

Daniel 06-02-05a

Yes, thanks. This is the 5th of February, 2006. We continue this morning our study in the book of Daniel.

Let's take a moment as we continue our worship to go to the Lord in prayer, to recognize, acknowledge, and cultivate the ministry of God's Holy Spirit, without which our time is wasted. Shall we pray? Father, we know that it is not by might nor by power, but by your Spirit that we are able to live a meaningful life. All else is meaningless.

It is mere chaff to be blown away in the wind. Our righteousnesses are unacceptable when they are done in our own strength. Our meditations, our thoughts, our actions, our decisions, are inconsequential and insignificant, and partake of darkness apart from the power of your Spirit and the guidance and the content of your Word.

We are grateful that we can enter into the kingdom of light and dwell therein because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are so thankful for Him, for His example of love and faithfulness in fulfilling every part of your Word at great cost to Himself. The fact that He sits at your right hand even now and intercedes on our behalf pays attention to our spiritual life even when we are not.

We thank you for the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit that guarantees our status and our possession by you until the day of redemption. We are grateful that we have a means of recovery when we fail as we so often do. That you have not only rescued us from an eternal separation and an eternal penalty, but we also have daily deliverance.

We have daily salvation through your mercies, your loving kindness, renewed every morning, always available. We thank you for the nation in which we live. We thank you for our government, the freedom that we enjoy, the opportunity that we have to pursue our lives in accordance with your Word.

We pray for those who have the rule over us. We pray for our president, our senators, our congressmen, the judiciary. We pray for those in the military and those in law enforcement, especially those believers who are seeking to fulfill those duties in the light of your Word.

For those who are unable to attend worship services and enjoy the fellowship of believers of like mind, we pray that you will activate and call to remembrance your Word in their souls in a special way. That they will have fruitful meditation, encouragement, and strengthening of soul from what resides in their souls. That they will be reminded and refreshed in the promises and principles and doctrines that have been incorporated into that treasury in the soul in days gone by.

And that it will be fresh and new and a living and powerful source of comfort and motivation for them. We pray the same for ourselves as we look into the truth of your Word and these

prophetic scriptures in the book of Daniel. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will find us teachable and be able to bring for each one of us a message of motivation and encouragement of guidance and of wisdom for the days that lie ahead of us.

We thank you again for each one who has chosen to assemble here, for the gifts that you have distributed amongst us and the blessing that we receive in fellowship as we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. We ask your blessing on our study. We ask your blessing on each one who is partaking of this food for the soul this morning.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Our scripture reading this morning comes from Deuteronomy chapter 28.

Deuteronomy chapter 28. There is in the Torah, in the law as it was given to Moses, very clear instruction for the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel in the Old Testament becomes a source of observation, interpretation and application for the individual church age believer.

As God dealt with the nation as His people and promised blessing and reward and fulfillment of promise for those who were faithful and obedient, even so it is true for you and for me today and tomorrow and the days that remain to us in this life. To the extent that we have God's words and keep them, we fulfill the first great commandment to love the Lord our God. Jesus made this explicitly clear in the Gospel of John.

The one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one that loves me and I and my Father will come to him and make our home with him. We have discussed many times in past studies the doctrine of the indwelling of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of the indwelling of the Father, the one perpetual indwelling that we have no matter what our status is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Father and the Son in our souls is dependent upon, not salvation, but faithfulness and obedience.

The one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one that loves me. The last great discourse we have from the Lord Jesus Christ is that conversation with Peter. Do you love me? Three times.

If you do, be obedient, fulfill your calling. Peter's calling was to feed the sheep, to feed the lambs. It is thrice asked, it is thrice answered, and he receives a three-fold commission to shepherd the sheep, to care for the lambs.

That was his particular calling. Each of us has a calling. Each of us, no matter your age, no matter your gender, no matter your status in life, there is a calling from God, a specific area of gifting, a specific set of circumstances, a specific set of opportunities that pertain today.

And if we love God, we will look at those opportunities and seek to fulfill them. Sometimes they are ministry opportunities. Sometimes they are fulfilling of responsibilities and tasks.

Sometimes it is to remain faithful under pressure and in the midst of suffering. And in different

phases of our life, at different times, different areas of our life, we have different kinds of calling. But all of us can look at our current hand, current set of cards that we've been dealt, and see where the challenges are, where the opportunities are to express our love for God by being faithful, by being consistent, by being patient, by exercising our option to trust, to live by faith.

And every time we do that, we claim, we lay hold of righteousness by faith. In my own mind, as a result of the first-by-first study that we did in Romans, the theme of which is righteousness by faith, I always think of the future for church-age believers in terms of a field, having a field where... A field has a lot of potential. Now, most of them today would subdivide it and create a housing development or something, turn it into a shopping mall or a strip center.

But in the agricultural economy, having a field gave you great potential because you could plant crops. You could parlay that possession into something that generated income, something that produced fruit, something that would sustain you and your family and your household and even your clan and then provide over and above that that you could sell and gain the ability to purchase other things. You could take a portion of your land and dedicate it to animals and raise livestock.

You could live on it. You could settle your children on it. It gave you great potential.

And we have a hard time visualizing treasure in heaven. Lay up for yourself treasure in heaven. Don't think about things on earth where moth and rust corrupt and thieves break in and steal treasure in heaven.

It's just kind of vague. So in my own mind, I try to make that more definite. And I think, well, just as a picture, as an analogy, if you could imagine that every time we are faithful, every time we claim a promise of God, every time we resist a temptation to fall apart or indulge our sinful nature and there is an occasion to trust and we do it.

We hold our tongue. We rein in our emotions. We avoid our besetting sin or whatever it is.

And that is an expression of our healthy spiritual life. We do that when we would normally have gone the other way. We live the super normal life, the supernatural life.

There is a recording angel up there, seventh level scribe angel, who is doing nothing but keeping books. And there is an estate that is being reserved for us in the eternal future. And he adds an acre.

There is another acre in the field that is going to be potential and going to be opportunity to continue to reflect the glory of God and to serve and to be useful. And every little decision that we make, what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Evening and morning and at noon, I will pray and cry aloud.

It is an expression of faith. I will fear not because God is with me. I will not be dismayed

because God is my God.

He is going to strengthen me. He is going to help me. He is going to uphold me with the right hand of his righteousness.

I am going to claim. I am going to rest. I am going to persist.

I am going to endure. I am not going to unravel. I am not going to give up.

Every time one of those decisions is made, every time faith is expressed, another acre goes into the plantation. And it is permanent. Once you do that, once you add to that treasure in heaven, once we make that decision, it is graven in stone.

It is a part of history. It will never be undone. And the question is, can we create such a pattern that God can add to our treasure in heaven? Not just acres, but wells and valleys and babbling brooks and beautiful scenes, hilltops.

Maybe the location of it moves a little bit closer to the heavenly Jerusalem where you can see the resplendent glory of God emanating from the throne. It is hard to even imagine. 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 that love Him. What is He preparing? I don't know exactly.

I have to use an analogy to try to make it real and to realize that small decisions, small choices about attitude and about approach make an eternal difference. Substitute your own analogy. That one is sort of scriptural.

But a lot of this is based on Scripture and the picture that we have of Israel in the Old Testament. Israel going into the land, the allotments of the land, who gets the great land. The highest and most inspiring example of that to me is Caleb.

Oldest man in Israel when they cross the Jordan. And he's pretty much got the pick of the land. And he comes to Joshua and he says, I'll tell you what I want.

I want this hill where there are still enemies to fight. I want to keep going uphill. I want to keep heading for the high ground.

I am as healthy. I am as strong. I am as able as the day that you and I, Joshua, went in and spied out the land.

It's 40 years later. My eye is undimmed. My natural force is undiminished.

And I'm ready to go in there and whip my weight in enemies. And I want to keep on fighting the battles of the Lord. I don't want to just settle down in my rocking chair and watch other people drive the enemies out of the land.

And what a great example. What a great attitude. And you get the idea that there are going to be challenges.

There are going to be opportunities in the kingdom of the Father beyond the millennium. When human history wraps up and we go into the future, it's going to be like the angelic civilization. There's going to be a lot going on.

And our opportunities to participate, our potential to live a meaningful and serviceable and God-glorifying life in the eternal future, a lot of our opportunities depend on the decisions that we make now. Good decisions open up your options. Bad decisions shut your options down.

If you want to be a cotton chopper for the eternal future, just be a normal Christian in the world today. Be the average Hello God on Sunday and forget about it the other 6.99 days of the week. Well, we find this in the Old Testament picture of the nation of Israel.

In Daniel, we are going to see this morning a great point of view from another elderly man in Israel. And he is going to be thinking about the content of Deuteronomy chapter 28. And this is where our scripture reading comes from this morning.

This, by the way, follows the curses that are pronounced on Mount Ebal in Deuteronomy 27. Curses first, then blessings. Moses commanded the people in 27.11 saying, These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people when you have crossed over the Jordan, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin.

These shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. So, we ask ourselves the question, are we going to be a positive example or a negative example? You can look at people in scripture. Do you want to be Simon Bar-Jonah or do you want to be Simon the Magician? Do you want to be the good Judas of the disciples or the bad Judas of the disciples? Well, in chapter 28, after the Levites speak out these curses and all of the things that can cause the discipline and judgment from God to fall, treating father and mother with contempt, moving his neighbor's landmark, pushing the blind off the road, all of these rather obvious bad things, look at chapter 28.

Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to do what? To observe carefully all his commandments which I command you today. The Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth and all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you because you obey the voice of the Lord your God. Isn't that a great way to put it? These blessings will overtake you because it seems like you're walking away from blessings sometimes when you do the obedient thing, when you do the right thing.

It seems as though, well, that's going to end my chance to get ahead. If I do the right thing here, I'm going to be left behind. I'm going to get the short end of the stick.

Others are going to swarm in ahead of me and get all the good stuff and I'm going to be left with the withered and the moldy and the dregs. Blessing will come upon you and overtake you.

It seems as though you're walking away from it.

It's going to come from behind and tackle you. Blessing will tackle you from behind because you obey the voice of the Lord your God. Remember what Samuel told Saul? I desire mercy more than sacrifice and obedience more than the fat of rams.

Obedience, that's what God values. Faithfulness in the face of what seems like hopeless circumstance. Job says, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

Look at the blessing that tackled Job from behind. Who would have thought in the days that he sat scraping himself with a busted piece of clay pot, listening to his friends ramble on for 40 chapters, that God would bless him twice as much as He had ever had before. Blessed shall you be in the city.

Blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground, and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle, and the offspring of your flocks. This is blessing by association of children for the sake of the parents.

It is blessing on work effort. It is blessing on domestic effort. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

This is what you do with your raw income. You gather things in the basket, you put the dough in the kneading bowl, and whatever you do, the things you manipulate, what you do with your hands, is going to be blessed. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

Coming in and going out, in a national sense, has to do with warfare. If there is a challenge, if there is a threat, when you go out to meet that threat, God will bless your efforts. When you come back in from it, you're going to be blessed.

Have you ever been away on a trip, been gone for several days, couple of weeks or something, you're driving back home and you turn the last corner to where you can see your house, has it ever flashed through your mind, well I wonder if the place burned down while I was away, or the window's broken and everything inside gone. Blessed will be your coming in. You come back and find that God has posted angels around your possessions.

And they're protected. And not even the little guppies in your aquarium died. Everything is just the way you left it.

It's preserved. Blessed will be your going out. Blessed will be your coming in.

The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. They are scattered.

They are dismembered. I recently had the chance to think about history in ancient Britain. You remember in 60 A.D. the Romans had put three or four legions in Britain.

And they were wreaking great havoc and extracting heavy taxes. And the ancient Britons got fed up with it. And some of them tried to agree and go along and pay their heavy taxes and all that.

But the Romans were abrasive, excessively cruel and hard. And so finally the Britons had had enough. And Boudicca, the queen of one of these areas in Britain, gathered up the people after her husband had died.

And she became the queen. And the Romans said, we don't want anybody getting uppity around here. And so they went in and they whipped Boudicca and they did awful things to her ten and twelve year old daughters publicly.

And Boudicca said, that's it. The deal is off. She rallied the troops and they went in and started kicking Romans all over the island there.

And she went down and attacked and sacked and burned the Roman capital in Britain, which is now Colchester. And there was a temple there and the last remnants of the survivors of her sacking of that city all went in the temple. And she besieged it for a couple of days and then set fire to it and burned it down and killed a whole bunch of them inside and burned them all to death.

And she started marching elsewhere and she started marching on what would become London. It was Londinium or something back then. She started heading that way.

And the Roman commander who was there, something Paulinius, was like twelve days away trying to get rid of the Druids. He was off fighting the Druids in some corner of Britain and he heard about all this too late that his capital was sacked and she'd wiped out all these thousands of his troops and his people. So he had to hot foot it back there and of course there was this big bloody battle.

But this great final battle would determine the fate of the island where Sergius Paulinius or whatever his name was, he came back and met Boudicca and Boudicca was marching to finish the job and wipe him out. The Romans were outnumbered 20 to 1. Boudicca had 230,000 or thereabouts troops. And he had like very few.

Divide by 20. I'm an English major. I can't do it in my head.

It was 20 to 1 odds. But the Romans chose the ground. The Romans picked one end of a valley where Boudicca's people would be canalized, would be funneled in.

And the Romans, of course, the Britons were waving axes and hoes and things like that. The one advantage they had was chariots which they were using that the Romans did not. It's interesting to note that at that time the Romans only used chariots for sport.

They didn't use them in battle. This is why Ben-Hur, the chariot race, they didn't go out and use

chariots like armored cavalry as they would later. These days they were strictly for sport.

But the Britons used them for battle. And this is one of the reasons that Boudicca did what she did because the chariots just wrought havoc on the disorganized and unprepared troops that she had fought earlier. But when she met this, the best and the brightest of the troops, they got channeled in and marched in there.

And the Romans went into their wedge formation. It looks like a sawtooth. And they've got their short sword, the machaira, two-edged sword.

They have their shields up there. And by making this sawtooth wedge-shaped front, it channels the enemy in to where they can be attacked on two sides. And the other thing that he had is the Romans had these kind of like an artillery piece except it shoots more of a crossbow bolt.

They had a bunch of these that they shot in there and they had a barbed point. And then each Roman had two javelins with a barbed point. And so as Boudicca's rabble all started funneling in, you think, well, they're just going to walk all over and run me 20 to one.

But they got restricted. And there was only a limited number that could meet the Romans. And when they got into this sawtooth thing, they got attacked from two sides.

Plus, as they approached, when they got maybe 150, 200 yards away, they fired the bolts off the mechanical things and when these barbed things would hit the shields of Boudicca's people, they couldn't pull them out. And it rendered the shield useless. You can't go up there waving a shield and fending off blows when you've got a big old hairy thing hanging out of a javelin or this crossbow bolt.

And so you've got to drop your shield and just go in there and hope for the best. Then as they got closer, maybe 20 yards away, the Roman legionnaires would throw their light javelin. And that wipes out a whole bunch more shields because it penetrates and sticks and they can't pull it out.

The shield is useless. So you've got to drop that. And then when they get about 10 yards away, the Romans throw their heavy javelin.

Two javelins each troop has. And by the time these guys come in, they've got no shields left and then they get funneled in and they just get decimated. Well, you'd have a big pile of bodies there and nobody could fight, so the Romans advanced with this wedge, this sawtooth formation, and they just chewed through Boudicca's people.

And the thing is, Boudicca's people were so sure they were going to win. All their families and everything came and they lined up all the wagons back behind the battlefield and they were all eating popcorn, watching the battle, saying, boy, this is going to be fun. Watch us kill all these Romans.

And so all the wagons and all the families were back behind. Well, when they started the battle, Boudicca's people yelled and screamed and they'd been hyping themselves up and getting drunk and everything the night before to bolster their courage. And then they all go rushing down there.

Well, as they start getting chewed up in the Romans' advance, after about 80,000 of them got killed, they started fleeing. But the problem is, the people in the front couldn't turn around and flee because the people in the back wanted to get into the action. And it was like yelling fire at a theater.

And the people in front were getting crushed. They couldn't even raise their arms to fight because the guys behind were all saying, let me up there. I want to get a Roman before they're all gone.

Well, the people in front were all dying. And it was just mayhem. And they were getting just ground up like hamburger.

And they couldn't even... And when the message finally got to the rear, the guys were saying, hey, we want to flee. And by the time they get to the back, so the back people would turn around and flee. Well, they started fleeing.

And then the Roman cavalry on horses came and flanked them and just totally decimated them. So they tried to flee. But then they ran into their own wagons and all their families back there with the snacks.

And they couldn't get away. And it was a horrible carnage. They came one way and they fled seven ways.

And they were totally decimated. Why? Twenty to one odds. But what did the Romans have? They had a plan.

They had discipline. And they didn't operate on emotion. They had their weapons.

And they knew how to use them. It was their training. It was their discipline.

It was the meticulous planning of this great commander, Paulinus. That's what won the day. The odds, twenty to one, you would think, man, there is no way.

All they have to do is just walk over us. But there is a way that they come at you one way and they flee seven ways. And that's what God promised Israel.

That's why Gideon was able to win a huge battle with 300 men. They will come at you one way and flee before you seven ways. The Lord will command.

By the way, those Britons were all a bunch of pagans. And there were, by this time already, starting to be Christians in the Roman world. This is 60 A.D. thereabouts.

Not to say that God gave the Romans the battle because there were Christians in it. But I think the Britons got decimated because they were a bunch of animists and pagans. Sort of pagans against pagans.

But there was no reason for God to bless their efforts. If St. Patrick had been able to get there and evangelize them all, it might have been a whole different story. The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand.

The Lord will command blessing. God will speak and command blessing. This is the same God that commanded the universe into existence.

That commanded light and commanded the firmament and commanded life to form on this planet. He will command blessing. And it will come just as surely as every other command of God has been fulfilled.

Whether it's your storehouses or all to which you set your hand, He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you. He will bless you. Now this is all future for them.

They're out there stewing around in the wilderness at the base of Mount Sinai. They haven't even seen the land yet. But God is giving them this promise.

Do they believe it or do they not? The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself just as He has sworn to you if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways. If. It's a conditional promise.

Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord and they shall be afraid of you. They will respect you. And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods in the fruit of your body and the increase of your livestock and the produce of your ground in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to you.

The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail.

You shall be above only and not be beneath if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today and are careful to observe them. So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day to the right or the left to go after other gods to serve them, to succumb to the enticements of the harlot, the promise, the empty promise of false systems of faith, false religion, false philosophy, false means of getting ahead, power of positive thinking, win friends and influence people, etc. Verse 15 But it shall come to pass if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.

Cursed shall you be in the city. Cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket

and your kneading bowl.

Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. Cursed shall you be when you come in. Cursed shall you be when you go out.

The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly. This is suddenly in Hebrew. Perish suddenly.

Because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken me. The Lord will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, with mildew." With mildew? Oh, man.

"...they shall pursue you until you perish." Mildew will pursue you? I can't think. I would rather be scorched and hacked with a sword than have mildew cling to me and ultimately kill me. Can you imagine death by mildew? Death by rot? What would you call that? Fungicide? Homicide by fungi? "...your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze and the earth which is under you shall be iron." Talk about being between a rock and a hard place.

You're going to be between iron and bronze. Who in their right mind, hearing the Lord God Himself speak these words, would do anything other than say, the choice seems clear. Do I want to be blessed and prosperous and fulfilled and have a bright future and have everything I do charmed and golden and blessed? Or do I want to be ground into powder and disappear in a black cloud of mildew spores? Why would anyone not simply obey the Lord? It is the path of peace.

It is the life of blessing. It is the life of fulfillment. It is the life that takes you beyond the setting of the sun and partakes of the eternal and the divine.

Who in their right mind would not pursue this? And yet, look at the history of the nation of Israel. We're going to see the results and we're going to see Daniel reviewing that history when we get into chapter 9 this morning. The Lord will make the plague cling to you.

That all by itself. The plague will cling to you. No matter what you do, you wiggle, you squirm, you shower, you change, you displace yourself, you remove to another location.

And every time you look around, there's the plague. It's just stuck to you. It's like a spot of leprosy that you can't heal.

You can't get rid of. The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. I didn't read verse 24.

The Lord will change the rain of your land to powder and dust. Black cloud comes up over the horizon. You think, oh great, we're finally going to get some rain.

The drought is over. But it's a dust storm. It's a sand storm.

It's volcanic ash dropping out of the sky instead of water. From the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. By the way, you will also note that nearly every one of these plagues is manifest in the 70th week, the last half of the 70th week of the annual, on the earth in general.

Look at the description. Nearly every one of these things is detailed in the end times. The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies.

You shall go out one way against them and you will flee seven ways before them. You shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. You're just going to be an annoyance.

They're going to look at you and say, there's trouble. We've got to do something about that. Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth and no one shall frighten them away.

The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab and with the itch from which you cannot be healed. The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart and you shall grope at noonday as a blind man gropes in darkness. You shall not prosper in your ways.

You shall only be oppressed and plundered continually and no one shall save you. You shall betroth a wife. Another man will lie with her.

You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You'll plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it.

Your donkey will be violently taken away from before you and shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies and you shall have no one to rescue them. Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people.

Your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all the day long. There shall be no strength in your hand. A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.

So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. The Lord will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. By the way, you can see why Job's friends said some of the things that they said about Job.

Conclusions that they drew. Assumptions that they made. The Lord will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known.

Jehoiachin, Zedekiah. You shall plant vineyards and tend them but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes. Worms shall eat them.

You shall have olive trees throughout your territory but you will not anoint yourself with the oil. The olives will drop off. You will beget sons and daughters but they shall not be yours.

They shall go into captivity. Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land. The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you and you shall come down lower and lower.

He shall lend to you but you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head. You shall be the tail.

Moreover, all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed. Why? Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded you. And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder and on your descendants.

Laolam. Unto the horizon. You won't even see hope on the horizon.

Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart for the abundance of everything. Therefore, you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness and in need of everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you.

The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar from the end of the earth as swift as the eagle flies. Remember the picture we had of Greece and Daniel coming like an eagle flying across the ground? A nation whose language you will not understand. A nation of fierce countenance which does not respect the elderly or show favor to the young.

They will eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land until you are destroyed. They shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks until they have destroyed you. How long is this going to go on? They will besiege you at your gates until your high and fortified walls in which you trust come down throughout all your land.

That deception represented by the harlot in Revelation, this supposedly great fortified wall that they trust in comes down. You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the Lord your God has given you in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemies shall distress you. You will become essentially cannibals.

You will feed off the people in your own family. The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, toward the rest of his children when he leaves behind. He will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat because he has nothing left in the siege.

Desperate straits in which your enemy will distress you at all your gates. The tender and delicate woman among you who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity will refuse to the husband of her bosom and to the

son and her daughter." And he goes on to talk about gross things. If you do not, verse 58, carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book that you may fear this glorious and awesome name the Lord your God.

The Lord will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary, great and prolonged plagues, serious and prolonged sicknesses. Well, what is the point here? This is exactly what happened. Despite this warning, despite the reading of this law, despite the clear choice that God set before Israel at Sinai, incredibly, unimaginably, they chose another way.

And it's just as incredible and just as unimaginable when we as believers today don't dedicate ourselves to fulfilling those two great commandments that transcend the dispensations love the Lord your God, love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets are summed up in those. The Christian life is summed up in those.

Faith, hope and love, the greatest of these is love because when love is in evidence, you are walking the walk of faith and you are motivated by hope. That's where love comes from. That's that love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by God the Holy Spirit, Romans 5.5. That's when we have the motivation and the perception and the viewpoint to endure and to persevere.

Well, Daniel has seen the fulfillment of all of these promises of God and he's going to talk about it in chapter 9 and that's where we will resume when we come back from our break.