



Daniel 2, 3, 6

Vision of December 1865

- ❖ Establish healthcare institutions to provide for the **spiritual** needs and provide **physical** care to cure the ill and also to provide **instruction** in methods of preventative medicine that the sick may learn how to live healthfully and to preserve future health.

In every place the sick may be found, and those who go forth as workers for Christ should be true health reformers, prepared to give those who are sick the **simple treatments** that will relieve them, and then **pray with them**. Thus they will open the door for the entrance of the truth. The doing of this work will be followed by good results. Our Sabbath-keeping families should keep their minds filled with helpful principles of health reform and other lines of truth, that they may be a help to their neighbors. Be practical missionaries. Gather up all the knowledge possible that will help to combat disease. This may be done by those who are diligent students. (*MM* 320.2)

But few can take a course of training in our
medical institutions. But all can study our
health literature and become intelligent on
this important subject.—Manuscript 19,
1911. (*MM* 320.3)

Daniel 2
King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Some expositors have thought that when the king required his wise men to interpret his dream in his 2d year, Daniel was not called to the meeting because his schooling was not yet completed, and that he and his friends were condemned to share the fate of the wise men because they belonged to the profession, although they were not yet full-fledged members of it. This view cannot be regarded as correct. The young apprentices were to be trained three years in order to “stand before the king” (ch. 1:5); and it was “at the end of the days” specified that they were brought before the king for examination. Then “stood they before the king.” (*SDA BC*)

This statement indicates that the three-year training period ended before the king examined them and “found” that Daniel and his three friends were better than all the other candidates. This could hardly have taken place after one of them, Daniel, had already received high honors and had been promoted to the rule of the province and supervision over all the wise men, and after the other three had been given high office. The logical sequence, as well as the narrative order, requires that Daniel’s three-year course end before Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in his 2d year. (Ibid.)

All this leads to the conclusion that this was not a period of 36 months; that these three years must be counted inclusively; they represent (1)

Nebuchadnezzar's accession year, in which the Hebrew captives arrived in Babylon and entered their training; (2) Nebuchadnezzar's year 1, which was the calendar year beginning at the next New Year's Day after his accession; and (3)

Nebuchadnezzar's year 2, in which Daniel graduated and stood "before the king," and the year in which he interpreted the dream. (Ibid.)

Then the king commanded to call the **magicians**, and the **astrologers**, and the **sorcerers**, and the **Chaldeans**, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. (Daniel 2:2)

The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any **magician**, or **astrologer**, or **Chaldean**. (Daniel 2:10)

And the decree went forth that the **wise men** should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. (Daniel 2:13)

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the **wise men**, the **astrologers**, the **magicians**, the **soothsayers**, shew unto the king; (Daniel 2:27)

- ❖ Magicians—diviner, possessor of occult knowledge
- ❖ Astrologers—conjurer (to call upon spirits), necromancer (to commune with the dead), today we might add the use of the stars to divine the will of the gods
- ❖ Sorcerers—use of magic spells
- ❖ Chaldeans—a learned class skilled in interpretations
- ❖ Soothsayers—someone who discovers hidden knowledge through supernatural powers, divining through the stars
- ❖ Wise men

Behold the Jewish captive, **calm and self-possessed**, in the presence of the monarch of the world's most powerful empire. In his first words he disclaimed honor for himself and exalted God as the source of all wisdom. To the anxious inquiry of the king, "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" he replied: "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. (*PK 494.3*)

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, **the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. (PK 499.4)**

❖ Daniel 1:1–21

Daniel 7—4 beasts

❖ Daniel 2:1–30

Daniel 7—Little horn and the Judgment

❖ Daniel 2:31–49

❖ Daniel 3:1–30

Daniel 8—The Judgment

❖ Daniel 4:1–37

Daniel 8—The Time of the Judgment

❖ Daniel 5:1–31

Daniel 9:1–27

❖ Daniel 6:1–28

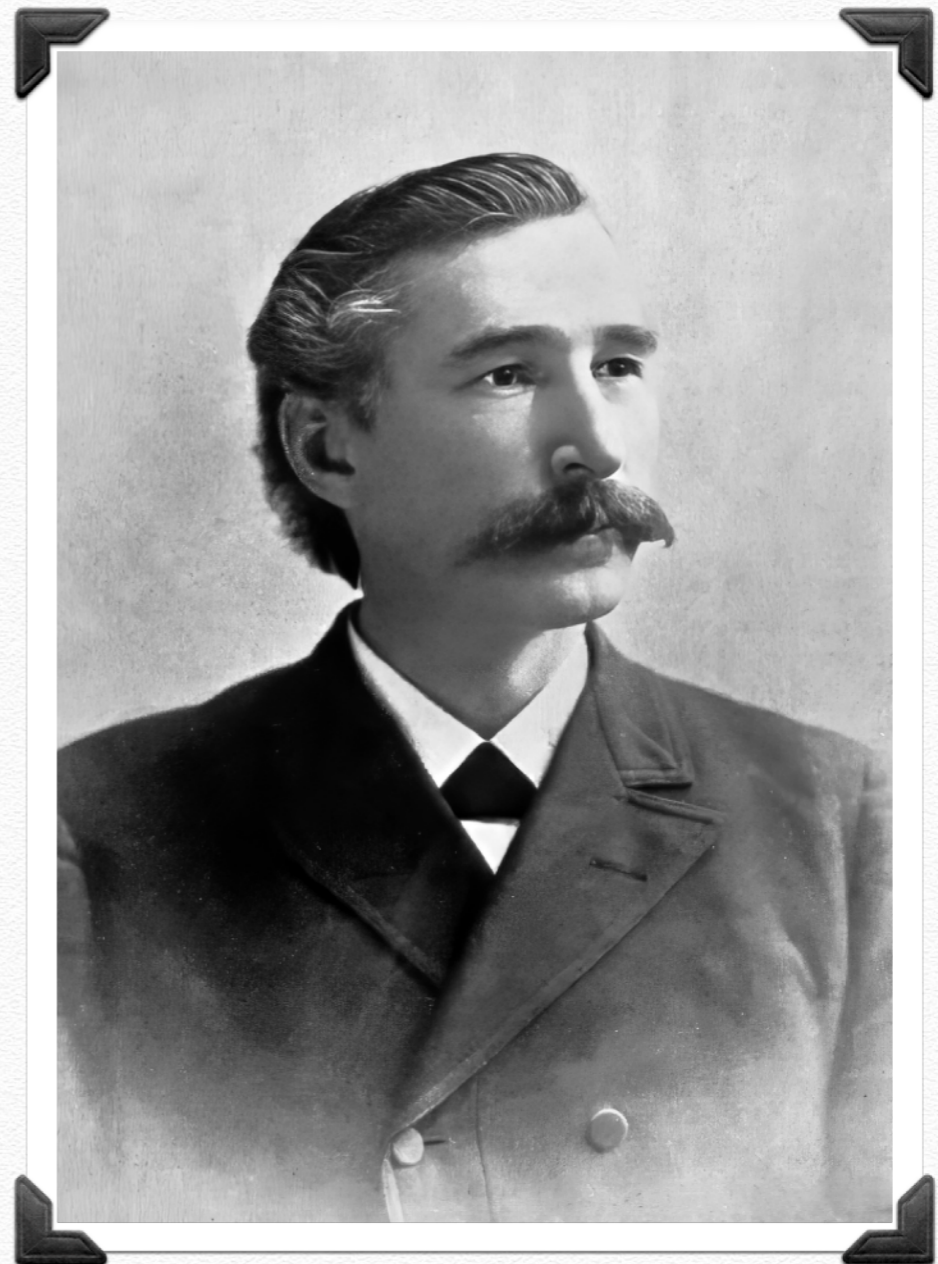
The Time of the End

Daniel 3

The Image of Gold

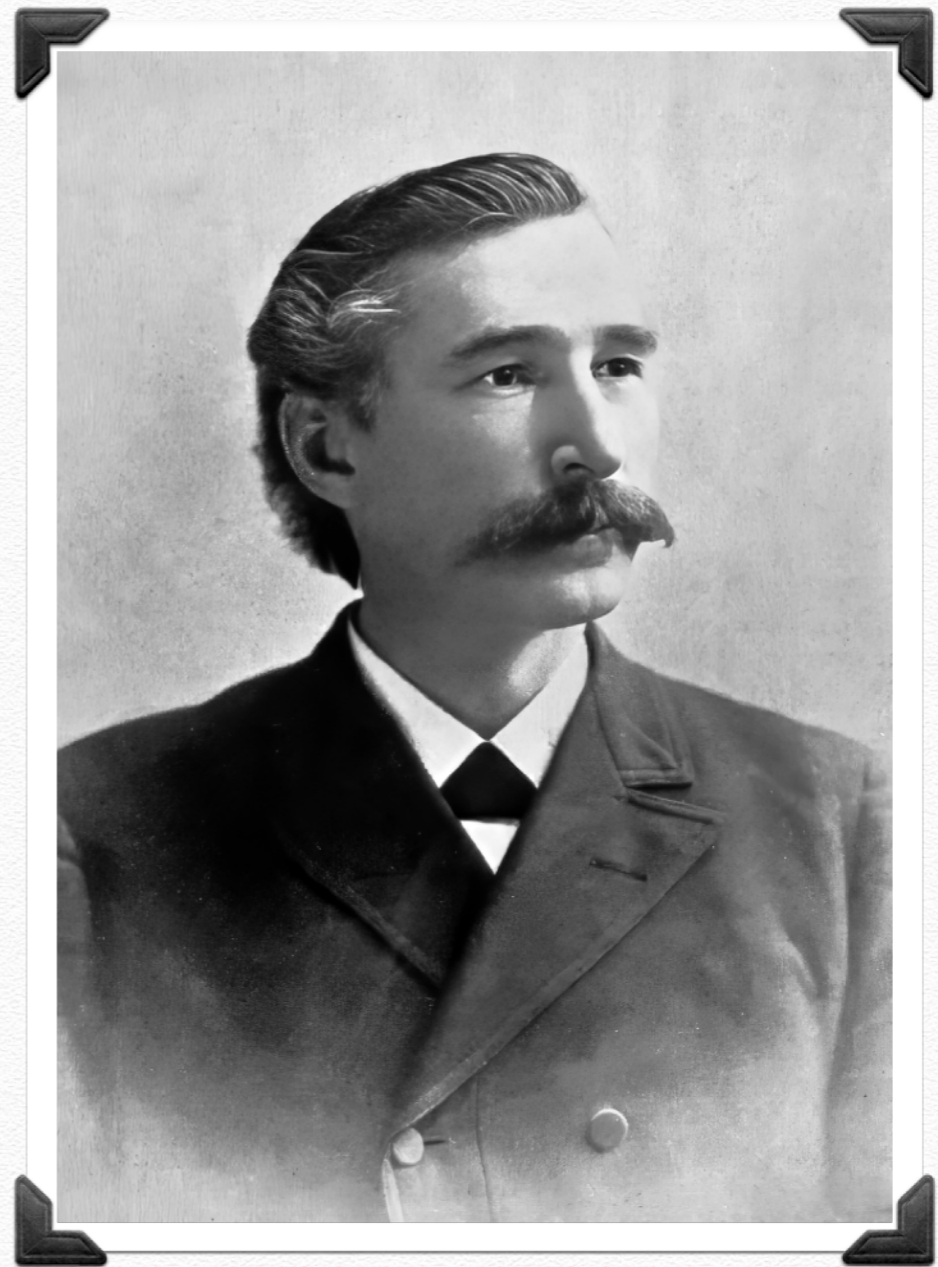
The Medical Missionary

- ❖ November 20, 1907, pp. 369–371, a series entitled “Religious Liberty” (Volume 16)
- ❖ December 4, 1907, pp. 385, 386—The Supremacy of the Law
- ❖ December 11, 1907, pp. 397–399, “The Supremacy of the Law”
- ❖ December 25, 1907, pp. 413–414, “The Church Itself”



The Medical Missionary

- ❖ January 8, 1908, pp. 39–42, “The Church Itself”
- ❖ January 29, 1908, pp. 85–88 —Between Individuals
- ❖ February 12, 1908, pp. 130–134, “God and Cesar”
- ❖ February 19, 1908, pp. 146–150, “Conclusion”
- ❖ *Individuality in Religion*



In the Scriptures there are given distinctly and clearly **five specific lessons on this subject of religious liberty** —the liberty of the individual soul against the domination of man and combinations of men in the powers of the world. (A. T. Jones, *MEDM* November 20, 1907, p. 370.1)

The Empire of Babylon embraced the civilized world, as the world then was. Nebuchadnezzar was monarch and absolute ruler of the empire. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all."

Dan. 2:37, 38. (Ibid., p. 370.4)

In his own providential purpose God had made all nations subject to the sway of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Jer. 27:1–13. In the form and system of government of Babylon the authority of the king was absolute. His word was the law. In this absolutism of sovereignty King Nebuchadnezzar assumed that he was **sovereign of the souls**, as well as the bodies, of the **religious life** as well as the civil conduct, of those who were subject to his power. And since he was ruler of the nations he would be ruler in the religion, and of the religion, of the nations. (Ibid., p. 370.5)

Accordingly he made a great image, all of gold about ninety feet tall and nine feet broad, and “set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.” Then he summoned from the provinces all the officials of the empire to the dedication and the **worship** of the great golden image. All the officials came and were assembled and stood before the image. (Ibid., p. 370.6)

“Then a herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up; and whoso falleth not down and worshipping, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.” And as the instruments of music sounded forth the grand signal for the worship “all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image.” Dan. 3:4–6 (Ibid., p. 370.7)

But in the assembly there were three young Hebrews who had been carried captive from Jerusalem to Babylon but who had been appointed by the king, officials “over the affairs of the province of Babylon.” These neither bowed nor worshipped, nor otherwise paid any particular attention to the proceedings.
(Ibid., p. 370.8)

This was noticed, and excited accusation before the king. "There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou haste set up." Verse 12.

(Ibid., p. 370.9)

Then the king “in his rage and fury” commanded that the three young men should be brought before him. This was done. The king himself now spoke to them personally and direct: “Is it of purpose, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?” The king himself then repeated the command that at the sound of the instruments of all kinds of music they fall down and worship, and if not, they were to be cast “the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”

(Ibid., p. 370.10)

But the young men quietly answered: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou haste set up."

Verse 14–18. (Ibid., p. 370.11)

The issue was now clearly drawn. The sovereign of the world's power had personally issued his command direct to the three individuals; and from them he had received answer as direct, that they would not conform.

This was conduct, and these were words, such as the king in his absolutism of power had never met before.

There was therefore a personal as well as an official resentment aroused in him; and he was so "full of fury" that "the form of his visage was changed against" the young men, and he commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than usual; and that "the most mighty men in his army" should bind the young men and cast them into the midst of the roaring furnace. (Ibid., p. 370.12)

It was done. And the three men, “in their coats, and their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments” fell down bound “into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.” But just then the king was more astonished than ever in his life before. He was fairly petrified—“astounded”—and “rose up in haste” and to his counsellors cried out, “Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” (Ibid., p. 370.13)

They assured him that this was true. But he exclaimed, "Lo, I see four men, loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

(Ibid., p. 370.14)

Then the king went near to the mouth of the furnace and called the men by name and said, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither." And they "came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors being gathered together, saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed upon them."

(Ibid., p. 370.15)

“Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.” (Ibid., p. 370.16)

Here, then, is the situation: The Lord had brought all nations in subjection to the king of Babylon. By messages of His own prophet He has commanded His people, the Jews, and these three young men among them, to “serve the king of Babylon.” Yet these three had explicitly refused to serve the king of Babylon in this thing which he had personally and directly commanded them; and in this refusal the Lord himself had most signally **stood by them** and delivered them.
(Ibid., p. 370.17)

Therefore it would be impossible more plainly to show that the Lord, in commanding the people to be subject to the king of Babylon and to serve him, had never either commanded or intended that they should be subject to him or serve him *in the realm of religion*.
(Ibid., p. 370.18)

By this unmistakable approval of the course of the three men, and this signal deliverance of them, the

Lord made perfectly plain to the king that his command in this matter was wrong: that he had demanded a service that he had no right to require: that in making him king of the nations **the Lord had not made him king in the religion of the people**: that in bringing him to be head of all the nations, peoples, and languages, **God had not given him to be head of the religion of even a solitary individual**: that while the Lord had brought all nations and peoples under the king's yoke as to their political and bodily service, this same Lord had unmistakably shown . . .

. . . to the king that he had given no power nor jurisdiction in any way whatever as to their soul's service: that while in all things between nation and nation, and between man and man, all peoples, nations, and languages had been given to him to serve him, and God had made him ruler over them all; yet with the relations between each man and God the king could have nothing whatever to do: and that in the presence of the rights of the individual person, in conscience and in worship "the king's word" must change, the king's decree is naught: that in this the king even of the world is only nobody, for here only God is sovereign and all in all. (Ibid., p. 370.19)

And for the instruction of all kings and all people,
forever, all this was done that day, and it was written for
our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are
come. (Ibid., p. 371.1)

Jones is not giving a history lesson only. He is not giving a lesson of principles of Scripture only, although both are important. What is important, he tells us later, is the application of history and Scripture to us today. He is teaching us a lesson of what we will also face.

Daniel 6

Medo-Persia

The world power and empire of Babylon passed away forever; and another took its place—the power and empire of Medo-Persia. Here was another principle of government, and here there is given to the world another lesson in religious liberty.

In the Medo-Persian empire the principle of government was different from that of Babylon. (Ibid., December 4, 1907, page 385.1, 2)

Babylon, as we have seen, was not only an absolute monarchy, but an autocracy—a one-man government, a one-man absolutism. The word of the kings was the law, and the law was changeable as the will and word of the king might change. The king was the source of the law; his word was the law for all others, but as for himself there was no restriction of law. (Ibid., p. 385.3)

The Medo-Persian government was an absolute monarchy also. There, also, the word of the king was the law, but with this all-important difference from Babylon, that when once the word of the king had gone forth as the law, that law could not be changed nor reversed even by the king himself. The king himself was bound, even against himself, by his own word or decree that had once become the law. The government of Medo-Persia, therefore, was **a government of law**; its principle was the supremacy of THE LAW. (Ibid., p. 385.4)

At the head of the administration of the affairs of this empire there were three presidents, of whom Daniel was first. Because of Daniel's knowledge, integrity, ability, and general worth in the administration the king had it in mind "to set him over the whole realm." This, becoming known, excited the jealousy of the other two presidents and of the princes; and they conspired to break him down.

They sought, first, "to find occasion against Daniel" concerning his conduct of the affairs of the empire. But after long and diligent search, and the closest possible scrutiny, they were obliged to cease their endeavor and confess that "they could find none occasion nor fault;" because "he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." (Ibid., p. 385.5,6)

“Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.” But they could not find any occasion against him concerning even the law of his God, until they themselves had first created a situation that would render inevitable the desired occasion.

Their long and exacting endeavor to find some occasion or fault against him in the affairs of the empire, had convinced them of his absolute devotion in loyalty to God. Through their investigation they knew by experience that he could not by any means be caused to swerve a hair's-breadth from the straight line of absolute devotion to God. But this was wholly an individual matter, in which there was no interference with any man in any way whatever. And in his conduct in relation to others and to the State, their own consciously prejudiced investigation had demonstrated that it was actually beneficial.

(Ibid., p. 385.7, 8)

Thus there being no possible ground upon which they could find occasion against him even concerning the law of his God . . . They therefore concocted a scheme into which they drew all the officials of the empire, and went to the king and said:—"O king, live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." Daniel 6:6–8. (Ibid., p. 385.9)

The king allowed himself to be caught by this very flattering proposal of so large a number of the highest officials of the empire; and he signed the decree.

Daniel knew that the decree had been framed, and that the writing had been signed by the king. He knew that such was now the law of the empire—a law that could neither be changed nor altered. Nevertheless he went to his house, and as his regular times of prayer recurred, three times a day, he “prayed and gave thanks before God, as he did aforesaid.” And his windows happening to be open, the imperial law had not enough place in his mind or weight upon his attention to induce him to take the precaution even to close the windows. (Ibid., p. 385.10)

The plotters expecting nothing but just this on the part of Daniel, "assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God." Then at sight of this open disregard of the imperial law, they hastened to the king and very deferentially inquired. "Hast thou not signed a decree," etc.? The king answered. "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." Then the plotters reported, "that Daniel which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day." (Ibid., p. 385.11)

“Then the king, when he had heard these words, was sore displeased with himself,” because he had allowed himself to be so flattered as to be caught in such a trap as that.

“And he set his heart on Daniel to deliver him.” But the plotters were ready with their plea of the supremacy and integrity of “the law”; and to urge arguments that it was

“not a question of religion, but of the law;” that to countenance disregard and violation of “the law” was simply to undermine all the government and make an open bid for a reign of anarchy, and for the very dissolution of society itself; that they were exceedingly sorry that such an excellent man as Daniel should be thus involved, yet to allow such open disregard of “the law” by one of such high standing and reputation would be only all the worse, because this very fact of the high standing and wide reputation of the one who so openly disregarded “the law” would be only the more encouragement to all people to do the same, etc., etc.

(Ibid., p. 385.12)

Yet the king “labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.” But through all that time and at every turn, the king was met by the plotters with the plea, “The law; the law.” “Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.” The supremacy of the law bound the king himself; there was no escape; and, though with greatest reluctance, “the king commanded and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions.” (Ibid., p. 386.1)

The king passed the night in fasting and in sleeplessness. But very early in the morning he hurried to the den of lions and “cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel ... O Daniel servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?”
(Ibid., p. 386.2)

Daniel answered, "O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before Him, innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." And therein the demonstration is made in perfection forever that the person who disregards any law that touches service to God is innocent before God, and also does "no hurt" to the king, nor to the state, nor the society, nor to any principle of law or government.
(Ibid., p. 386.3)

Remember, Jones is not repeating a history lesson alone, nor is he only giving a lesson of principles from the Bible, although both are important. He is giving this experience for its application to us today.

And when religion or religious observance or prohibition is fixed in the law, even though the law be as supreme and inflexible as that of the Medes and Persians, the divine right and perfect liberty of individuality in religion then extends [over and above] to the law that incorporates the religion, and such law is simply no law.

(Ibid., p. 386.5)

The civil law is rightly supreme in the realm of things civil, but in the realm of things religious it simply has no place at all. . . .

In the presence of the divine right of individuality in religion as relates to the supremacy and inflexibility of the law, illustrated in the government of the Medes and Persians, any law that touches or contemplates religion is simply no law at all.

The realm of religion is the realm of God. In that realm—God alone is Sovereign, and his will is the only law. And in that realm the individual stands alone with God, and responsible to him alone. (Ibid., p. 386.6–9)

By most remarkable facts and unquestionable experiences, in the case of King Nebuchadnezzar and the three Hebrew young men, there was made plain for ever the divine truth and principle that **with the religion of the people no monarch can of right have anything to do**; that in the presence of the right of individuality in religion, the king's word must change. (Ibid., p. 397.1)

By corresponding facts and experiences in the case of the Medo-Persian government against Daniel there was made plain forever the divine will and truth and principle that **with the religion of the people no law, nor any government by means of law, can of right have anything to do**—that in the presence of the free exercise of individuality in religion, any law teaching religion is nothing; and every individual in absolutely ignoring and disregarding such law is “innocent” before God, and also does “no hurt” to government, to law, or to society. (Ibid., p. 397.2)

These two examples and the principles which they illustrate cover every phase of earthly government as such, and so make plain the great and vital truth that religion, with its rites, institutions, and observances, is totally excluded, and is to be totally exempt, from the cognizance of earthly government of whatever phase or form; that **religion**, with all that is incident to it, **pertains to the individual alone in his personal relations to God.** (Ibid., p. 398.1)

And as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar the **principle** is that no monarch may ever of right do as that monarch did; as in the case of the law of the Medes and Persians the **principle** is that no law may ever of right be similar to that law . . . (Ibid., January 8, 1908, p. 40.6)

We have now traced in the Word of God the principle of the divine right of individuality in religion, as that principle is applied and illustrated as relates to **autocracy**, to government of the supremacy and inflexibility of **law**, to the **union of Church and State**, to the **church itself**; and to **individuals**. (Ibid., February 19, 1908, page 146.1)

Please let no one think that all this is **only a series of studies in ancient history**, nor yet that it is **a study of principles and Scriptures only** as such; though on either ground the study would be amply justified. However, it is nothing of the kind. It is a study of principles which in one phase or another are fully, as alive and active **today** as ever. And the day is **yet to be**, and that not far distant, when the whole series of illustrations covered in these studies will again be all alive and active, and all at once, as truly and to the like purpose as each was in its place and day. (Ibid., p. 146.2)

The day is coming, and it is not far distant, when autocracies, governments of the supremacy and the inflexibility of the law, unions of church and State, and churches as such, will all be standing unitedly, and bent as from one mind, to compel submission and uniformity in religion; and to crush out every suggestion of individuality in religion and every kind of right of it. (Ibid., p. 146.3)

It is particularly in view of what is soon to come that these studies have been published. All these things written in the Scriptures were set down there by the Spirit of inspiration, not only for the instruction of people always, but, particularly “for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.” The mightiest contest, and this upon the grandest scale, between the forces of evil and the reign of righteousness that this world’s experience shall ever know, is yet to be. This mightiest conflict is to be in the time when the ends of the world are come. That time is even now at hand. For this reason these lessons from the inspired record are all-important just now.

(Ibid., p. 146.4)

In view of the mighty pressure from all these sources and by all these forces, that is soon to be put on every individual, it is of the greatest importance that each individual shall know for himself, and know by the surest possible evidence—to know by very certitude itself—just what is his **place**, his **responsibility**, and his **right**, individually, **in the presence of principalities and powers, and before God and with God.** (Ibid., p. 146.5)

It is true that Nebuchadnezzar was entirely out of his place and did wholly wrong when he attempted to exercise authority in religion; and the story is written to show to all people forever that every autocracy is just as much out of place, and just as far wrong, when it presumes to assert authority in religion. At the same time it is true, and equally important to remember, that the three Hebrew individuals openly and uncompromisingly disregarded that autocratic assertion of authority in religion. And **the story is written to teach that all other individuals forever must do as did those three individuals**, if these, too will be true to God, to the right, to themselves, and to their kind. (Ibid. p. 148.3)

It is true that, notwithstanding its principles of supremacy and inflexibility of the law, the Medo-Persian government did wrong when it by its law entered the field of religion; and the story is written to show to all governments and people forever that every government is equally wrong in entering by law the field of religion. It is equally true, and equally important to remember, that the individual,—**Daniel, —did absolutely and uncompromisingly disregard that law, and that the story is written to teach all individuals forever that in all like circumstances they must do as did that individual,** if they will honor God and the right and be true to themselves and to their fellowmen. (Ibid., p. 148.4)

No, it is not these, but the blessed INDIVIDUAL with God and in God; it is those who have known and maintained the divine right of individuality in religion, it is the Daniels, the Christ, the Paul, the Wycliffes, the Luthers, who have stood alone in the world and in the church, and against both the church and the world—it is THESE, who have maintained the honor of God, who have kept alive the knowledge of God, of the right and of the true, and so have kept alive the world. (Ibid., p. 149.5)

And now, and for the time to come—when there is being pushed forward among the churches and urged upon the world, denominational, national, international, and world FEDERATION in religion and of religion; when all this is aimed expressly to the one end of asserting by autocracies, by governmental law, by churches allied with and in control of civil power, by churches of themselves; when all these shall work at once and together to the assertion and exercise of absolute authority in religion—in view of all this, just now, as never before, it is essential to know, to proclaim, and to maintain,—

The Divine Right of Individuality in Religion (Ibid., pp. 149.6, 150.1)