

when the names were given we did not know what the facts were about the direction in which the electrons moved, and therefore the names were wrong. It could -- would cause tremendous confusion to change them today so we just stick to the old names. The same is true here. These divisions were taken from the Latin Bible and put into the Heb. Bible. When they were put into it there are a few cases (maybe one in twenty) where they preferred to make a change and make it at a different place. So occasionally the Hebrew Bible has a different ch. division than the English Bible. Not more than about one in twenty. We follow the divisions from the Latin which were put in there in the 13th century, A.D.

The verse divisions are much older than the ch. divisions. But they also were put in quite a time after the Bible was originally written, and in some cases they are very strange. We have cases where two or three long sentences were included in one verse, and we have cases where one sentence is divided into two or three verses. They are strange but very convenient for finding places.

The setting here is that Nebuchadnezzar called in his wise men, v.2. He called in the magicians, the astronomers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to shew the king's dreams. And they came. "Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac." It could have said Aramaic which is the word we use today for the language in which they spoke. And from there on it simply changes to Aramaic from that point on.

They said, Tell thy servants the dream and we will show the interpretation. The king said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me. If you will not make known to me the dream with the interpretation you shall be cut in pieces. They said, Nobody can do such a thing; you tell us the dream and we'll tell you what it means.

The impression that that makes is that this man was a very arbitrary tyrant who asked people to do a ridiculous thing to tell him what his dream was! How could you expect wise men to tell you which dream? But I believe that is a misinterpretation. I believe it because where it says "the thing is gone from me" the word translated "thing" there can be a thing, a word, an idea; it can mean a decree. It does not have to mean dream. A decree. And when it says "it is gone" it can mean "the command went out from him." "I've given this command; that's definite." This is possible. We find it again in v. 8--"The king answered and said, I know of a certain that you would gain time because you see the thing is gone from me."

In v. 8, the phrase "is gone" is a word that occurs nowhere else in the Bible. In recent yrs. scholars have come to the conclusion this is a Persian word meaning "it is firm, positive." That's the way it's taken in most recent translations. The decree is firm, is fixed; this is the regulation I've given. Now it's up to you to do it! It does not mean he has forgotten his dream. After all if he'd forgotten his dream they could make up anything they wanted to and tell him that was his dream. I believe that what happened was that Nebuchadnezzar was in the habit of calling upon