

Daniel 06-01-22b

Let's turn in our Bibles now to Daniel chapter 8. In the spirit of prophecy, I said we would be in Daniel chapter 9, but that's yet future. We're in Daniel chapter 8. I've been studying in 9, but I'm still teaching in 8. So, you know, you get in three prophetic books at the same time, you just start living in the future. But we saw previously in Daniel chapter 7, the vision of the beasts that he had.

We've seen how these represent these great kingdoms and the interpretation that was given to him by the one who is standing by there. And I'm looking to where it identifies him. This is the end of the account in verse 28.

As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me. My account has changed, but I kept the matter in my heart. And we left this study last week, recognizing that there are times when the things we learn from the word of God don't leave us with a rosy glow.

The goal of a lot of modern Christian worship is to give everybody a little emotional boost. It's like, I haven't heard much about them lately, but for a while I knew people who were intimately involved with Amway. And Amway is a pyramid distributorship type of thing where they actually have some products that are pretty good.

But the whole idea is you get other people to sell the soap and you become a distributor. And as you move up the pyramid-like chain, the more people who are beneath you, your people go and sign up people who sign up people who sign up people, and all the money flows uphill and pretty soon you're making a big pile of cash and doing nothing more than shipping off a few cases of Amway products. Well, to keep everybody interested and motivated, they would have meetings where all the Amway people would come and they would try to boost their morale and pump them up and talk about success stories and giveaways.

It's kind of like Mary Kay and a lot of other deals where somebody that does well, they give her a pink Cadillac or some other token of achievement and esteem and so on. So it's this big rah-rah rally. Let's all get excited.

This is a common theme. If they want you to buy lottery tickets, they'll show you lottery winners. If they want you to buy publishers, clearing house, sweepstakes, magazines, they'll show you the winners and take the cameras out and show you the woman coming to the door in her bathrobe and you've won and balloons and cars and all that.

Well, it's all a big emotional lift. And that's what a lot of worship has become. The worship is not truly directed toward God.

It is about God with the intention of boosting the person. And in this sense, it has become that false religion that we're studying in Revelation on Friday nights. But Daniel gets the direct revelation of the Word of God and he doesn't come away with this big, he's not walking out

singing a praise song.

He's not all happy and uplifted. He is troubled greatly and his confidence has changed. People can look at his face and say, ooh, Daniel.

I had somebody tell me yesterday morning that I was looking kind of bad. And no, I, I, I admitted it. I'm talking about my roommate who saw me on the webcam and said I looked like a guy that had just murdered somebody and was in flight.

I got a picture that went out over the wire. And I can say that because he's listening. But Daniel says his countenance was changed.

He's troubled and he looks it. People can tell. It wasn't anything the matter with me except lack of coffee.

Anyway, his countenance changed, but he kept the matter in his heart. Now, see, I've lost you already. I haven't even gotten into the chapter.

You can be thinking about the truth and meditating on it and sometimes you're dealing with a troubling situation. Now, why is it troubling? Well, because it speaks of troublesome times. It is the judgment of God.

There is a lot to try to understand. Remember, Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by his dream. And Daniel gave him the interpretation and Nebuchadnezzar was all happy and said, great, I elevate you.

I elevate your friends. Everybody's happy. Let me go look at the plans for my statue.

But he was happy. Daniel is the interpreter of dreams. And when he sees this vision and gets it explained to him by the one standing by in verse 16, that's the one I was looking for earlier, ask him the truth of all this.

He told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things. And interpretation doesn't make Daniel all happy. Daniel doesn't say, well, I think I'll go out and call Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah and we'll have a little party.

He's greatly troubled by these things. And I ask myself, why? We've just seen David comforting and encouraging himself about a very troubling situation by concentrating on the truth of God. Here's Daniel concentrating on the truth of God and he comes away greatly troubled.

And his countenance has changed. But he says, I kept the matter in my heart. As we were talking about on the break, sometimes we need to be troubled.

Sometimes we need to be challenged. We need to have our understanding and our viewpoint stretched. If everything comes easy, if we nail it every time, if we ace every test, if we cruise through with flying colors, we're not learning and we're not growing.

There are times when we need to be stretched beyond ourselves. We need to be unseated. We need to be unsettled a little bit and not become complacent.

And not become, you know, as the Bible says about Israel, says, Jeshurun grew fat and kicked. Just a fat, happy calf out there in the pasture, no problems. Daniel is challenged by this.

He is stretched beyond himself by this. He is the great dream interpreter. And yet, when he gets the interpretation of this dream, it troubles him.

So, I say all of that to say this. When we find ourselves challenged and we find ourselves troubled and we say, wait a minute, I thought I was supposed to have peace. Look and see what is the nature of the disturbance.

Sometimes we lack peace because we're like the wicked and the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. And there is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked. But that's not the only reason to not have peace.

We can also have peace because we are being stretched. We're being given an opportunity to grow and to express faith in a new way. This is like everybody when they were a teenager.

I don't know about the rest of you, but those of us who get very tall, you get those growing pains. You know, they've had TV shows. I think people have almost forgotten what the phrase means.

But growing pains, I had sharp pains in my shins especially when I started getting my height. And I didn't ask for that. I wasn't doing anything to cause it and I couldn't do anything about it.

You just suddenly get these pains in your bones and it's just a part of the growth process. And it shouldn't cause us to question our faith or question our path or question our direction. We should always examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith.

And if we're in the faith, then accept the fact that we're going to be troubled as a part of our growth. You can't grow without being challenged, without being stretched, without having to wrestle with some things and get them figured out. Look at the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you think he had peace in the Garden of Gethsemane? It was the most challenging experience that the Lord Jesus Christ ever faced. And he was not peaceful in the Garden. It's like we talked about.

As a pattern of life, you should not be troubled. As the climate and the enduring environment of your life, you should not be troubled. But there are times when we're going to be troubled.

We care about people. It motivates us to pray. It motivates us to think about the Word of God and to try to apply it.

And so my point is we should not panic. Great men of God have been troubled. Do you think

Abraham was not troubled when he had to march Isaac up the mountain? Do you think Joseph was not troubled as he spent time in prison, wrongly accused? Do you think Moses was not troubled as he went up and down Mount Sinai and saw the difference between God's perfect plan and the imperfect implementation of it down below? Do you think Paul was not troubled over the churches? He said, I bear this great weight.

I pray. I go around. I contest.

I preach. I teach. I argue.

It's not unnatural. There's nothing wrong with being troubled. Okay, well that brings us to chapter 8, the vision of a ram and a goat.

Before we get any further, we already know some things about rams and goats, don't we? There is a distinction made between them in the sacrificial system of Israel, but what do we immediately know about rams and goats as compared, say, to bears, lions, and great horned beasts? What's the immediate difference? Rams and goats are clean animals, aren't they? They are eligible as sacrificial animals. They are mandated as sacrificial animals. Bears, lions, eagles, a lot of these other beasts are unclean animals.

So here, we're going to have this vision of a ram and a goat. In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me. Keep your finger there.

Turn back a page to Daniel 7.1. In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream. There had been exactly two years between chapter 7 and chapter 8. All of this is in the reign of Belshazzar. This is before Daniel chapter 5. Belshazzar, handwriting on the wall, perishes that same night.

Medes and the Persians and all that, that's back in chapter 5. Daniel and the lions in chapter 6, that's all after Belshazzar. Now, in chapter 7 and in chapter 8, these two visions that Daniel had back before the handwriting on the wall, before chapter 5, are inserted. These are the last two chapters in the Aramaic language.

This is a conscious choice to put these here, rather than chronologically in the sequence of the story. In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me, to me Daniel, after the one that appeared to me the first time. He gets that first vision, he's troubled by it, and he doesn't get another blinking thing from God for two solid years.

Two solid years. I always ask myself this question in Ezekiel about the date notices. He will say, in the twelfth year, in the fifth month, or whatever it is, I was by the river Kabar and I got this vision.

And I think, what about all this intervening time? If you're a professional prophet, so to speak, and you get a vision and you communicate it and you tell everybody about it, and then months and months, and then years and years go by, and there's no more vision. And you think, well, I

wonder if that was going to be the last one. And then, ten years down the road, you get another big vision.

And over the course of a lifetime, over the course of a captivity, they're few and far between. Two years elapsed between seven and eight. I ask myself, why? God gives us the truth that we need in its appropriate season.

There's a reason why we're studying the things that we're studying now, and we're seeing the things that we are seeing now. If God wanted us to be studying something else, that's where we would be. All of the events and decisions and things conspire and work together so that we are where we're supposed to be and we hear what we're supposed to hear.

And it's God's timing. Sometimes God's timing is inscrutable. But if we are doing what we're supposed to do, and we're looking toward the Word of God, it is going to be the season and it's going to be the time to learn those things.

So Daniel gets that vision in the first year of the last king of Babylon. Now, two years later, he's getting a second vision. He says in verse 2, I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan the citadel, which is in the province of Elam, and I saw in the vision that I was by the river Ulai.

Once again, having been so recently in Ezekiel, and still in Ezekiel, this sounds a lot like Ezekiel. Daniel finds himself by a river. It's not the river Kabar.

It's the river Ulai. And he is not in Babylon. He is in Shushan.

Now, what do we know about Shushan? Well, this is Susa. In history, it's known as Susa. It's one of the Persian royal cities.

It is 200 miles and some change east of Babylon. And the Ulai here is actually a canal. And 100 years after Daniel, 100 years after Belshazzar, Xerxes is going to build a huge magnificent palace in Susa, in Shushan.

And that is where the book of Esther is going to take place. All of those events in the book of Esther are going to take place 100 years after Daniel in Susa, in Shushan. Nehemiah is going to be King Artaxerxes' cupbearer in that Susa palace.

But these events are well down the road. We are in the year, we're circa 548 or so here. And so Daniel is looking forward.

Now, a lot of critical opinion has been written down by liberal scholars that the book of Daniel was written after the captivity, was written after the events that it purports to prophesy. And I'm not going to go into a big defense of the book of Daniel. Suffice it to say that it was written when the Bible says it was written, when he says, I, Daniel, had this vision.

It's not some fake Daniel. It's not pseudo-Daniel. It's not pseudepigraphical Daniel.

It is Daniel, and these things are future. It is so accurate that people think, well, this had to have been written after the fact. Because in Belshazzar's day, who knew that the Persians were going to be a big power? Well, God knew.

And you're either a Christian or you're not. You either believe the Bible or you don't. If you don't believe the Bible, you have to find a way to explain it.

And so you say, well, obviously prophecy was written after the fact instead of before. My only response to that is, how do you get something like that over? Let's say you're living a couple hundred years before Christ, after the Medes and the Persians, after Alexander the Great. You're in the Roman Empire, and you want to trot out a fresh book.

And you say, well, this is the book of Daniel. How do you overcome the incredulity of your peers? How do you explain the mysterious appearance of this book that purports to have been written before, but isn't actually written until after, and is, in fact, your clever forgery? And what do you have to gain by so doing? There has to be some sort of gain. Are you going to make money publishing a book about your forgery? People have done so.

But in the ancient world, there is no publishing industry. There is no money to be made. What is the motivation for forging Daniel after the fact and claiming that it's before the fact? Are you trying to bring people to God by your big lie? Who's going to be a big liar and say, well, I'll do a big lie, and that will bring people to God? It makes no sense.

But we don't have time to delve into that. But Daniel, much as Ezekiel, and you see very close parallels here to Ezekiel, and you almost get the idea that this picks up where Ezekiel left off. Daniel is transported to Susa, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam.

He saw in the vision, he was by the river Ulai. I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. Why the river? What does a river connote? The old Robert Redford had, didn't he have a movie, A River Runs Through It, or fly fishing or something? I never saw it, but saw the commercials for it.

Rivers, we talk about the river of time. It is sort of a measure of time passing. You watch water flowing down a river.

There's erosion that takes place. There's movement, and rivers speak of the passing of time. You have Pharaoh having his dream about the fat and lean kind, and where are they? They're by the great river.

This is the passage of time, and this is one of the clues that Joseph uses to interpret that dream, that the seven fat kind are seven prosperous years, followed by seven lean years. You have this water flowing behind. This is the passing of time.

You have Ezekiel by the river Kabar, and he has visions that talk about the past or talk about the

future. It's the passage of time. Here, once again, you have this river mentioned.

It doesn't need to be mentioned. It adds nothing to it except that it's an interpretive clue. It tells us about the passage of time.

In this case, it is future time. Standing beside the river was a ram which had two horns. The two horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.

Now, what's interesting about this is the province of Elam is between Babylon and Persia. If you want to look at it today, it's called Khuzestan. It's north of the Persian Gulf, and this is circa 548-547 BC, the third year of Belshazzar.

In that time, it was still part of the Babylonian Empire. It's a Babylonian province of Elam. Prophetically, later on, it is going to be a province of Persia.

In 521, which is like 25 or 30 years after the time of chapter 8, it is going to be rebuilt. Ashurbanipal is going to destroy it. It was destroyed, but it's going to be rebuilt by Darius I, and he's going to fortify it and make it a citadel.

It wasn't a citadel in Daniel's time, but it's going to be a citadel 25 or 30 years hence. Beginning in 521, Elam is a province of the Persian Empire, and Susa is the seat of the Persian Empire. It's going to be the capital.

You find this out from Nehemiah 1.1 and Esther 1.2. The ruins of it are still out there. The vision that we see here is located by a gate that opens toward the waterway, just like you find Ezekiel by the river Khebar. So, standing beside the river, a ram with two horns.

The ram is a clean animal. We've seen it in Ezekiel 34, for example, where both the ram and the goat are mentioned. God says in Ezekiel 34.17, As for you, O my flock, thus says the Lord God, Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats.

Remember that? Elsewhere we have these beasts that are unclean. So, they are not fearful. You don't get the predatory aspect of the bear crunching ribs in its teeth, or the lion, the eagle as a predator and so forth.

You don't see that here. These are more benign. You get the idea that there's not great violence involved in the conquest by the empires represented here.

The ram is, of course, the Medo-Persian empire. Initially, the Medes are dominant, right? Darius is a Mede. He's the guy that initially conquers.

But the Persians come up later, and they become more powerful. It's also interesting that in the Zodiac, in the ancient world, the signs of the Zodiac were associated with nations. And in the signs of the Zodiac, Persia was associated with Ares.

If you know anything about astrology, Ares is the ram. Even the name of the canal here, the

river Ulai, that name Ulai in Aramaic is Aleph, Wau, Lamed, and then Yod. So it's got the guttural, the Aleph, and then W, L, and Y, basically.

Ulai. Well, the word for ram is Aleph, Yod, Lamed. Ayil.

Ayil is also a Hebrew word that means strength. So they're similar, they're related. Persian kings, when they went forth into battle, their little symbol, you know how the Romans had eagles up on top of a pole? Well, you know what the Persian kings had on top of the pole when they went forth to battle? A big golden ram's head.

That was their royal symbol. We know this from Ammianus Marcellinus, who's a 4th century AD historian. That's what's pictured here by the ram.

The ram pushes westward, northward, and southward. This is the expansion and the taking over of the old Babylonian Empire by the Medo-Persian Empire. No animal could withstand him.

No other nation, no other empire could withstand him. Nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great. So, this is the prediction from the standpoint of the end of the Babylonian Empire, of the next empire.

How it's going to come into existence. Two horns, but then the one that comes up last is going to be greater, and that's the Persians, and they expand, and they dominate. Then in verse 5, as I was considering, Daniel says, Then suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground, and this goat had a notable horn between his eyes.

You don't find the goat so often as a symbol of leadership, but goats are aggressive. Goats can be considered fierce. They're more powerful than sheep.

You find this in scripture, like in Isaiah chapter 14, where the goats are making life hard for the sheep. Zechariah chapter 10. Jeremiah chapter 50, in verse 8, you have this reference to going out from the midst of Babylon, going out of the land of Chaldeans, and be like the rams before the flocks.

The strong ones that dominate and do more damage than the flocks. This, of course, represents the Greek Empire. If you remember all of the perversions that characterized the Greeks, you know that the goat is a very apt symbol for them.

The goat and the goat's head have come down even as satanic symbols into modern parlance. It's also interesting that in the signs of the Zodiac, Syria, which becomes the heart of the Greek Empire as it expands, was associated in the Zodiac with Capricorn, which is symbolized by the goat. The goat is also the symbol of the god Amaru.

This flying without touching the ground, this is rapidity of advance. We saw this once before back in the winged leopard of the last chapter, flying quickly. That was also a reference to the

Greek Empire.

So, in the future, and this is almost 200 years into the future, 334 BC, Alexander the Great has this flying conquest and creates the Greek Empire in just three years. He's going to demolish the remnants of the Persian Empire at that time and establish an empire of his own. Now, the notable horn on the goat is Alexander.

He's still notable. That's why they call him Alexander the Great. He came to the ram that had two horns, which I'd seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power.

I saw him confronting the ram. He was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him.

He cast him down to the ground and trampled him, and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand. Therefore, the male goat grew very great, but when he became strong, the large horn was broken. Remember Alexander the Great dies at the age of 28, and in the place of this notable horn, four notable ones come up toward the four winds of heaven.

You remember that when Alexander dies, they say, whose is the kingdom now? And he says, it's for them that can take it. They wind up dividing it between Alexander's four generals, one of whom is Seleucus. And the Seleucids are going to lay claim to this area, which includes Israel, includes Judea.

And from that line, you're going to have Antiochus IV. He is insignificant compared to Alexander. This little horn that comes up doesn't compare to Alexander, but he is going to do a lot of damage.

Antiochus IV was the youngest of several brothers. He had no right to the throne of the Seleucids. He was a hostage in Rome for much of his earlier life.

But when he takes over, he is going to really wreak havoc on Judea. And that's who is being initially pictured here. But we're going to see something very interesting, and it's going to tie in with our other studies.

I saw him out of this, in verse nine, out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. You may remember that in both Hebrew and Aramaic, the word that says toward the east, that is Mizraim. It comes from the verb that means to rise, and it's the direction of the rising of the sun.

And the south is the word Negev, which the desert takes its name from. That's the land of the south of Israel. So to the east, this is Mizraim.

This is the rising of the sun direction, and the south. And this, of course, is where Antiochus expands. Now, this is what's interesting here.

The note, I meant to bring my Schofield Bible down. The Schofield note, for this section of Daniel 8, says that this is the most difficult prophetic passage to interpret in the entire Bible. That's what Schofield said about it.

So, rushing in where angels fear to tread, we're going to interpret it anyway. But it is very tricky. We'll see why, and then we'll see what the solution is here in just the next few minutes, at least the solution I'm going to propose.

So, let's take a look at this. You have this little horn that grows great, expands to the east, expands to the south, and toward the fair, or the pleasant, or the glorious. And this is a veiled reference to Israel itself, which, of course, doesn't really exist in Daniel's day.

It's been trampled, and it's a conquered land. But, it says in verse 11, he even exalted himself as high as the prince of the host. And you see in your New King James, prince is with a capital P. This is the Aramaic word sar, S-A-R, from, you know, you have the word czar in Russia, or, what's our Arabic word related to this as well? The prince of the host.

And this is the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew word sabba, or sabbaoth, we get sabbaoth, the Lord sabbaoth, Jehovah sabbaoth, the Lord of the armies. So, he exalts himself as high as the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of his sanctuary, capital H, was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices, and he cast truth down to the ground.

He did all this and prospered. Now, we need to know a little bit about what Antiochus did, because he is the near-term fulfillment. And it's very clear that this is initially talking about Antiochus IV, also known as Antiochus Epiphanes.

We have coins that come from Antiochus that show his face. He pictures himself as Zeus. It says Antiochus Epiphanes right on it.

And Antiochus came down in 169, 168, 167, depending on who you read, B.C., and devastated Jerusalem. His desecration of the temple, his setting up of some sort of an abomination, statue of Zeus, or whatever it was, in the place of the altar in Jerusalem, instead of killing religious fervor in Judea, did just the reverse. And it is because of the actions of Antiochus IV, Antiochus Epiphanes, coming in and desecrating the temple, this is where you have the rise of the Maccabees.

You have Mattathias, and then you have his son, Judas Maccabeus, and that whole uprising. And there are a couple of spectacular military victories in the years immediately following this desecration in 169, 168, led by Judas Maccabeus, Judas the Hammer. And this is what gave rise to this great zealous political fervor in Israel.

That's the historic and early-term fulfillment of this vision. However, in what sense does Antiochus exalt himself as high as the prince of the host, and in what sense does he take away the daily sacrifice? By the way, this is not the word yom. This is a word that means, it's actually

an adverb, and it means continuous.

It means that which goes on. He takes away the continuous. And this language, because it is prophetic, gets a little bit murky.

He exalts himself, he grows great toward the glorious, toward the pleasant, toward the fair, and that's an adjective. And here we have, he takes away the ongoing, he takes away the enduring, he takes away the perpetual, and it doesn't say the perpetual what. And so people have filled this in and said, well, this is the daily sacrifices, the ongoing sacrifices.

What I would suggest as a possible translation here is, he takes away the ritual. Ritual is the perpetual, ongoing observance of something. And whatever it is that is ongoing is taken away, and it is associated with the place of his sanctuary.

This is not the word for sanctuary, per se. This is a noun taken from kadosh, which means holy, and it's makadosh. And remember, you take a word, you put a name in front of it, and you turn it into a noun.

And this is the place of holiness. It takes this idea of holiness and makes it a substantive. And it is used in the Old Testament in many, many places to talk about the sanctuary.

But it is the place of holiness, and it's got his on the end. So it's the place of his holiness, where there's none good but God, there's none holy but God, so this would be a reference to God's sanctuary. But it's very cryptic, because God's not mentioned elsewhere in the sentence.

But he's going to take away the ritual, and the place is cast down. Now, Antiochus defiled the altar, but he didn't cast down the sanctuary. He didn't cast down the temple, the rebuilt temple, that Nehemiah and Ezra were a part of.

Because of transgression, an army is given over to him to oppose that which continues, and he cast truth down to the ground. This Antiochus thing was very temporary. It lasted less than a year, because you have the Maccabees coming up and pushing back.

Antiochus had other things he had to attend to. He had to leave, and he had to send generals to come down and try to quell the rebellion that resulted from his desecration of the temple. And those generals were defeated for several years.

And all the way up until the death of Antiochus, they never did get a grip on the Jews again. This is the great rebellion of the Maccabees. So this doesn't fit.

It fits up to a point, and then it quits fitting. It quits matching history. And when it says, he exalted himself as high as the prince of the host, that's where it starts to change.

Because you don't have Antiochus setting himself up as an object of worship. He gets busy and goes elsewhere, and a few years later he dies. And so this goes beyond.

This leaves the ground and goes into the future, so to speak. Then Daniel hears a holy one in verse 13 speaking. Another holy one said to certain ones who were speaking, How long will this vision be concerning that which continues and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot? He said to me, For 2,300 days.

Then the sanctuary shall be cleansed. How long is 2,300 days? I put this in my calculator. It's six and one third years.

What does that match? Six years after this episode of the abomination being set up that sparks the Maccabean revolt, Antiochus is dead. Exactly six years later, by the way. This happens in 170-169.

Antiochus IV died in 164-163. So exactly six years later, he dies. But long before that, the sanctuary was cleansed.

So the history doesn't fit. Where are these 6.3 years? What is the abomination that is set up? And what does all of this mean? Well, we can't cover all of it in the minutes that remain to us this morning. But let me give you one suggestion.

There is this great chiastic thing that God always seems to do in so much of human history. Remember the vision that Nebuchadnezzar had. The head of gold.

You've got all of these kingdoms of the earth culminating in the feet of iron mixed with clay. And I've always thought, the feet of iron mixed with clay, well, that's the kingdom of the Antichrist. That's the revived Roman Empire.

It's got those ten toes. But if you think about it, those ten toes are the ten kings that really don't have a kingdom of their own and they give their power to the beast, to the Antichrist. And remember when the great stone that is made without hands smashes that image, it smashes the whole thing.

The whole image sums up the kingdom of the Antichrist, not just the feet. The revived Roman Empire, the iron mixed with clay, and those ten manifestations of it, those ten toes, that's what it all stands on. But the entire image represents the kingdom of the Antichrist.

That's why the whole thing is smashed by the stone cut without hands. So, if you're looking at history and you say, well, here's the Roman Empire and here's the revived Roman Empire, well, what came right before the Roman Empire? It's the Greek Empire, and specifically Antiochus and his devastation of the land and his setting up of this abomination. What comes right after the revived Roman Empire is subsumed into the empire of the Antichrist.

He sets up an abomination of desolation. And you have this nice comparison and symmetry between Antiochus as the prototype and the Antichrist as the antitype. Antichrist, antitype.

And what Antiochus does in a very small and limited way, the Antichrist is going to do in a

grand and substantive way. And he's going to go beyond. And the ultimate fulfillment of this, which skips over both the Roman Empire and the revived Roman Empire, is this view of the Antichrist, who is going to lift himself up against the Prince of the Host.

Who is the Prince of the Host? What are these 2,300 days? We're going to have to save that for next time. But, here is our interpretation application. Daniel has this vision and sees this rise of power on the part of these kingdoms that are represented as animals that ought to be sacrificial, that are clean animals, but they are not sacrifices.

Instead, they are duking it out as powers. The ram is there for a while with his two horns, but then he is superseded by the goat. And you have this degradation of quality as these empires move forward, just as we saw in Nebuchadnezzar's vision.

Gold, silver, bronze, iron. You have the sheep, the ram, which is a more acceptable, and then you have the goat, which is even less acceptable. As you see in the separation of the sheep and goats at the end of the Millennial Kingdom.

And the sheep are going to go into the kingdom of the Father. The goats are going to depart into eternal fire. And so this goat with its notable horn, the Greek Empire is so pictured.

Well, what do we think about all this? Daniel, as a man of God, what is his heart? What is his hope? He wants to see Israel prevail. He wants to see temple worship restored. He wants to see God honored and all of these Gentile powers put to rest.

But what does he keep seeing in these visions? Why is he troubled by them? Why do the wicked prosper? Why do I keep seeing the domination and the conquering of the world by these foreign, godless powers? You've got these beasts violently taking over and the fair, the pleasant, the glorious is trodden underfoot. It's disturbing. God's plan has to work itself out.

We have to wait. Just like we saw in our first session. In Psalm 52, what does David say? I will wait.

I know I'm going to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I know I'm going to be an olive tree. Productive.

Full of that oil of production. Full of fruit. But I've got to wait.

I've got to bide my time and let God work out His plan. That's what we have to do so often. There are things that do not resolve.

There are problems that do not go away. We've got to wait. If we endure, it's faith and patience by which we inherit the promises.

We just have to wait on God's time. It's not always free of trouble. It's not always free of strife.