

Daniel 06-01-15b

We continue our study now in the book of Daniel, resuming in chapter 7. This is going to be our last look at chapter 7, and therefore also our last look at the section of Daniel that is in Aramaic. You say, well, why do I care about that? I will seek to demonstrate the importance of that when we cross the threshold from chapter 7 to chapter 8. Depending on how fast I talk and how much we cover, we may or may not get there today. But, before we leave chapter 7, there is something, and I think it is the point of this chapter, one of the pinnacles, the high point, the main idea is found in chapter 7, verses 13 and 14.

Daniel says, I was watching in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed. Well, there is a huge amount of freight. I could spend a month, which would be eight solid lessons, just on these two verses, conservatively speaking.

Every word of Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may become mature, complete, thoroughly furnished, thoroughly equipped for every good work. The Word of God thoroughly equips us for every good work. It is not just an aid, it is not a supplement, it is not a help.

If you want to do good works in God's plan, if you want to be that child of God, that is obedient and faithful and fulfills His plan and purpose in this life, how do we do it? It is the living and powerful Word of God. That is what thoroughly equips us for every good work. To listen to modern Christianity and modern preaching and teaching, you would think that the Word of God partially equips us for some good works.

That's just not it. Every Scripture is God-breathed. Theonoustos.

And it goes back to the inert form of Adam laying on the ground, shaped by the hands of God out of the dust, laying there as an inanimate, non-living form. And God breathed into his nostrils the neshama, the breath of life. And how do we get the breath of life into our spiritual existence? What makes us alive? It is the living, powerful Word of God.

Zoe. Life. It is impossible for the unregenerate mind.

It is impossible for the carnal mind of a Christian to understand the difference that God's power makes in the human soul. It is incomprehensible. You can talk yourself into a puddle.

One of my favorite stories when I was growing up because it had my name in it was Little Black

Sambo. And I don't care what anybody says, there's nothing wrong with that story. It's a great story.

And the Little Black Sambo that's in that story is a smart kid. And the tiger's chasing him and he runs around the tree. He keeps running and running.

You remember how that story turns out? The tiger just melts himself down into butter, running around. Well, you can do that. You can talk yourself into a blue streak trying to explain to someone the difference between the secular, humanist, earthly, material view of this life and the existence of God.

I made a comparison earlier this week. Everybody has seen video games now, right? And they're very sophisticated. If you walk down the aisle of an electronics store like Fry's and they've got these displays up, have you seen the realistic movements and the realistic behavior of characters now in these games? They put the little Velcro dots on people and sample their motions and then program it in.

And so these are very lifelike. It looks like a movie. It looks like a film of actual people.

And it's all ether. It's all smoke and mirrors. It's programming.

But you have characters. And in these adventure games and first-person shooters, as they call them, where you go around with some kind of a thing, you know, dropping all of these opponents, and they go through various modes of gratifying destruction as they get hit with whatever it is you're shooting. You can use anything from a crowbar to a plasma weapon and, you know, send them into nothingness by whatever means.

But these characters are invested with more and more intelligence. Used to be they were just like a little cardboard duck going back and forth that you ping with a pellet and win a prize. But as these games evolve, as more and more artificial intelligence is invested in them, now hang with me.

Don't lose my train of thought. I won't lose it if you won't. In these video games, the characters are invested with more and more personality, more and more intelligence.

They are given more and more of the computer's own power to think and react, and they become very sophisticated, and they respond to what you do. And when you start shooting, they can duck and they can run and they can start responding. Well, this has all happened in the last 10 or 15 years.

Video games, when we got out of the CGA graphics and into VGA and on, where you could start getting some decent screen resolution and something beyond Doom with its blocky graphics and its take forever, you know, wait on the hourglass type of thing, these games have been evolving. And in the last 10 years, look how far they have come. Well, set aside for the moment the reality that the Lord is going to be back here pretty quick and suppose that human history

went on and our technological advances continued as they have been for 50 more years, five times the amount of time we have had.

Computer sophistication and power has gone up exponentially in the last 15 or 20 years. Imagine what it's going to be in 50 years or 100 years. How sophisticated do you think the artificial intelligence of these, just in this one narrow area, just in video games, how it's going to be 3D, people will wear headsets, they will walk around in the environment, it will be total immersion.

You'll hear sounds and sense around. You'll be able to place movement and noises in a three-dimensional context. The graphics will be three-dimensional.

It will be total immersion. Maybe you'll wear gloves and you can feel the trigger of your weapon and you can feel it when you bump into things and you can run on some kind of a slippery surface and you'll move around. It's going to be, if time went on, 50 to 60 years from now, it would be not unlike the holodeck on the enterprise.

I'm not kidding you. The technology already exists. It's merely a matter of packaging it in an economically feasible form and then refining and refining as you get feedback.

Well, here's my whole point. Stay with me. Suppose these virtual characters continue to be invested with intelligence and thought ability until they sort of take on a life of their own.

This has been the stuff of science fiction for the last 80 years. And they begin to think and to become self-aware. And they start to speculate as they look around their little digital universe and they see each other and they say, where did we come from and why are we here? And they start to wonder about the creator, about the God who created their universe.

Well, the God is an 18-year-old pimply-faced, you know, 2400 vision guy sitting behind some computer workstation someplace. We'll boil it down. It's probably a staff of people.

We'll say it's one guy that thought up the whole game and programmed all of this together. So what kind of questions would these characters ask themselves? Their known universe exists in bits and bytes, doesn't it? If they get down into their little molecular DNA, what's it going to be? It's going to be bits and bytes. And they might even figure out that that stuff is stored on sectors of hard disks or on whatever they have.

They'll have some kind of super bubble memory, virtual, indestructible, no-moving parts. You know, how many terabytes do you have on your keychain that you can plug into one thing and another? I mean, it'll just be unimaginably complex and capacious. It'll have so much capacity.

So these little characters are looking at their little digital universe and they're saying, well, I see your bit pattern, I see my bit pattern. What about the creator? I can see where we load off of these hard disk sectors or out of these little bubble memories or whatever they are. And I see how we're loaded and how we disappear.

And what about the creator? Well, you can imagine in that universe, what is the biggest stretch that their mind is going to be able to make? Can they imagine something outside the virtual reality that exists in the RAM of the computer in which they're running? I mean, to try to explain, well, there's carbon-based life forms that programmed you and there's birth and long history. I mean, it's just completely outside the scope. They have no possible way to comprehend where the creator came from, how the creator lives.

He's in a completely different universe founded on different principles. We don't run on a PC. We're not stored in RAM as we understand the concepts.

You can imagine that this entire universe, I mean, by analogy, I'm not saying this is reality, but by analogy, God wrote the program. It's running on hardware of his creation. He programmed it.

He sets the rules. If I am the programmer of a video game, can I snuff a character outside the bounds of the game? He didn't get shot and he didn't step on a mine. I just press delete and he's gone.

I can go into the menu and I can open up a hole in a wall where there didn't used to be one. Or I can give a character the ability to walk through walls where none of the other characters can. I mean, to me, it's child's play.

It's simplicity itself. To a programmer who works in a program and has control over that game, I can, you know, a guy's got an anomaly. He's got bad RAM and he doesn't have fingers on the end of his hand.

Well, I just go in and store him in a different location and bingo, he suddenly magically his hand is restored. It's child's play for me because I control the environment. I create the environment.

I program the rules. I live outside the rules. I'm in a completely different venue.

I share nothing. I can insert myself into that. I can take on the role of a character and I can personally control it and not leave it up to AI.

Well, use that analogy and think about God controlling this universe. And then think about people who in their arrogance say, how can there be a first cause? How can God be the cause of things in this universe and not himself have a cause? Well, that's like a character in Doom or Elite Force or one of these games coming up and saying, how can there be a programmer that doesn't load off of a disk? How can there be a programmer who's not composed of bits and bytes? I mean, it's just nuts. It's arrogance to say nothing can exist that I can't conceive of.

Nothing can exist that I can't comprehend within the context of my own intelligence. It's hubris. It's arrogance to say God must exist in a form that fits into my comprehension.

He has to conform to laws that I have learned as I have grown up in my little bubble of RAM

here. And it's nonsense. There's no little video game character that's ever going to understand me or you.

I don't care how much programming you give it or how much AI. It's never going to be able to experience the outside world of flesh and blood and the three physical dimensions that make up our universe. We are totally other than virtual characters in a video game.

Well, guess what? God is totally other. He is not bound by rules of causation. By rules of time.

You know, a character in a video game, you've got to boot the game. You've got to start the game. It has to play itself out from beginning to end.

It's got an environment that is set and fixed. If the game is set on a ship and they're running through the tunnels and the hatches and chasing each other hither and yon in the bowels of this rusty hulk or something, well, they're not going to suddenly find themselves in a 7-Eleven. It's not a part of the game.

It's not programmed in there. They're not going to find themselves in the Louvre looking at paintings. Oh, here's all the great statuary and paintings that are in the Louvre or in the Smithsonian.

It's not a part of the game. You can't get there from here. Well, people in our society, our culture, and our scientific community in particular are so bleeding arrogant to pooh-pooh and dismiss as nonsense the existence of God.

It goes back to that chapter in 2 Timothy that we looked at this morning. Do not be taken in. Do not be swayed.

Do not be discouraged by the mental ramblings of the virtual characters in this universe who cannot even admit that there might be something greater than themselves. They want God to fit into a box. If there is a God, he needs to be a loving God, and nothing bad should happen in my world if there is a loving God.

If something bad happens, then there is no loving God. I will never believe there is a loving God if people suffer and people die and disease happens and I lose somebody dear to me. There is no God.

That's my conclusion because I am the intellectual master of all knowledge. Arrogance. Our pride in believing that we know the answers and that we're going to understand everything.

This is our obstacle. This is what we're born with. This is why, as a child of God, we have to have our thinking rehabilitated.

To be teachable, you have to be humble. It doesn't mean you have to be kicking your toe in the dirt and saying, woe is me and I'm the lowest form of life. What does it mean? Recognizing our limitations, recognizing that we need God's help from outside the box, outside the program,

outside this universe.

God, by analogy, the touch of a key, can completely alter our reality. He has that power. He is infinitely greater than we are.

And He knows exactly why He is running our life the way that He is and why we encounter the things that we encounter. It is all working together for good. We understand that.

We have the humility to accept that, that there is something greater than ourselves to which we owe something. And God is going to bring us outside. This is the analogy of Pinocchio.

I don't know if you've ever thought about the Pinocchio story. But he starts out as a wooden puppet. And what does he end up as? If you've seen the Disney movie, you know the essence of it.

Now I'm flesh and blood. I'm not on the strings anymore. I don't float like a cork and so on.

Well, he moves out of the toy world, out of the imitation world, out of the limited world, into the world of reality, human reality. We, by the grace of God and by the work of Jesus Christ, are going to be lifted out of this temporary virtual reality into the reality where God dwells. He is going to give to us the flesh and blood of eternity.

He is going to give to us the capacity to walk out of that limited physical universe into eternity. Eye has not seen. Ear has not heard.

It hasn't entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love him. Now what if somebody doesn't like God, isn't interested in the eternity that God offers, likes just running around in circles within that limited universe? They're going to get their wish. God's going to hit the big delete key and they're going to be gone.

They will not come out of this temporary, ephemeral, vaporish life. That's what life is all about. It's important to see ourselves in the context of God's plan and in the larger reality that goes beyond this physical universe.

Our problems in that perspective become relatively small and of short duration. We are children. We are here to learn.

We have been put in this simulation, if we will. We are made in the image of God in the same way that a programmer makes a character in a game, in the image of real people. But it's a simulation.

It's a temporary construct. And we are in this to learn and to make decisions and to decide whether or not we want to come outside and spend real life on an eternal basis with God or not. God has the power to bring us out and that's the difference between a human programmer.

No human I know can take a virtual character out of a game and turn it into a flesh and blood human. And I don't think they ever will. Science fiction says, oh yes, a thousand years from now, you'll be able to download your soul into a mechanical body and you'll live forever.

Don't hold your breath. Don't put yourself in a cryogenic freeze waiting for it because it isn't going to happen. But God can.

That's the difference. He has creative power that we don't have. So all of this brings us back, interestingly enough, to the study of Daniel.

Because in Daniel chapter 7, verse 13 and 14, we have the crux. We have the point of much of this section of the book. Take a look at what happens.

This is the transition point. This is where the Son of Man takes possession. It tells us specifically here, I was watching in the night visions and behold.

Notice the word *one* is in italics there. It says, like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, He came to the Ancient of Days and they brought Him near before Him. What I find interesting about this is the word order.

Forgive me, I'm going to inflict some Hebrew on you, but it means something here. It's important. And I think you'll appreciate seeing this.

In verse 13, it says, I was watching in the visions of the night and behold. This is Aramaic now. In Hebrew, the word for behold is hizeh.

And it's just like, you can imagine, two Hebrew guys shuffling down. They're beating some goats with a stick or something going down the road, trying to get them to market. And the guy sees a lion off to the side or some kind of a threat.

He says, hizeh, hizeh. It gets attention. It's an onomopoetic word.

Hizeh. And the emphasis on the second syllable gets your attention. It carries for a long distance.

In Aramaic, it's different. The word behold in Aramaic here is aru. He says, I was watching in the visions of the night and aru.

Now to me, that just sounds like the Gentiles. It sounds like, well, this is not the elevated language of God where the word performs a function and grabs your attention. Hizeh.

You don't get that. Instead, you get aru. It reminds me of Scooby-Doo.

You know, aru. I'm sorry, but these are memory aids for me. There's a lot of vocabulary to remember, Hebrew and Aramaic and Greek.

And so these little things help my mind. But in Aramaic, the word behold is aru. And I just

always think of that dog.

He can't speak English. He wants to get someone's attention. He says, aru.

And that's what you have here. Aru. And then it says, im anani shemaya.

And you'll recognize, because Aramaic is a cognate language to Hebrew, shemaya is the word for heavens. Now wait a minute. We haven't said anything about bar anosh or anything about the Son of Man.

It says, behold with the clouds of heaven. That's the first phrase. He says, I look, and what do I see? I see with the clouds of heaven.

This is the first thing Daniel gives us to this sort of sequentially. What strikes his eye as he looks in the visions of the night? With the clouds of heaven, like a Son of Man. That's the word order.

With the clouds of heaven, like. This is the preposition kaf. It's the letter k basically in Hebrew.

Ka-bar-anosh. Anosh, anashim, this is man, men. With the clouds of heaven, like a Son of Man.

And then we have ateh. And this is confusing because in Hebrew, atah is a pronoun. But this is a verb, and here it is a participle.

It's a pial. Pial in Hebrew is the intensive stem. In Aramaic, the pial, p-e-a-l, is the intensive stem.

It's a pial participle from atah, a-t-a-h. And this is the word that means to come, to arrive. In some cases, to bring.

Now, if it's in the pial, it has the idea of, and it's a participle, it means coming. You know, participle is an ing word. It's like in English, we talk about gerunds.

Swim, to swim is the infinitive. Swimming is the participle. You take a verb and turn it into a noun.

So, what's the word order here? With the clouds of heaven, like a Son of Man, coming. I looked in the visions of the night, and behold, I rule. With the clouds of heaven, like a Son of Man, coming.

Then we have the main verb. And this is a pial perfect. What's a perfect tense do? Remember your grammar? Perfect tense is completed action in past time, right? This is a different word that also means to come, but here it means come to pass, or become.

To become. You may remember, we had a little exercise in Greek over in Revelation, this very same idea, where in English it was translated, it is finished, or it is complete, the voice from heaven. And we looked at that, and it's from Erchomai, and it was a perfect.

It has become. It has become. This was the announcement of God.

What did that herald? What did that mark? The kingdom has come into existence. It doesn't mean it's finished in the sense of something is fulfilled and all done. Something has arrived and is beginning.

It's a new thing. It has come into existence. It has become.

Very same statement here in Aramaic. I looked in the visions of the night, and behold, with the clouds of heaven, like a son of man coming, it has become. It arrives.

It comes to pass. This is the third masculine singular. He came.

He became. He came into being. It could be he, she, or it.

This is masculine. That tells us it's a he. Who is the he? The one like a son of man.

With the clouds of heaven. The word one is not there. You notice it's in italics in your New King James.

Now, if you've hung with me this far, why do we care about this? Why is this so important? As Daniel watches, he sees the clouds of heaven. You get the idea that this is sort of like the cloud chariot. Normally, God rides on the clouds.

Ezekiel saw this. Daniel is going to see it in other places. You see it in Job and the Psalms.

God in the whirlwind. God in the clouds. Here is one like a son of man with the clouds.

And Daniel puts with the clouds up front because this is highly unusual. You don't see men riding on the clouds. When you see men taking supernatural transportation, what do you see? Chariot of fire for Elijah.

But Jesus, when he ascends later on, is going to go up in the clouds. The two men standing there, why stand ye gazing into heaven? The same Jesus will come in like manner as you have seen him go. He went up and was received out of their sight into the clouds, and he's with clouds coming back.

But clouds are the conveyance symbol for God and his throne. And it is remarkable in the extreme that one like a son of man rides the clouds. Very unusual.

And it so strikes Daniel that he puts the clouds up front. With clouds, one like a son of man coming. Arrived.

Became. Came to pass. The emphasis is on that son of man.

It says, He came to the Ancient of Days. He came to the Atik Yomai. Remember, we looked at Atik.

Two successive weeks. The one existing outside. That was the substance of my introduction for

this second section.

God exists outside. Don't think that God is limited. Don't think that God is uninvolved.

There are people who say, well, even if there is a God, he created the universe like an alarm clock. He wound it up and got it ticking. And then he wandered off and kind of forgot about it.

He's not involved. He's not. This is the view.

You may have heard the phrase, it's a theological construct that says God is both imminent and transcendent. Imminent means, this is not imminent like something about to happen. It's got an A in the middle.

Immanent. And it means God is involved. God is here.

God is operating within the fabric of our time-space continuum here. He is imminent. And he is transcendent.

He is above and beyond our universe and our lives. Well, there are people that say he's transcendent, but he's not imminent. And then there are others that say, well, if there is a God, I expect him to be imminent, but I don't think he's transcendent.

They've got this whole thing of process theology where God's kind of making it up as he goes along and he's doing crisis management. He gets surprised all the time. He expects one thing and something else happens.

But because he's God, he's really smart and he kind of copes. Didn't really know Judas was going to betray Jesus, but he figured out a way to work it together for good. God's just kind of a big crisis manager.

Process theology. So, coming with the clouds of heaven, he came to the atik yomai. He came to what's called here the Ancient of Days.

The one who is not bounded by days. The one who exists outside this universe. And they brought him near before him.

Who's they? Goes back to the clouds. This is his conveyance. It's not just accompaniment.

Behold, he cometh with clouds. And they say, oh, there's clouds of saints or clouds of angels or whatever. This is his conveyance.

They bring him to the Ancient of Days. Now, this is the verse we want to focus on. Verse 14.

Then to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people's nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is everlasting. He doesn't pass away.

His kingdom is one that is not destroyed. Why do we have these three things? Why didn't it just

say a kingdom was given to him and then we move on? Well, there is a reason for it. And we want to take a look at these concepts, these words are important.

First of all, it says to him was given dominion. Well, the word to give is interesting here. You may know enough Hebrew or remember enough to know that the prophet Nathan, his name means to give, Natan, N-A-T-A-N.

Benjamin Netanyahu is always in the news over there in Israel. And Benjamin, son of the right hand. And then his last name, Netanyahu, means given by the Lord, given by Yahweh.

Netan or Natan, that's N-T-N. That's the verb for to give. Well, in Aramaic here and in this passage, we don't have that.

We have Yahav, Y-A-H-A-B or V. This is generally translated give. It can mean to pay, to yield, to provide, to place. But it basically means to put in place.

It's not give in the sense of like giving a gift. It means to apportion, to allot, to place, to set something. You move something from here and you put it over here.

This is a thing that is placed. Now, the idea here is that you have three things that are given. Three things that are given.

The first one is dominion. The first one is, in Aramaic, shaltan. Shaltan, S-H-A-L-T-A-N.

Does that remind you of a sultan in Arabic? Arabic, Aramaic, Hebrew, all derived from the same ancient Semitic roots. So, this sultanage is given to him. If you're a sultan, if you're a shaltan, you have a dominion.

You have something over which you have authority. And this is emphasis on authority. That's what the idea is of shaltan, is a view of authority, sovereignty.

If you're sovereign and you have sovereignty over a thing, the king has sovereignty in his kingdom. He may be respected elsewhere, but it's his kingdom where his sovereignty functions. So, this is the first thing that's given.

Dominion is given to him. The second thing that's given to him is yaqar, Y-A-Q-A-R. Now, this is translated glory.

But it's an interesting word because it has the idea of something of great value. This is sometimes used of precious stones. Things of great value and high quality and great price.

So, it's not just glory in the abstract sense of shekinah or something that gives off light. This is glory in the sense of honor and respect. To give you an idea of how this is used, in Esther chapter 1 verse 4, we don't get to talk about Esther very much, but Esther chapter 1 verse 4, it's talking about how King Xerxes was giving this big bash and doing like kings often do, showing off.

He showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days. 180 days, 6 months, he does this. And this yaqar talks about the nature of his kingdom.

However, when you get to Esther chapter 6 and verse 3, the king says, Of course, what honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for exposing this plot to do away with the king? Remember Haman, what shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor? And Haman says, well, that's got to be me. So, he gives his big dream of getting the big applause scene. And the king says, great, do that for Mordecai.

So, Haman has to lead him through the streets. And of course, it's a great foreshadowing of things to come. But, what honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for his service to the king? The king's servant said, nothing has been done for him.

Well, let's do it. And so, this great honor is bestowed. But, as you move on in the use of this word, remember when Vashti was supposed to come to the feast in Esther chapter 1, and she wouldn't do it.

She was indisposed. And so, the king got upset and did away with her. And there was an opening in the queen department.

And that's when they had interviews. And Esther comes in. Hadassah comes in and becomes Queen Esther.

It's a beautiful name, by the way. Hadassah. There's a lot of Jewish girls today and down through history that have been given that name.

But, in Esther chapter 1, verse 20, when the king's decree, which he will make, is proclaimed throughout all the empire, for it is great, all wives will honor their husbands, both great and small. When the king's decree, talking about the banishment of the queen, and this is going to set an example, that wives better honor their husbands. And the word for honor there is yaqar.

To treat as something of great value, worthy of respect, something of great price, great intrinsic value, their husbands. This is used in Job 28, verse 10, Psalm 49, verse 12 in the English. Nevertheless, man, though he is in honor, does not remain.

He is like the beasts that perish. It doesn't matter what you accumulate. You can't take it with you.

You know, houses and barns and so on. So, this is what is given to the one with the clouds, like a son of man, coming. When he's brought before the Ancient of Days, he is given this authority.

You know that praise song that Jack Hayford wrote, I think, called Majesty. Majesty, Majesty, Kingdom Authority. Well, Kingdom Authority is exactly what that dominion is.

That's what shaltan is. Kingdom Authority. And he is given yaqar, which is the value that

commands respect as a wife is to give to her husband, as the subjects are to give to a king.

So, shalitan emanates from the ruler out over the empire. You see the direction of it? It goes from him and his rulership extends out. He waves his rod of iron.

Yakar comes back the other way. This is the respect and the obedience and the honor that is due the king. So, he is given this outbound authority and he is given this inbound glory, respect.

You with me so far? What's the third thing that he is given? Dominion, glory and a kingdom. Kingdom, this is the noun form from malak. Melek is the word for king and malak or malaku is the substance.

Look at the order in which they are given. The first thing he is given is this dominion, his outbound authority. The second thing he is given is that inbound glory and respect.

And then, what is he given? The kingdom, the place to reign where all of this is going to function. But the authority comes first. He is the king before he has the kingdom as it were.

And he has the respect of his subjects before they enter in and take up occupancy and dwelling in the kingdom. How is that possible? These people have already lived their lives. They have already acknowledged the Son of God in prospect, the seed of the woman in prospect, the Mashiach, the Anointed One in prospect.

They have already honored Him in their lives and in their obedience, looking for a city whose founder and builder is God, dwelling in tents, waiting for the fulfillment of those promises. They have already developed this attitude. And the Lord Jesus Christ already has authority.

He is the Lamb who is worthy before the seals are ever opened. And so, these things are given to the Son of Man in this order, because that's sort of the order of their existence. The Lord Jesus is the Messiah first.

And then He is recognized as the Messiah second. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, isn't He? That was His destiny and in God's mind outside of time. That's a reality.

So, these things are given in order. Now, why do we care about this? What does it mean for you and me? It's perspective. Every part of Scripture strengthens our souls.

Our biggest problem is getting too caught up in the moment, isn't it? We forget who we are and we forget why we're here. All of our studies in these prophetic books give us perspective. And we remember that this is a momentary light affliction.

It is affliction. And we have a lot of pressure and we have a lot of challenges. But, if we can remember to look at them in the context of God's plan, as it says over in Paul's letters, this momentary light affliction is going to yield for us an eternal weight of glory.

He who endures to the end will be delivered. It is by faith and patience that we inherit the

promises. Here are those promises being fulfilled.

Here is that cloud of saints coming to occupy the kingdom. It's our pattern. It's the Old Testament example.

Well, we have that same thing in spades. This is just the fulfillment for the Old Testament saints. We have an order of magnitude greater potential.

If we can just see it. If we can just remember it. Not be swayed by our culture.

Not be washed aside into the broad road over the cliff, over the waterfall sewer that is most of humanity. But to go that upward way, that narrow path through the straight gate that leads to life, we have to keep focused. We have to remember who we are and why we're here.

These are the realities that tell us those facts. This is the living and powerful word of God that the Holy Spirit uses to motivate us and encourage us and strengthen us and equip us for every good work. Well, we'll pick up and move into chapter 8 next time.

Father, thank you for the privilege of studying your word together. May God the Holy Spirit minister these truths to our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.