

Daniel and the Coming King

Questions and Answers

Dr. Desmond Ford

You have mentioned that the symbols on the ensigns of the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem in A.D. 70 were “the abomination of desolation.” The eagle was featured prominently in all the legion standards. Is this what you mean?

Yes, I do.

Roman soldiers were for the most part uneducated and primitive. (I’m not talking about their officers.) These soldiers believed that their standards, or ensigns, contained the power of the gods.

It was therefore an idolatrous relationship that the average Roman soldier had with his standards.

However, we must remember that this is only one fulfillment of Daniel’s prophetic picture.

Another question asks about the last fulfillment.

In a nutshell: When church and state unite globally to enforce a religion of the lowest common denominator and non-conformists are threatened with death—that will be a fulfillment of “the abomination of desolation” in its last application.

Please explain the last part of Daniel 9:27: “And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation” (NIV)

Daniel is saying that the temple—which represents the people of Israel—would be so filled with evil that God would permit a desolator to come and wipe out the city and the temple.

Our Lord admonishes us to flee when we see “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel” (Mark 13:14). What does Jesus mean? Where do we flee and how? Is this just metaphorical?

No, I don’t think so. It is mentioned again in the Book of Revelation. I appreciate this question.

Revelation 18:4 says: “Come out of her, my people” (KJV). This is an allusion to the fleeing mentioned in Mark 13 and Matthew 24. What it means in Revelation is: “Separate yourself in mind and soul, from all that is erroneous and wrong and idolatrous. Whatsoever things are true and good and pure, and devoted to the gospel, cling to those things. Flee the rest.”

Of course, the initial first-century application was to the physical flight from the menaced city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Because they obeyed their Lord, no Christians perished in that debacle.

In Daniel 7 it appears that “judgment” is mentioned three

Dr. Ford answered these questions from a bright group on a sunny Sabbath afternoon, August 17, 1996. The session was in Alderson Hall, Auburn, California, during Summer Congress.

times. I’m unclear as to the type and time of each judgment.

You are wise to be unclear!

That’s because the references in Daniel 7 are a kaleidoscoping of the judgments of the Second Advent and the Third Advent.

Daniel 7 also implies the judgment of the cross. Looking forward to the cross, Jesus said, “Now is the time for judgment on this world” (John 12:30). All the sin (and sins) of all people were on the head of our representative, Jesus, on Calvary’s cross. Then the whole world was judged—and, in Christ, the whole world was acquitted.

That is why the good news of the gospel is not that if you do this and you do that, maybe, perhaps, God will forgive you. The good news of the gospel is, “God forgave you 2,000 years ago! Accept that you are accepted. The final vote is with you.”

Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. (Romans 5:18)

That “one act of righteousness” was Christ’s atonement. And it has brought acquittal for all humanity.

Legally, all people have been justified, because all people were judged in Jesus. All your sins were judged in Jesus. If you have accepted Christ and his cross, you are free of all your sins and guilt. They’re gone.

The judgments in Daniel 7 kaleidoscope the cross, the Second Coming, and even the Third Coming (after the millennium). The Old Testament has to work like that, as it predicts these events. It’s not surprising you have problems unsorting them.

What was the “daily”? Does the daily in Daniel 12:11 have anything to do with the daily in Daniel 8?

Yes, it is the same symbol.

The “daily” meant the daily sacrifices, the daily offerings and services, morning and evening. There was a daily lamb in the morning, and a daily lamb in the evening.

Daniel’s prophecy about the taking away of the daily meant that the offering of the daily sacrifices was stopped by Antichrist.

First of all, that Antichrist was Antiochus Epiphanes, and later the Romans when they destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Later still, in the Middle Ages, it was the union of church and state that martyred millions of God’s people. It took away from the people the gospel prefigured by the daily sacrifices.

In the Christian age, taking away the daily means all those who take away the significance of Calvary. That's how the daily is taken away now. By making religion man-centered, we take away the significance of the cross.

The most common religious mistake is this: "I have to be good enough before God will accept me." That is one way we can take away the daily. That is the opposite of the gospel.

The gospel says: "Though I'm not good, I can come just as I am, infirmities, weaknesses, addictions—warts and all! The gospel says that because of Christ I can come just as I am. God loves us that much.

"God loves us so much, he accepts us just as we are. But he loves



us too much to leave us just as we are."

So, "the daily" was originally the morning and evening offerings. That's why when Daniel writes "unto two thousand and three hundred days" (Daniel 8:14 KJV) he was saying "2,300 evening mornings" or "2,300 offerings." Two thousand, three hundred offerings would give us 1,150 days, just as some modern English translators say (see the TEV, for example).

Why was the Babylonian Empire considered the greatest empire?

It was considered the greatest only in the sense that **up to that time** it seemed the one most likely to endure because of its great wealth and the unity of its government.

Please note: Up to that time.

I have heard that there is no zero year between B.C. and A.D. How would the zero year work? Is there a year missing between the two millenniums B.C. and A.D.? How is the zero year handled?

In summary, I can only say this:

Such a question is only of significance when you are making calculations of time periods that span from one era to another. No year has been lost. It's simply a matter of how you attach numbers to years. If you forget this fact, you make mistakes when you establish dates from prophetic time periods. William Miller did it. That's the only principle I can give you in a short time.

Can you explain what the 1,290 days and 1,335 days are in Daniel 12? Is there a connection with any of the time periods in Daniel's other prophecies?

Daniel 12 points to three periods: 1,260, 1,290, and 1,335. These periods probably had a literal application at the time when the persecution of Israel ceased in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The end of the first period pointed to the cessation of persecution. The 1,290 referred to the time when the sanctuary was cleansed, and

the 1,335 to the death of Antichrist Antiochus.

What Daniel 12 is saying is that deliverance will come in a staggered sequence. Persecution will stop, God will intervene, wickedness will be judged, and then all righteousness will be restored in a clean universe.

Chapter 12 is simply saying, "Remember what happened back there under Antiochus? The same is going to happen in the future."

Please comment on the nature of the Day of Atonement as a sort of supersacrifice, whereas the sacrifices of Leviticus 1-5 are mostly for unwitting sins?

God could not put a price on sin. He could not say, "If you commit adultery on Thursday, all you do is bring an ox on Friday." He couldn't do that. There was no provision in the daily offerings for any type of willful, known, presumptuous sin—except by way of reparation (the trespass offering).

So God gave one day, the Day of Atonement, when those who humbled themselves before God in penitence, knew that this sacrifice would cover even their flagrant, willful sins. There was ceremonial forgiveness for willful sins only on that one day. That's because this sacrifice especially pointed to the atonement at Calvary.

The experience of the thief on the cross illustrates it. There is only one last-minute repentance in the Bible. One, so no one would despair. Only one so no one would presume.

What was the meaning, in the temple services, of the laying on of hands on the sacrifice?

It symbolized the transfer of guilt from the guilty party to the innocent animal sacrifice.

The angel explained his delay to Daniel by saying, "The prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. . . . I was detained there with the king of Persia" (Daniel 10:13 NIV). Please discuss.

The Israelites were trying to get permission to rebuild the temple. After they'd been given an okay from King Cyrus, they were interrupted by opposition.

Daniel 10 is simply talking about the fact that the Israelites were still being troubled by a Persian element that wouldn't let them get on with rebuilding the temple. The angel had been involved in solving this problem, and that is what had delayed him.

This is a striking testimony to the gift of free-will allowed even to rebels against God.

Please explain Daniel 8:14 and 9:24.

That's a bit much to do in one session!

In essence, Daniel 8:14 says that after 2,300 offerings had been suspended in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, the sanctuary would start functioning again.

This, in turn, became a symbol of the time when all sin would be finished and the universe would be made clean.

John 10:22 speaks of Jesus being in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication (or Hanukkah). This feast celebrated the original application of Daniel 8:14, when the sanctuary was liberated, or cleansed, by the valiant Maccabees.

In his Book of Revelation, John explains the final (or universal) application of Daniel 8:14. Here, the whole universe is cleansed of sin.

Did the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 provide that the Messiah would come in about 500 years?

Yes, it clearly says so.

If so, does this prophecy prove the year-day principle of prophetic interpretation?

No.

The year-day principle was never thought of until after A.D. 1000,

when a Roman Catholic scholar came up with the idea. Most English translations of the Bible read “seventy weeks of years” in verse 24, or “seventy ‘sevens.’” Even *The SDA Bible Commentary, Revised Edition*, admits that the year-day principle is not here in Daniel 9:24.

I would like to have information about Dr. Raymond Cottrell’s new book on Daniel.

It’s not in print yet.

Dr. Cottrell has not yet decided on his manuscript’s ultimate destiny. I’m praying that he will publish it.

How does he interpret Daniel 8:14?

He and I are in essential agreement.

I enjoyed reading *Daniel and the Coming King*. After reading the first eight chapters, I noticed a good number of things you discussed were also discussed in the book *The Chariots of God*. (One of them is that the idea of deliverance in Daniel is symbolic of the deliverance of God’s people at the end.) Why was *Chariots* not in your bibliography?

Because I have not read it.

Michael (Daniel 12:1; Jude 9) is said by Jehovah’s Witnesses to be Jesus, both before and after his incarnation on earth. How would you account for that claim, or would you bother?

I’d agree with it. (See Jude 9 and compare Zechariah 3:2.)

However, I don’t agree with the Jehovah’s Witness position that Jesus is a created being. That is a false teaching.

If Jesus is Michael the Archangel, would he not have to refuse being worshiped? Neither the apostles or other angels accepted worship, but Jesus did. Isn’t this a contradiction?

No.

Jesus is the “Archangel” (Jude 9). The word, “arch” means “chief.” Jesus is chief of the angels. He does not have to be an angel to be chief of the angels.

The president of the United States is commander-in-chief, but he’s a civilian, not a member of the armed services. In the same way, Jesus is the chief of the angels, while remaining divine.

If Jesus is God the Son, then it is quite appropriate that he should accept worship.

Addiction is a very common, widespread behavior. Is there a connection between addiction and last-day events?

The book of Daniel is fascinating on this topic.

In the very first chapter, the book tells about a man who exercised great self-control. (This is Daniel, himself, of course.) Daniel was so afraid of violating his conscience and the law of God, and so desirous of maintaining his health for the test yet to come, that he purposed in his heart he would not defile himself. He therefore made careful choices about his physical habits.

When you reach the approximate middle of the book, you find a king who does the opposite. As he drinks himself drunk, a supernatural hand writes on the wall: “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.” “You are weighed in the balances and found wanting.”

As you approach the end of the book, you find Daniel again exercising self-control over his habits. As he seeks to understand God’s will, Daniel fasts. (See Daniel 10.)

It’s as simple as this: We are not beings with a soul. We are body-souls. There’s all the difference in the world.

Any modern translation of Genesis 2:7 makes it clear. It says, “And man became a living being.” Not, “And man was given a soul.” Man became a living being.

Now, my friends, we are all like the ancient king in Daniel 5. He had the sacred vessels from the Jerusalem temple in his possession. Sadly, he misused them. We don’t have to do that. We are kings, and

we have sacred vessels to control. Those sacred vessels are our bodies (1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19). They are sacred through their purchase by the Son of God. They are the very ‘temple of God’ says Scripture repeatedly.

God is very interested in material things. His Son took a material body. The Scripture is so emphatic:

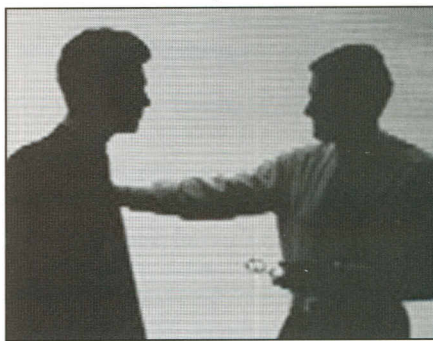
Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16–17)

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)

The law of God is written on every nerve and sinew and fiber of our being. Temperance, or self-control, is as much a part of the fruit of the Spirit as is love. It’s on the same list:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22–23)

So when we talk about addiction, the rule is, “Resist beginnings.” Addictions are terribly hard to break. They are not so hard to avoid.



For myself, I find that it’s easier to abstain than to be temperate. Inasmuch as most of us have great tendencies towards addiction, we have to employ that rule often. Abstain rather than try to be temperate. Resist beginnings!

In the last days we are going to have to think clearly. My experience is this: The healthier I am, the easier it is to think clearly, and to live a Christian life. The more run-down I am—fatigued, nervously strung-out—the harder it is for me to think clearly. And to speak graciously, hopefully, cheerfully, and faithfully.

Remember, don’t look on this matter of self-discipline as harsh law. This is good news.

God wants us to be happy. It is very hard to be happy if you have constant headaches, indigestion, and always feel tired. It’s very hard to be happy under such conditions.

This was a very practical question. The simple answer is: Resist beginnings, remember you are a monarch in charge of holy vessels, and whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Remember that great eaters, great drinkers, or great ‘sexers,’ are rarely great at anything else.

Do you believe the “mark of the beast” (Revelation 13:16–17) is just a spiritual mark? Or is it an actual physical mark? Or perhaps both?

No, it’s not a physical mark. That’s because the Book of Revelation is a book of signs and symbols.

There are obvious examples of this. We see a pregnant woman running through heaven (12:1–2). A great red dragon in heaven (12:3). A woman who spreads over seven mountains (17:9). The old joke is that she was a woman of some area!

These are clearly all symbols, not to be taken literally. And the “mark of the beast” is also a symbol.

Revelation 7 tells of an angel putting a seal, or mark, on the foreheads of the 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. Everything here is symbolic. Israel is symbolic of spiritual Israel, the tribes are symbolic, the seal is symbolic. The angel represents the work of God through the gospel. This is all symbolic.

So is the mark that is put on the disobedient later in the book.

Matthew 24:24 warns against God's people being deceived in the last days. In the light of today's events, what is the nature of the deception which, if possible, could deceive the very elect?

I don't think we'll know the details until it happens.

Speaking generally, I think it will be something like this: We will be tempted to go by our senses rather than by our knowledge of Scripture. That is the greatest deception to overtake any Christian: To be led astray by our senses when they seem to contradict Scripture.

Faith, sometimes, is believing what God says when everything visible and tangible seems against it.

We had better practice now believing what God says if we are going to survive then. We need to "get into training," so to speak.

Is the present cry for peace among nations fulfilling the prophecy of 1 Thessalonians 5:3?

No.

Thessalonians points to the time when the global "time of trouble" has commenced.

That is the same time when the Antichrist chapter of Revelation 13 has been fulfilled.

Please comment on the Toronto Blessing, the Christian Coalition, and Daniel 4:27.

I think the Toronto Blessing (which has now spread around the world) involves many people who are good Christian people but who are unaware of the real nature of what is happening.

I spent hours where the Toronto Blessing began, and walked among 'the slain' (that's their expression) during long meetings. My conviction is that there were many wonderful Christians right there. But what was happening was more hysterical phenomena, such as is seen at rock concerts and heathen worship in many parts of the Third World.

In other words, people—even Christian people—can be longing for signs and wonders, or sparklers. Certain types of music, certain psychological influences, can be brought to bear on an impressionable crowd, and emotions can outstrip reason. At that point, strange things happen.

That is my personal understanding of the Toronto Blessing.

The Christian Coalition, I think, stands for some good principles. But I'm not sure their methods are as good as all their principles.

Now, on Daniel 4:27. Let me read it to you from the NIV:

"Therefore, O King, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be then that your prosperity will continue."

This is good advice—in Old Testament times—for a pagan. But for Christians, it's not the gospel. It is the **fruit** of the gospel to do these things, to show mercy, to break off our sins. But it's not the gospel.

The gospel is that sinner though I be, Jesus died for me. That's the gospel. And that as I come to him, he has promised he will in no wise cast me out.

Why is the Genesis account so specific about the age of the patriarchs? Surely the number of years are invalid to calculate time from Adam to Abraham?

We don't know all the answers. But there are some meanings to some of the ages.

For example, you will find that the youngest man begets the oldest. You could preach a whole sermon on the significance of that. So some of the numbers do have an implicit meaning.

Genesis 1-11 are a different literary genre than 12-50. They deal with the times—the earliest times—that are closest to infinity and eternity. Whenever the Bible merges into eternity (as in the Book of Revelation) it lapses into a measure of symbolism.

I do not doubt for a moment that Genesis 1-11 has actual historical antecedents. What I do not believe is that the purpose of the chapters is to primarily teach us history, or that everything there is to be interpreted literally.

The purpose of the chapters is to teach us, "How to go to heaven, not how the heavens go." The chapters are perfect for the purpose for which they are given. They are given to teach us great spiritual lessons.

These lessons had to be capable of oral communication to people who couldn't read. Remember, it is only this century that a significant portion of the world is literate. Even today, at least one-third of the world can't read. In this country, the most highly privileged country, 40 percent of the people cannot read the King James Version of the Bible.

So the early chapters of Genesis—just as the last chapters of Revelation—include highly symbolic elements. What else can they do as they strive to bring time into eternity and eternity into time.

Keep this truth in mind: "You cannot get the heavens into your head, even though you can get your head into the heavens." God knows this truth, so he often talks to us in parables. The early chapters of Genesis are as perfectly inspired as John's Gospel or the writings of Paul. But they are perfect for their **purpose**. Their purpose is that you might know Jesus and him crucified.

The main purpose of the opening chapter of Genesis is not historical, though historical elements are present. The New Testament often uses Genesis chapter one as a picture of the experience of redemption. (See John 1:1; 2 Corinthians 4:6. and 5:17.)

Please explain: God made light the first day, which was before he made sun, moon, and stars, on the fourth day. Also, if the world was originally created perfect, why did the Creator make animals for extreme climates, such as crocodiles and polar bears? Why did God create carnivorous animals?

There are no simple answers to these questions.

If you will think about what I said about Genesis 1-11, you'll understand why.

Genesis 1 is not primarily meant to give us a minute, scientific account of creation. If it were to do that, none of us would be able to understand it. All we would have would be an equation which would be beyond all of us.

Science is forever changing, forever developing, forever growing. At what stage are we now? If you'd asked me this question a hundred years ago and I couched my answer in the science of 1896, it would be very outdated today. And what I should say today, couched in today's scientific language, would be equally outdated a hundred years from now. (If time should last, which I very much doubt.)

Genesis 1 is not primarily given to teach the fine details of science. It is perfectly inspired. Yet each time it is used in the New Testament, it is used to teach the truths of **redemption**:

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. (Galatians 6:15)

Genesis 1, to its first readers, meant: “These things in the natural world that you see, did not make themselves. There is a Creator. Worship him and adore him.”

We could go into much more detail. For example, there are poetic lines of stanzas in Genesis 1 which show it is not pure prose. But I think we should cling to the main point. Genesis 1-11 has as its main purpose the communication of spiritual truths. Though there are historical elements in all of these chapters, it is not God’s purpose to make us historians. God’s purpose is to make us Christians.

It has been said that we need God’s forgiving grace for what we are as much as for what we do. What verse of Scripture sustains this?

Scripture says God requires truth in the inward parts (Psalm 51:6). In other words, I am meant to be irradiated, permeated, controlled, and possessed by truth.

If it’s in the **inward** parts, that means more than just action. That is more than just words. That means what I **am**. God requires truth in what I am—in my nature.

The worst thing about us is not what we’ve done, though that’s bad enough. It’s what we are. We are **sinners**. We have a sinful human **nature**. (See Luke 6:45.)

First Corinthians 15:27–28 seem to indicate God will finally stand over Christ.

Yes, it does:

For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:27–28 NIV)

Remember, “God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son” (John 3:16). God did not lend him. God didn’t lend Jesus to us for 33 years and then take him back to where he was before. Christ forever retains his human nature. Now that is sacrifice!

Deity will ever be visible in the finite form of humanity. That is the sacrifice of God. Father and the Son—that is the sacrifice. Because Christ has become, from eternity, the Mediator for a lost world, he will retain a **position** below the Father. Obviously, he continues to be equal to the Father in **nature**.

Please explain briefly the Trinity.

Briefly? You must be teasing.

Here is the briefest statement I know.

To himself, God is three.

In himself, God is one.

As seen and known, God is three.

As seeing and knowing, God is one.

What about Dale Ratzlaff’s book *The Sabbath in Crisis*?

It’s written by a very fine Christian. I esteem Dale highly, and count him as a good friend of mine.

On the role of the Sabbath in covenantal theology, however, I disagree with him heartily.

What was there in heaven that needed purifying by the sacrifice of Christ (according to Hebrews 10:23)?

The Book of Hebrews portrays the problem of sin as so severe that it has cast its shadow even into heaven.

It’s as if the universe is saying, “God, how can you tolerate this problem?”

The cross of Christ is God’s answer. The cross, in essence, shows

that God shares humanity’s pain, sorrow, and loss. It also shows that God changes things by love, not by force.

The complete answer to the problem of the sin is, of course, in the Great Judgment Day. That’s when all questions—including ours—are answered.

What true tabernacle did the Lord set up in heaven (Hebrews 8:2)?

The author of Hebrews is referring to the fact that Christ, after he completed his atonement, began his intercessory ministry. This ministry takes place at the very heart of the universe, in heaven.

Is Israel the church?

If you mean, “Is literal Israel the church?” the answer is No.

If you mean, “When the New Testament talks about Israel in New Testament times, does it usually mean the church?” the answer is Yes.

Romans 9 says:

It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. . . .

In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. (Romans 9:6–8 NIV)

The last book of the Bible warns us to beware of those “who say they are Jews and are not” (Revelation 2:9). And just in case we are the least bit slow—and I often am—the warning is repeated in Revelation 3:9.

God does not identify Jews and Gentiles in the manner most people think. God only recognizes people as believers or non-believers. People are either in God’s covenant by faith or they are not. If you are in the covenant, you are a true Jew. If you are out of the covenant—even if you can trace your literal ancestry back to Abraham—you are not a true Jew.

What do you think of Dr. MacArthur’s Lordship ideas? His argument is that Christ has to be Savior in order to be Lord and Lord to be Savior.

I think Dr. MacArthur is 100 percent right.

Jesus asked:

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46, see also Matthew 7:21).

There is no such thing, no such thing, as a truly regenerate Christian who is careless about the commands of his Lord.

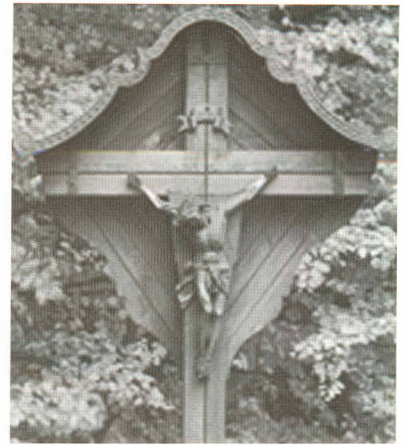
Do you think hell is literal or metaphorical?

Literal. There will be a literal hell, but it will be temporary.

The fires of God will consume this old world and all those who have made it their home. Only those who are nostalgic for heaven are going to miss that fire.

But that fire won’t last long. It will do its effective work and then cease. But while it is doing that work, it cannot be quenched.

Christians talk about God’s timing in the Bible. Ecclesiastes says there is a time for everything (3:1). One Christian author has said there is a time to stop growing. Why?



We never stop growing, spiritually.

We do stop growing physically, of course. But spiritually—and that's what counts—never.

We must never stop growing spiritually because there's so much to do. There is an infinite work to be done in us. It can't be done in time, only in eternity. It is completed at what we call "glorification."

That is when Jesus returns and transforms us (1 Corinthians 15:51–54). He will take away our old, fallen, human nature—and all its tendencies.

Remember, we are stamped with everything that has ever happened to us: Everything we've seen, everything we've heard, everything we've done. A lot of that is rotten.

It has left its mark on all of us. It taints everything we do. We never stop growing spiritually because the task is endless.

Which of us love enough? Which of us is prayerful enough, or grateful enough? We must never stop growing in this life. Christ will perfectly complete the task for us all at once at glorification when he comes.

Why do some Bible teachers say the King James Version is correct and all other versions are incorrect?

Because they are ignorant.

Don't misunderstand me! I love the KJV. I often quote memorized passages from the KJV. It is the greatest English version in the literary sense.

But it is not the greatest English version in the sense of manuscript accuracy. The KJV translators did the finest job possible with the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts they had. But some of the finest biblical manuscripts have been discovered only in the 300 years since the KJV translation was completed.

The KJV translators were saints. The KJV is a wonderful version. It is, of course, perfectly adequate for salvation. But the claim that its translation of the Bible manuscripts is superior to all others is just plain false.

Would it be correct theology to say sin's side effects are worry, lack of Christian love, being out of balance in living, etc., etc.?

Sin's side effects can include such things, but other things, too.

Not all worry is bad. If we were dragged into World War III and our government leaders said, "We're not worried about the war," we'd shoot them! There is a place for worry. If you're not worried at all about your children, you're not responsible parents.

The worry we are to avoid is worry over things about which we can do nothing. Remember, without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not.

Some of the things you list can have causes other than just sin's side effects. Some causes are often hereditary, or come from our early environment, or are the result of our own wrong choices.

A great rule for living is: "Be hard on yourself and easy on others." I fail at exerting it continually, but that's an ideal principle. Be hard on yourself and easy on others—even in your thinking.

In all of your studies and talks, you tell many appropriate stories to illustrate very important points. How do you find them? You must collect a catalog of them.

This question must be for Roy Gee. Roy's much better than I am with stories. If you want stories, go to Roy. He does much more in this area,

I'm the worst filer in the world. I don't have a catalog of the illustrations I use, but I read widely. I have read, on average, I suppose, between 2 and 10 hours a day for nearly 60 years.

Roy and I both read a lot. So it's the wide reading that's the secret.

Will you make your stories and illustrations available or publish them?

Listen to the GNU tapes, read my books, and the GNU magazine.

Some of the rest of us give studies, and we always need a good story to make our point.

The solution is to read the best literature.

Remember, you don't have time to read all the good books. You only have time to read the **best**. Every second-class book you read is one first-class book less you'll ever read.

In one Bible version, Romans 4:7 reads: "Whose sins are blotted out." In most other versions, it reads: "Whose sins are covered." Why?

The Hebrew word "caphar" meant "to cover, so as to blot out." It's a metaphor, based on a literal action. So both translations are correct.

Here's another one, in Romans 1:17. "Whoever by faith is justified shall gain life." (A slight paraphrase.) Other versions are: "The just shall live by faith."

Probably the correct rendering of Romans 1:17 is that "he who through faith is righteous shall live."

I say that because while there are different renderings of the Greek words in the verse, the sequence of the chapters in Romans follows this rendition. So it would make sense that at the outset of his book, Paul would write a key phrase, then build his following chapters on that phrase, following the same sequence of the phrase.

Chapters 1 through 5 of Romans deal with "he who through faith is righteous." The rest of the chapters in Romans deal with how you will live if you are righteous.

So "he who through faith is righteous shall live" is probably the correct translation of Romans 1:17. That's the way many recent commentators and some recent Bible translations now give it.

During the passion week Jesus was greatly anguished. Is this different from fear?

Yes.

Let me put it this way: It was no normal fear. Jesus' anguish was the cutting off of the life stream that connected him to God. This was spiritual asphyxiation, a strangling. This was an evisceration of life.

Jesus suffered this way because he was made sin for us. No one had ever experienced this yet, for he was dying what Scripture calls "the second death."

The second death will be the destiny for all who reject Christ, for all who reject the love of God. They will experience—not to the same depth that Jesus suffered—the anguish of being cut off from him who is our life.

If you want to be humble, just spend a minute or two feeling your pulse. Notice those irregular beats, suddenly two in a hurry, and then a delay. Notice some of these things and realize by how slight a thread your life hangs.

The Good Book says: "My times are in Thy hand" (Psalm 31:15 KJV). That's our confidence. "Our times are in Thy hand, O Lord."

Dr. Ford, did you bring back pictures from Australia of your new granddaughter Lilly?

The photographers in my family are my wife Gill and my daughter Elenne.

In 30 years I've traveled the equivalent of going around the world 35 times.

I've only carried a camera on one trip—the one to Russia. I have photographs of my granddaughter, but I didn't bring them today. I have them because I baby-sat her for one whole day!

Please give us some advice on how to remain in a closed-

mindful, traditional church. The people and the pastor are vengeful and laboring and maneuvering us out of service. We have three children who are seeing and sensing the bitterness.

I would leave.

You must, however, have Christian fellowship. You must find the nearest place where you feel that both law and gospel are honored. But I would not stay in a venue where evil was the only fruitage for my family.

What is systematic theology?

Theologians divide the science, or study, of theology into seven divisions:

- Theology—the science of God.
- Christology—the science of the Son of God;
- Pneumatology—the science of the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.
- Anthropology—the science of the nature of humanity.
- Ecclesiology—the science of the church.
- Soteriology—the science of salvation.
- Eschatology—the science of the last things.

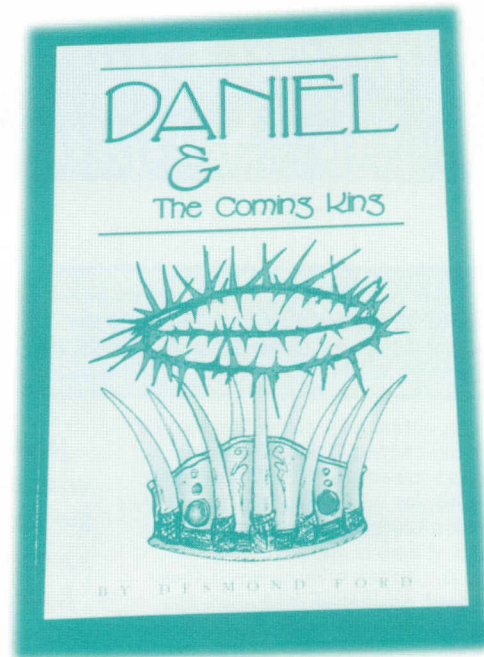
Systematic theology is what is done when you put those seven sciences together.

A systematic theologian draws answers from Scripture, and from the insights supplied by Christians over the years.

What do you mean when you say, “Let God be God”? If we are all, by nature, idolaters, how do we do this?

To let God be God means to want to please God more than to please yourself.

Therefore, our first duty is to come to know God’s will about every practical thing—then doing it.



Dr. Ford’s commentary on Daniel, Daniel and the Coming King, is now available from: Desmond Ford Publications, 7955 Bullard Drive, Newcastle, CA 95658. Price: \$18.00, plus \$4.00 priority mail. (California residents add \$1.30 sales tax.)