

Daniel 06-04-30a

This is the 30th of April, 2006, last day of the month. On this Sunday morning we continue our study in the book of Daniel. We're in the midst of chapter 11.

We'll take a moment as we continue our worship to pause and exercise our individual priesthood. There is no amount of assembly, there is no amount of scripture reading, there is no amount of holy thinking that can sanctify us. There is only one agent in the universe that can cleanse the souls of believers from the sins that we commit on a daily basis and that is the precious and eternal blood of Christ.

The only way that cleansing can take place is if we claim it by faith. And without that cleansing, God the Holy Spirit has to limit himself to convicting us of the sin that is separating us from God and hiding his face from us so that he will not hear. And it is our privilege to regularly claim God's compassion and God's grace by acknowledging our sin, by acknowledging the sinfulness of the environment in which we move that inevitably soils our feet, to acknowledge the sinfulness of our nation and the world in which we live before God so that he can apply that efficacious work of Christ to sanctify us, renew us, and cleanse us.

And there's no more important time to do that than as we address ourselves directly to the truth contained in the pages of the Word of God so that God the Holy Spirit can teach us and transform us and renew our minds. Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful that you have given us another day. Each morning is a kind of resurrection where your mercies are renewed, our potential is before us.

We can forget those things which are behind and we can press toward the mark of the high call in Christ Jesus that you have given to us. We thank you for your provision. We are not asked to accomplish anything in our own strength or by our own power.

It is not by might or by human power, but by your Spirit that we are able to lay hold of these great potentials and these great opportunities that are ours in Christ. We thank you for him. We thank you for his love, his obedience, his faithfulness, the example that he left us of how to live a human life guided by your Word and energized by your Spirit.

And even now he sits at your right hand and intercedes on our behalf, waiting that day when you will give him the Word to come and collect us and gather us to himself so that we can ever live with him. We pray that we will be ready, that we will not be ashamed on the day of his coming, that we can stand with a white robe gleaming bright reflecting your glory in his. We pray that our study this morning will contribute to that goal.

We pray for all those who do not have the opportunity to assemble or to enjoy the riches of your Word because of their duties, because of their responsibilities, because of circumstances that are outside their control. We pray for our governing leaders, those in the military, those who form the fabric of the structure of our nation, those who are believers and are seeking to

honor you in the execution of those duties. We pray that you will continue to bless our nation as you have for the last 227 years.

We pray that in all things our lives can reflect your glory and the glory of the Savior. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Our script reading this morning comes from the Psalms. Psalm 27. This is a passage I had the opportunity to read yesterday.

And it is a psalm of David. It is a psalm that comforts us. It is a psalm that distills in a few lines the essence of the life of a believer before God.

All of us face challenges. Also, we have blessings. Sometimes our prosperity can be a challenge in terms of distraction and derangement of our spiritual life.

This is subtitled in the New King James, An Exuberant Declaration of Faith. And we trust that whatever situation we find ourselves facing, whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, that we can make this exuberant declaration of faith along with David. Our study in Daniel chapter 11 is looking at history and the ups and downs and the tensions and the push and the pull of forces beyond an individual's control.

Israel is caught in the area between two great world powers as they fight back and forth and as kings rise and fall. And they have no say. They have no power.

They have no real control over these events. And we often find ourselves literally, well, not literally, figuratively, between a rock and a hard place. And as the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, so the individual believer today.

So this is a great psalm for us to look at in that light, in that context. Psalm 27, a psalm of David. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the Lord, and that will I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble, He shall hide me in His pavilion.

In the secret place of His tabernacle, He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above mine enemies all around me.

Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle. I will sing. Yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice. Have mercy also upon me and answer me. When you said, Seek my face, my heart said to you, Your face, Lord, I will seek.

Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my help.

Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me. Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path because of my enemies.

Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen up against me and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. What a powerful psalm, a psalm that really needs no commentary whatsoever. You can read that and get everything that David was thinking.

You can hear the encouragement that David derives from his knowledge of God, his pleasure, his peace in dwelling in the tabernacle of God. And we know that David didn't literally dwell in the tabernacle. No human being could dwell in that place.

But David thinks of God's tabernacle in terms of that place of God's presence, the place where God's word is constantly being reflected and constantly being manifested. And time and again you see David talking about dwelling in the house of the Lord. The last line in Psalm 23, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

That's not just a prediction, that's a statement of purpose. That's a statement of goal. And you find the same thing here.

David says, my heart would have failed. I would have lost perspective and lost hope unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. And whether it's the land of the living of the present or the land of the living of the future, David knows that all of God's promises will be fulfilled.

And the goodness of the Lord, the *Tov* of Yahweh, Adonai, will be visible, will be manifest, will be accomplished. Well, sometimes we have to make a conscious effort to remind ourselves that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. And it requires humility.

It requires objectivity to get our eyes off of ourselves, off of our circumstances, off of the seemingly powerful forces that are at work, things that are beyond our control. And remember that there's nothing outside God's control. He is sovereign.

He has been from eternity and is into the eternal future. And He weaves things together for the

benefit of His people. Well, this is important as we turn our attention now to Daniel chapter 11, where we have this account of future history, very detailed, very specific, from Gabriel to Daniel.

I want to take a moment to address our attention to something that I think is pertinent even though it isn't Scripture. And I'll ask Matt to hand these out. This is a poem by Robert Burns.

If you don't have a copy, it's easy to find on the internet. I'll put a copy of this. I haven't done so yet, but I'll put a copy in the folder for our study in Daniel.

But it's a pretty familiar piece of poetry. At least one line of it is familiar to us. And I'll do a bit of translation because this is by Robert Burns.

And he was a Scotsman. And I can't even attempt to replicate a Scottish accent or the Scottish dialect of English, so you'll just have to fill that in. But I will translate a little bit of the language here.

This is to a mouse. Robert Burns, even though he was one of the greatest poets that the British Isles ever produced, couldn't make his living at it, and so he was a farmer. And he's been called the plowman bard.

And one day he was out there plowing his field and he turned over a mouse's nest. And this was back in 1785. And looking at the destruction that he had wrought, he wrote this poem.

He says, We sleek it cowering timorous beastie, O what a panic's in thy breastie! Thou need not start away so hasty With bickering brattle. And that means a hurrying scamper. Bickering, we talk about bickering like arguing.

But in olden days it had the idea of hurrying. Hasty words. Things spoken in haste.

And brattle is scampering. You need not start away so hasty With bickering brattle. I would be loath to run and chase thee With murdering paddle.

I have no desire to run after you And murder you with a stick. I'm truly sorry man's dominion Has broken nature's social union And justifies that ill opinion Which makes thee startle at me, Thy poor earth-born companion And fellow mortal. I doubt not, Whiles, sometimes, But that you may thief.

What then, poor beastie? Thou must live. A demon ichor in a thrave. Which basically means The odd ear of corn Out of two dozen sheaves.

A thrave was two dozen. And a demon ichor, That's like the odd ear. Is a small request.

I'll get a blessing with the lave. With what's left. And never miss it.

So what he's saying is Even though you thief a little bit of grain, It doesn't matter. I've got plenty. I'll never miss it.

Thy wee bit housey, too, in ruin. It's silly walls. The winds are strewin'.

Silly in those days had the idea of feeble. And you can see the etymology When we say something is silly. We're saying, well, that's The product of a feeble mind.

And the walls of the house Are now being strewed about by the wind Because he plowed it up. And nothing now To build a new one Of foggage green. Foggage is the coarse grass of the field.

He burns his plow up the whole field So not only are the walls of his old house blowing away But there's nothing to build a new one out of. And bleak December's winds ensuing Baith, snell, and keen. Both bitter and keen.

Winter's coming on And he's destroyed his shelter. Thou saw the fields laid bare in waste And weary winter coming fast And cozy here beneath the blast Thou thought to dwell. Little mouse saw winter coming on Built his little nest in the field.

Now you're turned out for all your trouble Both house or hauled Without a house or holding To thole the winter's sleety dribble And cranroach called. Which basically means You have no house, no holding To endure the winter's sleety dribble And the hoarfrost cold. So, everybody's pretty well in sympathy With the little mouse at this point.

I know some people who are deeply in sympathy With rodents of this type. But mousey, thou art not alone. In proving foresight may be vain.

The best laid schemes of mice and men Gang aft alee And leave us not but grief and pain For promised joy. Gang aft alee Go often askew. Array! Still thou art blessed compared with me.

The present only touches thee. But, ach, I backward cast my eye On prospects drear And forward, though I cannot see, I guess and fear. Little mouse is just living in the moment.

Burns says, When I look back over my life It's a dreary prospect. And when I look ahead I guess that it's going to be more of the same. It fills me with dread.

It's a great poem. Burns, of course, One of the greatest poets that ever lived. Once you decode a little bit of his Scottish vocabulary, you can really enjoy a spectrum of observation and feeling and wit, as well as emotion in the things that he wrote.

The reason I have given this to you and gave you space to make notes out by the side of it there is because this really is a reflection from a human perspective of the very situation we find in Daniel chapter 11. The heart of it is in that I think it's the 7th verse there. Mousie, thou art null thy lane, thou art not alone, in proving foresight may be vain.

The best laid schemes of mice and men, gang-aftedly, often go awry, and leave us nothing but grief and pain for promised joy. We thought we had it figured out. We thought we had things mapped out for the future.

And something intervenes. Something unforeseen happens. And where there was promised joy, there is instead not but grief and pain.

Well, Daniel chapter 11. This is, or could be, if taken in a superficial way, a difficult chapter to really cover because it's an account of events of human history. It's future and we can marvel at the detail and the accuracy of the prophecy.

From Daniel's perspective, these things are future. From our perspective, they are past. And we can see in detail, and I gave you a lot of the details last time, of the fulfillment of this prophecy in the breakup of the Greek Empire into its four parts and the predominance of the king of the north and the king of the south and their struggles and their warfare back and forth with Israel, the people of God, the promised beautiful land right in the middle, caught in the fallout of these wars and overrun.

The king of the south comes down, overruns Judah and attacks Egypt. Egypt gets strong and wants to go up and attack the north. And so you have the Ptolemies and the Seleucids fighting back and forth and back and forth.

Well, the upshot of this, we worked our way all the way down and I won't review it, but think of it, step back just a step and look at this in a little bit broader perspective. What is the first half of chapter 11 giving us? This is human power at work, isn't it? This is the human perspective on life. Human power, military power, human device, human plots and schemes.

We've seen the exercise of military power. What happens when you gain military predominance? You look at verse 2, and as you build up your military, the fourth king in verse 2, by virtue of riches and strength, stirs up everyone against the realm of Greece. When he becomes strong and rich, that just creates the potential for conflict and for warfare.

So what happens? In verses 3 and 4, mighty king arises, ruling with great dominion, and does according to his own will. What happens when people start operating according to their own will and have that much power? His kingdom gets broken up. The kingdom of Alexander isn't held by his family or his son.

It's broken for others besides these. So there's dissolution, there's disintegration, there's division. And ultimately, you look at verse 5, you have a more powerful entity arising.

The king of the south becomes strong and one of his princes, and he gains power over him and has dominion. Dominion is a great dominion. So up in the north, the original domain of Macedon, Philip of Macedon, and Alexander comes from that.

Well, that is superseded now. Where the seat of strength used to be, now it's down in the south. Kings never seem to recognize that their endeavors and their accomplishments are temporary and ephemeral.

Solomon is one of the few kings to ever recognize this. He wrote the book of Ecclesiastes and

what does he say? This stuff under the sun is like a vapor. It exists for a moment, seems to have substance, but it vanishes away.

And he says, this endless cycle in chapter 1 of Ecclesiastes repeats itself. You see the water rushing down the river and it's a mighty force, but then it's gone. And first thing you know, there's some other water coming down the hill and rushing by.

And there are these cycles and these endless, there's no new thing under the sun. Just one thing after another takes place. So human kings very seldom recognize this truth.

And so they're constantly trying to get that elusive conquest, that great accomplishment. I'll establish an empire that will never die. I'll have a kingdom that will never end.

I will have a dynasty. I will conquer and I will seize and lay hold and this is going to be the monument to my greatness. Well, they try to accomplish this in a lot of different ways.

Military power. Strategic conquests. Marriage alliances.

You see this in verse 6. The daughter of the king of the south goes to the king of the north to try to cement an alliance and achieve peace on the borders. But it doesn't work. The authority is not retained and doesn't stand.

She's given up with those who brought her and those who begot her and with him who strengthened her in those times. The stratagem doesn't work. It doesn't accomplish its purpose.

They use force. Verses 8 and 9. They go down and conquer Egypt, take the gods captive with the princes and the riches and so on and yet the king of the south is going to last longer than the king of the north. The king of the north comes to the king of the south but then he returns to his own land.

There are great victories. These historic battles are fought and won but they always end up being temporary. Again, verses 7 and 8, verses 10 and 12.

The sons stir up strife in verse 10 and assemble a multitude of great forces and one overcomes and overwhelms and passes through and he returns to his fortress and then there's more strife. These conquests don't accomplish peace. They don't accomplish lasting prosperity.

They don't accomplish a dynasty. Something permanent. Something lasting.

Something worthwhile in the long run. It's much ado. Reminds me of Shakespeare.

The actor comes and struts and frets his hour on the stage. Sound and fury signifying nothing. It just comes and goes.

This is really the overarching message at least one of them in the first half of chapter 11 in this

near-term history for Daniel which begins with the Medes and Persians in the time of Daniel and extends down through Alexander and past Alexander to the four parts of his empire and all the way down in detail to Antiochus Epiphanes. Why do the people of God need to know this? Why is Gabriel giving this to Daniel? One of the things it is a reminder of is here's Israel and Judah in particular which has been conquered. The combined nations of Israel and Judah attacked by the Assyrians.

The northern ten tribes are gone because of military conquest but now the Assyrian empire itself is gone. The Babylonians come down under Nebuchadnezzar and take Judah and lead them captive. Take them away.

Daniel and Ezekiel go to Babylon under that conquest. But now the Babylonians are gone and here are the Medes and Persians. Well now the Medes and Persians are starting to wane.

And they say, well now is this going to be the time of the ascendancy of the kingdom of Judah, the nation of Israel? Is it going to return now that the Medes and Persians they seem to be much more peaceful and complacent. They're letting us kind of come up. We're not like slaves in Egypt anymore.

We're engaging in commerce. We've got people up in government and so on. Maybe this is the time of the ascendancy of Israel once again.

Jerusalem will once again be a mighty capital. And Gabriel says, look Daniel, let me tell you and the people of God that these kingdoms are going to rise and fall like bubbles in a cauldron. And for the next couple of hundred years it's going to be catch as catch can.

Somebody's going to fall off of a horse here. Somebody's going to have favorable weather and be able to accomplish something here. Someone's going to put together a coalition and a mighty force over here.

A great battle is going to be won here. A great battle is going to be lost over here. It's just churning like the waters of the troubled sea.

And what is the upshot of it? Nothing permanent. Nothing lasting. And we don't really see the people of God rising to the surface here in any of this.

And so that's about as far as we got in chapter 11 through say the first 20 verses. The conflict in verses 3 and 4 we had Alexander the Great. In verses 5 through 20 we had this back and forth running over the doormat of Israel between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies.

Right? Well now in verse 21 where we pick up this morning it says After this one who arose that imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom but within a few days he shall be destroyed but not in anger or in battle. Well this is a reference to the predecessor to Antiochus Epiphanes and the predecessor's name is Seleucus IV Philopator. Remember there were two sons who went back and forth.

We go back to verse 11 just to ramp us up into the present here. The king of the south moves with great rays goes out and fights with the king of the north musters a great multitude. The multitude is given into his hand.

He has taken away the multitude. His heart is lifted up. He casts down tens of thousands.

He will not prevail. For the king of the north will return to muster a multitude greater than the former and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. In those times many rise up against the king of the south.

Violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision but they shall fall. And misinterpretation of the words of Daniel motivated some individuals to try to come up against the king. And this is a reference back.

And if you want to look up all of this history between Ptolemy IV and Antiochus III, they clashed at the southern borders of Israel. This is verse 13. And Ptolemy IV, of course he's from down in Egypt, he slaughtered many thousands of the forces of Antiochus III.

But there was a hiatus and then Antiochus came back with another bigger army and he whops Ptolemy IV and sends him back to his own land. Well, many Jews, Daniel's people, the same ones spoken of in Daniel 9.24 and 10.14, joined Antiochus against Egypt. They joined in with this and I think their hope was we're going to gain independence.

We'll help Antiochus. We'll get Egypt pushed down there. And then Antiochus will let us have our own land.

We'll be independent of Syria. We'll be independent of Egypt. We'll come back and become the kingdom that God gave to David and to Solomon.

This was their political hope. Their political aspiration. Very similar to what you find in Jesus' day where they're looking for someone to throw off the yoke of the Romans and reestablish Israel.

Well, they've misinterpreted the word of God. They've misinterpreted the promises of God. Their hopes are not realized.

They have that vision. They know that God has promised a kingdom and they say, well, kingdom now. This is the time.

And it's not. Well, the fortified city that's referred to there is Sidon. Antiochus captured Sidon in 203 BC.

And from there, that was the radius from which he occupied and established himself in the beautiful land, which of course is Israel. So, he says he will stand in the glorious land with destruction in his power. And this again is talking about Antiochus.

He tried to stop the warfare. He tried to get an alliance and a peace treaty going between Egypt

and Syria by giving his daughter to marry Ptolemy V, Ptolemy Epiphanes, down in Egypt. But this didn't work either.

This is verse 17. He will set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, upright ones with him. Thus he shall do.

He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it, but she shall not stand or be for him. And this is evidently this reference to the marriage between his daughter. But I don't know about you, but I tend to get lost because I don't have a real good frame of reference for the succession of rulers in the North and the succession of rulers in the South.

What do we see here? Human endeavors, human ideas of how to bring peace, how to accomplish objectives of conquest, and the best laid plans of Mice and Men gang-aft ugly. It just doesn't work. Just when you think you've got it figured out, something unravels, something falls apart.

And whether it's looking at the history of nations and giant movements of empires or looking at our individual life, Robert Burns has it right. Mice are not alone in proving that foresight may be vain and that the best laid schemes don't always pan out. So by the time we get to verse 20, we're down into the days of Antiochus III's son.

Remember he was up there in Sidon and he tried to marry off his daughter and so forth? Well, his son is Seleucus IV Philopator. He heavily taxes his people to pay Rome, but he's poisoned. Just as he's got the grip of reins and he's getting the money and he's going to solve the financial problem, his treasurer, Heliodorus, poisons him.

And so he is slain, but not in battle. So this goes back, remember Bernice and the whole poisoning of the queens and the guy falling off the horse? No matter what you plan and how you proceed, unforeseen events intervene. Well, this brings us now to verse 21 of chapter 11.

This is where we begin to get this really, it reminds me of an airplane on a runway, a jet on a runway. You start out at a standing stop and that's Gabriel coming to Daniel and saying, you know, I was delayed for three weeks, but here I am, let me tell you what's going to happen. Then he starts rolling down the runway and as he rolls down the runway, the tires are on the ground and this is the future history for the next couple of hundred years.

And it's in detail and very precise. This is what's going to happen with the Seleucids, this is what's going to happen with the Ptolemies, this is what's going to happen with the beautiful land, the glorious land right in between. He's rolling and then at a certain point when there's enough speed, the jet begins to take off from the ground and he's going to continue to talk about near-term history, but it has this elevated element of foreshadowing far future events, far future events.

And it's going to start to have stereo instead of mono. You know, we went for years and years with the invention of sound recording back at the first part of the 20th century and we had

mono sound for years and years and years, decades. And then in the 1950s, they invented stereo and they figured out how to do stereo recording and deliver it to the masses.

In the very early 60s, it was commonplace for people to have a stereo and hear sound coming from two directions and get that depth, that three-dimensional effect. And that's what's happening here beginning in verse 21. We're going to start to get a second channel of information coming in.

So, beginning in verse 21, it says, In his place, this is in the place of Seleucus IV Philopda. Remember, Seleucus is the king of the north. In his place is going to arise a vile person to whom they will not give the honor of royalty.

This is the world famous, historically prominent Antiochus IV Epiphanes. He's the son of Antiochus III, the great. He is going to rule from 175 to 163 BC.

And the section here in Daniel that deals with his time, his 12-year reign, he's going to be given as much space as all the others before him combined. The last part of this chapter, the next 14-15 verses are all Antiochus IV Epiphanes. So, we've gone down the runway of near-term history and now we're going to really focus on this individual.

He is the little horn that we saw back in Daniel chapter 8, verses 9 through 12. The little horn that grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. It grew to the host of heaven.

It cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground and trampled them. Remember that in Daniel 8. He exalted himself as high as the prince of the host. By him the daily sacrifices were taken away and the place of his sanctuary was cast down because of transgression.

Armies given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices. He cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.

And we saw him again in Daniel chapter 8, verses 23 through 25. In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise having a fierce countenance, fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. Now, here's my question.

You step back and look at Daniel chapter 11. Gabriel comes. He says, Daniel, I've got an important word for you.

It took me three weeks to get here with it. Here it is. Here's a bunch of near-term history.

What is the theme and the essence of that history? Nations rise. Nations fall. Kings plot, scheme, attack, defend.

People get poisoned. People fall off of horses. People die of disease, like Alexander.

All of this turmoil in secular human history, in secular struggles for human achievement. And now we're down to Antiochus. And here we're going to slow down and take a very detailed look.

What does that prologue accomplish? Because obviously we're getting to kind of the main point here. Antiochus IV, the Epiphanies. He's the main point.

This is what Gabriel is getting at with Daniel. But he precedes it with all of this other. What does that do for us? What does that introduction accomplish for us? I'm about to tell you about a king who's going to arise when transgressors have reached their fullness.

Who understands sinister schemes, Daniel 8.25 tells us. I'm going to tell you about a king who's going to grow exceedingly great. He's going to be great toward the south, Daniel 8.9. Toward the east and toward the land beautiful.

Toward the glorious land. This horn is going to grow up unto the host of heaven. Never a king before described in these terms.

He's going to cast down some of the host of heaven to the ground and trample them. He's going to exalt himself as high as the prince of that host. It tells us in Daniel 8.11. By him the daily sacrifices are going to be abolished.

Something that has gone on in Israel since the time of Moses interrupted at the destruction of the temple. And those sacrifices are resumed but they're going to be interrupted again. Daily sacrifice is taken away and the place of his sanctuary is cast down.

Now because of transgression an army is given over to this horn. He is going to be given military power to accomplish his goals. And he will cast truth down to the ground.

Now, if you just get this information, you think, well, who can stand? How can the people of God possibly survive? But with the introduction we've been given of those previous kings, every great king has his Achilles heel. Every great king something happens. He accomplishes a conquest, then there's a reverse.

He starts out with great things and he gets poisoned. He starts out with great victories in Asia Minor and then he falls off his horse and breaks his neck. A queen comes to power and begins to rule from behind the scenes and then she gets poisoned by another queen.

And then that queen gets poisoned and on and on and on. The guy starts out with a great reign and his treasurer poisons him and kills him. So, all of these factors are in God's hands.

No one arises without God's permission. No one ascends. No one conquers.

No one accomplishes without God's permission, without God's foreknowledge, and without it being woven into God's plan. What does that mean to us? Many times we've been fighting battles and we've been slaying our dragons as we go through life and then all of a sudden we are hit with something that is seemingly unlike anything we've ever been hit with before. It's

huge.

And it sets us back. It's like our jaw drops. Or it's an unknown.

We're looking into the future and it's just an unknown and we're in a quandary and we're filled with doubts and uncertainties. How should we proceed? How should we choose? Think about this when you get ready to graduate high school and you say, well now what do I do? I mean the whole world is open up to you. Do you go to college? Where? To study what? And major in what? And how far away from home do you go? And how are you going to get through? And how are you going to pay for it? And what if, what if, what if? And all of these uncertainties.

Many times we come to a place and we think, I have never been here before. And when you look at the pattern of Daniel chapter 11 you realize none of this takes God by surprise. It may seem awe-inspiring to us, but to God it's just one more year in history.

One more thing that he's already woven into his plan. And this little horn that grows up to be scraping things out of the host of heaven, God already knows about it. God's already woven it into his plan.

Don't be alarmed. Remember Jesus said, if you've been faithful in that which is least, you'll be faithful also in that which is much. If you see God's dealing and God's comprehension and God's orchestration of these smaller kings and smaller events in world history, when this big one comes, the same God is going to handle it in the same way.

Nothing is outside his notice. Nothing is outside his plan. And it ought to give us confidence.

And we ought to argue from the small things that we see into the large things that we encounter. Just as Gabriel does here for Daniel. We're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back we're going to pick up and see the predicted career of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.