

Kings and Prophets 17-07-13

This is July the 13th of 2017, and we continue our study in Kings and Prophets tonight, resuming at the junction between Chapter 11 and Chapter 12. We'll take a moment, as is our custom, to go to the Lord in prayer, ask His blessing on us as we look at this portion of His Word, and then we'll begin. Father, we're grateful, as always, for this time of fellowship and seeking a better understanding of Your plan and purpose for us as we look at these pages of Scripture together.

We thank You for the freedom and the opportunity to do so, and we pray that You'll bless us as we look at this particular portion of the book of Daniel and some of its connections in the New Testament. We pray that each one that participates with us here, whether now or in the future, will be blessed through Your Holy Spirit and the power of Your Word that transcends both the delivery and the hearing and enables us to live in a way that pleases You and that fulfills Your purpose for us, bearing that fruit that will be everlasting and that reflects the glory of the Lord Jesus. We pray these things in His name.

Amen. Well, we're about to come to the close of this book of Daniel. The prophetic ministry of Daniel is about to close with it, and indeed, pretty much, we're getting very close to the end of the prophetic ministry in the Old Testament.

This is the time of the suspension of God's supernatural intervention in history until the days when the Lord Jesus is to be born and carry on His earthly ministry. But that intermediate period is unknown and dark in terms of the Old Testament record. We have the intertestamental books, as they like to call them, which are the book of Maccabees and some various other fillers of various degrees of accuracy and usefulness.

The book of Enoch will be developed during this time, and it's a very interesting collection of material. We may want to take some time and look at it at some point. It's about the only apocryphal book that is quoted and alluded to multiple times in the New Testament.

Jude makes a direct quote, and Paul alludes to it a couple of times. But for now, we're looking at these closing chapters of Daniel, and he anticipates the times of the Gentiles. The earlier prophets were God's messengers to Israel, calling the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom to covenant responsibility, to obedience, to return to faithfulness.

These are not evangelistic calls. They are obedience calls. And the Old Testament is notable in that there is, to my eye and observation, no evangelistic call or mission.

God seems to assume that His people believe in Him, and they are called to adhere to their side of the covenant. Those who choose to disagree, to disobey, to disbelieve, are not really addressed. God says, all day long I have held up my hands to a disobedient and stiff-necked people, not a disbelieving people.

There is no missionary call to Israel to go evangelize the nations. There are many nations in their immediate periphery, and they are to evangelize by example, by reflecting the presence of God in their midst, by being a holy people that has come out from among the nations and become separate. And there are many who, in fact, do that.

And you can name for yourself the number of Gentiles who became proselytes and, in many cases, moved to the nation of Israel, intermarried with them. The line of Christ is populated with quite a few. So Daniel, however, represents a real turning point and something of a close in terms of supernatural revelation and prophecy.

There is going to be a couple of more message prophets, but visions, miraculous deliverances really were about at the close with the book of Daniel. So it's unique in that regard. Also, we have seen the turn to the wider perspective, where the world is in view.

And this is really the threshold of the times of the Gentiles in the sense that when the kingdom is taken from Israel, Christ's kingdom, and given to those who will bear the fruits of it, you need that bigger perspective and that wider stage. And where before there was something of a narrow view, it widens out. And this I think accounts for a lot of what we've seen in the last few chapters in terms of the content of the visions.

Instead of calling Israel to repentance, instead of rebuking them with the ministry of Jonah, for example, or the calls of the earlier prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah and Ezekiel, and to some extent even Habakkuk, and some of the ones who make prophecies on surrounding nations such as Edom. It is all designed to get Israel outside of themselves, if not directly address them, and get them to realize their opportunity and not miss it. But Daniel really swivels the camera around to look outward at the nations.

And so we have seen in the last several chapters, actually beginning with Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the image, and then later on the beasts in more recent chapters, the unfolding of empires other than Israel, their hegemony, their control of larger events. And the people of God are now a cork floating on the troubled sea, rather than being at the center and at the focus, being delivered from one nation such as Egypt, or being delivered from attackers that come in, being given hegemony and conquest and suzerainty in the days of David through to Solomon. All of that has taken a side seat to what we see here.

So the prophecies here are not only about the nations, but in some ways they are for the nations. And you remember when the wise men come from the east, they evidently had the collected library that Daniel had assembled. They are from Chaldea, they are from Babylon, that region, what it was in the ancient day.

And even the Aramaic portions of Daniel suggest that it is looking toward and is a revelation for Gentiles as well as the Jews. And of course we find that many portions of the New Testament are inscrutable without the book of Daniel. Imagine trying to understand Revelation if you don't have Daniel.

Imagine trying to understand Matthew chapter 24 and 25, the Lord Jesus, what they call the Olivet Discourse. Have you ever heard somebody say the Olivet Discourse? That's his predictions, wars and rumors of wars, the end is not yet, nation rise against nation, and the sun is darkened and the moon doesn't shine. And all of that really harks back to and has as its context this book and this portion of the book.

So, the theme here is that where Israel formerly had its hope in its own kingdom, the line of David and the promises of land and of inheritance and of being an established earthly presence, Daniel really raises the bar for the people of God to realize that that isn't going to be the paradigm for weeks of years to come. Other empires will take the stage and it isn't going to be a material kingdom to which the people of God need to look. And you remember Jesus says this more than once.

You're looking for a kingdom, don't go out there if he says here's the king, there's the king, here's the Messiah, there's the Messiah. He tells Pilate my kingdom is not of this world. It could have been, but at the point that Jesus is going to the cross, that ship has sailed, that door has closed.

And so the nature of this spiritual view of life rather than a materialistic here I am with a material temple and overt rituals and things that I do to reflect my relationship with God, it now turns inward and the outward view is much more of a secular nature. So you think, well, so is it over? Are we just going to be forever suffering the slings and arrows? The ultimate promise and hope in the book of Daniel is there is a coming kingdom, but it is going to transcend anything that they could have imagined even in the days of David and Solomon. This will be David's greater son and it will be David's greater kingdom and it is going to be the ultimate fulfillment of these promises.

So now instead of being driven by presence, instead of being driven by God in the Holy of Holies and a litany and a ritual and hundreds of priests ministering and putting a grandiose show on earth, we now look for that future. And life is driven and motivated by hope rather than by a present sort of satisfaction. And this again is a thematic turning point in the Old Testament and a lot of the Jews had trouble with it.

Daniel himself has trouble with it and this is why he has to be strengthened and comforted because when he realizes that those glory days of Israel are gone and pretty much gone for good, even when they rebuild the temple, he says it is just going to be knocked back down and there is going to be a flood and there is going to be an abomination set up in it. It has already been knocked down once in his lifetime and he is beginning to hear rumors that they are going back. There is just going to get knocked down again and how depressing if your hope is in this life.

So the first point of general application when we think about, okay we went through kings and prophets and the kingdom kind of left and the exiles hear from Ezekiel and Daniel primarily. What is the message and the theme of the book of Daniel? What is its pertinence and

application for us? First of all, this is really where in the Old Testament God's people are told you have got to quit getting too invested in this life. It is the promise.

It is the hope that sustains us and guides us. That is our reference point on the horizon that enables us to steer a straight course, to have faith and have patience and take the long view. Not to be looking for vindication or even for happiness in this life based on its circumstances.

Our happiness and our hope and our peace are in the intangible world, in the invisible world where they cannot be taken from us. It is actually better. Remember Peter says we have a more sure word of prophecy.

John and Peter both allude to the fact that it is really better to have the word of God now than to have the presence of Christ back in their lifetime. They lived to, through and past the days when the Lord Jesus walked among us and they both say it is better now because we have the Holy Spirit and we have this inward strength and these inward resources that people cannot swarm into the garden and arrest your savior and take him away and hang him on a cross. They cannot forever alter your happy life of going about preaching and teaching and healing the sick.

What a wonderful time but you can imagine the clinical depression that would have hit all of the disciples when they realized those days are gone and they are never coming back. We are never going to walk the hills of Galilee. We are never going to sail on the sea.

We are never going to sit beside the shore and eat and talk with the Lord and ask Him questions. That is all gone. Peter and John both say what we have is better.

Jesus said it is necessary that I leave so that I can send you the comforter. This is a better day and a better way. So Daniel anticipates that.

His gaze is turned from looking back from Chaldea and from Babylon toward Jerusalem to looking to the future and the new heaven and the new earth ultimately. So that is the theme. That is the big idea in Daniel.

Prophecies of the 70 weeks raise your gaze to the horizon from the immediate future. Daniel is thinking okay the 70 years are up. Let's go back to the land.

God says you have 70 weeks of years and I have a bigger plan and a higher and greater Jerusalem with a heavenly temple and an eternal king. Get used to it. Expand your view.

It is hard for us. We are made out of flesh. Ernie Ford used to sing 16 tons that Merle Travis wrote.

Poor man is made out of mud. It is tough for us. We need the Holy Spirit to give us this view.

Daniel didn't have the abiding indwelling of the Holy Spirit like we have. This is why he takes three angel strengthenings before he can cope with this. We can cope with it all day long every

day because we've got the Spirit of God.

So now to resume where we left off last time. We looked at chapter 11 and lest you think that I'm just too lazy to give you the fulfillment of Daniel chapter 11. You can find this in all kinds of commentaries and so on.

But let me just give you a real quick summary. This is going to be just a five or six minute run through here. Daniel 11.

We've already talked about in the first year of Darius. We're pretty sure this is Gubaru. He's the general that is rewarded with rule of the city of Babylon but he doesn't last too long.

He's the guy that agonizes over Daniel in the den. So in his first year you have this allusion that the angel says. You remember back at that time one of the reasons you didn't get any sooner of a visitation is there was wrangling going on with the Prince of Persia even back then and Michael was having some battles.

It's a reminder that and again notice instead of the enemies of the Lord being armies that march into Israel or that keep Israel from trying to get into the land or whatever. We have the suggestion now that what's really important is the spiritual conflict. The one that the angels are engaged in and Paul will talk about later.

So he says I will tell you the truth and this is the truth he alluded to in chapter 10. This is the writing of the scripture of truth. The book of truth.

Three more kings are going to arise. You have Cyrus on the throne coming up and three more kings are going to come up. This will be Cambyses which is Cyrus' son.

He'll rule for about eight years. Then you have this Pseudo-Smyrtos. They're not even sure he was a real brother to Cambyses or son of Cyrus.

He doesn't last but a really short time. Then you have Darius I, Darius the Great and he lasts quite a long time. He's about 35 years or so.

So it says these three kings will arise. So this gets you all the way down to about 486 B.C. When are we talking the first year here of Darius the Great and the third year of Cyrus? Remember we're in the 530's? So this gets us down 50 years or so. 49 years.

Down to the days of Xerxes. Esther's Xerxes. He's going to rule for about 20 years.

It says that these three kings arise in Persia and then the fourth is far richer than them all. By his strength through his riches he will stir up all against the realm of Greece. You remember that Xerxes famously attacked.

Movies have been made about this in recent days. The Battle of Solomus and so on. He tries to take the Greeks.

He fails. He comes back sort of with his tail between his legs and we think this is the time when the old queen is out and the new queen is in and so forth in the days of Esther. Then it says, and when he has arisen, verse 3, a mighty king will arise who will rule with great dominion and do according to his will.

This mighty king is Alexander the Great. When he has arisen his kingdom will be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled. His kingdom shall be uprooted even for others besides these.

I can always remember two of them and I can never remember the other two. The Ptolemies are in Egypt. Seleucus is up there in Asia and then you have the Antipater and those guys.

And then you have the Ptolemies. I'm going to have to look it up now because I can't, I never can remember the other two. The Achaemenids and the, darn it, I had that written down right here.

The ones I'm interested in and the ones that the prophecy is interested in are Asia and Egypt because that's going to be the king of the north and the king of the south respectively. And you see them referred to here in verse 5. The king of the south. These are the Ptolemies in Egypt.

They will become strong as well as one of the princes. And the Ptolemy I Soter. Soter means savior in Greek.

He was one of Alexander's generals and he takes Egypt. And one of his generals was Seleucus who eventually rose and takes Mesopotamia and Syria. So these are going to be your two players over the next few verses.

The king of the south in verse 5 becomes strong and he will have power over him and have dominion. His dominion will be a great dominion. So Ptolemy dies and his son Ptolemy II Philadelphus makes an alliance with the Seleucids and they're going to try to join forces.

It says the daughter of the king of the south shall go to the king of the north to make an agreement. This is who I mentioned last time, this Bernice. She's supposed to go up there and cement the peace between these two halves of Alexander's kingdom.

But Antiochus up there that she's supposed to marry already has a wife named Laodicea, similar to the city Laodicea. And she doesn't really cotton too much to the idea of this Egyptian daughter coming up and sort of taking her place. And so she has Bernice and her infant son assassinated.

Well this doesn't sit well with the Ptolemies who sent the gal up there in good faith. So Antiochus is then poisoned by some of his own people and he doesn't last. So his wife Laodicea rules as regent until her son Seleucus II Callinicus is old enough to assume the throne of the empire.

So that's what's talked about here in verse 6. She shall not retain the power of her authority, neither he nor his authority shall stand. She shall be given up with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times. All of that is a loose allusion to all of this assassination and poisoning and so on.

But from a branch of her roots shall arise one in his place. This is Ptolemy III, Euergetes, and he's unhappy that his sister got murdered. So he goes up there to avenge her.

He captures Antioch and marches all the way to Bactria and defeats the Seleucid navy in the Aegean Sea, recapturing the former conquests of his father in Asia Minor. So now the king of the south is in ascendancy, if you will. Carry their gods captive to Egypt with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold, he will continue more years than the king of the north.

So he goes on to recapture the treasures that had been looted from Egypt in the days of Cambyses. Ptolemy III and Seleucus II eventually make a treaty. We're now down in about 240 BC.

Remember Daniel is writing this stuff down back in about 530. So 433, 332, 332, this is getting down 300 years into the future. But pay attention here because this is the plane going down the runway, talking about all the stuff that's painted on the runway, but it's about to take off.

Also the king of the north in verse 9 will come to the king of the south, but he will return to his own land. So Ptolemy returns home to Egypt and he's given the title by the Egyptians of Euergetes, good worker. You can see ergos there in Greek and eu, eureka, I've found it, or euphonious, anything good has eu in front of it.

So he's Euergetes, he did a good job, he was a good worker, he returns to his own land. Verse 10, his sons will stir up strife and assemble a multitude of great forces and one will certainly come and overwhelm, pass through, he will return to his fortress and stir up strife. This is Seleucus III, follows his father Seleucus II, remember he and Ptolemy III kind of hit it off and did okay.

But his son up in Asia only lives three years and is followed by his younger brother Antiochus III. This is Antiochus the Great, he sets out on a battle of conquest, marches to the borders of Egypt and he is met by Ptolemy IV. So you've got the next generation and they're back wrangling again.

The king of the south will be moved with rage, go out and fight with him, verse 11, with the king of the north who shall muster a great multitude but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. Remember now, we're three hundred years, imagine if somebody was going to talk about our Vietnam War or the war Desert Storm and Afghanistan and all the things that we're currently fighting and if somebody predicted this three hundred years ago, when would that be? That would be in like 1715, this is before George Washington, around the time George Washington is born, somebody would be talking about our current warfare. This is what the

distance is.

Here's another point to observe. This is the most detailed prophecy in the Bible, bar none. Whether you're talking about Revelation, whether you're talking about any of the other prophets, this is the most detailed prophecy and we have history telling us that it was fulfilled.

It is so detailed, you're probably aware, we've alluded to it in the past and you've probably picked it up elsewhere, that there have been a lot of attacks on the book of Daniel and there is no more attacked section of the book of Daniel than this one. Scholars are certain that this had to have been written after the fact because it is so detailed and it so reflects what actually took place. If I can just remind you, Daniel is in the Septuagint and the Septuagint was completed before all of this stuff.

You can't make it fly that this wasn't written until like 130 B.C. or something like that. It's in the Septuagint. Read the Septuagint.

Read the history of the Septuagint and when it was put together, these prophecies, this part right here, had not happened yet when the Septuagint was translated. So that debunks and forever puts a stake through the heart of the vampirical attackers of Daniel is not having credibility. This is God showing off, if you will.

This is God saying, look, I've told you before I'm the God that tells you what's going to happen before it happens. Also keep in mind here the nature of this prophecy. Remember all of the previous prophecies in the book of Daniel.

Here's a little, it's not quite a trivia question, but it's an attention to detail question. What is the difference in this material in Daniel 12 and everything we've seen up to this point in the preceding chapters with regard to the prophecy about here comes Persia, here comes Greece, here comes the feet of clay and all the rest of it. What's different about this? I mentioned it.

I gave you the answer last week. I just said, okay, everybody close your Bibles. I'm going to give you a sheet of paper.

Write down the difference between the prophecy of Daniel. This really spans three chapters here, 10, 11, and 12. It's the biggest deal in the whole book.

It finishes up the book. What's different about this from all of the preceding material? I'll give you a hint. It has to do with form.

What do you think? Anybody? Bueller? Exactly. Everything else was given in vision form and had to be interpreted. Here is the head of gold.

Here is the ram and the goat. It's given symbolically. You have a dream or a vision to hang your hat on and say, well, this is this.

Here's the bear with the ribs between his teeth. Remember all of that? This is all given verbally.

Daniel is strengthened three times and then it's just told to him.

If I can do this without sounding irreverent, God is here demonstrating that He is God. He says, look, I'm not going to dress it up. I'm not going to put it in fanciful form.

I'm not going to leave it open to interpretation. Here's what's going to happen. You compare the detail here with stuff like Nostradamus or other alleged prophecies where you can read that thing and make it mean anything.

We know historically there's only one place where you can have a king of the north and that's Asia. There's only one place you can have a king of the south and that's Egypt. And 300 years before it happened, 100 years before it happened, 200 years before it happened, this prophecy spans centuries and it is fulfilled to the letter.

And there's no mistaking it. So much so that the secular unbeliever must believe that it was written after the fact. Couldn't have been this accurate.

And so it just can't be real. And when you present them with the evidence of early texts and early witnesses and early allusions, Daniel is alluded to by some of the intertestamental books and the evidence of the Septuagint and the rest of it, people put their fingers in their ears and go, la, la, la, la. They just don't want to hear it.

Well, this is what you get. So whether or not you have a detailed interest in the fulfillment, the fulfillment is the message. For everybody, very few people that have ever looked at this prophecy had it future.

Nearly everybody of God's people that's ever looked at Daniel has been looking at it from the past. And it is the confirmation in history. Everybody in the region knew about Antiochus and Ptolemy and knew about Alexander.

Who didn't know? Alexander's empire is going to descend directly to the Romans. Everybody knows this history. It is common knowledge.

It's like history that is common knowledge to us. So did England? Well, it used to be common knowledge. You see that guy that travels around and sticks his microphone and asks people questions.

Who's the current president? Who was George Washington? That's kind of scary. But in this day, people were smart and they were informed. And so this section of Daniel in particular is just a tour de force of prophecy.

It's the biggest, longest, most detailed, most completely and unequivocally fulfilled prophecy in the Bible. And it is a witness. It stands as a witness.

And it's in plain English. You don't have to parse it. You don't have to translate it.

You don't have to figure out what the symbols mean. Even Jesus had to explain the parables to his disciples. You don't need anything here.

What's a king? Where's the south? Go from there. So that's really the point of this. And you can go on down and continue here.

The king of the north is going to raise a greater multitude down in verse 13. Greater than the former certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. And he's going to make a stand.

This is Antiochus III returning to take up arms again against Egypt. And now we're down to about 201 BC. And he's attacking and taking Gaza.

You know where Gaza is? You heard of the Gaza Strip? Well, that's named for Gaza down in Egypt. And so then it says, now in those times, verse 14, many will rise up against the king of the south. Violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision.

Now we've not seen any reference to anything with regard to a vision until you get down to verse 14. Remember I said we're rolling down the runway reading the numbers that are painted on the tarmac there? We're about to overlap. We're about to lift off.

We're going to be getting an elevated view. I saw a real interesting thing where they were superimposing one image over another of a face. And I think it was a life mask.

Don't ask me how I came across this. I was actually researching this lesson a while back. And something that I was googling brought up a life mask of Vincent Price.

And there's a guy that got Vincent Price in his later years. And he's real famous. He's done all of the great Hollywood stars.

He did Grace Kelly. He's done Sean Connery. He's done all of these incredibly famous people.

Alfred Hitchcock. The guy's the most well-known life mask maker ever. And he did this one of Vincent Price.

Well, I don't know why it popped up on my screen. And I hate it when this happens because, you know, rabbit trail alarm. But I just thought, wow, because some life masks don't really look like the person this one did.

And so someplace I went, they sort of blended and superimposed this mask over a photo of Vincent Price to show how lifelike it was. And well, then I got to looking at other things where they did this superimposition. But what struck me, because I was working on this lesson, is that you can see two things in view at the same time.

They match. They're very similar. And, oh, I know.

I know where this led me. My wallpaper has rotating pictures and just a few. And they're ones that I put together last fall.

And there's a picture of my dad in his Marine Corps uniform. Well, there's a picture of me in my uniform. And so I took the picture of me and I brought it over and I made it transparent.

And I thought, you know, how similar is my face to my dad's? I'm just curious. You know, are my eyes at the same distance? I always noticed his left eye was a little low. It's one of the things that made him, you know, a slight asymmetry really characterizes people that are handsome or beautiful.

It's not a perfect symmetry. And if you clone half of their face and reverse it, they don't look like themselves. It's that very slight, it catches your eye.

It's intriguing and it's attractive. And I've always noticed my dad's left eye was a little bit, I thought, well, I wonder if my left eye is a little bit lower. So I superimposed my face over his.

And it was really interesting to see what parts of my face come from my mom and my mom's side and what parts come from my dad and my dad's side. And I faded it back and forth just on a lark. I burned five minutes.

I apologize. Probably burned five minutes talking about it here. But it struck me, this is what's happening in this vision.

It is literal Greek empire history subsequent to the Greeks. You've got the Asian empire with the Seleucids. You've got the Egyptian empire with the Ptolemies.

And it's detailed right down the line, right down the line. But when you get to Antiochus IV, Antiochus Epiphanes, coming up right here, beginning at verse 14, there is this fade in and out. And there's another image that starts showing up behind it.

It gets a little bit transparent and it matches, but then there are some details that no longer match. There's not a single detail in all of this preceding that doesn't exactly match history. But it starts to lift off.

And your clue to this is in verse 14. Violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision. In fulfillment of the vision.

We're back to remember the vision that takes the long view. I've been sort of showing off here on how I can tell you exactly what's going to happen. It's all been written in the Scripture of Truth.

But the Scripture of Truth is polyvalent. It is multi-meaning in a lot of cases. It has an immediate, an intermediate, and a long-range significance.

And in some cases, we talk about double fulfillment and things like this. Right here is where

that starts to happen. So as you move down here, and it says, in those times many will rise up against the king of the south.

In history, there were some people in Jerusalem. Remember, they've been back there a long time now. And they think the Seleucids are the bee's knees.

They're close to us. They're our allies. We'll side with them against Egypt.

We're nervous about Egypt. We'll worry about them. So there's this pro-Seleucid party that rises up in Jerusalem.

But there's an Egyptian general named Skopas. And he pushes all the way to and through Israel, and he puts that whole thing down. He says, no, no, you guys, we're claiming your area.

But violent men, exalting themselves in fulfillment of the vision, they shall fall, starts looking forward to the seventieth week of Daniel. And there are going to be others who want to enter into the covenant for a week. But that covenant is going to be broken, and those are going to fall.

They're going to put their confidence in the Antichrist. They're not going to obey the Lord's warning to flee. They're going to try to go along to get along.

They're like the Jews that didn't leave Poland and didn't leave Italy and didn't leave other places in Europe. If you haven't seen it lately, if you haven't seen *The Winds of War* and *War and Remembrance*, I recommend the books, first and foremost, by Herman Wouk. And then beyond that, the wonderful adaptation to the screen that was done with Robert Mitchum as one of the central characters.

Because it takes you to Europe and it shows you this Jewish penchant for just ducking down and trying to survive through, and not leaving when it's time to leave. And this is what's going to get a lot of them in the seventieth week, in the time of the tribulation, Jacob's trouble. They're going to do that same hunkering down, and they're going to suffer the same fate they've historically suffered when they don't pay attention to God's Word, and they don't understand God's plan and purpose for them.

That's happening here. So then in verse 15, it says the king of the north will come, cast up a siege mound, capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not stand their ground.

When Scopas and the Egyptians come up, naturally the Syrians are going to counterattack. So Antiochus III catches Scopas and kind of hits him on the flank, and he's got to retreat and get back out of the Palestine area there. And he's now in Sidon.

That's in Lebanon now, right on the border almost. Anyway, he's going to get trapped there, and he's under siege. And he eventually loses Sidon to Seleucus III.

So then Antiochus III, pumped up with his victory, moves on south into Palestine, and he takes

Jerusalem in 198. So then you've got Ptolemy V, who is just a boy, and Antiochus III makes an alliance with him. This is, he will set his face to come, this is 1117 of Daniel, come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace, which he will put into effect.

He will give him the daughter of women to ruin it, but she will not take a stand for him or be on his side. This is Antiochus III, remember this is Epiphanes' father now, making an alliance with Ptolemy V, who is the boy king down in Egypt, and to cement this alliance. Remember how before they tried to cement it with a marriage, and so they sent an Egyptian gal up to marry him, and it didn't go well, and there's poisoning and murder and assassination.

Well, this time, they send the gal the other way. And so Antiochus's daughter, Cleopatra, not the Cleopatra, not Elizabeth Taylor Cleopatra, this is too early. That Cleopatra is down in the days of Julius Caesar, and that's within a century of Jesus.

We're still about a hundred years before that. Well, maybe not a hundred years, but yeah, about a hundred years, because we're down around 181 B.C. So Ptolemy V, this boy king, marries Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus III. But Cleopatra was supposed to go down there and say, okay, I'm representing my dad and the Asian empire up there.

Well, she actually becomes a fan of all things Egyptian. She becomes more Egyptian than the Egyptians, and she says boo to her dad and Asia and all the rest of it. So that doesn't work out too well either.

And after her husband dies in 181, she actually rules for a short time as kind of a regent in Egypt. And she's all about Egypt, and she doesn't care anything about this. So it says then the king of the north will turn his face to the coastlands in verse 18.

I'm skipping here a little bit, because this is very detailed, and it tracks all the way down. But you also have some echoes and some overtones. Similar things are going to happen.

People are going to say, wow, doesn't this sound just like the days preceding Jesus coming the first time? It's going to happen in the days preceding Jesus coming the second time. It's going to happen in the tribulation. And these movements and these influences are going to be mirrored in the 70th week in the movements of Antichrist and in the positioning of forces in and around the holy city.

It's going to be very similar. People who know their scriptures are going to really start having déjà vu, and they're going to know we need to get out of here. So if you look at the long view here, the long view, when you see these continued details that are fulfilled, Antiochus becomes a sharp forerunner and echo of the Antichrist.

And his desecration of the temple, his violation of treaty and everything else is a foretaste and is a superimposed vision. You can see the Antichrist behind this. That's your view beyond the immediate history that's coming up in the next few centuries from Daniel and beyond the gap

that we currently occupy into the 70th week.

And that really begins back up in verse 14. So, as you continue, and we could track these details all the way down, you can look this up. There are plenty of places that will give you sort of a blow-by-blow, a chart-by-chart.

Here's the verse in Daniel and here's the history. And it goes for pages. Seleucus the fourth is murdered.

Ptolemy the seventh comes up. This is around verse 22. And you're only halfway through the chapter.

So, again, trust me when I tell you this is a tour de force of prophecy in advance, fulfilled in detail, but then having a foretaste of what is to come. But the problem you run into is, okay, so if this is prophecy not only of the immediate future, but in the long term, what do we do with this and prophecy that is based on it, such as what Jesus says in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25, and what John says in the Revelation. And let me give you a real quick synopsis and some definitions, because this is where you would be labeled, and whether or not you want to call yourself this or not, in terms of your understanding of Jesus coming to take us to Himself.

Because, ultimately, if we say the big idea, what do we say the big idea is? We're not so worried about prevailing in circumstances and overcoming and having a literal physical kingdom. We don't have to take America back for God. The kingdom is spiritual.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood. It is the principalities and powers. We look at this turning point in Daniel where you read into the picture on a higher invisible warfare.

And these things that take place on the world stage are context for our individual decisions before the Lord, to be obedient and to be faithful and to be motivated by hope. So, having said all of that, what is our hope? Are we hoping for the Second Coming? Is there just one return of the Lord? Is there two separated by seven years? Is it the rapture first and then the 70th week? What's going on with that? Well, in a nutshell, we, our understanding, at least if you share my understanding, we are premill and pre-trib. We believe in a pre-trib, pre-tribulational rapture, that the interlude between the 69th and the 70th week is the age of the Gentiles that Daniel is anticipating here and that the Lord Jesus talks about when he says, Jerusalem will be trodden underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

And by the way, we are still in the times of the Gentiles and what's your opinion of Jerusalem? It is still being trodden underfoot by those who are not God-fearing, Bible-believing Jews. Go to the Temple Mount. Who's going to let you in if you want to go visit up there? It's not the Jews.

It's the Arabs. Arabs control the Temple Mount. Arabs have got the Dome of the Rock and it is still being trodden underfoot.

You do not have God-fearing, Bible-believing Jews in charge of that city. So, until that happens, you're still in the times of the Gentiles. So, not to start something I can't finish, we believe that those times of the Gentiles comprehend our time and that the times of the Gentiles are going to end with the Lord Jesus returning in the air to take us to Himself.

This is 1 Thessalonians. This is Corinthians. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God.

The dead in Christ will rise first. Dead in Christ. Old Testament saints are never, ever in any place in the Bible described as in Christ.

We are body of Christ. We are in Christ. We are baptized into Him by the Holy Spirit.

This never happened in Old Testament days. Daniel is not in Christ. Moses is not in Christ.

Abraham is not in Christ. Melchizedek is not in Christ. Daniel, Noah, Ezekiel, name your Old Testament, and notable, they are not in Christ.

The dead in Christ will rise first. We who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall be caught up together with them to do what? To meet the Lord in the air. This is the single most important distinction between the rapture and the second coming.

Meet the Lord in the air. John 14.6. If I go away, 14.3, I go to prepare a place for you. If I go, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

Where is he? Heavenly realms. I go to prepare that place. I'll come again and get you, because I'm in the heavenly realms, you will join me in the heavenly realms.

Not heaven per se. Heaven was already existing and in place when Jesus spoke. He said, I'm making a new place for you.

And when it's finished and the time of the Father comes, I'll come get you and we'll go there. So that where I am, there you may be also. That is not the earth.

We meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. It is the air.

It is the heavenlies. It is an ethereal, non-material realm. That's why we are looking at Daniel and realizing that our warfare, our attainments, our fruit are in the immaterial realm.

It can have reflections. It can have outworkings. It can have circumstantial impact.

But the substance of it is spiritual. Our fruit is spiritual. Our life is spiritual.

The judgment on us is going to be spiritual, not what did we do, what did we think. What we think results in what we do. But we'll be judged on the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Judgment seat of Christ. And that will be reflected in the deeds done in the body, but it is

immaterial. So not to worry if you look around and things seem to be a shambles.

If there are shambles in our soul, now we need to be worried. Meet the Lord in the air. That, if you think of two cuckoo clocks on the wall, ever since the 69th week when the Lord Jesus appeared and offered the kingdom to Israel and was not accepted, that Israel clock stopped.

That stopped in the middle of the week. There were 69 weeks past. Remember there were 7 and then there were 62.

And the Messiah is cut off, but not for himself. In the middle of the week, that's the next week, the 70th week. In between the 69th and 70th times of the Gentiles, that's where we are.

It ends with the rapture of the church. We go to be with the Lord. We're off the scene.

He's off the scene. He takes us and installs us in the place that he has prepared. Now he is the Lamb opening the seals on the scroll of Revelation.

And you stop the church clock because we are out of time off this earth and you start this pendulum swinging for the last seven years revealed to Daniel in chapter 9. And that is the time of Israel. Now let me ask you something. It's real simple.

All of this agony about mid-trib rapture, post-trib rapture, that we are pre-tribulational rapture because think about this. If the clock starts ticking again for the 70th week and somebody comes to faith in God through Christ, what are they? Are they an heir of the Old Testament promises or are they body of Christ? It is mass confusion if it's sort of both or neither or there's some kind of special case. It's very simple if you understand that anybody that comes to faith between Pentecost and the rapture is body of Christ.

Baptized by the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, all of the promises belonging to that covenant in the blood of the Lord Jesus and His body belong to us. We leave. Church opportunity.

And by the way, Jesus isn't going to come with His body incomplete. His body is complete. Everybody's in it that's ever going to be in it.

And we are uniquely a present from the Father to the Son. He has His own people. He's the firstborn among many brethren.

We're gone. Stop that clock ticking. Start the Israel clock ticking.

Two minutes after the rapture, if somebody looks around and says, you know what, I think that Bible is true. I believe in God. Guess what? He is heir of the Old Testament promises.

He is Israel. He is no different than any other Old Testament saint. And if He ends up being a martyr and He's crying out under the altar, He is still going to be resurrected when the rest of the Old Testament saints are resurrected at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

It's super simple. Just remember that the 70th week is every bit as much of the age of Israel as the previous 69 weeks and all of the centuries before that. You come to faith in the tribulation.

People say, well, you know, I can wait and if I see the rapture happen, I'll just believe right afterward. You are in a whole different world. I can't even say you're in a whole different world, brother, because you're not a brother.

You're going to be an Old Testament saint. So we are pre-tribulational in our understanding that the church does not go through it. There are people who are preterists when it comes to Daniel, when it comes to Matthew 24 and 25 from the Lord, when it comes to Revelation.

What does it mean to be a preterist? A preterite is a past tense, right? So if you're a preterist, you believe that everything Jesus said on the Mount of Olives about wars and rumors of wars and the end is not yet and the Son of Man in the heavens, they believe that all of it was fulfilled. It's all been fulfilled. When Jesus said this generation will not pass away until it's all fulfilled, they believe that means the generation He was talking to so a preterist says there is no unfulfilled prophecy in Daniel, in Matthew 24 and 25, or in Revelation.

It's all already happened. And brothers and sisters, they believe this is the kingdom of the Father. This is as good as it gets.

Woe unto you is all I can say if you're a preterist because you have got another think coming. If you think that this is the best God can do in terms of a kingdom, this is heaven on earth, this is the streets of gold, and they have to spiritualize it all and the kingdom is within you and hopeless. There's no talking to those people.

And sadly, a lot of them get hung up on this generation will not pass away. Remember when I was talking about and belabored the point that there's two things in view? When Jesus said this generation will not pass away, the immediate fulfillment, no two stones left upon another in the temple, destruction of Jerusalem when you see the abomination flee, Nero and all the rest of it, yes, a lot of that happened in 70 A.D. But Jesus' prophecy lifts off the ground just like this one does. And there are portions of it, when He talks about you'll see the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens and as lightning goes from the east to the west, none of that happened in 70 A.D. It's an overlay.

There's a fade. It's kind of like, and I've seen them do this occasionally, you have a young actor and an old actor, an old picture of the same actor, and you fade them and you just see, whoa, there's the age. Here he is young, here he is old.

Sean Connery young, Sean Connery old. Vincent Price young, no mustache. Vincent Price old, mustache.

Sagging lines, more scary. Well, this is a fade. And so when Jesus says this generation, is He talking about the generation to whom He's speaking? Yes.

And within 40 years of Him speaking, 70 A.D., a lot of that took place. But He is also talking about this generation that sees the abomination of desolation and that sees the Antichrist come in. And that generation will not pass away until all the rest of it is fulfilled.

So which generation is it? Is it Jesus' generation and the disciples' generation, or is it the generation of the 70th week? Yes. Yes. Just like Daniel.

Was this all fulfilled in the centuries following the days of Daniel? Yes. Is some of it still to be fulfilled? Yes. It's both.

God's word is not just stereo, it's 3-D, it's 4-dimensional in a way that we have a real hard time grasping. This is why Daniel fainted twice trying to grasp these words, just getting ready to understand these words. It's tough.

We don't think like this. We just want a little simple nursery rhyme, you know, Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet and a spider sat down beside her. And we just want it cut and dried, simple pieces.

God's plan is so much bigger and grander than this, and we have to adjust. There are things beyond us, there are things outside of us. It is now and it is then.

He is the Alpha and the Omega. It is the already and it is the not yet. You are saved, but you're not saved.

You are slated for a resurrection body, but you don't have it yet. We are already sanctified in the eyes of God, but we are not yet perfected experientially. It's an already, not yet.

And there are many, many aspects of this that feed into this hope, this look to the horizon, stay the course, be patient. You have need of endurance. After you've suffered a while, you'll inherit the promises.

In this world you're going to have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I've overcome the world. Now, has Jesus actually overcome the world yet? Is this an overcome world that we're looking at? Watch the news.

Watch CNN if you really want to get a jaded view. Is this an overcome world? Has Jesus overcome this world? Well, He has and He hasn't. He has secured the strategic victory 2,000 years ago.

But all things... Remember what Paul says? We do not yet see all things put under His feet. And yet, from the heavenly perspective, all things are under His feet. Read the last part of Ephesians chapter 1. All things are under His feet.

He's the head of all things to the church. Well, look around at the church. Does this look like something Jesus is the head of? It's scary.

There's an already and a not yet. We look to the invisible. We look to the coming glory.

And that's our reality. It's more real to us than the materiality around us. We're called to that in Daniel chapter 11 and chapter 12.

Now, look at chapter 12 real quickly. Again, if you just scan the last portion of chapter 11, you've still got details. He's going to stretch out His hand against countries in verse 42.

The land of Egypt will not escape. A lot of this is going to be fulfilled by Antichrist. He'll have power over the treasures of gold and silver, all the precious things of Egypt.

The Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at His heels. He's going to have the Arabic world at His beck and call. News from the east and the north will trouble Him.

He will go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. He will plant the tents of His palace between the seas and the glorious land. Historically speaking, this occurs in the days of Antiochus and so on.

But a lot of this no longer fits history. The last portion of the chapter, people really have to start stretching, and, well, it kind of fits, but it doesn't. We've faded out.

We're looking to the future. And naysayers will say, well, see, the prophecy was doing real well, and then it flaked out and fell apart. Or they were writing in 130 B.C., and some of the stuff that they guessed at didn't really happen.

And it's just nonsense. You have to understand this dual view. But look at chapter 12, verse 1. At that time, Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.

Notice he says, at that time. At what time? At the time that has been being described in the last portion of chapter 11. At that time, Michael is standing up.

And we've been introduced to Michael, coincidentally, because of the delay in getting the message back in chapter 10. That made an occasion for him to be introduced. Here is the suggested application of that observation.

Many times, things are introduced into our lives, and we can't figure out what it's for. You could imagine Daniel hearing the angel, and the angel gives him all of this back story about why it took so long to get there with the answer to his prayers, and the response to his mourning, and his interest in the future of his people. And he gets these details about the prince of Persia, and Michael, and by the way, three years ago, the situation was kind of reversed.

And Daniel is thinking, what are you giving me this for? What I'm really interested in is, can we go back to the land, build the temple, and have a big kingdom? And he says, no, there's going to be Gentile kingdoms, and it's going to go on for a long time. But now, he says, if you're going to understand the time of the end, you need to know who Michael is, and what he does, and that information I gave you three chapters ago is pertinent. Same thing with us.

There are things that come into our lives, there are portions of scripture we study, and we think, boy, you know, the Lord knows I'm going to church, and the pastor is on a mission here to get through this particular book, or this particular chapter, or this particular study, and I just don't get it. I'm in another place, I'm in another time, I've got needs, I need something that will directly apply to what I'm looking at right now in front of me. I have two things to say about that.

A, look at this. We're getting information sometimes that is for the future. Maybe not even in this life, maybe it is in the next life.

And we're going to need it, and it is from God, and we need to take it on board and value it. Remember when Gabriel told Mary that a sword was going to pierce her heart? Remember what she did? Because she's perhaps the greatest lady in the Bible. Who would you pick to be the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ? I would pick the greatest lady in the Bible, if it was me, and I suspect God did that.

What did she do when Gabriel said, a sword is going to pierce your heart? Remember what she did? She stored up all these things in her heart, and when she stood at the foot of the cross, 33 years later, she said, ah, here's part of what Gabriel was talking about. I get it. I've been prepared by the Word of God for this.

She was an incredible believer. Daniel does the same thing. We should do the same thing.

Don't dismiss or trivialize truth from the Word of God, because you can't find an immediate application. We build it in. We ponder it.

We lay it up in our heart, because God's giving it to us for a reason. Secondly, remember that the things that we learn may be for someone else. It's a group, right? If God needs to invest and to encourage and to restore, it may be for someone else.

If we tune out and say, well, that's obviously for someone else. He's talking about idolatry. He's talking about being not drunk with wine or in his excess or whatever.

That's not my problem. Keep in mind that fellowship with somebody who does need that, what if they come and say, you know, I'm really so glad that that came up, but I've got a few questions. If you tuned out and weren't paying attention, God's not going to be able to use that fellowship and that speaking the truth in love.

He's going to have to send that person who's looking for encouragement and support and additional understanding, God will have to send them to somebody else, because we didn't think it was worth our while. Doesn't apply to me. Well, you're not Jonah under the broom tree, and we want to be two or three gathered together in the Lord Jesus in the midst.

We want to be available. We want to be usable by God, whether in the immediate hour or in a day. Or in a week, or in a month, or in a year.

We're familiar. And if somebody has a question, sometimes you're in an online discussion. A lot of us get tangled up with things and it just comes out of the blue.

Somebody says, you know what, I was in a discussion the other day and I really need some help with this. You say, you know what, it didn't particularly interest or apply to me, but just a while back we were in that passage and here's what I learned. Daniel is memorizing these words and he's setting them down.

Do you think he fully understood that there were going to be hundreds of millions of people reading his prophecy throughout the centuries that God is describing here? I doubt that Daniel had any notion. God didn't say, the angel didn't say, now Daniel, be sure and get all this down because I'm going to put it in a Bible that's going to be reprinted by the billions and infinite numbers of people are going to look at this, so be sure you get it right. Daniel was faithful because Daniel loved the Lord.

Daniel was interested in the truth of God, whatever it was and whatever it contained. He learned it, he stored it up in his heart, he reflected it in his writing, and we are the beneficiaries. And we want to do that same thing.

There are a lot of believers in the modern day who, if they have any expertise in the scriptures, it's all New Testament. They don't know Job from Jonah. They don't know Abraham from Ahithophel.

Honestly, I am not kidding you. There are people who, we take it for granted that everybody knows the Bible stories. Go start talking to young people who have grown up in church and do not know the most rudimentary stories of the Bible.

You mention a name and they say, who? Uriah the what? It's startling. It's depressing. We want to have a good grasp of the whole counsel of scripture, the entire mind of Christ.

So when you get to 12, Michael is going to stand up and there will be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered. Now did any of this happen in 70 A.D.? Were the people in Israel delivered when the legions of Titus came in and razed the city and scattered everybody to the four winds and devastated and destroyed so much that the Temple Mount isn't even there? As near as we can tell, there is an absence of dirt where that thing used to sit.

And look at verse 2, many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. This is sobering. Why would you be awakened when you sleep in the dust, but it is to shame and everlasting contempt? Life is too short to spend it on stuff that is going to have this result.

And I think any sane person's view. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Isn't it interesting that it doesn't talk about personal accomplishment or personal understanding? It

says those who shine, those who exude this glory from God, who reflect the glory of God, and those who turn many to righteousness.

Again, if you say, well, this doesn't apply to me. I need, I want, I hope to get, I want something that will be useful to me. Look at the standard of judgment here, those who turn many to righteousness.

If you can talk about what is and isn't righteousness, what is and isn't a priority in the plan and purpose of God? Maybe somebody's got a problem that's just not anything you ever expected to encounter. I've had close personal contact in my past life with transgendered people. I didn't see that coming.

I would not have stored up any divine truth pertaining to, well, what if? What if you get in this situation? If you do that and have operations and you convert yourself permanently into an opposite gender, and then you wake up and decide you want to pursue the plan and purpose of God, are you beyond some sort of line that cannot be recrossed? What's the status? Well, you don't know what God may put in your path as an opportunity to turn someone to righteousness, to invite them to share an understanding that you have. So my encouragement from this passage and this section of Daniel is twofold. First of all, remember that the warfare and the opportunity for us is in the invisible realm.

It's reflected in circumstance. It's reflected in context. But the accomplishment and the fruit, the pruning and the bearing of more fruit is invisible.

Remember when Jesus told the disciples, I'm the vine, you're the branches. Abide in me and you'll bear much fruit. And if you're doing well, my Father is going to prune you so that you will bear more fruit.

Is any of that literal? It's in the spiritual realm. It's in the invisible realm. That's what is being alluded to here.

Turn many to righteousness. Shine with wisdom. You, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end.

Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase. And if you look at the hockey stick of the information age and the technology and the running to and fro, and how many are many? Look at any graph of the population of the world from the last 2,000 years. Every one of those areas that is mentioned here is just a hockey stick in our day, a hockey stick graph.

It started low, it gradually, gradually rose, and now it has just exponentially increased. Every single one of these things. Words and books, how many people there are and how much to and fro they run to, knowledge.

So I, Daniel, looked and there stood two others, one on a river bank and the other on a river bank. And one said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, how long

shall the fulfillment of these wonders be? And notice they are called wonders. All of that that was covered in chapter 11, all of that laborious detail, the wonders.

How long will it be? I heard the man clothed in linen above the waters of the river when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time. A time, times, and half a time. This is often related to the second half of the tribulation.

If it's a seven week period, then half of it is one, two, and a half, or three and a half. So you have a time, that would be one year, times, which is two years, and a half a time, which would be a half, and you add that up, you get three and a half, 1260 days. I will suggest something else to you, and this goes back to our prophecy of the days, when I suggested to you that that might be years, and crushed the hope of an immediately soon rapture.

You remember that? Understand, son of man, the vision refers to the time of the end, back in chapter 8, verse 17. And if the days are years, and the days are years, again in verse 26 of chapter 8, the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true, seal it up, it refers to many days in the future. Those times and those days, I suggested go actually maybe a hundred years from now.

If you take it literally, we'd have about a hundred years to go. Well, look at what it says here, a time, times, and half a time, from the time of Daniel, which is circa 500 BC, just to round it off. If a time is a thousand years, you go a thousand years, and that's AD 500.

You go times, and you get to 1500, and to 2500, it could be a long time in the future. It's so depressingly far into the future that people don't want to take it that way. A time, times, and half a time.

So the real question here is, what is the measuring point from which this is taken? It says a time, times, and half a time in verse 7. When the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. Although I heard, I did not understand. And I said, My Lord, what shall be the end of these things? He said, Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Many shall be purified, made white and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. These are the wise that are going to shine. Wickedness is going to continue.

From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1290 days. Blessed is he who waits and comes to the 1335 days. This is going to require its own treatment, so wicked will resolve these time references.

It will be our last Daniel study before we move back sort of into the king's side and look at the history and the movement forward to the attempted restoration of the kings. But of course there is no king, there are only governors. They never again have suzerainty, but we'll look at

the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

But we've got one more Daniel session, and we'll look at this last portion of Daniel 12, and look at this overlay idea. These days refer to the days of Antiochus, but they also refer to the seventieth week. It's not either or, it's both and.

And parts of it are fulfilled in one, parts of it are referred to the other. Did Michael your prince stand up in the days of Antiochus? We have no evidence of that. This is going to be the time of the end.

So in summary and in conclusion for tonight, the challenge to us is to not be too much in this world. Circumstantial challenges face all of us, and I can think of every person that is currently listening to the sound of my voice, and I know of specific challenges to each and every one of you, including myself. And our mission, our task, and the exhortation from the book of Daniel is, yes, you've got an immediate application, an immediate opportunity of fulfillment, but at the same time, take the long view.

Some of what we are learning now is not just for the present, it is for the future. And if I can't find a pertinence right now, believe me, it's pertinent, and it is going to be pertinent in a higher and greater way. Would you rather try to find application in an earthly kingdom or in the heavenly kingdom? Would you rather be prepared for a short-term kingdom that can easily be overturned by an assassination or poisoning or an incursion from another land? The message of Daniel 11 is, earthly kingdoms come and go, rise and fall, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

The fixed and future kingdom of God is never conquered, it's never overturned. Nobody poisons that king, nobody assassinates that line. It is fixed and permanent and future.

Do you want your treasure on earth or do you want your treasure in heaven? Here moth and rust corrupt, thieves break in and steal. What did Jesus say? Lay up your treasure in the invisible realm where nothing can take it from you. Remember the famous saying, he is no fool who exchanges that which he cannot keep for that which he cannot lose.

And that in many ways sums up the message of this portion of Daniel. Well, we'll pick up here next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you for the exhortation that lifts our eyes to the hills from whence comes our strength to the Lord Jesus who is even at this very moment seated at your right hand, interceding on our behalf, calling us to himself, reminding us that we will be where he is in the not too distant future and that this is a time of preparation, a time of testing, a time of opportunity to learn and to grow. We pray that your Holy Spirit will minister these things to our hearts, that we will be prepared not only to invest them in our own lives but to be prepared to share them as we speak the truth with one another, to be an encouragement as we exercise our spiritual gifts, to be a light that shines in the midst of our crooked and perverse generation

and at the same time builds in that wisdom and that understanding that will enable us to shine like stars in the age that is to come. We pray that in all things the Lord Jesus will be glorified both now and at that future day.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.