

Daniel 06-02-19a

This is Sunday, the 19th of February, 2006. As we continue our worship this morning, we anticipate our study in the book of Daniel, picking up in chapter 9, in one of the most famous passages in all of scripture, the notorious, well-known, oft-excavated section on the 70 weeks determined upon Israel. As we approach this study, we, having just gone through our memory verses, and reminded ourselves that we are to be diligent, to rightly divide the word of truth, and be workmen who need not to be ashamed.

Of course, if you've ever seen the AWANA group in a Baptist church or other places, you know that AWANA stands for, in some way, I can't remember exactly how that goes, but somewhere the W and the A stand for workmen that are not ashamed. I can't remember how that goes, but the W and the N and the A, I can't remember it either, but it's a worthy goal, because scripture would not talk about the possibility of being ashamed if it wasn't there. It is not often that you hear in modern Christian preaching and teaching the necessity to be diligent and to be patient and to endure, to recognize God's grace for cleansing and restoration when we fail, so that we can become mature, so that we can be complete, perfect, thoroughly furnished for all good works.

That's our goal. And it's not just in this life, it's not just to be an evangelistic testimony, it is the basis upon which God will decide who's going to ride the white horses, wearing the white robes, and who's going to be in the rear with the gear. And we, having been saved by the love and the work and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, do not want to be dismal failures in this life.

We want to reflect His glory, we want to follow in His steps, we want to take up our cross, deny ourselves, and follow Him. This is the way to do it. We study the Word of God, we hide it in our hearts, so that we can learn not to sin, so that we have the power not to sin, and that we have light on our path to see the way that we should go.

All of that from our memory verses this morning. So, there's no more important activity that we engage in than the study of the Word of God, but it does not end there, and our study is not our spiritual life. Our study is necessary to our spiritual life, but it is the meditation that you and I engage in all the times and places when we're not in Bible class.

It is the conditioning of our minds, the disciplining of our thoughts, taking thoughts captive for Christ, making decisions, executing actions, by faith, that's the whole book of Romans. Sixteen chapters of Romans are all about what you do when you're not in Bible class. Righteousness by faith.

Abraham believed God, it was credited to him for righteousness. That's our goal, and it's the opportunity that we have because of Bible study, because of learning the Scriptures. So, recognizing that, we understand that God has not left us orphans with the removal of the Lord

Jesus Christ from the earth.

We have the Holy Spirit, he enables us to learn, he helps us to remember, he helps us to understand, to see the application of God's Word to our life, and then he is with us, and when people talk about being controlled by the Spirit, it isn't control at all, it's advice, it is counsel, it is guidance that we have to act upon, we have to seize it, we have to make it our own and put it into practice, hour by hour, day by day. And of course it's a lifelong challenge, and what a great opportunity. It's a challenge we will not have once the Lord Jesus comes back.

We won't be in a body of sin, we won't be in a fallen world, we won't be afflicted by the devil and his devices. We will only have that opportunity here and now. And that's the value of our study, it's the value of the Word of God in our souls, it enables us to put on the full armor of God.

Well, a little mini-sermon before we ever even get to the prayer, but we have to ensure that we know who we are and why we're here, and how important God's grace is. God has given us the Word, God has given us the Spirit, we don't take any credit to ourselves. When we wrap ourselves in those white robes, Lord willing, and sit on those white horses, it will not be by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to God's mercy, where he delivers us, not only from the lake of fire, but also from the sin of our condition, the sin of this world, the sin and evil put forth and encouraged by Satan.

Deliverance is all of God, our righteousness is all of grace, and our opportunity and the extent to which we reflect God's glory is exactly that. It is all of God's grace. We recognize that as we go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, what a blessing and a privilege it is to relieve ourselves of the burdens of daily life, to set them aside, to gather together with believers of like mind, to push aside and away all of the distractions and the cares of this life, and refresh ourselves as if at an oasis in your word. We thank you for the ministry of your Holy Spirit, that he is with us every moment, every hour, that he is there to comfort and encourage and minister your word to our souls. We pray that he will find us teachable and impressionable with the truths of your word, that we will find in these scriptures not only an understanding of your larger plan for history, but also for our individual sojourn in this life.

We pray for those that have the rule over us. We pray for President Bush, for his cabinet and staff, for those in the Congress and those in the judiciary, for those in the military and in law enforcement, all of those, especially of the household of faith, who are seeking to fulfill their duties and execute their responsibilities in the light of your word and with the goal of glorifying you. We pray a special blessing on those who cannot assemble and do not have the opportunity to study because of those duties, that you will enliven and refresh the word that is already stored in their souls, that it will be renewed and refreshed to their understanding and will be a source of comfort and encouragement, challenge and blessing on this day.

We ask your blessing on us as we study. In the name of the Lord Jesus we pray. Amen.

As I said, we are in Daniel chapter 9. We pick up this morning in verse 24. Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Well, that verse all by itself is the basis for countless hours of study, countless books, countless articles, countless debates.

And so we begin. Let's take a look at it first in the Hebrew. The very first word requires interpretation.

Shavuim. S-H-A-V-U-I-M. Shavuim.

Shavuim. Shavim. Seventy sevens.

The second word is from the very same root. It is S-H-I-V-I-M. Shavuim.

Shavim. Shavuim. Seventy weeks.

Seventy sevens, literally. Well, seventy sevens. It doesn't say years, days, weeks, hours, months.

It just says seventy sevens are determined. And this is Nektak. Nektak.

N-E-C-H-T-A-K. Nektak. That's all we need.

three Hebrew words will occupy us for a goodly portion of the next half hour. Shavuim, Shavim, Nektak. This, in your English, 70 weeks are determined.

The verb here, Nektak, is from Katak, Katak, C-H-A-T-A-K. It is only found here in the entire Bible. We have lots of decrees, we have lots of determination, we have lots of command and so on from God, but we do not have this verb used anywhere else in the Word of God.

Katak. And it is in the Niphal stem, it has an N in the front, and that is the sign of the passive voice. So these weeks are not determining something, they are determined.

This root is found later in Rabbinic Hebrew, and this is how we know what it means. The Rabbis used it later on. And it means to cut, literally.

It means to cut. And it has the idea of marking something out. You cut a board, you cut it to length, you cut it to fit.

You have a rod that you want to be, maybe you want a walking staff, and so you cut it to fit. You chop it, you mark it out. You are going to plant a garden, and so you cut the ground so that you can plant seeds in it.

By your action, with a sharp implement, you put something into use. That is the basic idea here. To determine, decree, settle, or mark out.

Various English translations have used those words for this verb. Seventy-sevens are marked out for your people and for your holy city. Daniel is a Jew.

Daniel is a Hebrew. Daniel is an Israelite. He is a citizen of the southern kingdom of Judah.

So when it says your people, this is Israel. These seventy weeks apply to Israel, the people of God, the same ones he has been dealing with ever since Abraham, and more specifically with Moses coming out of Egypt in terms of a nation. For the people and your holy city.

That can only be one city on the whole planet, Jerusalem. Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city. Then we have six purposes for these seventy weeks.

There are six reasons that these seventy weeks have been determined. Number one, to finish transgression. Number two, to make an end of sins.

Number three, to make reconciliation for iniquity. Number four, to bring in everlasting righteousness. Number five, to seal up vision and prophecy.

Number six, to anoint the most holy. Now, there are many interpretations of these seventy weeks. Historically, the interpretation of times and the setting of dates based on these seventy weeks has been fraught with failure.

Probably the most famous and gigantic and glaring failure is that of the Seventh-day Adventists. It's not brought to the fore much anymore, but the Seventh-day Adventists were huge on this in the 19th century. There was a man named Leroy Edwin Froome, who was a big Seventh-day Adventist, and he wrote this magnum opus, four thousand page history of interpretation of prophecy and so on.

It was called The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers. You don't find it on most shelves, four thousand pages, but it was published back in the 19th, well actually that thing has been published in the 20th century. This was published back in the 1950s.

And in this magnum opus, he reviews the history of prophecy all the way up until the 19th century, and then he sort of stops. And the reason he stops is because he's a Seventh-day Adventist, and the Seventh-day Adventists had a huge embarrassing failure in the 19th century. How did this come about? They were looking at Daniel's seventy weeks, that we are about to look at.

And what I want to do is sort of talk about how not to interpret this passage. Seventh-day Adventism looked at this, and it was not original to them, but they swallowed it hook, line, and sinker. They took it over, appropriated it, made it their own.

You had the Millerites, if you've ever heard of them, William Miller, back in 1843. He said Jesus would come back in 1843. And when he didn't come back in 1843, he revisited his calculations and said, oops, I see where my mistake was.

It should be 1844. And Fromm addresses this in his treatment, and he says, this is the bitter disappointment. But how did this come about? How did Miller and others decide that Jesus was going to be back in the 1840s? Well, this was the year-day theory.

And to make a long story short, if you do the math, these people said, well, prophetic time is a day for a year. So if you calculate the number of days in the 70 weeks of years, and add them all together, why they end in the 1840s. They get this from passages like Numbers chapter 14, verse 34, where God tells Israel, according to the number of days in which you spied out the land, remember when Joshua and Caleb and the other 10 went in? According to the number of days in which you spied out the land, 40 days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year.

Namely, 40 years, and you shall know my rejection. So God said, for every day that you were in the land and you didn't decide to come in, it's going to be a year of discipline. And they said, well, now see, the Bible sets up this equivalence of a day to a year.

They went to our recent study in Ezekiel chapter 4, verse 6. Ezekiel, lay on your side, lay on your right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days. I have laid on you a day for each year. Remember that? He laid on his left side for the house of Israel, laid on his right side for the house of Judah, and it was one day on his side for every year of their malfeasance.

So they said, see, the Bible sets this up. And this is an easy thing to do, and you can go in and say, but notice in both of those passages that it makes clear that the days are days and the years are years. It doesn't say you spied out the land for 40 years.

It doesn't say you're going to wander in the wilderness for 40 days. Right? It's very specific and clear, and it says you are going to represent a year by a day, or you are going to be disciplined one year for every day. But they are very separate and distinct.

And so you can see already that there's a little bit of a hermeneutical problem. Hermeneutics is the science, the art and science of textual criticism of interpretation. It includes textual criticism and moves on to applying all of the various canons and rules that help us to not make mistakes like this.

So the day-year people, the year-day theory says, well, these 70 weeks of years are actually going to be computed in days. So Fromm says when the Millerites put this up and they said, well, it devolves upon you, our opponents, to disprove the year-day theory. And so they basically said, if you don't agree with our understanding, then Christianity is set adrift.

It's our understanding or no understanding. And this is a dangerous position to take because the timing of the return of the Lord Jesus, as interesting as it is, is not a major doctrine of the Christian faith. The timing of the rapture is not, now listen carefully to what I'm saying, the timing of the return, the timing of the rapture is not a major Christian doctrine.

The return certainly is, the rapture certainly is, but when it is going to take place, that is not a major tenet of Christianity. It is nothing to divide, to break fellowship over, to get unduly

concerned about. We try to understand the times, we try to discern the times, as Jesus suggested to the disciples, but it doesn't constitute anything to lose sleep over, to break fellowship over, to get discouraged and depressed over, if you think you have it figured out and it turns out to be wrong.

Well, that is an interpretation, there's nothing wrong with scripture, it's our understanding of scripture and that can be fraught with problems. Now, why am I belaboring this? Many Christians have an understanding of things in the word of God. There are Christians who go to Jesus' words to the disciples, when he said, whatsoever you ask for in my name, it will be done for you, and they take that to the bank, and they pray for something, I need a new dryer, I need a new car, I need a new house, I need a different job, and they pray and that prayer does not come to pass, it is not fulfilled in the affirmative, and they get discouraged and they say, well, the bible is just not true.

And you see the fallacy in that, it is their understanding of the word of God that is faulty. Now, I'm about to say something that may shock some of you, let's think about Genesis, chapter 1, and the creation of the earth in seven days, I have always understood that to be seven literal days, evening and the morning, seems pretty clear to me. Science continues to dig in the earth and find evidence that strongly suggests that not only this planet, but life on this planet is much older than 6,000 years.

Now, suppose that we have understood Genesis, chapter 1 incorrectly, and it would be an easy thing to do. Suppose, for example, that there is another clock, that there is another calendar, that God marks time in heaven, God's got a clock on his wall, God's got a calendar on his desk, and suppose that Genesis, chapter 1 is giving the history of the creation of the world, and or the universe, depending on how you read it. Now, this is a hypothetical, I'm not saying that I'm throwing over our understanding of Genesis, chapter 1. I'm saying, hypothetically speaking, suppose the reason there is this disparity between what science confirms by multiple methods, radiocarbon dating, isotopes, and paleontology, and the rate of formation of sedimentary layers, and how long it takes for various things to happen, and you go down in these old, old basalts, and so on, and you find these microscopic forms of life, and it's pretty difficult to explain by the flood.

The objective observer will say, there is some difficulty in reconciling science and Genesis, chapter 1. It is difficult, and I will tell you, as a guy who is very familiar with science, and very familiar with the Bible, it is difficult to reconcile the two, to a six-day creation, especially if you're a young earth creationist, and you think God created the heavens and the earth on day one. That is impossible. I'm just, sorry, I'm here to tell you, that's impossible.

You cannot, biblically, you can't even be a young earth creationist. But, people have a lot of trouble with science and Genesis, chapter 1, and believe me, I understand it. Now, suppose science confirms beyond all shadow of a doubt that life on this planet is older than what we understand it to be from the Bible, because we understand Adam being created three or four

days after life forms, right? Two or three days after life forms, literal 24-hour days, and yet, if it can be demonstrated that life on this planet goes back hundreds of thousands of years, before man appears, and it's just beyond any reasonable doubt, well, you either have to stick your head in the sand and ignore science, and just say, well, I don't know, but it's the Bible or nothing, or look at the word of God and say, perhaps my understanding of scripture is faulty, because the Bible also tells us God is the author of creation, and what may be known of God is manifest in creation, Romans chapter 1, right? All I'm saying is this, creation informs us about God.

The Bible informs us about God. It's from the same source. God is the author of creation, and God is the author of scripture, and the two, rightly understood, do not conflict.

They do not conflict. We cannot be dogmatic about interpretation. We can be dogmatic about fundamental truths.

Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus died on the cross for my sins. He is coming back for me, and I'm going to live forever.

There is no interpretive cloud around those issues, and those are basic fundamental tenets of the Christian faith. Now, how long ago God put this planet and its life together? Is that a basic fundamental tenet of the Christian faith? No, it is not. How much time does the Apostle Paul spend on the timing of creation? Zero.

He never mentions it. Why? It's not an important or fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. So, why would someone spend all of their time trying to disprove the Bible and undermine and erode away Christianity using science to talk about Genesis chapter 1? It's satanic.

Satan is trying to take a minor, unimportant understanding and lever over your faith in the entire word of God. It is not a major thing. So, I'm going to repeat something that my pastor taught me when I was young, that I have valued and applied and been benefited and blessed by all my life.

We are to be inflexible about essentials. There is no flexibility on essentials. Homosexuality is evil.

That is an essential. It attacks the very fabric of divine establishment, marriage, family, and nation, are all undermined and riddled with the cancer of perversion. Just as pedophilia, pornography, and a lot of other things attack, undermine, erode, and rot the fabric of divine establishment in marriage, family, and nation.

To some extent, even personal volition. Those are the four great divine establishments. You have free will, marriage, family, and the nation.

Those are the four. To the extent that people come under bondage, under slavery, under control of things such as this, those institutions are attacked. Now, whether looking backward

or looking forward, setting dates in the future or determining dates in the past, this is not an essential.

It is non-essential. In your daily life today, when we pack up, fold our Bibles, and go back to what we are doing here, does it matter if it was 6,000 years ago, or 6 million years ago, or 6 billion years ago that God created this earth in terms of how we live by faith and try to reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ? It matters not. If it was important, God would give us irrefutable, undeniable statements in Scripture.

Scripture is concerned with telling us who created the cosmos, not when. The Bible never makes a statement about when God created the heavens and the earth. It gives a time period in which He did it.

I'll tell you something very interesting. I've read a book. I try to keep myself up to date and informed.

Just to avoid totally shocking you, and I'll keep this brief, if you take Einstein's equations about relativity and about time, and you go to the point of the Big Bang, which I believe happened. I think there was a Big Bang. I think when God said, let there be, there was a Big Bang.

But, you can actually calculate, if you have a watch and a calendar, and you're standing outside the Big Bang, and there is an expansion that takes place from the point of that initial coming into being, and you're standing outside it. If you had a clock that runs at the speed that our clock runs now, and a calendar that moves forward at the speed based on our solar and lunar movements, in other words, you had some independent timekeeping equipment with you, and you were outside the universe at its inception. There is an exponential slowing of time.

And to just give you a very rough idea, what would be one day for you would be several billion years in this expanding universe. It's like having your VCR on fast forward. Your second day would mark off a much smaller period of time.

Your third day would mark off a much smaller. It's getting exponentially, the clock in this expanding universe, as it slows down and cools, is catching up to your clock. It's slowing down, so to speak.

If God has an arena full of angels, and they are keeping time in heaven, you can easily have a six day creation week that corresponds to the almost exactly 14 odd billion years of universal history as we know it. One of these days I may give you a more detailed coverage of that. But it's very interesting that the correspondence to the beginning and ending of those days is very like the understanding that science has arrived at in terms of when did the earth cool? When did life first come into existence? And the types of life, when they appeared, and where they come up in the fossil and paleontological record.

I am still a six day literal creation person for the time being. But what I'm saying is this is a non-essential. And I am flexible.

I may come to discover from observing God's revelation in creation and God's revelation in his word that I've had a faulty understanding. How many faulty understandings have we improved in the course of our ten years of studying together as a church? We have come to a better understanding of a lot of things in scripture, have we not? And there's no sacred cow about six days of creation. It's a non-essential.

And our understanding of that may change. Our understanding of the word of God in terms of the Lord Jesus Christ and his deity and his work on the cross is never going to change. That's an essential.

It's a fundamental. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. But if we're up there building second and third stories and bay windows and dormers and overhangs and attics and so on, well we may have gotten it wrong and have to go back and revisit it.

So don't panic and don't clutch your chest and have a cardiac if it turns out that we in some non-essential area like timing turn out to have misunderstood or as time goes on to improve our understanding in a better way. It's not the end of the world. Daniel's 70 weeks, similarly many believers down through history have thought that the end was near because they've looked at scripture and they've construed it and it's always exciting to think I am living in the end times.

There may be another several thousand years of human history before the Lord Jesus comes back. I don't know. It's a non-essential.

And anytime you come to the 70 weeks, believers for the last 2,000 years, 2,500 years have come to this passage and tried to figure out well now what does this mean to me? Where am I? And it's a valid question to ask. It's a valid undertaking to determine. But if we get it wrong, it is not a fatal flaw to belief in God or belief in the word of God.

It just means we're amateurs in interpretation and we are fallible. The word of God is infallible, but those who try to interpret it are fallible. The word of God is inspired.

The interpreter is not inspired. It is only to the extent that two things are true. First of all, are we asking and seeking and knocking? And secondly, how important is it that we have that understanding? Why do you think God has not intervened when so many people have gotten it wrong? I pulled up a website earlier this week that details all of the apocalyptic doomsayers in the last 2,000 years who believed that Jesus was going to come back in 600 A.D., 1,000 A.D. There was a huge, you remember Y2K? Well, Y1K was similarly chaotic and everybody thought the world was going to end at Y1K.

And down through history, people have used numbers in scripture and used passages like this to believe that the end was near, especially in dire times. In both World War I and World War II, there were huge numbers of European and American Christians who believed they were in the end times and that Jesus would be back at any moment. 1840s, 1850s, 1860s, people thought,

look at the upheaval, look at the chaos, look at the latter days, men are lovers of themselves, it has ever been thus.

So, we are going to look at this and we are going to find a time that is conveniently close to our age. But, we might be wrong. And looking at the history of the last 2,000 years, there have been more people wrong than right.

But, it is a non-essential line. I just want to emphasize that for purposes of application, remember, there are going to be times in other areas, there are going to be times when we pray for things and we want to believe that God is going to answer that prayer. We might go to a scripture that says, train up a child in the way that he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

And, we may have a child that goes totally ballistic, spirals out of control like a one fin rocket. And, we go back and start to question our entire system of faith because this one specific interpretation and application that we have made does not seem to be panning out. That is a mistake.

Don't let Satan stick a crowbar into your soul and pry your armor off because of a faulty understanding like that. Don't let outsiders call into question your faith and cause you to question your own faith by pointing out the errors in interpretation and the errors in understanding that various Christians have in various areas. We have a huge number of Christians that are all off trying to evangelize the world and they are screwy.

There are huge numbers of people who have got the word of knowledge and positive thinking and claiming by faith and planting the seed and all this other prosperity gospel nonsense. Be inflexible about the essentials and be flexible on the non-essentials. Things that the word of God doesn't spend much time on, we shouldn't spend much time on.

What is the bulk? What is the weight? What is the force of the 66 books of the Bible? Is it on when God created the heavens and the earth or when he created man or when he created the animals? Is that what it dwells on? Absolutely not. It is the problem in our soul. It is the solution for the problem in our soul.

It is the opportunities and the potentials that are available to us because God can and has solved the problem in our soul. And that affects the material of our life day by day by day. That's what gives us power to be better than we are, to be more faithful, to be more obedient, to be more Christ-like.

That is a feat of creation that surpasses putting this planet into place. If any man be in Christ, he is what? A new creation. You want to see creation take place? You want to find out when it is and how it looks? Let God make us a new creation.

You want the Lord Jesus to come back and fix things on earth? He's got a temple and he's got territory right here in our own soul. Let the Lord Jesus Christ demonstrate his ruling authority

and his power and his glory and his majesty in the real estate that we control in our own soul right now. We don't have to wait for the rapture or the second advent.

The Lord Jesus Christ can bless us with kingdom blessings right now, right where we sit in our fallen world. That is a terrific, supernatural feat for people to worry about the first chapter of the Bible, or the last book of the Bible, is to miss everything that the Bible is trying to say about God and about the Lord Jesus Christ. It is majoring in a minor.

It is focusing on the non-essentials. And that's the danger of even coming to a passage like Daniel's 70 weeks. Everybody wants to figure out.

Everybody wants to hash over the history and hash over the timing. Let's count days and let's multiply by 365 and divide by 360. Let's get this and let's get that and let's get the other and figure it all out.

And people will say, well you know, if there's any part of this that's wrong, then the Bible is not inerrant and your whole faith is a fraud. If I can find one mistake in the Bible, then your whole faith is goofy. Well, go to those same people and put the shoe on the other foot and say, so are you saying that if I find one mistake in science, then all science is bogus? If I can find Piltdown Man, then all paleontology is bogus? If I can find one pig's tooth that's been mistaken for a hominid fossil in a missing link, then your whole thing comes down like a house of cards? If I can find one faulty carbon date, if I can find one faulty identification of a fossil, then your whole, obviously not.

It just means somebody made a mistake, somebody misunderstood the evidence. It doesn't bring the whole system crashing down. And anybody who falsifies or seems to falsify or seems to find a problem with our understanding in some non-essential area of scripture is like trying to pry this house off its foundation with a toothpick.

I mean, it's okay, somebody didn't understand that correctly. Well, get over it. It doesn't move the house.

It doesn't change the essentials of God in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, and the power of His Spirit working in us to transform us by the renewing of our minds and to enable us to be something that we're not and to partake of eternal things in this temporal life. That's the important thing to remember. No matter what the doctrine is, no matter what the Bible understanding is, we're always going to have an understanding that's a little off somewhere.

And that's why we are students of God's Word and we are diligent. We study to show ourselves approved unto God. We are workmen who don't want to be ashamed.

And workmen are doing work and building something that is not already in existence. So, that is my caveat and that is my exhortation based on this passage because people have fallen on their sword over Daniel chapter 9. People have fallen on their sword over the book of Revelation or the book of Ezekiel or the book of Isaiah in making an interpretation and saying,

my faith rises and falls on this understanding. And huge numbers of disillusioned people were wandering around 150 years ago because they had been told and they believed that Jesus would be back in 1844 and he did not come.

I promise you, he didn't come. He has not come till yet. And this goes all the way back to the days of the Thessalonians when Paul said, don't be knocked off your foundation as though a word or a letter from us had come saying the day of the Lord is at hand.

That day will not come until certain other things happen. Comfort yourselves with these words. Don't be destabilized by a faulty interpretation of the Word of God.

We can do it to ourselves. Others can try to do it to us. Don't let it happen.

There are essentials of the faith that never change. That's the foundation that no other man can lay but Christ. And anytime you get disturbed or confused on some non-essential, go back to Christ.

Go back to the Lord Jesus. Go back to the hope and the faith and the love that define the Christian life. That's what counts.

Okay, well this is a good place to pause and take our break. When we come back, we will delve in like any other good student of prophecy and see what Daniel has to say in chapter 9.