

Daniel

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[0 : 00] We are entering a very dramatic period in the book of Daniel, and it has been described oftentimes in the past as the book of the revelation of the Old Testament.

And it is an axiom of Scripture, of understanding Scripture, and of a principle that, quite frankly, none of us is really competent, capable of interpreting the Scriptures.

I've come to that conclusion a long time ago. And we fall back on the Bible to do its own interpretation. And it is, after all, the only authoritative interpreter of Scripture.

And that is, Scripture interprets Scripture. And that is why we must allow one portion of the Bible to interpret another portion. And you do that only through the diligent comparison of texts.

And in this particular case, we find ourselves in the book of Daniel, and we will need to cross-reference a number of things that are in the revelation, as well as in some other passages.

[1 : 11] Because one passage sheds light upon another passage. That is called Bible study, as opposed to just reading the Bible. I don't want to take anything away from reading the Bible.

In fact, we are engaged in a plan right now at Grace, where we are, on Sunday mornings in the 9 o'clock hour, we are endeavoring to undertake an examination of the Bible from a chronological point of view.

We did this once before, but I guess it's 18 or 19 years ago. And it is all for the purpose of allowing people to make connections. Because the Bible, as you have it, if you have a usual Bible, ordinary Bible, whatever translation it is, the books are not placed in the Bible in the order in which they occur.

But they are rather listed in accordance with their genre. That is, you find the Pentateuch and the Law of Moses, etc., in the first five books. And then the historical books. And then you get into the books of poetry and the Psalms and the Proverbs and Song of Solomon and Job and things like that.

These are poetical books. And they are all grouped together. And then you get into the prophetic books. And that has to do with the four major prophets and the twelve minor prophets. So they are kind of placed together in your Bible in accordance with the type of literature that they represent.

[2 : 37] But that doesn't really help us much in making connections between them. And that's where the chronology comes in handy. And sometimes the chronology is a little difficult to come by.

We don't have a firm grip on all of it. But by and large, we are able to study the Bible in the order of the events that they occurred.

And that sheds a lot of light upon it. And that's what we'll be doing there. And I can provide you, if you're not from Grace, I can provide you with a reading list and the order in which those books are listed.

If you would like, I'd be happy to bring some extra copies. And you can pursue a private study on your own. And you don't need a special Bible to do that. You can use the Bible that you've got for chronological study and just be looking at the books in a little different order.

What we are engaged in now in Daniel chapter 8 is right on the threshold, of course, of chapter 9. And chapter 9 continues with the theme of future events that are going to transpire.

[3 : 41] And the principal character who will surface, and actually we'll see him surface in chapter 8 as well, He is the principal player of the end times, with the exception of the most principal player of all, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ.

And second to that will be the Antichrist. He will be the principal player until Christ comes on the scene. It is entirely possible that this person, the Antichrist, who by the way will be a human being, not some supernatural individual, he will be a human being, it is entirely possible that he may be alive today, somewhere in the world.

Probably in the Middle East or in Europe. I'm not saying that he is, I'm just saying it's possible. On the other hand, it's possible that he may not be alive for another couple hundred years, because we do not have a precise kind of timetable that we can operate with.

When this thing called the 70th week of Daniel, which is the key, and I cannot emphasize that enough, it is the key to the understanding of prophecy, the 70th week of Daniel.

And it is upcoming in chapter 9. That is the linchpin for all biblical prophecy. It is amazing how much hangs on the understanding, the information given, in Daniel 9.

[5 : 20] And I'm a little excited to get to it, maybe you can tell that, but we've got to do diligence with chapter 8 before we get there, so that's what we're going to do this morning. I just want to get this individual fixed in your mind as to how powerful, how influential, and how brutal he is going to be.

This Antichrist, we have already seen in surface in chapter 7, he is referred to as the little horn. And when the Bible uses the word horn like that, it is a synonym for power.

The horn. And it has reference to an animal horn. The horn of a beast, like of a steer, or something of that kind.

You've heard, we've all heard the expression about taking the bull by the horns. Well, you don't take a bull by the horns, in reality. You take a bull by the horns, the bull will take you.

That's for sure. Because, the raw energy that is wrapped up in those horns of that beast, whatever it is, is just incredible.

[6 : 33] And this is one of the reasons why mankind, way back thousands of years ago, made the association between the animal horn and power.

And we find the term horn surfacing many, many times. And this time, he is the little horn of Daniel chapter 7. And why he is called a little horn is that he begins with a seeming insignificance.

Don't pay a whole lot of attention to him early on. But this little horn is going to grow in power, in majesty, in might, in influence, and he is going to become the world leader.

And all nations are going to be subservient to this one individual. He will head the one world government that is coming.

Prophecy buffs are right now kind of salivating over what's going on in Europe with the common union and all that is involved with that.

[7 : 43] Now, Britain's trying to get out of it. And we do not know. We do not know, and we ought not to try to build a case and say this is the beginning. But we can say it may be.

We just don't know. This European Common Union, ECU, that is underway now may very well be the beginning of what we are seeing here. or it may be something that will fizzle out, dissipate, and what Daniel is talking about won't come on the scene for another 100 or 200 years.

I don't think that's the case. I think it is probably a lot closer than we know, but we cannot say for sure. And the one thing that we ought not to do about prophecy is we ought not to crawl out on any limbs and be too dogmatic.

Because too many have done that in the past. They've made all kinds of predictions only to have egg on their face when things fizzled out and did not come to pass. So, God has not called us to be prophets and make predictions and things.

And some do that to get a crowd. Some do it for the drama that's involved. But the scriptures ought to be handled with more respect than that. And there's just a lot that we do not know.

[8 : 55] So, he is the little horn of Daniel chapter 8. He is the same one who will be identified as the prince that shall come in Daniel chapter 9.

There is a tendency to think that that is a reference to Jesus Christ. But it isn't. It is a reference to the Antichrist. And that's in Daniel 9, 26.

He is also called the king who shall do according to his own will. That's a description that is given to him in Daniel chapter 11 and verse 36.

In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and verse 3, this same individual we're talking about is called the man of sin. He's not a man of sin.

We've got millions of those. He is the man of sin. And that is, he represents all of humanity as the chief man of sin.

[9 : 55] And in Revelation chapter 11, verse 7, Revelation 13 and verse 1, Revelation 17 and verse 11, and Revelation 19 and verse 20, he is referred to as the beast.

The beast. That is the designation given him. And then in 1 John chapter 2 and verse 22, he is further identified as the Antichrist.

That can mean one of two things. It can mean the one who is a false Christ or an imitation Christ or who presents himself as Christ, which I really don't think that's the meaning.

Or it can be a more literal meaning, the Antichrist, in that he is the one who is opposed to Christ in every way. And that seems to be the more common interpretation of the word anti.

It means literally against. Christ. I don't think he is going to try to convince anybody that he is the true Christ, but he is going to stand for anything and everything that is contrary to decency, to morality, to truth, and he will be energized by none other than Satan himself.

[11:13] He pointed out to you that the adversary has a trinity and it is a takeoff on the true trinity of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And the unholy trinity consists of Satan who is representative of the Father and the Antichrist who is representative of Christ, the second person, and then the false prophet who is representative of the Holy Spirit.

So, in this respect, as well as in many others, the adversary is a copier. He does not have an original bone in his body, but he copies that, he mimics that, and that is with the intent, of course, of deceiving.

And he will be successful in deceiving a great many. While we're here in Daniel, let's take a look at chapter 8, if we may. We've already considered part of it.

And by the way, these common references to the beast, and to the image that surfaced in chapter 2, remember the head of gold and the breastplate of silver and everything.

[12:27] If you ask yourself, why are these images presented to Daniel, and why is it he, how is it that he's seeing these, and what is it with all of these beasts, with these different animals anyway?

What do they represent? And why does God use these as indicators of what is coming? And I want you to stop and think about that for a moment. Each of these beasts, whether it is a lion, whether it is a bear, whatever it is, they are representative of the kind of kingdom, or the kind of king that is being surfaced.

And the reason that these animals are used to portray these dynamics is because how would you go about revealing in a vision or a dream, how would you go about visualizing the kingdom of Persia?

what does a kingdom look like in a dream, or in a vision? I have no idea how you would portray that. But if you use an animal, something that has concrete reality that people are identified with, and use that to represent the kingdom, that's intelligible.

[13:49] and you can get your brain around that. You can understand an animal. And he's not talking about literal animals, he's talking about this animal represents this kingdom.

So let's look at it, if we may. And where shall we, let's see. Let's just jump in, if we may.

We've seen the Son of Man presented in verses 13 and 14, and this shows us that this is going to be the end. And then Daniel is going to go over this again, and he says in verse 15, As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me.

The visions in my mind kept alarming me. I approached one of those who were standing by, and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me, and made known to me, the interpretation of these things.

In other words, Daniel didn't have a clue either. He's puzzled by it all. And they are going to be made known to him. And in verse 17, these great beasts, which are four in number, are actually four kings, or they represent four kings who will arise from the earth.

[15:05] But the saints of the highest one will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever for all ages to come. That's the end game.

That's where this thing is going to end. That's how it's going to play out. And it will be this kingdom that is forever that is going to come. And then I desire to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, they were found earlier in the chapter, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder leader with its feet.

In other words, this beast is taking dominance over everything. Everything is under him, under his feet. And the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn, which came up, and here are these horns again.

These horns are representative of national powers, or entities, or countries, and the leaders thereof. They came up before which three of them fell.

These are three who are going to oppose the Antichrist when he comes to power and presents his plan. Three are going to refuse to go along with it.

[16:28] And, of course, they will pay the price for having done so. And the text goes on to say that three of them fell, namely, in verse 20, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them. This is the latter part of the tribulation when persecution is going to be so abundant, martyrs are going to be realized by the thousands.

these are people who are going to be on the earth after the church is removed. They are undergoing this time of great tribulation, and the Antichrist is going to be ruling with an iron fist, and he will have complete dominion over all the earth, and no one will be able to stand against him.

This will be until, verse 22, until the ancient of days came, and that of course is none other than our Lord, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the highest one, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

This is at the close of the tribulation period. Thus he said, the fourth beast will be a fourth king. Now he's going back. He's going back again before this.

[18:06] What we have here in verse 22 is a kind of conclusion of this, when the saints take possession of the kingdom. This is when Christ is ruling and reigning.

But now he's backing up to present a full picture. And this fourth beast is key here. The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms.

And it will devour the whole earth, and tread it down, and crush it. Now you've got to understand that verse 22 and the content thereof is going to be realized after verse 23.

But he is concluding it here in verse 22, and then he's going to go back and tell us how this is going to come about. And as for the ten horns out of this kingdom, ten kings will arise, and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones, and will subdue three kings.

These are the three who earlier opposed him, would not go along with it. They are going to be overcome. He will subdue them, and he will speak out against the Most High, and wear down the saints of the highest one.

[19:23] He's going to really take a toll on believers who are alive at that time. And the phrase wear them down simply means he's just going to decimate them.

They are going to have no power and no ability to stand against them at all. And he will intend to make alterations in times and in law, and they will be given into his hand.

Who? Who is the they? That's the saints of the Most High. They will be given into his hand for a time, that's one, times, that's two, plus one, and half a time, that's a total of three and one half years.

This is the last half of the tribulation period, which will be seven years in all. And it is divided into these three segments, or two segments.

One time, sometimes it's called twelve hundred and sixty days, that's three and a half years.

Sometimes it's called a time, times, and a half a time, that's three and a half years.

[20:27] So however you look at it, we're talking about a three and one half year period. They will be given into his hand for a time, times, and heaven. Given into his hand means they will be under his complete control.

They will be powerless. But, the court, and this can only mean a court, the court of heaven or the final court, the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion, that is the Antichrist, will be taken away, annihilated, and destroyed forever.

And the beginning of that will be Revelation 19, when Christ appears on that white horse, with the sharp sword that proceeds out of his mouth, and he will utterly decimate the enemies of Israel, and the enemies of the body of Christ, that will have already been raptured at that time.

And this is going to be the second coming. This is when the blood will flow to the horse's bridles.

This is going to take place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, right outside the city of Jerusalem.

It's going to encompass a huge area of conflict. The Antichrist has already massed in Armageddon, in the plains of Megiddo, and is marching south.

[21 : 49] Christ will be coming from Basra, and Isaiah talks about, who is this that cometh from Basra with his garments stained with red? This is the Christ who has come, and he has rescued his people in Basra, and in the area where they have been providentially protected, and he will march north.

The Antichrist will come south. The contemplation will take place there, right in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is also the Kidron Valley that runs in the great African rift all the way from down into Africa.

So this is the second coming content. And then the sovereignty, excuse me, verse 27, then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the highest one.

His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions, will serve and obey him. Excuse me. This is when Christ is enthroned as King of kings and Lord of lords.

At this point, the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me, and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.

[23 : 12] So, have you any comments or questions before we move on into chapter 8? Anybody?

All right, let's hurry along now. Belshazzar, we've already covered this material, and I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it, but we've got the ram and the animals here.

This is seeing the same kind of an image. Well, I've got a morning frog here. I'm sorry for my voice. Verse 3, I lifted my gaze and looked, and the ram, which had two horns, was standing in front of the canal.

This ram is representative of the Medes and the Persians, and the two horns, one horn for the Medes, one horn for the Persians. They are in concert regarding this.

And the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other. This is the Persian that is dominant regarding the Medes. They had more men and better organized and a larger group.

[24 : 18] So these two horns represent two kingdoms. And the longer one and the stronger one represents the Persians and the others, the Medes.

I saw the ram budding westward, northward and southward, and no other beast could stand before him, nor was there anyone to rescue from his power.

But he did as he pleased and magnified himself. And while I was observing, behold, a male goat. Now this male goat will be none other than Alexander the Great.

And we know historically, and you can verify this with any secular encyclopedia, that Alexander with his army, comprising only maybe 20% of the manpower that the Medes and the Persians had, absolutely slaughtered the Medes and the Persians.

They had military tactics that were honed to a fine degree. And the Medes and the Persians were so bulky, so slow, and so ponderous, they were no match for the lightning strikes of Alexander the Great and his men.

[25 : 31] They were absolutely awesome. And he is the male goat coming from the west over the surface of the whole ground, without touching the ground. That speaks of the great speed with which he came, and a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

And he came up to the ram, that's the Medes and the Persians, that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. And I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him, and he struck the ram, and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him.

So we've got a goat depicted here as against the ram. So he hurled him to the ground, trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. And then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly.

But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken. That is Alexander himself. And in its place, there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

These four horns are represented by the four generals who assumed the breakup of the kingdom that Alexander the Great had conquered, and it was quartered between these four generals, and each one of them took a certain amount of territory.

[27 : 00] And out of them, verse 9, out of one of them came forth a rather small horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land.

And that, of course, is in reference to Israel. And it grew up to the host of heaven, and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth. And it trampled them down.

It even magnified itself to be equal with the commander of the host, and it removed the regular sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was thrown down.

And on account of transgression, the host, or the many, will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice, and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper.

And then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?

[28 : 10] And he said to me, For twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings, then the holy place will be properly restored. And it came about, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought to understand it, and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man, and I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Uli, and he called out and said, Gabriel, give this man, that is Daniel, an understanding of the vision.

So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end.

While he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground, but he touched me and made me stand upright. And he said, Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end.

The end of what? The end of everything. The end of this age as we know it. The end that everybody is referring to when they talk about the end, or when they talk about Armageddon.

This is closure. This is that which began in Genesis 3 with the fall, ending with final and complete destruction, and the new order being established, wherein God says, Behold, I make all things new.

[29 : 58] And that's this end that we are talking about here. And the shaggy goat, I'm sorry, verse 20. The ram, which you saw, with the two horns, represents the kings of Media and Persia.

Now, you might not know that just from reading where we've already been about the two horns. When I said they were Media and Persia, you can ask the legitimate question, well, how do you know that?

Well, we don't know it from that text, but the context. And the context includes what is right here.

And in verse 20, we are told, The ram, which you saw, the two horns, represents the kings of Media and Persia.

And the shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece. And who was the head honcho of that?

That was Alexander the Great, the son of Philip of Macedon.

And the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. And the broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power.

[31 : 12] That simply means these four generals that will assume the four different geographical areas that Alexander the Great had conquered, they will be, those four will be the replacements for the one, but none of them will achieve the stature or the power or the ability of Alexander the Great who gave them this position.

And then we read in verse 23, And in the latter period of their rule, when the transgressors have run their course, a king will arise insolent and skilled in intrigue.

And his power will be mighty. But not by his own power. Not by his own power. By whose power?

By Satan's power. He will be energized by Satan himself.

And his power he will destroy to an extraordinary degree and prosper and perform his will. He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.

And this refers to Israel. And through his shrewdness, he will cause deceit to succeed by his influence. And he will magnify himself in his heart.

[32 : 34] This guy is going to have an ego that is unbelievable. And he will destroy many while they are at ease. This is the time when they're thinking peace and safety and everything is calm.

Not hardly. Not hardly. He will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the prince of princes.

But he will be broken without human agency. That means his end is going to be supernatural. And the vision of the evenings and the mornings, which has been told, is true.

But keep the vision secret for it pertains to many days in the future. Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days.

Then I got up again and carried on the king's business. But I was astounded at the vision. And there was none to explain it.

[33 : 32] Well, it's going to be explained in chapter 9. That is upcoming. And I realize that what we have covered here has been kind of a review.

But I trust that you were able to pick up something from this that you might have missed the first time through. So, Lord willing, in our session next week, we will commence with chapter 9.

And as I mentioned, it is the linchpin that really pulls everything together regarding the prophecies. So, guys, thank you again for being here. And enjoy your breakfast.