

Daniel 06-04-23b

Let's resume our study now in Daniel chapter 11. We left off in verse 11, having noted the fidelity with which Gabriel predicts to Daniel the future course of events. And we asked ourselves a couple of questions just before the break.

Why is Gabriel sent by God to Daniel, specifically with this geopolitical, military, world event information that conspicuously leaves out one of the greatest threats to the existence of the Jewish people that has ever occurred, the plot by Haman and the decree that went forth under Ahasuerus' authority to wipe out everyone Jewish back in the 470s BC. It's glossed over without a mention in this survey of future history. And I think it is, to me at least, it seems notable by its absence.

And it stimulates us to ask the question, what is the purpose of this communication? It's obviously not to steal yourself for potential future threats to your existence because they're not even mentioned here. One of the greatest that ever was. And as I said before the break, and was helpfully corrected, there was a feast that celebrated this and is celebrated down to the present day.

The Feast of Purim commemorates the deliverance of the Jews by God through Esther and Mordecai on that occasion. It was a big deal to have Hanukkah on the brain because I went back and read 1st and 2nd Maccabees pretty much in its entirety over the last few days. Of course that cleansing of the temple and so on is the Feast of Hanukkah.

And I've still got that stored in my ever more unreliable brain matter. But what is the question here? What is the purpose of this account in Daniel chapter 11? We've seen the nature of it. We've only gone through maybe the first third or so.

But we see how it works. We can go on and see how events in the partitioned Greek Empire are going to play out and follow these predictions. So, as is always the case, we ask ourselves, so what? All Scripture is God-breathed.

All Scripture, including this chapter, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in history. That's not what it says. It's doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

So, we say, I'm a student of righteousness. I want to be a worker of righteousness. The words from our final lessons in the book of the Revelation, where those who are working unrighteousness, let them work it still.

Those who are dirty, let them be dirty still. Those who are working righteousness, let them work it still. And those who are sanctified, let them be sanctified still.

We want to be workers of righteousness. We want to be sanctified. We want to be part of that

church that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but is holy and without blemish.

And so here we are, Sunday morning, looking at Daniel chapter 11, and it's a big history lesson. So, what does it mean? How is this a profitable passage? Well, let me suggest to you a couple of things, because I found this to be a somewhat challenging question to answer. Take a look at this.

I will tell you the truth, Gabriel says. This is a part of the truth of the word of God that's coming up. Three kings will arise.

The fourth will be this, that, and the other. A mighty king will arise, this, that, and the other. Let's look at it a little bit more closely.

Let's look at it in terms of cause and effect. God is giving us a detailed view of how future history from Daniel's perspective and past history from our perspective works. Three more kings will arise in Persia.

The fourth will be richer than them all by his strength, and through his riches he will stir up all against the realm of Greece. He's basically going to throw the Persian Empire against the Greeks, and that's going to be its downfall. How does that happen? Why does it happen? By his strength and through his riches.

How does the strength and riches of the Medo-Persian Empire accrue? What brings it into being? Why did it become a strong empire? Why did it become a rich empire? What is the cause of that? Or to put it another way, how are these things provided? This depends a lot on things that are directly under God's control, under God's sovereignty, do they not? Crops, diseases, the outcome of battles, weather, climate, the vagaries of surrounding nations and subjugated peoples. Are there great inspirational leaders that rise up in revolt? Are there people who are disinclined to spend their fortune on military endeavors because they are busy trying to keep their personal affairs solvent? Or is there such a largesse because there's great prosperity, because businesses are going well, crops are growing well, animal herds and flocks are faring well, and because of what God provides, remember He causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust, and sometimes there's rain and sometimes there's drought. If there had been an Afghanistanian type of drought in the Medo-Persian Empire, if there had been famine, if there had been disease, pestilence, plague, military defeat of the subjugated peoples could not be accomplished, could not be maintained.

There were uprisings and internal divisions and strifes. 127 provinces were all at odds and fighting each other and there were civil wars and so on. This strength and riches would never have come into being.

And this beast, this bear with one shoulder higher than the other with the ribs in his teeth would not have been the strong, heavy bear that he becomes. God did this. God ensured that the Medo-Persian Empire would last long enough to return the Israelites to their land, to secure

their future under that government for 130 years after Ahasuerus' decree in that Persian Empire gives them freedom.

Why is there this 100 year gap between verse 2 and 3? That's the time where that Medo-Persian decree which cannot be revoked and cannot be repealed is in force. And that gives Israel three full generations, over 120 years to restore and rebuild the infrastructure. You can restore the temple.

You can rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. But how long does it take to repopulate and re-establish businesses? Look at New Orleans. How long is it taking those people after the devastation of the hurricanes down there? Lots of people returned.

They had Bourbon Street and they had Mardi Gras. But how long is it going to take them to actually get back on their feet economically and politically? They're looking around to see who's going to be the next mayor down there now. Well, this was the situation in Israel.

God saw to it that even though Ahasuerus sows the seeds of the destruction of the Empire by spending himself against the Greeks and exhausting the resources so that they can no longer expand and they are going to begin to shrink and begin to wither and wilt. But there is this 130 year period and it's all about Israel. God is orchestrating the events surrounding his people.

And it's not mentioned. It isn't denoted. It's not pointed out explicitly here.

Just as the work of God in the book of Esther is not denoted and pointed out and made explicit. It's implicit. It's obvious if you have an eye to see and an ear to hear and a heart to understand that God is effecting events and situations with an eye on his people.

The mighty king arises and he rules with great dominion and does according to his will. Everybody talks about Alexander being so great. How did he achieve that great dominion? God created the situation that Alexander exploited.

God gifted Alexander. God determined what kind of family he was born into. God determined the career and the abilities of Philip of Macedon.

God planted the ambitions in the heart of Alexander to do more than sit at home playing tiddlywinks. To go out conquering and to conquer. And because of the rapidity with which that empire was established, it didn't have stability.

And immediately upon his death, the single empire under Alexander barely lasts a decade. He dies and it immediately breaks. This reminds me of ceramics and pottery where if something is created in haste and then dries in haste, it cracks.

I have a beautiful pitcher and bowl that was made for me out of ceramic by a lady. And the bowl, it's a big piece, and in the drying process the bottom of it cracked. And she had to mend it with slip and then fire it.

But it didn't mature. It didn't have time to release its moisture in a consistent and even way. And that's what happens with the conquest of Alexander.

God orchestrated this. God defined this. God decreed this and appointed its times and its limits.

And this kingdom is divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among Alexander's posterity. If it had been divided among posterity, and you've got brother talking to brother, that's a slightly different thing. You remember Israel in the days of the Herods, where you've got guys who are related and they are friendly toward one another.

Why do you think monarchies constantly try to intermarry? If we're related, we won't be so likely to fight, is the idea. Remember Queen Victoria and all her German connections and the Germanic blood that went into the British monarchy? Why was that? Well, everybody could see as later history bore out that the Germanic peoples were a threat that needed to be allayed, that needed to be assuaged, that needed to be fixed. Let's ally so that we don't end up getting overwhelmed.

Well, this tells us when it says, that these parts are never going to come back together. It is not homogenous. It is heterogeneous.

Different generals, different lines, and this is inevitably going to create conflict. His kingdom is uprooted for others besides these. Then it says, What we're looking at here now is not just the events of history, but the causes and effects.

How do these things come about? Are these human accomplishments? Not at all. These are opportunities and potentials that God creates and that these people fall into and exploit. Moses tells Pharaoh, For this reason, speaking for God, for this reason I have raised you up.

God raised Pharaoh up. Pharaoh probably thought he and his family raised him up. God raised him up.

God saw to it that his endeavors prospered. God saw to it that he had the riches and the largesse and the prosperity necessary for these to take place. So these events are foreordained.

God knows ahead of time and tells the angels ahead of time. This is a chapter out of the angelic Bible, so to speak, isn't it? The angels know what needs to take place. Gabriel and Michael and the other angels who are working for and against the nations involved.

This is their playbook. This is their script. This is what's supposed to happen.

What determines whether an empire or a kingdom is going to prevail or wither away and fall? Forces beyond their control. History is full of vagaries. You go to World War II and look at the mud that bogged down the tanks and then the break in the rain that allows them, Patton, to move out and accomplish key strategic victories.

God orchestrates these things and who are the intermediate agents that control things like

weather and crops and winds and storms? You have Ahasuerus trying to go over there and fight the Greeks and you have the Spanish Armada trying to go over and fight the English. And the greatest plans of mice and men, there's a big storm and your flotilla sinks and gets brushed off the map. Human beings don't determine these things, God does.

So, interpretation, application. What about you and me? We look around, we have situations, we have circumstances, we have things that immediately affect us, but there's also a larger context, isn't there? We live in the United States of America in the year 2006, there are political things going on at home and abroad, there are cultural shifts, there are natural disasters, and all of this provides a large context in which our lives happen. God is in control of all of those things and they are preordained.

We don't have to worry. We say, well, what if the stock market crashes? What if there's another terrorist attack? Another 9-11 and our investments will pop like bubbles. Our way of life might disappear.

We might be standing in long lines at the grocery store. We might be standing in long lines at the gas pump. It might happen this way, it might happen that way.

One strong observation that you can interpret and apply from this chapter is God controls history and it's all been figured out ahead of time. God's not going to be taken by surprise by any terrorist or any foreign power or any domestic goofball group that gets homosexual marriage legalized or expunges all mention of God from the classroom or the government halls of justice or anything else. None of this is taking God by surprise.

The angels know it ahead of time. God knows it ahead of time. We know the trend of it ahead of time from what Scripture reveals.

So, as they say in Australia, no worries. Don't worry about it. Don't stew over it.

Don't fret over it. It's all written down in the book. All we have to do is recognize that nothing is going to befall us that isn't part of the preordained, predetermined plan and purpose of God.

It's not anything we can control anyway. What can we control? How do I think? How do I prioritize? What are my goals? What are my values? What is my motivation? That's what the actors always ask. Well, I'm going to play this part.

What is my motivation? Well, what is our motivation? If we can't get motivated looking at the future kingdom of God, if we can't get motivated looking at the Lord Jesus Christ and the promises that He makes to those who overcome by faith, who persevere, those letters to the seven churches, Jesus says, I know what you're going through. I know that you've got bad news people in your congregation. I know that you're being harassed and oppressed.

I know that you're having to endure a hard trial. I know that you're going to be tested for ten days. I know all of these things.

But to Him that overcomes, I will grant. And these are not a threat. They're an opportunity.

They're not a worry. They're not a problem. They are potentials.

They are the challenges that qualify us for great service and great things in God's kingdom and in God's future. How can we build muscle if we don't push against weight? That's what these things are. That's what chapter 11 is.

Gabriel tells Daniel, look, this is what's coming up. There are going to be huge geopolitical events swirling back and forth, military battles back and forth between these two great powers that sandwich the people of God. Don't sweat it.

God knows about it ahead of time. God has already determined who's going to prevail. Who's going to go back home with his tail between his legs.

At the end of some years, verse 6, they will join forces. The daughter of the king of the south will go to the king of the north to make an agreement. One of the most powerful inducements on earth is family alliance.

Anthony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar and Cleopatra, all the rest of these kingdoms are hanging in the balance depending on people's interpersonal relationships. God determines. God decides.

Someone may be on the ascending phase of a great career and they get poisoned. They get assassinated. They fall off their horse.

How many different methods does God employ to control history? I think there's nothing funnier than Antiochus, Seleucus Antinous, falling off his horse. How could you possibly predict that this king who goes over to Asia Minor and starts getting victories and getting an experienced army that he can go down and launch against the Egyptians, but before he can do so, oops, didn't tighten the saddle girth or whatever, and he falls down and breaks his neck and he's out of the picture. That's the hand of God.

So we have two basic lines of application here. One is not to worry and not to fret because God has the events of human history already well in hand. It's all tracking according to his foreordained purpose.

The second is not to think that the arm of the Lord is shortened and that it cannot save or that his ear is deaf and that he cannot hear. He has created this environment in which we live, whether it's large events, the movements of armies, the trend of climate and weather and the economic prosperity or lack thereof of nations, and whether or not one guy falls off his horse, whether or not one woman poisons another, the little small personal intrigues. God is at work.

God is at hand in all of those. And God is at work on behalf of his people. Why are we given all of this in great detail? Why are these particular details of history important? Why didn't we get

this of the pharaohs of Egypt back in the days of Moses? Why didn't Gabriel come down to Moses at the burning bush and say, let me tell you what's going to happen in Egypt over the next 80 years.

You all are going to go out and the Amalekites are going to come in and so on. Why is this particular part of history important? Two reasons. First of all, what is the biggest event in human history? What is the biggest single event in human history? Pop quiz.

It is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing as important in human history as Jesus Christ, God made flesh, dwelling among us. That is the biggest thing that has ever happened or ever will happen.

This is the preparation. The angels have a detailed plan of how the nations are going to move and interact and who is going to be strong and who is going to be weak and how the Greek language is going to be spread all through this empire and how the groundwork and foundation is going to be laid. God doesn't just, as it were, wake up some morning and say, well, maybe I will send the Savior today.

He has been thinking about it since before the foundation of the world and hundreds of years before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation is laid. God isn't just thinking about the coming of Jesus, what family, what tribe, what locale and giving prophecies, he shall be called a Nazarene, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, this and the other. What is he thinking about? God's forethought, it goes without saying that God is very smart.

He is already anticipating that once Jesus comes and once the news of the gospel and the news of the plan and purpose of God for the church emerges and this mystery is revealed, it needs to be communicated. Where are the roads? Where is the language? Where is the environment? Where is the freedom to move from province to province and kingdom to kingdom so that this message can spread effectively? God is laying the groundwork for it hundreds of years before it occurs. God plans ahead.

Anything that happens to us, God plans ahead. It looks like there is no provision, it looks like something is not coming that ought to be there, it looks like there is a crisis, it looks like there is a problem. We ought to have confidence that God has planned ahead.

Many things happen. I am intrigued by looking at the lives of believers who don't get saved until they are adults. I was saved in my early, early single-digit years.

My mother shared the gospel with me at the age of three so I have no testimony. I can't say, oh, I was a profligate, I did all these bad things. The people who come to Christ as adults and sometimes as a couple and they got married as unbelievers and yet they are the perfect match for one another and God did things and accomplished things in their lives well before they ever came to Christ.

Now what about that? Is God at work in the lives of unbelievers who later become believers? Of

course. God doesn't have to wait until we become believers to line up our blessings and establish our situation and many people who have a life prior to salvation can look back at it and see the hand of God because the arm of the Lord does not shorten it. It cannot save.

And his deliverance and his blessing is a part of his preordained, foreknown plan and purpose. He doesn't have to wait for us to come to Christ to start laying these things in place. He doesn't have to wait until Jesus comes to get the Roman Empire lined up and the Greek language lined up and the roads and commerce and trade and travel and transportation so that the gospel can spread.

God knows well ahead and provides and plans well ahead and we ought to have confidence and we ought to have faith and we ought to be motivated and encouraged and excited to watch and see the plan of God unfold for us just as it unfolds for Israel here. So, is the knowledge of God general? Well, you know, there's a whole movement, theological push today that God is God and He's really smart and He's really powerful, but He doesn't really have foreknowledge. He's just really good at crisis management and He kind of learns as things go along.

That's why He regretted making Saul king. That's why He regretted that He made man. You know, He does things and He's got a really good plan and He's really smart, but sometimes it kind of blows up in His face and He has to adjust.

And so, this sort of progressive view of God that He's going through time like the rest of us and He doesn't see ahead is betrayed and belied by this. Now, that's what I think the major lesson for us out of Daniel chapter 11 is. If you're interested, you can go through and there are many fine references where you can find the detailed fulfillment of everything that Gabriel tells Daniel here.

How it took place, all the way from Cyrus down through Antiochus. And it's quite fascinating. I think the application for us is this is the level of detail.

This is the level of preview that God and the angels through whom He works in human history have. They also know. The angels who need to know and need to influence human history, push a guy off his horse, make sure the lady's not caught when she's dropping the poison pills into her foe's wine glass and so on.

They know. And they're carrying out the plans and purposes of God in human history. That's one major lesson.

The other goes back to a more traditional and classic controversy. And this is the inspiration of scripture. This is so detailed.

It contains such minutiae that modern scholarship, and this actually goes well back, there was a guy who called the book of Daniel into question back in the 3rd or 4th century A.D. saying, well, it's so detailed it could not have been predicted. It must have been written after the fact. And so

the book of Daniel is attacked as not inspired, not prophetic, and, of course, if you can pry that loose, if you can make that allegation stick, now you've got big problems with the rest of the Bible.

The Lord Jesus Christ, for example, quotes the book of Daniel in Matthew 24, calls Daniel a prophet, not a historian. He doesn't say Daniel the historian. He says Daniel the prophet.

If Daniel is not inspired, the whole rest of the canon gets called into question. So liberals and secularists love to promote a late date for the writing of the book of Daniel. It has to have been written down in the 180s, 170s, 150s B.C. to contain all of this quote-unquote history because it's so detailed.

Well, Dr. Waltke, Bruce Waltke, has written a really great article which was published in Bibliotheca Sacra back in 1976. I just want to give you a few of the highlights. He summarizes it much better than I can, although these are things that we learn in seminary as well.

But the essence of the argument against the book of Daniel begins with a Neoplatonic philosopher named Porphyry. P-O-R-P-H-Y-R-Y Porphyry. P-O-R-P-H-Y-R-Y He was in the third century after Christ.

He wrote a 15-volume encyclopedic tome entitled Against the Christians. And he tried to refute all the leading tenets of Christianity. He was the first big anti-Christian author.

And he first introduced the idea that there can be no predictive prophecy. This just isn't possible. And there's a Latin phrase for this.

Siquid autem ultra openata sit qui futura nescient esse mentidum which you run across in scholarly literature from time to time. So Daniel has to be historical. That was his big idea.

And this sort of laid fallow for centuries upon centuries upon centuries. But when the German text critical movement arose back in the 1800s, your Westcott Hort guys on the Greek text and your documentary hypothesis graph Wellhausen and the rest of these guys, they seized upon this as their great inspiration. And so once they did this, everybody who liked that sort of uncritically accepted what Porfiry had said.

Well, he wrote 15 volumes. It must be right. And the Germans wrote about it.

And everybody just said, Oh, yeah, they're right. And so Waltke points out that in fact, he quotes Harrison up at the University of Toronto. Objections to the historicity of Daniel were copied uncritically from book to book.

And by the second decade of the 20th century, no scholar of general liberal background who wished to preserve his academic reputation either dared or desired to challenge this idea. Daniel was late. Daniel's historical.

It wasn't written when it says it was. Well, Waltke makes three great points. This issue is

important for three reasons.

First, the sovereignty of the revealed God in this book is at stake. If Daniel's God was able to predict the future, then there's a reason to believe the course of history is completely under the Lord's sovereignty, right? That's the point that we just made. That's our point of interpretation and application.

God is sovereign. We don't have to worry about how history is going to turn out. If the book of Daniel is historical instead of prophetic, then that goes out the window.

If the predictions are fraudulent, then we really can't say anything about God. Maybe he controls history. Maybe he doesn't.

Secondly, the divine inspiration of the Bible hangs in the balance. I've already alluded to this. If the book contains true predictions, there's firm reason to believe the book owes its origin to the One, capital O, who can predict the future.

It is of divine origin and divine inspiration. On the contrary, if it is spurious, fraudulent, then the reliability of other books in the canon can legitimately be questioned. Daniel's not for real.

Maybe the rest of the Bible isn't either. Third, one's understanding of the nature of Jesus Christ depends on the answer to the date of this book. Jesus Christ regarded the book of Daniel as a prophetic preview of future history and indeed of the divine program for a future that still lies ahead.

Matthew 24, 15 and 16. Jesus says, Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. What we're going to see next week is in addition to the literal history of the Medo-Persian and Greek empires that's contained in this chapter, this, as with so much of Scripture, shadows something still future, something greater and more important.

Jesus alludes to that in Matthew 24. If this is written after the fact, then that whole idea also has to go out the window. How can this also be teaching us about Antichrist and about the 70th week and about the culmination of human history and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom if it's spurious? If it's just written after the fact account? It won't work.

So, all of these are important. If Jesus is wrong in his interpretation of this book, then he's not omniscient. Jesus didn't know that Daniel was late and historical rather than early, inspired, and prophetic.

Jesus didn't know this. What kind of a Jesus have we got if he's quoting Daniel as a prophet and he's not? Waltke says, if he's wrong in his interpretation of the book, then he must be less than the omniscient, inerrant God incarnate. On the other hand, if his appraisal is right, then his claim to deity cannot be questioned in this regard.

So, this is important. It's not just an idle question. We can't just dismiss critics of the book of Daniel and its date with a wave of the hand.

Well, what are some of the ways, and this will be quick, what are some of the ways where the book of Daniel is dismissed as being late? One way is by saying that it was composed during the time of the Maccabees. The problem with this is the Aramaic portions of Daniel are, duh, written in Aramaic, right? Well, there have been four different kinds of Aramaic, and the Aramaic of the book of Daniel does not match the Aramaic that was known and prevalent and spoken in the time of the Maccabees. It is quite different.

Someone would have to have retroverted the Aramaic back into a form that was unknown in the days of the Maccabees to match the Aramaic there. This is a Western type of Aramaic, and this was proven when they found a piece of papyri called the Genesis Apocryphon. It was discovered at Qumran, discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

It was unknown in the days when the German scholars tried to argue that Daniel was late. This is a 1st century B.C. Aramaic document, and so we have a good copy of what Aramaic was like. We know exactly what it was like in the 1st century B.C., which is within a few decades of the purported writing of the book of Daniel in, say, 150.

Well, based on that analysis, you have people like Gleason Archer, who made a detailed linguistic analysis of the Genesis Apocryphon, and he says this, By way of summary, it may be said the Genesis Apocryphon furnishes very powerful evidence that the Aramaic of Daniel comes from a considerably earlier period than the 2nd century B.C., because the Genesis Apocryphon is obviously a copy of something that already existed, so it reflects Aramaic of its time, and the Aramaic of Daniel is way different. There's also an argument from Persian words that are found in the book of Daniel, and they claim to find 19 Persian words in the book of Daniel. Well, Kitchen, a very famous scholar, notes that four of the 19 words, when you get down to the Septuagint, remember what the Septuagint is, Greek translation of the Old Testament books, including the book of Daniel, and when the Septuagint translator has got to the book of Daniel, and remember they're translating the Septuagint right around the time that people are saying the book of Daniel had to be written, because of all these events that go down, Antiochus down into the time of the Maccabees, well, this is when Daniel had to come hot off the pen of this pseudonymous author, and then popped right into the canon so that the Septuagint guys could translate it, because the Septuagint is circa 200 B.C., and they're saying Daniel's written at or after that time.

Well, there are 19 Persian words that are identifiable in the text of the book of Daniel. Four of them, when the Septuagint translators got around to translating Daniel, they couldn't figure them out, and they are wildly mistranslated by these Greeks. What does that tell you? These Persian words had long dropped out of use, and nobody could figure them out in 100-150 B.C., let's say, when these old Greek translators are trying to translate Daniel.

They can't figure out Daniel's Persian words. Now, how do you figure that if it was written

around the time that these guys are translating? How come the author of Daniel knows these Persian words, which we now know, because we've got all kinds of scholarship, but the old Greek guys in 100-150 B.C. couldn't figure them out? It's because they are words from the time of Daniel, and we had figured out those words by going back to Persian inscriptions and Persian documents from the time of Daniel, and that's how we figured out what they mean. You can't figure them out from the Persian of 300 B.C. or 200 B.C. or 100 B.C. You have to go back to the time of Daniel in the 500s B.C. to figure out what these Persian words mean, and there are four of them in that category.

Well, there are also references to the Greek words in Daniel, and that they are late or whatever, and the names of musical instruments that were well-known well before the time, they say, well, it must be a late book because it's got these Greek words in it, and Greek wasn't prevalent in the days of Daniel. Well, the Greek words they're talking about are the names of three musical instruments, and these musical instruments have had their names for hundreds of years. The fact that the Greeks adopted those names doesn't make the book of Daniel late.

Well, I say all of that to say this. You will occasionally run across naysayers and others who reject the Scriptures, who claim it's full of contradictions, who claim that it's late, that it wasn't written by the people it claims to be written by, and so on. These people honestly are unfamiliar with the evidence.

They are unfamiliar with the facts, and it is only their ignorance that allows them to make that claim. I'm just giving you a taste. These same arguments are made and refuted for the book of Ecclesiastes, for the Gospels in the New Testament.

Do not be disturbed. Remember Paul wrote, he said, do not be troubled as though you had heard some word from somebody claiming that the day of the Lord has come and all this other spurious stuff. Never let yourself get troubled by these claims against the Bible and against its veracity and its inspiration and its integrity.

Trust me. If you go in and look at the details and you look at the facts, the Word of God comes out smelling like a rose every single time. It is a great resource.

It is the object of our faith. It is the source of our hope. It is the power for our faith and our love, and it ought to motivate us.

God is in control. God has a great plan. We have a great place in it.

That's the great message. If you don't get anything else out of Daniel chapter 11, know this. God controls history.

We are in history, and God has provided for us just as He has always provided for His people, sometimes well in advance, well beyond their vision, well beyond their horizon. God is at work to ensure that His will is accomplished among His people. What a great encouragement.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Next week we'll pick up in Daniel chapter 11 and finish it off. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You for the comfort and encouragement that it gives to us. May God the Holy Spirit find us teachable and impressionable with these truths so that we can grow in grace and in knowledge of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in His name.

Amen.