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The Drama of World Empires

or

"The Man on the Horse"



D. A. SOMMER



The Drama of World Empires

OR

"The Man on the Horse"

•

*Helpful in the Study
of Bible History
and Prophecy*

•

By D. A. SOMMER

Editor of Simplified New Testament, Author of Guide
Through Bible History, and Other Books
and Many Booklets

•

One Copy.....50c
Five Copies.....45c each
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D. A. SOMMER

INTRODUCTION

LIFE is the original Drama on which all other dramas are based. As individuals we come upon the stage of action, perform our little part, and make our exit forever.

As families, too, and tribes and nations, we act our part, then dwindle into insignificance or are entirely absorbed by other peoples.

Some races have held sway over almost the whole earth, and have been known in history as World Empires.

The "Man on the Horse"—the general of armies—has ruled these conquered nations with force and oppression. Will it always be so?

Or, are we living in the latter times when a New Order will be ushered in?

It is for busy people that we have prepared this streamlined view of some of the world's greatest events, as they have to do with all of us today.

If the reader will look up in his Bible the scripture references in this booklet, *and will read the full connections*, he will be taking an easy course in the greatest fulfilled prophecies in the Bible.



Act I
EARLY BABYLONIAN, OR CHALDEAN,
EMPIRE

(Unknown Date to 728 B. C.)

THE SCENE, AND THE PEOPLE

Two rivers have had much to do with the early history of man. The Euphrates (about 1,700 miles in length), rises in the Arminian Mountains, not far from Mt. Ararat, flows southwest as if to empty itself into the Mediterranean Sea, then seems to change its mind and turns towards the southeast and, joining the Tigris about a hundred miles from the mouth, empties into the Persian Gulf.

The Tigris River rises one hundred and fifty miles from the source of the Euphrates, flows more directly southeast, about 1,100 miles, and joins its sister to finish the course to the sea.

The district between the two rivers is called "Mesopotamia," which means, "between the rivers", and is now largely included in the modern Iraq. The northern part of this Mesopotamia was occupied by the ancient Assyrians, and the lower part by the Babylonians, two peoples related in blood and language.

At an early age canals and dykes were built to carry the water over the fertile land in the southern district especially. Herodotus, a Greek historian in the fifth century before Christ, says that the land produced between 200 and 300 fold. Grapes, figs and dates grew in abundance, and waving fields of grain fed the people through their long history.

In the lower district between the rivers, where Chaldea, or Babylonia, held sway, there was no stone, and their buildings were made of sun-dried brick. So when the cities were destroyed, they became only mounds of rubbish, worn away by what rains they had. Their great temples and palaces are not well-preserved structures as in Egypt, but only mounds of earth.

The books of the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians were made of clay, then baked. These tablets were of different sizes, from one to several inches in length or width, and an inch or so in thickness. There were few stone monuments with inscriptions, as in Egypt, and most that we know of Assyria and Babylon is obtained from these tablets. There are thousands of them in the different museums of the world.

The religion of ancient Chaldea was idolatrous. Paul tells us¹ that at an early age in their history men became vain in their imagination and their foolish heart was darkened and, professing themselves to be wise, they changed the glory of God into an image like unto man and beast.

They believed strongly in evil spirits and in incantations to appease them, and these superstitions were committed to other nations who have handed them down even to people today.

Their ideas of future life were much like those of the Greeks. The elysium, or place of happiness, was for those of great deeds and great piety, while dreariness was for the rest of men. They had no judgment like the Egyptians, where each one must be tried according to his deeds. The belief of the Jews, too,

¹ Rom. 1:20-32.

was very vague on the future life, in their early history, but they were taught to look to the future conquest of the world through the Messiah, who "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel".²

Since the skies were nearly always clear in Babylon, the people had a good chance, and they used it, to study the stars and their movements, and they became world-famous in astrology. We must not confuse the words "astrology" and "astronomy". The latter refers to the laws of the stars, and the former is the supposed influence of those bodies on human affairs, and our supposed foreknowledge of such influence.

The expressions: "lucky stars", "thank your stars", "ill-starred", came from the Chaldeans of the long ago. So did our 12 Signs of the Zodiac, our 12 months in the year, and 24 hours in the day, and 60 minutes in an hour, and 60 seconds in a minute. Not every important thing originated with us in the 20th century!

Enter NIMROD

When the human race is young, "Nimrod begins to be a mighty one in the earth. He is a mighty hunter before the Lord, wherefore, it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom is Babel."³

And his kingdom grows and evidently becomes the Early Babylonian, or Chaldean, Empire. But other rival cities must be conquered.

Here is the first appearance of "the man on the horse", but he continues to ride and rule with an iron hand through the many succeeding centuries.

² 2 Tim. 1:10.

³ Gen. 10:9, 10.

Enter HAMMURABI (AMRAPHEL), and ABRAHAM

Ur of the Chaldees is one of the cities of this irrigated, fertile lowland of the Euphrates and Tigris. The city seems to have vessels which sail in the Persian Gulf and then on to other lands, for the expression "ships of Ur" is found on many monuments.

It is in Ur that Abram lives when God calls him.⁴ Peoples had scattered long before, and Abram knew the dangers of his long journey to the promised land, yet he wavers not.

When Abram had become established in his new home, Amraphel, king of Shinar, and Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, along with other kings of the east, make war with the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. This Amraphel seems to be the Hammurabi of the monuments, who gathered the cities into a stronger kingdom, and who has been called the Moses of Babylon because of the wise laws he gave.

God now makes four distinct promises to Abraham: 1. He will make his posterity a great and prosperous nation. 2. He will give him and his posterity the land of Canaan. 3. He will bless those who will bless Abraham and his posterity, and curse those who curse them. 4. In him and his seed, Christ, all nations of the earth shall be blessed.⁵ God confirms these promises to Isaac and Jacob.⁶ And so this period of these three men might be well called The Period of the Promises. *The rest of the Bible is simply the unfolding of these promises.*

[*Exeunt* ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB.]

⁴ Gen. 11:28.

⁶ Gen. 26:3, 4; 28:13, 14.

⁵ Gen. 12:2, 3, 7; 15:16; 17:7, 8; 22:18.

Enter JOSEPH

What more beautiful and more needed story can be found in all literature than this simple recital of the struggles and persecutions and triumphs of this young man of faith in God and respect toward man and woman?⁷ He is sold into Egypt, is tempted again and again by his master's wife but resists, is thrown into prison, but is finally exalted to a high position in Egypt. At this time Egypt is making a big stir in the affairs of men, yet Babylon really occupies the center of the stage. [Exit JOSEPH.]

After Joseph's death a king arises who knows not what he has done for Egypt, and brings the descendants of Israel into cruel bondage. But it is not altogether unexpected, for God had said to Abraham, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance."⁸ No special characters among the Jews come into prominence in this period in a corner of the stage near Palestine. But over in the land of Uz, somewhere in Arabia, the patriarch Job lives and loves and serves and suffers, and sets an example of patience which has been held up before the world through thousands of years.

Enter MOSES

And now the time draws near for the promise to be fulfilled that Israel should return to Canaan to be a great nation, and Moses comes upon the scene.

⁷ Gen. 37-50.

⁸ Gen. 15:13, 14.

He performs the ten plagues, leads the people out, suffers their rebellions forty years in the wilderness, is himself provoked and overcome, yet before he dies is permitted to stand on Mt. Nebo and view the promised land.⁹

Egypt is still a great nation and Israel is beloved of God, yet the spotlight is yet on Babylon as the ruler of the world. [Exit MOSES.]

Enter JOSHUA, GIDEON, BARAK, SAMSON, JEPHTHAH, SAMUEL

It is a Babylonian garment (probably very beautiful), which some caravan had doubtless brought to Jericho, from Babylon, the world's capital and the Paris in fashions in those days, which, along with some silver and gold, brings death to Achan and his family, in the days of Joshua.¹⁰

God deals with his people through this period as a father deals with a thoughtless and stubborn child. They obey him a little while, then go into idolatry; he brings them into bondage to another nation; they repent; and he sends them a deliverer. So it goes through the four hundred years of the Judges, over and over again. Joshua conquers Canaan and divides the land; Deborah and Barak overcome a king of Canaan and his hosts; Gideon traps and destroys the Midianites; Jephthah, the outcast, delivers Israel from Ammon, and makes a rash vow; Samson annoys and kills many of the Philistines; and Samuel, the judge and prophet, defends Israel against the Philistines, and tries to hold the people to the law.¹

⁹ Ex.-Deut.

¹⁰ Josh. 1-7.

¹ Judges-1 Sam. 7.

While these exciting events are happening to Israel on the western edge of the world-kingdom stage Babylon, or Chaldea, is still swaying the scepter over more nations than any other power. [*Exeunt* THE JUDGES.]

Enter SAUL, DAVID and SOLOMON (UNITED KINGDOM)—(About 1000 B. C.)

And now since Israel has demanded a king to be like the nations about them, Saul is appointed over them. He is big in stature, which seems to appeal to the people; but he is small in spirit. He is envious of David, cruel in trying to kill him with a spear, and relentless in sending armies against him again and again, disobedient to God, and comes to an untimely end. [*Exit* SAUL.]

There is a long conflict between the house of Saul and the house of David, and David finally prevails and is firmly established on his throne. His reign of forty years is the strongest Israel ever had. He brings into subjection many little nations around Palestine; strengthens his rule at home; writes the beautiful Psalms; and proposes to build a temple to God. He commits the sin of adultery, repents but is punished in the rebellion of his son against his throne; and he spends his last days gathering together his shattered kingdom. [*Exit* ISRAEL'S GREATEST KING.]

Solomon takes David's place, but is neither warrior nor executive. He is wise but weak, for, like many, he does not live up to his knowledge. His Proverbs contain such practical wisdom that the book has helped millions through the ages. His Ecclesiastes (the Preacher) should be read and memorized by the ambitious of life. The Song of Solomon is a sample of

a man's love for a woman. Solomon's sensuality is so strong that he multiplies wives who turn his heart from God, and God then punishes him with enemies. His apostasy illustrates the truth that "Evil companionships corrupt good morals". Some one has graphically said that Solomon went up like a rocket and came down like a stick.² [*Exit* THE FOOLISH WISE KING.]

Babylon is still the ruler of the world.

Enter REHOBAM and JEROBOAM

After Solomon, the Jews are rent into two kingdoms: 10 Tribes into the Kingdom of Israel, in the north of Palestine, with Samaria as its capital; 2 Tribes into the Kingdom of Judah, in the south of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital.

In the Kingdom of Israel there is not one who we can say is a good king. This jingle gives the names and evil character of her kings in 1 Kings (with a dash separating reigning families):

Jeroboam, Nadab—
Baasha and Elah—
Zimri—Omri, Ahab—
All of whom were evil.

The Kingdom of Judah does some better, and the deeds of her kings through the same period of 1 Kings may be enumerated in another jingle:

Rehoboam left his God,
Abijam, too, his son,
While Asa and Jehoshaphat
Were praised for deeds well done.

[*Exeunt* THESE KINGS³]

² 1 Samuel 8 to 1 Kings 11.

³ 1 Kings 12-22.

Enter ELIJAH and ELISHA with AHAB, JEZEBEL and OTHERS

Elijah stirs things on his part of the stage. He denounces Ahab and Jezebel for their idolatry; prophesies a drouth; kills the prophets of Baal; is discouraged, but told that there are yet seven thousand faithful ones; foretells the violent death of Ahab and Jezebel; and ascends to heaven.

Elisha, his successor as prophet, heals Naaman and fastens his leprosy upon his covetous and lying servant; performs many other miracles and foretells many local events. The call to repentance of these prophets is generally unheeded. *[They pass off⁴]*

Enter ISAIAH, MICAH, AMOS, HOSEA⁵

Four prophets are contemporary in part, and live in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. In the midst of this period the great Babylonian Empire, which had ruled much of the earth from the days of Abraham, is now overrun by the Assyrians (728 B. C.) who, six years later (722 B. C.), conquer the 10 Tribes, the Kingdom of Israel, and carry them into Assyrian captivity.

"The man on the horse" has ruled the world from the dawn of history, and he will continue to rule it for millenniums yet. Aggression and suppression bring the only peace there is.

⁴ 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 13.

⁵ 2 Kings 15-20.

Act II

THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE (728-606 B. C.)

THE SCENE, AND THE PEOPLE

Assyria occupies the northern part of the district between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, and has Nineveh as its capital. This part of Mesopotamia consists largely of rolling plains, broken by hills and mountains, tolerably fertile in places. In the winter season they have two months of rain, when the country is a beautiful picture; then they have a ten-months' dry season. With their construction of dams and channels, they develop irrigation.

Enter a CRUEL NATION

When, at the dawn of history, Nimrod, the mighty hunter, brings man and beast beneath him and founds the Babylonian Empire, some, it seems, will not submit, and "out of that land went forth Asshur and builded Nineveh".¹ And so through the centuries there is a rival nation to Babylon, but it does not obtain power over her till late in history. The Assyrians surpass their Babylonian kindred in cruelty. They hunt wild bulls and lions, which accounts for so many representations of these animals on the monuments.

They are haughty and violent. Their cruelty is manifest in their acts of cutting off prisoners' noses and ears, and gouging out their eyes, and impaling some—torturing by fixing on sharp sticks. They even flay, or skin, persons alive and leave them to die a horrible death.

¹ Gen. 10:11.

In the ninth century, B. C., Jonah is sent against Nineveh to cry against its wickedness, and they repent for a time. But about 150 years later (713 B. C.) Nahum tells of God's judgments on it: "Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery. . . . Behold I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts."²

Enter TIGLATH-PILESER (745-727 B. C.)

Nineveh has been a great city and Assyria as a whole a great people for hundreds of years; but this great king is the one under whose mighty hand she conquers Babylon (728 B. C.), and by whose hand is laid the foundation for future Assyrian glory. Yet he passes away.

Enter SARGON (SHALMANEZER) (722-705 B. C.)

He captures Samaria in 722 and carries the 10 Tribes away, from which dispersion they never return as 10 Tribes.³ This transplanting of nations is a fixed policy of the Assyrians when they conquer a people, for when the home ties of place and friends are broken, the rising generation more easily forgets its wrongs. The Jews have no temple in these strange lands, and the synagogue service grows up, which has continued to the present day. [*Exit* SARGON.]

Enter SENNACHERIB (705-681 B. C.) and HEZEKIAH

He is the most noted of all the kings of Nineveh, to us at least, because he is connected with a thrilling Bible event and also because his name is found so often on the monuments in the ruined palaces of Nineveh. He is a great builder and tells of his city improvements thus: "I raised again all the edifices of

² Nahum 3:1.

³ 2 Kings 17.

Nineveh, my royal city; I reconstructed all of its streets, and widened those that were too narrow. I made the whole town a city shining like the sun."

He tells of his expedition against Hezekiah thus: "I took forty-six of his strong fenced cities; and of the smaller towns which were scattered about I took and plundered a countless number. And from these places I captured and carried off as spoil 200,150 people, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape."

But according to the Bible account he does not take the city, for "the angel of the Lord" smites his men, and he returns home with his shattered army without glory to his great empire, where later his two sons kill him in the house of his god.⁴

[*Exit* ANOTHER BOASTER.]

THE FALL OF NINEVEH

Saracus is the last of the long line of Assyrian kings. For hundreds of years these cruel monarchs have at times banished or afflicted many nations, but now the Medes and revived Babylonians besiege their city, and repay their cruelty. In 606 B. C. Nineveh falls. The king, seeing his doom, gathers his family to himself in his palace, and burns it over them.

⁴ 2 Kings 18, 19.

The Prophet Nahum tells of the desolation after the victorious armies are gone: "She is empty, and void, and waste, and the heart melteth and the knees smite together, and the faces of them all gather darkness."⁵

Zephaniah had foretold this very desolation: "Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her; all the beasts of the nations, both the cormorant and the bittern, shall lodge in the upper lintels of it [so much rubbish there, animals could walk into the upper stories]; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds; for he shall cover the cedar work. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me! how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! Every one that passeth by her shall wag his hand."⁶

Two hundred years later, Xenophon, in his famous Retreat with his Ten thousand Greeks from hostile Persia, passed the great mass of crumbling ruins and could not even learn the name of it.

The tourist beholds with amazement the great stone slabs with their carvings of bulls and lions and men and horses and chariots, with their scenes of the chase or battle, excavated from the ruins of ancient Nineveh, which now grace the halls of the British Museum in London.

Thus perish forever the proud and cruel Assyrian kings, and perhaps their nearest counterpart in modern times is the instigator of World War II.

The man on the Assyrian horse has been supplanted by stronger men on Median and Babylonian horses.

⁵ Nahum 2:10.

⁶ Zephaniah 2:14, 15.

The Symbol of Dan. 2



Act III
LATER BABYLONIAN, OR CHALDEAN,
EMPIRE
(606-538 B. C.)

Enter NEBUCHADNEZZAR

He is a great conqueror and builder. But his siege of Tyre was a long and hard one, lasting thirteen years. Ezekiel, the prophet, describes its length and heaviness of burdens on shoulders in these words: "Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled."¹

The First Captivity.—In 606 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, who is probably only a general of the Babylonian army at this time, comes and conquers Jerusalem, carrying away "part of the vessels of the house of God," and some of the people, among whom is the Prophet Daniel.² But the city is not destroyed. Jeremiah remains in the land. We may call this The First Captivity.

The Second Captivity.—Eight or nine years after this First Captivity, in 597 B. C., Nebuchadnezzar comes up against Jerusalem and carries away "all the treasures of the house of God . . . and . . . all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and all the smiths, none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land." Ezekiel, it seems, is carried away at this time.³ But Jerusalem is not yet destroyed.

¹ Ezek. 29:18.

² 2 Kings 24:13, 14; Ezek. 1:1, 2; 33:21; 40:1.

³ Dan. 1:1-7; 2 Kings 24:1.

The Third Captivity.—In these two captivities, chiefly the nobles and the rich have been carried away, but now in 586 B. C., 11 years after The Second Captivity, Nebuchadnezzar comes again, and this time he destroys Jerusalem with its temple, kills many of the people still left, and carries the rest away into captivity, (King Zedekiah being among those carried away),⁴ leaving a very few of the very poorest as vinedressers and husbandmen. Among these poor is Jeremiah, and it is at this time that he writes the Lamentations over the destruction of Jerusalem, from which he has been called "the weeping prophet". But these poor soon flee into Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them.⁵

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM OF WORLD EMPIRES

The king has a dream of a great metallic image of a man, but forgets his dream. Daniel is summoned to recall it to him and to interpret it. The head of gold represents the Babylonian Empire; the breast and arms of silver, the Medo-Persian Empire; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian Empire; the legs of iron, the Roman Empire; and the feet of iron and clay, ten kingdoms which should spring from the Roman Empire. The little stone which was cut out without hands and which struck the feet of the image and broke it to pieces, is the kingdom of God which is to grow up in the days of the Roman Empire and grow and grow until it fills the earth.⁶

THE CITY OF BABYLON

The city is now famed throughout the ancient world for its wonderful buildings. It is said to be fifty miles in circumference, with walls from one hundred to two

⁴ 2 Kings 25.

⁵ Jeremiah 39-44.

⁶ Daniel 2.

hundred feet high, and from fifty to eighty feet wide. Canals run through the city, and quays are at convenient places. Palaces and temples along with other public and private buildings, adorn the banks of the River Euphrates through the city. The "Hanging Gardens" are among "The Seven Wonders of the World". Nebuchadnezzar builds them for his Median wife who came from a hill country and is tired of the monotony of the plains. Grass, trees, fountains, palaces, are in these gardens, built off the ground, rising perhaps like a mountain.

The great king swells with pride as he surveys the works of his hand, and says: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But God chastises the haughty and cruel king by taking away his reason; and his subjects drive him from men, and he eats grass like oxen till his hair is grown as eagles' feathers and his nails as birds' claws.⁷ [*Exit the Haughty NEBUCHADNEZZAR.*]

Enter BELSHAZZAR

Nabonidus and his son, Belshazzar, seem to be joint rulers of Babylon, with the care of the government in the latter's hand, at the time Cyrus lays siege to the city. His feast to a thousand of his lords, and the drinking of wine from the sacred vessels from the temple at Jerusalem, are stirring events well known to Bible students.⁸ In 538 B. C., the city falls to the Medes and Persians, and the curtain drops on the Third Great World Empire, while men and nations shift the scenes for the next Universal Power.

[*Exit a Proud and Sacrilegious KING.*]

⁷ Daniel 4.

⁸ Daniel 5.

SYMBOLS OF DANIEL VII



BABYLON



MEDO-PERSIA



GREECE

4TH SYMBOL OF DANIEL VII



PAGAN ROME.

Act IV

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE, (558-331 B. C.)

THE SCENE AND THE PEOPLE

This empire reached from the Indus River in India to the Aegean Sea, and was the greatest in extent up to this time. A great system of roads was built from Susa, the capital of Persia, to Sardis, near the Aegean Sea. Excellent inns were stationed along the way. There were bridges over most streams, and ferries over others. Men on horses carried mail from post to post, hence our word "post"-office. The carriers

could make the 1500 miles in six days, which ordinary travel required six months. Other advantages were developed in proportion, till Persia became the most luxurious nation up to this time.

The Persians were not as cruel and warlike as the Assyrians and Babylonians had been, and they ruled their subjected nations with more leniency. Though the king was lord of all, and the laws of the Medes and Persians "changed not", yet their rule was mild and tolerant.

The religion of the Persians was a dualism. They believed in a Good Spirit and in an Evil Spirit. The former was the giver of all life and all good; and the latter of death and all evil. The Evil Spirit had many lesser spirits to carry out his evil plans. The Persians were not idolatrous like the other ancient nations, but worshipped the sun, moon and stars—served the creature more than the Creator. Their worship was very simple, consisting mostly in prayer and praise.

Enter CYRUS, (558-529 B. C.), and ZERUBBABEL

Cyrus rides onto the stage with confidence; and well he might, for he is one of the greatest leaders that ever lived. He has such a prodigious memory that he can call every soldier in his army by his name. The Medes and Persians are kindred people and have had frequent alliances, but when Cyrus the Persian comes to power he so lifts Persia above Media that he fulfills the picture by Daniel of a bear "raised up on one side",¹ and of the ram with two horns, with one horn "higher than the other, and the higher came up last."² Cyrus is so generous of spirit that he not only permits

² Dan. 8:3.

¹ Dan. 7:5.

the Jews to return to Jerusalem from captivity, but gives commandment to the local rulers in those districts to help them with the revenues of state.

Zerubbabel now leads about 42,000 Jews³ back from the captivity, about 536 B. C. With joy they lay the foundation of the new temple which Ezekiel had so minutely described when in a strange land.⁴ When Zerubbabel spurns an alliance with the religiously-mixed Samaritans, who dwell in the land, to build a union temple to God, he is persecuted by them, and finally his work is stopped by their machinations. After years of indifference on the part of the Jews toward rebuilding the temple and Jerusalem with its walls, and after Zerubbabel's death, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah stir them from their spiritual lethargy, so that they go on and finish the temple.

Enter EZRA and NEHEMIAH

But many thousands of Jews did not go up when Zerubbabel came to the ruins of Jerusalem, for they were doing well there and were loathe to endure the hardships necessary. It is about this time that Esther lives and saves her people who have not yet gone back. Fifty or seventy-five years after Zerubbabel's return, Ezra comes back from the land of captivity and begins to help rebuild the city and Jewish state. He denounces their marriages with the heathen around them, and makes them separate themselves from the idolatrous people there. He is a scribe and a determined restorer of the ancient ways; and is the one who gathers the sacred writings into the Old Testament canon.

³ Ezra 2:64.

⁴ Ezek. 40-50.

Nehemiah lays aside for a while his position of state in Persia and comes back to Jerusalem to help his troubled brethren. His return is thirteen years after that of Ezra. He spurns compromise, flattery, ridicule and threat, from the neighboring Samaritans and heathen, and pushes the building of the walls of Jerusalem to a successful conclusion.⁵

[*Exeunt* TWO FAITHFUL SERVANTS.]

Enter DARIUS and XERXES

Darius can not endure the sight of the rising Greeks in the west. He pushes his armies against them, (492 B. C.), but is defeated. Undaunted, he tries again, and is again defeated by the Greeks in the famous battle of Marathon, (490 B. C.). Infuriated, he starts to gather greater armies, but death stops his fury; and he leaves to his son, Xerxes, the task of subduing the stubborn Greeks. Never has any monarch gathered a greater mass of soldiers than has Xerxes, to beat into the dust the liberty-loving Greeks. But the famous unequal engagement of Leonidas at the pass of Thermopylae with his three hundred Spartans when all of them die for their country, and the utter defeat of Xerxes in the naval engagement at Salamis, (480 B. C.), send the young king reeling back home in dishonor.

[*Exeunt* IMPUDENCE and REVENGE.]

Other rulers step upon the Persian stage and off again, but their performance is so small compared to some others, that at our distance we can hardly discern them. But now we see on one corner of the

⁵ Read Nehemiah.

stage, a young soldier making such a stir that we cannot turn our eyes from him. He is meeting with success wherever he leads his armies. The whole world now takes notice. It is Alexander the Great, king of Greece. In three well fought battles he defeats the Persians, the last one being at Arbela, (331 B. C.), near the ancient city of Nineveh. He now rides to the center of the stage on his famous steed, and pushes the Persians into the background.

And the curtain drops on the luxurious Persian Empire, while the actors shift the scenery, and push the capital of the world 1600 miles to the west, from Susa to Athens.

Symbols of Daniel VIII



Medo-Persia



Grecia

Act V

THE GRECIAN EMPIRE, (331-147 B. C.)

THE SCENE, AND THE PEOPLE

Once more the curtain rolls up, this time displaying to the world in the center of the stage, the most noted of all the ancient nations, especially in its influence on subsequent history. We except, of course, the Jewish people with the Christian religion.

The land of Greece is surrounded by water on three sides, and probably has as many bays and inlets as any land in the world. At an early age the Greeks took possession of the islands of the Aegean Sea, settled in Asia Minor, and conquered southern Italy and Sicily.

The architecture of the ancient Greeks has probably never been surpassed. The Parthenon, on the Acropolis in Athens, upon which Paul probably looked when he stood on Mars Hill and where he made his famous speech to the men of Athens¹,—is still there in its majestic ruins, along with other temples. Many public and private buildings today, are modeled after those of ancient Greece.

Never has Homer's *Iliad* been surpassed in heroic verse; and in fact Virgil's *Aeneid*, Dante's *Inferno*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, are patterned more or less after it.

Wherever Alexander went, he took with him the Grecian culture, using the theater as a vehicle of his propaganda. There was hardly a city of any promi-

¹ Acts 17.

nence in his great empire that did not have its open air theater. Every fourth year they had their Olympian games—whence we get our modern Olympian contests. Running, leaping, boxing, were some of the physical games. There were contests in poetry, drama, history. The winners in these games were crowned with ivy or pine, with palms in their hands. The races were so prevalent in Paul's day that he made many comparisons between them and the Christian life.

The Greeks had inquisitive minds, and were the most philosophical nation yet to appear. Paul said that "the Greeks seek after wisdom." The names of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle will always live, for the last two practically ruled the world in philosophy for two thousand years. The Stoics whom Paul encountered on Mars Hill started largely with Zeno, about 300 B. C. The sect pled for the simple life, denounced the magnificent temples and beautiful works of art, and were in short the Puritans of those days. They believed in an all-wise god, and taught restraint in sorrow and joy alike.

Epicurus, who also lived about 300 B. C., taught that happiness is the chief end of man; and as many people find happiness only in sensuality, the system led to great excesses. The philosophers sought God, but could not find him except in a general way. They could not learn his commandments, except as he had taught them in nature and reason.

The Athenians were "very religious," as Paul says. The market places were crowded with altars and statues; temples were everywhere. Almost everything seems to have been deified—sun, moon, stars, winds, woods, storms. All this is impressed on one's mind as

he wanders among the ruins of these ancient temples. Their deities loved and hated and envied and fought, and seem to have possessed all the weaknesses of frail humanity. But in the Eleusinian mysteries, noble sentiments were imparted to the initiated. In religion and philosophy the Greeks sought for something they could not find.

The Trojan War, made famous by Homer's *Iliad*, was supposed to have been fought about 1000 years before Christ, about the time David was ruling over Israel. Prominent men came upon the scene and passed off again; the Greek states fought intermittently among themselves; but when Darius and Xerxes turned their floods loose against the little states, they banded themselves for the attacks, and they won. After the victory, came a period of great prosperity and advancement among the Greeks.

Enter ALEXANDER THE GREAT, (336-323 B. C.)

He rides onto the stage on his famous charger, and continues on horseback till his end. Born the son of Philip, king of Macedonia, when he becomes king himself he loses no time in bringing all Greece under his sway. Revenging the efforts of the Persians to trample the Greeks into small dust, he pushes his armies into their territory and in three major engagements defeats their hordes. The last battle, as we have said, 331 B. C., marks the passing of the Persian rule.

Alexander continues his conquests into Egypt and as far east as India, but he finally dies in Babylon, 323 B. C., as a result of his insane excesses. He had conquered the world but had failed to conquer himself.

The Greeks become the empire designated by the "belly and thighs of brass" of the great metallic image which Nebuchadnezzar had seen. Alexander himself becomes the leopard with "four wings of a fowl" and with "four heads";² and becomes the "rough-he-goat," the king of Grecia, who overcomes the ram with the two horns.³ Is God guiding this ambitious young man that the nice, exact language of Greece may become universal, to express later the nice and exact meaning of the gospel of His Son?

Enter THE FOUR GENERALS OF ALEXANDER

When the great Alexander dies, his vast, far-flung empire is divided by four of his generals among themselves, thus fulfilling Daniel's prophecy⁴ that four notable horns would come up where the one great horn (Alexander) of the he-goat had been. And out of one of these four horns "came forth a little horn which waxed exceedingly great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land [Palestine] . . . and by him was the daily sacrifice taken away," etc. This is Antiochus Epiphanes.

He tries to hellenize (Greek-ize) the Jews and all peoples, and then tries to exterminate the Jews for resenting it. He pillages Jerusalem, burns swine's flesh on the sacred altar, tries to abolish the Sabbath and circumcision, decrees death to any one possessing the Old Testament Scriptures, and takes away the daily sacrifice. He tortures and slays seven sons of one woman before her eyes, and then kills the mother herself, because they will not eat swine's flesh. But a family called Maccabees—a man and his five sons—

² Dan. 7:6.

³ Dan. 8:20, 21.

⁴ Dan. 8:7-12.

gather together thousands of the Jews and carry on a successful guerilla warfare against their persecutors, till they free their people and establish what has been called the Maccabean Period, from 167 to 63 B. C.

And so the Grecian Empire continues to go to pieces. In 147 B. C., the city of Corinth is taken and destroyed by the Romans, and with it falls the power which had belonged to Greece. The "belly and thighs" of the metallic image gives place to the "legs of iron," the Roman Empire.

The man on the Grecian horse is unseated by the man on the Roman horse who rides into the center of the stage to perform in the limelight for hundreds of years.

Once more the curtain of Time falls on the drama of world events, until the unsettled nations can adjust themselves to the new order of affairs.

Act VI
THE ROMAN EMPIRE
(147 B. C. to 400 or 500 A. D.)

THE SCENE, AND THE PEOPLE

The Roman Empire was to be "diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces."¹ It did this to such a degree that all the Mediterranean lands were subdued; and far into the outskirts of civilization, her armies went. No nation before or since has been so great in extent.

Their religion was much the same as the Greeks', for the Romans obtained much of their culture from the Greeks and passed it on to the rest of the world. Mars, the god of war, was their favorite deity, and the month of March was named for him. They had no sense of sin, and worshipped for what they could get out of it. They expected a response to their prayers, and once when they did not receive it they killed the general leading them. The flight of birds was an evil omen to them, and the condition of the entrails of slain animals often decided whether they should fight a battle or refrain. A rat running across the road was a bad sign, and the senate was once assembled to discuss the meaning of a newly-hatched three-legged chicken.

If they did not care for their newly-born babe, they were at liberty to cast it on the rubbish pile, whence it was often salvaged for a slave or for immoral pur-

¹ Daniel 7:23.

poses. Many manuscripts reveal this. In excavating the city of Pompeii, so many vile things were on the outside of the ancient buildings that the excavator in charge covered them with great sheets to keep the workmen from being degraded. Let the reader enter the Pompeian rooms in the museum at Naples (restricted to students), and he can see things tolerated in Pompeii without any censure which would not be tolerated in the worst city in any professed Christian land in the world.

But the manuscripts show that many Romans could read, were sincere, and were devoted to their gods. When the gospel spread among them, they looked upon the Christians as atheists because they had no temples or great religious places, but often met in upper rooms or private houses or catacombs. Yet millions of the Romans became obedient to the gospel in the first few centuries.

The first settlement of Rome was about 754 B. C., on the Palatine Hill on the Tiber River, about fifteen miles from its mouth. As the population increased, the city spread over six other hills, till Rome was finally called, "The City of Seven Hills," and is so named in John's Book of Revelation. At an early age they had kings, but abolished them for their cruelty, and established a republic under which they extended their sway through much of the earth. But with the rise of greatness went also the rise of ambition in unscrupulous men, till the republic was lost in an absolute and despotic empire.

Enter JULIUS CAESAR and OCTAVIUS (AUGUSTUS)

About fifty years before the birth of Christ, Julius Caesar rides onto the stage on his horse at the head

of his legions, and transmits his ambition and power to "Caesars" for half a millennium. He is a great warrior, statesman and author. He conquers Gaul (France and Germany), and Britain. The high school student has often stumbled over Caesar's Commentaries on his Wars, which begin with the never-to-be-forgotten sentence: "Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres"—All Gaul is divided into three parts.

As Caesar grows in strength, and Pompey, his son-in-law, also increases in favor, the two decide to divide the Roman state between themselves. But when the time comes that this should be done, the ambition of each has grown more than his humility; and in the clash of arms which follows, Caesar is victorious. When he returns to Rome, he is accorded the greatest triumph the city had even seen. He is master of Rome, and Rome is master of the world.

But his unlimited sway is short-lived. He is assassinated in the senate chamber. Mark Antony and Octavius now divide the world in their plans as Caesar and Pompey had done. But after beating down the friends of the old republic, they quarrel between themselves, and Octavius finally wins.

The great Roman Empire really begins with the reign of Octavius, whose name is now changed to Augustus (illustrious). In his mild reign, the Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Augustus is deified after his death, and temples are built to him and divine worship accorded him. Thus begins the worship of the emperors, a practice which caused the death of many Christians when they refused to burn incense to their images. Also begins a long line of Caesars whose lives of cruelty and ambition

and covetousness and licentiousness we are glad to pass over, except the most notorious.

Enter NERO, (54-68 A. D.)

Through two thousand years this monarch's name has been a symbol of evil. He burns a good part of Rome that he might build it again more beautifully; and it is reported among the people that he sings a poem of his own composing, on the Burning of Troy, while the fire is raging through six days and nights. To try to appease the people, he blames the fire on the Christians, and inaugurates what is possibly the greatest persecution ever waged against them. Many are covered with pitch and fastened to poles and lighted as torches at night on the Palatine Hill. How one's heart is stirred with emotion as he walks meditatively over this famous hill, where so many Christians sealed their faith with their blood! Paul, it seems, dies in this persecution. In these trying times many of the Christians hide themselves in the catacombs of Rome, underground passage ways which had probably once been quarries.

Nero's sensuality and crimes finally drive the senate so against him that it decrees his death by scourging; but the emperor, aided by a servant, takes his own life and escapes the pain he had heaped on others. And there is a sigh of relief among the heathen as well as the Christians as Nero's sin-ridden body tumbles from life's stage.

Enter VASPASIAN, (69-79 A. D.), and TITUS, (79-81 A. D.)

This father and son give the Roman people as good a rule as perhaps they ever had. While the father is

reigning, Titus, the son, conquers and destroys Jerusalem, after one of the most bitter sieges in history. Josephus, the Jewish general and historian, is with Titus at the fall, and has given a vivid account in his Wars of the Jews. He estimates that 1,100,000 Jews perish, and that a miserable remnant of 97,000 are sold into slavery.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, Titus carries away the sacred vessels of the temple; and on his Arch of Triumph at Rome there can be seen today the sculptured representation of the seven-branched golden candlestick from the holiest place in the temple, which is one of his trophies of the war. In the short reign of Titus as emperor, three historic events transpire: 1. The great Colosseum, which seats 40,000 spectators, and which his father began, is finished. 2. Rome is destroyed by a fire almost as great as Nero's. 3. Pompeii and Herculaneum are destroyed by a disastrous eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. [Exeunt.]

Enter CONSTANTINE (306-337, A. D.), and OTHERS

And now enters a long list of emperors, a few good but most of them bad. Altogether it is estimated that they wage ten great persecutions against the Church. But Christians multiply despite the opposition, till finally a professed Christian comes to the throne, Constantine; and though the world becomes more favorable to the Church, the Church becomes corrupted by the world.

Barbarians from the north continue to fall on the Empire, till at last it is permanently conquered by them near the end of the fifth Century, A. D. Out of its ruins grow up other empires through the centuries,

changing now and then as they war among themselves. In the great metallic image of a man which Nebuchadnezzar saw, the legs were of iron representing the Roman kingdom; and the toes were of iron and clay, representing weakness and strength in ten kingdoms which would spring out of Rome. We leave the reader to search out these ten kingdoms through the past 1500 years.

The "little stone" has been breaking these kingdoms to pieces more or less through these centuries, in that it has been instilling more righteous principles into them. Have we come to the last days when the little stone will fill the whole earth?

Act VII

THE LAST GREAT WORLD KINGDOM

ITS NATURE AND PEOPLE

"The man on the horse," in other words, the general of armies and oppressor of vanquished nations, has ruled the kingdoms of men by force and whim for thousands of years, and we have had confusion and strife and slavery. If the world must be ruled by the man on the horse, let him be all-wise and all-good. The God of heaven planned just such a Ruler through thousands of years.

Abram was called from Ur of the Chaldees to lay the foundation of such a Kingdom. God said to him, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."¹ This was to come through the Messiah. Isaac and Jacob were heirs with him of the same promises.² And when Jacob was blessing his sons, he looked forward to the Kingdom and said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver [Revised, "ruler's staff"] from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."³

Moses spake of the coming King as a prophet and lawgiver: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."⁴

Isaiah joyously portrays the peace-bringing future Ruler of the World: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall

¹ Gen. 12:3.

² Gen. 26:4; Gen. 28:14.

³ Gen. 49:10.

⁴ Deut. 18:15.

be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."⁵

Again Isaiah described the peace and order and justice of the coming Kingdom: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."⁶

The humility and harmlessness of the truly-converted citizens in this future Kingdom, are picturesquely portrayed by Isaiah in these highly-figurative words: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the

⁵ Isa. 2:2-4.

⁶ Isa. 9:6, 7.

weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's [venomous serpent] den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious."⁷

And again Isaiah tells how the coming King would shine unto Jew and Gentile alike: "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."⁸

And Daniel tells of the final triumph of the future Kingdom over all others in these comforting words: "In the days of these kings [the Caesars] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."⁹

Other prophets, too, looked forward to the Happy Age ahead; and the Jewish people as a whole became imbued with the Hope of Israel. But they misunderstood many of the prophecies, thinking that the Messiah was to be a temporal king who would subdue their enemies and make them the ruling nation of the world.

And now the time is come for the Prince to be born who is to be Ruler of the coming Kingdom of heaven. Said the angels to the shepherds, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the LORD."¹ He is the one to lead the people on

⁷ Isa. 11:6-11.

¹ Luke 2:11.

⁸ Isa. 49:6.

⁹ Daniel 2:44.

to victory over injustice and greed and pride and death. Long centuries the world had looked forward to a Golden Age, and now it is ready to begin in the little town of Bethlehem:

“The hopes and fears of all the years,
Are met in thee to-night.”

The spirit of the people in this new regime is to be different from that in all the world empires before it. The citizens are not to be proud and haughty and ambitious, but humble like their King. He himself said, “Blessed are the *poor in spirit*, for *theirs* is the Kingdom of heaven.”²

All the World Empires were established and perpetuated by force; but when Peter tries to defend himself and thus his religion by force, the Prince of Peace says: “Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword [to defend or propagate my religion] shall perish with the sword.”³ In the wake of those professed Christians who have tried to push the Kingdom of Christ with the sword, have followed the troublesome waves of strife and death.

Some of these World Empires have had some wise rulers, but too many of them have been established and advanced through treachery, deception and lies. Under our very eyes we have had an attempt to establish a world empire in such an evil way. The progress which Hitler made the first two or three years of his conquests was through hypocrisy and lies—through violated word and broken treaties. But the last Universal Empire is to be established on truth and integrity. Said the King himself, “Ye shall know the truth,

³ Matt. 26:52.

² Matt. 5:3.

and the truth shall make you free." And the last immoral character condemned in his Book is, "Whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Caesar and Augustus and practically all the other rulers of Rome and Greece and all the other nations, schemed and fought and killed, to stand at the top, and to receive the applause of men; but Jesus says, "So shall it *not* be among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be servant of all. For the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."⁴

Each group of disciples in this Kingdom had its simple congregational form of government with elders (called bishops) and deacons⁵ and was complete in itself for all kinds of work and worship. They had no arch-bishops, presiding elders, cardinals, popes with their great prestige and authority. These are part of the great apostasy from the true Kingdom.

This spiritual Kingdom is to conquer the world, but in what a different way from the carnal kingdoms! Before he ascends to heaven, the King says: "All authority [power] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and *teach all nations*"—make disciples of them (Revised).⁶

It is to conquer through love, not hate; through character, not physique; through simplicity, not pomp; through faith, not force.

The tie which binds people by blood and country, has been exceedingly helpful to civilization in certain ways, yet like everything else when carried to an ex-

⁴ Mark 10:43.

⁵ 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1.

⁶ Matt. 28:19.

treme, brings great and lasting evils. It held groups together when the world was sparsely settled and nations were farther from each other, but in these days when radio and airplane have brought all peoples together, it is a hindrance to world peace. Extreme nationalism, love of one's country ALONE, brings wars and rumors of wars. And the conflict within nations between master and servant, laborer and capitalist, will keep trouble brewing till Pride, the guilty party, is chained or liquidated. But the King of the last great World Kingdom proposed to put all nations and all individuals on the same level where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."⁷ "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low, because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away."⁸ May this Kingdom soon come in its fullness.

The "little stone" has not yet filled the earth, because so many of its subjects have been disloyal. Jesus says more perhaps against the grab for gold than any other one thing, yet many citizens in the Kingdom have robbed widows and orphans in their community or their nation, or exploited poor and weak nations of the world, until millions have been driven from the Kingdom, and the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them.⁹

The military school of this new Kingdom is so simple that most of the "great ones" have overlooked it. Every Christian is to be a spiritual "commando." When a persecution arose, the disciples who were

⁷ Gal 3:28.

⁸ James 1:9, 10.

⁹ Rom. 2:24.

scattered "went everywhere preaching the word."¹⁰ Paul's command to Timothy applies to *all* preachers, to develop teachers—"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."¹¹ Result of our neglect: a lack of qualified men to guide the local churches.

When the Lord's army was first formed, and when each unit, congregation, was gathered for worship, several members took public part and not simply one man—"every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine [teaching],"¹² etc. In this way all the faithful "man power" was used, and the Army advanced.

Citizens in this spiritual Kingdom have tried the carnal-kingdom way of training their children, and they have failed. They have neglected a most vital principle regarding it, and until God's way is restored, we can not hope for much progress. Paul says: "And ye *fathers*, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."¹³

Boy Scouts may multiply, school teachers may admonish, children's organizations may increase, and even Sunday Schools may enlarge—but if fathers and mothers fail to discharge their duties daily in teaching and admonishing their offspring, all society is built on the sand.

More than a successful business; more than a good job; more than Social Security; more than a college education; more than boys' clubs; more than teaching of morals in public schools—more than any of these

¹⁰ Act 8:4.¹¹ 2 Timothy 2:2.¹² 1 Cor. 14:26.¹³ Ephesians 6:4.

human, helpful yet imperfect, complicated arrangements of men for the betterment of the finances and morals of society—is needed in this troubled world the careful and prayerful, teaching and training, of sons and daughters, in morals and religion, by Christian fathers and mothers.

The Kingdom has not made disciples of Christ of all nations because its citizens have become too much citizens of the carnal kingdom. The little stone has not yet filled the earth because the impetus which Christians should put behind it has been shifted to the flesh. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

THE LAST "MAN ON THE HORSE"

Is it a weakness of human nature that men have idolized the man on the horse, even though, later, he has trampled us under his feet? He leads us to victory over our carnal enemies, and at the same time he leads us into slavery to himself. We are hero worshippers. And so through the centuries the world has been hoping and praying for a "man on a horse" who is all-wise, all-powerful, all-knowing and all-good, and who can and will lead us to eternal joy and peace.

And now in the latter times such a Man has appeared, and he tries to win all by love yet tramples under his feet all rebellious ones; he supports the Right, but treads down the Wrong.

On the rocky and lonely isle of Patmos, Apostle John caught a glimpse of Him at the beginning of his Revelation: "And I saw, and behold a *white horse*; and He that sat on him had a bow [but no arrow;

hence, peaceful]; and a crown was given unto Him; and he went forth *conquering, and to conquer.*"¹¹

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."¹²

"The kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."¹³

The questions before us today are not: When will Jesus come? when will the millennium be? what will each be like? etc., etc.; but the all-absorbing question should be, Am I ready for these great events, and do I have my lamp trimmed and burning? Wonderful joys are ahead for the faithful—but are we faithful?

If we win World War II overwhelmingly, as we expect to do, who knows what inviting events may be in the making? Britain and America are professed Christian nations, even though they have not let their light shine religiously as they should have done. In Russia, only a comparatively few are atheistic, and the churches have been filled since the war began. Obviously the superstitions of the former state church, and its oppression of the poor, did much to drive the people into infidelity. Abundance of help from professed Christian nations may be bread cast upon the waters.

¹² 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

¹¹ Revelation 6:2.

¹³ Rev. 11:15.

Chiang Kai-shek and his Madam are both professed Christians; and if the United Nations win a great victory, this ruler and his wife may accomplish much toward bringing Christianity to the 450,000,000 people of China.

And who knows, if Japanese war lords are "liquidated," and Japan is crushed into the dust, she may conclude that the Sun of Righteousness, even in a somewhat obscured form, has more power against Treachery than the natural sun, which they worship, has for it.

We can not tell: World War II may help prepare people for momentuous events just ahead. John tells us at the beginning of his prophetic picture in Revelation that a Rider on "a white horse" went forth "conquering and to conquer." And after describing the struggles of the conflict in this Conquering through the centuries, tells of the final triumph of this Rider over all enemies:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold *a white horse*; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and *in righteousness* he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God.

"And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon *white horses*, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, [his Word], that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of

Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KINGS OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**"¹⁴

When the United Nations will have formed their Parliament of the World and it will be functioning as they intended, there will still be Pride and Greed and Lust to work havoc between and within the nations of the league.

Only the Man on the White Horse can subdue the nations that forget God and can chastise the "Christian" nations for their sins, and can destroy sin in the heart which is the cause of all the world's woes; and can thus usher in the *fullness* of the Golden Age for which we long.

¹⁴ Rev. 19:11-16.



Act I

THE EARLY BABYLONIAN, OR CHALDEAN, EMPIRE

1. What are the names of the two famous rivers which play so important a part in the early history of man?

2. What is the name of the district between the rivers?

3. What people lived in the upper part of this district?

4. What people lived in the lower part of this district?

5. Did Abraham originally live in the upper or lower part?

6. What fruits grew there?

7. What was the Babylonian religion like?

8. What were their books like?

9. Who was the first great ruler?

10. Who was called "the Moses of Babylon" when Abraham was in the promised land?

11. What are the four distinct promises God made to Abraham?

12. What relation do they hold to the rest of the Bible?

13. What was the name of the World Empire in the days of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and until Moses?

14. What was the name of the World Empire through the period of the Judges?

15. What, in the days of Saul, David and Solomon?

16. About how long before Christ did Moses live?

17. Saul, David and Solomon?
18. What happened to the kingdom of Israel at the death of Solomon?
19. Tell where the Kingdom of Judah was, its capital city, number of tribes, its first king.
20. Tell where the Kingdom of Israel was, its capital city, number of tribes, first king.
21. Give the jingle of the names of the kings of Israel through 1 Kings.
22. Give the jingle of the names of the kings of Judah through 1 Kings.
23. What was the World Empire at this time?
24. Give a few events and characters connected with Elijah.
25. Give a few events and characters connected with Elisha.
26. What year was the Kingdom of Israel carried into captivity and by whom?
27. What other great event happened about six years before that?

Act II

THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE

1. What was the capital city of Assyria, and what prophet was sent to cry against it long before it became the World Empire?
2. What was the character of the Assyrians and what prophet spoke of their disposition?
3. From what year to what year was Assyria a World Empire?

4. Who was the great king who brought an army against Hezekiah at Jerusalem, and what happened?

5. What did the last king of Assyria do with his palace?

6. Who were the prophets who described the desolation of the city for its sins? Quote the substance of their words.

7. Where can many of the stone slabs of Nineveh with carvings be seen today?

Act III

THE LATER BABYLONIAN, OR CHALDEAN, EMPIRE

1. Name the predominate character in this Empire.

2. Tell when and who and what he carried away on his first expedition against Jerusalem, (The Kingdom of Judah).

2. The same regarding his second expedition against it.

3. The same regarding the third.

4. Describe the dream of Nebuchadnezzar of the great metallic image, what each part was made of and what it signified.

5. Describe the great city of Babylon over which Nebuchadnezzar gloried.

6. Describe his humbling by God.

7. Describe Belshazzar's feast and what happened to him and his kingdom.

Act IV

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

1. What were the years of its beginning and end?
2. Describe its extent and improvements, and the character and religion of the people.
3. What other nation was at first linked with Persia, and what king lifted Persia above it?
4. This superiority of Persia over Media is illustrated how in two visions of Daniel?
5. About how many people went back to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel from the captivity?
6. About how long after Zerubbabel's return was it before a certain scribe came back, and what was his name?
7. About how long after his return did a prominent officer in the Persian court come back, and what was his name, and why did he come back?
8. Tell of the work of Ezra.
9. Tell of the work of Nehemiah.
10. Name two prophets who helped encourage the people in rebuilding (read their books).
11. What king of Persia led an expedition against the Greeks in 492 B. C.?
12. What king led one against them in 490?
13. What was the name of this king's son, who led a still greater expedition against the Greeks in 480, and was defeated?
14. The Persian Empire came under the power of another rising empire after what battle, in what year, won by what man?

15. To what part of Nebuchadnezzar's metallic image is the Persian Empire compared.

Act V

THE GRECIAN EMPIRE

1. Tell what you know of the country, architecture and games of the Greeks.

2. Tell what you know of the two kinds of philosophy Paul met with in Athens.

3. Tell of the religion of the Greeks.

4. What is the name of a famous early war of the Greeks which is commemorated in their greatest poem which was somewhat of a Bible to the Greeks.

5. The victories which the Greeks had over the Persian Kings, Darius and Xerxes, did what for the Greek nation as a whole?

6. What great general overcame the Persians in what battle and when, thus making Greece the World Empire?

7. To what is Greece compared in Nebuchadnezzar's metallic image and in other visions in the book of Daniel.

8. How many of Alexander's generals became rulers of his empire for a while, and to what part of a he-goat does Daniel compare them?

9. Who is the he-goat, and who is the great horn?

10. Who is the "little horn" who came up after the four horns, and what did he do against the Jews?

11. What man and his four sons stood against him, and established an independent Jewish rule for a while?

12. Give an instance of the cruelty of An-ti-o-chus E-phiph-a-nes.

13. What nation was rising in great power in the west, and in what battle, and when, did they bring Greece into their power entirely, and thus become the next World Empire?

Act VI

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

1. What was the religion and morals of the Romans like?

2. What was famous about the site of the city of Rome?

3. Tell all you know about the first and greatest of the Caesars.

4. Tell what you know of the second Caesar, and who was the great person born while he reigned?

5. Tell what you know of the wicked Caesar who raised such a great persecution against Christians, in which Paul probably died.

6. Tell what you know of the Caesars, father and son, who conquered and destroyed Jerusalem.

7. When did he live and what was the emperor's name who made Rome nominally Christian?

8. Who was it who finally destroyed the Roman Empire?

9. To what part of the metallic image is the Roman Empire likened?
10. What did the ten toes in the image represent?
11. What was the little stone which struck the image and ground it to powder, and finally filled the whole earth?

Act VII

THE LAST GREAT WORLD KINGDOM

1. To what patriarch was this kingdom first spoken about?
2. What did Jacob and Moses say about it and the King.
3. Recite from memory all the passages given from Isaiah about the Kingdom and the King.
4. Recite from memory Daniel's explanation of the little stone.
5. What did the angels say to the shepherds about the new-born King?
6. Enumerate some of the differences between the Kingdom of Christ and the other world empires on Humility.
7. Method of conquering the world.
8. Equality of subjects.
9. Love of money.
10. Means of training leaders.
11. Full use of "man power".
12. Training of youth.

13. What book, chapter and verse first tells of the Man on the "white horse"?

14. What does He go forth to do, and how does He do it?

15. What does Paul say in 1 Corinthians 15 about the final days on earth of this Kingdom?

16. At the end, what will the kingdoms of this world become?

17. Though we may not understand much about the millennium and second coming of the King, we can do the important thing which is what?

18. Recite the substance of the final conquest of the world by the Man on the "white horse".

19. Though World War II may lead to a Parliament of Nations, what will still be left which only the Man on the white horse can vanquish?

20. But will he do this personally, or through his Word and through YOU, YOU, YOU?

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