

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is the visions of Daniel.

Possible songs include the following hymns:

[Be Thou My Vision](#)

[In Christ There Is No East Or West](#)

[God Himself Is With Us](#)

[Now Thany We All Our God](#)

[O Lord Of Hosts, My King, My God!](#)

## **Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of February 28, 2009**

*The person conducting the Sabbath service should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.*

Continuing the thought of last Sabbath, many teachers, preachers, and would-be prophets will come in Jesus' name, proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah, and by doing so, they will deceive many. Each of these teachers, preachers, and prophecy pundits will say something like the following:

What is the real significance of this [Middle East] unrest? To understand it, we must study a marvelous prophecy, never before understood—a prophecy that has been closed and sealed until now—a prophecy that foretold, 2,500 years ago, this very series of crises and the war that shall finally draw in all nation of the world! (*The Middle East in Prophecy*. Herbert W. Armstrong. Worldwide Church of God; 1948, 1954, 1972.)

The Middle East in 1948 saw conflict, as it did in 1956, 1966, 1973 and more recently. It saw conflict in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century BCE, the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century BCE, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> Centuries BCE. It saw conflict in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries CE, as well as in 11<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries CE. In fact, when has the Middle East not seen conflict; so conflict in the Middle East is hardly a sign of the end of the era. If anything, absence of conflict rather than conflict would have significance.

It isn't conflict that has prophetic importance, but specific conflicts that form the shadow and type of conflict in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm ... perhaps the most difficult concept someone schooled by Herbert W. Armstrong or by Ellen G. White has in understanding prophecy is that Scripture—all of it—forms the shadow and copy of the heavenly Book of Life in which the lives of disciples are epistles written in spirit on the tablets of human hearts (2 Cor 3:3). The epistles of Paul were written with ink on velum, tanned animal hides; the epistles of endtime disciples are written with keystrokes recorded on magnetic discs (hard drives). But the lives of both Paul and faithful endtime disciples are

recorded in the non-physical Book of Life. There, their lives will not be lost or misunderstood as their words are in this world.

When Armstrong wrote, "To understand it, we must study a marvelous prophecy, never before understood—a prophecy that has been closed and sealed until now" (1), he knew that the prophecies of Daniel were sealed and had been kept secret until the time of the end. He believed, however, he was then living in the time of the end, that with introduction of nuclear warfare, humankind was not long for this world. He wrote in a co-worker letter dated December 8, 1947, the following:

GREETINGS! in Jesus' name: TIME is running out! This world is moving swiftly to its destruction! Yet there is still time---and just barely enough time---to finish the work of God for this present age. THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE. But the work of God is progressing on schedule---amid handicaps, thru obstacles and trials that try our souls, our patience, and our faith to the limit---under the divine direction of God, and as a result of MIRACLES performed by him in our behalf.

[paragraphs 2--5 have been omitted]

Yes, this world is being hurled rapidly TOWARD UTTER DESTRUCTION---we approach the END OF THE WORLD!---which means the end of this AGE!

The WORLD TOMORROW will soon dawn, bringing peace, prosperity, happiness and joy at last;---and in the short time that remains our calling and sole important mission in life is to SHOUT THIS GOOD NEWS (the true Gospel of Jesus Christ) TO THE WORLD! It must go, not only to America and Canada, as it is now going, it must go to ALL NATIONS, in ALL LANGUAGES! To this end, AMBASSADOR COLLEGE is now operating in sober earnest--instructing consecrated, eager young men and women in the true Message, training them in speaking foreign languages.

THE OUTLOOK, at the moment, is for six or seven more years of PROSPERITY here in America---(even tho it is an artificial, unsound and inflated "prosperity")---while meantime the world moves relentlessly toward WORLD WAR III and final DESTRUCTION!

YOU, dear Co-Worker, are not going to be permitted to enjoy your home, your freedom, your present privileges and pursuits, many more years. Just a few more years---perhaps six or seven---perhaps twelve or fifteen---and a re-united Fascist-Nazi Europe will STRIKE---America's great cities will be blown out of existence in one night without warning---we shall see such tremendous atomic destruction as the world has never even dreamed ---more than 40 MILLION Americans will perish in the horrifying blasts! At the same time drought and famine will strike dead another THIRD of our entire population---men, women, and children ---thru starvation and disease! And our second great commission ---our divine calling from Almighty God---is to WARN our beloved nation, and other Israelitish nations, before it is too late! Every individual who HEEDS this warning, turns to God, is WATCHING and PRAYING ALWAYS, being filled with God's Spirit, living by every Word of God, with a life consecrated to Him, will be given

special divine protection---taken beforehand to a place of SAFETY--  
-- preserved thru the final horrifying tribulation, time of plagues  
and human anguish soon to visit this earth!

[the remainder of this lengthy letter has been omitted]

With love to all, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

Armstrong's five or six more years have become sixty more years: he was living in the Apostle Paul's "end of the ages" (1 Cor 10:11), but he wasn't living in the Prophet Daniel's "time of the end" (12:4). Therefore, Daniel's visions remained sealed and secret throughout Armstrong's lifetime. He couldn't understand them—and his lack of understanding wasn't from lack of wanting to understand, but from the very simple, *it wasn't time for Daniel's visions to be unsealed*. And the same pertains to Ellen G. White, who lived even earlier.

It's easy to identify both Armstrong and White as false prophets, but that is probably too harsh a condemnation of both. Certainly there was more time than what Armstrong thought, but then, there has been more time than what the Apostle Paul thought. So it is not failure to understand a sealed and secret prophecy that should be held against Armstrong or White, but teaching that both possessed understanding when they did not ... Armstrong inserts a convenient 2,000 year gap in historic events fulfilling Daniel's long vision of chapter 11. He writes in his *The Middle East in Prophecy* booklet,

Verse 32—Antiochus tried to end the religion of the Jews [editors' note: ca 167 BCE]. He took away the daily sacrifice, forbade the ministrations of the Temple. He perverted by flatteries the Jews who were willing to forsake their religion. / But—right here, the prophecy cuts off from the continuation of events in the history of those ancient north and south kingdoms. Up to this point, the prophecy has unfolded, step by step, in the actual history of the northern kingdom of the Seleucidae, or Syria, and the southern kingdom of Egypt. But say most commentaries, all accurate details seem suddenly to stop short with this verse. (9)

Let's understand what Armstrong wrote: first, he relied on "most commentaries" for understanding of what Daniel writes through verse 32 of chapter 11. He assigns the actual historical narrative to verses 2 through 32, ignoring what the angel tells Daniel: "Do you know why I have come to you [Daniel]? But now I will return to fight against the prince [*sar*] of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince [*sar*] of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince. / As for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him" (10:20–11:1).

Darius the Mede was a *sar* [prince or king] of Persia, but Darius was a human being. He was not one who withstood or was able to withstand the angel bringing Daniel knowledge of what is written in the Book of Truth. Thus, in mentioning Darius, which seems to be a name-drop, the angel tells Daniel that the prince of Persia whom he was not able to overcome by himself is not like Darius whom he had to confirm and strengthen ... if this angel is Gabriel, then a human prince is stronger than an archangel if the *sar* of Persia were Darius and that is not and never will be the case; so the *sar* of Persia and the *sar* of Greece are not human kings, which is knowledge from the Book of Truth that can be taken back to Daniel's second vision (chapter 8). The ram Daniel saw in vision at the Ulai canal is the kings of Persia (8:20) — one ram represents the plural kings of Persia, with

one horn (the shorter horn that came up first) representing the kings of Media and longer horn that came up second representing the kings of Persia. The ram represents all of the kings of Persia with whom the angel bringing Daniel knowledge was left: “Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia” (10:13).

The he-goat that tramples the ram is the king of Greece, which also is not one king but a federation of demonic kings, with the great horn being first and in the position of authority over the other kings that do not have dominion or authority until the great horn is broken suddenly.

Now to the visible humanoid image Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision: the head and face is the king of Babylon, but the arms are now like the two horns of the ram, the king of Persia, making the image’s human-like chest of silver like the head or face of the ram ... a human chest doesn’t have facial features! Correct, but the king of Persia isn’t the head of Babylon (the image taking its name from its head); so it is reasonable for the face of the king of Persia not to have eyes, ears, and mouth. A ram is not a human being and doesn’t see, hear, or speak like a human being. But the head, the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4), as the reality foreshadowed by Nebuchadnezzar has eyes, ears, mouth, and does the seeing, hearing, and speaking for Babylon, just as the glorified Jesus does the seeing, hearing, and speaking for the Son of Man.

If Nebuchadnezzar’s humanoid image’s chest of silver equates to the face of the ram (and the assertion here is that it does), then the image’s belly and loins equates to the face of the he-goat (or scruffy goat) ... on the he-goat, only one horn is visible, a great horn between his eyes, which places this great horn in the position of an erect penis.

When Daniel reveals the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream to the king, Daniel says, “Another kingdom inferior to you [as silver is inferior to gold] shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth” (2:39) ... it isn’t the fourth kingdom that breaks and devours that shall rule, but the third kingdom, the bronze kingdom, the kingdom of the king Greece, the he-goat that tramples the ram. And how does this third kingdom *rule over all the earth*? Through the appetites of the belly and the loins; through the lust for food and sex: is this not how the world is ruled today? When sex is used to sell hamburgers, the king of Greece rules the world ... the fattening of not just America but of much of the world, from China to France, discloses the extent to which the king of Greece rules over the flesh of human beings.

Returning now to Armstrong’s use of many commentaries to give him understanding of Daniel’s visions, we see that first, the commentaries will make Darius stronger than the angel Gabriel; for the commentaries identify the kings of Persia as human kings, and identify the first king of Greece as Alexander the Great, and the kings of the South as the Ptolemaic Greek-Egyptian Empire and the kings of the North as the Seleucid Greek-Syrian Empire. But these commentaries were written when even by Armstrong’s reasoning, the prophecies were closed and sealed (*The Middle East in Prophecy*, 1); thus, the commentaries might well be historically accurate, but if the prophecies remained sealed and secret, then at best all the commentators could discuss was the shadows that sealed and kept secret Daniel’s visions and knowledge of what is written in the Book of Truth.

Armstrong goes on to write,

Now let us notice verse 32 in detail, and particularly the last part: /  
“And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupt by

flatteries.” This, Antiochus Epiphanes did do. But now notice the last part of the verse: “but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.” / So our question now is, when, beginning with, and following, 167 B.C., did people begin to know God, and to be spiritually strong, and to do exploits in the Lord’s service? The answer is, at the time of the Maccabees, beginning in 166 B.C., and, two centuries later, at the first appearing of Jesus Christ and in the days of the apostles! (*The Middle East in Prophecy*, 9)

Armstrong asks the correct question: when did the people begin to know God? But he answers the question wrongly!

The prophet Jeremiah writes,

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. *And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord.* For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (31:31–34 emphasis added)

*Knowing God* is an attribute of the new covenant, which, according to the writer of Hebrews didn’t begin with Calvary; for the writer of Hebrews says, “In speaking of a new covenant, he [Christ Jesus] makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away” (8:13)

The new covenant—the covenant by which the people would know the Lord—was not yet in effect two decades after Calvary. The old covenant was *becoming obsolete*, but wasn’t yet obsolete nor had it vanished away ... what is the justification of a Christian ministry if it is not to teach neighbor and brother to know the Lord? But what Christian ministry truly teaches neighbor and brother to know the Lord? Certainly not any that teach neighbor and brother to transgress the commandments, or any that deny receipt of the Holy Spirit (the divine breath of the Father) gives to the disciple real life in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm. The Christian ministry that teaches neighbor and brother to know God teaches neighbor and brother to walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6) and to imitate Paul as he imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17).

The existence of Christian ministries to teach neighbor and brother to know the Lord is *prima facie* evidence that the new covenant has not yet been implemented; therefore, Armstrong misreads the last clause of Daniel 11:32, and continues his misreading of Daniel, for about verse 34 he says, “Here is described in general the whole course of God’s people, from the days of Christ to the present. Compare with such passages as Rev, 12:6, 11, 13–17. And notice the vision carries down to this present time of the end” (*The Middle East in Prophecy*, 10).

Christ Jesus contradicts Armstrong’s misreading of what Daniel receives: when asked by His disciples about the sign of His coming and the end of the age, Jesus said,

*So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. (Matt 25:15–22 emphasis added)*

The abomination that desolates, spoken of by Daniel in chapter 11, verse 31, appears not in the form and body of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, but in the man of perdition, the lawless one (2 Thess 2:3), in the time of the end. Antiochus Epiphanes is only a shadow and type of the abomination that desolates as King Nebuchadnezzar is only a shadow and type of the spiritual king of Babylon, Lucifer (Isa 14:4–21), and as Alexander the Great is only a shadow and type of the first horn or king of the “king” of Greece.

Armstrong habitually jumped around in biblical prophecies, claiming *this* verse pertained to a historical event, but *that* verse pertains to the English-speaking peoples at the end of the age—biblical prophecies don’t jump around. They reveal what humankind cannot know about what happens in the heavenly realm except through revelation. However, to be valued and recorded [canonized], they were also about events that happened near in time to the prophet giving the prophecy. Thus real historical events form the shadow and type of what happens and will happen in the timeless heavenly realm; for not all of what happened to Israel formed the shadow and copy of heavenly events, nor is all that occurred recorded in Scripture. What is recorded are the events that are shadows and copies. What is not a shadow and type is omitted from Scripture.

Armstrong could “sense” that Daniel’s long vision had an endtime application, but despite his best efforts he could not unseal these visions for it was not then time for Daniel’s visions to be unsealed. It was not yet the time of the end, despite humankind unlocking the energy of the atom to make bombs of immensely destructive potential.

Finally, we are ready to address Babylon’s iron legs:

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*The person conducting the services should again read or assign to be read Daniel chapter 2, verses 31 through 45.*

**Commentary:** Dominion over the earth is given to the bronze belly and thighs, or to the kingdom that rules the appetites of the belly and the loins. This is a “golden” colored kingdom, for common bronze (90% copper, 10% tin) is the color of 14-carat gold (gold-copper alloy), the gold most familiar to Americans. And Daniel’s visions record war occurring between the gold-colored bronze of the Babylon’s belly and thighs and Babylon’s silver arms and chest ... the silver arms and chest never receive dominion over the earth, but following the trampling of the silver ram, the great or first horn [king] of the king of Greece is broken suddenly and for no (in Scripture) explainable reason. Then the four horns sprout from around the base of the first horn, with these horns also being

between the eyes of the king of Greece, the pelvic girdle of Nebuchadnezzar's humanoid image functioning as eye sockets on a skull.

If the femur sockets function as eye sockets, then each leg of Nebuchadnezzar's humanoid image functions as an eye, a realization that initially seems too fantastic to be true. But when realizing that the four beasts or kings of Daniel chapter seven are these four horns or kings that sprout up from the base of the first king. These four are also the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, with the first horsemen being the false prophet, the second horseman being Apollyon, the third horseman being the king of the South, Sin, and the fourth horseman being the king of the North, Death. Thus, Sin and Death are separated when (or shortly after) the first or great horn of the king of Greece is broken suddenly, an awareness helpful in understanding that the first horn is broken at the second Passover liberation of Israel, a liberation from indwelling sin and death by disciples being filled or empowered by the Holy Spirit. Disciples will remain dwelling in mortal fleshly bodies subject to dying, but unless disciples take sin back inside themselves, they will not die spiritually; they will not experience the second death.

The kings of the South and the North—Sin & Death—have functioned as “eyes” for the king of Greece, who, again, rules through the appetites of the flesh. How so, one might ask. And the question is answered with a question: How is it that lawlessness finds a person wherever he or she attempts to hide? How can disobedience “see” into a person to strike where the person is most vulnerable? How can Satan see the thoughts of a person, thus knowing when to dangle temptation in front of a person as a fisherman hops a plastic worm in front of a bass? It is the appetites of the flesh that betray the person, disclosing weaknesses, stripping away the righteousness of Christ to leave the person naked before God—and when naked, the person separates him or herself from God as Adam and Eve hid from *Elohim* [singular in usage]. Yes, Sin & Death “see” inside a person to attack the person where he or she is weakest. Whether it is an extra jelly doughnut or a flirtatious smile the appetites of the flesh see “into” the heart of the person to turn resolve into slavish obedience to the demands of the belly and the loins.

It is Sin & Death that destroys, devours, and tramples what lives; they are as iron flails. They are the legs of iron—and because iron is a dull silver color, they represent *silver Christendom* and worship of the cross, the mark of death.

Egypt serves as a representation of Sin as Assyria serves as a representation of Death. When Jeremiah records, “Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it shall no longer be said, “As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” but “As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.” For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. (16:14–15), Jeremiah tells Israel that the nation's exodus from Egypt, the representation of sin, will be forgotten when the nation is spiritually recovered from Death.

No physical recovery of Israel will cause Israel to forget the Exodus; any physical recovery of Israel will always be compared to the Exodus. Thus, the recovery that is in the context of the Lord hurling Israel out of the land (16:13) that represents God's rest or presence then sending fishers and hunters after Israel, but making the nation pay doubly (*v.* 18) for its iniquity is not and cannot be a physical recovery! ... The wages of sin is death; the wages of iniquity of any kind is death. So how can the Lord make Israel repay doubly? One death is

enough to end one life. Thus, to repay doubly would cause the Lord to send Israel into the second death, the lake of fire. And the physical nation of Israel has, until now, no second life that can be ended in a second death. Only the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel—the Christian Church—has a second life that can be ended in the lake of fire. Hence, the recovery of Israel, the nation that the Lord will first doubly repay for its iniquity, is a recovery from Death, or Salvation.

The highway from Assyria (Isa 11:16) is the road to life, or the road to salvation. The context in which this highway is found does not permit it to be anything else.

The iron legs do not—and have never—represented the Roman Empire or the Roman Church. The whore that rides the beast is not the Roman Church, for the king of the North will overrun the king of the South just before he is taken and dealt a death blow. But this is for next Sabbath.

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*The person conducting the Sabbath service should close services with two hymns, or psalms, followed by a prayer asking God's dismissal.*

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