them, and formed from that time but one empire and one people. The father of young Cyrus had married the king of Media's daughter, and he himself was brought up at the court of his grandfather, where he was early distinguished by the most brilliant qualities ; and when grown up, and placed in command of the army, he gained victory after victory, and finished, seventy years after Daniel's captivity, by taking Babylon, and proclaiming immediately a decree permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to re-build it.

But read yourselves, dear children, the wonderful words written about this prince two hundred and forty years before his birth ; in the forty-fourth and forty-fifth chapters of Isaiah. Mark well these words : "Thus saith the Lord unto Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, to loose the girdle of kings, and to open the gates before him : I will go before thee ; I will break the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.....I have called thee *by thy name* ; I have *named* thee, though thou hast not known Me. It is I, saith the Lord, who do all these things."

Suppose that a book had been written in Geneva, at the time of the Savoyards' assault, two hundred and thirty-five years ago ; and that

in it was found the history of Napoleon Bonaparte, even calling him by his own name: "I have called thee by thy name: thou shalt be Bonaparte; thou shalt come in two centuries from the Isle of Corsica; thou shalt be a warrior; thou shalt subdue nations, thou shalt loose the girdle of kings; thou shalt take possession of France, thou shalt conquer Italy and far-off Egypt; thou shalt return to subjugate the continent of Europe, thou shalt trouble nations as far as the land of Magog; and at last, thou shalt go away to die upon a distant rock in the ocean." What deep and religious reverence should we not feel for such a book! We must not then be surprised, that Cyrus, after having read the Jews' Bible, favoured that prophetic nation, and decreed its re-establishment!

Think then, my children, what this Bible should be to you, who know besides, that it has been given to lead us to God, to declare the pardon of sin, to deliver us from the devil, and to prepare us for the return of Jesus Christ!

Listen all, then, with reverent attention to these words of the Almighty, with which I will end:—*Isaiah* xlv. 21, 22.

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## LESSON VIII.

### DANIEL II. 37-39.

WE resumed, last Sunday, verse by verse, the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream; but we had only time to explain the meaning of the 37th and 38th verses: which of you can tell me what they signified?—The kingdom of Babylon.—Yes.—Nebuchadnezzar was "the head of gold;" that is to say, this prince and his family, or his dynasty. This was the first of the four great empires which were to follow each other, and to rule, one after the other, over the people of God, until the universal kingdom of Jesus Christ. Truly Nebuchadnezzar ruled the world himself during forty-five years; took Jerusalem, broke down its walls, burnt its temple, and transported its people into Chaldea. His glorious and triumphant reign lasted till the year 562 B.C.; but six years only after his death. Belshazzar, his grandson,

ascended the throne for a reign of eighteen years, at the end of which, being conquered by the joint kings of the Medes and Persians, who surprised by night the impregnable Babylon, he was slain in the midst of his women and his courtiers. This event happened sixty-six years after the day when Daniel, standing before the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, said to him, "Thou art the head of gold." This, then, was the first, that is, the oldest and the most glorious of the Four Monarchies. It is called the kingdom of Babylon, because Nebuchadnezzar had, in a few years, made of this city the capital of the world, and the most magnificent of cities, It is also called the kingdom of the Chaldeans, because the people of Babylon belonged to the Chaldean nation. It is sometimes also, but more rarely, called the Assyrian monarchy, because it is thought that Nebuchadnezzar was of Assyrian origin, or at least that his kingdom had originally detached itself from the Assyrian empire.

We now pass on to the *Second* Monarchy, in the explanation of our verses. To understand the description of it (in *verses* 32 and 39) we must here observe four important marks. *First*, the metal is changed. This means not exactly a new empire, but a new race, a new dynasty (with a new language), which will come to govern the world, and to keep the people of God subjected. The time of the statue, "the times of the Gentiles," in our Saviour's words (*St. Luke* xxi. 24.) that is to say, the time when heathen nations were to rule Jerusalem, and tread her down, began with the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, and was continued by the Persians under Cyrus and *his* successors. When the metal changes from silver to brass, the time is carried on by the Greeks under Alexander the Great and *his* successors; and when at last the brass becomes iron, the Latins take the place of the Greeks, ruling the world, and in their turn oppressing the people of God. When the metal changes, the people and the language have changed.—This is the first remark; and now here is the *Second mark*. There is no interval between the gold and the silver in the construction of the statue. This colossus is *one*, although different metals succeed each other in it. Thereby, then, is represented one and the same empire, begun by the Chaldean kings and continued without interval by the Persian monarchs.—*Third mark*. The second metal is inferior to the first: *that* was gold, *this* is only silver; representing, therefore, an empire, which, although great and powerful, will be less brilliant with riches and glory, than was that of Babylon.—



*Fourth mark.* Finally, this second kingdom is not represented only by the breast, but also by the two arms, which are expressly (and not without intention) mentioned in *verse 39*.—The empire was thus composed at first of two kingdoms, soon to be united and to form only one.

Now, my children, here is a rule of interpretation, to which I wish you to listen very attentively; the smallest among you will be able to understand it.—It is that the chronology of the Four Monarchies is taught us in the statue, *by the respective heights of the different emblems which represent them in it*. I mean, that in the history of these monarchies, the order of time follows exactly the order in which the corresponding members are placed in the human body, beginning from the head and going down to the toes. Thus, for instance, the head will represent the most ancient of the monarchies, because the head is higher than the rest of the body. After the head comes the breast; and as the arms, placed at the highest part of the breast, are joined in it at the height of the shoulders, they will clearly point out two kingdoms, which, from the beginning of their domination will be united to each other to exercise a common power, and to be no more separated. One of these kingdoms will be the right arm, and the other the left. Now observe that it will be just the contrary with the *Third Monarchy*: not only does the belly of brass come below the breast of silver (that is to say, the monarchy represented by the belly will come after that shewn by the breast); but the thighs of brass, being placed below the belly of brass, point out that it will be in the last times of the Third Monarchy, that this empire, one at first, will be divided into two. And observe lastly, that below the thighs of brass, a Fourth and last monarchy is pointed out by the legs of iron; that below the place where these legs are become iron their metal changes, and is mixed with clay; and also that below this mixture, and in the lowest part of the statue, the feet are divided into ten toes, signifying that the Fourth Monarchy will not be divided into ten kingdoms, until after having undergone the change represented by the union of the clay with the iron.

Here is, then, the very simple principle which, with as much clearness as exactness, fixes the chronology of the Four Monarchies: “It is the respective height of the emblems in the body of the statue.”—But to return to the arms and breast of silver.—If we open the

Book of History we shall see its perfect agreement with that of Prophecy. Which was the Monarchy that overthrew that of the Chaldeans? Let those who know stand up to answer me.—It was that of the great Cyrus.—And who were the subjects of the great Cyrus? Did they not belong to two nations formerly distinct?—Yes, the Medes and Persians.—Until then these two races had formed distinct kingdoms, themselves made up by the union of divers mountain tribes; but under the guidance of Cyrus, they made themselves into one nation so completely, that the Persians who at first were very inferior to the Medes, and had not risen up till after them, soon gained the ascendancy through the influence of Cyrus.—This same circumstance of two nations forming but one, and of which the last surpasses the first, we shall find again (in *Chap. viii.*) represented by the emblem of the “two horns of the ram,” of which one was “higher than the other,” and of which “the highest came up behind the first.” And in order that we should not mistake the meaning of these prophetic representations, nor give way to our imagination, Daniel takes care to tell us in the 20th *verse*, “The ram which thou hast seen which had two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia.”—Some of you, doubtless, already know the history of that monarchy; but for those who may not have learnt it, I will relate it in a few words.

Five years after the day when Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar the fate of nations (in the year 600 B.C.) was born in the mountains of Persia, then subject to Babylon, a child whom his parents called Cyrus. The father and mother of this young prince were heathens; they lived three or four hundred leagues from Jerusalem, and were far from suspecting that the name of their little boy had been written down exactly in a book two hundred and forty years before, and a book of the obscure nation of the Jews now captive in Babylon. How should they have imagined—they who were then also tributaries of the great Nebuchadnezzar,—that, according to this book, their little Cyrus had been chosen by the God of Heaven, to bring down nations, to unloose the girdle of kings, to say to Jerusalem, “Thou shalt be rebuilt,” and to her temple, “Thy foundations shall be laid.”—Nevertheless, so it was; and what the Almighty had decreed concerning this child of the mountains, was in time fulfilled.—The mother of Cyrus was a daughter of the prince of Media, whilst his father was prince of Persia. The Babylonish yoke becoming lighter after Nebuchadnezzar’s death, the

king of the Medes soon became powerful. His daughter sent little Cyrus from Persia, to be brought up at his grandfather's court; and he soon made himself admired and beloved there. Placed at the head of the army of Persia and Media, which had risen against Babylon, he was everywhere victorious, and made great conquests, till at last he came and laid siege to the mighty Babylon. But this city, with its walls three hundred feet high, its deep ditches into which flowed the waters of the Euphrates, and its trebly-guarded fortresses, appeared impregnable; till at last, Cyrus, having turned the course of this great river in one night, entered the city with his cavalry, through the bed itself of the river, killed the king of Babylon, and became the master of the world.—He knew the prophecies of Daniel; God moved his heart to favour *His* people: he freed them after seventy years captivity, and sent them soon back to their country by a solemn decree, in which he said to Jerusalem, "Be rebuilt!" and to her temple, "Be founded again!"—Read aloud that wonderful passage in Isaiah, of which I have already spoken to you (*Chap.* xlv. 26-28, and xlvi. 1-6.) and listen all with deep reverence, remembering that Isaiah wrote it at Jerusalem, four hundred leagues away from the country where Cyrus was born, and two hundred and forty years before his birth.—Let us adore this God of prophecy, who called Cyrus, and who girded him with the girdle of kings, though Cyrus knew him not yet!—Let us acknowledge, as it is written, "that this God is the Everlasting, and there is none other."

But enough about the breast and arms. I pass on to the *Third* Monarchy. It is written in the 32nd *verse* that the "belly of the statue was of brass, and that the thighs also were of brass;" and in the 39th *verse*, that afterwards would arise "a third kingdom, which should be of brass, and should bear rule over all the earth." Again, observe well these three things: *First*, the brass followed the silver, and was closely united to it without interval. Therefore, a third kingdom, a third people, a third language, must follow immediately the people and language of Persia in the government of the Gentiles, and in ruling over the people of God.—*Second*, brass is less shining than silver, as silver is less so than gold. This *Third* Monarchy, then, would be less rich and splendid than that of Cyrus, although it should rule over all the world then known to the people of God.—*Third*, not only was the belly of brass, but the thighs also. Therefore, the third empire, after forming one

all-powerful kingdom only, would be afterwards divided into two states belonging to the same people, and speaking the same language.—And now what kingdom is this? Those of you who have some knowledge of history will think it to be that of Alexander the Great, king of the Macedonians, and general of the Greeks.—It is what is called the Grecian Empire. But even those among you, who have not yet learnt history, might equally name this *Third* Monarchy, if they had only read the eighth chapter of Daniel; for he there points it out by name. He does not represent it only by the emblem of a “rough he-goat,” he says plainly, “It is the king of Javan,” (the name of “Javan” is in Hebrew, that of “Greece.”)—He goes farther even, and clearly explains to us (both in the eighth and eleventh chapters) what we must also understand by the two thighs of brass. The *Third* Monarchy, which is the Grecian, he tells us is afterwards to “be divided” into “four kingdoms; and that still later two of these four kingdoms will be stronger than the two others; and with them only the Israelites will have to do; so that the one (the king of Syria) will be called “King of the North,” and the other (the king of Egypt,) “King of the South.” Read aloud in *Chap. viii.*, the 21st and 22nd *verses*. And in the eleventh *chapter*, *verses 2-5*. Who are “those three kings of Persia?”—Cambyses, Smerdys, and Darius. And the “fourth?” Xerxes.—“And a mighty king shall stand up”.....? Alexander.—Nothing can be plainer; history repeats exactly what you have just read. Two hundred and forty years after Daniel had explained the future to the king of Babylon, was born, in the little kingdom of Macedon, a boy who was afterwards to be called Alexander the Great, and who was to conquer the then known world, from the kingdom of Javan (which was looked upon as the extreme west) to the distant shores of the Indus and Hydaspis, the extreme east. In early youth he was already one of the greatest and most dreaded commanders who have ever stained the earth with blood. He was but twenty-one when all the states of Greece appointed him *general of the Greeks* in order to attack the powerful monarchy of the Medes and Persians. In the following year he passed over into Asia, and overcame every obstacle; he marched or rather flew like the stormy wind; the best fortified towns fell before him; the most formidable armies were destroyed in a day; Tyre was burnt, Gaza brought to nothing; Egypt was conquered in a few weeks; Babylon opened her gates; the unfortunate king of the Medes and Persians, after being long pursued, fell mortally wounded; and in five years of unexampled, rapid, and

victorious warfare, this young prince, scarcely twenty-six years old, sat upon the throne of Nebuchadnezzar and of Cyrus, was the ruler of the world, and had himself called "Master of the Earth and Sea." Nevertheless, hardly has this proud conqueror, after his return from the mouths of the Indus, and the deserts of Scinde, to the banks of the Euphrates, entered into Babylon, intending to make it the centre of his kingdom, than he was seized by a burning fever, and in ten days was carried to the grave. In vain was he plunged, many times a day, into the Euphrates; in vain were innumerable victims sacrificed in the temples of Babylon; in vain were all the efforts of physicians to preserve the life of this master of the world;.....he was forced to give up his body and soul to God, as well as to leave his palaces and his armies, at the age of thirty-two; death in a moment silenced that voice of command, which made the world tremble; and he, for whom, the day before, the earth had seemed too small, was enclosed in a piece of porphyry, since found by the English in Egypt, and which is now shewn in the British Museum. Fifteen years after his death, his wife, children, brothers, sisters, all had perished; and his generals disputed with great bloodshed the possession of his vast empire. At last, after thirty years of war, they divided it "towards the four winds of heaven," into four kingdoms, of which two soon became much more powerful than the others, and were also the only ones with which the people of God had to do. They were the Grecian kingdom of the Seleucides in Syria, to the north of Jerusalem; and to the south the Grecian kingdom of the Ptolemies, in Egypt. Seleucus and Ptolemy were two generals of Alexander the Great; and their descendants, who are called by Daniel the kings of the north and of the south, reigned till the coming of the Romans, and had power by turns over the people of God. They are the thighs of brass. Thus, then, the Word of God has been fulfilled in the fate of the three first Monarchies. We shall next Sunday see that of the fourth: but in the meantime let us look now and always to the fifth, to that of Jesus Christ! It is to be a mountain "filling the whole earth;" and all the wonders told of it shall be fulfilled. Oh! may we be found acceptable when the Son of Man shall come, and not be confounded at His presence!

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## LESSON IX.

DANIEL II. 40-48.

WE learned last Sunday about three of the great monarchies which were to govern the world and rule over the people of God.—To-day we go on to the fourth, or the legs of iron.—You remember the two great preceding revolutions.—After the power of Babylon, came that of Cyrus from the east, with his terrible squadrons of Medes and Persians; then after them, rushed from the west Alexander, king of Macedon, at the head of his indomitable Grecian phalanx. I am now going to speak of a still more violent revolution; but first I wish to shew you this picture of the vision. You will see at once in it the succession and chronological order of these great events. Which of you can recollect the chronological principle of the emblems in this vision? It is their respective height in the body of the statue. You can easily see it in this picture. Look; the head of gold begins in the year 605 B.C.; for then it was that Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne of his father. The arms of silver began in 538; that is to say, that in this year Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian, his sister's son, took Babylon and formed the second monarchy; but the arms became breast two years after, when Cyrus was proclaimed sole monarch of the empire. The belly of brass began in 330, when Alexander the Great destroyed the monarchy of Persia, and put himself in its place; but this belly of brass gave way to the thighs of brass, when, in the year 300, Alexander's generals divided his kingdom among themselves; Seleucus taking Syria as far as India, and Ptolemy making himself king of Egypt. You smile perhaps at this picture; it is truly a poor representation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream; but nevertheless, you must look at it with reverence, for it will remind you of wonderful revelations. It is the history of empires pictured by God Himself before they existed. What divine light must then shine forth from this statue! Here are we looking at it, 1870 years after Jesus Christ; but God Himself, in the palace of Babylon, on the banks of the Euphrates, was, during the silence of the night, 2476 years ago, engraving it with His Almighty Hand on the mind of the great Nebuchadnezzar; and during the silence of another night, reproducing it in the young and holy soul of that Daniel whose prayers He had heard. During these two nights where were Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, and all the Roman Emperors? where were all those kings of the Gothic nations, who more than one thousand years after Daniel were to divide and continue the vast empire of the Latins.

These thoughts were suggested to me unexpectedly this last week, while reading the travels of two Englishmen along the shores of the Euphrates, in the plains of Babylon. I have told you that never was there on the earth a greater and more magnificent city. Well! what think you these Englishmen were doing? They were on horseback, galloping over the site of Babylon, and they were looking for Babylon! They sought her, but could not find her: because she is no more, and her place no longer knows her; and because, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, she was to be changed "into pools of water, and into habitations of wild beasts." At last they perceived a vast space, by turns dry, barren, sandy, or surrounded by pieces of water and large marshes, on which were seen a succession of little elevations, evidently only heaps of ruins. This was great Babylon! It was plain that formerly there must have been a populous city on this site; then, farther off, they saw a very high ruin at the top of a more considerable eminence entirely composed of rubbish. These gentlemen approached it; but before they got there one of them saw from afar, upon the height, four black points seeming to move to and fro "What can these moving objects be?" said they; "doubtless some of the Bedouin-Arabs, those thieves and vagabonds, abounding in these deserts." But when one of them looked through his telescope, he recognized four magnificent lions, who were walking upon the ruins of Babylon as on their own domain, and had made their dens among them. This, then, my children, is what is become of Babylon, she who was called "the golden city, the glory of the magnificence of the Chaldeans, the hammer of all the earth!" she is the dwelling of wild beasts; she is become pools of water; nothing remains of her, nothing of the Persians, Grecians, nor Romans; while the Word of the Lord, who declared their ruin, endures for ever, and the book of His divine oracles remains alone unchangeable. This Book, which the youngest of you carries in his hand, had the ruin of Babylon written in it before Nebuchadnezzar's time, and shall never perish; for "Heaven and earth shall pass away," said our Saviour, "but this word shall not pass away." Yes, on the banks of the river Euphrates, where the lions of the desert now roam, stood 2476 years ago, a magnificent city, with splendid palaces, and having gigantic canals, an immense traffic; and containing sages, astronomers, politicians, generals, governors, queens, and princes; enjoying sumptuous feasts, melodious concerts, joyful sounds, and scenes of triumph. In the midst of all these sights and sounds, there was in a grand hall

of the king's palace, seated on his throne of gold, a conqueror who had made the earth tremble ; and in his presence stood a young man of seventeen, relating to him the destinies of future empires, as we might now tell the history of the past. These empires arose and then fell ; all earthly power must likewise fall ; but this Book, which relates their rise and fall, will never pass away !

Let us now see the fate of the Fourth Empire ; the 33rd *verse* tells us that "his legs were of iron, and his feet part of clay and part of iron." The interpretation is in *verses* 40-43, which shew us what were to be the characteristics and fate of this *Fourth Kingdom*. *First* : it was to be of iron, because iron breaks all things in pieces ; "and as iron breaketh all these, so shall it break in pieces and bruise." This Fourth Kingdom must then consist of a more warlike nation, more cruel, powerful, and oppressive than any of the preceding ones. *Second* : It was at first represented by two legs, because it was to be at first not monarchical but republican, and governed by two equal rulers. *Third* : its toes are expressly mentioned in the prophecy, which, according to the usual language of emblems, points out that this Fourth kingdom, in the last times of its rule, should be divided into ten distinct states, thus continuing the Latin empire under this new form ; in the same manner as we have seen the empire of brass continue to exist after its division into the two thighs of brass. We shall find an infallible explanation of this emblem in *chap. vii. verses* 23, 24, where the prophet represents to us the same four monarchies under the image of four ferocious beasts, the fourth of which has ten horns, as the feet of our statue have ten toes : and one of them that stood by, said to him, "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns are ten kings that shall arise out of this kingdom." *Fourth* : "The feet and toes were to be part of clay and part of iron," because this kingdom was to be divided ; partly strong and partly weak. These last marks shew that an internal change was to take place in the constitution of this kingdom, by which I mean that it was not to be an outward division like that pointed out by the ten toes, but an internal essential division into two governments, or two nations, or two languages, or two powers ; a division which should be common to the ten kingdoms, and in which the feet of the statue, and each of their ten toes should equally share. *Fifth* : When should this essential



change in the internal constitution of this empire take place? According to our chronological rule, you should easily be able to answer me. You know that the respective height of the emblems in the body of the statue, determines the course of time in the successive destinies of the four monarchies. This change should take place *towards the end* of this monarchy; since it does not begin till in the feet.—Right, dear child; but yet this same internal change must take place *before the division of the empire*, since it begins above the toes.—*Sixth*: Lastly, the iron and the clay mixed in the feet of the statue could not, however, cleave together: and this emblem, as explained in *verse 43*, signified that the two parts of this inward division made in the Fourth Empire, would be *united* without being ever *mixed* together. They should be united by human seed (“mingle themselves with the seed of men;”) that is to say, they should be taken from the same races and the same families, yet without ever being able to be really mixed one with the other.

Here, then, are six plain characteristics of this Fourth Empire. Will you repeat them? (The children do so.) Now, my dears, I will tell you in few words, the history of the Fourth Monarchy. Whoever has any knowledge of the revolutions of the Roman empire, will admire the exactness of the prophecy. Never, even after the event, has a more clear view been given in so few words. “The Fourth Empire was of iron!” The Roman character cannot be better drawn; all was of iron. Its government was inflexible, hard, crushing, unmerciful. Its courage was sanguinary, unconquerable. The soldiers were of iron; never were any more fearfully armed in battle; their cuirasses, helmets, shields, spears, javelins, their short and heavy two-edged swords, all their weapons were terrible. Their discipline was of iron: the Jewish general Josephus has described it to us, after having seen their army march to the siege of Jerusalem. “Their laws,” said he “order the punishment of death, not only for desertion, but for the least neglect; and however severe may be their laws, the officers who enforce them are still more so.” The yoke laid upon the conquered nations was of iron; heavy, unbearable, and yet immovable, unavoidable. All was crushed in the conquered countries, and they were reduced into Roman provinces, deprived of all nationality, and even of their language; for very soon Latin was forced to be spoken, not only in the whole of Italy, but in Germany to the south of the Danube, in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal, and even in

Africa.—The Romans' hearts were of iron; they never shewed mercy; they shed the blood of men like water; they needed this cannibal joy in peace as in war. When a man was beheaded, his flesh was always first wounded to the bone, by beating him with rods. When a king was taken prisoner, they harnessed him to a triumphal car, on the day of their entrance into Rome; and during the festivities which the emperor then provided for his army in the palaces of the Capitol, this wretched prisoner was scourged apparently to death; then beheaded with cries of joy, and dragged into the river Tiber. When Julius Cæsar, who took possession of France, and reduced it into a Roman province, had taken its last town by assault, he caused both hands of every man in it to be cut off, and himself boasted of this deed in his "Commentaries." They required human blood in all their amusements; and in all their towns there were theatres, frequented by ladies as well as by men, where poor prisoners of war were forced to fight to the death, either against wild beasts or each other. As soon as one was wounded, all the spectators cried out, "He is disgraced!" and then the unhappy man, lowering his shield immediately, was obliged to put one knee on the ground, and to stretch out his neck with a theatrical air, and thus submit to be killed; at this sight, the people both men and women gave the signal by raising the thumb; and immediately the conqueror, approaching the conquered man, thrust his sword into the jugular vein above the shoulder, and drove it in up to the hilt. If the poor man, when dying, was able to preserve a heroic attitude and graceful movements, the loud applause of the crowd greeted his last sigh. When Julius Cæsar, on his return from France, provided festivities for the people of Rome, there were, it is said, similar combats in every street of that great city, between the German or French prisoners. The famous Titus, he who took Jerusalem, and who was named "the gentlest of the Romans," and "the delight of mankind," caused all the old, sick, and deformed people to be killed in cold blood; and when he set forth on his joyful march back to Rome, he took in his train the 80,000 young Jews who remained, and had them killed with the sword by thousands, or devoured by wild beasts, to amuse the people in the towns through which he passed. In a single day, for instance, at Cæsarea, in order to celebrate his brother's birth day, on the 24th of October, he caused the death of 2,500 of them, of whom some were burned, some slaughtered, and some devoured by beasts. Those who remained of this multitude were employed in building the Coliseum, or in dying in their turn, at the cruel games celebrated there.

We learn these details from Josephus, who was with Titus at Jerusalem, and his ardent admirer.

“The legs were of iron.”—“There shall be a fourth kingdom strong as iron” (*verse 40*). And in the seventh chapter, when the prophet represents the monarchies by the image of four wild beasts, he says that the fourth was “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet.”

We said, *Secondly*, that this Fourth Kingdom, being represented in the statue by “two legs of iron,” was to be governed at first by two authorities equal in power. Such was in fact the Roman empire, when it became part of the statue; that is, when Pompey had reduced the Greek kingdom of Syria into a Roman province, in the year 65 B.C., and after he had taken Jerusalem in 63. This empire was not at that time at all monarchical; it had two chiefs of equal power, called consuls, to whom the *imperium* was entrusted, in whose name public affairs were administered, and by whom, in the calendars, the years were marked.

We said *Thirdly*, that the empire being in its lower part represented by the ten toes, was to be divided into ten kingdoms; and *Fourthly*, that this division would take place in the last period of its rule.—This was strikingly fulfilled about the year 400 of the Christian Era, and in the following century; for from the far north, there rushed at that time, almost at once, ten Gothic nations, innumerable, warlike, cruel, speaking the same language; they crossed the Danube and the Rhine on the ice, or by swimming; over-ran the whole Latin empire, and established themselves even at Rome, in the year 476 A.D. But they soon all equally accepted the customs, laws, religion, and even the language of the Romans; so that, in spite of the invasion, this *Fourth* Empire was continued under a new form, called the Holy Roman Empire, with the Latin Church, and the Latin language for holy purposes: its history for centuries was that of Church and State. I will only at present tell you the names of these ten nations and of their kings. *First*, the Visigoths, under their king Alaric; they fixed themselves in Spain. *Second*, the Ostrogoths, under their king Theodoric, established themselves in Italy. *Third*, the Heruli, under Odoacer; they took Rome, and there proclaimed him king of Italy and of the Heruli. *Fourth*, the Lombards, under Alboin; they took

possession of north Italy. *Fifth*, the Franks, under Pharamond; they spoke a sort of German, like all the others; they fixed themselves at Paris, and in a great part of the surrounding country. *Sixth*, the Burgundians, who invaded parts of France and Switzerland: their king Gondobald, who also spoke German, resided at Geneva. *Seventh*, the Alani, under Gonderic; they fixed themselves first in France, and afterwards in Spain. *Eighth*, the Suevi, under Hermanric; they passed over the Danube into the country called after them Swabia. *Ninth*, the Gepidi, under Cunermond; they fixed themselves in Pannonia, and from that time their territory was called kingdom of Syrmium, as it had been named before kingdom of Gepidium. *Tenth*, and last, the terrible Vandals, under Genseric; they first established themselves in Spain, where they gave their name to Andalusia (or Vandalusia,) and afterwards in Africa, where they founded a kingdom of Carthage. Some men have wanted to reckon in the number of the ten kings, the Anglo Saxons, who established themselves at that time in England, and the Huns, who ravaged the world under the too famous Attila; but this is a two-fold error: as concerns the first-named people, because England no longer made part of the Roman empire; as regards the Huns, because though they ravaged the Roman empire, they did not establish themselves there, and were neither of the same language, nor of the same race as the other ten kings.

Some of you have perhaps seen in your week-day schools, the Atlas of Lesage (or Las Cases); he was a friend of the Emperor Napoleon, and during his abode with his master at St. Helena, he made, in order to put the great facts of history within the reach of the young, a course of time-tables, in which he has distinguished by different colours, both the empires and their sub-divisions. This learned man was probably far from thinking, when writing by the side of his friend the emperor Bonaparte, of the prophet Daniel, who yet would have been able to dictate the same to him 2426 years before, by the side of *his* friend the emperor Nebuchadnezzar. Like Daniel, Lesage divides the history of the world into four parts: and he uses four colours to mark out the four monarchies of the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. That of the Greeks he divides into four kingdoms; but he marks two of them, those of Syria and Egypt, as much more powerful than the others; and finally he divides the Roman empire among the Barbarians, nearly as we do. He names and enumerates the ten kingdoms nearly as I have been telling you; (only

erring by including the Huns and the Anglo-Saxons;) so that you see that the friend of Napoleon, and the friend of Nebuchadnezzar, have written history in the same way; the one before the events, the other after them; the one six hundred years before the Christian Era, the other eighteen hundred years after it. Yet there will always be this difference between them; Daniel's history extends much farther into the course of ages than Lesage's: the former telling us of a *Fifth* Monarchy, of which the latter had no idea. Once more, dear children, let us look forward to this Fifth Monarchy, and prepare ourselves by prayer for the coming of its King.

Oh, gracious God and Father! be pleased to make these solemn thoughts sink deep into all our hearts; and since Thou grantest to these children the favour of being early acquainted with these striking proofs of Thy power and Thy truth, may it be for the advancement of Thy kingdom in their young hearts, and for their waiting in love for the coming of Jesus Christ, our glorious Saviour! Make ready, Oh God! a generation consecrated to Thee, living on Thy truth, glorifying Thee by good works, and hastening by prayer the promised time, when the stone shall become a mountain, and fill the whole earth!

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## LESSON X.

DANIEL II. 41-44.

DEAR children, you must each recollect where we stopped in our last lesson; and you must also be able to give a ready account of the whole course of explanation. You remember that last Sunday we tried to find out, by-keeping to Daniel's words alone, what were to be the characteristics of the *Fourth Monarchy*. We saw, firstly, why it is represented by iron; secondly, why by *two* legs of iron; and thirdly, why afterwards, by the ten toes of their feet. By two legs of iron, because it was to have two rulers of equal authority, in whose name it would govern the world, publish laws, execute judgements, and count year by year the records of its glory. It was also towards the end of its existence, to be divided by ten barbarous nations, who issuing from

the far north, should invade the whole of it, and afterwards continue it under a new form, by soon adopting its laws and religion, its ecclesiastical organization, and even the Latin language; though at first all these nations and kings spoke only a sort of German. Thus, for instance, Geneva, which was taken by the Burgundians, was nevertheless called for six hundred years an imperial city, a town of the Holy Roman Empire: and that is why half of the imperial Roman eagle was given for its armorial bearings. There remain, then, three things to be done, in order to finish the interpretation of this wonderful vision; first, we must learn by what principles we may be able to fix the *geography* of these four empires, in the same manner as we have already settled their *chronology*; and we must try and put these two in exact and satisfactory agreement with each other. Secondly, we must explain what is meant by the *clay*, mixed with the iron, from the ancles down to the toes. Thirdly, we ought to study the teaching of the Holy Spirit about that *Fifth and last Monarchy*, which was to succeed in its turn, and to last for ever; for, "in the time of these ten kings—" (See what is written in *verse 44.*)—Let us, then, begin by putting the geography and chronology of these four monarchies in agreement. If I were to ask you to shew me on a map, Babylon, Persia, Macedon, Rome, you would be able to do so; but if I went on to ask you to which of the four empires Egypt belonged, or in which parts of the world were those ten kings to settle, who divided the Fourth Empire, why in France, Spain and Africa, rather than in Greece or Egypt, I think you would have some difficulty in answering. And again, if I asked you whether England and Holland were in the Roman Empire, you would probably be not better able to satisfy me. This, then, is what I wish to explain clearly to you, by telling you about the geography and chronology of the two legs of iron.

In the year 65 B.C. the Roman Consul, Pompey the Great, overthrew the Greek kingdom of Syria, and thus destroyed one of the brazen thighs of the statue, in order to replace it by the legs of iron of the Fourth Monarchy. This Pompey, who took Jerusalem by assault two years after, was one of the greatest generals that the Romans ever had; he had made war in Italy, France, Spain, and Africa; on the seas, and to the then known extremities of Asia; he had been victorious everywhere; and when he re-entered Rome on his return from Jerusalem, three hundred and twenty-four royal personages in royal robes, walked in fetters before his triumphal car; among them

was a king of Armenia, a king of Colchis, seven sons of the king of Pontus, his sister, a queen of Scythia; and in the midst of them all, the unhappy king of the Jews, Aristobulus, with his young son Antigonus, still more unhappy. But this general Pompey had another Roman Consul for his colleague, whose daughter he married, and with whom he soon quarrelled; this was the famous Julius Cæsar, the most fortunate and the most dreaded of all the Roman generals. In less than ten years he made himself master of eight hundred towns, killing therein, historians say, more than a million of men; and soon afterwards quarrelling with his son-in-law Pompey, he defeated him, and persecuted him even unto death. Those who cut off his head wrapped it in linen, and presented it to Cæsar; he wept, it is said; but five years afterwards, having continued the war against Pompey's son, he caused that young head to be cut off also, that it might be put upon a stake, in the middle of the neighbouring town. In the following year he was himself killed by twenty-three sword-strokes; and it was his nephew *Cæsar-Augustus*, who became after him the *first emperor of the Romans*.—I hope, my dears, that these details will help you to take in what I am going to say.

In what year, do you remember, was placed in the statue the end of the thighs of brass, and the beginning of the legs of iron?—The year 65 B.C., when Pompey destroyed the Greek kingdom of Syria.—Yes; but some chronologers place them two years later, when Pompey took by assault Jerusalem, which had refused his authority; and others, that they ought not to begin till the year 30 B.C., when Cæsar-Augustus destroyed the second thigh of brass (the Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies in Egypt); or even till the year 27 B.C., when he was proclaimed emperor by the Roman senate, and when he did what he pleased with the provinces of the empire. The difference between these three dates is of no great importance; but observe, that in order to find those of the beginning of each monarchy in the statue, we must not seek out the time when they began to exist (for they had all four been already founded nearly seven hundred and fifty years before Christ); but the year is chosen in which they each, after obtaining dominion over the people of God, overthrew the empire preceding them. Thus the kingdom of Babylon begins in 605, that of Persia in 538, that of the Greeks in 330, and that of the Romans in 65 or 27 B.C.

Now listen to the principles by which the geography of these four kingdoms may be determined with equal exactness.—There are four of

these principles ; but as you are young two will be enough for you.—*First*, the special territory of each monarchy is that which it occupied at the time when, by the taking of Jerusalem, and the subduing of God's people, it became part of the statue. Thus you see that its chronological date determines its geographical extent. You will easily understand this first principle from some examples of its application. If we were asked what was the territory of the first monarchy, or of the Chaldeans, what should we answer? Nebuchadnezzar, indeed, conquered Armenia, Asia Minor, Persia, then Tyre, Egypt, Africa, and it is said, even part of Spain; why, then, should not all these countries form his special territory? Because Jerusalem, as we learn from the Bible, was the *first* of his conquests. From that moment he became the golden head of the statue, and his territory is determined; all the rest is over and above. Farther, why should not Egypt or Asia-Minor make part of the special territory of the silver breast, the kingdom of Persia? Because the people of God were already subjected to it, before the conquest of those countries. Farther still, what then should be the territory of the Grecian monarchy?—All Greece, Asia-Minor, Syria, and Egypt; because Alexander the Great, had already conquered all these countries, when he made himself master of Jerusalem.—Let us go on to the Fourth Monarchy; what was the special territory of the Romans when they became members of the statue? It was the countries conquered by them before the year 65, or the year 27 B.C. Neither England, Holland, nor Lower Germany, were as yet part of the Roman Empire. History tells us that at the accession of Cæsar-Augustus, the boundaries of the vast empire of Rome were, the Danube on the north, the Rhine on the east, the Atlantic Ocean on the west, and Mount Atlas, in Africa, on the south; consequently, when you are told that the iron legs were divided into ten toes, you must not look beyond these limits for the ten kings represented by that emblem. Such, then, is our *first* principle in fixing the geography or special territory of the Four Monarchies. Our *second* is still simpler, and more easy to take in.—*Second principle*. As each of the four metals of the statue points out the ruling of another race and of another language, we can easily find out the special territory of each of the monarchies, by inquiring what language was known to have prevailed there. Now, *Persian* continued to be spoken on the east of the Tigris; *Chaldean*, between the Tigris and Euphrates; *Greek* on the west of the Euphrates, in Egypt, Syria, and Asia-Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, and as far as the Danube, and the



mountains of Illyria; *Latin*, in Africa as far as Mount Atlas, in Europe on all the left bank of the Rhine, and all the right of the Danube, and as far as the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. And even at this day, not only are the French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian languages, fundamentally only corrupted Latin; but even religious worship in Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, is performed in all the Roman Catholic churches in the Latin tongue; praying, singing, saying Mass, all is in Latin; and when the Bishop of Rome (who is called the Pope, and who rules over the Churches in those countries) writes any letter, or publishes any decree, he still uses Latin only.

When I began this lesson, I intended to do three things; first, to put the geography and chronology of the Four Monarchies in satisfactory agreement, and to shew you how they were determined; secondly, to explain what the mixture of iron with clay means; thirdly, to shew the meaning of the dominion of the stone which broke the statue in pieces and filled the whole earth. But the first of these points has taken up all our time, and has not allowed us even to touch on the two others, which are too important to be spoken of at the end of a lesson, when perhaps your attention is already exhausted. I would rather keep them for next Sunday if it please God. However I do not regret having dwelt so long on the previous subjects, because the explanations given may have enabled you to understand better how detailed and how precise are the revelations of the Holy Spirit in the Bible.—Dear children! say to yourselves, whenever you are studying the Holy Book: My soul, be attentive, for this is a wonderful Book—a Book that describes empires before they existed; a Book in which God fixes, twenty centuries beforehand, the bounds of their habitations, says to them, as formerly to the sea, “Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.” Book of my God! I would study thee, and cherish thee more and more!—Listen to the words of St. Paul. (*Heb.* xii. 25—28.) I shall never forget that when I was a boy of your age, and was studying at school the general history of the world, I happened to read for the first time, in Daniel, this prophecy, and that in the seventh chapter. I was so struck with admiration at seeing his agreement with the facts that I had just been learning in Rollin, that I said to myself, “Ah! certainly the Holy Bible is from God!”—And I remember also, that afterwards, during my preparation for the Communion, while still studying at the academy, if any evil doubts about the Scriptures came into my mind,

immediately the remembrance of what I had seen in these prophecies was a safeguard to me, and restored my faith.—But still later, when I had become a minister of the Gospel, and had studied still more closely the oracles of God, I was so forcibly struck with their wonderful harmony with all history, that the effect of it to me was as if some one had risen from the grave and said to me, “Minister of Jesus Christ, honour His Word, preach His Word, expect everything from His Word!”—Well, dear children, I wished that you might, from your earliest years, have some conviction of the truth of the Bible; and that is why I chose this sacred Book of Daniel for the subject of our lessons.

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## LESSON XI.

### DANIEL II. 41-49.

MAY God permit us to finish this day the explanation of this prophetic statue, in which 2400 years ago were written the annals of nations now extinct, the destinies of those still to arise, and finally the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ, which shall one day cover the whole earth, and fill His Church with perfect holiness and eternal joy! God grant above all, that, as we finish it, we may have in our souls something of that religious feeling and fervent adoration which penetrated the soul of the still heathen Nebuchadnezzar, when falling on his face before Daniel, he exclaimed, “Of a truth your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings!”—Yes! let each of us learn to adore Him, with a heart equally touched and prostrated; for we see fulfilled in history, that which the king of Babylon saw by faith only; we can also see beyond, even to the kingdom of God; and we “expect from Heaven His Son Jesus, risen from the dead, who delivers us from the wrath to come!”—We were at the *Fourth* Monarchy, and had explained the 40th verse. What remains to be done? Two things: first, to shew what is meant in the legs of the statue, by *this clay* which begins from the upper part of the foot: secondly, to explain the fifth and last monarchy, represented by the *stone cut without hands, out of the mountain*.—What is the *mountain* from which the stone is cut?—

What is *the stone itself, cut without hands?*—What mean the *blow*, and the *breaking of the statue* in its feet of clay and iron?—What is the *destruction together* of the metals and the clay, so that they “became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, which the wind carries away; and that no place was found for them?”—Lastly, what means the *growth* of this stone which becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth?

Let us first read again the 33rd, 41st, 42nd, and 43rd verses, and then carefully explain them.—We saw how the Roman empire became a member of the statue and the ruler of the world, from the year 65 B.C. when the Greek kingdom of Syria (one of the brazen thighs) was conquered with Jerusalem by Pompey; or else thirty-five years later, when the Greek kingdom of Egypt (the other brazen thigh) was reduced into a Roman province by the emperor Cæsar-Octavian, who, three years afterwards, took the name of Augustus.—The iron legs meant that Fourth Monarchy, which was to exceed in vigour, power, duration, and extent, all the kingdoms that had preceded it.—Cæsar-Augustus, the first Roman emperor, was looked upon as the master of the world, and as a god upon earth.—His rule extended over fourteen hundred leagues in length, by seven hundred in breadth, in the three parts of the then known world, Europe, Asia, and Africa.—His revenue each year was equal to £4,000,000. His terrible legions, each of which was like an army, were twenty-five in number: he kept two at the foot of the Alps, four at the Danube, eight by the Rhine, three in Spain, two in Africa, two in Egypt, and four by the Euphrates.—He was, I said, adored as a god; temples were built for him, and in several places priests were appointed to celebrate the worship of him.—His empire was in peace, wisely and firmly managed; and in order to celebrate the glorious termination of his conquests, and the profound peace which had followed them, he had just closed the temple of Janus, which was always kept open in time of war, and which, before his time, had been only twice closed in the long period of seven hundred and fifty years.

But in the mean time there was a change coming over the Romans. They were not all of the old iron temper, and they were obliged to call strangers to help them fight their battles. Thus the feet, even the instep, were of iron and miry clay. They tried to mingle together, there were marriages and agreements between them, but iron and potter's clay cannot mix, and can only make one another infirm and

fragile. So the Gothic nations, who had come in by little and little, at last broke up the Roman empire, both eastern and western, and it was divided into ten kingdoms, all of them made up of a mixture of the old Roman iron and the new Gothic clay, some more, some less. The ten kingdoms are not always the same, but there are always about ten within the bounds of the old Roman empire, and they are partly strong, partly broken.

All this time, however, there is a stone growing, "cut without hands," a power not raised by man.

For twenty-six years had Augustus seemed to rule the world, when, in an obscure corner of his empire, an event took place, which was almost unnoticed on earth, but which stirred the Heaven of heavens.—In the most obscure province of his empire, in one of the smallest towns of that province; and in a humble inn of that town, came down from the mountains, a carpenter with his young wife. They found no place but the stable to lodge in; and there the young woman brought forth her first-born, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.—The Emperor (Cæsar-Augustus) had ordered the population of his vast empire to be counted; and it was in order to be registered at Bethlehem, their family city, that these poor people had been forced to come there.—Who, at that time, troubled himself about this child? Who was thinking of His birth?—The sun had risen that day as on other mornings; the rivers continued their course on earth, and the stars in the sky; the old emperor at ease in his palace, was there adored as a god; the children in his cities were thinking only of their play; the grown men of their business, or their pleasure; and yet then was accomplishing the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in flesh; His angels desired to look into its depths; and millions of the Heavenly Host cried out together, "Glory to God in the highest places, and on earth peace, and good-will towards men!"—It was the King of Glory who was just born as a man; it was "the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world," and "taking away its sin;" it was He, who having created all things, upholds them by the word of His power; it was the Word which "was in the beginning with God, and was God;" it was He who is for us like a bridge thrown across the abyss between hell and Heaven; it was our Saviour, my children, our only Saviour!

This event is not represented in the prophetic statue, because it is an entirely religious one. It took place at the time when the legs

were as yet only of iron ; and remember what I told you, that as the Bible prophecies related, some to the history of states and politics, some to that of the Church and religion, the vision of the statue shewn to a heathen ruler, would make known to us only the history of states, and shew us religious events only so far as they exercised an immediate influence on political ones.—However, this Saviour, born in the reign of Augustus, was put to death in that of Tiberius, his successor, at the time when the Roman general, Pontius Pilate, governed Jerusalem, in the name of that emperor. After the Saviour's Resurrection and Ascension, He sent the Holy Spirit to His Apostles ; and souls were converted to God ; the Church began in reproach and suffering ; it was persecuted during three hundred years ; the blood of the faithful flowed like water ; the Roman emperors made the Christians stand in public places, burning like torches, after plunging them in melted pitch, and tying them to stakes ; or else, in order to amuse the people, throwing them to be devoured by dogs and lions ; and these persecutions, ten times renewed, never made the Christians (who yet already filled the cities, the country, and the armies of Rome) revolt against their emperors, nor even "mix with the unquiet men," who abounded in their days.—But in the year 312 after Jesus Christ, one of the Roman emperors, seeing that the number of Christians only increased the more they were persecuted, declared, at the head of his troops, that he was a Christian himself. This prince, named Constantine, was a great warrior. It does not appear that he was himself truly converted—I mean that his life did not seem to shew that he was walking in Christian faith, hope, or holiness ; but he acknowledged that the religion of Jesus came from God ; he admired its history, revered its martyrs, believed its miracles, professed its doctrines ; and had even a cross painted upon the standards of his army, with these remarkable words, "By this sign thou shalt conquer."—And, in fact, he very soon overthrew all his enemies.

So it was that "in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed : and this kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (*Verse 44.*) Now this Fifth empire is foretold in other parts of the Bible. Daniel again speaks of it in the seventh chapter, 13th, 14th, and 27th verses. This fifth empire, then, is "that of the Most High ;" "that of the Son of Man ;" "that of the Saints of the Most High"—that which is

promised to the Church for the time when the Gospel shall cover all the earth, and bring all nations under its sway. Read what the Angel said to the Virgin Mary, when telling her that she should have a son. (*St. Luke* i. 31-33.)

This "mountain" (*verse* 45) represents the Church of God, into which this "stone cut without hands" has grown. It began "without hands"—that is, without man's will or power; but by the Providence of God, and the power of His Divine Spirit alone, cut out from the old mountain of the Jewish Church. "The stone smote the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." (*Verse* 34.) If any kingdom is unhappy enough to rise up against the Church of Christ, sooner or later that kingdom will be overthrown; and if it wishes to destroy the Church, it will certainly be destroyed itself: as if, in a fit of passion, I were to knock my head against a stone pillar, intending to move or break it, my head would be broken by the blow, and my folly would alone bear the blame. Thus, dear children, in the last days, the Church "will break in pieces" her adversaries. She "will overcome by the blood of Jesus," as it is written in the book of Revelation; "She will overcome by the patience, and by the faith, of the saints." And in her there are no divisions of metals. All people, nations, and languages, are one in her. When the world comes into collision with the Church of God we see what Isaiah foretells, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper," (*Isaiah* liv. 17); and the fulfilment of our Lord's awful saying, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder," (*St. Matt.* xxi. 44,)—words that almost certainly looked back to this prophecy.

The great statue then is the world, divided into earthly powers, from the head of gold to the feet of iron and clay. It is still standing, but every time it struggles with God's Kingdom it crumbles into dust; and at the last there shall be a struggle, when it shall be utterly broken, ending in nothing but dust, only a fearful anarchy. There "shall be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear." But then, what will come to pass? That little stone has become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. The Church of Jesus Christ shall fill the earth. Then shall all the kingdoms of the world be the inheritance of the Son of God; and His dominion shall be without hindrance, trouble, or sorrow; glorious and eternal. (*See Rev.* xi. 15.)

Listen again to what Daniel said in the 44th and 45th verses of our chapter.—Daniel was very young to have such power, (as we see in the 46–48th *verses*,) that the king gave him. He was hardly so old as the famous William Pitt was, when George the III confided to him the government of the greatest of modern nations. But need we wonder, when we remember that already in the ninth year of King Jehoiakim's captivity, Daniel, being then scarcely thirty years old, was declared in the Bible to be the wisest of men? (See *Ezekiel* xxviii. 3.) Let us also, like Nebuchadnezzar, (*verse* 47) prostrate ourselves in heart before the God of gods, the true King of kings, the Lord of Lords! Let us fall down before Him in love and faith. **May** He find us thus willing, before the day when every knee shall bend, willingly or unwillingly, before Him, in Heaven or in hell! And let us all say with the penitent thief, "Lord, remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!" Lord Jesus! may we then have our robe of righteousness washed and made white in Thy precious blood!

"Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever! Amen." (*Jude* 24, 25.)

NOTE.—In writing for instruction, liberties must sometimes be taken with originals, and adaptations are needful. So, with many apologies, I have thought it best to modify, in some degree, M. Gausson's interpretation of the iron and clay, so as to bring it into accordance with the explanation more generally accepted by the best authorities.—[Ed.]

## LESSON XII.

### DANIEL III. 1–21.

THE story brought before us to-day, in the order of our lessons, will take us out of prophecy. *Verse* 1.—This great colossus was probably overlaid with gold, rather than made of solid metal. It was one hundred feet high, (for the Chaldean cubit was a little more than twenty inches). Its enormous dimensions are exactly those of the bronze

statue erected by the Italians on the bank of a large beautiful lake, in honour of an ecclesiastic named Borromeo,\* whose corpse is still shewn at Milan, covered with magnificent clothes, and laid in a crystal coffin. His statue, sixty-four feet high, is raised upon a pedestal of thirty-six. From afar, you take it for a steeple; and it is even said that four persons can be comfortably seated at table inside its head.—As to the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up in the plain of Dura near Babylon, it must have been raised, like that of Borromeo, upon a high pedestal, because its proportions in height and breadth are not those of the human body. If the breadth of its shoulders were six cubits, the statue itself could not have been more than twenty-four high; for the total height of a well-proportioned man is reckoned as eight times that of his head, whilst the breadth of his shoulders is at least double the height of the head. The pedestal of the image in Dura must therefore have been thirty-six cubits high at least.

But how strange this mark of idolatrous pride in the king of Babylon seems to us! He who had just witnessed a striking revelation; he who fell on his face before Daniel and exclaimed, "Truly your God is the God of Heaven, the Lord of kings, and the Revealer of secrets;" *he* now sets up an image, and would make all his subjects worship it! Though the exact time of this sad affair is not known, it was evidently *after* the day of the monarch's miraculous vision of the statue; for we read in *verse* 12 of "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego," as already "established over the affairs of the province of Babylon."—Some persons have supposed that this colossus in the plain of Dura might be only a representation of the statue in the king's dream, and that in his ignorance he thought thus to give honour to the "God of gods," whose sublime revelations had been made known to him by the mouth of Daniel. But it is much more probable, from the end of this story, and from that in *Chap.* vi. 4–6, that Nebuchadnezzar was persuaded to have this idol set up by the jealousy of his nobles against the Israelites, whom they thus hoped to deprive of the king's favour. Else why this threat of a burning furnace for those who would not fall down before the image, if it had not been aimed at the Jews? Would the Babylonians, addicted to every kind of idolatry, have needed to see the preparations for punishment, in order to consent to the worship of some new image? No, doubtless not.—However this may be, we see here a proof of the hardness and wicked folly of man's heart: but we ourselves—we come

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\* A sainted Bishop.



here to study the Bible, but not to get such a knowledge of it as only puffs us up and flatters our vanity. Yet this happens only too often.

Look at Nebuchadnezzar; he had, like ourselves, just been hearing prophecy, and hearing it even from Daniel's mouth; but what did he do? He set up an idol!—And you, my children, have also been studying prophecy in the book of this same Daniel; take care, then, that you do not become idolaters in your turn. All study of the Bible which does not end in making you truer, purer, more obedient, gentler, more humble, is nothing, and worse than nothing; it is hurtful, and will only serve to condemn you.—The Word of God should be as food for our souls. But no substance nourishes our bodies unless it becomes within us blood, water, flesh, veins, muscles, bones. The Bible must nourish our souls by causing Jesus Christ to live in them. So, then, it would be worse than useless for us to make remarks on Nebuchadnezzar's folly, unless we look within and ask ourselves, "What use have I made of what I have just been hearing?"—For it may happen in times like our own, that some young people will be proud of knowing their Bible better than their parents. This knowledge may, doubtless, be an invaluable treasure; but *hearing* without *doing*, *knowing* without *profiting*, is vanity of vanities, misery of miseries. With this thought let us return to Nebuchadnezzar.—We called him senseless and ungrateful, after the wonderful things shewn him! Yet let us take care that we be not all in some degree like him.—We also have seen great things, and have known that God answers prayer; but have we not gone back to folly and ingratitude? We can serve false gods in many ways, without falling on our knees before them. Whenever we love anything more than God, we make an idol of it, and may soon be drawn into farther sin. Let then each examine himself, and see whether, after blaming Nebuchadnezzar, he ought not rather to find fault with himself.

*Verse 2.*—The celebration of presenting any sacred thing to God, or the day in which some important institution is founded, is called "dedication." Some of you may remember the dedication of this chapel to God, some years ago. Well! Nebuchadnezzar, resolving to celebrate the dedication of his image, commanded everybody to fall down before it. You see how sorely tried were the faithful Jews who had been brought captive to Babylon. It was for them the hour of fighting against Satan and the world. As soon as the burst of music

was heard, all the people fell down before the golden image; but Daniel's three friends did not do so, and were immediately denounced to the king, as having disobeyed his orders. Eastern monarchs are extremely proud; it is not allowed to look at them, much less to disobey them.—Perhaps you are surprised that Daniel was not with his three friends. We do not know the reason; perhaps he was at that moment away from Babylon; or perhaps, without being absent, he owed his safety to the fear which his favour with the king inspired; so that these Chaldeans did not venture to accuse a man in such high credit, but would first try an experiment on inferior victims.—Observe, once more, in *verse* 15, the senseless arrogance of man's heart, asking, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" and yet God keeps the breath of his nostrils; God has only to speak the word, and this poor being falls back into nothing! Ah! dear children, let us always remember, that "God can deliver." If you were at this moment placed in sight of a furnace, and were told to worship images or else you should be burned, you must even then recollect, like your forefathers, that "God can deliver."—But alas! how often, on the contrary, when danger has seemed near, it has no longer appeared possible that we should be delivered; and how often has this incredulity led us into much evil! Conscience said "Thy duty would be to behave differently;" and Unbelief replied "That is true; but thus thou wouldst be blamed, spoken ill of, misunderstood, forsaken, persecuted; therefore it is better to yield."—Thus it is that we forget that God can deliver even from a furnace.

These young men had early begun to seek Him with all their heart. You remember the time when, for fear of defiling themselves by partaking of a heathen king's food, they resolved to eat nothing but vegetables, and to drink water only. They grew up in that wisdom which cometh from above; neither the pomp nor favour of the court chilled their fervour; and now they are ready for the trial of the strong. Listen to the noble answer which they dared make to the king, when they were confronted with the fury of his looks, and the flames of the furnace; and observe first, that notwithstanding their fearless courage, and in spite of the monarch's injustice, there is nothing in their answer of bitterness or insolence; neither are they like enthusiasts; they speak without pride or passion; they address their king with respect, because they know that rulers should be honoured, even when they must be disobeyed. Thus St. Paul (*Acts* xxvi. 25) called the governor "most

noble Festus," even when he from his judgement-seat said, "Paul, thou art mad." But observe farther the firmness, faith, and dignity of their language united to this respect. They know God's Second Commandment, and they are resolved to obey it. They prefer death to sin. They fear the king of Babylon less than God, who can cast both body and soul into hell.

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## LESSON XII (*continued*).

DANIEL III. 1—25.

WE should especially observe four points in their answer: First, they do not hesitate to give it; the phrase "we are not careful to answer thee," might appear to you insolent; for it was the duty of these young men to answer their king, and it would have been very improper to have refused. Besides, you see that they *did* answer him. The phrase should be rendered by "We have no need of an answer for you;" that is, "we have not to seek how to make one, for it is quite ready: our God has spoken, and consequently we have but one thing to do." This, my children, is the first point to be remarked in the answer of these young men, and to be imitated; when a temptation arises, we must not hesitate; we must be careful not to make terms with evil; we must never imitate profane Balaam, who, after having said, "If Balak would give me his house full of gold, I would not go with you," added soon afterwards, "Yet tarry, I am going once more to consult the Almighty," for it was by this fatal way that the wretched man fell into the snares of the devil.—No! we must, on the contrary, always say to sin, "Get thee behind me, Satan."—We must flee from it, and say, like young Joseph, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" But secondly, observe the clearness and honest exactness of their answer.—They do not look for excuses or pretences.—No, my friends, when obedience to God is the question, we must go straightforward in our words, and in our conduct. Listen to them in *verses* 17 and 18. Thirdly, observe also their trust in God.—"He *can* deliver us from the burning fiery furnace;" and if He does not prevent

our being cast into it, yet we know that, in one way or other, "He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king;"—Lastly, observe their resolution, so simple and so great.—Whatever God may do, He has taught us what *we* are to do. To deliver is His work, not ours; and He will perform it in the way He sees best; but to obey is our business; it is also our safety, our happiness, our glory; and, by His help, we will do it!

But now let us suppose, that instead of thus answering the king, these young servants of God had consulted man; they might perhaps have received the following advice: "Dear friends, what! will you leave the situation in which you are doing so much good? Is it not plain that you are in your right place, as magistrates in Babylon? Yes, certainly; and who would ever have thought (humanly speaking) that you would be called to fill it? It is then, clearly, God who has put you in it, by His powerful Hand, when He gave to Daniel miraculous wisdom and favor with the king.—And what will become of the Jews if you forsake them by death? Poor exiles! they will be oppressed by the Chaldeans, and *you* will even have done them *harm*, for you will irritate Nebuchadnezzar and all his subjects more than ever against them. They will be persecuted, hindered from serving God, and crushed, all owing to you! Besides, dear friends, see how well all has been going on for some time; many princes and nobles were becoming friendly to us; and even the king was making progress in true religion. Think what an effect on Babylon and the world, if *he* should give himself up to God! But besides, dear friends, what, after all, are you asked to do? to yield for a moment! it is but a mere form; perfect freedom of conscience is left to you. Therefore, in prostrating yourselves on the plain of Dura, like everyone else, and even the Jews from Jerusalem, what will you be doing so wrong? You are not hindered from thinking what you please; you may hate idolatry in your heart; you may even say aloud elsewhere that you hate it.—You are known to be under constraint, captives and strangers.—But, moreover, Nebuchadnezzar is your benefactor, and you ought not to forget that."—But thanks be to God, the three faithful young men asked better advice, followed a higher kind of prudence and policy; the prudence of saints, the counsel of the Holy Spirit, the policy of Heaven. Yes, they looked to God strong and mighty, and said that their "portion was to keep His law;" they did so with an honest and good heart, and very soon was God glorified by this simple obedience.

This, then, is a great lesson for you, my dear young friends; remember it throughout your lives; on all occasions regard as an infernal beguilement of the old Serpent, that false and wicked thought—“You may disobey in such or such a matter, for otherwise you will lose your influence, and the opportunities of doing good to your family, your country, or the Church of God.”—Vain imagination, mad presumption! A feeble creature, to do good without God! to do good against God! A miserable sinner, a brand plucked out of the fire! What! whilst “the righteous scarcely is saved,” and whilst “thou canst receive nothing unless it be given thee from above,” thinkest thou to help forward the kingdom of God, by first refusing to do what is right? Dost *thou* give the power to will and to do? (Dost thou hold men’s hearts in thy small hand?)—Who is it that can do good except God, either in thyself or in others, whether by thyself or by others?—Begin by obeying, and then thou wilt see what He, “of whom, by whom, and for whom are all things,” will do with thee; and then if it please Him, He will bless thy humble submission, and thy simple faith.—Doubtless, He might also, if He would, do good by thy negligence and disobedience, as He did by the hypocrisy of Caiaphas, the cowardice of Pilate, the treachery of Judas; but then, alas! woe to thee!

And now, my children, see how well it was for these three young Jews to have been faithful to the voice of their conscience, leaving all consequences to the Lord of lords; for it was their being saved from martyrdom, which very soon led the proud Nebuchadnezzar to praise them before all his people, for having disobeyed him. (See *verse 28*.) It was their sublime and humble simplicity which calmed his idolatrous fury, which took down his demi-god pride, and which prepared the way for that wonderful conversion, by which he was afterwards to astonish the world, to lift up the Church, and to rejoice the angels in Heaven.

This was how these young men did good: “they yielded their bodies, that they might not serve any god except their own God.” But this is not all; besides these effects, which history has made known to us, still more glorious ones were doubtless produced by their faithfulness, which can be revealed to us only in the light of the last day. How many souls among the children of Israel might then have been brought back to the truth? how many believers strengthened?

how many Gentiles converted to the true and living God?—A great light for the heathen nations of the East shone around Daniel, ruler of Babylon and prophet of God, around his three admirable friends, and around the Jewish nation! This example, given by young men in so high a position, doubtless was not lost. In those days wise men of all countries were enquiring after truth, and came into the Babylonian empire in order to seek wisdom, and to know “the unknown God.” At that time, Pythagoras, Anarcharsis, Thales, Anaximander, Solon, it has been said even Zoroaster and Confucius, travelled in central Asia, in order to fit themselves for becoming teachers of their countrymen. You can imagine what floods of light, what brilliant reflections of divine revelation, must, at that time, have been spread among the Gentiles!—The last day will declare the work done in the days of Daniel and his three friends; and then it will be seen that these honest consciences had chosen the safest side, the most skilful measures, the soundest policy.

*Verse 19.* These good and brave young men were then thrown into the furnace (which was a sort of great lime-kiln). Their answer had so irritated the king, that his face looked terrible; for passion changes the expression of our countenance. When we do wrong we usually show it in our features; and when we do right it is seen in the same way. According to what is in the heart does the countenance change. Thus there may be two children, one looking modest and amiable, the other heedless and wilful. Sometimes indeed the expression of the face is only outward show, and not the expression of what is within the heart. But this is seldom the case, especially in children. Do not deceive yourselves; remember our Saviour’s words (*St. Matthew* x. 26)—*God* “perceiveth thoughts afar off;” but *men* also will know them by the expression of your face.

But—what has this furious king seen in the furnace? No longer three men only, but four! (*Verse 25.*) They are no longer bound but loose! No longer down upon the burning coals, but walking in the midst of the fire without hurt. The only thing burnt is the cord that bound them? But who was this fourth, of whom it is said that He was like a Son of God? It was the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Trinity, who before being born as the Son of Mary, had already appeared on earth more than once before, as we read in the Old Testament, and now came into this furnace to deliver these poor

men; they had trusted in Him and he came to their help; He is also with every Christian, in any sorrow, who trusts in Him, as He was with these three young men, though not in the same visible manner.

And now, dear children, remember that you will all be thrown into the furnace of the world "which lieth in wickedness," more terrible than Nebuchadnezzar's, because his could kill the body only, while the other exposes the soul to danger. (See *St. Matt. x, 28.*) To escape from the furnace of this world, and from that of the world to come, your heart must be turned to God, and you must have faith in Jesus Christ. You see that He Himself draws near to the young who seek Him: may you find Him early in life; the Evil One will not harm you in your passage through the world, and one day you will be received into everlasting habitations!

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### LESSON XIII.

#### DANIEL III. 26—30.

LAST Sunday, we left the three young Jews in the furnace; now let us see how they came out it. They had been roughly seized; "the most mighty men in the army" had been ordered to cast them into the furnace, without even giving them a moment for prayer; they were not even stripped of their court-garments; time was given only to bind them; they were thrown in with their hats, coats, and shoes; and such was the heat of the furnace, such the urgency of the king's command, that the officers, in casting them in, were killed by the flame. But very soon, what was seen? You know: four men instead of three, a fire which did not consume them; for they were walking in the flames as under a canopy of leaves, and their bonds only were burnt.—Now observe the astonishment of the king! (*Verse 26.*) Now he acknowledges that there is a "most high God," Who rules above kings, and before Whom all his royal power is only smoke and ashes.—But when he saw these young men come forth from the furnace, without hurt, he himself blessed the God Who has delivered them. Then admire the

greatness of mind with which this proud monarch acknowledges before all his people, that these young men have acted nobly in resisting his command, and choosing to obey God rather man. (*Verse 28.*) God has said, "Them that honour Me, I will honour"; but "those that despise Me, shall be lightly esteemed." And now listen to the decree, which Nebuchadnezzar made public. (*Verses 29, 30.*)

Thus you see, dear children, that the faithfulness of these young Jews, so far from injuring the cause of religion in Babylon, only made it more glorious and more widely known. This was how God, Who doubtless intended, during the time of Daniel and the Captivity, to lead many souls to life eternal, prepared the conversion of this powerful monarch, who was at that time called the Scourge of God, and the master of the world. He had at first, it is true, admired greatly the God of Daniel, when the dream of the Statue had been declared to him; but afterwards, his victories, his immense conquests, the splendour of his empire, his unheard-of prosperity, had so puffed him up, that he had made of himself a kind of god, and that he cast into the fire conscientious men who would not adore his pretended divinity. Yet when he saw them "yield their bodies that they might not serve any other god but their own God," then come out of the furnace safe and sound; when an angel, "like unto the Son of God," had come to them in the furnace, and delivered them; oh! then he acknowledges at last, their God as "most high"; he approves of their disobeying himself rather than this powerful Being; he forbids, on pain of death, that any of his subjects should dare to speak a word against Him: "There is no other God," he exclaimed, "who can deliver like him."

Such then had been the consequences to Nebuchadnezzar, of the young men's faithfulness. He was convinced that the unseen Being who inspired such noble feelings, and who wrought such a wonderful deliverance, could alone be the true God; he acknowledged Him before all his people; he even published a decree in His honour. But shall we therefore say that Nebuchadnezzar was now converted? No, not yet.—Convinced,—converted, are two very different states of mind. Conviction is not faith; it is only the conversion of the understanding, while true conversion is that of the will.

But let us make sure that you understand, what in Scripture is meant by conversion. Which of you can tell me? And first, what is



the exact meaning of the word? A returning—or turning back. Yes, and thus for example, you may have often heard in drilling soldiers, the sergeants call out to them, “Turn to the right or left;—(“Conversion à droite!—Conversion à gauche!”) If then the conversion of the body is that movement by which a man turns to the opposite side to that towards which his face was at first directed; the conversion of the soul will be that operation by which a man, whose affections and hopes were at first directed towards the world and evil, turns them towards God and holiness. We have all by nature hearts far from God, selfish affections, ill-regulated desires, making idols of things of this world; so that it is necessary, in order to enter into Heaven, that before we die, we should have turned to our Creator, saying to Him from the depth of an honest and good heart: “O my God! here am I! what dost Thou require of me? I love Thee: do with me what Thou wilt! I am ready to do Thy Will!” This is conversion. Now Scripture tells us, that this blessed change is wrought by the power of God in the heart of man, by His Holy Spirit, through faith. That which hinders man’s heart from drawing near to God, is the feeling himself a sinner; he shuns the thought of God, as Adam after His fall into sin hid himself from His presence among the trees of the garden; but when we know that God is our Saviour, and have the real faith in Him, of true Christians, we shall “love Him much, knowing that much has been forgiven us,” through His blood shed for us.

But now let us return to Nebuchadnezzar: he believed that Daniel was a prophet of the true God, but his heart was still selfish and proud, adoring the world, idolizing himself; all for Babylon and the glory of man, no thought of the glory of God; he required humiliation. A time was coming when God by His Spirit drew towards Heaven the hitherto carnal and arrogant heart of this idolatrous monarch. But also, in order to dispose him to seek his happiness and his life in Him, God made use of these three successive dispensations; first, He showed him great wonders: secondly, He staggered him by the admirable example of His faithful servants, especially this trial of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; thirdly, (as we shall see in the next chapter) He humbled him by severe discipline, and made him pass through the fire of tribulation. What is God going to do with him? He will in mercy take away his power, strength, glory, and Babylon from him—and, more than all, his understanding; for he will become mad; he will be reduced to the state of a beast, and eat grass; he will let his

nails grow till they are like to birds' claws, and his hair to eagles' feathers; he, the conqueror of nations, the king of kings, "the head of gold!" And not till the end of seven years will his understanding be restored to him! But then at last, he becomes such as God will have him to be; little in his own eyes, humbled, trembling at His word, remembering the God of Daniel, and really believing in Him.

Well, there may be in this church, persons who, like Nebuchadnezzar, may have said, "God is the true God, His Word is true, and He alone can deliver"; but this conviction has not yet been a living reality in their soul; not that truth which the soul feels and touches by its affections and experience, as my hand feels and touches this book by the impressions of its fingers and nerves. They have not hitherto had true and living faith; and our Lord might say to them also, "How can you believe, who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?" (*St. John* v. 44.) They seek the favour of man first, though willing to have that of God, but in the second or third place. Their happiness is on earth, their portion is here below. But what does God often do? From that man He takes health away, and lays him on a bed of pain, or of long weakness: "My son," now "My son, give Me thy heart!" From this woman, he takes away beauty; she is miserable; like Jonah under his withered gourd, she is weary of life. She has lost her idol, and without it the world seems to her a desert. "Doest thou well," My daughter, "to be angry?" Seek thy Saviour, and thou shalt receive from Him that which will make thee beautiful in the sight of angels, and which will never perish. From another, he takes away his money: "My son, set thine heart on the treasures above, a better and enduring substance."—From another, he takes wife or child: "Oh!" says the mourner, "henceforth the earth is for me a cemetery; I am as a stranger, a traveller, in it."—Yes, my friend, thou art a pilgrim; but seek thy country, come to thy Saviour; He is the resurrection and the Life. He only will comfort thee, and soon He will wipe away all tears from thine eyes.

Such are the ways of God! Thus would a mother do to her little daughter walking upon a steep path at the edge of a precipice, with a doll in her arms. "Take care!" she calls out; but the child does not heed. What does the mother do? She snatches away the toy. The child cries and screams; the mother looks at her tenderly, takes hold of her, walks on, and lets her sob. But when they reach home together, what joy follows the tears!

## LESSON XIV.

DANIEL, IV. 1—26.

GREAT things had been done by Nebuchadnezzar, between the story of the young Jews in the third chapter of Daniel, and the event which we shall consider to-day in the fourth chapter. He had been making conquest after conquest; and twenty-five years after his vision of the statue, had returned from Egypt loaded with treasures, had made Babylon into the most magnificent of cities, and, intoxicated with glory, he was reposing there, when suddenly his soul was troubled by a fearful dream. But let us listen to his own words, addressed to all the nations under his rule. Certainly there are few more touching scenes in the Bible than that of this proud conqueror relating himself, first his pride, then his being justly humbled, and at last his recovery and his gratitude. How simply does he begin his address. (*Verse 1.*) No longer as "the king of kings," demi-god, but "the king to his people." And what does he ask? No longer their adoration, but that "peace may be multiplied to them."—"I thought it good." (*Verse 2.*) He feels it to be his duty to humble himself, and to give glory to God before his people. He begins with an exclamation of wonder and gratitude; (*verse 3*) and before reminding his people of the madness with which he had been struck for seven years, relates to them the wonderful way in which God had, twelve months beforehand, warned him of it, as of a just punishment of his pride. Troubled by a dream, and after vainly consulting the wise men of Babylon, he once more sent for Daniel. (*Verses 4—8.*) He still calls him by the name of Bel, his god, (*verse 9*) and considers him as a magician, rather than as a prophet of the true God, whom he had formerly acknowledged as God of gods. He tells him that on his bed a vision had troubled him: he saw "in the midst of the earth" a magnificent tree. (*Verses 10—12.*) You may understand that this tree was to represent the power of Babylon become like the centre of the world, by the vast conquests of Nebuchadnezzar. "Its height was very great": this was to point out the glory to which the ruler of this empire had raised himself.—"It grew, and was strong": this represented the irresistible power of the Chaldean armies.—"Its top reached unto the heavens": did not Nebuchadnezzar want to be a god? and had he not commanded the adoration of himself?—"The sight thereof reached unto the end of the earth": everywhere, in the towns and in the country, in the palaces and in the cottages, people talked of Nebuchadnezzar, just as, sixty years ago in every part of Europe, they

talked of the first Napoleon.—“The leaves thereof were fair”: there was nothing so brilliant, nor so magnificent, as the palaces, the officers, the ceremonies, and feasts of Babylon.—“The fruit thereof was much, and in it was meat for all; the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof: and all flesh was fed of it.”—This empire was not only glorious, but prosperous and beneficent: great fortunes were made in it; an innumerable population lived happily under its government, in which great order ruled; the poor were protected, the rich increased their goods, and enjoyed their grandeur in peace.—But listen now to what Nebuchadnezzar *heard*. (*Verses 13–16.*)—While this grand sight was still before his eyes, he saw coming down from Heaven an angel, whom he calls “a watcher and a holy one,” because the angels are holy, and never sleep. Constantly attentive to the Lord’s commands, they are always ready to fly at the least sign from Him, fulfilling His will with the speed of wind and flame.

Can you tell me, dear children, some of the reasons for which God has given us sleep here below? I do not mean those which concern the body, I am only thinking of those which may affect the soul. Try and find them out. And first, do you not think that people would be still more wicked if sleep did not come to calm their passions, to interrupt the course of their anger, to suspend their intrigues and their combats, and to restore by force some peace in the midst of them? Besides, it needed also that man, by the law of sleep, should each day recollect an important truth: what truth?—That he must die.—Doubtless; and for that purpose he lies every day upon a bed as if dead; he no longer sees, nor hears, nor eats, nor even thinks; at least, if his sleep be sound, he no longer *knows* that he thinks; and he feels, after having slept, as if he had not lived during this long interval. Ah! let us think each evening, “O my God, I am going to compose myself for the death-like sleep of this night; but soon also I shall fall asleep to awake in the morning of eternity! O then, my God and Father, in falling asleep this night, I commend my spirit into Thy hands!” And let us think every morning: “My God I have been as dead, and am risen again! Oh, may it be in order to please Thee and to walk in Thy light. And when my last awaking shall come, may it be to behold Thee, and to rejoice for ever in Thy presence. May I say with David, ‘I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness’; and with Job, ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth,’ &c.” You

understand then why sleep is given to us on earth, and why the holy angels need it not, and are here called "watchers and saints."

Now listen to the words of the angel, whom Nebuchadnezzar saw come down from Heaven. We see clearly that it is a man and not a tree, of whom he speaks; for after having said, "Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass," he adds, "let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth; let his heart be changed from man's," &c.

But there is something still more important to be explained which I could not pass over—the solemn confirmation of the angel's sentence. (*Verse 17.*) What do these words mean—"the decree of the watchers," when we read in verse 24, "the decree of the Most High?" The meaning is, I think, that God had made use of the co-operation of angels, to whom the guiding of things in this world, and especially in the Church, is often entrusted. Like as God carries on human affairs, by directing the deliberations of kings or counsellors, pastors or warriors, in such a manner, as that their resolutions are, in two different senses, the decrees both of God and of man; so it appears that He had given to angels the charge of humbling the king of Babylon for his salvation. In one sense, then, it was indeed always the decree of God; but in another it was also the decree of the angels. Read aloud what is said of angels in *Hebrews* i. 14.—But what do these following words mean, "The demand is by the word of the holy ones"?

Well worthy of remark are they. Why did God send this punishment on the king of Babylon? Perhaps in answer to the prayers of the saints. Yes, there were at that time many holy persons at Babylon, at Jerusalem, in Egypt, by the river Chebar, who prayed to God to deliver them, to glorify His Name. Well, God heard them; and it might be on account of these lowly ones that the great king of Babylon was going to fall from his throne, and become mad. (Read *St. Luke* xviii. 8.) These praying ones were poor captive Jews, whom no one regarded, except with contempt; yet these it was who moved by their prayers the Chaldean empire, because their prayers moved the Hand which moves the world! The men who in those days talked of Chaldean politics, said perhaps to each other, "Who can resist Nebuchadnezzar? Will Tyre or Egypt?" "No," replied secretly

the Holy Spirit; "it will be the people of God, enslaved by the Chaldeans; those hidden ones, who pray and 'cry day and night unto Him.'"

Recall now to your minds the history of Simon Peter, in the twelfth chapter of Acts.—His colleague, James, had just been beheaded: he himself was imprisoned, and bound with two chains; he was guarded by sixteen soldiers—two were close to him; there were keepers before the iron door of the prison; next morning, after the Feast of the Passover, he was to be executed, and all the people at Jerusalem were expecting his martyrdom. But in the house of Mary "prayer without ceasing was made by the Church for him." And what happened? While King Herod was sleeping in his palace, before daylight, there was a knocking at Mary's door; the damsel Rhoda came to ask who was there, and when she knew Peter's voice "she opened not the gate for gladness," but ran into the room to tell the disciples, who replied, "Thou art mad." Where then was faith? They prayed, but could not believe that God had answered their prayers. Peter came in, and beckoning to them to be silent, related how "a watcher, and a holy one," an angel, had been sent to deliver him out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.—But this is not all: listen to what happened some days afterwards. Herod went down to Cæsarea, to celebrate some solemn games. He sat upon his throne, in the presence of an immense multitude. "His robe of silver tissue," says the historian Josephus, "shone in the sun so brightly, that it could not be looked upon without a feeling of reverence mixed with fear."—He was fifty-four years old, and had a fine face and figure; his daughters, Drusilla, Mariamne, and Berenice, were the most beautiful women of their time; he had every human prosperity. This feast at Cæsarea began splendidly; all the nobles and great men of the kingdom were assembled there. The king spoke from his throne eloquently; and the people immediately cried out, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." Then "a watcher and a holy one," "an angel of God," says the Scripture, "smote him"; he felt instantly that his bowels were attacked with unbearable pain; he was carried into the palace, and on his bed was gnawed by worms, and soon died in horrible torment. The people of God had prayed in Mary's house; and it might be said of Herod, as of Nebuchadnezzar, "This matter is by a decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the saints."—Nevertheless, take good heed: the faithful in Babylon did not ask for the malady of

Nebuchadnezzar, nor those in Jerusalem for the death of Herod—they prayed for the deliverance of God's people; and Scripture had commanded them, as well as us all, to pray for kings.—At Babylon, they perhaps prayed for the conversion of the king; and in the end Nebuchadnezzar was converted.—But how?—He was to lose his reason, to be mad for seven years, to become like a beast of the field; and in the depth of this humiliation, God would come and seek him, in order to save him!—But see, in verse 19, Daniel's emotion and answer.—What a moment for him! He was at first silent, astonished, and troubled, and could not speak again for an hour. He loved the king, who was his benefactor. And what misery coming upon him did he foresee? The king encouraged him.—Daniel exclaimed, "May this dream and its interpretation be to thine enemies!" But alas! "The tree,..... it is thou, O King!".....(*Verses 20-26.*) What a sentence upon the greatest monarch on earth! Not only deposed, but driven from among men; not only driven away, but deprived of reason—stripped of all that made him a man, become like a beast, without clothing, wet with the dew of heaven; his beard grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like birds' claws!—Let this scene, dear children, lead us to acknowledge that the Most High, the Almighty, ruleth!—Why are we not like this man? (Read 1 *Cor.* iv. 7.) O God, we thank Thee, not only that we did not rise this morning sick or suffering, but that we are not like many others, mad, and in confinement, or stupid, and like the beasts of the field.—Let us often replace ourselves where we ought to be—in the dust, before God; and there, in grateful adoration, acknowledge that "the God of heaven ruleth in the kingdom of men"; so that we may obtain mercy in Jesus Christ; and that being made children of God by His wonderful grace, we may inherit that kingdom, which cannot be moved!

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## LESSON XV.

### DANIEL IV. 27—37.

WE read last Sunday the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and the terrible explanation which Daniel was obliged to give of it. To-day there remains to be seen its wonderful fulfilment.—The king himself

relates it in that humble and touching proclamation, which he addressed in the year 563 B. C. "to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth."

You remember in our last lesson that Daniel had been as if thunder-struck, unable to speak for a whole hour; "his thoughts troubled him," it is said; at last, however, he was obliged to speak and give the interpretation of the dream.—Now listen to him in *verse 27*; he gives his counsel to the king like a pastor of souls, and a minister of the living God: "let it be acceptable to thee," that is to say, be welcome to thee; "break off thy sins by righteousness," (that is, by giving thyself to righteousness,) "and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity"; that is to say, the punishment shall be turned away from thee, and God will repent of the evil which He charges me to denounce to thee, as He did at Nineveh when she repented in sackcloth and ashes; and also in the case of the wretched Ahab as soon as that king humbled himself.—You must understand, dear children, how deeply painful it was for Daniel, who loved Nebuchadnezzar, to have to tell him of the severe and just judgements of the Lord God; "He Himself declares them to thee;..... but I entreat thee to repent, while there is time."—This message was indeed hard to deliver; but do you think that Daniel would have shewn more love, if, notwithstanding, he had said after his hour's silence, "O king! this frightful dream does not concern thee; thou hast nothing to fear; return to the affairs of thy kingdom, and live in peace."—What would you have said of such language?—It is that of a traitor! Why deceive an unhappy man who has put his trust in you, and consulted you? Do you then wish for his ruin, and the loss of his soul for ever?—Are you his worst enemy?—Thus, then, my children, if you were sick unto death, the first duty of your parents, and of all those who love you, would be to say to you, "Dear child, thine immortal soul is going to pass away towards God; repent of thy sins, and as thou hast not the twelve months allowed to Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps not twelve days, nor even twelve hours, before thy death; oh! cast thyself, my darling, in the arms of Jesus Christ!"—And blessed is the child or the grown-up person, who then can answer, "I am ready to go to Thee, my Saviour, in the faith of Thy redeemed and beloved people." Like Daniel's exhortation to Nebuchadnezzar, had been that of Isaiah to the people of his time. (Read *Isaiah* i. 16, 17.) Such also was that of John the Baptist: "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Such



was the reply of the Apostles to those who asked them, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (*Acts* ii. 37-40.)—Such was the call of Jesus Christ Himself in *St. Mark* i. 15.—Understand, then, my children, the exhortation of Daniel to the king: "Take my advice; turn from those sins which draw on you the wrath of God, and shew by a new life that you have given your heart to the true and living God."

And now it remains to be seen what was the effect of this exhortation. God gave to Nebuchadnezzar a whole year's interval, between the warnings of Daniel and the fulfilment of his threats. But at last "at the end of twelve months" (Nebuchadnezzar himself relates it), "he was walking in the royal palace at Babylon" (probably attended by a brilliant court), and he said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the king's dwelling, by the might of my power, and for the glory of my majesty?"

You know that nothing has ever been seen equal to the magnificence and splendour of Babylon. It had long been a noble city, and its foundation dated almost from the flood; but Nebuchadnezzar had, by prodigious works, made it into a new city, and the first of the wonders of the world. Scripture calls it "the golden city," "the glory of kingdoms," "the queen of kingdoms," "the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency" (*Isaiah* xix. 4, and xiii. 19); and to express its formidable power, Jeremiah called it "the hammer of all the earth," "the battle-axe which breaketh in pieces the nations." (*Jer.* i. 23, and li. 20.) The famous Herodotus, who was, I told you, a Greek traveller, born only fifty-four years after the death of Belshazzar, and who was the most ancient and esteemed historian among the Greeks, went there himself to view its wonders; and he relates that never was seen anything so magnificent. The pages of this father of history are confirmed by a great geographer named Strabo, who lived in the time of our Lord Jesus Christ; and by famous historians, contemporaries also, or at least of His Apostles. These ancient authors, named Diodorus Siculus, Quintus Curtius, and Pliny, have all equally borne witness to the great features of this astonishing description. The whole city formed a perfect square, five leagues on each side. The walls which enclosed it were perhaps the greatest sight there. Built of brick, and cemented with a bitumen which hardens in the air, they were 350 feet high, and 87 broad. The whole city was crossed from north to south by twenty-five parallel and magnificent streets, 150 feet

wide, and 5 leagues long, intersected at right angles by twenty-five other similar streets, running from east to west; so that there were fifty great streets, terminating in one hundred gates of brass, and forming at their intersection 626 immense squares. The houses in these squares, had all three or four stories, with magnificent fronts, while the interior space was adorned with courts and large gardens. The great river Euphrates, which ran through the city from north to south, was also confined by walls as high as those which enclosed the whole city; there were large stairs made in them, by which to go down to the river, because it is much increased annually by the rains of Armenia and Kurdistan. These staircases were also closed by enormous gates of brass. But the most astonishing part of this incomparable city, was that where stood the temples of Bel, and the two royal palaces. These latter buildings occupied alone themselves nearly a square league; and the most splendid portion of it were the hanging gardens. These consisted of arched terraces, rising one above another, up to the height of the city walls, and containing four thousand square feet. The terraces were built of stone, and first covered with plates of lead, then with a bed of bitumen and reeds, and finally with a thick layer of soil fit for vegetation, out of which grew very large trees. On the highest platform was a vast reservoir, which received the water of the Euphrates, raised up to it by the powerful action of a hydraulic machine, called the Persian tower (*tour persanne*). Such facts show what great progress the arts and sciences had made in the empire of Babylon. The machine which raises the water of the Rhone to the highest part of Geneva, lifts it, after all, only 130 feet above the river, while the civil engineers of Nebuchadnezzar had found means of raising that of the Euphrates to the height of 350 feet. Nevertheless, it appears that the work which gave the highest idea of their genius to foreign travellers, was the passage which they had made with bricks and bitumen under the Euphrates, by turning away for a time the course of the river. This underground work would seem to have been like the famous tunnel made by the English under the Thames.

Now, my dears, you can well understand the pride of the great Nebuchadnezzar. All the then known nations were at his feet; he had conquered them. Their captives and their riches filled Babylon. He was the "head of gold."—The heart of man is too weak to bear such prosperity without intoxication.—Alas! in the midst of so much

magnificence, and so many temptations, what effect could the vision of this great tree, and the terrible interpretation given by a prophet of God, produce? The king was doubtless frightened for some days; perhaps he purposed to repent, but all his intentions soon vanished in the atmosphere of his grandeur.—In order to understand this, we have only to see among ourselves how easily many who have *not* built great Babylon neglect the Word of God, which calls them “to break off their sins,” &c. They have perhaps seen a brother, a father, a sister, a mother die, and followed the remains to the cemetery; they have shed many tears: the veil has been lifted off for a moment, they saw plainly the nothingness of transitory things; they made good resolutions; but soon all this passes away like the morning dew in the mid-day sun, and vanishes in the midst of the business and fascinations of this world. Our Lord has said, that in many persons the good seed springs up but never ripens, because it is among thorns; and these thorns are of three kinds: (*St. Luke* viii. 14) first, “riches” (for the old especially); second, “cares of life” (particularly for those of middle age); and third, “pleasures” (for the young especially).

Such, then, was Nebuchadnezzar.—I seem to behold him on the terrace of his palace, or in his hanging gardens, surrounded by his flattering courtiers, beholding this magnificent city, pointing out these temples and buildings raised by his command. (*Verse* 30.) But listen, in *verse* 31, to what he himself relates. These were the last words which the great king of Babylon heard; as soon as they were spoken he became mad! and seven years passed over him in that state; he was driven from among men; he chose to be naked, as mad people often like to be; he lived in the open air without shelter, and his body became like a beast’s or bird’s.

Here you will again remember, I hope, what I was saying to you last Sunday.—What is it which hinders ourselves being this very day reduced to a like condition? What alone prevents it, but Thy favour, O my God!—Alas! a very small thing would be needed to bring us into it; a fall, a blow, a slight hurt, a drop of blood out of its place in our brain, and in a moment we might be deprived of our memory, our understanding, or our will, or of all together.—And besides, have we not deserved, a hundred times, by the bad use we have made of that memory, understanding, and will, that all these noble faculties should be taken from us? since our Creator had lent them to us, only that they should be

employed in His service and to His glory.—Dear children, remember that whatever pain you may have to bear, you must still thank God for having preserved your reason. How often have you and I deserved to lose it, by not using it to glorify Him who has lent it to us for that purpose; and by forgetting, like Nebuchadnezzar, “that the Heavens rule, and that those who walk in pride God is able to abase.”

But now listen to the touching language of Nebuchadnezzar, and see the goodness of God towards him.—God gives him true reason, true wisdom, real good sense; and he now being truly turned to God, praises, exalts, and glorifies Him. (*Verses 34, 35.*) His great men re-established him on the throne of his kingdom, and his glory was even increased. (*Verses 36, 37.*)

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## LESSON XVI.

### DANIEL v. 1—10.

THIS wonderful chapter is taken up by the story of a single night; but of what a night!—It is perhaps the most tragical and important one in all history; not only in itself, and in the great events which marked it, but especially, as being in prophecy the solemn type of God’s final judgements.—It is the night when fell “great Babylon, because her sins had reached unto Heaven, and God had remembered her iniquities”; it is that night in which was said, “Alas! alas! Babylon, that great city, that mighty city! for in one hour is she made desolate.”—So great and terrible a night was it, that the Holy Spirit makes use of it as an image of that much *more* terrible night, when Jesus Christ shall come “in flaming fire” to judge the quick and the dead.—Observe in *verse 1*, how this night *began* in Babylon: by a sumptuous feast, to which the king had invited a thousand lords, and which took place in the splendid palaces built by Nebuchadnezzar.

I told you last Sunday something of their magnificence. The river Euphrates ran through the city from north to south; a fine bridge, 1200 feet long, had been built across it; and at its two ends were, on

one side, towards the east, what was called the old palace, three or four miles in circumference; and on the other side, towards the west, the new palace, still larger than the first.—It was the anniversary in honour of the idols of Babylon, which was this year to be celebrated with more splendour than ever before. Who in Babylon would at that time have believed, seeing this night begin so gaily and brilliantly, that it would end so sadly? that Babylon was about to fall? that this young king would be slain before morning? and that in the place where wine had been poured out, human blood would, in a few hours, flow like water?—And not only in kings' palaces, but in country cottages, and in the poorest dwellings of a town, a day may begin in carelessness and gaiety, but who knows how it will end?—In order to understand *this* chapter, you should know what had happened since the end of the last, and who this Belshazzar was: he was not, strictly speaking, the *son* of Nebuchadnezzar, but his *grandson*; and it was about twenty-three years and a half since that great prince, his grandfather, had died, that the splendid banquet took place, spoken of here. Nebuchadnezzar, you know, was mad for seven years, from the year 568 to 561 B.C. Then he published that excellent decree which we considered last Sunday; and he cried to the living and true God in words of honour and praise.—Nevertheless, God, in His kindness, would not leave him long exposed to the temptations of his high position, but took him from this world twelve months only after that proclamation: he died in the year 560, after a reign which had lasted altogether forty-six years.—His son, Evil-Merodach, succeeded him; but during his reign, many of the large countries which Nebuchadnezzar had conquered freed themselves more or less; among others, on one side, the mountainous country of Media, to the north of Babylon; and on the other, the country of Elam, possessed by the Persians.—Cyrus, son of the king of Persia, was at that time a young boy, full of talents, and noble qualities; and as his mother was sister to the old king of Media, he had been sent to his maternal grandfather's court, there to complete his education. Thus it was, that from his youth he had gained the affection of the Medes as well as of the Persians; and had been prepared to become, one day, king of both these nations.—Associated in the command of the armies with his uncle, called in the Bible "Darius the Mede," (as we shall see in the sixth chapter,) he had made with him war against the king of the Chaldeans, who was slain in battle; and the two allied princes, after much success, had ended in laying siege to great Babylon.—I have already told you the

size of this city, and the height of its walls. How was it to be taken? Provided with food for twenty years, and containing many defenders, it must have appeared impregnable both to friends and foes. Nevertheless, Cyrus and his uncle were not discouraged. They had surrounded Babylon with their armies; they had made immense ditches round its walls; they had divided their troops into twelve corps, who alternately guarded the trenches for a month; they had prevented any one from entering or leaving the city; and when Belshazzar fell, the Medes and Persians had been already three years encamped around his capital, apparently without hope of taking it.—The Babylonians, safe within their walls, laughed at the folly of their enemies, who were, as they thought, uselessly consuming their time, provisions, and men; they insulted them from the high battlements of their towers; and it was partly doubtless to show how little the enemy was feared, that Belshazzar was determined to celebrate this splendid festival, of which your lesson of to-day speaks. Such, even, was the neglect of caution, that the brazen gates, by which from the raised quays of the city the river might be approached, were left open. Nevertheless, while Babylon was careless, Cyrus was forming bold and skilful plans for taking it, which I will tell you in my next lesson.—You now understand in what circumstances the king of Babylon, on the anniversary, when all his subjects were accustomed to celebrate their false gods by national rejoicings, sat down to table with his thousand nobles.—I pass on to verses 2-4.—Such are the sad effects of intemperance. It is by the disgusting mirth, excited in people through intoxicating liquors, that are made known most strikingly all the bad passions of the heart—impurity, insolence, anger, readiness to shed blood, contempt of divine things, blasphemy of God, indecent songs, and all the defilements “which come from within.” (*St. Mark* vii. 21.) (Read *St. Luke* xxi. 34-36; *Prov.* xx. 1; and *Isaiah* v. 11-13; also *Prov.* xxxi. 4, 5.)—Go and see people assembled for drink; or rather do *not* go, for you would be ashamed of human nature, and you would come out perhaps defiled yourselves by what you would have heard. (*Prov.* xxiii. 20.)—It was when he had been drinking, like Belshazzar, at a feast, that Herod, (who yet loved and revered John the Baptist,) being heated by wine, swore to the young Salome, that he would give her anything she asked.—By her mother’s advice, she asked, when she returned into the banqueting-room, that the head of the prophet, who was imprisoned in a dungeon close by, should be brought to her in a dish; and “the king, though very sorry,” as we are told, dared not refuse, “because

of his guests, and of the oath" which he had sworn in their presence. The head of the man of God was brought in, therefore, in a dish, and reeking in his blood.—It is related that almost all the plots which caused Protestant blood to be shed in France, were formed, glass in hand, at table. The tragedy which took place on St. Bartholomew's Day, had been planned in the midst of the marriage festivities, with which the court of the king of France was occupied. "Be sober and watch."—But now look at this wretched Belshazzar and his guilty nobles.

Great lessons had been given twenty-five years before to the court of Babylon, by the conversion and example of Nebuchadnezzar. Besides, there were in that city thousands of faithful Israelites, who worshipped the true and living God. Many Chaldeans had been forced to attend to God's words by the decrees of Nebuchadnezzar, by Daniel's miraculous wisdom, by the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and by the influence of all these men of God, who had for a long time largely shared in the government of the empire. But impiety ruled in the court of Belshazzar; and he perhaps thought that nothing was more likely to bring discredit upon the religion of the Jews, than to place on the banqueting-table the golden vessels which had been used at the Temple of Jerusalem in the worship of God. So they were taken out of the idol Bel's house, where the Chaldean conquerors had put them; and when brought to table, the king and his guests, in order to insult the true and living God, drank out of these sacred vessels, and "praised their gods of gold and silver, iron, wood, and stone."—But listen! What has happened? Look at Belshazzar, pale as death, with his wide-opened eyes fixed upon the wall; "the joints of his loins loosed, his knees knocking against each other."—While this guilty company were blaspheming God in the vessels of His Temple, "came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."—"His thoughts troubled him"; his conscience, at last awakened, was roused as by a storm from the Almighty, and filled him with terror.—"The king cried aloud," &c., (*verse 7*). Now imagine the terror of all that company. The wise men came in, but not one of them could read the writing, nor say a word in explanation.—"The king (*verse 9*) was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished."—At last a woman came into the hall, who had not taken part in this banquet.

It was the queen-mother, the famous Nitocris it is thought, of whom history speaks in great praise. She had remained quietly in her palace, away from the madness of this day; but when she heard of her son's trouble, she came forth in order to counsel him. She knew Daniel, the man of God, who at this time lived away from the court: she came to advise the king to send for him.

My children, let not this story slip out of your memory. Do not forget that there is in Heaven a Hand which writes down everything; which each day enters in the books of judgement the secrets of your consciences, and all the actions of your lives, to be made known in the light of the last day. Never forget that Hand; never forget those books! And should you be, either alone or with others, in any room where temptation to sin assaults your soul, seduces your conscience, or corrupts your will; should you then be tempted to say with the wicked, "How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?" (*Psalms* lxxiii. 11)—look at the wall and remember Belshazzar! Think of that Hand which writes in Heaven, and which could at that very moment, if God chose, come forth and write also upon the wall in your sight, that you are weighed in the balance, and found wanting. Think of those books, and of what is being written therein; for "the sea will give up the dead which are in it; and death and hell the dead that are in them; and they shall be judged every man according to their works. (*Rev.* xx. 13.)—O my God! before that great day comes, let the Blood of Atonement flow over all the pages which concern me in that dreadful book! let it blot out all the records of my sin, marked by the Hand of Thine eternal justice and truth! let it leave only the little good that I have been enabled to do by Thy grace, through faith in my Saviour; and even in that good, O my God! let His Blood yet efface the evil which, alas! has more or less been mixed with it; let it blot out my evil thoughts, words, and actions; and let it leave only the cup of cold water which I may have been able to give for the sake of Jesus Christ to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple!

But one more thought about the last day.—How fearful it appears to one who has just read this chapter of Daniel, with its account of the king with his trembling limbs, his strength failing from fear! And why?—Because he has but seen a hand, a part of a hand, writing four words only, on the plaster of the wall! What then will be the terror in the last day, at the "voice of the archangel, and at the trump of



God?" when, instead of this hand upon a wall, we shall see "the Son of Man coming in the clouds, with all the holy angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ": when, instead of those four words, there will be the book of works; and instead of that wall there will be "that great white throne, upon which One will be sitting, before whom the heavens and the earth will flee away, and before whom will stand great and small; the books will be opened, and all the tribes of the earth, kings and great men, every freeman and every bondman, will hide themselves in dens among the rocks of the mountains, saying to them, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of Him who is sitting on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"—My God, remember us in that terrible day! Have pity on each of us, O Saviour! Thou only canst save from the wrath to come. Oh, may I appear before Thee without spot in that day! and having put my trust in Thy Blood, may I "not be ashamed of Thy Presence at Thy coming!"—(Read 1 *Thess.* iii. 13; and 1 *St. John* ii. 28.)

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## LESSON XVII.

### DANIEL v. 11-21.

OUR last lesson ended with the queen's entrance into the banqueting hall, and her begging the king not to be troubled; for said she, in the beginning of our to-day's lesson, "There is in thy kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods."—Let us pause here to admire the wisdom of the ways of God, in guiding every event at the right time, for the successive accomplishment of His eternal purposes. The dynasty was to be changed, for so it was written. The kings of Babylon were about to fall for ever; the head of gold was to perish. The power of the breast and arms of silver—that is, the monarchy of the Medes and Persians—was about to begin. But when Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian, should be on the throne of Babylon, they were to favour the Children of Israel, and restore them to their country after their seventy years' captivity. For this object it was needful that

Daniel should be again brought forward, so that at the taking of Babylon everyone should be talking of him, and that the king of Media should so distinguish him, as to put him at the head of his new empire.—It was for this purpose that the hand appeared upon the wall; Daniel would be sent for and listened to, and whoever recognized him would feel confidence in him.

In the view of angels, the great war against Belshazzar and the kingdom of Chaldea was carried on, not in the plains of Babylon, nor on the banks of the Euphrates, nor in its dried-up bed, but rather in the prophet Daniel's chamber of prayer, by that window where the man of God knelt so reverently, turning his face towards the Lord, fighting in fervent prayer for the deliverance of his nation, and making request in fasting, sackcloth, and ashes!—Daniel and his brethren asked for the restoration of Israel, not for the ruin of Belshazzar; but the Almighty, while granting their request, had fixed the next day for punishing the king of Babylon, and for giving up the country of Chaldea to perpetual desolation; the day when should be fulfilled the words of Jeremiah, *chap. 1.*

Daniel had already passed the eighty-seventh year of his life, when, at the request of the queen, he was sent for out of his dwelling. But since the death of Nebuchadnezzar, that is for about twenty-three years, he appears to have lived away from court, deprived of his office, and neglected.

It was then necessary, as we said, that when the seventy years' captivity of the Jews was about to end, Daniel and the people of God should be brought into the notice both of the Chaldeans and of the Medes and Persians who were about to conquer them. What does God do for that purpose? You have heard it. He abandons Belshazzar to his profane mirth, and to the intoxication of his impiety; He causes the whole court to be assembled round the king, on the very night in which he was to be slain; He makes visible a hand on the wall, filling every heart with terror. "Anguish seized them," says Scripture. Then enters the queen, and points out a man who will explain this fearful mystery. Here then is the audience prepared by God for Daniel, and the prelude to his appearance.

Observe in *verse 11* the words in which the queen expresses before the court, first her own deep respect for Daniel, and then that of

Nebuchadnezzar for him. Be not astonished at this man's great genius and noble character, for said she, "the spirit of the holy gods is in him." The heathen believed in good and wicked gods; it was the spirit of the good ones that was, she was sure, in him.—Listen how she praises the genius of Daniel in *verse 12*: "In the time of thy father," (she means during the life of thy father, Evil-Merodach, who reigned only two years, or during the forty-five years of thy grandfather Nebuchadnezzar's reign,) "were found in him light and understanding, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods; interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts." Observe also, how she pays homage to his noble character: "An excellent spirit was found in him;" his heavenly disposition, his humility, his love to God and man, were acknowledged. So she adds, "The king, thy father," (that is thy grandfather, whose steps, alas! thou hast not followed,) "made him master over all the magicians, astrologers, and wise men," of his kingdom. Now then, O king! let this "Daniel (whom thy grandfather named Belteshazzar) be called, and he will shew the interpretation."

Two things may be seen here; first, that Daniel, although known as a great prince under the Babylonian name of Belteshazzar, had hastened to take back, when possible, his more precious name, his Jewish one of Daniel; for, like Moses, "he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," and "preferred the reproach of Christ to all the treasures" of Chaldea.—Secondly, that the court of Babylon had soon forgotten the great services which Daniel as governor had rendered to the kingdom: he was no longer remembered except by the old queen.

Such is the value and duration of the world's favour. Unhappy then are those, who, in their labours here below, have sought only the good-will of men, which is capricious and fleeting; "they have had their reward," said our Lord. (*St. Matt.* vi. 2, 16.) Christians therefore must take care in what they do—not only for the Church, for the Word of God, for the spread of the Gospel, for the good of all the people of God; but even also in what they do for their country, for mankind in general, for the sick and afflicted—not to look for the praise of men. No! all must be done for the sake of Jesus Christ, and in such a manner that "our left hand shall not know what the right hand doeth."—Otherwise two great evils will follow: first, you

will have all your reward here below—God abhors what is done with a double mind, a squinting look, one eye turned to Him, the other to man; secondly, even this little earthly reward is of no account; it does not last, it has wings and flies away like men themselves; those who most love you, may die to-morrow, and no longer be able to help you; but even those who live as long as you, may be fickle and ungrateful, and soon forget you. Well was it for Daniel that he had not laboured in Babylon in order to obtain the favour of men; for now that he is old, his services appear to have been forgotten by all but the queen.

Yes, my children, do everything for Christ's sake; for while men soon cease to remember the trouble we may have taken for them, He forgets nothing, and even tells us that in the last day, a cup of cold water only, given in His name to the least of His brethren, shall not lose its reward. (Read *St. Matt.* xxv. 34–40.) But what did I say? that Thou, my God, dost not forget *any* thing? Nay, for while Thou rememberest the cup of cold water, Thou dost forget, for the sake of Thy holy Son, the frightful number of our sins!

But now let us pass on to the fourth act of this great drama, for the history of this memorable night presents to us the successive acts of a striking tragedy. The first act consists of a festival—joy, splendour in dress and furniture, music, shouts: in short, a scene of enchantment. The second opens with the suddenness of lightning. A hand appears, writing words on the wall; the king was terrified, and cried out for the magicians, but they could neither read nor interpret the writing. The third contains the entrance of the queen, her speech, and request that Daniel may be called. The fourth, he is brought in: and now observe his reply to the king. Daniel had witnessed during seventy years all the changes in the kingdom; he had lived forty-five years under Nebuchadnezzar; thus he speaks with the respect due to his sovereign, but yet with the stern authority of an aged man, and of a prophet of the Almighty. He begins by refusing the king's gifts; he is no mercenary; he is God's servant; his career is ended; what good would these trifles do him? The kingdom of Babylon is come to its end; what use in these honours? But he expresses himself respectfully though decidedly, "Let thy gifts remain with thee." Ah, my friends! should not we despise the world's honours, if we could anticipate its approaching end, and say, "I have in Heaven a better and more enduring substance"?

After this refusal, Daniel enters on the subject of the writing and its interpretation. He begins by recalling the reign of the great Nebuchadnezzar; these are not vain words but a necessary part of the interpretation which he is to give. He describes the high degree of glory, power, and honour to which the Almighty had raised Nebuchadnezzar. (*Verses* 18, 19.) In fact never had any heathen prince been so highly exalted; and Daniel takes good care to tell the successor to so much power, that "it was God who had given it." It was neither his genius, nor courage, nor ability (which was undoubtedly great); it was the most high God, the God of gods, as Nebuchadnezzar himself called Him. "All people and languages trembled," &c. (*Verse* 19.) His genius and power were all-subduing, nothing resisted him. Even kings asked and held their lives from him. In his empire no one dared raise his voice; he had power of life and death over all. "But when his heart was lifted up," &c. (*Verse* 20.) Such is the effect of pride, that it hardens the heart against the commandments and judgements of God, and hinders all conversion.

Read *verses* 21, 22, and, before closing this lesson, let us observe how Daniel, in this last night of Belshazzar's life, stands before this wretched man, like a second conscience, recalling, as from God, the examples, the mercies, the knowledge, the help, which had been given to him, but which he had so shamefully neglected.—Think what torture that voice of memory will be at the last day to the wicked; speaking too late, and bringing to the soul only bitter regrets and eternal self-reproach. What ever-renewed grief, what a gnawing and undying worm, will cling to the remembrance of so many unacknowledged favours, neglected warnings, lost opportunities! when the last hour shall have struck; when there shall be no farther delay nor remedy; and when the riches of God's patience and long-suffering shall be exhausted! Ah! then, my children! do not wait to remember your advantages, till the day when they shall be yours no longer, when your probation shall be ended! Do not wait for the reproach of having madly lost them. Will the wicked need any other torment than memory? a worm which dieth not, a devouring fire which is not quenched! I might have chosen life, but I laid hold on death; Jesus Christ called lovingly to me, "My son, give Me thine heart: there is no Saviour but Me; open to Me;" and I have not done so, and now it is too late! "Son, remember," said Abraham to the rich man in torments.—Then will conscience stand up, like Daniel before the king,

and say, "Thou hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this."—Young girl, remember the tears of thy good parents, who entreated thee to love Jesus Christ, but which thou sawest unmoved. Young boy, remember the death which took place in thy father's house, and the examples which God then set before thee. Remember that thou hast perhaps seen death on the face of a brother or grandfather, a sister or mother, who had besought thee to give thyself to God! But what hast thou done? "Thou hast not humbled thy heart." (Read *Prov. i. 23-31.*)

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## LESSON XVIII.

### DANIEL V. 22-31.

THESE verses relate one of the greatest events in history. I would have you all understand it thoroughly; not only that you may profit by this chapter of Daniel, but also that you may be able to read more intelligently the other portions of prophecy which foretell the same facts, whether in the Book of Daniel, or in Ezekiel, or in Isaiah (*chapters xiii., xiv., xxi., xlv., xlv., xlv., xlvii.*), or also in Jeremiah (*chapters xxv., l., li.*). These holy pages of *prophecy* are very dark to those who have not taken the trouble to study in Scripture the *history* which relates to them; but, as I have told you before, they are full of light and beauty to anyone who sets about the easy work of reading them as in presence of the events contemporary with these men of God. Just as a reader would very imperfectly understand St. Paul's Epistles if he had no knowledge of the history of Jesus Christ in the Gospels, and of the Apostles in the Acts; so it is clear that we shall gain comparatively little light from the Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, if we have not first studied the lives and circumstances of these prophets in their historical chapters, or in the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

Let us begin by recalling the events contemporary with Daniel. Who reigned at Babylon?—Whose grandson was this prince?—In what year before Christ did Nebuchadnezzar begin to reign?—Whom

had he led captive to Babylon?—About what age was Daniel then? And what age when he appeared at Belshazzar's feast?—How many times had Nebuchadnezzar taken Jerusalem?—Whom had he established king over the Jews after the taking of this city?—Whom, afterwards, at its second taking?—What did he do at the end of the third siege?—He burnt Jerusalem and its Temple.—Yes; he carried away the sacred vessels; he killed all the king's sons in their father's presence; and afterwards, having put out his eyes, he brought him in chains to Babylon.—But how long was the captivity of the Jews to last?—Seventy years.—Who had foretold it?—Jeremiah.—Yes, in his twenty-fifth, twenty-seventh, and twenty-ninth chapters.—And which were the three great prophets raised up by God to point out this great chastisement, to sanctify its lesson to his people, and to foretell its duration?—The first?—Jeremiah, who prophesied at Jerusalem.—The second? Ezekiel, who prophesied by the river Chebar, in Mesopotamia.—And the third?—Daniel, who prophesied at Babylon, and who lived in grandeur.

Now, dear children, it is of importance that you should know distinctly that when the venerable Daniel, eighty-seven years old at least, came before the king in the midst of his disturbed feast to give him the explanation of that mysterious writing, he was acquainted with the prophecies which Jeremiah had delivered fifty-six years before. Jeremiah had doubtless been dead ten or fourteen years. He was, as you may remember, about twenty-eight years older than Daniel, whilst Ezekiel was his elder by only four or five years.

I wish you to read two or three of the prophecies of these great men before we go farther, for two reasons: first, because you may thereby better comprehend these wonderful pages by comparing them with history; and secondly, because you will also better understand our to-day's lesson.

And first, let one of you read aloud the three first verses of Daniel's ninth chapter.—You see three important facts:—First, that Daniel, although himself one of the Lord's greatest prophets, studied with reverence the books of his contemporary, Jeremiah. It was not *Jeremiah* that he read in them, but God.—Second, that Daniel had read in Jeremiah that the captivity should last seventy years: it had begun in the year 606 B.C., and was to end in 536 B.C.—Third, that Daniel's reading had moved him to fervent prayer.

Now let us read the fifteen first verses of Jeremiah's twenty-ninth chapter.—You see that this holy man, in the year of king Zedekiah's accession to the throne (that is to say, in the year 598, when Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem for the second time), wrote from Jerusalem a letter of consolation to the Jews at Babylon, exhorting them to submit to their fate, as to a just judgement of God, and telling them that after seventy years their children should be delivered, and restored to Jerusalem. This, then, was one of the chapters which Daniel, sixty-three years afterwards, read and thought upon in Babylon. in order to pray the more fervently.

Now you shall read only one chapter more of Jeremiah—one of those in which he foretold, fifty-six years beforehand, the terrible and sudden overthrow of Babylon. You will see by the last verses that he wrote this wonderful prophecy while Jerusalem was still standing, in the fourth year of king Zedekiah—that is the year 594 B.C. Let one of you read aloud the fifty-first chapter of Jeremiah.—You have now heard the most exact description of the manner in which great Babylon was to fall. While its inhabitants in the middle of the night should think themselves safe, and be given up to festal mirth, Cyrus, with his terrible cavalry of Persians and Medes, was to enter by the bed of the Euphrates, the course of whose waters he had turned away. Thus he would reach the middle of the city. The quays which bordered the river, and which, like the outer walls of the city, were three hundred and fifty feet high, had immense flights of steps shut in by brazen gates, which were to remain open that night; in the midst of the universal mirth the bars were neglected to be laid across them; the Persian army was to rush on foot into the palaces, or on horseback into the streets, set fire to the fleet on the river, slay the strong men in the city, and the king, his nobles, and his wise men, in the palace. (See *Jer.* li, 39, 57.) The enemies of Babylon were to fill her “with men as with caterpillars”; “the standard was to be set upon her walls,” the watchmen placed, the ambushes prepared; the surprise and terror of the Babylonians were to be such that they would “forbear to fight,” and would “become like women”; and while Belshazzar would yet be at his feast, suddenly he would be told, “The Medes are in the city! we are lost!” (*Verses* 31, 32.) When Daniel came into the presence of Belshazzar, he knew this chapter of Jeremiah; but he was farther able, by the Spirit of God, to declare to the wretched king the meaning of the words written on the wall.



In the first words of our lesson to-day, Daniel, as a minister of God, reproached the king that he had "not humbled his heart, though he knew all" the history of Nebuchadnezzar! This want of humility is what most offends the Most High. (*St. James* iv. 6; *Malachi* iv. 1.) And you must remember, dear children, that if God so severely punished the pride of a heathen king, He will much more chastise that of a person enlightened with Christian knowledge; and that if He was so seriously offended by the pride of a king of Babylon, He will be more so by that of an English boy or girl. "Thou hast not glorified the God in Whose hand thy breath is, and Whose are all thy ways"—Here was the sin of this wretched man expressed in a few words; and this will condemn at the last day all the unconverted. Every pulse and every breath they have from Him; wherever they go they are under His power; they depend on Him for every moment of day or night. What, then, is the reasonable and grateful duty of everyone? Is it not to honour, love, and serve *Him*, and not to think that they are put into this world to live for *themselves* alone?

*Verse 25.*—"This is the writing.....by the hand sent from God." It would seem that even the letters of this sentence were unknown to the Chaldeans. It has been thought that the writing was in old Hebrew letters, like those used now by the Samaritans, and of which the inhabitants of Babylon were ignorant. It appears that each of these three fearful words had one meaning in Hebrew, and another, a little different, in Chaldean; so that with these two meanings united, they were equivalent to six words, six terrible words. Listen to them:—

*Mene*: in Hebrew, under a Chaldean form, *he has numbered*; in Chaldean, *he has finished!*

*Tekel*: in Chaldean, *he has weighed*; in Hebrew, *thou hast been found light!*

*Upharsin*: U means *and*; *Pharsin* or *Parsin*, in all languages, means *the Persians*; but it is also the Chaldean participle present plural of a Hebrew and Chaldean verb, which means *to divide*.

So that these three short words, the first of which, to be more emphatic, is twice repeated, signify:—

*Mene, Mene*: God has numbered thy kingdom, God has numbered thy kingdom; and He has finished it, He has finished it!

*Tekel*: thou hast been weighed in the balances, and thou hast been found wanting!

*Upharsin*: and thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians!

It might have been feared that Belshazzar would have been irritated by the prophet, and have done him harm. But no; he gives Daniel the promised reward: the latter has too much consideration for his unhappy king to refuse his favours; but of what use are they? that very night Belshazzar will be slain! (*Jer.* i. 35.)

All the prophecies about this event were strikingly fulfilled, even in detail. If any of you should read the old Greek historian Herodotus, or the writings of Xenophon, a general who lived two hundred years after Cyrus, you would see the agreement of prophets and historians on this catastrophe and its consequences. The kings of Persia and Media, leagued against Babylon, had agreed to trust the command of their armies to the great Cyrus, according to the prediction two hundred years before in *Isaiah* xxi. 2., and in *Jeremiah* li. 11. But the taking of this city, according to *Jeremiah* li. 27, was not to be the work of the Medes and Persians alone: and in fact, Cyrus, having subdued the people of Upper and Lower Armenia (Ararat and Nineveh), and quickly won their affection by his generosity, did not fear to incorporate their armies into his own. He induced the Hyrcanians to break their alliance with Babylon, subdued the powerful kingdom of Lydia, as well as Phrygia (Ashkenaz) and Cappadocia, and united equally all the soldiers of these vast countries under his standard. In short, Xenophon tells us, that by the nobleness of his conduct, and the mildness of his government, he was able in twenty years to change into a confederation against Babylon the alarming coalition which all these nations had at first formed against himself.

Scarcely had this great commander reached Babylon, before he surrounded it with his army, and went on horseback, with his staff, round its walls to discover any vulnerable part; but his expectation was quite frustrated: nowhere did these wonderful walls present a single assailable point: its walls and ditches, wrote the historians, appeared to be a bulwark of nature rather than a work of man. What was to be done? This great multitude must be surrounded on

all sides, and thus reduced by famine. Cyrus, fearing that the sallies of the Chaldeans might endanger the safety of his army, which presented around the walls so extended a front, began by placing it in a fresh position, which Xenophon (himself one of the most able generals of the Greeks) admires while he describes it. A deep trench was dug all round Babylon, and forts built at intervals, to repulse the enemy if any sally was made. The entire army of the Persians was then divided into twelve large corps, to guard by turns, each for a month, these vast lines of circumvallation. Babylon had been hitherto, in the hand of God, "the hammer of all the earth"; it had been formerly a cruel and impetuous nation. "They are terrible and dreadful," said Habakkuk (i. 7-10). But now they are shut up within their own walls, they are become a nation of women. At the sight of the enemy's squadrons round the ramparts they lost heart, and kept behind the battlements of their great towers, where the Persian arrows could not get at them. Their prince, to whom Cyrus had proposed to settle the quarrel by single combat, dared not accept the challenge; "his hands waxed feeble, anguish took hold of him;" king and people had nothing left of their former courage; their brazen gates remained shut night and day; and they had not even dared to attack the enemy's army when they saw its lines weakened by extension. In short, historians are astonished at a timidity contrasting so strongly in this people with their former bravery; but it had been foretold, like all the rest, in *Jeremiah* li. 30.

Cyrus, seeing all his enemies shut up in their capital, hoped for more than two years to reduce them by famine; but after so long a siege, his only hope of success must have forsaken him when he found that the Babylonians possessed within their immense enclosure fields of wonderful fertility, and they had moreover amassed provisions for twenty years. They laughed at the patience of the Persians, and insulted them from the top of the walls. Two years of blockade and of great works seemed then to be lost; the army became impatient, the city appeared to them impregnable, no progress kept up their hopes, and the anxiety of Cyrus increased every day; when at last he conceived a new and bold plan. It was to enter Babylon by the bed of the very river which seemed to constitute its strength, since by running through it from north to south, the Euphrates filled also with its rapid waters the great ditches which surrounded the city. Cyrus resolved to cause the river to flow during one night into the wide and

deep trenches which he had had made on each side of it. This task might seem as rash as it was laborious. The river was twelve hundred feet in width, and twelve in average depth; and one of Cyrus's wisest counsellors had told him that he would moreover find Babylon still better defended by its high walls on the banks of the river than it was even on the land side. Nothing stopped Cyrus. The work of the trenches continued uninterruptedly under his eyes; both his friends and enemies thought that he was only intending by it to render Babylon inaccessible to all foreign succour, and to starve its population, by isolating it for ever from the rest of the world. "If the besieged had suspected Cyrus's intentions," says Herodotus, "or if only they had discovered them before they were fulfilled, the Persian army would have been destroyed; it would only have needed to keep shut the gates which opened upon the river, and to place troops on the walls on each side: the Persians would have been caught as in a trap, without being able to escape." Therefore Cyrus, in order to guard against such a great danger, had taken care to choose for the execution of his plans the night of the great festival, when the whole city was usually plunged in drunkenness. As soon as this long-expected night began, the dykes were cut; the river rushed violently into the deep ways that had been dug for it, the water sank in its ancient bed, and the Persians silently and immediately went down into it. The Almighty had said in *Jeremiah* l. 38, "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up;" and in li. 36, "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." The Chaldeans were everywhere taken by surprise; but such was the vast extent of Babylon, says Herodotus, that its inhabitants who lived at one end were taken or slain before any alarm had reached the centre of the city. Not one of its hundred brazen gates had been forced open, not one brick of its enormous walls had been displaced; and yet great Babylon was filled with enemies, numerous as those clouds of locusts which darken the sun, and cover whole provinces, when the wind of the desert drives them forward.

Thus was accomplished literally the words of the Lord, "Babylon is suddenly fallen." "How is Sheshach (Chaldea) taken! How is the praise of the whole earth surprised!" "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages (or fords) are stopped, and the reeds (or marshes) are burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted." (*Jer.* li. 8, 41, 31, 32.)

Cyrus had harangued his troops when night began, and said, "Those of our enemies who are not drunk are asleep, and all Babylon is in confusion." Scarcely had the Persians entered the city by the gates on the quays, than they killed the more watchful of the soldiers posted near the walls, pursued the others from street to street; and even joining in some quarters the masquerades of the Chaldeans, as if their murderous work had been only one of the many follies of that night, they hastened to reach the royal palace by the shortest way. Suddenly they arrived there, before any one of those messengers going to meet another had yet told the king of Babylon "that his city was taken at one end." The greatness of the danger was not yet suspected. "Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from Me shall spoilers come unto her," had said the Lord in *Jeremiah* li. 53. The gates of the royal castle, which itself formed a powerful fortress in the middle of the city, were closed indeed; but their guards were drinking in the great square outside the palace, around a bonfire made there. Suddenly a frightened crowd rushes in; the Persians, sword in hand, are in the midst: cries of terror and despair arise; no longer like the sounds of a festival, they are heard by the inhabitants of the palace in its porticos and halls. Then first, from the heights of the terraces, and by the light of this flaming fire around which the Persians were slaying the people, the king and his court beheld a scene of tumult and carnage, of which they did not know the cause. At this sight, the king, thinking it only a popular riot, gave orders that his guards should go and suppress it. The folding gates of the palace were opened, but instantly rushed in the Persians, and slew the king and his great men, who thus passed in a moment from drunkenness to death! (See *Jer.* li. 39, 40, 57.) Cyrus, says Xenophon, sent squadrons of cavalry to go through the streets, slaying all they found in them; and at the same time he sent out a proclamation from one part of the city to the other, in the Syriac or Chaldean language, ordering all to keep within their houses, or else they would be killed without mercy.

Thus was fulfilled what Jeremiah had written (*verse* 54): "A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:"—"spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets." (*Verses* 3, 4. See also *Jer.* l. 42.)

As soon as the city had been taken, and the fleet burnt in the dried-up bed of the Euphrates, Cyrus, in the sight of all the people of Babylon, reviewed in the streets and squares of the city his cavalry. Four thousand horses of the royal guard were posted in front of the palace gates, and two thousand on each side. As soon as he appeared, they marched to meet him, followed by two thousand lancers. After these picked regiments, advanced four large corps, each of ten thousand horses; and behind these formidable Persian squadrons came, in very fine order, first the Median cavalry, then the Syrian, Hyrcanian, &c. At last two thousand war chariots, advancing four abreast, closed this imposing march. Some time afterwards, Cyrus reviewed again at Babylon his whole army. It consisted, say the historians, of 120,000 horses, and 600,000 men on foot.

Thus fell Babylon, the scourge of nations, the hammer of the whole earth, the impregnable and cruel city; and thus were fulfilled, one by one, the Almighty's prophecies concerning her!

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## LESSON XIX.

### DANIEL VI. 1-10.

WHAT a touching and noble scene is presented to us in this chapter; let us compare it with that in the first chapter: there we saw the faithfulness of Daniel in youth; here we see the same in old age. Oh! may you also, my young friends, be found faithful, like him, at the age of fourteen, in the morning of your life! for then (God has promised and he keeps His promises) you shall also be found faithful in the evening, when you are about to sink out of this world's sight, in order to rise gloriously on the other side of this life, in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Scripture compares the path of the just to that of the sun: it is "like the shining light," says Solomon in *Prov.* iv. 18, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Such was the path of this blessed Daniel. One likes to behold him both in childhood and old age. Look at him first, taken away from Jerusalem into captivity, but already devoted to his God,

and desirous of glorifying Him: he was a sun of holiness and happiness rising upon Chaldea. And now see, by his window, this same Daniel, with his white hair, at the age of eighty-five, on his knees, in his chamber; three times a day he kneels there, his shutters are open towards Jerusalem, he prays and gives thanks unto his God. He has read the decree of the king of Media, and knows that he shall be thrown into the den of lions; but he is a servant of the King of kings; his heart is full of love, peace, and joy. What a fine sunset! Well! happy in all ages, is the child who begins his life like Daniel! and very happy also is the man who ends it like Daniel, in obedience and prayer to his God and Saviour!

Now let us simply take up our lesson, verse by verse. 1, 2.—You remember how mighty Babylon, besieged for two years by Cyrus, had been surprised in the middle of the night. The river Euphrates, which flowed through it from north to south, had served for a passage to the Persian cavalry, who had entered by its bed, some above the city and some below, because its waters had been turned into the great lake. King Belshazzar, at this frightful news, had gone out against them, sword in hand; but he was killed, and his fleet burnt; his generals and his soldiers were slain; so that when the sun arose next morning upon Babylon, it shone upon the bloody beginning of the empire of the Medes and Persians. That of the Chaldeans had ceased to exist; the monarchy of silver had just begun. Historians tell us that the king of the Medes (uncle and father-in-law to Cyrus), Darius the Mede, called also Cyaxares, and who was about sixty-two years old, was not at that time with his army; he was in Media. Cyrus the Persian, although conqueror of Babylon, did not yet reign nominally over the Medes, nor even over the Persians, for his father and mother were still alive. He then returned, Xenophon tells us, after his victory, to his parents in Persia; afterwards he came back from thence with his uncle, to settle the affairs of their great empire. He assembled his whole army in the plains of Babylon, in order to review it; and I have already told you that it is said there were 120,000 cavalry, 600,000 infantry, and 2000 war chariots armed with scythes, and which were at that time used in battles. Formerly these great numbers related by historians were thought to be exaggerations; but since the wars of Napoleon they need not astonish us; for it was with about this number of combatants, that he crossed the Niemen, twenty-four (*now* fifty-seven) years ago, and met with his ruin in the great empire of Russia.

Nevertheless, Cyrus yielded the highest station to his uncle Darius the Mede, who reigned only two years over the empire of Babylon; and he himself had gone to lead his victorious troops to the shores of the Red Sea. Thus it was during his absence that Daniel was cast into the den of lions. Doubtless after the taking of Babylon everyone spoke of Daniel's prediction. Had he not read the mysterious words upon the wall? had he not foretold the king of Babylon, on the very night of his ruin, and in presence of his thousand guests, all that was going to happen? He had, besides, been long known in the kingdom for his wonderful wisdom, his unspotted honesty, his powerful mind, and high character. He had shewn great talents for government; and it was known that, for half a century, he had served the great Nebuchadnezzar with equal disinterestedness and success. The princes of Persia and Media, when they had divided their vast empire into 120 provinces, hastened to give them 120 governors or satraps, and to place above them three ministers of state, who were to superintend the whole administration, and to have "accounts given to them" of every matter. One of these three places was given to Daniel. One of the chief qualities of great princes always has been, to know how to choose their ministers. Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Charlemagne, Louis XIV., Napoleon, had this talent; so had the great Cyrus. In our prayers we should ask God to give the spirit of wisdom to all kings, that they may seek and find men working for God's glory. When He chastises His people, He gives them "men without wisdom, children for governors."

*Verse 3.*—We see here the high reputation of Daniel; how much, indeed, was required in him "an excellent spirit"; that is, not only deep wisdom, great ability, much knowledge, but also decision of character, integrity, and calmness, which might quickly inspire others with confidence—how much, I say, to induce the princes of the Medes and Persians to place at the head of such a powerful empire—who?—a stranger, a Jew, a captive, a servant of their enemies, and farther, an old man of eighty-five at least. It was also necessary that Daniel should be gifted, even in old age, with wonderful health both of body and mind, to enable him to bear the burden of such an office. God gave him, doubtless, these precious gifts, in order to make him the instrument of the mercy which He was soon going to exercise towards the people of Israel. Daniel was to be long their protector in a strange land; and it would be still almost wholly through his influence, that



Cyrus should be led to publish the blessed decree which should restore Judah to the country of their fathers, and rebuild Jerusalem.—But what I want you specially to admire, is the tender faithfulness of God our Saviour toward those who have given themselves to Him from their childhood. He never forsakes them; He takes care of them in the midst of the greatest distress; He blesses them throughout the longest life; and He does not let “any pluck them out of His hand.” At the age of fourteen, Daniel had already given his heart to his God, and at the age of eighty-five here he is in his chamber, kneeling, and pouring out in His presence the prayers of an honest and good heart! Thus it was that God had kept him, in soul as well as body, in the luxurious palace of an impure city, amid the almost constant society of idolaters, in daily and necessary intercourse with a corrupted court, among the superfluities of wealth, in the midst of all the snares of power and greatness. Behold this governor of Babylon, this man who ruled under the great Nebuchadnezzar for fifty years; this old man who now governs a third part of the kingdom, and whom Darius thinks of putting at the head of the whole empire of the Medes and Persians. Where is he? By his open window. And what is he doing there? He is on his knees, praying three times a day; he decides on a death by wild beasts; his life is in his hands, and he offers it to God his Redeemer! Yes, my children, thus will God keep you by “His power through faith” (1 *St. Peter* i. 5), even unto hoary age, and to the door of His banquet in the Kingdom of Heaven, if you give yourselves *now* with all your heart to Jesus Christ, to be His redeemed and beloved ones. He has promised it.

What I have just said, reminds me of that good Polycarp of whom you were told some weeks ago. He was as old as Daniel, and he was also to be devoured by wild beasts, for the cause of Christ; but the lion not being ready, the people cried out, Let him be burnt alive! They tore down the doors and windows, made a fire of them and burnt him therein. Polycarp had, like Daniel, given his heart to God while a child, and an unhappy child; for he had been taken in war, and sold, but to a good Christian lady named Calista, who had him taught the Gospel. During his childhood and early youth, he had often listened with Ignatius and Papias, to the aged Apostle St. John, who was then living near Smyrna; and after the death of Calista, he went to live with him. Afterwards he became pastor of the Christians of that city. When the emperor's soldiers came to seize him in the country-place to

which he had retired, they were struck with respect at the sight of him; this holy man immediately offered them refreshments, meekly asking them to give him time for prayer. He then sought the presence of his God, and passed two hours in fervent prayer. When he had done, he was put on an ass, and then upon a car; but the officer took him down from it so roughly, that his thigh was broken, and in that state the old man was taken before the tribunal of the province. As soon as the proconsul sees him, he orders him to cry out, "Down with the Atheists!" (this was the name by which the heathens of that time called the Christians.)—Polycarp, without hesitation, stretches out his hand, and looking steadfastly upward, cries solemnly, "Down with the Atheists!"—"Now deny Jesus Christ, and I will release thee."—"I have served Him for eighty-six years, and He has never done me anything but good; how then should I blaspheme my King and my Saviour? If you do not know it, listen: I am a Christian."—"I have wild beasts," cries the proconsul.—"Call them," replies the martyr; "we are resolved, we Christians, not to exchange good for evil."—"I will tame thy spirit with fire, if thou despisest wild beasts."—"You threaten me with the fire which burns for an hour, and you are ignorant of that eternal fire reserved for the impious at the Day of Judgement!"

But let us return to Daniel.—Although such was the excellence of his character, his high position would be envied by the great men among the Medes and Persians.—What! shall a foreigner be set above us, a slave, an old man of eighty-five, a Jew, who does not worship our gods?

*Verse 4.*—"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom;" some negligence, some hastiness, some injustice, or at least some mistake: "but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."—Then what did they do?

*Verse 5.*—"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."—What a testimony is given in all times to the true servants of God, by their greatest enemies!—They sought to find some fault in Daniel, but they found none!—Thus, when speaking of the Provençal Waldenses, a great number of whom were put to death by persecution, Louis XII. said, swearing according to his custom, "These

wretches are better men than me and my people!"—Well! let it be so with Christian children.

It often happens that a boy who tries to live piously, has something to bear on account of his faith. He is at school; where, perhaps, are other lads without right principles, who jeer, and insult, or laugh at him, who treat him with unkindness or contempt. This is certainly hard to bear; but a Christian boy ought often to say to himself, that "there shall be nothing to reproach him with, except concerning the law of his God."—He must be gentle, true, attentive, and hardworking; he must be respectful to his masters, kind and obliging to his companions, simple, honest, and civil to everyone.—And then, by whatever names he may be called, let him reply like Polycarp, Yes, I am a Christian!—Our Saviour said, "Blessed are ye, when you are reproached for My sake; when all manner of evil shall be said against you *falsely*. (Observe, *falsely*.) Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven."—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."—St. Peter says, "Having an honest behaviour among the Gentiles: that instead of speaking against you, they may glorify God in the day of visitation, by your good works which they behold."—But if, whilst a man calls himself a Christian, prays, studies his Bible, attends Church and religious meetings, he is seen, after all, to be just the same as other people, sour-tempered, lazy, light-minded, proud, sulky, mean, vain-glorious or impertinent, a liar or a glutton, a covetous man or a slanderer; oh! then, what frightful harm he does to the Gospel!—St. Paul wrote to nominal Christians: "You are the cause why the name of God is blasphemed by the Gentiles." And Jesus Christ went so far as to say, "Woe unto him who gives occasion of falling. It would be better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea!"

*Verses 6-9.*—There was probably, in Babylon or in Shushan, some great assembly of the nobles of the empire, of which the enemies of Daniel made use to plot his ruin, by imagining this absurd decree, and proposing it to the king, as a means of securing the submission of the people lately conquered. "We have unanimously agreed, that such a decree would have happy consequences, because it would strongly bind all your subjects to your government and to your person, by accustoming them to see in the king of the Medes and Persians an almost divine

being whom they ought to adore.”—However impious was this thought, you must not be astonished at it; the pride and wicked folly of man’s heart have, in all times, gone such lengths. Did not Nebuchadnezzar want to have worship paid him? Did not Alexander the Great call himself a god, son of a god? Even the first Christian Emperors of Rome had themselves and their images adored.

But to return to king Darius, who, surprised in his imprudence, and flattered in his pride, and not yet perceiving the wicked use which was going to be made of this decree, against Daniel, set his seal to it; and from that time, according to a law of the Medes and Persians, it was irrevocable. No one, not even the king, could either abolish or alter it.

But let us go on to the 10th *verse*. What will Daniel do? He knew of the decree; he has made up his mind; he has taken his life in his hands, and offered it to his Saviour-God; and he will reply to Darius as did the loyal Dandelot, brother of the great Coligny, to a king of France; this prince having threatened him with death unless he recanted: “Sire,” answered he, “for more than twenty years I have willingly risked my life for you in battle, and you have always found me faithful, because you are my king; but I have in Heaven another Master, whom I ought also to serve, and Whom I will serve; I hope that He will find me faithful!” What then is Daniel going to do? He will not hide himself. Doubtless God often gives His persecuted people permission to escape; but Daniel will not make use of it. He must strengthen his brethren by his example; his God called him to glorify Him by death, perhaps; it is the hour of conflict; he will not shrink from it!

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## LESSON XX.

### DANIEL VI. 10-24.

You remember that Daniel had been made one of the three chief governors of the new kingdom; and that many of the nobles of Media and Persia, jealous of the high favour granted him, had by secret intrigues, unknown to Daniel (who yet was at least their equal in the

council, if not their superior), managed to make a law by which they thought to get rid of him. It forbade everyone for thirty days to pray to any other God or man than to the great king of Media. When Daniel knew that the writing was signed by the king—and thus an established law of the land, under pain of death to anyone who should break it—what did he do? he “went into his house and knelt down; the windows of his chamber being open towards Jerusalem.” He had counted the cost, and knew that his last hour drew near; but that although the laws of the Medes and Persians were unchangeable, those of God were much more so. Doubtless he prayed for strength to honour God by such a death, waiting for the day when—Read his own words in chap. xii. 2, 3. Daniel used to pray three times a day, and he would not change his habits of devotion for all the threats of man. But how fervent must have been his prayer by that window, with the thought that it was his last day, and that he saw for the last time that brilliant Chaldean sun which was going to set on the horizon of Jerusalem; but he expected the rising of a more glorious sun in the heavenly Jerusalem; for she will not need the light of the sun, because the glory of God shall “lighten her, and the Lamb shall be the light thereof.” It is with such thoughts, my friends, that we should try to pray every day; how much more attentive, fervent, sincere, and loving, in prayer should we be, if we said to ourselves, I am perhaps praying to-day for the last time on earth; prepare, then, my soul, to meet thy God, and pour out thy heart to Him! Read what one of Daniel’s ancestors said three thousand years ago: *Psalms* xxxix. 4–7. The windows of the prophet’s chamber were open, so that strangers passing by, and especially his enemies who were spying him eagerly, might hear, or, at least, see him while he was praying to God. But perhaps you think that Daniel should not be commended for praying with this appearance of ostentation. Did not our Lord say, “When thou prayest, do not as the hypocrites, who love to be seen of men; but enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” Was he not then doing like the hypocrites? what do you think about it? Doubtless his conscience bore witness to him that he was acting uprightly. Certainly, dear children! He opened his windows for the same reason that would have made hypocrites shut them. He did just contrary to those wretched people of whom our Lord speaks; they desired to be seen praying in order to be praised by men; but if people, instead of honouring them for their

prayers, laughed at them, ill-treated them, or threatened them with death, would hypocrites then wish to be seen upon their knees? No, indeed! on the contrary, such persons, in Daniel's time, would have closed their windows and shutters; and even behind them they would not have prayed; they would have ceased to imitate the people of God. But it is said that Daniel's windows were open "*towards Jerusalem*"; do you understand *why*? He wished while praying to fix his thoughts on the promises of God. Jerusalem had been in ruins for seventy years; but in praying to God, Daniel turned towards the city of the promises, to shew more plainly that the ground of his trust was not in any good that he might find in himself, but solely in that covenant of grace, announced from the beginning of the world, renewed to Abraham, sanctioned to David, and recalled to the people of God by the Temple, the Altar, and all the Tabernacle worship, which represented to man the Saviour of sinners, and which bore witness to the "plenteous redemption" to be found in Him. Probably Daniel, on opening his window, remembered Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple. Read this beautiful passage (1 *Kings* viii. 46-49), and you will then better comprehend why the man of God, praying at Babylon, thus turned his face towards the setting sun. And as for ourselves, dear children, when we pray, we should look towards our heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; towards our High Priest, Jesus Christ; towards the true tabernacle, where God hears our prayers. And it is then as if we were saying, "O my God, not for my sake, who deserve nothing from Thee, but on account of the blood and sufferings, merits and intercessions, of Jesus Christ my Saviour, hear me from Heaven!"

But let us go on with the explanation of our *10th verse*.—Observe that Daniel prayed "as he did aforetime"; he had not waited till danger came; he prayed while he was governor of the kingdom.—Many persons do not call upon God, unless some chastisement, sickness, anxiety, or sorrow, fall upon them. Then perhaps they will kneel and pray many times a day. But why was it not so in their prosperity? and why will it no longer be so when the trouble is over?—So did not Daniel; he prayed *continually*, both for himself, that God would keep him amid the temptations of his office; and for the Church, that God would have pity on its misery, and raise up Jerusalem again.—So did also the centurion Cornelius at Cæsarea; he "prayed *always*," and God told him by an angel, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God!"

Another lesson for us is in Daniel's *regularity* as well as constancy in prayer.—We are commanded indeed to “pray without ceasing”—to have a constant spirit of prayer; but we are also recommended to have in the day regular times of leaving other occupation in order to seek God in prayer. A real Christian's heart should be full of prayer and praise; when he is alone, when he is walking, when he is working, he may say in his heart: O my God, how good Thou art! Be with me and keep me from evil! Bless all these persons round me! How beautiful are Thy works! “in wisdom hast Thou made them all.” My God, I am going to my work; do Thou, by Thy grace, make me diligent and studious; put far from me every evil thought; strengthen my memory; enable me to satisfy my masters and my parents!—When he is among his friends, he should say, Grant, O my God, that in amusing ourselves together, we may do nothing to displease Thee!—Yes, the Christian should “pray without ceasing,” should have this spirit of prayer; but he should also have times set apart for this holy exercise, just as there are fixed hours for lessons and for meals.—These two habits of a Christian life—I mean the habit of praying without ceasing, and that of praying at certain hours, constancy and regularity—help one another; and without the one, the other will go on badly.—If the Christian fails to give fixed moments to God, and excuses himself by saying, I pray without ceasing; let him know that he will no longer pray without ceasing, if he do not keep up the spirit of prayer by regular devotion.—And should a Christian say, I pray three times a day, and not have the spirit of unceasing prayer, let him know that he will no longer pray three times a day, if he have not the continual spirit of prayer; for then his three prayers will be no longer prayers, they will be wandering, cold, without life and sincerity.—It was a custom with pious Israelites to retire into some solitary place three times a day, to pour out their heart before God; and they willingly chose for this purpose the hours when oblations and sacrifices were commanded to be offered in the Temple, in order to have a more lively remembrance that their worship was accepted only because of the “Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.”—Thus you will see in the ninth chapter of Daniel, that he “presented his supplication before God.....about the time of the evening oblation.”—You will also see in *Psalms* lv. 17, that such was the custom of David.—And in *Acts* x., that such also was the habit of holy men in the New Testament. The brave Cornelius not only prayed continually, but had also regular hours for prayer. The 3rd verse shews him fasting and praying in his

house at the ninth hour (that is at three in the afternoon); and in *verse 9*, we see the holy Apostle Peter going "upon the house-top to pray about the sixth hour," that is at noon.

But we shall find in Daniel's example another rule for our prayers; he prayed *kneeling*. This is the fitting posture for the Christian in prayer. I have known many persons who did not like to kneel down when they prayed; they said there appeared to them something superstitious in the custom. Yet, when Stephen prayed, when Paul prayed, it was on their knees. (See *Acts* vii. 60; and xx, 36; and xxi. 5.) When St. Peter prayed by the bed of the good Dorcas, he was kneeling. (*Acts* ix. 40.) When the great king Solomon prayed solemnly at the dedication of his temple, he was on his knees in the presence of all his people. (1 *Kings* viii. 54.) When his father David, the man after God's heart, prayed, he knelt down. (*Psalms* xcv. 6.) And above all, when our Master prayed, it was on His knees! nay, in Gethsemane He was not only on his knees, but He fell on His face upon the ground!

Lastly, we see that Daniel not only "*prayed*, but *gave thanks*" to God. This is what a Christian should always do, even in time of trial, danger, sorrow, or death (See *Phil.* iv. 6); for a true believer will always have matter of praise to God; and we shall *ask* amiss if we know not how to *thank*. I think I see this venerable old man by his window, not only saying (perhaps) "My God, preserve me, and give me all the strength I shall soon need"; but praising, magnifying, giving thanks to God; "all that was within him blessing His holy Name." Observe one word more in this 10th verse. The Holy Spirit has not only said that Daniel "thanked God," but that he "gave thanks to *his* God," in order to shew us by this simple word, that the blessed old man poured out his heart before God, in the spirit of adoption and religious joy. "O God, Thou art *my* God!" he said, like David in *Psalms* lxxiii. and in many others, *Psalms* xxxi. 14, for instance.

Thus was Daniel praying, when his enemies assembled close to his dwelling, and then went to Darius. Read *verses* 12, 13. The unhappy king saw too late the snare laid for him. He saw that they were determined to destroy his prime minister, he "was sore displeased with himself"; and besides, "he set his heart to deliver him"; he



did all that he could to find some way of saving him from the rigour of this law of persecution, which he himself had been surprised into making. He laboured till sunset, says *verse* 14. But all his endeavours were in vain; these wicked men came again to the king (*verse* 15) and repeated the law of the Medes and Persians, "that no decree nor statute established by the king might be changed." We are here reminded of the wicked priests and rulers at Jerusalem, crying out to Pilate when he said, "Why, what evil hath He done?" "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." These things shew us how much poor kings and rulers need the prayers of God's people in their behalf.

At last the wretched Darius thinks himself obliged to yield. "Daniel is brought and cast into the den of lions." (*Verse* 16.) What must have been the feelings of many Jews in Babylon, who were waiting for the fulfilment of the promises made to their fathers, and who, with the Book of Jeremiah in their hand, were counting with many prayers the seventy years of their captivity? Since seeing the fall of Babylon, according to the announcement of Scripture, they probably looked upon the promotion of Daniel to the government of the new kingdom of the Persians, as the means prepared by God for their deliverance. What a trial then of their faith was the purposed cruel death of their protector! But also, what a striking lesson was the sight of this martyr, this aged Daniel, willing to die, though *not* willing to cease from praying, and acknowledging the hope of Israel, the living and true God! What an example to them! Perhaps some among them, especially among the poorest, had in rash and harsh judgement severely blamed the pious Daniel for consenting to live in an idolatrous court in the midst of luxury. But now, rash men, condemn no longer! Who are you, to judge another's servant? Look at this noble faithful-hearted old man, confronting death because he had continued to pray: go and do likewise! But listen to the king's remarkable words on seeing his decree put into execution: "Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." How comforting to Daniel's faith! "Yes, my God" (he might say in his heart), "one way or other certainly Thou wilt deliver me!" But he is cast into the horrible den, "and a stone was brought" (*verse* 17) "and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet," and also "with the signet of his lords," who probably distrusted Darius, and who would thus hinder "the purpose concerning

Daniel from being changed." The lions were used to be kept without food all day, in order to make them more fierce; but still more to make sure of Daniel's death, he was to be left all night in the den, which was not to be opened till next morning.

My children, this martyrdom has often reminded me of that of another old man, the first bishop of the Church of Antioch, the excellent Ignatius, who was, like Daniel, exposed to the rage of wild beasts at the age of eighty, for the sake of Jesus Christ. He lived in the time of the Apostles, for he was born in Sardinia, five years before the death of our Lord. He was thirty-six years old at the death of St. Paul, and had lived much with the Apostles, especially at Smyrna with St. John; and he was much attached to that good Polycarp, of whom I told you in my last lesson. He was fond of sacred music, and it is said that he introduced among the Eastern Churches the use of chants which alternately reply to one another. (*Antiphonal?*) When the emperor Trajan made his triumphal entry into Antioch, Ignatius appeared before him, and spoke to him of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. "His kingdom!" replied the emperor contemptuously, "the kingdom of the Man who was crucified under Pilate!" "Yes, His kingdom! the kingdom of Him who crucified my sins, and who puts all the malice of Satan under the feet of those who carry Him in their hearts." "Dost thou carry within thee Him who was crucified?" "Yes," replied the old man, "for it is written, I will dwell in them and walk in them." Then the emperor, on the spot, hastened to dictate aloud this decree: "Since Ignatius confesses that He who was crucified is within him, we command that he be transported to Rome, and there thrown amid wild beasts for the amusement of the people." On hearing these words, Ignatius, full of joy, cried out, "I thank Thee, O my God! that Thou hast judged me worthy, like Thine Apostle Paul, to be loaded with chains for Thy holy Name!" Immediately he was put in irons, and given into the charge of ten soldiers, to be led to Rome, all through the empire. Trajan thought that the martyr's long journey would spread terror among all the Christians of Europe and Asia, who looked upon Ignatius as the greatest successor of the Apostles; but God made use of it, on the contrary, to restore courage to those disheartened by persecution. His ship having stayed some days in the port of Smyrna, he had the joy of finding there his beloved Polycarp; and he wrote from thence four letters which are still in existence. At last, when he got to Rome, he was, like St. Paul, given

over to the prefect of the pretorium, who chose for his execution the great day when the people assembled in the amphitheatre of Vespasian (the famous Coliseum) were waiting for the greatest combats of gladiators. In the morning the martyr, kneeling down in the presence of his keepers, and addressing, like Stephen, Jesus Christ, entreated Him to bless His Church, to unite all His people in love, and to put a stop to the persecution. He was at once dragged into the arena. On his entrance into this immense Coliseum, he saw all its stages filled with a multitude of spectators, estimated at 89,000, rising row above row to more than the height of some church steeples. The lions then were let loose, and having been kept without food they were furious, and in a moment the old man was devoured! But his example remains for ever; and by his faith, though dead, he yet speaketh!

Such also, dear children, was Daniel: for we must return to our two old men; I mean to the aged king Darius going back in the evening to his palace without Daniel, and to this venerable prophet cast by his order into the den of lions. Can you fancy this unhappy Darius? What a humiliating and lamentable day? What a gloomy and fearful night! He recalls Daniel's noble conduct, his gentleness, his wise counsels, his disinterested affection, and above all his holiness, his elevation of soul, his faithfulness to his God, whom he "serveth continually." (*Verse 20.*) Could he sleep on his couch while the prophet is lying in the den, his bones breaking by the lion's teeth? Could he find pleasure in the music of his palace? And must he not also fear that powerful God of vengeance, who announced the death of Belshazzar and the ruin of his kingdom, on the wall of the banquet-hall? He could neither eat nor sleep; his night must have been passed in the anguish of terror and remorse. "Then he arose very early in the morning" (*verse 19*), he will go himself to the mouth of the den; and when he came near, "he cried unto Daniel with a lamentable voice"; he has not lost all hope; Daniel was so nobly faithful to his God, and the God of Daniel is so powerful! Observe, in Daniel's answer to the king, that he attributes his deliverance entirely to his God. "He has shut the lion's mouths." (*Verse 22.*) The Bible sets the Name of God on all that is done. It was by His Will that bears devoured the children who mocked Elisha; it was also by His Will that the lion's mouths were shut in favour of Daniel, and opened again to devour his enemies. St. Paul, in *Heb.* xi. 33, alludes to this deliverance of Daniel, through faith by the power of God.

This power rules the most savage instinct of animals, sometimes opening the mouth to devour a disobedient prophet (1 *Kings* xiii. 24), sometimes shutting it to redeem the life of a faithful one. But how should we understand these words of Daniel, "innocency was found in me before God?" Do you think that Daniel may have been one of those who say they have no sin? No; for there is none that sinneth not; and you know besides that Daniel makes the most humble confession of his sins in his ninth chapter. Why, then, is it that we hear sometimes in the Bible the servants of God justifying themselves? It is not that they want to establish their own righteousness before God; but that when they are falsely accused, it is right to defend themselves.—Doubtless; and in such cases it would not be humility to believe themselves guilty.—"The king was exceeding glad;" it is always a cause of joy when we see God repair our errors, fight against evil, and bring good out of it. Well it is for us to know that God rules over all and everywhere; and that He can help in extreme misery, even as He saved Daniel in the lion's den.

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## LESSON XXI.

### DANIEL VI. 25-27.

DARIUS returned to his palace, and published this wonderful decree; what words to be used by a heathen king, a fire-worshipper, one of those terrible Medes, come down from the mountains into the kingdom of Babylon!—But we cease to wonder at this language, if we remember all that had happened before; the hand which came forth from the wall at Belshazzar's feast, the interpretation of Daniel proved true that very night; the den of lions out of which this Daniel was taken, and "no manner of hurt found upon him, because he believed in his God"; his accusers cast into this same den, and devoured—how must all these things have spread through the empire the fame of Daniel's God! what a witness to the religion of the still captive Jews! What a light poured over the vast eastern world by these miracles! For we must not forget, that at this time (it is believed) came from China to Babylon the great Confucius, to prepare his book for the Chinese; and

the great Zoroaster from Bokhara, also to prepare his Zend-Avesta, and to reform the religion of the Magi, from the Tigris to India; at the same time that the West sent there Thales, Pythagoras, and Solon. All this is enough to explain the language of Darius, surprising as it appears.—The fame of Daniel still remains in our days, on the desolate banks of the Euphrates, in the midst of the ruins of Babylon.—It is a fact well worthy of attention, and which was lastly attested to me by a worthy officer in the English navy, just returned from a two years' residence in those countries. The name of Daniel, and the story of the den of lions, are still, he told me, remembered by the people; the only indestructible monument of Chaldea. Babylon, the golden city, "the hammer of the whole earth," has been broken like a potter's vessel! (*Isaiah xxx. 14.*) But what alone has not perished in its ruins is the name of Daniel. This officer, who commanded in 1835 the "Nitocris" and the "Nimrod" in their hazardous expedition up the Euphrates and Tigris, from the Persian Gulf to far beyond Bagdad, said to me: "The Arabs of the country led us over the ruins of Babylon, and then showed us the place where Daniel was taken to be devoured." These ignorant men knew nothing else. All the great conquerors, famous in Babylon and in the world at large—Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Xerxes, Alexander, Trajan, Severus, Julian, even Tamerlane—all are forgotten, but Daniel is remembered; and his name still glorifies, in those deserted plains, the living and true God.

I will first explain the decree of Darius; you need not be surprised if the first monarch of this new empire is here (*verse 25*) called Darius, while by the Greek historians he is named Cyaxares. It was the custom for kings to have two or three names, of which one pointed out their race, another their dignity, another their person. Thus the first Roman Emperor, who came from Veletri, and whose family name was Octavius, had he not two other names?—He is called in the Bible sometimes Cæsar, sometimes Augustus.—And his successor and adopted son, whose family name would have been Claudius—he was called sometimes Cæsar, sometimes Tiberius.—Well! in the same way, the old king of the Medes was called sometimes Cyaxares, and sometimes Darius. He was uncle and father-in-law to Cyrus, and was at this time sixty-three years old.—Struck by the miracle done in his sight, he wished to proclaim the glory of the God of the Jews to all the parts of his vast dominion, which contained many distinct nationalities, united only by force; and amongst these nationalities were many different people and languages:

that is why the decree of Darius is addressed to "all people, nations, and languages."—But when he adds, "that dwell in all the earth," he exaggerates; for after all, his kingdom, though far extended, did not include the whole globe. But, alas! this foolish way of speaking is natural to us, and is a common weakness of people, found in all nations and in all ranks.—He then says, "Peace be multiplied unto you!" It was in all times customary for kings when addressing their people to speak at first gently, in order to make them more obedient. One cannot blame them for so doing; it is even to be wished that all authority of man over man were exercised in a mild manner. Inferiors should always be spoken to with consideration, to shew them the account we make of them, and the good we wish them. Politeness becomes every one, small and great. By it those in a lower rank are disposed to look favourably on those whom God has placed in a higher one. Besides, remember that politeness is a Christian virtue, recommended to us towards all (1 *St. Peter* ii. 17), but especially towards Christians, for it is one of the fruits of brotherly love. (*Rom.* xii. 10.) It is most particularly enjoined on the young in their intercourse with one another. (1 *St. Peter* v. 5, 6.) Darius then wishes that "peace may be multiplied" to his subjects. "Peace," (in Hebrew, *Shalom*; in Chaldean, *Shêlam*; in Arabic, *Salem*;) is the expression used still by Orientals at this day. The Latins said *Ave* when they met, and *Vale* when they parted; and the Greeks, *Khairé*, (which means "Joy be with thee.") This was the word used by Lysias to Felix (*Acts* xxiii. 26); by this word Jesus greeted the Marys (*St. Matt.* xxviii. 9), and by this word the angel saluted the mother of the Saviour. (*St. Luke* i. 28.) The modern Greeks still say *Khairé*, and the modern Orientals *Salem*, so that if you were to go now to the Levant, you would hear the Arabs everywhere greet you with (just like Darius to his subjects) *Salem Aleika—peace be with you*; and it is from those words that we call *Salamaleks*, the low bows we are taught to make after the manner of the Orientals. But now tell me what men who speak French say when they first meet.—They say, "Sir, I salute you."—Certainly, that is a good wish; since it means, Sir, I wish you salvation! It would be well, when meeting our neighbour in the street, to think of all the meaning of this word, and say in our heart, O my God, bless through Jesus Christ that person passing near me! May that immortal soul be saved.

I proceed to *verse* 26. A delicate question here arises, which we should like to be able to answer before going farther. Had Darius

really felt the power of truth? Was his heart changed by the Holy Spirit? Had he profited by his intercourse with Daniel, so as to give himself up to the Almighty? In a word, was he converted? Some think not, because nothing in the history of this prince leads us to suppose that either he or his subjects had given up the worship of idols. But we must remember that Darius and his Medes worshipped no idols; for their religion, that of the Magi and Zoroaster, admitted the unity of God, and abhorred, like the Mahometans of the present time, the worship of images. Certainly nothing is revealed to us of Darius like the confession of Nebuchadnezzar, humbling himself before his people after his illness, and acknowledging his nothingness with an uprightness which could scarcely find place but in a regenerate heart.—Nevertheless, it would be wrong to say that we could not consider the king of a great dominion to be a child of God, unless he had reformed the religion of his people. How should Darius set about the work, except by declaring from his throne the convictions of his heart? Reform cannot be accomplished by force.—But after all, nothing can be affirmed of Darius's piety one way or other.—Nevertheless, it is only too probable that this prince, admiring Daniel, and deeply moved by the miracles he saw, may have proclaimed his convictions, without thereby renouncing his former sins, and without crying to God for mercy. It is easier to give religious commands, than to submit ourselves, our hearts and lives, to them. But "Woe," said Jesus Christ, "to those who say and do not." It is therefore very possible that Darius only admired the miracle at the den of lions, without troubling himself to rule his life according to God's commandments: his inconsistency is only too natural!—Many think themselves Christians because they admire the biblical doctrine of the sinner's justification by faith; many others also, because, seeing either the fulfilment of prophecy, or the wonderful change worked in the world by Christ's religion, they admit the divinity of Scripture. But conviction is not conversion; admiration is not faith.—Conviction, like admiration, takes hold of man's reason only; conversion, like faith, seizes the whole man—conscience, will, heart.—We must not attribute too much to miracles: what is it which alone can change the heart?—The Gospel, or good news of salvation by grace, received by a true faith. What does St. Paul say in *Romans* i. 16? By what then is man saved? By the power of God. What instrument does He employ? The Gospel. And do you remember what the Apostle Peter said on this subject at the Council at Jerusalem? (*Acts* xv. 9.) Who purifies the heart, and

by what means? Has not Jesus Christ Himself told us of the insufficiency of miracles to change the heart? What did He say in the Parable of the Rich Man? (*St. Luke* xvi. 31.) Remember, then, that you might have seen many miracles, and read many books in favour of Christianity, without their sufficing to make you a true Christian. We must, as it were, drink Christianity. If you were ill in bed, and close to your pillow was placed a wonderfully good medicine, would that be all that was wanted?—I must also be convinced of the goodness of the remedy.—But would that conviction be enough? I must also drink it.—Yes, dear children, this remedy, the blood of Jesus Christ, we must drink it. We must drink the Gospel by faith: faith is the *heart's* accepting it, the hand of the soul which lays hold of Jesus Christ. (*St. John* vi. 34.) Nevertheless, we must own, whatever opinion we may form of Darius, that there was certainly something noble in these resolutions, taken on the throne, by a king and master of Babylon. For my part, I think that God made use of this decree to call many heathens to the study of Holy Scripture, and to enliven the faith of the Jews in all the countries where their conquerors had scattered them. But also I like to think that by this decree God was preparing the aged Darius for greater light at his approaching end; and that it was in eternal mercy that He had thus given him the friendship of a man whom the Holy Spirit compares to Noah and to Job. Darius, in his intercourse with such a friend, might find the way to eternal life before he breathed his last, which he did the following year.

Let us go on with the decree.—“The God of Daniel.”—Many have thought that by these words Darius expressed the idea that every nation might have its own God, although the highest rank belonged to Jehovah. Certainly, if it were true that he thought so, he was in grievous error. God rejects it with horror: “He is jealous.”—He will not share His glory. The Emperors of Rome would have often willingly adored Jesus Christ in their Pantheon (or temple of all gods) together with Jupiter. But we have no Pantheon in the Christian Church; we admit into our worship one God only in Three Persons; and we say that if Jesus Christ is *God*, those who reject His Divinity blaspheme; just as, if He were *not* God, those who adore Him would be idolaters.

“Men should *tremble* and *fear* before the God of Daniel.”—Again in these words it seems as if this poor king spoke like a heathen who



only knew God in His justice and terrible judgements, without having yet learned to love Him. Doubtless, we may say that God ought to be feared, since a right fear of Him is the beginning of wisdom" (*Psalm* iii. 10); but have I not told you that there are two kinds of fear?—There is the fear of slaves, and that of sons; that of devils, and that of Christians.—Yes, that of slaves, who fear punishment; and that of sons, who fear doing not enough: that of devils, who "believe and tremble," because they have no Saviour; and that of Christians, who believe and love, because they have a Saviour. These last fear always not loving Him enough.—The ancient heathen, learned or unlearned, never knew the love of God; they never spoke nor even thought of it.—To fear the gods was their religion, but never to love them. When they thought themselves good, they proudly fancied that their god owed them his favour; and when they felt themselves bad, they tried at most to appease him, if possible, by sufferings and sacrifices. And as for modern heathens, read the accounts of those who have visited them in their forests, or in their towns; what do they find everywhere?—"Fear and trembling," as Darius said.—Yes, everywhere, as St. Paul said (*Heb.* ii. 15), the devil, through fear of death and its dreadful consequences, keeps men all their lifetime in a spirit of slavery. Their gods are revengeful, wicked, and terrible: they have large mouths, long teeth, collars of human skulls, haggard eyes, and sometimes four hands, one holding a sword, another a death's head hanging by the hair. Their worshippers seek only to appease them, and they are appeased only by cruelty. (*See Micah* vi. 6, 7.)—On the other hand, in great contrast, but from the same cause, our civilized modern unbelievers have not even this fear, except perhaps at the hour of death; most often they do not trouble themselves about God, or their soul, or future judgement; but because they live amidst the Church of Christ, from which the sweet sound of the Gospel reaches them, which they hear without understanding it; they can well imagine a God who pardons, but without atonement, and without regeneration; a God all mildness, without justice or hatred of evil. But this is not the God of the Bible, which tells us of a Being whom we must fear, and yet whom we can love. (*See Exodus* xxxiv. 7.) "Who persuaded you to become a Christian?" an American naval captain asked the old king Pomare; who replied, "The missionaries of Christ have alone been able to shew me a God both of justice and mercy. Before they came, when I thought of a *just* God, I said to myself, Pomare is then lost, for Pomare is a sinner! And when I thought of Him as a

*Saviour* only, I said, He has then no holiness nor justice, for Pomare is a sinner!"

I will finish the explanation of the decree.—Darius adds his reason for his command: "for He is the *living* God!" This expression is very remarkable from the mouth of a Mede!—God calls Himself so in His Holy Word, because this name separates Him from all created beings. He will be called the "God who lives," and also the "God who is," (that is what the word Jehovah means;) because He alone is living in Himself; and He alone has being in Himself; so that all that *lives*, lives only by Him, and that all that *is*, by Him only exists.—A stone is a stone only because God *is*; and an archangel *lives* only because God *lives*. (See *Acts* xvii. 28; also *St. John* i. 1–4.) Jesus Christ Himself, in order to attest His eternal Godhead, was careful to say, in *Rev.* i. 8, 18, not only, "I live," and not only "I am," but, "I am He that liveth," and, "I am He that is, and was, and is to come."—Darius adds farther, "He is steadfast for ever." All passes away and changes; the earth, the sky, and even the sun which the Medes worshipped: it will be extinguished, "the heavens shall be folded up and shall perish;" but "God remaineth for ever," and "His years shall not fail."—Darius, probably, in saying, "His kingdom shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end," alluded to the revelations already given in Nebuchadnezzar's vision in chap. ii.; and probably, also, Daniel had related to him that which he had seen seventeen years before, and of which he tells us in chap. vii. What did we read in chap. ii. 44? That "the God of Heaven should set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed, and which should stand for ever."—And what is said in chap. vii. 14, after Daniel saw "the Son of Man coming on the clouds"?—That "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and that His kingdom shall not be destroyed."

Listen now to the last words of Darius's decree—*verse* 27.—Darius knew all the miracles done in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and those also in the night of the fall of Babylon; but that which gives him special pleasure to make known to "all people, nations, and languages," is this last deliverance of Daniel.

## LESSON XXII.

## DANIEL VI. 28.

BEFORE explaining this verse, which sums up the career of Daniel, I wish, in order to complete it, to read to you what Josephus says of it. This Jewish historian, who lived in the time of the Apostles, had carefully studied the antiquities of his nation; for he was a priest, and had commanded an army of 100,000 Israelites in that frightful war against the Romans in which Jerusalem fell. In the tenth book, chapter twelfth, of his *History of the Jews*, he writes: "After the enemies of Daniel had been punished as we have related, Darius caused to be proclaimed throughout all his dominions that the God of Daniel was the only true and all-powerful God; and he raised Daniel to such a height of honour, that no one could doubt that he was his greatest favourite in the whole empire. His being raised to such glory, and his extraordinary favour with God, were looked upon with admiration. He caused to be built in Ecbatana, the capital of Media, a superb palace, still existing, and appearing as if only recently finished, from retaining so much of its original splendour, while, usually, time tarnishes the beauty of buildings, and they grow old like men. In this palace is the burial place of the kings of Media, Persia, and Parthia; and its guardianship is still committed to a priest of our nation. Nothing is more wonderful in this great prophet than his special and almost incredible good fortune above all other men, to have been honoured by kings and people during his life, and to have left an imperishable memory after his death. The books which he wrote, and which are still read to us, shew us that God Himself spoke to him, and that he has not only foretold in general, things future, like other prophets, but that he has even marked the times when they must come to pass!"....."This great prophet, (continues Josephus, after speaking of the predictions in *Daniel* viii.) was also acquainted with the Roman empire, and with the extreme desolation to which it would reduce our country. God had presented all these things to his mind, and he left them in writing.....in order to confute the error of the Epicureans, who think that God does not interfere with things here below. For if the world were governed by chance, as they say, how could it be that we should see the fulfilment of these prophecies of Daniel?" Thus spoke Josephus, eighteen hundred years ago; and if he were living in our days how much more would he not say of them? There are thus, then, like *two* men in Daniel—the man of history and

the man of prophecy ; and it would be hard to say which is the most eminent, the one being not the less incomparable among princes and saints than the other among prophets. If instead of being in the world a state governor, and in the Church an equal to Noah and Job, Daniel had been only a man without influence, he would still rank highly among the writers of the Old Testament, by the number, method, and divine clearness of his prophecies, as also by their striking fulfilment, which even in the time of Josephus already impressed the seal of God upon Daniel's book in the sight of all the people. And, on the other hand, if he had never spoken a single prediction, he would still be one of the greatest men in history, by his influence upon his times, as well as by his heroism and genius. His holiness, which began in childhood, led him to face martyrdom in old age ; he was the support of Israel throughout his life ; and this long captivity of the Jews, which began in his own person, was to end by his credit as a friend of the greatest monarchs of his time, and as governor of a third of their empire.

This is doubtless what Holy Scripture would in few words recall to us in our to-day's lesson ; let us begin by taking in all the meaning of this verse. You doubtless remember that Daniel had been taken to Babylon in the year 606 B.C. when he was not more than fifteen or seventeen years old ; and that it was in the year 538 that Darius became, by the taking of Babylon, the first king of the new kingdom of the Medes and Persians.—What age, then, was the prophet at that time ?—About eighty-three or eighty-five.—Cyrus began his reign in the year 536, two years after the taking of Babylon, and hastened to proclaim the decree to restore Jerusalem.—How old was Daniel then ? About eighty-five or eighty-seven.—It was, then, in this year 536 that the pious men among the Jews returned to Jerusalem, after seventy years of humiliation and sorrow.—Certainly, it would be one of the most extraordinary events in history, if it did not relate to this miraculous nation. What a memorable thing was this restoration of the Jews after such a long annihilation ! for they arose, as it were, from the grave ! Who could have believed it beforehand, except by faith in prophecy ? Had not the ten tribes been transported into Assyria one hundred and thirty-three years before ? Were they returned ? Who ever saw a whole nation, after going away from their father's country, return there after three generations—after the land had become desolate and the cities burnt down ? Remember, dear

children, that those among the Jews of your age, going with their parents to this unknown land, could not even have heard anything about it from their grandfathers of seventy years old; for these very grandfathers had been born in Babylon, and the great-grandfathers alone could have seen Jerusalem. Let us read Ezra's account of this wonderful journey. (i. 5.) This small nation, numbering under 50,000 persons, set out, under the guidance of Joshua the priest, and Zerubbabel the governor, a descendant of David; 200 sacred singers enlivened their march, while more than 8000 animals carried the children and baggage. But we must read also in Ezra, how at the approach of the seventh month all these persons assembled in Jerusalem like one man, to begin anew the solemn worship of Jehovah. We must see Joshua and Zerubbabel, when they had rebuilt the altar, offer to God the sacrifices interrupted for seventy years, and celebrate with strong feeling the solemn Feast of Tabernacles. We must follow them also, in the second year, when they laid the foundations of the Temple; while the priests, clothed with their ephod, and sounding their trumpets, answered one another in songs of praise, repeating after each verse, that "the Lord is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever!" while the people "shouted with joy," "because the foundation of the Lord's House was laid."—See also *Psalms* cxxvi.

Now Daniel was still living during these happy days, and you can imagine that his heart was full of holy joy; for he had full time before his death to receive these delightful tidings from Jerusalem.—He was at that time either in Ecbatana, or in Babylon, with his friend the great Cyrus, who probably still consulted him on the affairs of his kingdom; but Daniel being too aged to be able to return into his fathers' land, waited, like Abraham, for the blessed resurrection—"the better and heavenly country," "the city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."—In the meantime, he was doubtless prompt in using, for the good of his brethren, his high favour with Cyrus, of which this last verse of our chapter speaks; seeing to the execution of the royal decree, that nothing should be wanting, and that Mithredath, the treasurer, should deliver unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, all the sacred vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had put in the temple of Bel.—We read also, in Daniel's tenth chapter, that he was living "in the third year of Cyrus," (that is, two years after the restoration of the Jews,) and that he then received from God the clearest and most wonderful revelations.

But now listen, while I shew you how wonderful are God's ways with His Church : first, in preserving her in the midst of the overthrow of nations ; secondly, in preparing her deliverance at the very time of chastisement ; thirdly, in making many events concur for that purpose with the exactness of a clock ; and lastly, in bringing this deliverance out of the most hopeless circumstances.—It has been justly remarked, that never, in the long course of ages, was there so great an overthrow of empires, as during the six hundred years between Daniel and Jesus Christ.—All nations were like the ocean, tossed by the four winds of heaven ; and out of this tempest arose four great monarchies : but in what condition was the Church ?—She was like the little ship which St. Mark describes on the Sea of Tiberias, when “ there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was full ; ” the Apostles cried out in despair, and yet Jesus was sleeping in the stern. Yes, the Church, at that time, might appear, both to friends and enemies, on the point of sinking. But what power had all these storms ? Jesus Christ was in the ship, and the ship could not perish ! Instead of being swallowed up, she saw her most cruel enemies, who had often threatened her destruction, sink one after another. During these six hundred years, she saw all nations four times overthrown ; that Chaldean empire, which had transported her, perished in one night ; that other often hostile empire of the Medes and Persians gave way to that of the Greeks, which was a greater persecutor than the two former, and was subdued by the blows of the Romans ; but even that power—more terrible than all the rest, and which for three hundred years caused the blood of saints to flow in torrents—was broken into ten parts by the blows of the Barbarians ; for those who fight against the Lamb shall be overcome by the Lamb.—See *Rev.* xvii. 14.—But to keep to Daniel's days : was there ever anything to be compared to the desolation of the Church under the Babylonish captivity ? It was not merely a subjection, as in the time of the Philistines ; but the destruction of the country, the burning of the Temple, the transportation of the people, the abolition of their sacrifices, the cessation of their public worship !—Nevertheless, not only did the Lord preserve His Church while trampled on by Chaldea, but for her sake He overthrew that haughty Babylon, and caused even the royal conquerors to proclaim the praise of God ; in short, in the few words of our text, He made Daniel to prosper in the reigns of Cyrus and Darius.

This, then, is my *first* reflection, God upholds His Church in the midst of the greatest troubles. And this is my *second*: He is often already preparing the deliverance of His people at the very time of their chastisement. This is a soothing thought; do not forget it, dear children, when the hour of sorrow comes to you; for mark well, that what I am here saying of the Church, applies to each member of it. See how the truth of this thought is strikingly shewn in the history of our Prophet! Do you not observe, that while on the one hand the anger of God was crushing Jerusalem, on the other, His mercy was at the same time placing under its ruins a germ of restoration and of blessing? This germ was Daniel.—God set him apart at Jerusalem, seventy years beforehand, and even in the day of His wrath, for the day of His deliverance; when Daniel prospered under Darius and Cyrus.

But now listen to my *third* reflection: that the wonderful ways of God are farther shewn in this history, by the concurrence of numerous events in the deliverance of the Church, with the regularity of a clock. The youngest among you may understand what I mean; for it is simply that the over-ruling power of God is like the sure and regular going of a watch. Have you ever followed, for twelve hours, the three hands of a watch which shews the *moments*? If now, at noon, you were to observe them carefully till midnight, and were to mark with a pen upon the face of the watch, all the places where they crossed one another; you would see them following, getting before, rejoining each other, and during those twelve hours passing 1,452 times one over the other, on always different points. But at midnight you would see that the watch-maker has made the three hands to move in such exact relation with the movements of the sky, that at the very moment when the sun crossing the meridian of our antipodes, marks for them the middle of the day; and for us the middle of the night, our three travellers, the hands, still going on, will then, for the first time, pass all three over the same line at the same moment.—Well! God is the supreme Clock-maker of ages, the Ancient of days. This world is under His power like an immense but perfect clock, which bearing on its dial-plate millions of hands, makes them reach their meridian at the same instant, although each has its independent action, according to its wheel-work and employment. The feelings of nations, the accidents of nature, the wills of high and low, of good and bad—all these hands, after having crossed one another thousands of times in

apparently infinite confusion, will nevertheless arrive at one and the same point, when the hour is come for accomplishing God's Will, and the predictions of His Word.—Is not this a very comforting as well as a very grand thought? God has created the fixed stars for the reckoning of centuries; the moon, for that of months and weeks; the sun, for that of years, days, and hours. But it is with the same exactness, though by different means, that He makes the hands of this world move, and that He brings to their terminus the events of the earth, as well as those of the firmament.—“O Lord! my times are in Thy Hand!” said king David. See, for instance, in this story of the lion's den, with what precision, and marvellous concurrence of unexpected circumstances, the Almighty brought about the deliverance of His chosen people, and the restoration of Jerusalem.—Let one of you recall to us, what He had promised by Jeremiah concerning this deliverance.—That it should come to pass at the end of seventy years. Thus then the seventieth year was in God's plan the meridian of the clock, and the millions of hands moved by His Providence, were all at that time to meet there. But think, nevertheless, how unlikely this great event must have appeared at the beginning of the year in which Babylon fell. It was near the appointed time. How many years had passed between the captivity of Daniel and the fall of this empire? I mean between the years 606 and 538 b.c.—Sixty-eight years.—Yes; then with what lively expectation must the believing Jews have been counting the time, and longing to see the end of it. Perhaps even the children, who were carefully taught the Holy Scriptures, might ask, “Whence will come the deliverance promised by the prophets? What year may we expect it, and from what date shall we count the seventy years? Jerusalem has been taken three times by Nebuchadnezzar, and three times have our fathers been transported; from which period shall we reckon the days of our desolation? Besides, though oppressed by the Chaldeans, what can we expect from the Medes and Persians when they shall conquer as Daniel has foretold? People say that they come down from their mountains more blood-thirsty than the bears of their forests. Shall we escape, when we become their prey? Who will plead our cause, and make them pity us? Ah! we shall then only change masters, and perhaps the last will be more unmerciful than the others have been!”

But now—what had God done? The hour of Babylon's fall had struck; all the events of the war which the Persians were making



against her, had concurred to bring about in one night her ruin, like a tempest; but the Lord had ordained that in the midst of this tempest Daniel should be seen and heard.—You know how: although forgotten for twelve years in Babylon, he is to denounce its fall at the banquet of the king, and in the very night when its ruin is to be accomplished; for the time when the queen asked for him was, without his knowledge, that when the Persian squadrons were descending into the bed of the Euphrates which they had dried up.—Here then is Daniel raised to fame in one night, and to be, the next morning, governor over one hundred and twenty princes! But this was not all; for God, in order to raise him still higher in the esteem of the Medes, and thus to bring about the deliverance of His people at the time foretold by Jeremiah, worked a fresh prodigy, in order to heighten the respect already paid to him. To that end, again observe how many good and evil wills must concur: how many hands and wheels move in the complicated machinery of this great clock: the great men of the kingdom who plotted, the king taken by surprise, the impious decree proclaimed, Daniel obliged to break the law of the kingdom in what concerned the law of God, his condemnation permitted by the king, his being cast into the den secured by a great stone and the seals of the king and his lords, the lions changed into lambs for that night, Daniel telling the king next morning that God had sent His angel and had shut the lions' mouths.—So then, at the very time when the Medes and Persians were following up their victories, Daniel was raised to the right hand of the throne, in order to deliver Israel! Darius hastened to proclaim another decree commanding all his people to reverence the God of Daniel; and soon afterwards, Cyrus issued that ever-memorable edict, (which Isaiah had announced two hundred years beforehand,) and of which we may read the remarkable words in *Ezra* i. 1, 2.—Tell me then, one of you, what was our *third* reflection on this miracle in the den of lions?—That the seventieth year was going to strike on the world-clock, and that God was making all the hands, by His Providence, meet at this point.—Yes, dear children, and therefore let us always rely upon the God of promises; and let *Him* govern the world; let us not be uneasy at being only the *hands* that move.

But I have one more reflection to make; that God, in preparing a deliverance for His people, is pleased, in order to render it more striking, to make it arise out of the most hopeless circumstances.—What a trial to the faith of the poor Jews at Babylon, must have been the condemna-

tion to death of that Daniel, by whom they hoped for great things ! In a few months they expected deliverance, since God had promised it, and that, besides, Daniel was at the head of the government. Would not the conquering kings who had raised *him* so high, consider his nation ? What had he said himself, in his ninth chapter, *verses* 1-3 ?—But now a persecution had fallen suddenly upon them, and upset all their hopes : an order of the king forbidding their worship of God ; and Daniel cast into the den of lions ! What a terrible night for them ! Truly so, and yet it was the happiest event for them ; their deliverance arose from it, and it was thus that God answered Daniel's "prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." He came out of the den more loved and venerated than ever by Darius ; and before the year had past, Cyrus said to the waste places of Judah, "Be inhabited ! and to Jerusalem, Be rebuilt !" —Such are God's ways : He wounds, and He heals ; He thinks good to make His people sink low, before raising them high. See *Deut.* xxxii. 39, 40.—For instance, behold the Church, the Apostles and disciples, on the very eve of our Saviour's resurrection, in fear and despair ! They had seen Him crucified, dead, and buried, on the Friday ; but on the Sunday, when Mary came "very early in the morning" to His grave, (like Darius to the den,) Jesus was not there, but had risen from it, and was again seen by His disciples, before He ascended "to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God ;" and "because He lives they shall live also."—For another instance, the Church, three hundred years afterwards, passed from a den of lions to a glorious deliverance. The most dreadful of all the persecutions of the Christians, began on Easter Day, 303 A.D., in the imperial city of Nicomedia, by the execution of twenty thousand of them ; and from Egypt to England, from the Euphrates to the Tagus, the whole Roman Empire was inundated with their blood after frightful tortures. At Rome, in the great Circus, the people cried out twelve times, "Let the Christians be put to death !" and twelve times also did the Emperor reply from his throne, "Let there be no Christians left !" And in fact, this work of destruction appeared so universally accomplished, that medals were struck, and columns erected, with this inscription, "In memory of the extinction of the Christian name." And so it was thought to be—when, all at once, the Church arose, like Daniel out of his den, calm and majestic.—The Emperor Constantine, in the year 313 A.D., having publicly renounced the worship of false gods, and subdued all his enemies, calling on the Name of Christ, entered, as a Christian, into the City of Rome, recalled the exiles,

rebuilt the places of Christian worship, abolished idols, founded schools everywhere, and caused the Saviour's Name to be adored even in the palaces and temples of Rome.—Here you see (as at Babylon) the decree of this new Darius arose from out of a den of lions, into which so many Daniels of each sex, age, and rank had been cast.

Now then, to conclude this lesson, let us apply this thought to ourselves. Yes, dear children, if it should please God to send you some great sorrow; if those of you who have hitherto had the inestimable happiness of having parents still living, were to see them laid in the grave; then let them recall this story of Daniel; to-day cast into the den of lions, to-morrow delivered from it; and afterwards hearing the decree for the re-building of Jerusalem; "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Remember then, young Christians, that if your parents are true Israelites, "their bodies are indeed dead, because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." (*Rom. viii. 10.*)—If it is a Christian for whom you mourn, he is not dead; he is in the lions' den, but God is even there *his* God; not a hair of his head shall perish, and no hurt shall be found on him, because he believed in his God.—And it is not a king like the aged Darius, who waits for him in the morning; no, it is the King of all kings, the Redeemer Jesus Christ, Who expects him, at the dawn of the everlasting day: his body was "sown in corruption, but shall be raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, but raised in power; sown in dishonour but raised in glory." (*1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.*) Oh! then, what a deliverance! If you could see it by anticipation, such as it will be, you would rejoice; and when you in the cemetery visit the grave where rests your beloved mother, or your honoured father, you would (like Darius) hear a voice from the tomb, saying, "My child, seek no longer the living among the dead! thou sheddest tears, and thou doest well; but my God will wipe away all mine: thou puttest on the dress of mourning, and thou doest well; but my God will clothe me for ever with light and joy!"

I have now finished, dear children, the history of Daniel; greater things, the visions of God, claim our attention. From next Sunday, we shall begin the prophecies which continue to the end of the Book of Daniel.

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## LESSON XXIII.

## DANIEL VII. 1-3.

WE are now to begin studying the farther revelations which were made to Daniel. Let us, my dear children, in silent reverence listen to *God* in them! as did Daniel, for he says that his "spirit was troubled in his body," while the angel of God made him "know the interpretation of the things." (*Verses* 15, 16.) I expect, then, your most serious attention; and I promise you that the youngest among you will be able to understand me, if they know how to listen. Did you not all, during our lessons on the second chapter, at last understand the vision of Nebuchadnezzar?—Yes.—Well, I am also sure that you will not have more trouble with that of Daniel.—I will to-day explain only the three first verses of this seventh chapter; and I think that the knowledge which you have already gained of the *four monarchies* will prevent the need of *long* explanations.

*Verse* 1.—"The first year of Belshazzar!" How so? Are we then gone backwards twenty years? We were, last Sunday, in the last years of King Darius, the conqueror of Babylon, and even in the first days of Cyrus; and now we are transported to the *beginning* of Belshazzar's reign, the *end* of which was told us two chapters back! Have you thought that perhaps there was some confusion here?—No. Why not?—Because God would have us first know all the *life* of Daniel before studying his visions.—Doubtless; and we ought to admire the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in the alternate arrangement of narration and prophecy.—You remember what I was saying to you some weeks ago on the necessity, in order to understand prophecies, of having an accurate knowledge of the times when they were declared. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, before relating to us the various revelations granted to Daniel, willed to begin in the first six chapters, by setting before us the contemporary history. For instance, in what year is it said that Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream the course of empires?—In the "second year of his reign."—And in what year are we told that Daniel, in his turn, saw this same course of empires, under the image of four ferocious beasts?—In the "first year of Belshazzar."—Then since we know that Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-three years after the death of his father—that is to say, nearly forty-one years after his terrible dream—and that we know also, that Belshazzar did not become king till after seven years of war and misfortune, you see that

forty-eight or forty-nine years had passed away between the dream of the king and that of the prophet. (I hope you have not lost the table of dates which I made you copy some weeks ago.) When Nebuchadnezzar had his vision of the statue, Daniel, his young captive, had been in Babylon only two and a half years, and might be from eighteen to twenty years old; but when he saw the four beasts in a dream, forty-eight long years had passed over him.—What age was he then?—Sixty-six or sixty-eight.—Yes; and at this time Nebuchadnezzar, his protector and friend, had for nearly eight years been dead. The wretched Evil-Merodach, who succeeded him, had had time to experience numerous reverses, and to die in battle; the young Belshazzar therefore was king, and was to reign for seventeen years longer.—It appears, then, that Daniel for eight years had lived in retirement, after having been for nearly half a century employed in the government of Babylon. Probably many of the Jews were grieved to see their prophet put down from the high position in which he could protect them in their captivity; but doubtless Daniel did not allow himself to regret it. A true servant of God will not grieve either at the lowliness or the eminence of the post in which God has placed him: he will only be anxious to prove himself faithful in it.—Such a one will never be forgotten by God his Master.—You recollect that, after twenty-five years of privacy, when the time was come for Daniel's return into public life, the old Queen Nitocris remembered him, and sent for him in the middle of the night; and he was soon appointed, with two others, to preside over the vast empire of the Medes and Persians!

“Daniel had a dream,” not one of those fancies which sometimes frighten us in sleep; there was something extraordinary and undoubtedly divine in this dream, as in that which forty-eight years before had so terrified Nebuchadnezzar: “then he wrote the dream,” for the generations to come, “and told the sum of the matters.”—What does this word sum or summary mean?—We call thus the abstract of a chapter or a book.—Yes; and in a narration it means the short account of an event of which the principal things only are related.—Let us listen to this summary. *Verses 2, 3.*—“Daniel spake, I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”—Before going farther, I wish to ask if any one of you can tell me why the Holy Spirit, who had made known to Nebuchadnezzar the succession of the four great empires, shews

again, so long afterwards, the picture under a new form.—I have told you the reason, but so many weeks ago, that I want to make sure that you remember it. Have I not told you that the history of a nation is composed of two sets of facts, which cannot be severed, but must always be distinguished? Political facts and religious facts.—Yes; in other words, the history of the Church and that of the State. I hope, then, dear children, that you will always recollect, in reading both prophecy and history, that these two objects, though distinct, are inseparable.—When the Gospels tell us of Jesus Christ and the Church, they are obliged to tell us also of Herod and Pilate, and many other Romans.—When Bossuet wrote his noble work on Universal History, for the use of a boy of your age, son of Louis the XIV., he took care to divide his book in two great parts, calling the first, Course of Religion, and the second, Course of Empires.—The vision of the statue must have familiarized you with the history of the four monarchies, which were to rule the world, and oppress the people of God.—Which was the first?—That of the Chaldeans.—Yes, or rather of the Assyrians, who became masters of Chaldea, and founders of the great empire of Babylon.—It was of all the monarchies the richest and the most glorious, but also the shortest: it was the head of gold.—The second?—That of the Medes and Persians, represented by the breasts and arms of silver.—And the third?—That of the Greeks, represented by the belly and thighs of brass.—Quite right. We will now look at the fresh emblems presented to us in our verses to-day. You will find them more exact, if possible, than those in Nebuchadnezzar's vision. The course of empires had been represented to him under the brilliant and terrible image of a statue; because it was under this appearance of glory that, in the conceptions of his yet carnal mind, this heathen king saw the grandeur of this world; but how were they represented here to the man of God?—Under the emblem of four fierce beasts.—Yes, because it was under this odious aspect that the vices, the idolatry, and the brutal tyranny of the empires of this world would present themselves to the mind of a prophet.—Remember, dear children, that the figures or emblems employed by the prophets are far from having been variable, arbitrary, or adopted by chance. Their symbols are a language; and this language is fixed, as were the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, or as are the signs of Chinese writing. As, in an Egyptian book, the disc of the sun always represents royalty; as, in a Chinese book, two legs wide apart always represent a man, and three unequal bars resting perpendicularly on a fourth, always a mountain: so, in the language of

prophecy, a beast always points out a persecuting empire; and a horn on the head of this beast, a power raised high in that empire.—In short, the same sign constantly represents the same object. Therefore, Newton in his Commentary on Daniel takes care to tell us that “the first thing to do, in order to understand the prophecies well, is to learn their figurative language.”—That is not difficult.—I might give you a sort of vocabulary, as many have made such already; but I like better to explain each symbol to you as it comes before us. But do not think that I shall invent its meaning; you will see, that generally the Holy Spirit Himself explains it to prevent our mistaking it.

Daniel, then, had a dream, and an angel of God came to explain it to him; for he says in *verse* 16, “I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the *truth*” (that is, the *meaning*) “of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things;” saying in *verse* 17, “These four great beasts are four *kings*,” or four *kingdoms*, as he explained afterwards (in *verse* 23). Now these “four great beasts, diverse one from another, came up from the great sea; while the four winds of the heaven strove upon that sea.” (*Verses* 2, 3.) The Great Sea, in the common language of the Hebrews, meant the Mediterranean; and we ought to observe carefully, that the four great monarchies all came equally to establish themselves on the shores of that sea. That is what characterizes the prophetic earth. But I think we must see here something more. In the figurative language of prophecy, the sea and its great waters signify constantly the turbulent multitude of nations, too often like the waves of the ocean furiously raging in a storm. (See *Rev.* xvii. 15.) Now these “four winds of the heavens,” which “strove upon the great sea,” are either the violent passions, or the providential dispensations, or the political revolutions, which convulse the nations of the earth like the raging of storms upon the sea. But fear nothing! these winds are always in God’s Hand. (Read *Psalms* lxxv. 7; *Prov.* xxx. 4; and *Jer.* li. 16.) It appears, then, that these four monarchies should rise at once from amidst popular tumults. And it is remarkable, that if we search into history for the origin of each of these four great empires, we shall see them arise all four at the same time—I mean in the eighth century before the Christian Era.—While Romulus, in the year 753 B.C., built Rome in the *then* far West; the great Belshazzar (also named Baladan, or Nabonassar) governed the city of Babylon, and founded in the East, on the distant shores of the Euphrates, the first of our four

monarchies. The *first* of these events fixed, for the historians of the *West*, the era called that of the Foundation of Rome, beginning January 1st, 753, B.C.; and the *second* event fixed, for the historians and astronomers of the *East*, the famous Era of Nabonassar, which dates from February 26th, 747 B.C.,—you see, six years only after the preceding. It was also at that time, that, by the death of Sardanapalus, and by the fall of the ancient empire of the Assyrians at Nineveh, was formed the monarchy of the Persians and that of the Medes. (Some historians prefer not counting the years of the Medes till the reign of Dejoces, year 710, that is, thirty-seven years only after the Era of Nabonassar.) We also find that the kingdom of Macedon was founded by Caranus, in the year 795, that is, forty-two years only before the Era of the Foundation of Rome.

Nevertheless, it appears to me that if the four beasts were at first shewn to Daniel all at once, as rising from the sea, he saw them come upon the prophetic scene one after another. We may have observed the same in the vision of the statue. Each of the four monarchies which Nebuchadnezzar saw, although having existed previously, was reckoned as making part of the colossal image only from the time of its taking possession of the prophetic earth by the subversion of the preceding monarchy. That of the Medes and Persians is counted only from the time when it took the place of the Babylonian in the ruling of the world and in the possession of Jerusalem. The Grecian Monarchy is not reckoned till the conquests of Alexander; and that of the Latins only from the taking of Jerusalem by Pompey, or the conquest of Egypt by Cæsar Augustus. These are the “times of the Gentiles,” of which Jesus Christ said in *St. Luke* xxi. 24, that Jerusalem should be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

Daniel adds, in *verse* 3, that these beasts were “diverse one from another.” We must then examine them successively; which we will begin doing in my next lesson. But before dismissing you, I should like to make sure that each of you will carry home the thought so forcibly brought before us in your verses to-day; it is that God makes “all things work together for good to them that love Him,” as says *St. Paul* in *Romans* viii. 28; yes, *all* things—even the most wicked and the most dreaded; even “oppression, agony, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword” (*Romans* viii. 35); even the most cruel men, and the



most persecuting governments.—What did God mean to teach us by these fierce beasts which Daniel saw?—Not only that He directs the world, but that He does so for the sake of His Church in regard to His great work of redemption. That is His great object in the government of the world, the sublime and sacred end to which all is subordinated. What a grand but soothing thought for His redeemed people! Do you understand, my children, what I meant to say? Some of you, perhaps, in learning your verses this morning, were surprised to find in them these beasts, these empires, these revolutions: you did not expect these details in a book intended to make your life holy; perhaps you thought—What need is there of all that, in order to unite me to Jesus Christ, and to prepare me for Heaven? What have these beasts, these empires, and these wicked revolutions, to do with the wants of my soul, the cries of my conscience, the cross of my Saviour? You are going to see what they have to do; but in the meantime, carry away this thought: that God governs the world in the interests of His Church; that He makes the revolutions of republics and empires subservient to the advancement of His work of Redemption—His great business.—When He created the world, it was for His glory in His Son, and in the deliverance of His people. At the last day the Son will say to them, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”—When He created the glorious angels, it was in reference to men who were to be “heirs of salvation.” (*Heb. i. 14.*)—When He cursed the earth after the Fall, He put it in the condition necessary for the abode of a fallen but redeemable creature.—When He sent the Flood, and destroyed the old world, it was again for the sake of His Church; for He then took away the earth from His enemies, in order to give it again to Noah and his race.—When He confounded their language at Babel, and scattered the people, it was for the sake of His Church.—When He sent seven years of famine upon the East, it was for His Church.—When He raised Egypt to the highest degree of splendour in the days of Joseph, and afterwards overthrew her in the Red Sea in the days of Moses, it was for His Church.—When He by turns prospered and abased the kingdoms of Moab, Ammon, Idumæa, Damascus, Assyria, it was for His Church.—And in our to-day’s lesson, what do we again see? That God, for the sake of His Church, and for His plan of redemption, gives successively the sceptre of the world, first to the Babylonians, then to the Persians, then to the Grecians, then to the Latins. Yes, God does all

for the sake of His work of redemption; He tells us (*Col. i. 16*) that "all things were created by Christ, and for Christ." He would "make all see the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: that the manifold wisdom of God might be known *by means of the Church.*" (*Eph. iii. 9, 10.*)

Let this thought sink deep into your hearts. God orders everything in the world for His Church and people, for His work of redemption.—It cannot be otherwise; for is He not the "same" God always? He who has given His beloved Son for us, "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (*Romans viii. 32.*)—Yes, I repeat it, His work of redemption is His great business. Let it be ours also; and in order really to understand this work, let us contemplate Jesus Christ on the Cross, let us drink this Blood which has redeemed us, let us eat this Flesh which was broken for us, let us shew forth His Death till He comes again, let us wait for Him from Heaven!—If then, dear children, there should be in our days (*written in 1838*) revolutions in Europe, if everything were overthrown, if the four winds of heaven should again "strive upon the great sea" of nations, if enemies should invade us, if strangers should tread us under foot, if wicked men should prevail and Christian flocks be dispersed, let us then be fully persuaded that God even then is designing good for His Church; that He does not lose sight of her; that He will purify, vivify, unite, and at last glorify, all His chosen people.—"God is our refuge," let us say; let us sing, like the children of Korah, the forty-sixth Psalm.

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## LESSON XXIV.

### DANIEL VII. 4-6.

How appropriate and how beautiful are these symbols, which represent to us, one after the other, the Gentile kingdoms! Look first at Babylon: in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, it was "the head of gold;" here, it is "the lion," of all wild beasts the most imposing: how majestic his form, how bold and kingly his look, how proud his step! His terrible voice sounds across the desert; his strength is marvellous: "we often see him," writes a missionary from the South of Africa,

“carrying a calf in his mouth, clear wide ditches, and high walls, by prodigious leaps.”—A blow from his paw breaks the bones of a horse; a turn of his tail knocks down the strongest man.—How dreadful he looks when angry, but how grand! He shakes his mane, he lashes his sides, his eyes are flaming; death to those who come near him! His roars also, echoed from rock to rock, and which afar off are like thunder, cause great fear everywhere. At this terrible noise, all living creatures in the desert or in the forest recognise their master, and hasten their escape.—Well, my children, such was Nebuchadnezzar and his empire of Babylon. Jeremiah had, before Daniel, thus called him in *chapter* iv. 6, 7.—But it was not enough to represent the empire of Babylon by the image of this king of the desert; he must also have the “wings of an eagle.” It was a lion, doubtless, but a flying lion; the monarch of the forest, having the wings of the monarch of the air; it ruled over its enemies like that fierce bird which makes its nest in the highest rocks, which discovers its prey afar off, pounces upon it, and carries it off, in its strong claws, to its nest as high as the clouds.—Can you imagine clearly this dreadful creature, this lion-eagle which Daniel sees rise up from the sea? Fancy yourselves pursued by it; pounced upon by it, seized by worse than eagles’ claws, squeezed by the paws of a lion, and carried up to the top of the highest rocks!

This is the image of what Nebuchadnezzar must have been for the neighbouring nations, with his sudden attacks, his rapid conquests, his carryings into captivity; and also by the height of his genius, and the strength of his flight. He transported conquered nations in order to keep them more entirely subject to his laws. He reached them as if he had wings, he overthrew them like a lion, but he carried them into the mountains of Assyria like an eagle. Nothing stopped him in his conquests—neither mountains, nor rivers, nor walls: thus he took Nineveh, of which the fifteen hundred towers were, it is said, two hundred feet high; thus he three times took possession of Jerusalem, and carried away, in his claws, first Daniel and the princes, then the king himself, then all the people with their riches and their sacred vessels, into Babylon; thus he took the impregnable Tyre, who thought herself safe from the lion, on a rock in the sea, but had not reckoned on his eagle’s wings; thus he subdued rich and powerful Egypt; and his eager flight carried him to the extremities of Africa, and it is said even as far as Spain. Thus had Jeremiah foretold—*chapter* iv. 13, 19; and in *chapter* xlviii. 40; and also Ezekiel, in *chapter* xvii. 3–12.

But now, listen : what became of this lion with eagle's wings, who had been seen for forty years, pouncing upon his enemies as from the clouds? Behold him, sometime afterwards, stripped of his wings and become a common lion—indeed he was no longer even a lion ; for Daniel says “it was made to stand up on the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it,” instead of its lion's heart.—Here the fate of Babylon is represented to us, and the rapid fall of this so lately terrible empire pointed out. In fact, as soon as Nebuchadnezzar had disappeared from the scene, first by his mental malady which lasted seven years, and then by his death which soon followed it, his armies ceased to fly as an eagle ; their conquests were, one after another, taken from them, they were beaten by all their enemies. Evil-Merodach, the new king, become despicable by his wickedness, was put to death by his own relations, after a bad reign of two years ; afterwards, Neriglissar, his sister's husband, who had succeeded him, and who tried to put down the revolted Medes, was conquered by the great Cyrus, and killed in battle.—You see, the bear has already come down from the mountains of Persia and Media, and attacks the failing lion.—The son of Neriglissar, Laborosochad, defeated, and his troops slaughtered, took disgraceful refuge in his capital. Twice did Cyrus, after having ravaged the country, offer to end the contest by single combat with the king ; but he refused, and his humiliated subjects put him to death after a reign of nine months. Then it was that the young Belshazzar began the sad reign which was to be the last.—There was no longer a man with a lion's heart, but a lion with a man's heart ; and this king of the desert was a coward ; “he stood upon his feet as a man,” and hidden behind his battlements, he dared not come down into the plain to face his enemies. Instead of the fierce and rapid movements of an eagle, and of a lion ; instead of their courage and strength, were the attitude, weakness, and fears, of a man ! “The lion stood upon his feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.”—This prophecy was written at Babylon in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar, that is, 555 years B. C. ; but seventeen years afterwards, the *lion* with a man's heart was to be suffocated between the powerful paws of the Median *bear* ; the Chaldean Babylon was to be destroyed, and the Persian monarchy to begin.

Let us go on to this second empire, described in *verse* 5.—Observe again, with what exactness and faithful colouring its characteristic features have been depicted. It was a cruel and rayenous bear.—If the lion is

the king of the desert, the bear reigns on the mountain, delighting in snowy and wild regions, and in thick forests. Its strength is in its limbs, especially in its powerful paws, armed with bent claws, at once so sharp and so strong, that the animal, in spite of his great weight, can climb up high trees, and even over icy mountains. With these dreadful weapons, he overthrows, crushes, and tears his enemies to pieces; and often even he hugs them between his fore-paws till he has stifled them. Besides, he is voracious, he feeds upon everything; and therefore it is said to this one, "arise, devour much flesh."—The conquerors who overthrew Babylon, and then became rulers over many nations, came down from the mountains of Armenia, Persia, and Media. They were brutal and cruel warriors. The Chaldeans had carried off conquered nations to place them at a distance; but the Persians and Medes, without carrying them off, overthrew them, and trampled them under foot.

Read *verse* 5. Have you any idea of what is meant by "the bear raising itself up on one side"?—If what we have already seen of the Second Kingdom, in the vision of the statue, is not enough to make you comprehend the meaning, you will find, I think, the explanation in Daniel's next chapter (viii. 3), where the empire of the Medes and Persians is represented under the image of a ram standing near the river Ulai, which flowed by Shushan, one of the future capitals of the Persian Empire. Read *chapter* viii. 3. And what did these two horns of the ram point out? Read *chapter* viii. 20.—If then the Medes and Persians, who were in the end to form but one kingdom of Persia, were in the statue represented by the two arms of silver joined into one and the same breast of silver; and if in the vision of the ram, these two same nations are represented by two horns, but in such a manner, that the Persians (who did not become a nation till after the Medes, and who nevertheless raised themselves above them, and ended by giving their name alone to that powerful monarchy) are symbolized by the "horn which came up last, and which was higher," you will understand, I hope, why, here, in the vision of the bear, the animal "raised up itself *on one side*." Tell us, one of you.—Because this empire, at first consisting of the Medes and the Persians, was afterwards to appear as the kingdom of Persia only.—Right.—It is also said, that the bear "had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth."—What are these three ribs? Newton understands them as the three kingdoms of Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt, which this *second* Monarchy conquered, so they were not members of its body, but only in its mouth, though afterwards to make

a part in the body of the *third* Monarchy. The kingdom of Persia held them all three in its bloody mouth, and crushed them.—“And they said to it, Arise, devour much flesh.” Nothing before had equalled the brutal cruelty of the Medes and Persians in their first conquests; even to the poor little children of the vanquished. Isaiah himself was touched by it, two hundred years beforehand. (Read his *chapter* xiii. 19.)—For instance, if you were to read the entrance into Egypt, of Cambyses, son of Cyrus, you would exclaim, These were bears, not men! And although Cyrus was personally magnanimous, the ferocity of the two nations under his command had become a proverb. All historians bear witness to it, from Herodotus down to those who wrote at the time of Alexander the Great. These nations became in some degree civilized, but without losing the natural cruelty characterized in their laws, manners, punishments, and all the customs of their government. Even 350 years after Jesus Christ, the famous Latin historian Ammianus Marcellinus, who knew them well, having fought against them in the Roman army, tells us that even in his time, they exercised their cruelty in the deaths of the lower classes and slaves, flaying men alive, taking off their skin sometimes in pieces, sometimes entire; that their laws were abominable, such as destroying without distinction all the relations of a man, as soon as he was declared guilty.

I proceed to the *sixth* and last verse of your lesson.—In a few words are described the character and the destiny of the *third* great Monarchy; and I do not think that any man, even after the event, could with all his imagination draw, in so short a space, a more perfect emblem of Alexander the Great and of his monarchy. Listen to *verse* 6.—You know something of the leopard, or panther (the original word may be translated by either name).—Of all wild beasts, it is that which shews most strength comparatively with the smallness of its body. The size of the lion is so imposing, that it is sometimes nine feet long from the muzzle to the beginning of the tail, while the length of the leopard is only four: but then, how elastic, bold, and impetuous, are its movements—beyond all other animals. It has an insatiable thirst for blood; attacks every creature it meets, indiscriminately; and before tearing its prey to pieces, it gets drunk with its blood: but the quenching of this burning thirst does not arrest its ravages; he kills whole flocks when he can no longer eat or drink. In his leaping course, he seems only to touch the earth by the ends of his claws; his elastic legs are like springs, always ready to be stretched: how then should

the prey escape from his sudden movements? Thus, when in Scripture the greatest quickness is to be described, it is by the emblem of the eagle's flight or the leopard's course. (See *Hab.* i. 8.)—Now this was the most characteristic feature of Alexander and his Macedonians. I told you, when we were explaining the second chapter, that the rapidity of their marches exceeded imagination. History never saw the like. Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, wonderfully rapid as they were, appear even slow compared to the king of the Greeks. In ten years he had conquered the world, from the Adriatic Sea to the far-off countries watered by the Indus, and from the Caucasus to the Indian Sea. It has been said that he ran through countries, conquering and organizing the people, as any other man would pass through them in travelling. He was like the leopard in his powerful and furious leaps, in his burning impetuosity, his thirst for destruction, and his pleasure in shedding blood.—Listen to the dates only of his conquests—their bloody itinerary. In the year 334, he attacks the immense empire of the Persians, he overthrows their army, he is master in a few months of all Asia Minor. In early spring of the following year, he is already in the defiles, where, in modern times, Ibrahim Pacha was before his victory of Nezib; the whole of Syria is conquered; the Persian army is destroyed; and very soon Darius's family and treasures are in his power; Palestine and Tyre have fallen by his blows. In the third year he became master of the ancient kingdom of Egypt, disposing of its riches, crossing its deserts, and building, by one of his generals, the magnificent city of Alexandria, at present so flourishing, and destined to become again, ere long, the most important harbour in the world. In the fourth year, he rushes in pursuit of the unhappy Darius; he rejects all his offers of peace; he crosses the Euphrates and the Tigris; and when he has for the third time cut his army to pieces in the plain of Arbela, he no longer leaves him a moment's respite, but pursues him furiously into the mountains of Media.—The fifth year, he takes Persepolis, Shushan, Ecbatana; and while he is rushing towards those wild mountainous regions bordering on the Caspian Sea, he meets on the road a chariot conveying a fine young man, pale and bleeding, pierced with arrows, and loaded with chains.—Alas! it was his noble and generous victim, Darius, whom his own servants had assassinated! The corpse was scarcely cold; he had just expired. Alexander covers it with his cloak, and sends it to Shushan for burial; but he stays not his own furious course—no longer indeed against Darius, but against his murderers. He goes from mountain to mountain, as far as those

arid countries inhabited in our time by the Turcomans and the Usbec Tartars.—It is said that his army marched forty miles a day; he surprised his enemies, overthrew them, and without giving them time to recover themselves, overwhelmed them. The following year, which was only the sixth, he crossed the Oxus, and the countries about Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand, where the Romans have never been able to reach; he there remounted his cavalry, of which the horses were worn out; and at last, in the seventh year, he was in the depths of the East, on both sides of the Indus, in the kingdoms of Afghanistan, Scind, and the Punjaub. From thence this untiring leopard descended the Indus on a great fleet which he had built, reached the shores of the Southern Ocean, and resuming his bounding course, he returned to Babylon at the age of thirty-two, and died there even more quickly than he had conquered.

I said that history contains nothing to be compared to the rapidity of these Macedonian conquests. Observe also how vividly their features are depicted in the prophet's mind. Daniel was at that time in his bed at Babylon, two hundred years before Alexander was born at Pella, a little town in Macedon; yet he already sees him as a bounding leopard, and, to make him go still quicker, he also gives him not only *two* wings, but *four*. You know that the ostrich of the desert, pursued by African horsemen, defies the swiftest race-horses, because, aided by two wings, it rather flies than runs. When we come to the eighth chapter we shall see the prophet describing Alexander, if possible, in a more expressive way; as running through Asia in the same way as you sometimes in a dream fancy you are going downstairs, or are reaching the top of a mountain. I mean without your feet touching the ground. Read viii. 5. And what does he add in *verse* 21? "The rough goat is the king of Grecia."

But it is not only by the velocity of its movements that the leopard was an emblem of Alexander and his Grecian empire. Many other resemblances have been remarked; the leopard is spotted—Alexander was not uniform in temper, but capricious; sometimes generous, but more often cruel; sometimes moderate and temperate, but more commonly shamefully the contrary: especially has it been observed that the leopard is small but intrepid; attacking all it meets, and stopped by nothing. Alexander was of small size, and his original kingdom also; he had only a small army against 150,000 men at



the Granicus, against 400,000 at Issus, and against 800,000 at Arbela. Besides, like the leopard, he was constantly restless and insatiable; and this same character was that of most of his successors, When fever and death surprised him in the palace at Babylon, he had a world of projects in his head; and the intoxication of his ambitious thoughts was as great as that of his meals. He intended to fall suddenly upon the West, to go round the Caspian Sea by land, and Africa by sea, restore the temples of Babylon, destroy the navy of Carthage, conquer Sicily and Spain, make a road on the coast of Africa as far as the pillars of Hercules, make a harbour for one thousand ships below Babylon! Death arrested him. That was the only future event for which he had made no preparation. In ten days fever laid him low. Some days before his death, as he was upon the Euphrates, the heavy Babylonian tiara fell off his head into the river, but the ornamented band belonging to it was carried by the wind to the opposite shore. A sailor, in his zeal, swam at the peril of his life to get it, and to avoid wetting it, dared to put it on his head. Alexander had him killed for so doing. But on his return to Babylon, he passed his nights in drinking with his generals, and boasting that he would empty a cup of Hercules which contained six bottles.\* he twice accomplished this brutish boast; but this king of the world fell down upon the floor, fever began its work on the 12th of May, and finished it on the 22nd.

Listen now to another no less striking characteristic of this *third* Monarchy.—The leopard, it is written, “had four heads.”—Those of you who have seen a historical atlas, or read the Grecian history, will know what this means.—Besides, we saw the same thing in the statue.—What did these four heads represent?—The four Greek kingdoms into which the Macedonian empire was to be divided.—Yes, doubtless: and we shall see, farther on, this great historical fact, again twice recalled by Daniel. (viii. 8, 22; xi. 1–4.)—Alexander’s generals, fifteen or twenty in number, soon disputed his spoils, sword in hand. At the end of fifteen years, all his family, including mother and wives, had died a violent death, and torrents of blood flowed for twenty years in all the provinces.—Alexander had said when dying, “I foresee that my generals are preparing for me a bloody funeral.” He spoke truly. His empire was, twenty-four years after his death, divided into four Greek kingdoms, “toward the four winds of heaven.”—On the east,

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\* His intoxication is not mentioned by the most trustworthy authors.

Seleucus had India and Syria; on the west, Cassander, and then Antigonus, had Macedonia and Greece; on the north, Lysimachus had Thrace, and the Asiatic shores of the Black Sea; on the south, Ptolemy had Egypt, Arabia, and Cyrenaica.—Jerusalem and Judea belonged sometimes to the king of Syria, sometimes to the king of Egypt; and that is why these two sovereigns are called, in relation to the Holy City, the king of the North, and the king of the South, in Daniel's eleventh chapter.

But now let us conclude by the last word in your lesson: it is well worthy of remark—"dominion was GIVEN to it." These words are a useful summary of all we have heard.—Nations arose out of the strife of the four winds of heaven; three fearful beasts came forth, and this vision has made us run through the history of empires, from the year 606 to 300 B. C.—During this time, what infernal passions raged! The people of God were oppressed, Jerusalem trodden under foot, human blood poured out like water.—Too true, my children; but "God reigneth." Too true, that in the midst of these ravages, sin covers the earth like a flood; but also in the midst of them the Holy Spirit says, when describing the third and most powerful of these wild beasts, "dominion" was *given* to it;" that is to say, *lent* by God.—Well then, dear friends, always recollect this thought.—Nations may be like wild beasts; the lion, the bear, the fearful leopard, may follow their cruel instincts; but God reigns, and "dominion" is "given" for a time only—is but *lent* to the most menacing of men. "I know thy abode," says the Almighty, "and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against Me; but I have put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." (*Isaiah* xxxvii. 28, 29.)—Let us learn, then, by all these inspired words, to fear God *only*, so that we may put ourselves with faithful trust under His government, and submit to it with love: waiting till "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;" till "all dominions shall serve and obey Him;" till "all the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ;" and until the love of God covers the world.

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## LESSON XXV.

## DANIEL VII. 7.

WE are now come to the *Fourth* Empire. I think I need not tell you its name nor its characteristics. You learned them in the statue, and I hope, still remember them.—What power came after the Macedonian Greeks, and trod Jerusalem under foot, and ruled over the people of God?—The Roman power.—By what symbol was it represented?—By two legs of iron, which from the height of the ankles became a mixture of iron and clay, but which were at last broken to pieces by a stone cut out of the mountain without hands.—Why this mountain?—To represent the Church of God, which will at length fill all the earth.—Why this iron?—To signify that the Roman Empire would be the severest of all, and likewise the most durable. Why the *two* legs?—Because, at the time when Jerusalem was taken by the Romans, their power, instead of being monarchical, like that of the other empires, was republican, under two consuls.—Yes, or under two sovereign powers, called in all decrees, and on all monuments, *Senatus Populus Que Romanus*, or abridged, S. P. Q. R., that is to say, *The Senate and the Roman People*. And remember that these two consuls, who represented the power of the Senate and People, still continued to hold their office, after Cæsar and his successors had taken possession of the supreme authority, under the then modest title of emperor, or military commander. The laws were still published in the *name of the Senate and of the Roman people*; and this characteristic form of the old republic was continued till the invasion of the barbarians, and was abolished by the emperor Justinian only in 541 A.D.; so that the calendars of the Empire were dated according to the reigning consuls, as those of the republic had been reckoned.—Thus, for instance, the year when Pompey took Jerusalem is marked by these words, “Cicero and Nepos being consuls;” and that when the Christian Era began, by Lentulus and Piso being Consuls.”—But why ten toes?—Because after the invasion of the ten Gothic nations, the Roman Empire was to continue under the form of ten kingdoms.—Yes, of ten Latin kingdoms, still subject to Rome by new bonds.—But in the end, why this crushing of the legs of iron and clay to pieces like chaff?—To express the frightful anarchy in which all was to end.—Why, in this crushing of the iron, are the *brass*, *silver*, and *gold* included?—Because this ruin and anarchy were to extend equally to Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor, Chaldea, Persia.—But what means this mountain?—It is the Church

of the God of Israel, which was at length to arise and increase, till it should cover the whole earth.—And now a question or two on the dates of these great events. In what year (for I have already told you) did the legs of iron begin?—Sixty-five years B.C.—Yes, in the time of Pompey, or as some think, 30 B.C., in the days of the emperor Augustus.—And in what year was the mixture of the clay with the iron?—About 400 A.D.—Yes, its beginning; but this division of the feet into their ten toes, should rather date from the year 476, when Rome was taken by the king of the Heruli, who, becoming king of Italy, caused the succession of the emperors to cease in the West; or even from the year 520, when the last Gothic kings, the Lombards, established themselves in Austria, to cross afterwards into Italy; or even, indeed, from the year 541, when the consuls were abolished for ever. In what year the smiting of the toes by the stone, and the breaking to pieces of the whole statue?—We cannot say yet, because it is in the future.—I am pleased that you have well remembered the second chapter; and I feel sure that these recollections of the statue will help you to understand the further prophecies both of Daniel and St. John.—You see, then, dear children, that according to the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, the destinies of the Fourth Empire were to be divided into three or four periods clearly distinguishable; for you may already recognise *four* successive Romes. *First*, that immediately below the thighs of brass, the Rome of iron, in its two legs. *Second*, at the height of the ankles, the Rome of clay and iron, in its two feet. *Third*, at the height of the toes, the Rome of clay and iron, in its ten toes, its division into ten kingdoms. *Fourth*, at the time of the blow of the stone, Rome crushed in its clay and in its iron.—Thus we have republican Rome, imperial Rome, ten-kingdomed Rome, anarchical and revolutionary Rome.—But now to return to the words of your lesson. (*Verse 7.*) Observe first the last point in this admirable description of the fourth monarchy: the beast “was different from all the other beasts that were before it;” which the Angel explains in *verse 23*: “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms.”—The bear, certainly, is not the lion, and both differ from the leopard; yet these three animals may still be compared one with another, both as to shape, instinct, and duration of life; while the fourth beast, you understand, was like nothing—it was to be a monster; “it was different from all the others,” but different in what, do you suppose?—By its strength, or by its frightful form, or by its cruelty.—Yes, possibly; for “it was

dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped what remained with its feet: and it had great iron teeth;” moreover, the 19th *verse* adds, that “its nails were of brass.”—Nevertheless, I think there must be something more: and first its long life. What did we see as to that in the statue?—That the Latin empire was to last till the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. That may be then another reason for the Angel’s saying that this “fourth kingdom shall be diverse from all kingdoms.” The empire of Babylon lasted but 209 years; that of Persia only 208: that of Greece but 227; while it is already more than 1900 years since that of Rome took Jerusalem; and yet we see it lasting even now, with its ten kingdoms still subject to Rome.

But again, this is not all; another point of difference between this fourth empire and all the others, is the form of its government.—The three first were always monarchical, while that of Rome was republican; and we saw in the statue, that it had at its head the senate and the people, and that its two consuls were renewed year by year.—Another feature by which the Latin empire was to differ from all the others, is seen in our fourth beast.—I mean its ten horns, and also another little horn, with eyes and a mouth in it.—And now, dear children, before finishing this first lesson on the fourth beast, I want to ask if you can think why Daniel did not give any *name* to the fourth beast, nor describe it by any other marks than its head and its nails?—Because no name of any known beast would have sufficed to represent such a terrible empire.—I think that a more satisfactory explanation may be given; nevertheless, such was that of the ancient commentators of Daniel, fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago.—But farther: a symbol was needed which would represent the Latin empire to the end of the world, and such a one as should be always recognizable in the changes of its history; therefore Daniel does not give a complete description of the fourth great beast, because, *first*, it was needful to express that this monarchy would be a monster unlike any other; and *secondly*, it was needful to point out this beast by its ten horns only, in order that it might be always recognized in all its transformations.—But if Daniel is silent as to its form and name, observe the force with which he describes its character—“It was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet.”

In our next lesson, we shall recognize in all its features this fourth empire, which under different forms of government, would persecute

the Church to the end of time, and until the Son of Man, coming in the clouds, shall subject all nations unto Him.—I trust, my dear children, that not only will the study of this vast prophecy throw light on the studies of your youth; but that it will be blessed to you in the strengthening of your faith, even amid the apparently unfruitful details of the Roman history.

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## LESSON XXVI.

DANIEL VII. 7, 19, 23.

I MUST now, my dear children, make you better acquainted with this Roman Empire, such as history describes it, and such as the Holy Spirit depicts it in these verses. I will take, one after another, all the characteristics of the fourth beast, which your lesson points out. It appears to me that there are five, immediately distinguishable. *First*, this beast was to have great strength—the words in *verse 7* have been translated “marvellously strong.”—*Secondly*, it was to “devour the whole earth.” (*Verse 23.*) *Thirdly*, it was to be exceedingly cruel—“dreadful and terrible.” (*Verse 17.*) *Fourthly*, it was, by its voracious habits, to consume the substance of the conquered nations. “It devoured,” is repeated in *verse 19.*—*Fifthly*, it was to crush and trample upon what it had not devoured.—“It stamped the residue under its feet,” is thrice repeated.

I am going to give you some idea of all these characteristics, by what history relates of the Rome of the *consuls* and *emperors only*; for I shall not tell you at present, how much more terrible the ferocious beast became under the reign of its ten kings, and the influence of its little horn. But we must not anticipate; and I must content myself with describing to-day the Roman Empire in the days of Jesus Christ and His Apostles.—These details are necessary for the full explanation of this chapter.

The Roman Empire is, to the end of time, the great theatre of the greater part of future prophecy, both in Daniel and in the Revelation; it almost entirely relates to the destiny of the Church of God in the West; and thus is comprehended in one or other of the epochs of Latin history. Let us begin with the first characteristic—*strength*.

If you were older I should have many ways of showing you the marvellous force of the Romans; its causes in their manners and institutions; in the admirable authority which they gave to law; in their codes, which, although cruel, were impressed with deep wisdom; and especially in their political constitution. I mean in that alliance of aristocracy and democracy, which was always the character of their government; an alliance productive of great commotions, but which developing the strength of nations to the utmost, makes them capable of the greatest things. However, I think that the best way of giving you a just idea of the fourth beast, as to its marvellous strength, is to set before you one of those Roman armies, so much talked about. That will not be difficult, because I can repeat the words of a man who had himself seen them. Certainly, we can understand beforehand how perfect they must have been in the bloody art of war, when we remember that, at the birth of Jesus Christ, they had been under arms for more than 750 years, constantly practising the art of murder. You can think that if 800 years of continual warfare, scarcely interrupted by two or three very short intervals of peace, had made these people the most cruel of nations, they had also become the most skilful and invincible, so that all other warlike nations ended in yielding to Rome.

I will now read to you the words of Josephus, a general who saw these terrible Roman legions pass before him, 60,000 men in number, when they invaded Judea, led by Vespasian and Titus, to overthrow Jerusalem, in the month of April, in the year 67 after Jesus Christ. Nero was reigning at this same time, and caused St. Paul to be beheaded at Rome in this same year. This Josephus was well able to judge of these soldiers, being himself a warrior. He saw them cross the mountains of Judea, and was obliged to follow them to the walls of Jerusalem; for he had been led into their camp on the 4th of July, loaded with chains, after the slaughter of 40,000 Jews, who had been shut up with him in Jotapat. This is his description of their order of march. "At the head of the army advanced first the auxiliary troops, more lightly equipped than the Romans, and employed in watching the road, discovering ambushes, and bearing the first attacks of the enemy. After them marched part of the Roman infantry and cavalry, charged with the encamping of the army. It was a large body of men, composed of the choice out of all the cohorts, from which ten per cent. were taken; and besides bearing their own arms, they also carried all the tools needful for the construction of a camp. After them came

the pioneers, or sappers, ordered to level roads, cut down forests, and throw down hindrances. Then came the baggage of the commander-in-chief, and of his generals, with an escort of cavalry. Then the commander-in-chief, Vespasian himself, surrounded by some choice foot and horse soldiers, as well as lancers. Following the general, came a body-guard, formed of the choice of the cavalry in the legions; ten per cent. out of them also. Then came the machines for attacking strong places. It would be difficult to form an exact idea of the power of these machines to hurl stones and arrows. For instance, Vespasian having placed 160 together against the walls of Jotapat, the stones hurled by them knocked down the battlements, and made openings at the angles of the towers. In the night of the 19th of June, one of these stones carried off, at the distance of 1800 feet, one of the men fighting by my side on the top of the wall. The noise also of these machines was fearful. After them came in a single corps, the generals and other commanders, accompanied by some choice soldiers. Following them were the standards of the legions, surrounding the eagle, that powerful monarch of the air, which reigns over the whole army, and is the symbol of the sovereignty of Rome, and the pledge of her victories. After these sacred things came the trumpets. And, lastly, the whole battle array, marching six abreast, with officers charged to keep order and maintain discipline."

As to this renowned discipline, which made the power of the Romans, listen again to Josephus. "If we consider the government of their armies, are we astonished at their having the empire of the world? Certainly they owe it to their efforts, much more than to fortune. They do not wait till war constrains them to attend to it: they are continually exercising themselves in it; constantly using their weapons, from which they are as inseparable as if born with them in their hands; you would take even their games for battles. Never do they break their order; never does fear make them lose their wits; never does fatigue knock them down. And as they meet with no enemies in whom so many qualities are united, they are always victorious.—In whatever place they make war, they never give battle till they have constructed their camp, and that not inconsiderately, but in regular form, and with great labour. They always take with them many blacksmiths and other workmen, so that nothing may be wanting of what is necessary for fortification. The interior is divided into quarters; and you would take the exterior face for the walls of a city,



for towers are placed at regular distances, and, in the intervals, machines for hurling stones and arrows. The whole camp is surrounded, when needful, by a ditch of six or seven feet in depth and width. You see four large gates—also streets; in the centre are lodgings for the officers; a pretorium, or court of justice, built in the form of a temple of their gods; a market, and shops.—You would say that this camp is a city sprung up in a moment, so much science and labour are displayed.—They take their meals together; the trumpet summons them to sleep, to awake, to keep guard. In the morning, the soldiers go and salute their captains; and these latter go and salute their tribunes; and both tribunes and captains go afterwards all together to salute their commander-in-chief. At the first sound of the trumpet they fold up their tents; at the second, they pack the baggage; at the third, they start as in a race, and set fire to the camp; when the third trumpet has ceased, all begin to march; and then a herald, who is on the general's right side, demands three times if they are ready to fight; and you hear them reply with uplifted hands and loud shouts of gladness.—The foot soldiers, armed with helmets and cuirasses, wear two swords, the one on the right very long, and the other on the left much shorter. The choice of the infantry, who are placed near the general, bear lance and shield; whilst the other soldiers of the legion, armed with javelins and long shields, also carry a saw, a hatchet, and other tools, with provisions for three days; so that they are hardly less loaded than the horses.”—I must omit what he says of the cavalry. But now listen again.—“Continual military exercises strengthen their minds as well as their bodies. Fear of punishment keeps them to their least duties; their law punishes with death the smallest neglect. This wonderful obedience makes the Roman army as admirable in peace, as it is terrible in war. Ought we then to be astonished that such a people have made such conquests? and that this proud empire extends to the Euphrates on the east, to the Great Sea on the west, to the African deserts on the south, to the Danube and the Rhine towards the north, since we may say, without flattery, that however great may be the extent of their conquests, the heart of this master-people of the world is greater still?”

Yes, Josephus says truly, great was the heart of this “great beast,” and such as suited its long iron teeth and nails of brass; but great also in murder and hatred, as we shall see presently; great in selfishness, in blood-thirstiness, in destructive genius; great, in a word, with that greatness which is still found in Satan and the rebellious angels.—I

will go on to the *second* characteristic. "The fourth beast," it is written in *verse 23*, "shall be the fourth kingdom, which shall devour the whole earth." I must here, dear children, read to you, out of Josephus, a speech which his intimate friend king Agrippa addressed to the Jews, in order to deter them from engaging in war against the Romans. It contains a picture of their power; and is a commentary on these words of Daniel.—At Jerusalem—ten years only after this unhappy king, with his sister Bernice, had heard the Apostle Paul speak before Festus, and had said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,"—the multitude of Jews, at his request, had come together into the great square, which communicated by a bridge with the mount of the Temple, and extended into the upper town to the foot of the magnificent dwelling of the Asmonean kings. "O ye Jews! let no one interrupt me, if I say anything that displeases him. Those who want to revolt are free to remain in the same mind after my words; but at least let me be heard. When Pompey invaded Judea 130 years ago, then was the time to do everything to resist the Romans. But if our ancestors, richer and more powerful than ourselves, could not drive back a small part of their army, how can you hope to bear the attack of the whole force of so formidable an empire?—The generous Athenians, who, in order to defend the liberty of Greece, did not fear seeing their cities in ruins, are now reduced to obedience, and see their republic, formerly the queen of Greece, now receive orders from Italy. The Lacedemonians, who gained so many battles, acknowledge equally the Romans for their masters.—Even the Macedonians, who cannot forget the exploits of their great Alexander, and who had intended to rule the whole world, yet consent to bend the knee before these invincible men. Many other nations, who did not think it possible to lose their liberty, are equally under the yoke of these rulers of the whole earth.—And would you pretend to be the only one to resist those to whom all are subject?"—"What shall I say of the five hundred cities of Asia? Do they not obey a single proconsul without a garrison, and all prostrate themselves before the consular fasces? What again shall I say of the people of Colchis—of the Bosphorus—of Pontus—of the Caucasus—of the Palus Mæotis—who never having had masters, not even of their own nation, dare not think of revolting against Rome, although there are now only 3000 soldiers in garrison among them? Again, have not these same Romans made themselves masters, with forty ships only, of the vast Euxine Sea, through which none other people before had ventured to pass?—How many reasons might

Bithynia, Cappadocia, Pamphylia, Lydia, and Cilicia, have alleged in favour of their freedom? and yet they pay tribute without the Romans even needing soldiers to force them! What shall I say of Thrace, that vast region, defended by its natural fortresses, its mountains, and its ice, and which yet yields before 2000 Roman soldiers?—Again: look at Illyria, which extends to the Danube and to Dalmatia, yet is subjected to the Romans, with two legions only, which also serve to repress the struggles of the Dacians! Also those Dalmatians, who have so many times taken up arms in great force for their liberty, do they not submit quietly to a single Roman legion?—Who would have more reason to revolt than the Gauls, who—defended on the east by the Alps, on the north by the Rhine, on the south by the Pyrenees, on the west by the ocean,—contain 305 different nations? Yet they are tributaries to the Romans! Their courage is undoubted, for they have fought eighty years for their liberty: however, they obey 1200 Romans, a number scarcely equal to that of their towns!”—“Of what use were their mines of gold to the Spaniards—or to the Lusitanians (Portuguese)—or to the warlike Cantabrians (Biscayans)—to be so far from Rome, on the shores of the ocean? They carried their arms beyond the pillars of Hercules, and crossed the Pyrenees; and yet one single legion is now sufficient to keep in subjection such distant warlike nations. Again: which of you has not heard of the numerous Germans? Have you not often observed their great stature and their uncommon strength? for there is no part of the world where the Romans have not slaves out of this powerful nation. And yet—great as is the extent of their country, as well as their strength of mind and of courage, which even surpasses that of their stature—although they despise death, and once irritated become more furious than wild beasts, the Rhine is now their frontier, eight legions keep them in subjection, and it is only by flight that they seek security against Rome. If you place your trust in the strength of your walls, consider the advantage of Great Britain in being entirely surrounded by sea;.....yet in spite of winds and waves the Romans have conquered her, and four legions are sufficient to keep so large an island in subjection. What shall I say of the powerful nation of the Parthians, which gives hostages to Rome, and sends her, on pretext of peace, but as a pledge of subjection, the flower of their nobility? The Carthaginians also, in spite of their Hannibal, have fallen under the blows of Rome. Even Africa, the third part of the world—extending from the Red Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, and including, with Ethiopia, many other nations—pays tribute to Rome; besides providing her

with corn enough to feed her citizens for eight months of each year, and bears many other heavy burdens, without murmuring; whilst one legion suffices to keep them in subjection! But why look so far off for examples? Will not Egypt (which is so near you)—with its seven or eight millions of inhabitants, without counting those of Alexandria, and which reaches from Arabia to Ethiopia—shew you the extreme power of the Roman nation, when you see her pay faithfully a tribute which must be immense, since it is levied on each person? And yet how tempted this ancient kingdom must be to revolt; for its city, Alexandria, pays more to the Romans in one month than you do in twelve, besides furnishing annually corn enough to feed, during four months, the populace of Rome. Notwithstanding the position of Egypt, with its impenetrable deserts, its sea without ports, its great river, and its Delta, its surrounding marshes—two Roman legions, garrisoned in Alexandria; are sufficient to keep in check this great Egypt, and all these Macedonian nobles, who had conquered her, and ruled over her for three hundred years.”

Thus spoke Agrippa, the cotemporary of St. Paul, and the friend of General Josephus. Thus, without intending it, this Jewish king gave in Jerusalem, 620 years after Daniel, the exact comment on these words of Daniel: “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which.....shall devour the whole earth.”—Moreover, all ancient historians have spoken like Agrippa, and like Daniel, as to Rome’s having devoured the whole earth. The famous Pagan historian, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writes in Rome, seven years B.C.: “Vast as was the vast Macedonian-Greek kingdom, it was bounded by the Adriatic Sea; but the Roman republic governs all the earth—as far, at least, as the earth is habitable; for this republic is mistress of the sea, not only on this side of the pillars of Hercules, but also of the ocean wherever it is navigable. Of all the nations whose fame has come down to us, Rome is the only one whose boundaries extend to the extremities of the east and of the west.”

Also, dear children, there is not a region in the old world where this beast has not left the marks of his feet and nails. You would find its traces everywhere—from Mount Atlas in Algeria, to Northumberland in England—from Portugal to the Euphrates. Even the Latin language (or at least our modern ones derived from it) is still a monument of the Roman power, and bears witness to the words of the Holy Spirit, speaking of the Roman beast, “.....it shall devour the whole earth.”

## LESSON XXVII.

DANIEL VII. 7, 9, 10.

I MUST now put before you the three last characteristics of the fierce Beast: but what a contrast between this subject and that which soon follows it! between this cruel Beast, this continual bloodshed, these cries of the wounded to death, the sufferings and extortions with which the Latin Empire has wearied the earth during so many centuries—and that heavenly scene, “the Ancient of days” on His throne of flames, “a fiery stream issuing before Him,” and all those thousands of angels ministering unto Him! What a contrast between the eternal festival of Heaven, and what takes place on our bleeding earth! Nevertheless, dear children, it is useful to look upon this contrast. God teaches us much thereby; and that is why I wished to mark it plainly to you, by telling you to repeat the 9th and 10th verses, which follow so close upon the 7th. The Bible has sacred reasons for describing unto us the kingdom of the Latins, as well as for describing the Kingdom of Heaven. It instructs us by the example of the wicked as well as by that of the good; by murderous Cain, as by righteous Abel; by the old world drowned in the Flood, as by faithful Noah in his Ark; by Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Holy Ghost, as by Aquila and Priscilla filled with the Holy Ghost; by Herod, Caiaphas, and Judas Iscariot, as by St. John, St. Paul, and St. Stephen. Look, then, for useful lessons even in the hideous details which I must give you of the Roman Empire. All the doctrines of our faith are confirmed by that very spectacle of horrors in the long history of Rome. You will see by it, first, an indisputable proof of the fall of man. Poor human nature, what hast thou become, thou who wast at first the companion of those millions who served thy God? Was it thus that thou camest forth from the hands of thy Creator in Paradise, in order to hate and torment and destroy thy fellow-creatures? What a proof that the Bible says not a word too much, when it declares thee “dead in sins,” “without understanding,” “hateful and hating one another,” “inventors of evil things,” “mouths full of cursing and bitterness,” “feet swift to shed blood!” And what a proof also of thy need of a Redeemer, and His atoning blood! And again, what a proof of the need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, in order that thou mayest enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, with those thousands who stand before God!—What a frightful distance between those angels full of love and humility, and thee in thy selfishness and pride!—Again, what

a proof of the reality of hell in this history of the Romans, with their incessant wars, their gladiators, and their combats of men with beasts! Would it not be hell to be for ever with men such as were the Romans, and unrestrained by the fear of man or of a revenging God! May God be merciful to us, and deliver us all from the power of Satan, and from the wrath to come!

Recollect all this while I describe the three last characteristics of the Roman Beast.—First, its insatiable voracity.—“It devoured.” Nothing like Rome in this particular has been ever seen in the history of nations: a whole people being fed for six hundred years by the conquered nations.—The people of Rome ate, and the rest of the world laboured. All the historians of the empire have recorded this great fact, characteristic of its life, and cause of its ruin.

I pass on secondly to the crushing of the conquered: “It stamped the residue with its feet.” These words depict the extreme rigour of the Roman government, and its unmerciful severity to the conquered. All their treasure was to go to Rome; they were to give up their laws, their manners, and even their language; in all their rural districts, their freemen, disheartened by incessant exactions, abandoned agriculture in order to take refuge in towns; so that everywhere the ground was cultivated by slaves only, as now by negroes in America. If a greatly oppressed province tried to resist, double woe to it! The beast trod it down with its strong feet, and tore it in pieces with its claws of brass. The grown men were killed, and the women and children sold. They were called “servi,” that is to say, “servati,” or “preserved,” (out of the massacre). Their hands were tied behind the back, and a crown of turf put on the head—the sign agreed upon for their being exposed for sale. Then numerous slave-merchants, who followed the Roman armies to seize upon the living, as vultures do upon the dead, soon brought into Italy their suffering prey, to supply the market of the town, or the butchery of the circus.

For I have yet to tell you what the Roman people did with their slaves; and therefore I go on, thirdly, to the last characteristic of the fourth Beast—I mean, to his unparalleled cruelty.” He is called in *verse 7*, “dreadful and terrible,” and in the *19th verse* “exceeding dreadful;” the words in the Chaldean of Daniel mean rather, “marvellously dreadful,” “excellently terrible.”

To see clearly this last characteristic, we must get rid of the brilliant illusions which our reading of Roman triumphs may have left in our minds. We are too often fascinated by these accounts, as if the trumpet-sounds of these triumphs made us deaf to the sobs of the victims. Yet the whole history of Rome for twelve hundred years, looked at closely, is nevertheless a continual scene of atrocious cruelty. We must see this nation in action—I do not mean in their wars (all war is cruel); but in their laws, their manners, their life, even in their feasts and amusements—in order to have an accurate idea of their ferocity, and to acknowledge that there never was under the sun a nation better befitting these words of Daniel, “dreadful, and marvellously terrible.” Have you read Bowdich’s *Travels*, or the more recent *Missionary accounts of the Ashantees*,\* a powerful and cruel negro nation? It seems at first as if nothing upon earth ever equalled their thirst for blood, which is shed day and night like water at Coumassy, their capital, both in times of mourning and of rejoicing. When the king’s sister was to be buried, they were not satisfied with killing a great number of slaves, but they paved the bottom of the great ditch with the heads of free men; and when the coffin was being lowered into it, one of the nobles, who were stooping over it in order to let it down, fell always upon it, killed by the blow of a club. Well, dear children, I can assure you, that if you were to study the manners of the Romans more closely, you would find them still more inhuman.—As at Coumassy, feasts, births, funerals, treaties of peace, days of triumph, all were celebrated with human blood. This national cruelty had sunk so deeply into their manners, that it shewed itself even in circumstances which everywhere else soften the mind, and incline the heart to loving-kindness. At table, in friendly meetings, in the midst of joyous festivals, they delighted in the spectacle of murder, and the combats of gladiators. At those times also, the heads of those put to death were brought in a napkin to the emperor or his lady. The fearful story of John the Baptist’s head brought in a large dish, during a festival, to the queen Herodias, by Salome her daughter, was only a common sight at Rome; and I could tell you of many similar ones while St. Paul was there.—And how cruel were their punishments! The cross for slaves; rods with the axe for freemen; the consuls never went abroad without these rods tied round this axe, and carried before them by lictors; for they scourged before beheading a man.

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\* Before 1848.

Once more, what sort of games were theirs? If I were to detail them, they would seem to you like the amusements of those ogres with which unwise nurses sometimes frighten the imagination of children. No holiday without murder. This strange people found in the sight of sufferings, of wounds, of blood, and of death, inconceivable pleasure. There were constantly fights of gladiators by pairs, in the streets, circuses, public places, or in the courts of palaces; combats against lions or tigers; men devoured by dogs, or crushed by elephants. And these inhuman games were so suitable to the national character of the fourth Beast, that the Roman ladies and even the vestal priestesses were present, without the shrinking of modesty or fear. What must the men of that nation have been, where the women liked such pastimes?

I promised to tell you about their slaves. You have no idea of the treatment of these poor wretches; and you would be horrified by only reading the laws about them, in that famous code which is still studied by our lawyers. "The slave is no longer a person, but a thing," says one of these laws. "The slave cannot possess anything," says another, "because he himself belongs to his master." "No outrage concerns the slave," says a third, "but only the master." "When a Roman is assassinated," says the Syllan law, "all the slaves dwelling under the same roof, men, women, and children, are to be put to death, in order to consecrate the safety of the masters." And thus it was, that in the year 61, when St. Paul was at Rome, Pedanius Secundus having been assassinated by a slave who thought himself outraged, the whole city was greatly stirred, when it saw led out to death four hundred poor slaves dwelling in his house, whom neither number, sex, age, nor innocence, could save. "Now that we have slaves of all nations at our hearths," says Caius Cassius in the Senate, "this vile heap of barbarians cannot be restrained but by fear. Doubtless some innocent ones will perish; but no great examples can be given without individual injustice, which vanishes before the great thought of public utility." As soon as a man was sold, neither wife, children, nor relations, were his; and the right of life or death was given over himself. And as the continual wars of the Romans brought each year from all parts of the world numerous gangs of slaves at low price; they were treated with the uncaring cruelty of an omnibus-driver to a poor old horse sold for his skin. Thus the mortality of the slaves was so great, that there were never too many. Rich Romans had sometimes twenty thousand. More than once their sufferings excited



them to formidable revolts ; and even in the days of the great Pompey, these miserable men, prompted by wild despair, quickly formed themselves into an army of 120,000 men, and brought the empire of the Beast to within an inch of its ruin. When a Roman wanted to get rid of his slave, he exposed him naked in a chest furnished with bars, and called *catasta* : and all that was necessary was an inscription shewing his bad qualities, if he had already been in bondage ; or else with his feet and wrists bound, if he were recently acquired "under the crown" (of turf). Those employed in the fields were shut up at night in an underground cave, with their feet in the stocks, and received for their food a certain portion of grain, salt, and pulse. The slaves employed as porters were chained by night to the gate of the dwelling, and their food was much the same as that of the mastiffs their companions. The detail of their punishments is full of horror. For the least fault, one hundred lashes ; or else suspension with an enormous weight fastened to both legs ; or else burning marks made by a hot iron on their poor bodies ; or even the cutting off their ears or nose ; or yet farther scourging to death ; but most often crucifixion. Sometimes, however, they were thrown as a prey to beasts, or made to perish with the torments of hunger. The master was not called to account ; they were his property ; and may I not, if I choose, throw my property out of window ? For instance (to speak only once again of the time of St. Paul), we read in Suetonius, that under the emperor Claudius, the sick slaves were transported as incurable to a little island in the Tiber, to perish there ; but that the number of these forsaken ones became so great, that the irritated Emperor had a law passed, declaring all those who got well, freed from their masters.

Yet what was still more atrocious in the treatment of slaves "sold under the crown" (as the phrase went), was the consumption of them in the amphitheatres at the horrible games with which the fierce Beast was daily amused, and of which I have already told you. The finest and bravest, put into the hands of men called Lanistæ, who prepared them for fight, were resold afterwards in couples to the government or to the rich, in order to be killed either by men or by beasts in these public spectacles. The still magnificent remains of these bloody amphitheatres are yet to be seen at Rome and in Italy, with the place of the combatants, and the caverns whence rushed the beasts to devour them. There we seem to hear those words addressed to Cain : "What hast thou done ? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from

the ground!" Can you imagine, dear children, these cannibal pastimes? Crowds assembled at the dawn of day. Canvas, extended over the top of this immense building, sheltered innumerable spectators from the burning sun of Italy. I have myself seen in the wall still traces of this work. Fancy this vast Coliseum, as high again as our cathedral, and constructed by Titus on his return from Jerusalem. At its inauguration, it is said that five thousand wild beasts and two thousand gladiators were expended. The combats in it lasted for one hundred days following.—Imagine the people arranged in tiers one above another, and crying out impatiently for the sight of blood. Do you hear throughout the amphitheatre those enthusiastic cries? They are those of the Roman people, with its emperor and his court; the cruel Beast saluting the two men ready to slaughter each other. Swords are placed in their hands, they are told that one of them at least must be killed: "in each pair of gladiators, one of the two must die!"—Do you see them meet and cross their weapons, while, with all his eyes fixed on them, the cruel Beast with a hundred thousand voices remains silent, till he has seen one fall by the sword: he is pierced through—he dies; and cries of joy arise in his agony, for the fine stroke which has run him through from breast to back. Oh, dear children! it is a hard thing for man to fall into the hands of man! And do not think that these almost daily butcheries took place only among pairs of gladiators. No! hundreds and thousands of men were engaged in them. At great festivals, whole battalions slaughtered each other.

Here are some examples, taken still from the time of St. Paul. One day, a year only after writing his Epistle to the Romans, (Suetonius tells us that) they had a sham siege of a town to be taken by assault; but both assailants and defenders turned it into a real massacre. The 1st of August, in the year 52, much worse took place, such as would pass belief, had not Dion, Suetonius, and Tacitus, all three testified to the facts, without even expressing any astonishment. Claudius wished to celebrate his birthday by giving the people the spectacle of a naval battle on the Lake Fucinus. Imagine twenty-four large ships, twelve against twelve, loaded with these poor creatures condemned to death, to the number of nineteen thousand, says Tacitus. An innumerable multitude covered the shores and the environs of the lake, to the slopes of the hills, and even to the top of the mountains. The whole imperial guard placed in boats or on ramparts with machines for war, prevented flight or dispersion. The 1st of August shone upon this splendid

slaughter ; (for our Heavenly Father maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good ;) Claudius presided at this festival, clothed in magnificent military dress ; while his empress, the proud and handsome Agrippina, mother of Nero, shone at his side in a golden military cloak. Upon this Lake Fucinus, the nineteen thousand convicts in the twenty-four ships, were ordered, before the fight began, to defile near the shore in front of the imperial platform. They cried out to their prince, "Hail, General! we salute you before going to death!" "Joy to yourselves!" replied he; and these poor wretches thought that pardon was granted, and that the slaughter would not take place. "Claudius," says Suetonius, "became furious at this mistake; he threatened to destroy them by fire and sword; descended from his throne, and running along the shore, made himself ludicrous in the eyes of all the people by his unsteady movements." But alas! during his ferocious folly, a silver Triton, issuing from the depths of the lake, and sounding a trumpet, gave the signal for slaughter. "The combatants," says Tacitus, "shewed the intrepidity of the bravest warriors; and when much blood had been shed, the rest were spared." By this emperor, who was in some respects mild and kind, judge what the others must have been. Dion tells us that he had a lion killed, because the people of Rome had become too fond of him, on account of his skill in devouring men. But, at the same time, his passion for the games was so great, that one day, the supply of men to be devoured failing the beasts, he caused some of the crowd to be thrown to them—taking care, however, to have their tongues cut out, for fear they should complain before they were devoured. He was never tired, says Suetonius, of his fights of gladiators; expending for his pastime a great number of slaves. But what gave him the greatest delight was to see them kill one another during his breakfast. He liked to go to the public shows as soon as it was light, adds Suetonius; and constantly, whether the gladiators were at his own or others' cost, if one of them fell by any accident, he had his throat cut, in order to have the pleasure of observing his face at the moment of death. It happened one day that two of them, fighting under his eyes, ran each other through so completely with the same stroke, that Claudius transported with joy at seeing them fall together in their blood, ordered, that in memory of such a fine stroke, two small knives should be made for his use without delay, out of their two swords. And this emperor, I told you, was one of the least wicked who governed the empire!

But now, dear children, think, if such were the Beast in joy, what must he have been in fury; and having observed him in peace, judge what he was in war. Say if the Holy Spirit has not exactly depicted him as "dreadful and marvellously terrible!" It would be well then to shew him to you in war; and whatever page of his long history I might unroll, his feet would be always in blood. The great Cæsar tells us, in his famous Commentaries, that in nine years he completed the conquest of Gaul, (which then included Belgium, Switzerland, and Savoy, as well as France,) which became the prey of the fourth Beast, and made at last part of its immense body. There were reckoned three hundred distinct nations in Gaul, and three different languages spoken therein. But at the end of these nine years, these nations were obliged to submit to the horrible yoke; to renounce their liberty, laws, and property, and even their gods and their language. Cæsar, by his unlimited prodigality to the people of Rome, and by the favour of the conqueror of Jerusalem, the great Pompey, who was his son-in-law, obtained (with the office of "Sovereign Roman Pontiff," and with the command of Upper Italy,) permission, if he thought fit, to make war in Gaul. Thus his fortune was made; for it was a country worth pillaging. He had already stripped Lusitania; but the wealth of Gaul would purchase the empire. Thus, at the summit of joy, this audacious man ventured to say in full assembly of the people, "Henceforth, my foot stands on the neck of my rivals!"

After subduing the Swiss, Cæsar attacked the Germans established in Gaul, near the Rhine. He overthrew them in battle, pursued them to the banks of the river, and killed eighty thousand of them. This was his first year. Early in the spring of the second, he attacked the Belgians; and he made, says Plutarch, so great a carnage, that the Romans needed no other bridge for crossing many rivers, than the bodies of the slain, empty of blood, and floating in masses on the surface. After the Belgians, the Nervians, in the country of Hainault, Mons, Liege, and Namur, attacked in their turn, and furiously pursued into their ancient forests, were so nearly exterminated, that, at the end of the year, says Cæsar, of the ninety magistrates composing their senate, three only remained; and of the sixty thousand men forming their army, five hundred only remained. In the same year also, he took the capital of the country of Namur; sold "under the crown" all whom he did not kill; and when he inquired their number of the slave-merchants, who followed him everywhere, they said that they had bought fifty-

three thousand! Woe to Rome henceforth: for Cæsar has wealth enough to buy it! Of so much spoil, gained quickly by the extermination of nations, he sent presents of slaves all around: he gave public festivals to all the people of Rome, with innumerable gladiatorial games; and had these poor wretches taught, at his expense, the use of the sword, by soldiers and senators; he built a palace at an enormous cost; he doubled his legions, and gave to each soldier slaves and lands; while he overwhelmed with unheard-of presents, the senators, magistrates, and ladies, of the capital, in order to obtain by favour, and against law, the prolongation of his reign. In the third year, he went in person to exterminate the far-off people of Brittany. In a single naval battle were slain their choicest young men, on board of two hundred and twenty ships. And in his frightful cruelty towards the wretched remains of this great people, he had all their senators beheaded, and the rest sold under the crown of turf. In the fourth year, Cæsar, having cut to pieces an immense army of Germans established in Gaul, himself crossed the Rhine, ravaging the German territory; then re-crossing it to the left bank, he proceeded to the sea-shore, embarked at night, and carried the arms of Rome into England, which, until this time, was so little known, that it was looked on as a new world. In the fifth year, he crossed again into this island, where his first expedition had failed; he gained victories, crossed the Thames, had tribute promised to him; then returning to the continent, rushed back to Treves, in order to cut to pieces the revolted Gauls.

In the sixth year, he returned to Italy, there to follow up the gigantic projects of his ambition; but at the same time, his cruel exactions from his allies, as well as from the vanquished, had again made the Gauls revolt; for, says Suetonius, "in order to gain and spend fresh wealth, he lost no opportunity of making war, however unjust it might be, and for that end spared neither allies nor enemies." All France rose to arms, with the cry of despair: "Freedom or death!" It was the seventh year of his rule: the danger was imminent; Cæsar, then at Rome, gained partizans by enormous gifts; a golden river ran from Gaul into Italy, conferring powers upon him, which soon ruined for ever Roman liberty and honour. In the depth of winter, Cæsar, in spite of the snow, re-crossed the Alps; in his fury, he rushed against the unhappy city of Bourges, took it by assault; and of the forty thousand soldiers who defended it, eight hundred only escaped. He himself says, "Neither women, children, nor old men, were spared from

slaughter: none were even enslaved." Soon afterwards Cæsar met in a pitched battle the young and generous commander of the Gauls, whom he forced to retreat with eighty thousand men into the city of Alise, in Burgundy; he immediately surrounded it with a double circumvallation, with walls, towers, and ditches, in order to defend himself both on the side of the city against the besieged, and on the side of the country against an army of 240,000 men, assembled from all parts of Gaul. Think of what became of these eighty thousand men shut up without provisions, and of the population of the city soon deprived of food! Reduced to the extremity of hunger, the armed men made the women, children, and old men, go out through the gates. Cæsar hears their despairing cries; they ask the favour of being made slaves, but it is refused; they must die of hunger one upon the other between the walls of their own city and the ditches of their enemies. At last the town itself must surrender at discretion; and this large population is given by Cæsar to his soldiers one by one, to be sold for their profit in the slave markets; except twenty thousand men only, of Auvergne, sent back to their mountains, to restore obedience there. After this terrible revenge, Cæsar, in spite of winter, going on from place to place, destroyed all by fire and sword, till he had shut up his last enemies in the strong city of Usseldun. The wretched inhabitants, deprived of water by the Roman works, and reduced to the extremity of thirst, were obliged to surrender; but yet, their chiefs were first beaten to death with rods, and then beheaded; and the people were to bear their punishment, and thus to strike terror into all the towns of Gaul. "Cæsar commanded," says his secretary, "that all those who had taken arms against Rome, should have both hands cut off; in order that these criminals, going from town to town with outstretched mutilated arms, to beg for bread, might shew by their sufferings better than they could have done by their death, the cost of resisting the Roman people." At last the country was subdued; the three hundred nations in Gaul were under the yoke; all were reduced into Roman provinces; and everywhere, in order to make profit by the spoils of this great country, and to keep it for ever in bondage, colonies of Roman soldiers settled in towns and country, had Gallic prisoners for slaves, Gallic fields for domains, and Gallic houses for dwellings. The gold of this country had passed into Rome in such abundance, that it was sold there for nine times only its weight in silver; and, according to Plutarch's calculations, Cæsar had, in nine years of conquest, taken by force eight hundred

towns, subdued three hundred nations, and defeated in a course of pitched battles three millions of soldiers, half of whom were killed, and the rest sold for slaves.

Thus was rushing on the fourth Beast in his fury; thus were accomplishing God's Holy Scriptures; thus was developing the character given of this fatal empire; thus History was reproducing the features of Prophecy. The fourth Monarchy had appeared, such as God had described it by Daniel, so many centuries beforehand, as *strong, voracious, cruel, dreadful, and marvellously terrible*; in a word, unparalleled.

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## LESSON XXVIII.

### DANIEL VII. 7.

"And it had ten horns."

A VERY important question remains to be answered, in order to finish the distinctive marks of the fourth Empire, and to point out the great features of its history.—What are these ten horns? in other words, what are these ten kings that "shall arise out of this kingdom," as it is said in *verse 24*?—Certainly, the conception of ten great horns on the head of a beast is a strange one! Was anything similar ever seen in the works of God? It is then plain at first sight, that since this feature is so prominent upon the head of the Roman Beast, since also (as I have already told you), this Beast, when re-appearing three times in the Book of the Revelation, shews itself also three times armed with these ten horns, it is, I say, plain that this extraordinary and permanent feature of the prophecy relating to the Latin kingdoms, ought equally to correspond to the most extraordinary and most permanent feature in their history.—Well, dear children, this is what we shall soon acknowledge, and be filled, I hope, with renewed admiration.—We have seen the cruel nature of the Beast, and his bloody conquests; it only remains to consider his ten horns, in order to complete his political fate, with which also the highest interests of the Church are connected.

What are these ten horns? or what are these ten kings? This question will take up all our time to-day, and we must return to it

next Sunday. Most of you, perhaps, will be surprised at my intending to dwell so long upon a subject which seems to you so easy; for I am sure that if I questioned you upon it, you would be eager to reply. You have not forgotten the statue in chapter ii., nor its two legs of iron, ending in ten toes of iron and clay. Is it not plain enough, that the ten horns of the Beast point to the same object as the ten toes of the statue—since each vision represents the same empire of the Romans, and since the most characteristic event in its history is the invasion of the barbarians, and their division of the empire?—And as to these ten kings; I also doubt not that most of you remember them. Let one of you name them.—They were the ten Gothic nations, and their ten kings, who invaded the Roman Empire about the year 400.—Very well; and who also continued it under a new form.—But their names?—First, the Visigoths, under King Alaric.—Then? The Alani, Suevi, and Vandals, each with their king.—Well,—Then the Heruli, under their king Odoacen; the Ostrogoths, under Theodoric; the Franks, the Burgundians, under Gondebald; and lastly, the Gepidi and Lombards.—Very well; all these nations and their kings crossed the Danube and the Rhine, as if by common consent, in order to inundate the empire: they divided the whole of it among themselves; they became its aristocracy; they adopted its religion, laws and language; and it was under this new form, half Roman and half German, that they continued what has been from that time called “the Holy Roman Church,” and “the Holy Roman Empire.”

But in order to make myself completely understood by my young audience, I must enter into details, and must remind you of the notions of chronology and geography which I have already given you. Without attention to these two subjects, you would not be able to understand the very best explanation of prophecy.—Suppose that God had made you go up with Moses on Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, when by a miracle He made him see all the Holy Land, from Dan to Beersheba: doubtless you would have greatly wondered; but even with this miracle before your eyes, you must have comprehended it in order to enjoy it; and to comprehend it, you must have already known the geography of the Holy Land. Of what use would have been the miracle, if you had not known of the existence of these countries and their respective positions; or unless some friend had been with you on Mount Nebo, to do you the same service there as I am going to do you here—I mean, putting before your eyes a map of Canaan, and naming



all its parts, as the miracle shewed them. "That is the Sea of Tiberias—that is Lebanon—Carmel—Jerusalem." Then only would your admiration be complete, and your joy unmixed, because you would have comprehended the sight.

Well, dear children, I wish also, God helping me, that in studying Daniel your admiration be complete and your joy unmixed, because you shall have understood of what he is speaking. And here am I upon the mountain, while the goodness of God is shewing you the distant prospects of the world and of the Church, with *two* maps in my hand, one of places, one of dates (such as I gave you in the second chapter, when I was explaining Nebuchadnezzar's dream).—In the one, I shew you the time of Daniel, that of Cæsar, that of Constantine, that of the ten horns, that of the little horn; and in the other—"Here is the Mediterranean, the Danube, the Rhine; here is the territory of the Greeks, that of the Latins and of the ten horns, that of the three horns plucked up by the roots, and that of the little horn."—I must then, before going farther, question you on both maps. In what year must we place the *prophetical* beginning of the Empire of Babylon?—The year 606 B. C.—But did not that empire exist before that epoch, and have I not told you that the so-called Era of Nabonassar, or the year 747 B. C., marks its beginning with astronomers and with historians; but that in prophecy, the beginning of an empire dates from the time when it becomes, in its turn, the master and oppressor of God's people? In what year, then, shall we date the beginning of the rule of the fourth Beast?—In the year 65 or 63 B. C., when the Romans, under Pompey, destroyed the Greek kingdom of Syria and took Jerusalem.—What happened in the first year of the Christian Era? or, more exactly, four years before it?—The Birth of Jesus Christ.—Yes, dear children, it was at this ever-memorable epoch, under the rule of the Romans, and in the reign of Cæsar Augustus, that appeared on earth in the form of a feeble infant, in the stable of an inn, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, our great and merciful Saviour, the same "Son of Man," whom Daniel in his visions of the night beheld returning on the clouds of Heaven; that "Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God," but "was made flesh."—You see, then, that one of his first humiliations was to be born a subject of the fourth Beast. Before His birth, His mother had, on His account, to go to Bethlehem, by Roman orders, as under that government. The name of her Son, Jesus, had to be

inscribed in the Roman register of births, and thirty-four years later, in that of penal deaths. He paid taxes to Rome, He lived in subjection to Rome, He was put to death in a Roman way, and by Roman hands. It is true that Jewish priests condemned Him, but it was to Rome that they delivered Him up, and Rome that signed His sentence of death. "Knowest thou not," said the representative of Rome, Pontius Pilate, "that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" "Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above," answered He; (because it was decreed from on high, that the fourth beast should shed His blood.)—It was then Rome that shed the blood of "the Just One," at the demand of the Jews; they were Romans who tortured and insulted Him, and led Him to Golgotha, and there nailed Him to the Cross. The seal of the Roman Empire was put upon the stone of His sepulchre, and Roman soldiers kept guard there.

Observe then, dear children, that when the Son of Man appeared on earth, the fourth beast had held Jerusalem with his iron teeth, and nails of brass, for sixty-three years.—But soon the Holy Spirit came down upon the men of God. In thirty-four years only, the Gospel was proclaimed to the ends of the known world. Then the Beast sought to destroy it everywhere. Already in the year 67 A. D., in the days of Nero, the blood of Christians flowed in torrents at Rome. The pagan historian Tacitus relates that they were burned alive, devoured by dogs or lions, crucified, covered with pitch in order to make them burn when tied to stakes, and to be used as torches.—There have been reckoned, from the year 67 to 303 A. D., ten great and bloody persecutions of Christians by pagan Rome. The first was under Nero: it is that described by Tacitus, and in which St. Peter and St. Paul died.—In the second, it is said that St. John was thrown into boiling oil.—In the third, that venerable Ignatius of whom I have told you, was cast to lions.—In the fourth, was beheaded Justin Martyr, of whom I shall speak again; and that good old Polycarp, of whose noble death you heard, in the lesson on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.—In the fifth, (about the year 201,) Tertullian, son of a Roman captain, at Carthage, composed that beautiful Apology, in favour of the Christians, which we still possess, and which he addressed to the persecuting judges. "O magistrates," said he in conclusion, "judge us, torture us, exterminate us, call us *people of the faggots (sarmenticios)*, for thus to call us, is to recall our victory: your stakes are our triumphal cars.

When you reap us from the earth, we become more numerous, and the blood of our martyrs is the seed of the Church!"

But to go on with my questions.—How long did these ten persecutions last?—Till about the year 300.—Yes, that is to say, the tenth and last began on Good Friday of the year 303, at Nicomedia, and continued for ten years. It shook the whole empire, like an earthquake, and filled it with the blood of the saints. But at the end of ten years, two great events marked for ever the reign of Constantine the Great. I have before pointed them out to you in the table of dates; and the knowledge of them is necessary for your understanding of the ten horns. Let one of you recall them to us.—It was first the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, and afterwards the foundation of Constantinople.—Quite right; nothing could be greater nor more unexpected than the first event.—Fancy the astonishment, in the year 312, of the world which saw the Christians everywhere crushed under the feet of the fierce beast, and thought them destroyed, when suddenly this emperor declares himself a Christian. "Jesus Christ," said he, "the great God Almighty," (these are his own words,) appeared to him one night, and promised him victory! Immediately, he had the Name of Christ written upon his standards; and that Cross, of which the name alone was held in abomination by the Romans, even before the days of Jesus Christ—that Cross, which had become a hundred times more hateful to them, since the God of the Christians had hung upon it—that Cross did Constantine cause to be engraved upon the shields and helmets of his soldiers!—From that day, the most powerful enemies of the Cross, who regulated three-quarters of the empire, and who appealed solemnly to the ancient gods of Rome, were overthrown, by blow after blow, emperor after emperor, army after army. One hundred thousand idolaters fell in the battle of September 24th, at the Milvian Bridge, at the gate of Rome: and not only did these proud men, hitherto so feared, fall in battle; but they were in such terror and despair on their death-beds, that they confessed their crimes, shed tears, and recommended themselves by proclamations, to the Christians' prayers.—The Hand of the great God of Heaven was at that time visible; the Almighty made bare the arm of His holiness, as said Isaiah; and the most sudden, powerful, unheard-of revolution, overthrew in one day, the ancient paganism of Egypt and of Asia, of Greece and of Rome! And at what a moment! In the hour of its apparent triumph; at the very time when full of pride and bloodshed, erecting columns,

and striking medals *in memory of the extinction of Christianity*, it sent forth cries of victory, thinking the Church was expiring under its power! And behold, itself received the death-blow! Jupiter, Diana, Mars, overthrown in the same day! and all those gods who had been adored in the thousands of temples in the whole world, for immemorial ages, soon fell so low, that in a century, they were no longer mentioned in the whole world, except as a fairy tale or a night dream! Henceforth, it is the religion of Jesus Christ which shines as light from one end of the world to the other. Christians coming forth from their places of retreat or of exile, re-appear everywhere; thousands of men, hitherto secret admirers of the martyrs' faith, confess Jesus Christ and ask for Baptism. The Holy Bible in multiplied copies, is scattered in all places; missionaries carry it to distant nations; Christian schools, oratories, temples, superb basilica, are built throughout the empire; and thus it is, that thousands of souls, led by the stir of this great event to the knowledge of Jesus, are to enter into the way of life eternal.—Nevertheless, we must, alas! acknowledge that this magnificent triumph, at first accompanied with so many spiritual blessings, soon bore poisonous fruit and injured the Church; because its pastors, over-honoured, greedy of power, lovers of praise, and negligent of the Bible, soon became hostile to its doctrines. At that time appeared Arius, who denied the eternal divinity of Jesus Christ, and who, first pouring out his poison at Alexandria, found disciples everywhere. Bishops at the court, worldly priests, unbelieving flocks, welcomed him for a time, throughout the empire. The Church and the World had united; and thus a way was prepared for "that great apostasy" which St. Paul had foretold.

Now what was the second great event which marked the reign of Constantine?—The foundation of Constantinople, and the division of the world into the eastern and western empires.—Yes, Greek was spoken in the eastern, Latin in the western.—Constantine, who, in order to extinguish more completely in Rome the last breath of paganism, was thinking of creating another capital, saw in the admirable situation of Byzantium, between two seas, at the gates of the east and the west, everything suitable to the seat of a great empire. A short time sufficed him to make of it the most beautiful of cities. He summoned there all the most famous architects in the world, with armies of workmen; and such was the ardour of his proceedings, that at the end of two years this city, to which he gave his own name, was perfectly splendid,

not only by its capitol, circuses, obelisks, triumphal arches, ports, temples, and palaces, but also by a brilliant court, an imposing senate, but above all, by an immense population, who received, like that of Rome, yearly distributions of wheat and wine, so that very soon the Rome of Constantine greatly exceeded in magnificence even that of Romulus.—It was on Sunday, the 10th of May, 330, that this prince, with prayers and great pomp, dedicated it solemnly “to the God of the martyrs.” And here is something that will interest you; in order to represent these martyrs by their finest model, guess of *whom* was the colossal statue in brass erected in the Forum?—Of Daniel?—Yes, of our Daniel in the den of lions; of Daniel, calm, peaceful, and free from all hurt, “because he believed in his God.”

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### LESSON XXVIII (*continued*).

#### DANIEL VII. 7.

“And it had ten horns.”

Thus, then, passed the fourth century; I proceed to the fifth, it is that of our ten horns. What happened towards the year 400? The great invasion of the Barbarians, who divided among themselves the Latin empire into ten distinct kingdoms, continuing it under a new form. It is to this point that I wished to lead you, in order to explain the ten horns; but it was well, in order to make myself understood, first to shew you the preceding great scenes of history. Now, in representing the unparalleled fact of the division of the Roman empire by ten Barbarian nations, you will see with what divine precision this event is described in the Book of Daniel. The whole history of nations does not shew any example of such an overthrow since the Flood. The face of the world was changed; the social edifice was overthrown; masters became vassals and servants; the rough language of the Goths was heard in all the cities of the west; and the Goths themselves, hitherto gladiators and slaves of the Romans, became everywhere their lords, and in some places seized the third part, in others two thirds of their lands; arts perished, sciences were forgotten, civilization destroyed, and barbarism, in all its forms, covered the face of the west.

But what became, throughout the empire, of the poor children in this raging storm? There were no longer any means of instruction;

those who escaped with their life remained without culture, the people were to cease from learning; even the nobles and princes of that time hardly knew how to write, for the Germans were the nobility of the country, and the old Romans the common people.—Besides, of what use was learning in those sad days? The Goths despised it, and the Romans had not leisure for it; they were obliged to work for their new masters, in order to live; and it was not at that time easy to gain their living. Historians say that the sufferings of mankind at that epoch exceeded all that imagination can conceive, both in their nature and extent. To massacres were joined famine, pestilence, and wild beasts ravaging the land devastated by man. In many places, especially in Spain, those who were famished fed upon one another. Imagine also the fate of those thousands of beings, who, in Rome, had for centuries lived only upon the labour of others, and who, no longer receiving their bread from Africa and Sicily, failed of their subsistence when the Imperial fleets no longer entered the Tiber. Thus we read that during Alaric's invasion, the corn from Africa having failed, the people, at the games in the circus, cried out frantically, "Let human flesh be offered for sale, and let the price of it be taxed." On this subject, Saint Jerome, then very old, wrote from Palestine to some Roman ladies: "The city which has conquered the universe," he wrote in 412, to a young lady named Principia, "has itself been conquered, or rather it has perished by hunger before it was slain by the sword; and such was the desolation, that scarcely in this great city were found a few citizens to be carried away."—I repeat, that this great revolution of the fifth century so completely overthrew everything, that it has cut history in two; and that in reading the events which followed it, you might think they belonged to another world, did you not from time to time hear some ancient name, such as Rome, Milan, Ravenna, &c.

I propose next Sunday, please God, to trace the history of these ten Gothic nations and their Kings; but I wish first to shew you this little map of the Latin empire, on which I have marked the settlement of each of the ten kings.—I think it important to tell you that all historians make nearly the same nomenclature, as I do, of all these barbarous nations, who at that time shared the Roman empire; except, perhaps, that they take in some others, as the Germans, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Huns, whom I have not marked in my list, because their kingdoms were outside of the prophetic earth; they did not make part of it, as I will shew you by-and-bye. You doubtless remember the

map which M. Las Casas, Buonaparte's friend, drew of the same subject in his little historical atlas, and which you have perhaps studied in your week-day schools.—He, probably, was not thinking of the ten horns in Daniel, when he published this synoptical chart of the invasion of the Roman empire by the Barbarians; and yet he seems to have made it for us! He marks in it the same *nine* nations as we do; only he takes little account of the Heruli, only mentioning them in a note, and adding the Slavi, the Huns, the Anglo-Saxons, who all established themselves outside of the Latin empire; and the Saracens, who did not come till long afterwards.—I have told you that our ten nations were all of the same race, and scarcely differed except in name. “All,” says the historian Procopius, “spoke the Gothic language, had fair skins and yellow hair, were tall, and had good open countenances!” This man knew them well, for he was living nearly at the time of which we are speaking, going as private secretary to the great general Belisarius, when he fought against them in Africa and in Italy, from the year 533 to 540. He tells us that among all these nations there were four reckoned higher than the others, whether in number or character; “these were,” says he, “the Ostrogoths, the Vandals, the Visigoths, and the Gepidi.”—As to the Alani, as I had read in many of our best modern historians that they were of another race, I consulted Procopius, and am sure that they fell into this mistake, because this warlike people often joined the expeditions of the Huns, and the Slavi; but they were good Germans like the nine others; Procopius calls them positively “a Gothic nation.”—This was then the fate of the Roman empire until the fifth and sixth centuries.

It is now time to leave history, and to return to prophecy.—Repeat the short words of our text.—“And it had ten horns.”—If we had here no farther explanation of these words than the great facts of the Roman history, we should already understand that these *ten horns* prefigure, like the ten toes of the statue, the division of the empire into ten distinct kingdoms.—Throughout the Old Testament a horn represents power, splendour, a crown. How often we find in texts like these: “The Lord shall exalt the horn of His anointed;” (1 *Sam.* ii. 10.) “The Lord is my rock, my strength, the horn of my salvation.” (*Psalms* xviii. 2.) And even in the New Testament; “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,.....for that He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of His servant David.” (*St. Luke* i. 69.) It is in their horns that the power of some animals

exists ; they are their defence as well as their ornament. It is for this reason that from the word *Keren* (which means in Hebrew a *horn*) have come down to us, as well as to the Greeks and Latins, those of *corne and couronne* (horn and crown.)—You see, then, dear children, that we might at once say of these ten horns that they necessarily represent the divisions of the Latin empire into *ten* distinct kingdoms ; like as in chapter viii. *two* horns on the head of the ram represent the two associated kingdoms of the Medes and Persians, whilst the great horn of the Macedonian he-goat, which was broken to give place “to four other great horns towards the four winds of heaven,” signifies the great empire of Alexander broken into the four kingdoms of Macedon, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt, situated respectively at the four points of the horizon. But the Holy Spirit has not even left us the trouble of this interpretation, simple as it is ; for He tells us in plain words (*verse 24*). “The ten horns are ten kings that shall arise out of this kingdom.”—You hear, then, the ten horns are ten kings ; that is, according to the usual language, ten courses of kings, or ten kingdoms.

And mark well here, I pray, that although these ten horns appear on the head of the beast, at the opening of the vision, they are only there as yet by anticipation, since the Roman empire was to fulfil part of its destiny *before* the time when these ten kingdoms should arise out of it ; “they *shall* arise.”—This is my first remark on this passage ; but I shall have many others to make. However, this is enough at present ; and I only wish to-day to make you see how divine is the choice of these emblems. Observe with what simplicity, together with wonderful exactness, the great features of history are represented by the great features of the vision. See here how three or four bold strokes of the prophetic pencil are sufficient for the Holy Spirit to produce a sketch so strikingly true, that even a child when he has read history, cannot but exclaim, “That is the Roman empire.”—What is in history the most prominent feature of that empire ?—The greatness of its power, and of its cruelty.—Well, have you not seen in prophecy “this fourth Beast, dreadful, terrible, and strong exceedingly ?” But afterwards, what in the history of this empire is the greatest and most characteristic event ?—The invasion of the Barbarians.—Well, look at the picture of this fierce beast, or rather ask your youngest brother in shewing it to him, what part is the most striking ? Will he not immediately point to the ten horns ? You perceive then, dear children, (and we must not pass lightly over such manifestations of the divine truth of the



Scriptures,) and mark it well ; that as the ten horns of the fierce beast form its most striking feature in prophecy, at least till we come to that fearful little horn with eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things ; so the violent and lasting division of the Roman empire into ten distinct kingdoms forms its most prominent feature in history.

I would now have one of you read to us the passage which I have marked in the preface to Sismondi's history of the fall of the Roman empire ; it relates to the invasion of the Barbarians.—“It is the most important, the most universal, and the longest, of the convulsions to which mankind has been exposed ; it has destroyed one civilization in order to prepare the elements of another. It has comprehended in its effects all that portion of the human race, which at that time was conscious of its existence, and capable of preserving its memories ; all that part, consequently, whose written monuments have transmitted to us its thoughts. The Roman empire (which extended over all the earth at that time thought to be habitable) was invaded by all the nations which surrounded it, ravaged, depopulated, broken to pieces. We are the children of those men, not of the Greeks and Romans. With them began the languages we speak, the rights we acknowledge, many of the laws which rule us, the opinions and prejudices (more powerful than laws) which we obey, and which our descendants perhaps will obey also.”

Now, after these words of Sismondi, look again with respect upon this picture of the beast, which I drew for you from Daniel's description, and admire its exactness.—You know that nothing better characterizes a person or an animal than the head-gear : a lion has its mane ; a Turk, his turban ; a sheep, its two horns ; an European, his hat ; a Bernese woman, her horse-hair cap ; a Negro, his woolly hair ; a king, his diadem ; a Chinese, his skull crowned with a hairy streamer ; a mandarin, his pointed cap surmounted with a ruby ; a Pope, his tiara and his triple crown. Well, the Roman beast has the ten great horns for his head-armour.—Mark well, also, I pray you, a very striking characteristic of the feature thus portrayed ; which is, that the event here prefigured is not only gigantic, unparalleled both in itself and in its long influence upon the destinies of mankind, but also highly improbable.—I wish you might understand how unheard of, and almost impossible, this revolution would appear beforehand.—What man could foresee that this immense and warlike Roman empire, which seemed to embrace the whole world in its iron arms, reckoning that beyond its limits existed

only barbarous and ill-armed hordes, what man could foresee that this empire would be destroyed, not by intestine divisions, but by strangers? not by a single conqueror, like those who had destroyed the preceding empires, as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, or Cæsar, but by ten barbarian nations? by ten nations at enmity with each other, and constantly employed in exterminating one another.—Thus, nevertheless, were accomplished the decrees of the Almighty, and the oracles of His Scriptures.

I shall return on Sunday to these ten kings, because there remain to be observed in this prophecy many points which will shew you its beautiful and divine accuracy.—But I would not that even now any shadow of doubt should arise to weaken your admiration of these divine emblems; so I wish to tell you at this moment that in my following lessons I will shew you the error of the different objections that may possibly have been raised against our interpretation of the ten horns.—Only remember, in the meantime, that I am able to prove to you the three following truths concerning our ten kings: First, That these ten kingdoms, according to the unanswerable testimony of Daniel, should be sought for only in the territory of the Latins, and not at all in that of the Greeks, as certain unreflecting persons might have wished to assert.—Second truth: That, according to Daniel and according to history, the Roman empire, even after its division into ten distinct kingdoms, was to continue in existence under a new form until the end of time; and that, in spite of numerous revolutions, in spite even of the successive destruction of many of these ten primitive kingdoms, this empire was also, to the end of time, still to reckon always ten kingdoms within it.—Third truth: That our explanation of the ten horns is so conformable to the evidence of facts, that we may say it has been universally received; and that at least the most eminent of the Roman Catholics, as well as the most eminent among Protestants, have equally admitted it: for instance, the great orator Bossuet among the former, and the great astronomer Newton among the latter.—All these different interpreters, equally recognizing in the ten horns the barbarian kings who shared the Roman empire in the fifth century, hardly vary with each other, except in the enumeration of some of these kings.

But now I must stop; only let us not go back into our houses without thinking that we have been present at a great spectacle, by which I mean not only a great and terrible judgement of God, but also

a grand fulfilment of His holy Scripture. It is not only God destroying the world as in the days of Noah, and renewing the face of the earth as by another flood; but it is also God shewing us in prophecy this judgement, such as He had shewn it to Daniel in the visions of the night, more than one thousand years before its fulfilment.—What ought we then to do, my dear children? We ought to praise God for His power, and adore Him for His faithfulness. We should remember with seriousness, that all His other prophecies will be fulfilled with the same faithfulness and the same power; we must always look forward to that great day of Christ when all the rebellious nations shall be crushed, and all people shall serve Him, we must wait for Him, place ourselves under His government, and live only for His glory.—Read *Psalm* ii. 1, 11, 12.

The *next* lesson will be the first sentence only of the 24th verse; but we shall return some Sunday following, to the 8th verse.

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## LESSON XXIX.

### DANIEL VII. 24.

“But the ten horns are ten kings that shall arise out of this kingdom.”

If I were to tell you that a traveller coming to the foot of Mont Salève on the 10th of July at noon, rested in a cavern among the rocks, and remained there for three hours, you would receive my testimony on this fact, without either interest or effort. But would it be thus, if some one were to come and tell you, that on the same day, in the same hour, at the foot of the same mountain, below the same cavern, an atrocious murder was committed, and that then some person was thought to be seen issue out of his den, slip down to the base of the rocks, and fall upon his victim? No, doubtless! on the contrary, all the circumstances of time and place, which seemed at first of no consequence, would become highly important: you would say, “Is the exact time really known? where then is the cavern? is there no other in the same place? was *one* man only seen to climb up into it, and to come down out of it? Let us not judge hastily, let all the facts be made clear; the honour, liberty, and life even, of one of our fellow creatures hang upon this matter!”

Well, dear children! thus it is with the question, "What are these ten horns?"—I have replied, "Ten kings." "Very well, so they may be, but it is of little importance to me." (perhaps you thought) "whether this Latin monarchy was divided into ten kingdoms rather than into four; I do not care much about it!"—No, if that were all; but if Daniel now goes on to tell you, that in the time of these ten kings, and in this same Latin territory, we were to see a great enemy of God arise, who "shall subdue three kings, speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, &c. (*Versè 25.*) Oh! then, an immense and a purely religious interest is thrown into the question of the ten kings! Who are they? when did they arise? where are they now? and which are the three among the ten that were plucked up by the roots?—Henceforward you will see how important are these questions, not only in order to explain the prophecies of Daniel, but also those of St. John.—It will be no longer enough to repeat, as we did last Sunday, the names of the ten kings; we must do more, and must prove that we have *rightly* named them: in short, we must refute objections, and establish facts, as in our story of the cavern and of the murder.

I will then speak to-day of the first appearance of the ten kings.—In giving to you for this morning's lesson, the first words of the 24th verse, I have done two things to which usually I am equally averse; first, I have, against my habit, anticipated *this* verse out of its place in the chapter, because in it alone does the Angel give the explanation of the 7th verse, and I did not wish to return to our ten horns when we should have come to the end of the chapter.—Farther, I thought it right to devote a whole lesson to these first words only of *verse 24*, although I like commonly to take several verses for each Sunday's explanation.—But we must be content with slow progress all through this seventh chapter of Daniel, because of its great importance, and of its giving us, together with the second chapter, the key of all the prophecies, as said the great Newton, and before him the great Luther. The ten kings, and that terrible invasion of the Barbarians, shall now pass in review before you. Try to imagine what must have been that great avalanche of nations into the Roman Empire, when she heard its first thunder, about the year 400 A.D., on the death of Theodosius.—This great prince, who had kept them within bounds during his reign, died on the 17th January, 395. He left his vast empire between his two young sons: one, of ten years old, became, at Rome, Emperor of

the Latins; the other, of nineteen, was, at Constantinople, to govern the Greeks.—It was on hearing of Theodosius' death, that the Barbarian invasion began in all its fury.—Doubtless it had long been in preparation, and each year innumerable multitudes from the high regions of central Asia, rushed down like so many impetuous torrents, towards the distant countries of the west.—Reaching by turns the shores of the Danube and the Rhine, they met there the formidable Roman legions, with their men of iron. Year after year, myriads of these half-naked barbarians fell under the heavy weapons of the imperial soldiers. Yet, for more than a century, they did not cease crowding together against the Roman armies; as we sometimes see, in our great cities, the multitude, whom tumult has stirred up, rush upon the bayonets of an order-protecting force, because the hindmost ranks, scared, and not listening, push furiously against those in front of them, and force them to go forward. Thus in the year 400, did the crowd of barbarous nations press on, some on horses, others in chariots, and some on foot, from the mountains of China to the banks of the Oxus, from the Oxus to the Vistula, from the Vistula to as far as the Rhine. Excited by passion, eager for pillage, driven also themselves by other hordes, and pressed on by the triple spur of cupidity, fear, and hunger, they threw themselves against the Roman armies. The foremost in their march towards the west, were all of the great Gothic race; they all spoke some one of the idioms of that wonderful Teutonic language, from which have issued all the modern dialects of England, Holland, Germany, and Scandinavia; a language of which the great resemblance to the Sanscrit, Persian, and most of the other dialects spoken in Hindostan, has lately been recognized. All these nations, though called each by a name distinguishing it from the others, had names in common. They were sometimes called Geti (or Goths), sometimes Germans (or War-men), sometimes Allemanni (or *Men* of *all* nations). Descendants of Japheth by Gomer, they were pushed on from the east towards the west, by the Slavi, sons of Bos, Meshech, and Tubal; as these were in their turn, by the terrible Huns, who having come down from the Mongolian mountains, had already conquered the vast empire of China.—Often did these Gothic nations shed one another's blood in torrents, but not the less did they press forward into the Roman territory on the whole line of the Danube and the Rhine. In vain did they fall by thousands, through the better armed and disciplined legions of the empire: notwithstanding their losses, they were still so numerous, intrepid, and fond of danger, that they returned to the

charge, and even by their misfortunes learned to conquer. Already in the preceding century, the Emperor Constantine had incorporated forty thousand of them into his armies; so that they were soon able to unite their unconquerable valour with that military discipline which increases the strength of an army a hundred-fold, by the unity of manœuvres and of command. Besides, what an irresistible attraction to these men in their sombre forests, was the thought of fertile Gaul, of rich Spain, and above all of that Italy which their bards were constantly praising in their national songs. Italy, its gardens, fruits, palaces, its voluptuous cities!—Behind them, what did they see? barbarians, more barbarous than themselves, more menacing, more greedy, and more cruel.—Before them, riches, power, glory, and repose in glory!—Already, thirty years before Theodosius, eighty thousand Burgundians had gained permanent footing on the Gallic shores of the Rhine, by submitting to the laws of the empire; while on another side, innumerable Goths crossing the Danube, had equally obtained land in Thrace. But very soon, being oppressed by the officers of the Emperor Valens (the immediate predecessor of Theodosius), had these Goths conquered him before the gates of Adrianople, and had burnt him alive in a shepherd's hut.—At last, as I have said, this Theodosius, who had so long repulsed them, died after a reign of sixteen years; and the news of his death, made known to all the Gothic nations, became throughout their whole line the signal of advance. There was soon a great and enthusiastic stir throughout these hordes: the hour of fearful ruin had struck for the Western Empire; “The Almighty had lifted up an ensign to distant nations.”.....to speak with *Isaiah*, v. 26-28. Scarcely had the head of the Visigoths, the great Alaric, who lived beyond the Danube, heard that Theodosius was dead, than he crossed the river on the ice with his people, and the terrible cavalry of the Alani, who were accompanied also by innumerable Huns. He had ravaged Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece, for five years, and now turned westward.

The fifth century was opening; an age of grief and ruin! the time of the avalanche of nations!—I am going to give you the nomenclature and description of these barbarian nations; but remember that we are now speaking only of the Western Empire; I will tell you *why* of that only, by-and-bye.—In the year 400 was the signal of war given.—Whence is that first trumpet-sound? From the Visigoths (or Western Goths), who were the vanguard of this universal invasion. Alaric was at their head; they had proclaimed him king that same year. They

first ravaged Austria, part of Hungary, Illyria, and the Venetian territory. We might say, "There followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth." (*Rev.* viii. 7.) They took possession of Aquileia, sent out of this city into their own country a great number of captives, and made all Italy tremble. Though they were cut to pieces, yet, in two years, the Visigoths and Alaric returned; he was defeated at Pollentia and Verona, his wife and children taken, and he himself escaped only through the swiftness of his horse. But it was still in vain, that three years afterwards, two hundred thousand barbarians, the most part Slavi, who had also in their turn crossed the Danube, led by Radagaisius, and were joined by a great number of Burgundians, Suevi, and Vandals, were in their turn so completely routed, at the foot of the Appenines, that not one man escaped; for in the last day of the same year, 406, a deluge of more barbarians crossed the Rhine on the ice, and penetrated into Gaul. They were Alani, Suevi, Burgundians, and Vandals. From the 1st of January, 407, till the end of 408, woe to all the country between the Rhine and the ocean, between the Alps and the Pyrenees! It was cruelly ravaged, and the whole of it treated like a city taken by assault; its towns were full of corpses; and birds of prey with beasts of the forest, came even into the streets, to seek a frightful meal of human flesh and bones. Soon afterwards, on the 28th of September, 409, the Suevi, the Vandals, with the cavalry of the Alani, abandoned this devastated territory, crossed the Pyrenees, and descended into Spain, to seek fresh victims. They found the expected fertile and beautiful plains of this country as yet undisturbed.—Ermeric, king of the Suevi, established himself in Galicia; Gunderic, king of the Vandals, and brother to the terrible Genseric, settled in Betica, which from that time was called (after their name) *Vandalusia*, turned afterwards into *Andalusia*; Respendial, king of the Alani, established himself in Portugal.—There were, however, yet other Alani, who united with the Goths, settled at the mouths of the Ebro, and gave to the country, it is said, the name of Goth-Alania, or Catalonia; (as others, it is said, who remained in France, had given to their abode the name of Alani-comium, or Alençon.)—Thus in a few months, the vast and rich peninsula of Spain was covered with ruins; desolation had rushed over it like a tempest; it is said that the barbarians themselves repented of their ravages, for nothing had ever equalled their horror.—Olympiodorus relates, that those Romans, who instead of flight or slavery, had preferred shutting themselves up in walled towns, were forced to end in devouring one

another; and Bishop Idatius, who was living in Spain at that time, and has written a chronicle of it, declares that the misery was equally great in the country as in the towns. Such, he tells us, was the multitude of dead bodies thrown upon the high roads, that wild beasts had multiplied from the abundance of food, and that, emboldened by having fed so long on human corpses, they ended by attacking the living, and by committing frightful ravages on the people scattered by the barbarians over plain and mountain.

But listen again, for we have not done with Alaric and his Visigoths. He returned in 408, for the third time, more formidable than ever. He marched against Rome, which was already devastated by two other enemies, famine and pestilence. In vain was he told, in the hope of frightening him, of the millions of men contained in that Babylon. "So much the better," he replied; "the thicker the grass, the more will the scythe mow."—His retreat was however bought, and in order to pay for it, the churches were stripped of all their silver and gold, and vast treasures were laid down at his feet. He retreated, but returned a fourth time in 409; and a fifth time in 410; until at last, on the 24th of August in that same year, at midnight, he entered, with all his troops, the eternal city, as it was called, by the gate Salaria!—I have seen that gate, dear children, such as it was on that night of the Visigoths, fourteen hundred years ago: and when I was shewn those ancient arches, built by the Emperor Honorius, I paused beneath them in silent contemplation. I thought of Daniel, of his night visions, of the four monarchies, of the fourth beast, of his ten horns, of his little horns, of God's judgements on that murderous city, of the Jewish people still seen there in great numbers; and at last, of the fifth monarchy, and that reign of the saints which shall be manifested when the Son of Man, as Daniel has also foretold, shall have appeared in the clouds of Heaven, "and all His enemies shall become His foot-stool."—In that famous night when the Roman citizens were awakened by the blasts of the Gothic trumpets, and by all the military cries of all those German voices resounding under their porticos and their triumphal arches—in that memorable night, 1163 years had elapsed since the foundation of this world-commanding city, and 473 years since she had ruined Jerusalem.

But you must not think that all these Goths were heathens. Before making them the rod of His anger against the degenerate Churches, the same God Who had prepared them for the accomplishment



of His designs against the empire, had willed that they should have received something of the Gospel, in order that His hidden Church should not be swallowed up in this deluge of nations. Long had Christian missionaries been seeking them out in their distant forests, following them in their warlike course along the shores of the Baltic Sea, and on the cold banks of the Vistula and the Boristhenes. They had led the greater part of them into some knowledge of Jesus Christ; although afterwards they saw them perverted by Arian priests, who followed their traces everywhere.—“What a marvel,” wrote the old priest Jerome, in one of the many letters which he wrote to Roman ladies, “that the army of these fair-haired Goths should carry tents consecrated to the worship of the true God! It is for that reason, perhaps, that God has given them the victory over our armies!”—Thus in that night when he took Rome, Alaric dealt with it like a Christianized Goth. “Visigoths, this great city is yours,” said he to his soldiers, at the moment of assault; “but spare those without arms, and remember that I forbid, under pain of death, any outrage on the temples.”—To secure obedience to this order, he placed during the pillage, in the streets and on the bridge over the Tiber, from the Forum to the Basilica of St. Peter, two long hedges of Gothic soldiers, sword in hand, in order to protect the sacred things that were being carried to the temple. — The pillage lasted three days; and you can imagine the humiliation of the proud city. The streets and houses were inundated with blood; and in many places fire made great ravages. “She who had pillaged the world, is in her turn pillaged; blood flows through the empire,” wrote Jerome; “tears flow no longer, too many have been shed, they have dried up; blood alone continues to flow!”—Nevertheless, this taking, and this pillage of Rome, was to be only the beginning of sorrows to this proud city; and its greatest humiliation was not to be inflicted till the days of Odoacer, sixty years afterwards. Alaric died soon after leaving Rome. His kingdom of the Visigoths was not destined to take root in Italy; it was to be established in the south of Gaul, and in Spain.—This is the first kingdom; nine remain to us.

Listen!—Hardly had the Visigoths settled themselves in Spain, under their king Vallia, than a fresh trumpet sounds, carrying terror far and wide; that of the Vandals! Already, at the time when the Visigoths were ravaging Italy, three other Germanic nations, the Suevi, Alani, and Vandals, had invaded Gaul; but in 409, wearied by

the resistance of the walled towns, and, no longer finding subsistence in a devastated country, they had crossed the Pyrenees like a tempest, and invaded the whole of Spain.—I have named them to you before ; they form the second, third, and fourth kingdoms. But, behold ! in 429, the Vandals, crossing the Straits of Gibraltar, under Genseric their king, passed into Africa, took possession in a short time of the vast provinces belonging to the empire, and soon became a maritime power, much more formidable on its ships than it had hitherto been on its horses and war chariots.—From that time, woe to the shores of the Mediterranean ! It was, in that great sea, as if “a great mountain burning with fire was cast into it ;” as if “the sea had become blood.” (*Rev.* viii. 8.)—Genseric, who was fair, short, and lame, but bold, and indefatigable, having drowned his sister-in-law, and murdered his nephews, had just taken the supreme authority, and was long to be the terror of the empire.—As to his Vandals, they were men of blood and of crime, whose name has become a proverb for barbarity.—They had, in a few months, devastated all those vast countries now in possession of France—Morocco, &c. : countries so fertile that they were called the granary of Rome, and so populous that they were full of flourishing towns, of Holy Christian Churches, and of zealous servants of God.—At that time lived at Bona, called Hippo, and of which he was Bishop, the venerable Augustin, the holiest, tenderest, deepest, of the ancient teachers, the greatest and purest light granted by the Lord to His Church before the Reformation. He was now seventy-six years old, and had been converted forty-three years previously, after long resistance, either by the preaching of Bishop Ambrose at Milan, or above all by the tears and prayers of his good mother, who went with him from Africa into Italy : he laboured incessantly by his admirable writings to strengthen the Churches of God everywhere. You can judge of his unwearied labours, for even those of his writings which have come down to us fill eleven great folio volumes.—When the Vandals attacked Hippo in 430, by land and sea, for fourteen months, Augustin was seized by fever in the third month of the siege, and happily died of it.—From the beginning of his illness, he seemed more than ever in the presence of his God, full both of the joy of His salvation, and of the most humble feeling of his unworthiness. He had caused to be written near his bed, in letters large enough to be read by him without getting up, with his own age-enfeebled eyes, the 51st, the 130th, and the 143rd Psalms. From his death-bed, this holy Bishop read over and over again these three psalms, and recited them with many tears,

He allowed his friends to come into his room at the first morning hour only, in order not to be disturbed in his last hours of serious thought, and to be found quite ready at the coming of his Lord. He expired on the 28th of August, 430. But, "by his faith, though dead, he yet speaketh;" for his writings shed upon the following ages a long and brilliant track of light. The finest are his "City of God," his "Commentaries on the Scriptures," his "Treatises on Grace," and above all, his admirable "Confessions," where he gives, as before God, and in a spirit of constant prayer, the story of his errors, and of his conversion.—However, the Vandals, eleven months after the death of this man of God, took Hippo by assault, then Constantina; and at last, Great Carthage, in 438.—The power of this great empire soon became enormous; for not only did Genseric display it along the line of the African shores, from the Atlantic to the great Syrtis, but also did his Vandals, in thousands of ships, carry every year terror and desolation to one or other of the Mediterranean shores. In this way they took possession of Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily, till at last, in 455, their terrible Genseric, disembarking unexpectedly at the mouth of the Tiber, at the head of 800,000 soldiers, entered Rome, in his turn like Alaric, but in order to pillage it for fourteen days and fourteen nights, to carry off all its riches, and to transport to Carthage the most beautiful ladies of the empire, with innumerable other captives.—"Where do you wish us to conduct the fleets?" the Vandal pilots asked their king each year. "Wherever the winds and the vengeance of God shall lead us!" replied Genseric. Yet, after all, these winds and this vengeance of God carried only the second of our ten horns, the terrible king of the Vandals; while there were many others more lately arrived, and occupied at the same time in completing their work against the empire.

I must now tell you of the Franks, the Gepidi, and the Burgundians.—The Franks, who were likewise Goths, and spoke German like all the others, came under their king Theudemir, in 407, and under Pharamond in 417, to settle in Gaul, which from that time was called France.—The Gepidi were, according to Procopius, one of the most powerful Gothic nations. Conquerors of the Huns under Ardaric their king, and quitting trans-Danubian Hungary, which they named Gepidia, they crossed the Danube, and founded, on the Save, in 553, the kingdom of Sirmium, established themselves in Styria, where their kings had for some time the name of kings of Sirmium, and ruled between the Danube and the Alps.—The Burgundians who, driven out

of northern Germany by the Gepidi, had already in 407, gained territory in Belgium, crossed anew the Rhine in 439, under their king Gundioch, and formed themselves into a kingdom; in Savoy, from the foot of the High Alps to the Rhone; in Switzerland, from the lake of Neuchatel to that of Geneva: and in France, from the Jura to the Saône.

I have only as yet spoken of seven of our ten kings; and yet, before finishing this lesson, I must tell you that in the midst of the tumult of all these Gothic nations, there were yet fiercer cries of a hideous people not of their race, who did not speak their language, and who, in spite of its innumerable armies, and its formidable invasions of the Roman empire, was not to form a kingdom in it, and should never be reckoned among the ten horns.—I am speaking of the horrible Huns and their Attila, who rushed furiously from the frontiers of China, threatening the entire West with irremediable ruin.—God had destined them to consummate the ruin of the empire, and to prepare, even by their ravages, the way for our ten kings. You shall hear more about them next Sunday.

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### LESSON XXX.

#### DANIEL VII. 19, 20.

- “19. Then I would know the truth of the fourth Beast,.....  
20. And of the ten horns that were on his head.”

WE also, like Daniel, “would know the truth” concerning them. Therefore we must take care not to confound the nation of the Huns with the ten Gothic kings who founded ten kingdoms in the Roman empire; for the great Attila, though more capable, more audacious, and more powerful than all of them, never attained to establishing a kingdom in the prophetic territory. He ran through it like a destructive meteor; but he also vanished from it like a marvel of the air; while the world, terrified at the report of his ravages, had soon to ask with astonishment, what had become of this colossal empire, which in Attila’s life-time had stretched from the shores of the Rhine to the mountains of China.—These Huns came from afar upon the Latin empire. Starting from the shores of the Yellow Sea, they first conquered the country of the Manchoos at the north of China, and made themselves masters of that immense empire; then, harassed by intestine struggles, and urged

on by famine, they marched towards the west, at the beginning of the fourth century, and, separating themselves into two great bodies for the march, stationed the one upon the Oxus, the other on the Ural.—Thence, under their leader Balamir, they, in 376, started again westward; and speedily traversing Russia, Prussia, Poland, and Hungary, they there so crushed the power of the Goths, that when Attila appeared at their head on the Roman frontier, he held already under his rule, the Alani, Ostrogoths, Gepidi, Suevi, and Heruli, as well as the Marcomans and Sarmatians. Even the kings of all these conquered nations were seen marching in person, like generals of division, in this immense army.—Think of Europe's terror at the approach of this scourge.—We were able perhaps to form some idea of it when the dreadful cholera, which came, like the Huns, from the east, advanced also like them, from year to year, towards the west. You are all too young to remember it; but had you seen, like your elders, with what anxiety, when people asked each other, Where is it now? the answer was heard, It has already crossed from India into Persia! then, It is in Syria! in Poland! in Hungary! and at last, It is in Paris! in London!—then you would have some idea of the Empire's anguish at the daily increasing rumour of the approaching Huns.—They destroyed everything on their way across the world; and the remote dread of their approach had already urged the ten Gothic nations to rush into the west.—But one day, in the spring of 447, the news was brought to Rome that the Huns had crossed the Danube, were marching against the Greek empire, and slaughtering everyone on the way! Three years later, in the spring of 450, it was heard at Rome that the Huns were traversing Germany, rushing like a storm! that they had crossed the Rhine, ravaged Gaul, and were already threatening Rome! In fact, the horrible Attila had shewn himself to astonished France at the head of 700,000 soldiers, almost all cavalry. In a short time he had taken by assault and reduced to ashes, Strasburg, Worms, Spire, Trèves, Mayence; afterwards, Laon, Toul, Tongres, Rheims, Besançon. Metz had been burnt down on Easter Day; then Auxerre, with fifty leagues around. It was a more devastating invasion than all those of the Goths, with more numerous armies, more barbarous men, and more inhuman hearts. They ravaged for the pleasure of destroying; they lived upon cruelty. "The grass shall no more grow where my horse has trodden," said Attila. Besides, they were horrible even to look at; not like the tall, fair, blue-eyed Goths, who, under rude and too often cruel manners, had something of German kindness. No; short, stout, dark-skinned, they were as ugly as they were ferocious.

They did not speak the Gothic language, but an unknown one; and assembled at the sound of the great hollow shell of the Tartars.—Listen to what Sismondi quotes from Jornandés, who was a Goth, and notary of the king of the Alani; he became a Christian and a bishop, and wrote in Latin a history of the Goths. He says, that “The Huns, by the terror inspired by their faces, put to flight those whom their valour could not conquer. The livid colour of their skin was something fearful; the face was a mass of deformed flesh, in which two black and squinting points held the place of eyes. Their beardless face was tattooed by fire.”—Ammius Marcellinus says, that “They were not taken for men, but for beasts standing up on their hind feet.”—Other historians often called them Ugres or Ogres, which was their generic and primitive name; and I think that probably from thence came that strange and fearful name with which young children are too often frightened by foolish nurses.

But think of the misery of Europe. Famine in that year, 450, say the historians, was so severe, especially in Italy, that fathers and mothers devoured their own children. Nothing in the whole century equalled the scourge of the Ogres led by Attila. It might have been called “A burning comet fallen on the western earth,” or, as in *Rev.* viii. 10, “A great star burning as a lamp,”—thrown upon the Rhine, the Marne, the lake of Constance, the Ticino, the Adige, the Po, and “on all the fountains of the waters,” which flow down from the Alps into Upper Italy; for it was in all these waters that such torrents of blood were shed by him.—We must imagine at the head of such a people, a being such as Attila, a man as fitted for the command of them by his genius and boldness, as by his cunning, by his iron will, and by his cruelty. When I call him great, it is on account of his high powers; for he was very short in stature, with flat head and nose, yellow face, and small eyes, but active, indefatigable, often angry, always imperious, but dignified, and as equitable to his Huns as inexorable to his enemies. He liked to call himself “the Scourge of Nations, and the rod of God,” like the first Napoleon after his Prussian campaign. Master of an empire four times greater than that of Napoleon, he aspired like him to universal sovereignty. Equally skilful also in leading immense armies, and in making himself obeyed by twenty warlike nations, he was seen, fourteen centuries ago, to enter France at the head of 700,000 soldiers and innumerable chariots of war; as we saw, not half a century ago, Napoleon enter Russia at the head of

647,000 men, 187,000 horses, and 1,372 pieces of artillery.—Around Attila were, always on horseback, and always trembling, kings, princes, and generals, awaiting his orders, and radiant with gold and diamonds, while he was clothed in a simple unadorned garment. He preferred sitting upon a wooden seat, drinking out of a wooden cup, and eating upon a board. Among those horsemen who were prancing at his side, there were Valamir, king of the Ostrogoths; Ardaric, king of the Gepidi; Sangipan, king of the Alani, and many others; like as around Bonaparte were the kings of Naples, Spain, Westphalia, Saxony, the Viceroy of Italy, the son of the king of Wurtemberg, sometimes even the king of Prussia, and others also. Attila's proud words were unequalled. He caused divine honours to be paid to him; he spoke of the sky descending, and the stars falling before him, like as poor Bonaparte in his prosperity acted the part of Jupiter, and spoke of his "thunderbolts." Alas, dear children, in their place we might have done the same; such is the weakness and folly of the poor human heart! Nevertheless, after Attila had again sacked Cologne, Tongres, Arras, and Orleans, in his French expedition, he was at last conquered himself in the terrible battle of Châlons (as Bonaparte was in that of Leipsic), and lost in a single day 170,000 of his warriors. "What a pity," said the Goth Jornandés, in relating this battle, "that by the mad fury of one man, all that nature had taken so many years to produce, should be destroyed in a few hours."—Yet Attila re-crossed the Rhine only to carry on his ravages elsewhere: and in spite of the slaughter of Châlons, he was seen the following year, at the head of 400,000 men, to cross the lake of Constance, and to traverse the Swiss Cantons, in order to go and devastate all Upper Italy in a few months, besieging its towns with innumerable machines, and destroying one after the other, Padua, Pavia, Vicenza, Treviso, Cremona, Mantua, Milan, Turin, till at last he took by assault Aquileia the powerful, where the best soldiers of Rome had shut themselves up, and where every living soul was killed.—What would have happened to Rome herself, the object of his most ardent desires, if she had not hastened to arrest his progress, by laying at his feet immense treasures, and by promising him, as a wife, Honoria, sister to the Emperor, just as, thirteen centuries later, Maria-Louisa was promised to Napoleon?—Then this terrible man re-crossed the Danube, but was always talking to his Huns of Rome, and promising them to return thither. Certainly there would have been an end both of this capital and of all the empire, if God had not in the following year arrested by death this angel of death. One morning, after a wedding-

feast the night before, his attendants came into his tent, and found him dead in his bed, a man of blood—he was vomiting blood, and floating in his own blood. He was put into a golden coffin, which was inclosed in a silver one, and both in another of iron. Care was taken, in order to conceal his sepulchre, to kill all those who buried him. His great empire, like that of Bonaparte, vanished away after his death; and no more remained of this conqueror, and of his inroad into Germany, Poland, Scythia, Italy, and France, than the ruins with which he had everywhere encumbered the ground, and the sinister echo of a name, become for ever the symbol of devastation. However, notwithstanding all these ravages, and the seven kings that I have already named, the power of Rome was not to receive its death-blow till twenty years after Attila. A fresh wound, more humiliating and more fatal, was to be inflicted by the eighth horn. Listen! it was in 476, that the Heruli, who had come down from Scandinavia, and had long followed the standard of Attila, blew their trumpets under the porticos of the Capitol. Historians describe them as rapid in their course, and more fitted than others for fighting as the vanguard. Their old men chose to be burnt by their near relations as soon as age made the life of a soldier impossible to them; and widows strangled themselves on the tombs of their husbands. This victorious nation had Odoacer for their chief. The Roman nobles, dissatisfied with their emperor, invited him themselves to come and deliver them from a hated tyrant. He sets out from the shores of the Danube, where he had already established a powerful kingdom; he crosses the Alps, cuts in pieces the imperial army, pursues it as far as Pavia, takes that important city, and is there proclaimed king of Italy, takes possession of Ravenna, and without delay marches to Rome. His army, lately clothed in skins of beasts, but now magnificently dressed, present themselves at the Flaminian gate; the Romans all go out to meet him, in order to give him the keys of the Eternal City; their emperor puts off publicly the purple robe, and the senate proclaim Odoacer king of Rome and Italy.—Behold then, this proud city, after 1229 years of rule, dispossessed for ever of its sovereignty! The ancient empire of the Romans seems come to its end; at least, “the sun” of this imperial power, which had so long shone upon the three parts of the old world, “was smitten and darkened in the third part of its orbit,” as says St. John in *Rev.* viii. 12. And now the new kingly power of the Teutons will alone shine in its stead over all the Latin territory.—When this great event occurred for Rome, it was 540 years since this empire, by setting its foot upon Jerusalem, had become the



fourth of the four monarchies, and the oppressor of the people of God.— Thus were accomplished the counsels of the Almighty.

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LESSON XXX (*continued*).

DANIEL VII. 19, 20.

“19. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast,.....

20. And of the ten horns that were on his head.”

BUT we must hasten with the history of the ten kings.—How many have we had already?—Only eight, because the Huns are not to be counted.—Quite right! there are then still two left; and you will perceive here two things: first, how the place of the three last was in Italy; and secondly (but later), how it was precisely these three last who were to be plucked up “before the little horn.”—When Odoacer and his Heruli had become masters of Italy, it might have been thought that at length calmer days were going to arise upon this land, watered with so much blood; for Odoacer was a great man, and ruled wisely. But no! he was to disappear in his turn, after a sixteen years’ reign, before a king still greater than himself, like his Heruli before other Goths more valiant, or at least more fortunate.—I am speaking of Theodoric, and of his Ostrogoths. Listen!—Theodoric was at this time thirty-three years old, and king of the Ostro- (or Eastern) Goths. He early acquired the art of commanding, because the king, his father, had sent him at eight years old to the court of Constantinople, after having obtained from the emperors leave for the establishment of his Ostrogoths at the south of the Danube, on the Roman territory. At the age of seventeen, Theodoric succeeded his father on the throne of his Goths; and while still their king, he was appointed Roman consul, and captain-general of the imperial guard.—In 488, the emperor of Constantinople, who hated Odoacer and the Heruli, invited Theodoric to put himself at the head of his people, in order to go and overthrow the new throne in Italy. This young prince, warmly embracing the proposal, raised up for the war the whole race of Ostrogoths. Not only men set forth, but women, children, slaves, flocks, all together. They crossed the Alps, and fell suddenly upon Italy. In the end, after a four years’ struggle, the unfortunate Odoacer, in spite of his heroism, was conquered, betrayed, and assassinated, thus leaving free place to

his rival.—Thus the Ostrogoth kings, masters in their turn of Ravenna, and of Rome, were to wield the sceptre of Italy for seventy-five years.—This was the ninth horn.—Theodoric, whatever may have been his perfidy at first, was like Odoacer, a great king. His throne was at Ravenna, and he reigned over Illyria, Austria, and the south of France, as well as over Italy, and over his Goths; so that it might once have been thought that this powerful monarch would regain for himself alone the sceptre of the west.—However, in that same year, 493, when Theodoric caused his rival to be assassinated at a banquet, a very different scene was passing in our city of Geneva, which was to have a powerful influence on the future of France, and of which I must tell you something.

There was a young and beautiful German lady, of the Burgundian race, named Clotilda, living within our walls with a young sister. Daughters of the last king, Chilperic, whom Gondebald, his brother, had put to death, they were kept by their uncle in a convent close to his palace. But such, according to legends, was the fame of Clotilda's charms and merits, that Clovis, a German like herself, wished to make her his wife. Others assert that this brutal and sanguinary king of the Franks was yet more attracted by the inheritance of Clotilda than by all her virtues. However that may be, he sent to Geneva, secretly, Aurelian, one of his generals, who, concealing himself under the dress of a monk, arrived there one Sunday, at the hour when the two young girls, at the convent gate, were giving alms to the poor of the city. "Come in, poor stranger," said Clotilda to him, "and let thy feet be washed." But the pretended monk, while she is herself ministering to him, takes her fair hand, and slipping the royal ring upon her finger, tells her forthwith the object of his mission. Clotilda, transported with joy (say the legends), gave in her turn to the monk her own ring, for the king of the Franks; and he, as soon as he had received Aurelian's message, demanded her in marriage from her uncle Gondebald, who dared not refuse her to him, and who sent her off from Geneva in a chariot drawn by four oxen. But soon changing his mind, he sent some horsemen in pursuit of her; however, she was determined to go on, mounted a horse, and galloped away as far as Soissons. This story is sad, notwithstanding the embellishments of the papal historians, for the husband whom Clotilda chose was a pagan. We are indeed told that she got him to be baptized; but this king of the French was a sorry member of the Church of Christ. Sismondi

tells us that his whole life was from that time only a course of cowardly perfidy and cruel assassinations. However, we must say also that the Christians of the Roman cities were worth nearly as little at that time, and that the baptism of Clovis had great results for the future of all his people.

We have got now *nine* of the horns; one only remains to be mentioned—the Lombards.—If the Visigoths, who first invaded the Imperial territory, were the van-guard of the great barbarian army, the Lombards were to close the march. The most formidable warriors are chosen for the rear-guard of an army, in order to keep the other corps in their places, and to strike terror into the enemy. The Lombards (like the Gepidi, to whom they were long subject) came down from the cold regions of Scandinavia. They had first devastated almost all the provinces of Poland and of Germany, under their king, Gudehoc, in the time of Odoacer; but it was not till 526 that they crossed the Danube for the first time, and established themselves in Pannonia, on the territories of the Empire. They were called *Lombardi*, on account of their long halberts, it is said. They wore loose garments, and small laced boots; the back part of their head was shaved, while their long yellow hair divided in front, and falling on each side of their bearded face, increased their frightful appearance. Their language was German, like that of all the Goths.—In 553, their king, Alboin, having conquered the Gepidi, and with his own hand killed Cunimond, their king, cut off his head, and had the skull ornamented with circles of gold, for a banqueting cup. It was preserved long after his time, under the name of “Schala,” at the Lombard court, being placed on the royal table at great festivals, to hold the best wine.—In April, 568, Alboin, abandoning to others the plains of Pannonia, which he had occupied forty-two years, crossed the Alps, with all his wives and children, and all the treasures of his people, and advancing furiously upon Upper Italy, soon conquered it, and gave it the name of Lombardy, which it still bears. His soldiers, at Milan, had raised him upon a shield, and proclaimed him king of Italy, with triumphal shouts.—Alboin, like Odoacer and Theodoric, knew how to be a great king.

And now, dear children, I will again shew you the map of the ten kingdoms, in order that their position in the Western Empire may be familiar to you.—It is nearly similar to that which Las Casas drew at

St. Helena, under the inspection of Bonaparte, when he wished to shew him plainly the march and the settlement of the barbarians in that vast Latin Empire which he himself had conquered and ruled.—Let one of you enumerate again the ten horns, but by their respective countries.—I had to place three in Italy, one in Austria, two in France, one in Africa, and three in Spain. Which are those in France?—That of the Burgundians, and that of the Franks.—Right; but it was also from France that the Visigoths, who had first established themselves there, departed, to go into Spain.—And now, which in Spain?—Three: those of the Visigoths, of the Alani, and of the Suevi.—Yes, in 409; but without including the Vandals, who from Spain crossed over into Africa in 429.—And now, which in Africa?—That of the Vandals, to whom many Alani united themselves.—Which in Austria?—That of the Gepidi, at Sirmium, under Ardaric, their king.—Right; from thence also the Ostrogoths and the Lombards came later into Italy.—Which then in Italy?—Three: those of the Heruli, of the Ostrogoths, and of the Lombards.—Yes, the Heruli, in 476, the Ostrogoths in 493, and the Lombards in 568.—Thus, then, was completing, in this tumult of nations, the bloody college of the ten kings, which Daniel had looked upon from his bed in Babylon 1123 years beforehand. Thus were accomplishing the judgements of God, in the midst of the greatest revolution experienced by the world since the days of the Flood. Thus God, in bringing together the nations of the world, from China to the Rhine, in order to throw them all at once upon the guilty Latin Churches, caused these ten barbarian nations to reach, at their exact time, those ten portions of the Empire which were assigned to them in His providential decrees. And nevertheless, in this division the Latin Empire, instead of coming to an end, was to continue in a new form, making always one body only, with Rome still for its head, as we shall see by-and-bye.

My children, admire then the powerful unity with which God brings the events of an age to *His* appointed end. What an imposing sight was that of all these barbarians rushing down from the East and from the North in numberless multitudes, crossing the Baltic in their boats, issuing from their forests on their wild horses, passing over rivers on the ice; and all for the fulfilment in the Roman Empire of Daniel's prophecy? and all done with the united action of a great army under the same commander, who, by wise manœuvres, had advanced to the conquest of an empire, itself the conqueror of all

others? Does not this shew us that the God of prophecy governs and guides the thousands of nations on the earth, as He guides the thousands of worlds in the sky? Yes, even when roused by their passions, they think only of following their fierce instincts, He makes them hear, unrecognised by them, *His* voice in their fury; they follow it without knowing that they do so; and thus it is that from out of the furious contests of all these savage nations, He brings, at their time and to their place, each on a separate throne, the ten kings whom He had shewn to Daniel more than a thousand years before? For He has appointed them to complete the destiny of the fourth monarchy, to infuse into the unhealthy veins of this great body a more generous blood, to open the way to the man of sin, and in the end to prepare the triumphs of Jesus Christ! Imagine the sight of these strange nations, as they reached the frontiers of the Empire. Sidonius describes them "with naked arms, thighs, and legs, their feet shod with horse-hair boots up to the ancles only, with garments of divers colours, scarcely reaching beyond the knees or shoulders; they like to wear green cloaks bordered with red; their sword-belt hangs from the shoulders; their ears are covered with tresses of their hair; their halberts have a hooked iron; and their two-edged war-axes are thrown against the enemy." Besides, do not think that they left their wives and children behind. The white or red haired little ones hung from the shoulders of their mothers in a sack, or in a basket on the back of some horse; while the elder ones already marched in the ranks beside their fathers. And as for these tall mothers, they were worthy of following these warriors, for they increased their ardour, and were often seen in the tumult of battle, animating the masculine courage of their husbands, exhorting them to die, and dying with them.

But where were all these Gothic races at the time when Daniel beheld them from his bed in Babylon, in the first year of Belshazzar? Where were these nations who were to come, 955 years after the prophecy, and throw themselves into the last of the four monarchies?—They were living in the distant regions of Asia, on the table-land of the Altaic mountains, in the high valleys of Hindoo-Cutch, of Cashmere, and of the Himalaya. The great Odin, who was in after time to lead them into Scandinavia, and of whom they were to make a god, was not yet even born; and nevertheless, all their paths were already traced in the councils of the Most High, and foretold in His Word. It was there said that four great monarchies yet to come were to govern the

world, and that all these Goths were to invade the fourth, where ten kingdoms and ten crowns were prepared for them.—And now behold, in the year 400, (that is, 955 years after the vision,) all these Gothic nations advancing in battle array. “Forward! forward!” resounds in all the Teutonic dialects. From whence can this order arise out of this confusion and tumult? Why do all these chiefs of the different races, who only think each of his own interests, and who hate and fight one another as often as they meet—why do all these generals, nevertheless, march altogether against the Roman empire, as if they were going to give battle scientifically, like as we might see the great corps of one and the same army advance in order one after the other, to break the enemy’s line at a fixed point?—Have they then one and the same plan, one and the same commander-in-chief? Yes, and the signal is given to them. But who has given it? Not Alaric, not Attila; it comes from on high. And where is the plan? it exists, doubtless, but it is unknown to the chiefs. If you enter their camps, you will find there only contradictory projects, and discordant wills. Whence comes it, then, this imposing and terrible unity, this majestic course of converging manœuvres, executed with precision upon the whole line?—Ah, dear children, it is Daniel’s plan which is being executed. Behold all these Gothic kings advancing furiously, each as if he had been alone; do they suspect that their history has been written 955 years before, in a book of the Jews? that a prophet has already counted them at Babylon, in the first year of Belshazzar? Perhaps they think that it is chance which leads them; perhaps they talk of *their star*, as did often poor Napoleon the First, and also the counsellors of king Louis-Phillippe, and the deputies of his parliament.—No, there was for these Goths a great Commander-in-chief, who led them, great, but invisible. Behold *His* skilful manœuvres; thirty nations advance with standards flying; the field of battle is spacious; the left is on the Black Sea, at the mouths of the Boristhenes and the Danube; the right is near the Baltic and the North Sea; the reserve on the Volga; the front extends from the Lake of Constance to the mouths of the Rhine; the advanced posts are already in our Alps, on our lakes, in the Vosges, in the Ardennes; the whole army is marching in attacking columns, and the trumpets are heard along the shores of the Danube and the Rhine. The passage of the troops will last more than a hundred years. When the Vandals shall be already in the plains of Algeria, and on the two slopes of Mount Atlas, the Ostrogoth battalions shall defile in the Alps, and the Lombards of the rear-guard will again march into the Illyrian valleys,

with their great lances on the shoulder, and their long hair hanging down on each side of the forehead. All this reminds me again of Bonaparte. Some of you have perhaps read how, in 1812, at the head of all the Latin kings and of all the German tribes, he entered, by a contrary march to that of the Goths, into the vast Muscovite empire, having divided his army into three bodies; the Prussians to the left, on the Baltic; the Austrians to the right, on the Boristhenes, and all the other European continental nations in the centre, on the Niemen. I know not how many marshals, princes, and kings, were marching with him to lead all these bands, yet each of them receiving his orders from him alone. There was indeed a plan for this bloody campaign; no one knew it except Bonaparte; but if you had been admitted into his tent, he might have shewn you the map of it (as you are here shewn the design of God in this seventh chapter of Daniel), and in it each corps had its appointed *place*, and *time*, and *duty*. Well, thus it was in the invasion of the Goths. The plan of the campaign was already in the tent of the Sovereign; the sketch of it had been given to Daniel in his night vision; all these kings marched according to this plan without knowing it, and the Almighty was leading them. Look then again well at our map of the ten kingdoms, for it is the map of the grand field of battle, after the contest was ended, and the ten kings had established themselves. Look at it carefully, because we shall have to return to it when we speak of the three "horns plucked up before the little horn," and because a perfect knowledge of this first great drama is absolutely necessary for the understanding of that which will follow. I have told you that Las Casas, Bonaparte's friend, drew at St. Helena an almost similar chart to mine, thereby making himself an interpreter of Daniel. If, when Las Casas was shewing the way of the ten Gothic kings, and the division of the Latin Empire, to Bonaparte, who had possessed Rome like Alaric, shaken the German world like Attila, and led all the Western nations, from the Loire to the Boristhenes, these two men had perceived that Daniel had traced, 2400 years ago, the same charts as themselves, and that in them he had pictured to us future ages, as history now describes past ones, they would perhaps have together adored Him Who rules the world, and Who gives or takes away diadems at His pleasure! This modern conqueror would perhaps have understood that the King of Heaven had led *him* also from Italy to Egypt, from the Nile to the Mançanares, and as far as to the Moskwa, in order to be to the world, like Attila, "the rod of His anger," and that when

at last he overthrew him on the field of Waterloo, and cast him away as an unserviceable weapon, to go and finish his long drama on a rock in the Atlantic, it was in order there to bend his pride, as of a demi-god, and to demand of him an account for all the human blood shed like water.—“When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall set on His right hand,”—not kings, nor conquerors, nor men of genius, nor the rich, the powerful, the clever (if they have *only* been rich or clever, men of genius, conquerors, or kings), but the meek, the gentle, the beneficent, the humble of heart, who shall have believed in His Word, and done good for the love of Him.—See *St. Matt.* xxv. 31-46.

## LESSON XXXI.

### DANIEL VII. 8.

“I considered these horns.”

WE are come back to the 8th verse. The prophet takes care to tell us that he “considered” these horns, so deep was his astonishment at the sight of this noble symbol, and so lively the interest he felt in it. Our great reformer, John Calvin, in the lessons which he gave to our ancestors 280 years ago, in a church close by, on the prophet Daniel, commended specially to their attention these first words of our verse, “I considered these horns;” properly meaning, said he, “I listened;” that is, “I was attentive to these horns.” “Do not think, he added, that it is without reason that Daniel speaks thus. He wishes to lead us as well as himself to true meditation; for what is said of the fourth beast is above all memorable; and that is why God caused Daniel to be astonished. It is, therefore, our duty not to read carelessly what is here written, but to ponder diligently what the Holy Ghost signified by this vision.” Let us follow Calvin’s good advice, or rather the example which Daniel himself gave us, twenty-one centuries before Calvin, and repeat with him:—“I considered these ten horns;” let us look at them again attentively. For my part, while “considering” them during the week, that I might speak to you about them this morning, I felt sure that I had still three things to do. First, I must show you by new features the divine correspondence of the events of



history with the symbols of this vision. Secondly, I must tell you the chief reasons for the interpretation which I have given of them. And thirdly, I must answer two or three objections which are sometimes raised against a meaning so plain and satisfactory. Let us begin, then, by looking at the symbols of the vision under new aspects. Consider first their divine resemblance to certain general and quite external facts in the Roman history. Look at our picture of the beast with his ten horns and his nails of brass; you knew in a previous lesson how to reply to me concerning two of the strongest features of the Roman empire; its unparalleled power, and its division into ten kingdoms; and you also remember that we immediately found corresponding features in the beast, striking features of resemblance, although nothing more yet was seen of him than his head and his nails. Now can you not also point out in the political destinies of Rome a third feature, not less extraordinary than the two first, and not less marked out by all historians as characteristic of that empire? When you have pointed it out to me, I will show you also that prophecy has not less clearly represented it than the two others. Can any one of you then tell me what is most remarkable in the fate of this Latin kingdom, after the barbarian invasion?—It is perhaps the papal kingdom established in Rome, and governing the whole Roman Church.—That is not a bad answer, though it does not fit my question: observe, dear children, we are not yet come to that part of the subject: that fact belongs to the religious state of things, while we are still considering that which is political. We will not anticipate; every thing will have its time, and every symbol its place.—The beast is the Empire, and we are still speaking of the beast; by-and-bye, we shall come to “the little horn,” and perhaps then we shall speak of the popes; but this is not the time to do so. No; this third feature which I will show you, is extraordinary and unparalleled in history, and clearly prefigured in Daniel’s vision. It is the strange fact of the continuation of a *Roman Empire*, even after ten kings were established in it; and in spite of the division of its territory into ten kingdoms independent of each other. It is the unheard-of fact of a monarchy become ten-kinged, and yet continuing spite of this division, to subsist, for so many ages, even down to our days, as one and the same monarchy, under the name of “Holy Roman Empire,” and under the administration of a great Roman Catholic unity (as I shall show you more at length, in time); a monarchy one in name, in worship, in its head, in its clergy, in its language, in its laws—all being Roman; one even in its capital—Rome,

the Babylon of the last times.—Who could suppose, not only in the time of Daniel, but even 1400 years ago, when the Roman Empire was invaded, that it would still continue to exist notwithstanding its being torn and divided?—Who could foresee that these ten Gothic kingdoms would all become Latin ones?—Who could expect that this empire would remain divided into ten kingdoms during so many centuries, notwithstanding the efforts of the proudest conquerors, Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Bonaparte, to make them into one kingdom? And again who could foresee that this empire, always divided, always ten-kinged, would yet remain always one by its worship, by its capital, by its language, by its laws?—Well, this extraordinary feature has been foretold like all the others in Daniel's vision. In the 7th verse, the Latin beast has "ten horns"; in the 24th, these "ten horns" are "ten kings that shall arise out of this kingdom;" but observe in the 11th and 12th verses, as in the 25th and 26th, that for all that, the beast is not destroyed: on the contrary, it lasts to the end, and until the appearance of the "Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." It is then, according to Daniel, and then only, that "the beast shall be slain," *verse 11*, "and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame;" in order that "the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, may be given to the Saints of the most High." (*Verse 27.*)

Thus, you see, that the third feature, improbable as it was before the event, and singular in history, was to be like the two others, clearly prefigured in the book of Daniel.—But wait, I have not told you all. There is, in the order of political events, a fourth and last characteristic of the Latin Empire, not less extraordinary: it is likewise unparalleled in history, and also is marked by the Holy Spirit in prophecy with the same beauty of resemblance as the others.—Listen again. The Roman Empire was invaded from the year 400; and, soon after, divided by its ten kings; but it was very remarkable in this event, that the first kingdoms of these barbarian kings, having been for the most part destroyed by one another, some new kingdom has always arisen to occupy the place of those which perished; so that from Alaric to Bonaparte, the total number of ten has continued for 1400 years to represent the ordinary number of kingdoms among which the prophetic earth of the Latins has been divided.—This strange division of the Empire into ten distinct kingdoms has been maintained, in spite of the destructive revolutions soon experienced by most of the primitive States; and though interpreters of this chapter may sometimes vary in their lists

of these kingdoms ; it is because they take them, in history, at greater or less distance from the first invasion.—The Heruli, for instance, were overthrown by the Ostrogoths ; the Ostrogoths and the Gepidi by the Lombards ; the Lombards and the Burgundians by the Franks.—But still, it was necessary that out of these revolutions new kingdoms should come into existence, to replace those that had perished, to complete the prophetic number of the ten kings, and to bring it back from age to age to its normal cypher.—Do we not read in this very chapter that “three of the first horns were to be plucked up from before the little horn ;” that is to say, that three of the ten kingdoms were to be destroyed from before this clever, audacious, malevolent power?—Yes, in the 8th and 24th verses.—Well, I could show you that, in spite of this plucking up, the primitive number was constantly kept up. The Bavarians, for instance, in order to replace the Heruli, established themselves in the empire under their king Theudon, who died in 511 ; and, in order to replace others, the kingdom of Clovis, after his death in 514, was divided into four, having for capitals, Metz, Orleans, Paris, and Soissons. Doubtless there must have been times when the list of contemporary kingdoms was longer or shorter by one or two ; but the number ten has so remained their average, that you will find it in all the principal epochs of the long history of the West ; so that, as Newton remarks, whatever may have been afterwards the number of these kingdoms, they did not cease to be called “the ten kingdoms of the West.” If you study history on this point, you will see that ten were reckoned in the eighth century, ten at the time of the Albigenses, ten at the Reformation, ten still under Bonaparte. This feature in the Roman empire is certainly quite as extraordinary as the three others, especially as having remained for so many centuries. Well, this singular circumstance, and precisely because of its singularity, has been also foretold ; for we shall find it clearly prefigured in the ten-horned beast ; whether we study this seventh chapter of Daniel, or his second *volume*, I mean the Revelation of St. John, who only continues in *his* book the prophecies begun in Daniel’s. St. John, during his exile at Patmos, had visions like Daniel on the fate of the Roman empire ; and the Holy Spirit, in order that their meaning should not be misunderstood, took care to show them to him under the same emblems as to Daniel ; I mean under the image of the same ten-horned beast which our prophet had seen at Babylon 600 years before. Now St. John sees this image repeated thrice, and each time with some fresh circumstances, prefiguring the

march of events in the Latin empire. In the twelfth chapter it is imperial Rome, till the barbarian invasion; in the thirteenth it is ten-kinged Rome down to the French Revolution; in the seventeenth it is democratic Rome, the Rome of the last times, till the days when the Son of Man shall come to destroy His enemies, and to give the kingdom to the saints of the Most High. Well, dear children, this is what the angel told St. John in the seventeenth chapter. "The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but will receive power as kings at the same time with the beast." He says also that "these ten horns shall make war with Jesus Christ;" but that He shall overcome them; and adds "the ten horns which thou sawest are those who shall hate" the city of Rome, called here the unchaste woman; an emblem by which the Scriptures often represent an idolatrous city, or an unfaithful Church. "They shall hate her," said the angel, "and burn her with fire." I am nowise intending to explain these prophecies now; all I wished was to show you one single point; viz., that, according to their testimony, the Latin empire will be seen in the last times, as always, divided into ten distinct kingdoms, and that also under this strangely permanent form it will see its capital fall, guilty Rome; "in one hour her judgement will come;" and the executioners of this judgement of God will be the ten kings, who will still at that time share the Latin empire. But I must not forget that I promised to tell you the reasons of this explanation of the ten horns. First, according to the ordinary language of prophecy, these ten horns, or these ten kings, ought to point out, not only ten individual kings, but ten sets of kings or ten kingdoms. This is what you see clearly in the next chapter, in the very words of the angel Gabriel. There, the kingdom, or the course of the kings of Persia and Media, is represented by two horns on the head of the ram; the kingdom, or the course of the kings of Alexander's dynasty, by a great horn on the forehead of a he-goat; and the four great kingdoms or courses of kings of Syria, of Macedon, of Thrace, and of Egypt, by four great horns come up out of it towards the four winds of heaven. There again the angel Gabriel gives the interpretation, saying, in verses 20, 21, "the ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia; and the rough goat is the king of Grecia, &c., &c." But without seeking for proof so far as in the eighth chapter, do you not see, even in this seventh, that "a king" in Daniel's style means a kingdom? How does he call the four monarchies in the seventeenth verse? "Four kings which shall arise out of the

earth." You see then, again, that for him four kings are four kingdoms, four sets of kings. And what does he say of the fourth beast, or of his fourth king, in verse 23? "The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth." You see then, again, that what he just before in the seventeenth verse called "king," he now calls a kingdom. In his style, then, ten kings are ten kingdoms. This is my *first* reason. *Second*, the ten horns of the Latin empire must necessarily mean, not successive kingdoms, as some unreflecting persons have sometimes supposed, but contemporary ones. In fact, the ten horns subsist at one time; it is from the midst of them that the little horn comes up; they are crowned at one time with ten crowns, as St. John tells us, and they subsist together to the end. *Third* reason: these ten kings or kingdoms of the Latin empire, must have a duration not of some months, some years, or some centuries only, but of a great number of centuries. It is easy to show this. The little horn, which yet must last a shorter time than the ten kings (since it does not arise till after them, but does not end before them), is to persecute the saints for "a time and times and the dividing of times." Now these three times and half, which are prophetic years, necessarily denote in themselves alone a long course of ages, for we are told, in verse 12, that the three first monarchies had their lives prolonged for a time and a time." You see, then, that my reasoning is simply a rule of three. If "two times" in the prophetic style are equal to "the prolonged life" of the three monarchies of the Babylonians, Persians and Greeks, reckoned one after the other, how many years would three times and half make? Newton, in his commentary, reckons the duration of the three first monarchies at 720 years. He counts it from the era of Nabonassar, in the year 747 B.C., until the setting up of the empire of Augustus, in 27. If then, we suppose for the moment this number 720 to be correct, we shall say, "as two prophetic times," (the duration of the three monarchies) "make 720 years; how many will three times and half (the duration of the little horn's persecutions) make?" Answer: 1260 years. You see, then, that if these persecutions alone of the Church by the little horn, were to last already 1260 years, may we not reasonably say, that the little horn itself, and above all, the ten horns (which begin before these persecutions and which end *after* them), must necessarily have a duration of many centuries; and that every system giving them a short existence, would be therefore inadmissible. That is our *third* reason for concluding that these ten horns represent indeed our ten kings. *Fourth* reason.—If you

remember my saying that since the ten horns of the fourth beast form its characteristic and permanent feature, the ten kingdoms of which they are the emblem should also be the most characteristic and most permanent event in the Latin empire, we must acknowledge that the establishment of the ten Gothic kingdoms alone answers this condition. Look at the picture of the fourth beast, though we see only its head and claws, yet by that alone we recognise it. And why? Because of these ten horns on its head. And now ask the youngest child who has been taught the Roman history, what is the most striking event in it, from Romulus down to the French Revolution, and will he not answer: it is the barbarian invasion; for after all it is one of the greatest in *all* history, and so complete and lasting a revolution never changed the aspect of the civilised world. What shall we therefore conclude? For the fourth time, that the ten horns are truly our ten kings. *Fifth* reason.—Were it otherwise—I mean, were this fact of the division of the empire into ten kingdoms a fact still future (as some persons have supposed), the result would be, that since the taking of Rome by Odoacer, there would have been no longer any Latin empire; while yet, according to prophecy, this fourth monarchy is to endure till the last times. But how can it do so, in the view of those who do not acknowledge its continuance under the form of the ten Gothic kingdoms?—Let us conclude then again from this *fifth* reason, that the appearance of ten kingdoms is not a future fact, but a continued one; in other words, that the ten horns are truly our ten kings. I might give you more reasons, but I think these are sufficient; and I have said so much on this subject, only because of the grown up persons who take an interest in coming to hear your lessons.—I will only add that our explanation of the ten horns has been almost universally admitted both by Protestants and Romanists. I will mention two celebrated men—on the one side, Newton, in his commentary on Daniel, and, on the other, Bossuet, in his explanation of the Apocalypse. Listen to Newton's words out of his fourth chapter, "The fourth beast represented the Roman empire, which, having lasted till the reign of Theodosius, was then divided into the kingdoms represented by the ten horns of the fourth beast, and it was to continue under this divided form, till the time when Daniel sees the Ancient of Days sitting, the judgement set, the books opened.".....

And as to these ten kings, Newton thus enumerates them at the beginning of his sixth chapter, "In the year when Rome was taken by

the Goths, the Roman empire in the West was divided among the ten following kingdoms :—those of the Vandals, Alani, and Suevi in Spain and Africa, those of the Visigoths and Alani in Gaul, those of the Burgundians, Franks, Bretons, Huns, Lombards, and Ravenna.” Listen now to Bossuet, contemporary of Newton, counsellor to Louis XIV, preceptor to his son, and chief author of this king’s persecutions of the Protestants. “St. Jerome,” says he, “who saw the Roman empire ready to fall, from the time of Alaric, exclaimed, ‘The Roman empire is falling into ruin, and we do not comprehend that Antichrist is coming! the Quadi, the Vandal, the Sarmatian, the Alani, the Gepidi, the Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Germans, and oh! misery, our enemies, the Pannonians, ravage everything.....The Romans, who used to make war to the ends of the earth, fight now in their own territory, and, (who would believe it?) no longer for glory but for safety; or rather, they no longer fight, they think only of redeeming their life.....’ “Thus,” adds Bossuet, “Jerome makes here a frightful enumeration of the nations who began to dismember this great empire, and he names as *many as ten* of them, perhaps in secret allusion to those ten kings who were to ravage Rome according to the Apocalypse.” Bossuet adds afterwards on *Rev.* xvii. 12. “The author of the commentary on the Apocalypse attributed to St. Ambrose, says distinctly, that by these ten kings are meant ten kingdoms, by which the Roman empire has been destroyed, and he has reckoned these destroyers to be ten in number; truly the West *is* torn asunder almost at the same time by the many kings who have formed large kingdoms out of these ruins of the empire; Vandals, Goths, &c. It is remarkable that of a single empire so many great kingdoms should be formed.....and that the Roman empire should be overthrown in the West where it arose, not by one kingly commander-in-chief, as commonly happens, but by the inundation of so many enemies all acting independently of one another!” I hope you will remember all my reasons, and repeat them next Sunday, should I ask you for them again. These ten first Gothic kingdoms, to which many others may have succeeded from age to age, are then truly our ten horns;—first, because the horns represent, not individuals, but kingdoms;—secondly, because they represent, not successive kings, but contemporaneous ones;—thirdly, because they represent, not kingdoms of three years, nor even of three centuries, but kingdoms of an immense duration, even a much longer one still than that of the three first monarchies added together;—fourthly, because they must represent the most characteristic and the most lasting event in the Roman History;—

fifthly, because if they did *not* represent our ten kings, there would be no Roman Empire the last 1400 years ;—whilst, according to prophecy, this Roman Empire is to last till the return of Jesus Christ ;—sixthly, because all these reasons united, have made the Commentators of all times and parties acknowledge in the ten horns, the ten kingdoms formed at first by the Gothic invasion : but these kingdoms (I must again repeat) have necessarily, from that time, and during the course of 1400 years, experienced numerous variations, if not in their number which was always kept up, at least in their names, and in their respective conditions. Let one of you stand up and finish this lesson by reading again the prayer of Daniel, when Nebuchadnezzar's dream was "revealed to him in a night vision," and that "then he blessed the God of Heaven." *Chap. ii. 20-23.*

Well, dear children, go each of you saying like him, "Oh Thou God of my fathers ! I thank Thee, and praise Thee !"

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## LESSON XXXII.

DANIEL VII. 8—15.

ON account of some objections that have been made to me against the explanation which I have given to you of *the ten horns*, I think it well to return to the subject. What have I told you about them ? That they are ten kingdoms which were formed in the empire by the invasion of the barbarians—Yes, but I said also that these ten kingdoms have constantly maintained themselves in it, by renewing and completing themselves from age to age. Now that is the point against which three kinds of objections are made. First, it has been said to me, "Your ten kingdoms could not be those of which Daniel speaks in the 24th verse ; because you have found them in the Latin territory only, whereas the Roman monarchy comprehended equally the two empires of the West and of the East, represented in Nebuchadnezzar's statue by the two legs of iron. It would then be necessary that the ten toes of the statue, which evidently correspond to the ten horns of the beast, should have been taken equally out of both empires ; in other words, the ten kings should have been found in the *Greek* as well as the *Latin* territory." What think you of this objection ? Does it



seem to you that the two legs of the statue *can* represent the two empires of the East and West?—It is impossible.—Why?—Because then this division into two ought not to have taken place till at the height of the ankles; whereas it begins above the knees, as high as the iron.—When does the iron begin? When the empire of the Romans became a member of the statue in place of the Greeks, and had taken Jerusalem.—Yes, in the year 63 B.C. And when did the division of the two empires of East and West begin? Four hundred years later, under Constantine the Great.—And what is the rule followed in this vision for determining the respective chronology of events? I told you in the second chapter?—It is the *height* of the emblems in the members of the statue.—Very well; but then, if the two legs of iron do not represent the two empires of the East and West, what then do they mean? That the Roman empire, instead of being monarchical, should be republican under the government of two consuls.—Yes, so I had explained it to you; but I think it still more likely that the two iron legs pointed out that the Roman Empire should be as you say, republican or constitutional, recognising two masters, the senate and the people; for I have remarked, since my lessons on chapter 2, that these two governing powers existed in all the acts and laws, and on all the monuments of Rome, pointed out by these four letters, S. P. Q. R., “Senatus Populus Que Romanus.” What must then be inferred from all this?—That the two iron legs did *not* represent the two empires of the Latins and of the Greeks.—Very well; because this division into two empires did not take place till 400 years after the beginning of the legs of iron. But this first answer to the objection, although solid, is not the only nor the strongest one; there is another still more simple. I should like if you could find it out yourselves in reading again the 35th verse of the second chapter. Look at it well, and listen. If it were true that the two territories of the Latins and of the Greeks were represented by the two iron legs in chapter ii. (or by the fourth beast in chapter vii.); in other words, if it were true that in the statue, the brass had become iron by the conquests of Rome; then where would be the brass? It is very clear that all having become iron by the conquests of Rome, there would then be no more brass. And what is the brass?—The territory of the third monarchy.—What is this territory?—Greece, Macedonia, Thrace, Asia-Minor, Syria and Egypt.—But, then, is this opinion, which supposes that after Rome’s conquests there is no more brass, because all has become iron, reconcilable with Daniel’s words

in verse 35?—It is not; because Daniel says that the brass exists to the end.—Doubtless; then what must we conclude?—That Turkey in Europe, Greece, Thrace, Asia-Minor, Syria, and Egypt, are still the brass, and have never been the iron.—Very well! never the iron, never the body of the fourth beast; never the special territory of the fourth monarchy. And why?—Because, otherwise, it would be impossible to say what that brass is of which Daniel speaks in the 35th verse. Repeat that verse. What is the silver?—The special territory of the Medes and Persians. Where was that?—To the east of the Tigris. Where was the special territory of the head of gold?—Between the Tigris and the Euphrates. And the special territory of the brass? Between the Euphrates and the Adriatic. And the special territory of the iron?—To the west of the Adriatic and of the Rhine. If then, these two last territories had become *iron* by the Roman conquests, and if they formed the *two legs* of the statue, you may well say that there would be no longer any *brass*. And can we admit, in accordance with Daniel's words, that in the last times there will be no longer any *brass*?—We cannot admit it, because in the last days of the Roman Empire, the brass is said to be broken to pieces as well as the iron;—the belly and thighs as well as the legs. What should you say, then, of this first objection, which would make us place the territory of Alexander the Great in the body of the Roman Empire, and oblige us to look there also for our ten horns? That it is putting the legs of a man in his belly. I will read to you some good and simple words on this subject, of the great Newton:—"The people of Chaldea and Assyria, are still the first beast; the people of Media and of Persia still the second; the nations of Macedonia, Thrace, Asia-Minor, Syria, and Egypt, still the third; and, consequently, the people who live in Europe, to the west of Greece and of the Rhine, are still the fourth. As we seek for the body of the third beast on this side only of the Euphrates, so we ought to look for that of the fourth on this side only of Greece. And as we place the fourth head of the Macedonian Leopard on this side only of the Euphrates, so we should place the eleven horns of the Roman beast, on this side only of Greece. When we describe the four kingdoms into which was divided the Greek-Macedonian Empire, we do not speak of the Chaldeans, nor of the Persians. Therefore, also, when we describe the eleven kingdoms into which the Latin Empire was divided, we ought not to speak either of the Greeks or of Constantinople; for they form the body of the third beast." Thus said Newton; and thus you see that we cannot apportion the

same country to more than one monarchy as its special territory ; each of the four beasts had its own body ; and the conquests which they may, in turn, have made beyond this territory, have never, according to Daniel, made part of their bodies ; they were only, as in the case of the Persian Bear (*chap. vii., v. 5*), "ribs in their mouth," rather than members of their body. "The three ribs which the Bear held between its teeth," Newton said, "were the kingdoms of Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt." This prey in its mouth was never a part of its body. Egypt, for instance, Syria and Asia-Minor, have successively belonged to the *four* monarchies ; but these countries have really made part of the *third only*. The gold, the silver, the brass and the iron have always existed in the statue, although they have had dominion only by turns. The ten toes of iron and clay should not then be sought for either in Constantinople, or in Persia, or in Mesopotamia. We therefore conclude that the ten horns should be looked for in the territory of the *Latin only*. So much for the *first* objection ; I pass on to the *second* : viz., that we have not included Great Britain in the *prophetical earth* ; nor reckoned the Anglo-Saxons in the number of the ten horns. It is said that we thus disagree with most other commentators ; and that it is easy to make out the number of ten if we permit ourselves to take away from the dominions of the empire all the countries that would add to that number ! England, however, was for 300 years part of the Roman territory, and, like the rest of the empire, was subject to the invasion of the Goths ; did not the Angles who conquered her, and who caused her change of name from Britannia to Anglia, belong to the same race as your ten other kings ?" I will reply at some length to this second objection, because this question is very important in the subsequent explanation of God's revelations. I will give you *five* reasons for not placing England in the prophetical earth : *First*, England did not yet belong to the Romans when the legs of iron succeeded to the thighs of brass ; I mean, when the Romans became the fourth Monarchy by the taking of Jerusalem ; nor even thirty-three years later, when Cæsar-Augustus founded his imperial dynasty, and gave a new form to the government of Rome. England was not conquered till the reign of Claudius in 43 A.D. ; that is to say, 106 years after the empire of the legs of iron had begun in the statue. You remember, I hope, dear children, the two principles by which the geography of the prophetical earth may be accurately ascertained ? What was the first ? That in order to know the special territory of a monarchy, we must simply look for that which it occupied when it became part of the

statue, and took Jerusalem.—And the second?—That to know the special territory of each monarchy, we must enquire what language is known to have prevailed there.—Right; what language then to the east of the Tigris?—Persian.—Between the Euphrates and the Tigris? Chaldean. From the Euphrates to the Adriatic?—Greek. And in the country of the ten horns?—Latin. Quite right; you will then understand my second reason for not placing Great Britain in the prophetic territory; it is that the language spoken there is derived from the Gothic, and not from Latin. I think this reason is good; however we must not perhaps draw out all its consequences too rigidly, or else, in that case, it would be necessary to place the limits of the empire on the summit of the Noric Alps, rather than on the shores of the Danube; because, otherwise, it would be necessary to exclude from the Empire, if not Hungary, where the use of Latin has been remarkably preserved, at least Bavaria, where German only is spoken. But now listen to a third reason for not placing England among the ten horns. It is very simple. That country, not only did not yet belong to the Roman empire when it became the fourth monarchy, but what is much more, had been already detached from it for ever when the ten kingdoms were formed. This is a remarkable fact. At the beginning of the fifth century Great Britain was solemnly declared, by the Emperors of Rome themselves, to belong no more to their Empire of the West. Honorius, by an official decree, made known to all the municipalities of that island that, being no longer able to protect them, he released them from their oath of allegiance, and separated them legally from the Roman Empire. And observe, dear children, that this separation was the most perfect that can be conceived, because it was made in law and in fact. “The independence of Great Britain,” says the historian Gibbon, “was very soon confirmed by Honorius himself, the legitimate Emperor of the West; and his letters, addressed to the thirty-three great cities of Britain, may be considered as an absolute and solemn abdication of the rights and exercise of sovereignty.” Gibbon places this important act in the year 409. The laws of England, he says farther, are Saxon and not Roman. And when Justinian published his immortal Code, which has been called “the public reason of Rome,” and which settled law and right in all the provinces of Europe, Asia, and afterwards of Africa, he caused it to be proclaimed in all the solemn feasts at the doors of all the churches; but at that time Great Britain had already been separated from the body of the Empire for twenty years. Thus the Lords and Commons, at the Parliament of

Merton, where it was wished to introduce the Roman law, hastened to reply, "We will not have the laws of England changed." Thus it is clear that at the time when the ten horns arose, Great Britain was no longer in the Roman Empire. This country beyond the Sea had been doubtless for a time possessed by the Romans, like Dacia on the other side of the Danube, or like some parts of Germany beyond the Rhine. It was for them a foreign conquest; it was a "rib" in the mouth of the monster; it was not a *member* of its body. Could then a horn grow in England on the head of the Beast, when that country was not a member of its body, and was no longer even between its teeth? A fourth reason against making an Anglo-Saxon kingdom one of the ten horns, is, that Great Britain once freed by the Romans in 409, did not form itself into one kingdom at all, but remained forty years divided into so many little republics as it had municipal towns (33 in number). And farther, the Anglo-Saxons after forty years, instead of founding one kingdom only, founded eight, which afterwards were reduced to seven. It was not till 823 A. D. that one united kingdom was formed under Egbert. My fifth reason requires a little more attention from you. When, in the 2nd chapter, I gave you the rules for fixing the geography of the four monarchies, I told you but *two* of the four principles which may soon determine it. I feared to tell you more, lest I should not be understood, but since we have returned to the subject to-day, I will try to give you a *third*, of which you would not yet appreciate the proofs, but of which the youngest of you will be able to see the application. When we study certain clear prophecies, on which we have not yet entered, we recognise as a fact foretold by God, that the ten kingdoms of the fourth Monarchy are to be subject to the court of Rome and to its sovereign Pontiff; so that the holy Reformation which took place in Europe 300 years ago, was not to be able to establish itself nationally *within* the limits of the Latin Empire. I do not prove this great fact to you—we shall find it again, by and bye; but in the meanwhile, you can all easily make the application of it.—What then, according to this fact, would be the fourth rule to follow, in determining the geography of the Latin empire?—We need only look out in the map for the kingdoms where the holy Reformation has established itself nationally. And what shall we say of these kingdoms?—That they are outside the prophetic earth.—Very well, you doubtless understand, that the Reformation may have more than once tried to get beyond the Rhine into France or Belgium, into Italy or Spain, as the Cimbri and the Teutons did, before Theodosius, into the provinces of Rome; but never could it have been

able to establish itself nationally in the prophetic earth. It is a law of Providence in the counsels of God, a law which his oracles reveal to us, and which the history of nations confirms.

Look with me at this map of Europe; here for instance is Spain, the Reformation there, in 1526, was holy, heroic, flourishing both in palaces and cottages, in convents as in schools; received by the chaplains and confessors of the Emperor Charles V, as well as by the officers of his armies. Nevertheless, it was necessary that Rome should stifle it in the flames of martyrdom. Fifteen tribunals of the Inquisition in fifteen different towns, searching night and day for martyrs, had them burnt alive in great numbers by order of the Pope. "Two months later," said the Grand Inquisitor, by the light of the piles of Seville and Valladolid, "would have been too late, and the whole of Spain would have been taken from us." But that was not possible, for Spain is a part of the body of the beast. Look now at Hungary, to the south of the Danube; there was a time when the Reformation seemed to prevail there; long even before the death of Luther, the greatest part of the country belonged to the Reformation, but Rome by her violent measures overthrew it there. And even in 1675, 250 Protestant pastors were carried away from their flocks, taken to Presburg, dragged from prison to prison, condemned to the severest labour, beaten, deprived of food, and had most of them died of their sufferings, forty-one remained who were sent in Spanish galleys to Naples, but twenty-seven only survived, when Admiral Ruyter, in return for his services, obtained their liberty. The Reformation was not to be established in Hungary neither, because that country, at least in its provinces on this side of the Danube, and in Buda, its capital, belonged to the body of the beast. Look again, to the south of the same river, at the beautiful country about Salzburg. It had embraced the Reformation; but myriads of fugitives in the last century, were obliged to expatriate themselves on account of the Austrian dragonades, and seek freedom in Poland. Why this necessity? because Salzburg belongs to the body of the beast. Look at Bavaria, and read in Ranke the persecutions which have swept the Reformation out of it. Look at Italy, The Reformation flourished there in the Apennines, and in Calabria, even at Naples; at Cremona, Florence, Ferrara, Lucca, and especially at Venice, in the time of Peter Martyr, Caraciolo, Martinengo, Burlamachi, Tremellius, and many others flying from the sword and fires of Rome, and who came in great numbers to seek at Geneva a

new country, and peace of conscience. The effects of the Word of God spread abroad in Italy had been so powerful, that it was for a short time thought to have embraced the Reformation, so that the cruel Cardinal Caraffa, who became later Pope Paul IV, wrote to Pope Paul III:—"The Lutheran heresy infects the whole of Italy; it has seduced not only statesmen, but great numbers of Ecclesiastics." And this heresy (as Caraffa called it), was so near bringing into Italy the desired reform, that the Romanists confess that without the Inquisition it was all over with the Pope. "The establishment of the Inquisition at Rome," says Palavicini, "saved Catholicism in Italy." As soon as it had been established there on the same basis as that of Spain, woe to all those who wished to follow Jesus Christ, and to live according to the Bible; their voice was drowned in their own blood; all those who could escape from the executioner were obliged to fly far from the Pope; and this nation, deprived of its noblest sons, was thus reduced to the moral abasement in which it remained for three centuries. It was especially under the Popes, Paul III, Julius III, Paul IV, Pius IV, and Pius V, that the persecution was the worst: Pius IV surpassed Paul IV himself by the cruelties in his reign; and Pius V surpassed them both. "At Rome, under Pius V, there are every day some unhappy wretches either burnt, or hanged, or beheaded," wrote Tobias Eglino in 1568; "the prisons for arrested persons are encumbered with them; new ones have to be built; and this great city has not dungeons enough for the crowd of good people who are continually arrested." Then were given over to torture and to flames the choice men of Italy: the finest geniuses, the noblest hearts; Tanino of Faenza, Dominick of Casa-Bianca, John Mollio, the generous Algieri, the great Orator of Lucca, the illustrious Paleario, the valiant Bartoccio, and that amiable and brilliant Carnesecchi, the friend of kings, the glory of Italy; young, handsome, and not less distinguished by his genius, than by his virtue.

It was at this time that all these great men were burned at Rome by order of the Pope, sometimes even under his eyes. It was then also that the excellent Varaglia, who from a persecutor (like Paul of Tarsus) had become a preacher of the Gospel, and whom the Genevese had sent to Angrogna, being interrogated at Turin as to the number of his companions, replied to his judge: "I am living with twenty-four preachers, who for the most part came from Geneva; and the number of those who are ready to follow me is so considerable, that you will

not find wood enough to burn them." It was then that Louis Paschali, sent into Calabria by the Italian Church of Geneva, was taken, brought to Rome, and burnt in the Castle of St. Angelo, in the presence of Paul IV, and of his Cardinals. It was then, also, that at Venice, the Pope, after having long solicited the senators to burn the Protestants, obtained at least their being drowned. At midnight, the prisoner, loaded with chains, and drawn noiselessly out of his dungeon, got into a gondola, with a priest and four gondoliers, till, having reached the open sea, two leagues off, he was lowered silently into the deep by a stone chained to his feet. Thus were swallowed up so many noble martyrs, Guirlanda, Ricetto, Lupetini, &c., waiting for the blessed resurrection! You see that Italy was very near, like Spain, being freed from the Pope; but no! Italy belonged to the body of the beast!

Follow out this review, and look at France. With what wonderful heroism has that large nation twice received the Gospel, and given rivers of blood for Christ! It is more than any other the country of martyrs. Twice she seemed to have escaped from the Pope, and twice he has again trampled her under his feet. What a wonderful work had already taken place in the awakening of the Albigenses during the darkness of the middle ages! "The fine country of Provence and Languedoc was marching rapidly in the career of civilisation," says Sismondi, and was going to outstrip by three centuries the rest of Europe; "its towns were numerous and flourishing, governed according to republican forms, by councils named by the people." Their populations, aroused by the use of the Holy Scriptures, of which written copies were circulated everywhere in the common tongue, were reformed in their morals as in their doctrines; in their life as in their faith. "Their most furious enemies," says Sismondi, "acknowledge that in appearance their chastity was blameless; that in their respect for truth they never admitted any excuse for a lie; and that their charity disposed them always to devote themselves to others." "But Pope Innocent III judged that if the Church did not crush them, if she did not utterly destroy the race, and thus strike terror into Christendom, their example would soon be followed. He, therefore, ordered his ministers to have the chief men burnt, to disperse the flocks, and to confiscate their goods." But afterwards, "perceiving that according to the progress of public opinion, executioners would not suffice for the destruction of heresy, and that the whole people must be struck down by the sword, he called the northern French to



accomplish the work of extermination, which lasted twenty-seven years. It is said that as many as 500,000 men poured down in a single year upon Languedoc. Thus the torch of the first reformation was extinguished in blood; the number of deaths by torture was prodigious; public worship ceased among the reformed; almost all their teachers perished by fearful deaths, some only having fled into distant countries."

So much for the first reformation in France; but observe again this same country 300 years afterwards, in the days of Beza and Calvin, when, after 38 years of continual persecution on the part of Rome, and continual patience on that of the Reformers, the number of the latter was still so great, and their rank so high, that the Pope's power might seem ruined in France. Look again at that country; thousands of churches strongly constituted all over the kingdom, held their synods; the chief towns seemed gained over, with half of the nobility, and even the most part of the Princes of the blood; the king of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and the Duke of Bouillon; Trémouille, Coligny, Lesdiguières, Turenne, Rohan, and many others of high family.—But the Pope must prevail. The religious wars, excited through his agents, began by stopping all Gospel work, and afterwards the massacre of St. Bartholomew destroyed in one night 70,000 Protestants. In the space of thirty years the number who perished for their faith was tenfold. To complete the matter Henry IV, in 1593, although victor, apostatizing from his faith to secure his sceptre, gave up to the Pope his family and kingdom. And yet this was not enough for Rome; his grandson, Louis XIV, caused, by unheard-of cruelties, 600,000 Protestants to leave France, 800,000 others to abjure, and 400,000 to perish; until this new Diocletian caused to be written in the laws of his kingdom "There are no more persons of the Reformed Faith;" as the ancient one had written on the medals of his empire "that there were no more Christians." Such is then the history of France, because it was prophetically impossible that she could free herself from the Pope. France is part of the territory of the beast! Impossible, have I said? Yes, but do not think that this prophetic law should at all slacken the labours of our Christian Societies for the evangelization of this great people. On the contrary, dear children, it is an additional motive for making these labours more active by making them more pure. If our evangelists know that they will never obtain in the territory of the beast that national success which changes the face of an empire, they will be the more thereby led

back to the thought of their sole and great business, which is to save souls by preaching the Gospel; to save them individually; and with this aim, to profit by the liberty which the agents of Rome still give to the Bible among the French. And is it not thus that St. Paul thought with regard to the Jews? he acted as we do, for he knew as to them, what we know as to the French. He had himself declared that the national hardness of the Jews would endure till the last times (*Rom.* xi. 25); and yet this prophecy, far from abating his zeal for the evangelization of that rebellious nation, stimulated it more and more. But in what hope? "In the hope" (he says in 1 *Cor.* ix. 22, and in *Rom.* xi. 5) "to save by all means some;" and to bring to Christ the "reserved remnant." Well, let us do likewise, and remember that it is good for us not to be exposed by outward success to those human stimulants which can so easily spoil the motives of the most faithful men.

But let us take up again our map of Europe. Who can tell me in which of its kingdoms the blessed Reformation has been able to establish itself nationally? In the kingdoms of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Prussia, Saxony, Hanover, Holland, Wurtemberg, Scotland, England.—Yes, but you see on the map that these ten Protestant kingdoms are all situated on the other side of the sea, of the Danube, and of the Rhine; that is to say outside of the prophetic limits of the Beast; and never hitherto has the Reformation been able to establish itself nationally on this side of the two rivers, in any of the ten kingdoms of the Latin territory. And if we follow this rule of prophetic geography, even in its fulfilled detail, we shall be surprised. In descending the two imperial rivers, we shall see the Pope on the *right* of the Danube, as on the *left* of the Rhine, and on the other side, the Reformation. On the Danube, I could shew you the mountaineers of Salzburg, the citizens of Lintz, and many more, driven to the other side of the river, on account of their faith. On the Rhine, from Switzerland to the North Sea, to its left are the Pope's men, and to its right those of the Reformation: to the left, Strasburg with its Papal Cathedral, and, below Strasburg, still on the Roman side, the free and imperial cities of Worms and Spires, whose Cathedrals have always remained Papal, in spite of the large reformed population; also Mayence, Aix-la-Chapelle, Bonn, and Cologne, (whose Archbishop in vain embraced the doctrines of the Reformation). And on the right bank, the Protestant cities of Heidelberg and Frankfort-on-the-Maine, those of the Palatinate, of Hesse, and of Nassau, of Manheim, Darmstadt, Arnheim, Utrecht, and Leyden. But where the fulfilment of the

prophetical law is especially admirable, is in the strange destinies of the Low Countries. There on the two sides of the Rhine, were seventeen fine provinces, which revolted together in the sixteenth century against Spain, in order to obtain freedom of conscience. Blood flowed in torrents, and, by the hand of the executioner alone, 18,000 persons, in three years, expired in torments. But at last what happened?—The law was accomplished, and the *ten* provinces on the left bank fell again under the Papal dominion, while the *seven* which did not make part of the prophetical earth, were formed into the Protestant country of the united provinces,—glorious Holland. And what occurred as late as 1831?—William Frederick, a Protestant king, tried to re-unite these two countries under one sceptre; but after fifteen years, they were anew separated by the revolt of the Belgians, and the Protestant king whom they chose, had to promise that his children should be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. I conclude then from this rule, that the Angles never formed one of the ten horns, and that Great Britain does not belong to the prophetical earth, because she has nationally freed herself from Papal dominion. I am well aware that some commentators have applied to the Reformation of England this prophecy of St. John. (*Rev.* xi. 13), which declares that “a tenth part of the great city fell:” they mostly apply it to the conversion of one of the ten Latin kingdoms, or, at least, to its entire separation from Rome; but this fall of one of the ten Latin kingdoms (whichever it may be), not being to happen till towards the end of the Turkish empire, cannot apply to England, freed already from Papal dominion, for more than three centuries. Besides, can we say of a kingdom, that it “falls,” when it reforms itself? And when, in *Rev.* xvi. 19, it is said of the terrible revolution of the last times, that then “the cities of the nations fell,” do we not rather understand by this expression that they will then be ruined? What then shall we conclude from all this?—Let us conclude that the Anglo-Saxons are not among the ten horns, because Great Britain, like Dacia, or like Batavia, was only a *rib in the mouth* of the beast, and was not a member of its body. Repeat, I pray you, the reasons for this conclusion. First? Because England did not belong to the Romans, when they became the fourth monarchy. Second?—Because the language of England is not Latin. Third?—Because England made no longer part of the Roman Empire when the ten kingdoms were formed in it. Fourth?—Because England, if we were to count its Gothic kingdoms, would reckon *eight* instead of a single one. And the *fifth* and last?—Because England has rejected nationally for three hundred years, the yoke of the Roman

Pontiff.—Yes; while it is essential to the kingdoms of the fourth Empire, to be subject to him. You shall repeat to me, next Sunday, please God, the last half of our 11th verse.

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### LESSON XXXIII.

#### DANIEL vii. 11.

“I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.”

THESE then are the terrible judgements made known to Daniel at the end of his vision: “the beast slain, his body destroyed,” and this body even “given to the burning flame!”—These emblems signify, at least, the complete ruin of the kingdoms of the West. For what in fact is “the beast,” if not the Empire? What is his body, unless it be territories? and what the destruction of “this body by fire,” if not the fearful ruin by which the political destiny, and even the historical existence of countries, must come to an end?—Yes, our glorious European Empires, which have held for twenty centuries the sceptre of the world, and which still make their power to be feared even to the ends of the earth, these empires will in turn be destroyed like Nineveh, Babylon, Persepolis, Palmyra, Thebes, and like all this world’s grandeur. Not only will the sceptre of power be taken from them, but even their country will be the scene of such desolation as Daniel in the whole course of his vision had never seen equalled. When the Babylonian Lion, the Persian Bear, the Macedonian Leopard, were obliged to fall one after the other by the stroke of the conqueror, these three beasts did not then appear slain, nor their bodies destroyed; but when the ruin of the Roman Beast comes, it is not only slain, its territory is ravaged, it is “destroyed,” “given to the flame,” “burned.” Mark well, dear children, that this already clear prophecy, is again fully confirmed by that of St. John, who sees in his Apocalypse, towards the end of time, the same ruin as Daniel, and under the same emblems. First it is Rome “the great prostitute,” he tells us, who will be destroyed by the ten kings, “who shall hate her, and burn her with fire (*Rev.* xvii. 16);” then some time afterward, comes the turn of the beast itself, or the Empire of the ten Latin kingdoms; for the Apostle sees it with its ten horns as Daniel had seen it: “I saw the beast” he tells us, and “the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war” against Jesus Christ and His people; “but the beast was taken and with him the false prophet” (evidently here represented by the

little horn), and "these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (*Rev.* xix. 19, 20). That is to say, that then, according to Daniel, as well as according to St. John, our countries will at least share the same fate as that beautiful and powerful Chaldea, where Daniel lived when he had his vision. It was the centre of civilization, the brilliant theatre of knowledge and genius, the country of astronomers and warriors, the admiration and terror of the world; it was a land whose fertility, surpassing even that of Egypt, nourished thirty millions of men; a vast garden watered by innumerable canals, where palm trees, a hundred feet high, overshadowed fields rich in corn, the ears of which, Herodotus and Strabo tell us, brought forth annually two hundred, and often even three hundred, for one. But what has become of this same Chaldea?—You know, for I have already told you: this country which then ruled over all the world, this country of which Herodotus said, "The Greeks themselves will not be able to believe what I am going to relate of its fertility, if they have not, like myself, seen it;" this country has not only lost the empire of the world: it is a desert of either hard clay, or dry sand, travellers say, "so scorching at noon, that the breathless horseman fears to get down from his horse, least the sole of his foot should be burned." Lions roam about "roaring after their prey, seeking their meat from God"; and the still more formidable Arab on his dromedary, pursuing the terrified caravans, can only find his way through this desert by the stars, like the sailor on the sea. Well, dear children, thus it will be, and worse still, with this Latin world of which we make a part, and which, in the days of Daniel, was only a country of Barbarians; Switzerland, France, Spain, Italy, will be ruined; civilisation will have left them as Petra, Troy, Nineveh, or Babylon, as Balbec or Palmyra; "the voice of harpers and of musicians, the sound of flute or trumpet, will no more be heard there, nor the sound of the millstone, nor the voice of the bridegroom and the bride"; and, in future ages, learned travellers, coming either from California or China, or Tombuctoo, will come, guide book in hand, to visit our ruined countries, in order to find traces of them; as persons in our days go to the ruins of Thebes or of Persepolis, of Nimrod or of Khorsabad, to the mountains of Idumea, or to the sandy plains of Shinar. Whence will this desolation arise, which seems to us as improbable as must have appeared impossible to the citizens of Babylon, that in which we see Chaldea now—this desolation—whence will it come? and how will it come?—That is what we shall see clearly by and bye, in comparing the pages of Ezekiel and St. John, with those of Daniel; but I have many

other things yet to tell you, before speaking of the desolation of the last ages. At this moment I am only desirous of making plain to you the great prophetic principle contained in your to-day's verse. It is this: since the desolation foretold so clearly in it has never hitherto taken place, neither for the city of Rome, called *Babylon*, nor for the Latin Empire, called *the Beast*, nor for the Latin territory called *the Body* of the Beast, it must of necessity be that Babylon and the Beast and the body of the Beast, still subsist. In other words, we must admit that according to Daniel, the Roman Empire has lasted from Odoacer until our days, and that it is not to be destroyed till future times. I hope you all comprehend this principle, and I repeat it as shown in to-day's verse, because I have this morning to tell you of a third objection made to my explanations, and which opposes this principle. Listen well to this objection; I am going to put it as strongly as it has been made to me, and as if I were myself of the opinion of those who propose it.—This then is the objection.—“Your explanation of the fourth monarchy,” I am told, “is directly contrary to the evidence of facts; for in giving to the Roman Empire, as you do, a continued existence down to our days, and even to the Second Coming of the Son of God, you contradict all history, which agrees in representing this empire as having ended in the fifth century by the invasion of the Goths. Where is your pretended empire? Nearly 1400 years have passed since that famous Monday, 23rd of August, 476, when the king of the Heruli placed the crown of Italy on his head! And is it not acknowledged that his triumphal entry into the city of the Cæsars, amid the acclamations of the Roman senate and people, saluting him as their lord and king, pointed out the fall of this ancient Empire? for, while these Goths, entering by the Flaminian gate, with cries of joy, went to plant their German standards on the terraces of the Capitol and on the high walls of the Castle of St. Angelo, the people of Rome saw their emperor, Romulus Augustus, place solemnly in the hands of Odoacer his imperial crown and robe; thus himself proclaiming that the last hour of the empire had struck. Say no longer then, that, according to Daniel, it still subsists: that would make both Daniel and History speak untruth. It is not duration enough, the 1229 years until the great Odoacer?”—This, dear children, is the objection, and I have great pleasure in showing it to you, because, studied more closely in history, it will be done away with by such marvellous facts, that your admiration of the Scriptures ought to become greater and greater. In fact this is what you will see; that under the double aspect in which

the Roman Empire after the conversion of Constantine should be viewed, this kingdom, in spite of Heruli, Goths, Lombards, Franks, and Vandals; in spite of the darkness and revolutions of the middle ages; in spite of the misfortunes of the times, and the length of the ages, this kingdom has not ceased to exist, from the coming in of the Barbarians until the coming in of democratic rule; from the days of Odoacer to those of Robespierre. When I speak of this double view of this Roman Empire, do you understand what I mean? do you not remember what, in Nebuchadnezzar's statue, the composition of the metal of its feet, teaches us? This mixture of iron and clay beginning at the ancles,—did it not shew us that the fourth kingdom, beginning at a certain period, would be composed of two distinct elements, always mixed, but never cleaving together?—Yes, the State and the Church.—Just so! political power, and religious power, “mingling themselves by the seed of men;” but never being able “to cleave one to another,” as it happens if we try to “mix iron with clay.” Well, dear children, I will now show you plainly that the Roman Empire has continued to exist from Odoacer's days to ours, be it in the clay, be it in the iron.—Let us see it at first, in “its clay,” I mean in its ecclesiastical power, in its priestly monarchy, or in what has been called its *Imperium in Imperio*. In this respect it has been in vain invaded by millions of Germans, uncivilized by them, divided into ten distinct kingdoms, revolted by cruel wars, and tormented by incessant revolutions; nevertheless, for the fulfilment of prophecy, these wars, revolutions, Germans, and this barbarism, equally concurred in bringing all these nations of the empire to the feet of the priest, still reigning in the city of Romulus, still sitting in the palace of the Cæsars, crowned with the tiara like the kings of Babylon, and bearing, like the Emperors, a globe in his left hand. All the Latin kings of the west obeyed him, called him *their Father*, subjected to him their faith, held his stirrup when he mounted his mule, bore up his satin robe when he walked, and kissed his slippers when he was seated. All this has been done for 1300 years, and even in the last century, it has been said of the Roman Empire thus continued in its clay: “A Pontiff is seated on the throne of the Cæsars.” And who is it speaking as correctly as Daniel might have done? It is even the celebrated, wretched Voltaire, of whose impiety you may have heard, but who thus, like Caiaphas, prophesied without knowing it!—At least, he would have taken good care not to make now the objection which I am refuting, nor to say, like some Protestants, “that the Roman Empire has not continued.” Voltaire goes on to say that

this Pontiff carries "the sceptre and the incense-vase in his hands," he has his throne upon the altar, he exercises on it "absolute power"! Could the marvellous continuation of the Empire in its clay be better set forth?—You see then clearly, dear children, that this Empire, even looking at it only in its clay, still subsists; and not only comprehends in its vast extent all the ten Latin kingdoms, but also exercises a power greater, in more than one respect, than all that ancient Rome, or even any other empire ever had. While it gains subjects to its rule from afar, among all the nations of the earth, and in all climates, it unites all its strength in one man, who, on the banks of the Tiber, and from his still Roman throne, stretches out at the same time his two arms to the gates of the East and of the West. Do you not even now, in Geneva, see his officers walking through our streets in that uniform which they are forced to wear all over the world—black gown, fringed girdle, buckled shoes, collar under the chin, and three-cornered hat on the head?—Thus they form to the extremities of the earth, an immense, disciplined, formidable army, more numerous than any emperor ever commanded—cardinals, legates, apostolical nuncios, primates, archbishops, bishops, curates, abbots, monks, nuns, Jesuits, priests of all kinds! Try and count them if you can.—"In France alone, before the Revolution," says De Pradt, "the officers of Rome were, in a population of 25 millions, to the number of 159,936:—136 bishops, 44,000 curates, 6,400 coadjutors, 7,400 canons or canonesses, 10,000 ministers and servants of churches, 18,000 vicars, 16,000 other ecclesiastics, 31,000 monks, and 27,000 nuns!"—In Spain, at the same epoch, there were 149,376, in a population of 11 millions.—According to Fulchiron, there were, in 1806, in the kingdom of Naples, 98,300, in a population of 6 millions—that is, more than a sixtieth part! Think then, what the whole army must have been! for if one reckons, like Balbi, that there are in the world 142 millions of Romanists, the Spanish proportion will give to the militia of Rome 2 millions of ecclesiastics; the French proportion, 900,000; the Neapolitan, 2,300,000. What then, compared with this formidable army, even the French contingent alone, are all the legions of Bonaparte? And when I call it formidable, it is so not only in numbers, but much more in discipline, organisation, fanaticism, by unity of command, by antiquity of system, by violence of doctrine, by pretension to universal empire, and, above all, by the terrible oaths which bind it to its chief.—What are, even in this respect alone, the Russians of the Czar Nicholas? Do not these 900,000 ecclesiastics swear an unlimited obedience to the



sovereign of "the clay"? Do they not all promise not to marry, in order the better to obey him? Do they not all acknowledge his right to loose them from the oaths made to others? Do not the priests in the confessional cause to be whispered to them the secrets of all the families of the empire, of kings and shepherds, of priests and nuns, of husbands and wives, of high and low? Do they not all, according to what appear to them infallible councils, "declare, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary to eternal salvation, that every human creature should submit to the Roman Pontiff?" Lastly, do they not all think that according to councils equally infallible, "it is a good thing and commanded by God, to put to death (as soon as Rome can do it safely), all the men and women who are not obedient to the Roman Pontiff."—You see then, that instead of being surprised at our saying, with Daniel, that the fourth fierce Beast still exists, you should rather admire prophecy which so well describes that empire, the powerful monarch of which reigns now in the Vatican; it would be better to say, "All honour to the Word of God." Is not, in fact, this empire of "clay" imperially strong? (Written in 1848.) Its monarch is Lord of Rome, residing at Rome, heir of Rome (in virtue, he says, of a gift made at first by Constantine, afterwards by Charlemagne). And although its rule extends over Spain, Portugal, France, Piedmont, Belgium, Austria, Bavaria, it is everywhere purely Roman, and *one* by its capital, its language, its heresies, its chief, and its laws.—I say by its capital: it is the Eternal City, the feet of the head of gold, the Babylon of the last times.—I say by its language.—Could one ever have believed it? After so many ages, it is still, in the whole extent of the ten kingdoms, the ancient language spoken by Pompey, Cæsar, Pilate, Nero, Caligula!—I am amazed at this secular, universal mark of unity, and I should call it inconceivable were it not prophetic.—In vain has St. Paul condemned the use of an unknown idiom (1 *Cor.* xiv, 6–19); in vain has each kingdom its own tongue; in vain did the first Teutons, the conquerors of the West, speak the Gothic language, and read in it the Bible which their missionary Ulphilas had translated for them; in vain do common sense, and conscience, condemn the use of a dead language; it must needs be that, in spite of common sense and conscience, in spite of the Goths, and even of St. Paul, this whole empire of clay, with its 900,000 ecclesiastics, with its subjects dispersed as far as Brazil, Australia, and China, should perform its religious services in Latin, receive its laws in Latin, pray and sing in Latin!—I say also by its heresies.—Even in this respect, it is completely

Roman in its ten horns, all equally receiving from Rome rules the most contrary to the usages of the primitive Church, and the most condemned by the Word of God. Among them all, at the instigation of Rome, Mary is adored, that humble Mary, who prayed *with* the Apostles, but *to whom* they never thought of praying. By them all a worship is paid to angels, commanded from Rome, but forbidden by God. Among them all is a worship of the dead, of their bones, sent from Rome, of their hair, teeth, and blood, and even of their clothes. In all these countries, according to the commands of Rome, all priests are forbidden to marry, although St. Paul requires them to have one wife, although St. Peter, of whom they make a Pope, travelled twenty years with *his* wife, and although Scripture has pointed out this prohibition of marriage as one of the marks of Antichrist. Among them all, there is abstinence from certain meats by order of Rome, another mark of Antichrist. In all, men and women confess their most secret sins to the ministers of Rome, and purchase at money-price, indulgences and pardons which come from Rome.—I say also, by its laws, called *canonical*. The whole monarchy of “clay” has continued for centuries to observe the same ecclesiastical code for all which relates to public worship, to excommunications, to baptism, and to the Lord’s Supper, to oaths and murders, to births, marriages, deaths, and burials, to priests, and the rights of priests; a code, by means of which, Rome has been able to torment kings, to make nations revolt, and to shake the world; a code which was made at Rome, and which still rules the ten horns of the Beast.—Lastly I say, by its head—the Sovereign Pontiff! What is there more Roman and more monarchical, than this strange personage? He is called “Most holy Father, best, greatest,” as Jupiter was by the ancient Romans; and also “Pontifex Maximus,” as they called Julius Cæsar. Do you know exactly what a *Pontifex* is?—It was a Roman and heathen office.—Yes, entirely so.—Julius Cæsar chose to be invested with it, and all the Cæsars after him. It conferred the right of judging vestals, of governing augurs and priests, of regulating the service of the gods, the dedication of their temples, and the national worship. Thus all the heathen Emperors caused it to be given to them; and Constantine himself, after he had embraced Christianity, chose to be invested with it again, as also did all his successors sixty years after him.

But it happened in the year 375; that the pious and valiant Emperor Gratian, when, at his coronation, he was about to be saluted by the title of “Sovereign Roman Pontiff,” pushed away with both

hands the pontifical robe that was being presented to him. "Do not give it me," he exclaimed, "God forbid that I, a Christian, should take such a title and such a dress." Nevertheless, my children, there is now at Rome, in the gardens of Nero, on the right bank of the Tiber, a prince who bears this title and wears this dress; I have seen him myself, in his magnificent palace, clothed in the cloak refused by Gratian! I was struck with wonder at the sight. Oh! holy prophet Daniel, I said, mentally, what would you have said at this sight? But when afterwards I walked about the squares of the Eternal City, and read there, on those great Egyptian obelisks which adorn them, the double signature of the emperors and of the popes, who have equally given themselves this so characteristic Roman title, as if to verify upon them, each in his time, the prophetic perpetuity of the empire. Oh! then my admiration increased and became solemn. On Mount Citoriaeus I saw an obelisk of red granite more than eighty feet high, which the great Sesostrius, at the time of Moses, more than 3500 years ago, had erected in Hierapolis, and which Cæsar-Augustus, 1600 years later, caused to be transported to Rome in a ship; and what did I read upon it?—On one side, Augustus, as head of "the empire of iron," had engraved in Latin, 1900 years ago, these words: "The divine Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, the fourteenth year of his reign;" and on the other side, Pope Benedict XIV, as head of "the empire of clay," caused to be engraved in Latin, 100 years ago, these words:—"Benedict XIV, Pontifex Maximus, the eighteenth year of his reign;" and Pius VI, fifty years ago:—"Pius Sextus, Pontifex Maximus."—Farther on, in the Square of the People, in front of the Flaminian Gate, I saw another of them seventy-four feet high, which Augustus also had brought from Egypt, and which Pope Sixtus V had set up again. Upon one side, Augustus had caused to be written:—"Cæsar Augustus, Pontifex Maximus;" and on the other, wrote, Sixtus V, 250 years ago: "Sixtus Quintus, Pontifex Maximus."—Upon a statue of Antoninus, at the Capitol, is, "Antoninus, God, Son of God, Pontifex Maximus;" and below, "Paulus Tertius, Pontifex Maximus," (this was Paul III, who instituted the order of the Jesuits). And even, again, in the famous Forum, on the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, that cruel emperor wrote his name, 1640 years ago, with the title, "Pontifex Maximus;" and quite recently, Pius VII wrote his also with this same title, "Pontifex Maximus!" Thus, then, dear children, the empire of Rome, looking at it only in *its clay*, has preserved (although having always its ten kingdoms and its ten kings), its existence as one

vast monarchy alone ; wholly subject to the Pontiff who reigns supreme in the city of the Cæsars, and who may still say, as did Pope Gelasius, that "the diadem of princes is in his presence only as lead in the presence of the splendour of gold ; since he sees the neck of kings humbled below the knees of priests."—Had I not, then, good reason to say, that in this respect also, the fourth monarchy of Daniel has continued until our days?—I beg one of you to repeat the marks by which we have been recognising it as always one, always powerful, and always Roman.—First, by its capital ; secondly, by its sainted language ; thirdly, by its heresies ; fourthly, by its army of priests ; fifthly, by its costume ; sixthly, by its name of Roman Catholic ; seventhly, by its code of canonical laws ; eighthly, by its head, the Pontifex Maximus.—Right, my children ; but there is much more to hear. Listen.—It is not only as to *the clay*, but also as to *the iron of its feet*, that this continuance of the Roman monarchy during so many centuries, is strikingly shown in history. In other words, it is not only as an ecclesiastical empire, and as a holy Roman Church universal, it is also as a political kingdom, and as a holy universal Roman *empire*. This part of the fulfilment of prophecy, will appear as divine as the preceding one. Who would have thought in the year 476, on the day when the proud king of the Heruli entered Rome with the crown of Italy upon his high red-haired head, and when the Emperor of the West put into his hands the imperial purple ; who could have believed, that 1370 years after him, a Roman empire should still be talked about, as always existing under an emperor, and yet always under ten kings?—Well, but so it was.—Oh, power and truth of God ! Daniel had foretold it 1000 years before the birth of Odoacer ; and we contemplate its fulfilment to-day, 1300 years after him ! All honour then once more, be to the holy miraculous Scriptures ! Listen to this last point, and my lesson will end. At whatever epoch of history we choose to study the fate of the West, from Odoacer to Bonaparte, we see always in it, doubtless, ten Latin kingdoms ; but we also see in it always *one* "Empire of Rome ;" sometimes humbled, sometimes threatening ; sometimes in the hands of a German, sometimes of a Spaniard, sometimes of a Frenchman, but always Roman, and always recognised.—Take, if you will, history at the invasion of the barbarians ; take it afterwards in the ten following centuries, or, still later, in modern times, and until the days of Napoleon ; throughout you will find "the empire."—Look, first, at the frightful period of the invasion, when twenty German nations from all parts, rushed upon the

prophetic earth and covered it with blood. Well, even then, when tearing the West into ten parts, all these nations still acknowledged the existence of a "Roman Empire;" all called themselves members of it, all wished to be its officers and its servants. For instance, when the proud Alaric threw himself upon Italy, and sacked Rome for three days, he called himself General of the Empire. He said that the Emperor of the West had acknowledged him commander of all the troops of Illyria, and his Visigoths were only auxiliaries. And later, when they had made Toulouse the capital of their new kingdom, they demanded of the emperor that Catalonia and Aquitaine should be voluntarily ceded to them, as to titular vassals of Rome. The Gepidi, Alani, and Suevi did the same as the Visigoths, calling themselves "confederates of the Empire," though all the while tearing it to pieces. The great Odoacer himself, when he had taken the Eternal City, preserved in it all the forms of the Roman magisterial office; he made the emperor bring back from Constantinople the imperial standards; he asked him respectfully for the dignity of *Patrician*; and the emperor, in his answer conceded to him his request, "as to the man whom the Senate of Rome had chosen to defend the empire of the West."

When the formidable Theodoric with some Ostrogoths had, in his turn, established his kingdom of Italy, not only did he, like Odoacer, preserve the Roman laws and policy, but he caused even the Roman dignities of consuls and patricians to be conferred from year to year upon his own officers, by the emperor of Constantinople; as he himself had gone so far (king as he was) as to have the consulate given to him in 484.—If you read the consular annals of this year, you will see his royal name (*Theodoricus rex*) among the Roman consuls!—Behold farther, the king of the Franks, that cruel Clodowich, whom modern Frenchmen call Clovis, and who made such bloody conquests in the Roman empire. Did he not solemnly at Tours receive the ambassadors of the Emperor of the East, who brought him the insignia of consul? And does not the historian Gregory of Tours (a learned, pious little man, who lived in the same century, and who has left us its history) relate to us how Clovis, with the crown on his head, appeared at that time in the Church of St. Martin of Tours, in the dress of the Roman consuls, and how he went on horseback to the Cathedral, throwing gold and silver pieces to the people flocking towards him? Shall I end by telling you about our Burgundian kings, and that Gondebald, whose palace stood at one of the gates of Geneva?—Like all the others, he

called himself member of the "great Roman empire"; and yet farther, "Patrician."—Listen to this letter, which, on his death, his son, Sigismund, wrote to the emperor of the East, and which bishop Avitus has preserved to us: "My father," he writes, "was one of the most faithful subjects of the empire; my Burgundians look upon you as their suzerain lord; and from all time my ancestors have had Roman hearts. I hold more to the honor of obeying you, than of being obeyed myself by my subjects; and if the East is governed by your presence, the West is so under your auspices." What more can be said to prove what I advance? Certainly, this is enough for the period of the invasion. Notwithstanding the ten kings and their ten kingdoms, the empire at that time continued still, "even in its iron."—Will you not again admire the divine precision with which the sacred oracles describe the most improbable signs of the future, and its most unexpected events?—But to go on with the history of the West, in the ten following centuries. The fulfilment of prophecy will appear, if possible, still more striking.—When Odoacer had proclaimed his kingdom of Italy, the imperial head of the West appeared "wounded to death," doubtless: but sixty years later "this deadly wound was already healed" (*Rev.* xiii. 12), for at that time, Justinian, emperor of the East, having, by the victories of his great general, Belisarius, overthrown the kingdoms of the Goths and Vandals, re-established for a time, the imperial government of the Romans in Italy, Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia. From that time, the Pope and people of Rome, acknowledged the sovereignty of the emperor for two centuries, until 726, when they revolted against their master, because he forbade them to worship images. But on Christmas Day, in the year 850, Pope Leo III, fearing the Roman citizens, who had revolted against him, invited the illustrious king of the Franks, Charlemagne, to come to Rome and enter St. Peter's, where the Pope unexpectedly placed an imperial crown upon his head, and the whole people, carried away by his example, shouted with one voice, "Life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by the hand of God, great emperor of the Romans"! This scene accomplished a great revolution. How long ago did it happen?—More than 1000 years back. Well, see again during these thousand years, in the coronations of the succeeding emperors, the truth of what I assert. When the prince had entered with great pomp into the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, he received, with the sword and belt of Charlemagne, his imperial crown, surmounted by a globe of gold (symbols of the universal monarchy); then being conducted by the priests to the front

of the altar, he was to answer in Latin ten Latin questions, of which this is the last: "Wilt thou adhere and remain subject to the very holy Father in Christ, the Pope of Rome, and to the holy Church Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman?" And the emperor answered, "I will." But after this first coronation, he bore only the title of "king of the Romans," till he had gone into Rome itself, to be there consecrated anew, as "Emperor of the West," by the sovereign of the "clay," the "Pontifex Maximus." Look at both of them again in their "bulls." The emperors, during these thousand years, sent forth, for the political government of the Roman empire, *bulls*, that is to say, decrees sealed with a leaden or golden *ball*, and the Pontiffs, in imitation, had also their bulls for the ecclesiastical government of this same empire.—Here, then, we see the empire "in its iron," and also the "union of the iron with the clay." Here are these two powers which, as Daniel said, "shall mingle themselves" during more than 1200 years, "by the seed of men, but shall not cleave one to another."

The ferocious Beast had then existed during these 1200 years, raised up, and living, in spite of these great crowned horns on its head. It did not then die, as has been said, when Odoacer had seemed to give it "a mortal wound" on its imperial head. No, at least it recovered in order to live 1330 years longer, from the days of Justinian to those of Bonaparte in 1806. And since, dear children, I have mentioned Bonaparte, I hasten on to modern times, as I promised to do; and I am going to show you the fulfilment of prophecy, even in the reign of that extraordinary man.—Do you know what he did to "the Emperor of the Romans"? I remember it still; I was about your age. He forced him to give up his ancient titles, in order to have no longer any other than that of "Emperor of Austria." Do you understand *why*? Because he would have *himself* considered as successor of Charlemagne. Yes, and as temporal head of the whole Roman Catholic empire. Thus you see, even down to Bonaparte, how the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled from age to age; and how the idea of a Roman empire still subsisted in his ambitious mind, as in the humble thought of the forty preceding generations. It was, then, according to this imperishable notion, that, not satisfied with putting on his own head, like Charlemagne, the iron crown of the Lombard kings of Italy, Bonaparte willed that the imperial crown of Charlemagne should be placed there also by the "Pontifex Maximus," who came from Rome to France on purpose to perform this ceremony. And it was with the same idea that, having by his marriage with a daughter of the ancient Cæsars, a son in 1811,

he had him called from his birth "King of Rome." The poor young man lived till 1882. I might have taken a shorter way of showing you, that still in our time, a Roman Empire exists in its clay, and in its iron, if I had sought to prove my assertion, to the Roman Catholics established in our city of Geneva; for you should know that their Bishop, who resides at Fribourg, never sends them a decree, even in our own days, without giving himself, besides his title of Bishop, that of "Prince of the Holy Roman Empire."

Thus are accomplished throughout all ages, the words of our God. Thus Daniel beheld 2400 years beforehand, the strange destinies of the Latin Empire, from Odoacer to Justinian, from Justinian to Charlemagne, from Charlemagne to Bonaparte: "*Imperium in imperio*," two elements of power always united and never confounded together; each belonging to the same families, and yet always distinct. On the one side, the Emperor, his ten kings and all their armies, on the other, the Pontifex, his cardinals, legates, monks, generals of orders, bishops, of whom some are still styled by him counts or princes of the holy Roman Empire; his Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, and the 900,000 Ecclesiastics who swear obedience to him and make for him the most powerful of armies.—What shall we say then? That the objection is changed into a proof; and that it has come in its turn, like all the others, to pay homage to the Divinity of the Scriptures. Time presses—we must come to an end. Yet, since I have spoken of the Empire's rule *in its clay*, I ought not to omit one last mark of the double legislation of its clay and of its iron, which struck me vividly in the city of Rome, when I went there to see the Pope.

I would speak of it at greater length, dear children, if you were older, for you would then better comprehend that nothing, perhaps, has more powerfully, than this legislation, contributed to make, during so many centuries, one single whole of the ten kingdoms of the West. This is it.—On one hand, in *civil* things, all the Latin kingdoms have been under the same Roman *civil* code, called the Pandects, and which contains all the imperial Roman laws, collected 1300 years ago by the learned lawyer Tribonian, in the reign of Justinian. On the other hand, for ecclesiastical things (marriages, burials, sacraments, oaths, excommunications) all the Latin kingdoms have been equally subjected to one and the same Roman *ecclesiastical* code, called the *Decree*, and which contains all the Roman papal laws, collected 700 years ago by the learned Canonist Gratian, under the pontificate of Eugenius III. Now, this is what struck me.—I was going through the magnificent



halls of the Vatican, where the Popes live, and I was looking at the pictures, which almost all represent some one of their triumphs over the ten Kings of the West. In one of the principal rooms, my eyes were vividly struck by a double picture drawn by the famous Raphael. It represents precisely this double unity of the ten Latin kingdoms, by the double legislation given to them by Rome, in their *clay* and in their *iron*. On one side of a window, in one panel, is seen the great Emperor Justinian, seated on a throne; and on the other side, in a second panel, the great Pope Gregory IX, equally sitting on a throne. At the feet of the emperor is one kind of lawyer kneeling, and at the Pope's feet is another kind of lawyer, on his knees also. The Emperor, on his throne, holds a book in his hand, and gives it to the man kneeling before him; and, in like manner, the Pope, on his throne, has a book in his hand, and gives it to the man kneeling before him. What are these two books, and who are these two men?—One of these men, doubtless, is Tribonian, and the other, doubtless also, is a successor of Gratian. One of these books is the Roman *civil* code, which down to our days was to rule the Empire in its *iron*, the other is the Roman *ecclesiastical* code, which was to rule, until our time, the Empire in its *clay*. At this sight, my children, I remembered Daniel, and said to myself, "Here then is the Fourth Monarchy in its two elements! here is its great and marvellous unity by its double legislation; and here is the great Raphael, who, in Rome, 350 years ago, depicted upon the Pope's walls our lessons on Daniel! I have often had pleasure in preparing drawings which might show you more vividly the prophetic teaching of Daniel; but could I expect that the prince of painters, born 300 years before me, should have taken upon himself to design one still more significant, and to place it in the palace of the Popes, at Rome itself? This sight filled me with religious awe, and made me lift up my heart to God. Well, my children, let us all, now, lift up our hearts to God. You have seen that the Beast did not die after the crowning of its ten horns: and even after the mortal blows upon its head, its life was not extinct; its ferocious nature remains; and henceforth its leopard's heart, its bear's paws, its lion's mouth, its iron teeth, its nails of brass, and its ten terrible horns, are employed by another power, of which I have yet to tell you. Next Sunday then for this little horn; the principal object of the prophecy; but our attempt at discovering it will be rendered easier, since the ten horns out of the midst of which arises this enemy of God, are now so fully known to us.



