

A Survey of the Briefer Predictions

We have noticed that the book of Daniel naturally divides into two main sections, each of them including six chapters. The first section is largely historical, though its second chapter contains an important prophecy. The second section is devoted almost entirely to prophecy, except for statements about the situations in which the prophecies were given.

We shall now look at the short prophecies contained in the first half of the book. It is questionable whether there is any prediction in chapter 1, which tells how Daniel and his companions determined not to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. The only statement in the chapter that sounds at all like a prediction is found in verses 12-13. Daniel asked the chief official to allow him and his comrades to eat only vegetables and drink only water during a trial period of ten days, and then to compare their appearance with that of the other captives. Since Daniel evidently had faith that God would enable them to pass the test this might be considered as a prophecy. Yet Daniel does not clearly predict the result. His words should probably be understood simply as a statement of faith in God rather than as a prediction.

In chapter 6 we shall carefully examine Daniel 2, which is one of the great prophetic chapters of the Bible.

The third chapter of Daniel's book tells how his three friends refused to worship the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and describes the events that followed. There is