

Comments on Daniel 2 Chapter, 31 to 46 Verses.

BY J. L. WIGGLES.

Bro. T. M. Morgan:

DEAR SIR,—Agreeable to your request I devote to you and other readers of the MESSENGER, a few hours in comments on this Scripture.

The age in which the future was unfolded to men in dreams or visions has long since passed. Since all the evidence necessary to authenticate the existence of a God and that he has sent his Son into the world in order that man might again have access to the tree of life, and that "the spirit of truth" has come "to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment," and since John was permitted to "write in a book" of the blessings that "he that overcometh shall receive," revelations are no more necessary to the future happiness of man. Nebuchadnezzar, the first man at whose command the nations of earth moved in obedience to "law and behold," surprise, and no doubt fear, filled the heart of the king, for the "form" of the image was terrible and the "brightness" was excellent.

Though it might be of much interest for our thoughts to be occupied with the "brightness" which doubtless was the impress of "wiliness" such as Satan alone can give; but, brother, it is the "form" and the formation I would first call your attention to.

The head of this image was of fine gold. This word *fine* conveys to our minds no idea of purity because Satan is the opposite of everything that is pure; and it was at the time when this image was complete that the devil from the top of a "very high mountain," after calling our Savior's attention to it offered it and its "glory" to him, "if he would but bow to his authority. A king without a kingdom can not be, nor can a kingdom without citizens.

Nebuchadnezzar is represented as being "this head of gold;" and in verse 39 he is represented as a kingdom. "After thee shall arise another kingdom," and in the same sense that the "head" is called *fine*, so also are the "breast and arms." Briefly then "the head, breast, arms, belly, sides, legs and feet" are each in their parts representatives of so many kingdoms, and the word *fine* instead of conveying the idea of purity only tells us of the particles of the citizens which make up the parts of the "image."

Beginning with himself, the king had here shown to him, in a picture, the bringing together of the forces of evil, that the influence was ambition alone, the tie which held together was tyrannical force.

To this then let us look, and afterward I shall ask you to view with me a "picture" that is indeed lovely and not terrible.

The Assyrian nation was the first nation that arose to that greatness that she could command all other nations, 37 and 38 verses. This nation was also the first of a succession of kingdoms which terminated in the consolidation of strength, that too upon the downfall of the one going before.

The history of the ancients tells us of the greatness of the Assyrians under Nebuchadnezzar, that there were none who could singly and successfully oppose him. Perhaps the Egyptian Sesostris had carried his victories farther, but he left no ruling face to hold in subjection. "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." This kingdom was the union of Media and Persia. "In what respect their inferiority consisted I am not prepared to say, but we know from this language that in speaking of the Assyrian being as the head, he is recognized head of the kingdom, while it is the kingdom that is the "head of gold." "After thee" (after this kingdom) "shall arise another kingdom."

Prior to and even at the overthrow of Babylon the Medes and Persians

existed as separate nations, but soon after that event occurred the death of Cyaxares, upon which a final union of the two nations was consummated. The extent of territory was greater, perhaps the rule and the morality of this second kingdom were superior to the first, but Babylon with her walls and her riches, the strength and protection of the first found no place in the second. In this, at least, "the breast and arms," though capable of conquering, were "inferior" to the head. The "third kingdom of brass," which did bear rule over the whole earth, "could never, with their courage, and led by an Alexander, succeeded in overthrowing the second, had there been a Babylon in the way. Alone, with but a meager force, the Grecian king attacked the image, consisted of head, breast and arms, and conquered it. No love was there, nothing but a vain glory in carrying their conquest over the nations of earth. And although the king of this nation of brass sought to make his people believe that he was himself a God, yet Rome was never reached, and she, with her iron strength, made war upon and conquered the image.

This "fourth kingdom" has other peculiarities than strength, to break in pieces and subdue. At the first the image was a unit, a head only; second, a union of two arms in the one breast; third, a unit the body of the image; and fourth, a division in two parts, these two parts each divided in five other parts. Was this Rome, Governed by two tribunes, a civil and a military, in peace the civil ruled, in war the military. Here then we find the legs. Now how about the toes. Each tribune consisted of five members, that then fills out the comparison and Rome completes the image. I know it is claimed that China existed through all this an independent nation and undisturbed. Let those who set up this claim examine the history of these several nations or any other nation in their relations with each other, their wars, their treaties, their marine, their commerce, or in any other particular, and decide for themselves if aught was then known of such a people, of such a nation, if Rome was not a universal kingdom, if the entire strength of "evil" was not consolidated, and that through the marching of armies over the dead and dying bodies of human kind.

Brother, come now and let us look at the other picture, which the king was permitted to see. "Thou sawest till" (beyond the foundation of the image) "that a stone was cut out without hands," 34 verse. This stone smote the image on his feet and brake them to pieces. When 44 verse "In the days of these beings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Would any person suppose that the setting up of this kingdom was to occupy a period of time running from Daniel to the glory of Rome. Certainly not, and yet we read "In the days of these kings," nor can we advance an age farther for the "Stone smote the image on his feet."

As to the time of the birth of our Savior all agree that it was during the reign of Tiberius; and that there was at that time, and for some years after, nothing to disturb the quietude of Rome. In her "brightness" and "form" she rested. At such a time when there were no foes to this universal nation Christ was born. And now remember that Adam had not the strength to resist when his appetite was appealed to. Christ had. In no point did he fail. This only by way of evidence of his Messiahship. Finally the entire scheme was given into the hands of a chosen few, and it is said "their sound went to the ends of the earth."

The infidel tells us of the barbarian overrunning Rome and causing her downfall. We cite them to the preached word as the cause of weakness in their midst, even to the "stone that smote the image on its feet, and brake them to pieces," like

as though we should with a blow of the sledge break to pieces a huge boulder. By the preaching of the gospel Rome was broken into fragments. "A falling away" followed, but again it is renewed, and we see the day approaching, as the grinding of the fragments progresses, when like the "chaff of the summer threshing floors the wind will carry them away." The image is gone, but the particles, the individuals remain opposed to the dissemination of truth, to the gospel, the grinding.

Brethren, tell us of the near approach of the "coming of our Lord." The king saw till the stone "became (a progressive work) a great mountain." It is already that; but, brother, there is much to be done, a great work is yet before us before the world is filled with righteousness; before we reach that time when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." Beyond this the king saw not, but to us it is portrayed that "after all rule and authority and power is put down." Then "God will be all and in us all."

God grant that we may all labor in that kingdom and share the future glories of Him whose law is truth, whose king is love, and whose duration is eternity.

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How Tommy Tingle Remembered.

BY WILLIAM NORRIS BURR.

The wind-sprites and dust-imps were all out that morning for a frolic. What a jolly, reckless people they are, and how much of pleasantness we do miss from our lives when we grumble and scold and whine and cry when these sprites and imps come out to gether! I once knew a boy who spoiled one whole day for himself and for every one around him, just because some gleeful wind-sprites, whirling about so fast they couldn't see what they were doing, pushed about a million dust-imps right into his face one morning. The wind-sprites should have been more careful, it is true; but they didn't mean to do anything rude, I am sure, and I think if that boy had kept his ears from getting rusty he might have heard the wind-sprites saying: "Pray, excuse our rudeness, sir." Off he rushed with a dozen dust-imps clinging to his eye-lashes, which so enraged him that—well, I don't believe dust-imps and wind-sprites did half as much mischief in the world that day as did this cross, crusty, ill-mannered boy. One night the wind-sprites and dust-imps were having a frolic, and the sprites pushed millions and millions of the imps between the window-sash and the casing into the home of a tidy housewife. Now this good lady tried to keep her home as neat as a band-box, and in this effort a good trait in her character was manifested, I am sure; but she was not a model in other respects, for this morning, when she came to the window and saw all those poor, imprisoned dust-imps lying quietly as if frightened on the window-sill, she lost her temper; and it was not pleasant to be in the house with her until the next day.

I seem to have forgotten that I sat down to write about Tommy Tingle. As I told you, the sprites and imps were out that morning for a frolic. Tommy stood by the window watching them as they jumped and flew and rolled and tumbled about, so intent on their wild pranks that they forgot they were bringing evil into the world by infusing something of their thoughtless spirit into the men and women, boys and girls, about them. Tommy's mother was busy with the Saturday baking, and grandma in the next room was saying something about mustard and her pleurisy.

"Oh dear!" said Mrs. Tingle, "this ginger-box is empty. Tommy, do you think you can get down to Mr. Humphrey's grocery without being blown away?"

"Course I can; this is nothing! I'll have it up here in a jiffy."

"Don't forget what you are to get," said his mother, as he pulled his cap over his eyes and started out of doors. She knew that Tommy sometimes allowed his mind to become so full of something else that the message which she had given him was completely crowded out.

"No. I'll remember," and away he went.

Before he reached Mr. Humphrey's store he found the wind-sprites and dust-imps in such large numbers and so boisterously rude that he ran into a Chinaman's wash-house to get away from them. As soon as he could brush a lot of the saucy imps from his eyes he looked around upon his strange surroundings. He found he had three Chinamen for companions, two of whom were preparing a late breakfast, and the other ironing. This one stooped, and, sucking up from a bowl beside him a mouthful of water forced it from his mouth in a fine spray over the garment. This was his way of sprinkling clothes. Tommy watched this interesting performance as it was several times repeated, and then turned to see what the others were doing. One with a large knife was cutting a piece of fresh pork into very small bits, and the other was stripping asparagus, which he afterward cut into very small pieces.

"You like spinach?" asked one.

"What's that?" said Tommy.

"Spinidge. You likee?" he asked again, untying a large bundle of green leaves.

"Oh! spinach," said Tommy, as he saw what the bundle contained. "No, I don't like it very well."

"Cost too muchee," said the Chinaman. "Tree pound, twenty-five cents."

Just then the door opened and a young man entered. He had evidently been there before.

"See here, John," said he familiarly, "I did not see you at the Sunday school last Sunday. Come to-morrow, won't you?"

"If I have time," said John.

"Oh! you know you ought not to wash and iron now on Sunday," said the young man.

"Some gentlemen want their clothes, and I have to work," said the Chinaman.

The sprites and the imps seemed to have settled down for a rest, so Tommy went on up the street a little farther to Mr. Humphrey's grocery, made his purchase, and went home.

He found the baby crying, his mother worried because she was getting behind with her work, and the pain in grandma's side no better.

"Now, Tommy, you must play with the baby while I make the gingerbread," said his mother; and she bustled about her work so briskly that one would have thought her life depended upon having that gingerbread done at a certain moment not far away.

It was on the tea-table that evening Tommy tasted it first. Just then the baby began to cry again, and I think she must have caught sight of Tommy's face, the sight of which was surely enough to make any baby cry.

"What's the matter with that gingerbread?" exclaimed Tommy.

His mother placed a crumb of it in her mouth, and then went into the kitchen for her ginger-box.

"What did you buy at Mr. Humphrey's this morning?" she asked of Tommy. "I am sure I sent you for ginger."

"Well, I forgot. I couldn't tell if it was ginger for gingerbread, or mustard for grandma. S'pose I got mustard."

—S. S. Times.

The largest gold-pen manufactory in the United States is said to be that of John Holland, Cincinnati. His establishment comprises 65,000 square feet of floor space. He employs sixty skilled hands, and his annual profits amount to more than \$100,000.

Select Reading.

—Gen. Sherman is credited with the remark that newspapers generally print ninety-nine lies to one truth. In printing this remark we unhesitatingly place it among the ninety and nine.—*Ex.*

—"Just as soon as man likes any place better than home, he is on the way to perdition."

—"A young man who is 'too good to work' is too good for anything else in this world. There is no place for him on the earth."

—"The number of envelopes manufactured and sold in Great Britain and Ireland, during the past year, is upwards of six hundred and fifty millions; nearly two hundred each for every man, woman and child."

—"Satire is a greater enemy of friendship than is anger.—H. A."

—"Generally speaking, a married man is considered more worthy of credit than a bachelor, because unmarried men are generally restless and often fall into bad habits."

—"The qualities we possess never make us so ridiculous as those we pretend to have.—La Rochefoucauld."

—"The success of the greater part of things depends upon knowing how long it takes to succeed.—Montesquieu."

—"Law is very like a sieve; it is easy to see through it, but one must be considerably reduced before he gets through."

The train of years goes slowly out of sight. Time freighted each and into darkness bound,

And leaves us but a feeble, fading light To copy negatives from memory's ground;

But even these, so indistinct at first, We straightway spoil with our shallow tears,

As though 'twere folly that we choose the worst, And leave us nothing but our silly fears.

—The last letter written by General Washington, dated Mount Vernon, December 8, 1799, six days before his death, is in the possession of George W. Childs, publisher of the *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia.

—Erastus Brooks says that during a journalistic experience of forty years in New York city he has seen the birth and death of one hundred and twenty-five daily newspapers. Three papers only that were being issued in 1837 are still published.

—Old, in-bred habits will make resistance; but by better habits they shall be entirely overcome.—Thomas A. Kempis.

—"If here on earth we do not delight in holiness, we have no preparation for that world where God is to be all in all forever.—Melville."

—Cowper hated Dr. Johnson. "Oh!" said he, after reading his life, "I could thrash his old jacket 'till I made his pension jingle in his pocket."

—A recently-invented paper-bag-making machine receives at one end a roll of paper, cut to the proper width, and lays off at its other end completely-finished bags. The machine can be made to suit any width of paper and produce any size of bag within the limit of its highest capacity.

—"Remember that success always follows the young man who trusts in God and does his level best."

—"The use of wire instead of thread in book-binding is found to be not only much more economical, but it saves labor—one man, by using the requisite machine, being able to turn off as much work as eight manual operators."

—"A material called parchment slate, manufactured in Nuremberg, Germany, readily takes the mark of a lead-pencil, and is being largely substituted for paper in note and account books, etc. It is much lighter than the mineral slate, and possesses the further advantage that it will not break—being tough and unbending. Writing upon this substance, can be easily erased and cleaned off as from a slate itself."