

## Kings and Prophets 16-10-20b

Let's continue our study now, again, with Daniel chapter 4 and specifically looking at these dreams. We've already seen in the first session that there is a pattern, there's an archetype that Daniel is aware of as a prince of the Hebrews. He will have been schooled in the Old Testament in the books of Moses and he knows the story of Joseph and those three dream sets that are a part of that story.

And obviously, we try to think of scripture that pertains when we find ourselves in a situation that needs our attention and we're looking for divine guidance, we're looking for light on our path. We think, well, what part of God's word would pertain? I can't imagine Daniel being confronted with a king's dream that needs interpreting and not thinking back to his predecessor, Joseph, who heard a king's dream that needed interpreting and other people's dreams that needed interpreting and his own dream that had a meaning. And we see this same thing taking place in Daniel as happened in Genesis.

So we looked at Daniel chapter 2 and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar regarding this image, which is one thing being replaced by another in an iterative fashion. And there is the number five associated with it, followed by this stone, which is the sixth thing. In Pharaoh's dreams, he had the seven productive, well-off things replaced by seven that were not.

And seven is the number of God's completion and perfection. It's four plus three. It is the six days of labor followed by the day of rest.

And then on the eighth day, something new starts. Why do you think Hebrew male children were circumcised on the eighth day? It is the day of a new beginning. The first seven days have completed something, and the eighth day is the day of new life.

Leviticus 14, the cleansed leper, he is reinitiated into the life of Israel on the eighth day after his cleansing. He even looks like a baby, shaving off his eyebrows and so on. So what is the import of it? What does it mean to us? We say, well, God is telling Nebuchadnezzar what's going to happen in the future.

Why would Nebuchadnezzar care about the Medes and the Persians and the Greeks and the legs of iron and the feet of iron mixed with clay? Why would he care? He's the head of gold. As long as he's around, it's going to be a head of gold. He doesn't care.

Why would the Babylonians care? They don't care. Who does care? Every person that has heard the teaching of the word of God from Daniel's day to this. And who are those people? God's people.

Currently, that's you and me. It is for us that these things were written down upon whom the ends of the ages have come. And all of us, everybody in every generation that is seeking the things of God, asking, seeking and knocking, seeking it as for his treasure, wanting the fear of

the Lord and the knowledge of God, comes to these and God ministers it to our hearts.

What does it tell us? What is its message? Regardless of the way things may appear, this image made with hands out of what man considers to be precious materials will disappear, to be replaced by that supernatural stone of God's manufacture. They didn't see it coming. The whole time Nebuchadnezzar was looking at this image, he didn't say, you know, I heard a thunderous noise and I felt behind me as though there might be a giant stone made without hands rolling up to smash this.

He never saw it coming. It wasn't a part of his rationale. It wasn't a part of his evidence package.

And yet here it comes and destroys this that seems so valuable and so permanent. Why? For one reason, it stands on feet of mixed composition, which is the weakest of all of the elements, meaning that as human history goes forward, even though it seems to be advancing, iron is stronger and more resilient. We don't make our cars out of gold and silver or brass.

We make our cars out of steel, which comes from iron. Why? It's the most utilitarian as human history has gone on. A lot of the ornate finery that characterized palaces in Europe and palaces in ancient China and Japan and in Africa and other places in the world has been replaced with a far more utilitarian economic model of government.

It's functional. It's practical. It's down to earth, literally.

That's why the feet stand on the earth. But as it does so, it becomes inherently weaker and weaker because it is further from heaven, further from consciousness of God. Nebuchadnezzar is conscious of God.

Darius the Mede is God's own man. But by the time you get to the Greeks and the Romans, the knowledge and the fear of the Lord diminishes and is gone. And as you get further from heaven and closer to earth, all of this grist and grit that we're so familiar with and is familiar to us because we're made out of it.

You're farther from God and farther from heaven. And that is the basis of its destruction. And a rock carved without hands is going to obliterate and replace it all.

And this, of course, is the Lord Jesus. This is a message for us. And we say, well, okay, I got the message.

What does that mean to me? In my daily life, what am I investing in? What am I plowing my diligence and my effort and my focus, my heart, my relationships, my resources, my time? What am I investing in? What is my life being spent on? Time is money. You've all seen the clock in our kitchen, wedding gift right on the glass. One of my favorite sayings, time is money.

Not in the human sense. Time is a gift from God to invest. It is spiritual money.

What do we do with it? Do we fritter it away? Do we spend it incautiously and without purpose? A certain amount of entertainment is beneficial. A certain amount of relaxation, a certain amount of recreation is a wonderful benefit. It is restful.

It is restorative. It builds fellowship. When you do creative and fun things with your family and with your friends and with people who have worth and value, this is productive.

We don't always have to be walking around quoting scripture and, you know, spouting about the wrath to come. It's wonderful to have these things, but in their place and in proportion, in the same way that it's okay to spend money a bit frivolously now and again. But we don't spend all our money frivolously.

We don't fail to buy groceries. We don't fail to think ahead. We don't fail to save.

We don't fail to put something aside for a rainy day. Our frivolous and recreational spending should be a relatively small proportion of the budget, right? Just enough for that to serve its purpose, to put icing on our cake or cream in our coffee or whatever it might be. But you don't just drink straight cream all the time, do you? You don't just eat syrup and no pancakes.

Fill in your own metaphor. But we want to invest in things of substance. Time is money.

Redeem the time because the days left to themselves are evil. If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time. If you do not have purpose, if you do not have focus, if you do not have an objective, if you're not working toward a meaningful, divinely approved goal, you have squandered that time.

It's gone and you can never get it back. There's no do-over. There's no second chance.

There's no rewinding the clock. You don't get a DeLorean. You don't get to go back and try again.

You get one shot at each day. Somewhere in there, we should be making a significant investment in the eternal future. That's what Nebuchadnezzar's dream means.

God has given us the picture of history. It is moving toward a conclusion. There's numbers in both dreams.

Seven cows, seven heads of grain, five phases of kingdom in that image. Why? What do those numbers tell us? In God's plan, there are definitions and there are limits. There's not an infinite number of kingdoms.

There's not an infinite number of years of plenty or an infinite number of years of famine. It's not variable. It's not chaotic.

It's not random. It's not unpredictable. It is precise.

It is decreed. It is ordained. It is managed and overseen by the Lord God in heaven.

There are exactly seven years of plenty. There are exactly seven years of famine. There are exactly these five kingdoms in which you have the presence of God's people, Israel.

Now, have we had kingdoms between the Lord Jesus and the rapture that aren't in the image? Yes. Just like China. Just like Africa.

Just like the aboriginal and the Japanese dynasties and all the rest of it. What's going on there? No people of God in them. There is no Israel of God in this age.

So these kingdoms can come and go as they will. We're in the feet of iron mixed with clay. There's no count.

How many particles of iron? How much clay? It doesn't tell us. Why? That's the phase we're in. And it turns a corner at the heel and starts going a different direction, right? It's been vertical, vertical, vertical, vertical.

You get to the feet. They stick out horizontally. There's something new, something different, something strange going on here.

And this, of course, is going to be at the rapture. And then you have the final seven years of the age of Israel. And with Israel back in play as the people of God, now the image pertains.

It's precise. It's exact. It's intelligently designed.

And it communicates. It is given to us in advance. I am the God who tells you what is going to happen before it happens.

And he did such a good job of that that the critics all say, well, it was actually written afterward. It's too accurate. It's too precise.

It has too many details. So it had to have been written after. And then they discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls, and they found scraps of documents and allusions that are well before when they say it had to have been written after.

There's manuscript evidence now before. And those guys, most of them dead now, all have egg on their collective faces because they insisted that Daniel could not have been written until after the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, until after the days of Alexander, until after the days of so much of what it portends and foresees because God is the God who tells us what's going to happen before it happens. And remember what I said about evidence? If people don't like the evidence, they will explain it away.

They will rationalize it away because it's not a matter of the quality of the evidence. It's a matter of the quality of the heart looking at the evidence. And Jesus Christ can appear to you in person, and you can look right at him and decide he's not really Jesus.

How do I know that? It happened 2,000 years ago to scores of people who were supposed to be experts. They were the most educated, learned, well-versed people in the Bible and in Scripture and in prophecy ever. And they looked right at Jesus and missed him because they did not.

There's none so blind as he who will not see. And save your breath. You don't have to argue yourself until you run out of it.

Reasonable evidence. If God the Holy Spirit confronting someone about sin, righteousness, and judgment does not create an occasion for them to decide to turn and to pursue and to seek in humility, God resists the proud. God gives grace to the humble.

If there is no humility, there is no turning. If there is no turning, God the Holy Spirit can't convince them. Nothing we say or do is going to convince them.

Let them go. Let them visit the swine trough. Perhaps they will reach the point of the prodigal and turn back.

But for us, what do these dreams mean? God is telling us. This gives us confidence. This gives us consistency.

This gives us hope. We are in the hands of a great and loving Heavenly Father who knows exactly what He's doing. Nothing overtakes us, but God already had it figured out.

He has balanced it. He has calibrated it. We may think it's heavy, but it is not too much to bear.

I was sure that I was going to fail several things back when I went through very intensive military training. But God sent me there. And come to find out, He knew more than I did because I didn't fail.

I passed. Miraculously so. And you don't know what you can do when with God all things are possible.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me, it says in the King James. All things. And that's all things that we are assigned.

All things that are put in our path. It is not too heavy a cross. It is not too deep a valley.

It is not too difficult a churning river to cross because we are in Him. And in Him we partake of His strength. We partake of His acceptability to the Father.

We partake of His intercession on our behalf. We partake of His Spirit. We partake of the Word, capital W. And that's the message of these dreams.

It's to God's people. And it tells them even though you're in a foreign land, even though you are subject to a power greater than yourself, whether it's Jacob's family in Egypt, whether it is the people of God in Babylon under judgment and in discipline, they're because of the mistakes of

the majority and the minority were taken captive. Men like Ezekiel and Hananiah and Daniel and Mishaël and Azariah and these others, faithful men, they're not under judgment, but they are in that circumstance because of the bad judgment of other people.

But God assures them if they are willing to look and willing to listen, this is a part of my plan. It's organized. It's consistent.

It is limited. It is factual. It is ordained, and it will absolutely come to pass, and it will conclude with the standing presence of Joseph, the standing presence of the rock carved without hands, Joseph of the bloody coat, dead and yet alive, beloved of his father, separated from his father on account of the sins of his brethren, and yet ultimately raised to be savior of his people.

Right. You cannot get a better archetype for the Lord Jesus than Joseph. I mentioned before the break that we have all of these doubles, the three dream episodes in Genesis are all associated with Joseph, and they are all doubles.

He sees the sheaves of grain, and he sees the sun, moon, and stars. There is the butler and the baker. There is the dream of Pharaoh with the cows and the heads of grain.

Everything is doubled. Remember John the Baptist in prison? Lord, are you he that should come, or do we look for another? Is there one Messiah or two? Because sometimes he seems like one, sometimes he seems like two. You have the suffering servant depicted in Isaiah, and you have the conquering king.

Are there two guys or one? And the answer is yes, there are two, and he is one. Because he who, it's over in Revelation, he says, I am he who lives and was dead and is alive forevermore. Two lives, same person, but a first advent and a second advent.

And he looks like two, but he is one. Joseph is the slave in Egypt. Joseph is the ruler of the land, but one, just as he is in heaven now, seated at the right hand of the Father.

So, in the first dream comparison, we looked at Daniel 2, vis-à-vis Genesis 41, one and following. Both kings have their dream in the second year. There are these divisions, and it speaks of the future of the nation and the preservation of God's people in and through these changes, right? And the resolution of it at the end, you have this supernatural rock, and you have this supernaturally promoted ruler, Joseph.

It's an act of God that this slave becomes more powerful than any other Egyptian, save Pharaoh himself. It's just incredible in the true sense of the word. But with that deliverance, Egypt is delivered by the promotion of Joseph and has the opportunity to come to know and worship the God of Israel by seeing this wonderful supernatural revelation and provision, right? God provides for the whole nation of Egypt, potentially through Joseph.

But what ultimately happens in Egypt? Ultimately, they're going to go through the 10 plagues and be destroyed. Despite the presence of Israel there, they're going to become complacent.

They're going to become arrogant.

The new Pharaoh knows not Joseph, and therefore doesn't know Joseph's God. It isn't interesting, though. It doesn't say that they didn't know God or the God of Jacob.

It says a new Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and they go into slavery. Joseph, representing the Lord Jesus, knowing not the Lord Jesus, not recognizing him, not valuing him, not understanding the message that he represents. So Egypt fails to remember the lesson and tries to build its own might on the backs of the now-enslaved Hebrews.

We'll build these Ramses and these store cities and bricks without straw and all the rest of it. We're going to build, build, build, and we're going to trample down the people of God, right? Even though they had this wonderful lesson, they had a Pharaoh who understood who the God of Israel was. They had the shining example of Joseph, but it is forgotten, and it is ignored, and it is set aside, just as we see happening in our nation today.

So God's people are supernaturally preserved and delivered, right, in Egypt. What's happening in Babylon during the time of Nebuchadnezzar's dream? God's people, Nebuchadnezzar is going to build the image of gold. He's going to destroy anybody that doesn't worship it.

Nebuchadnezzar himself fails to remember the lesson that he learned through Daniel, who is another type of Christ in many ways. He tries to build his own might, and he ends up being cut down while the people of God are supernaturally delivered yet again. Hanani, Meshel, and Azariah, supernaturally delivered.

Daniel, at Lion's Den, supernaturally delivered. You see the thematic consistencies and parallels in these dream episodes, and Daniel is not insensitive to what he knows in his Bible, which is the Old Testament, including and especially the books of Moses. Number two, that was dream comparison number one.

Number two, the second dream in Daniel is in Daniel chapter four. Once again, it is a dream of Nebuchadnezzar. This time, it is the great and mighty tree with its branches extending to heaven and the birds nesting and the beasts resting in its shade.

It's this wonderful, powerful, seemingly unconquerable tree. Then something supernatural, a watcher, appears and says, cut down the tree, haul it off, but preserve the stump. And then there's the prediction.

You will be cut down, you'll lose your reason, you'll have a change of your heart, and seven times we'll pass over you. And this is personal to Nebuchadnezzar, right? The first dream was human history at a national level projected into the future, right? The dream of Pharaoh was his nation's history projected into the future for 14 years, right? With good times and bad times included. This time, Nebuchadnezzar's dream is more personal.

There is a decree that he himself is going to be judged for his pride. What does Daniel warn him

about after he interprets the dream? Forsake your sins, humble yourself, perhaps this can be set aside. It doesn't have to be this way if you change your heart.

Nebuchadnezzar, despite all of his previous experience with Daniel and the veracity and the integrity of the interpretation, says, nah, that can't be right, look at me. I'm the big and mighty tree, I'm the head of gold. Nobody can touch me, nobody can cut me down.

Look at all of this that my hands have built. He doesn't put himself in the context of God's plan and he is chopped down. And he goes nuts, just as God predicted.

It's his personal fate. Now, corresponding back in Genesis, what's the second dream pair in Genesis chapter 40? Once again, Joseph now is in prison and he meets some other people in the prison. The butler and the baker, right? And each of them has a dream, so we have a pair of dreams.

The butler is first. He has a dream of this vine that has three branches. Grapes appear and it's bountiful and luscious and he squeezes these beautiful, just supernaturally prolific grapes into Pharaoh's cup.

And he says, what does it mean? And Joseph interprets it. He says, the three branches are three days. In three days, you are going to be delivered out of prison and restored.

And you will resume your former place. Kind of reminds you of the stump and Nebuchadnezzar, after seven times pass over him, he is restored, right? The baker says, well, I like that. That's a positive outcome.

Let me tell you my dream. I dreamed about my head. People always leave this out when they talk about the baker's dream.

He dreamed about his own head. He said, I saw my head. The butler didn't say, I saw my head or I saw my hands.

You don't see any part of the butler, but the baker says, I saw my head. And there was a basket sitting on top of my head and there was bread in it. And birds were coming and picking away and eating that bread.

And these three baskets that are sitting on his head, Joseph says, the three baskets are also three days. But in three days, that head you dreamt about is going to be lifted up from off you and you're going to be executed. So in this doublet of dreams, there is death after three days and there is life after three days.

Three days. Three days. Personal fate.

So what conclusion would Daniel draw as he thinks about Nebuchadnezzar's dream and as God reveals its import and its meaning in terms of Nebuchadnezzar's personal fate? God is going to deal with him personally and individually because of his pride, because of his insensitivity to the

message and the example that has been repeatedly delivered to him. This is the man who saw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the fourth man in the fire. This is the man who heard Daniel's interpretation and recognized its value and its veracity and promoted him in the land and promoted his three friends.

He should know better by now, but he does not. And this is the people of God. Once again, all of this is the people of God.

Nebuchadnezzar can come and go from a historical point of view. Secular history doesn't even know about this period of madness for Nebuchadnezzar. But the people of God know because it is a message for us.

Not only does God reveal history, but God communicates with us and deals with us personally. And what is the issue? God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. He will resist us until our pride turns to humility.

Obviously, hopefully, the sooner the better. If we're smart, we don't spend a long time on the proud side. But for Nebuchadnezzar, it takes these seven seasons, these seven times that pass over him.

Until you learn what? Remember how many times we saw it emphasized? We covered this last week. That there is a God in heaven. Who is authoritative over the affairs of men.

Until you recognize that there is an authority higher than your own. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture. It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves.

We worship the creator and not the created thing. Romans chapter one. There is an assault and an attack on the truth of the divine authorship of the universe.

The divine authorship of life. The divine authorship of the human body and soul in the modern day. It's Romans chapter one.

It is here. I've got this all figured out. I need no contact with the God of heaven.

I reject, I repudiate all of that. It is our awareness. And look, we as believers go on to Bible class.

Doing all the things we're supposed to do. We're not holding up liquor stores or pursuing a hedonistic lifestyle. We're treading on the narrow path.

But when we become complacent. When we become apathetic. When we are no longer appreciating what God has done for us in Christ.

No longer appreciating the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord of glory. Philippians chapter two.

What he gave up to save us. When we are no longer grateful. When we are no longer motivated by that hope of seeing the Lord Jesus face to face.

Having him introduce us into the presence of the Father. When that is no longer real and personal and valuable to us. God will take steps to restore our awareness.

Because it is that attitude that enables him to work in us and through us to do his purposes. We have to be aligned. We have to have that attitude and that motivation.

Or God can't use us. A chisel that doesn't hold its edge is going to be set down. And a sharper one is going to take its place.

The handle that breaks is going to be set aside. And a firmer, newer, more flexible, hickory branch is going to be used in its place. We want to be useful to God.

He has done so much for us. How can we become indifferent, apathetic and complacent about it? That's what this second set of dreams says. Why were the butcher, not the butcher, the butler and the baker.

No candle guy in there either. Why are they in prison to begin with? They malfunctioned in some way and displeased Pharaoh. They are both in Pharaoh's presence.

If they're both in prison, Pharaoh got annoyed with them for some reason. The wine was bitter. The bread was dry.

Something happened to displease the highest authority, the one that they serve. What do they do while they are in that time of reminder, that time of review? And of course, we don't get the psychology of these guys as Egyptians. It is a picture for God's people.

What are they going to do during the Babylonian captivity? Are they going to learn the lesson and eschew idolatry and return to the God of their fathers? Are they going to return to the covenant? Are they going to return to faith and obedience or not? It's a test. It's a challenge. They've been given this time away like the prodigal.

What are you going to do when you come to the end of your own resources? It's sad that we're not smart enough to figure this out before we come to the end of our resources sometimes. But that's the message. What is our personal fate? And this is in the middle.

You've got this national big picture history. You've got the universe and the planet and the nations and the big movements of history at the beginning. Now you've got us as an individual.

Am I the baker and not paying attention? Am I the butler? And I am ready to serve. I'm ready to once again do what I'm supposed to do. By the way, you saw how much Christology there was in that first set.

What are the two elements in these dreams, bread and wine? Is there no Christology here? Is there no life and death in three days? And this is the new covenant in my blood. Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you.

My body is going to die. But the life of the flesh, which is in the blood, the blood is going to continue. The blood is going to go on.

The blood will be efficacious. The blood never loses its power. The old hymn tells us we are washed in the blood of the lamb.

We are robes. Strangely and supernaturally, our robes are made white in blood. The worst thing you can do to a white shirt, get blood on it.

Anybody that's kept themselves shaving or some other infarction, you know, you get blood on white cotton. It's really tough to get out. But the blood of the lamb, capital L, washes our robes white because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us.

We were redeemed not with corruptible things, but with that which is incorruptible. What does the Bible say is incorruptible? The blood of Christ. The life of the flesh is in the blood.

Life is in the blood. Our life is in the blood of Jesus Christ. His death secures our life.

And God grants him a new life because of that work. It's a beautiful, beautiful picture. And it is foreshadowed.

It is nascent. It is incipient. It is anticipated in these dreams.

The butler and the baker. The bread, that's going to die. That human body of the Lord Jesus Christ is not coming back.

This human body, my veil of flesh here, my mortal coil is going to shuffle off. It's going to be gone. But not my life.

Remember when John is in the grave and Mary and Martha are there and Jesus says, The one who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? There's a lot going on there. And it is parallel here to this tree.

The tree is cut down. You say the tree is gone. The tree is not gone.

The tree of Israel. Remember the king often is put for the nation. Who is the true king of Israel? Jesus Christ, the son of David, is the true king.

He is the tree that will be cut off, but he is going to re-sprout after three days. After two days, he will restore us. After three days, we will live again.

Right? So the tree is Nebuchadnezzar, but the tree is the Lord Jesus. The tree is Israel. The kingdom is cut off, but there's a band around it.

And that kingdom is coming back. Right? That's number two. Daniel 4 compared with Genesis chapter 40.

You have the vine and the branches. Even when the butler tells his dream, it's the vine and the branches. Jesus says in John 14, I'm the vine.

You are the branches. Abide in me and bear fruit. And that fruit is going to go into the cup of the king.

It is pleasing in his sight. You can't help but see the inspiration of Scripture when these close, finely woven threads are so consistently found through it. The birds come and eat that bread.

Right? And birds always represent. Remember, the birds are the ones that come and take away the seed of the word. It doesn't say, and they become fat and lay eggs, and everybody's happy, and oh, the wonderful doves.

These are nasty birds. These are birds that roost in the branches. Have you ever parked your car under the branches of a tree where birds were roosting? It rained, and my truck is still messed up from being parked in the woods for a couple of weeks.

Birds are not good unless they're dropping chow to Elijah or something in Scripture. So that's number two. Number three, very quickly, so we can finish here.

Daniel chapter 7. Now, we've not gotten there yet, but we will. But let me just finish this comparison to Genesis. In Daniel chapter 7, you may recall, Daniel has a vision himself, just as in Genesis.

Going back, and remember, these are mirrored. We're going earlier and earlier in Genesis. The last dream in Genesis is Pharaoh with the cows and the grain.

The middle one is the butler and the baker. And the earliest one recorded in Genesis of that set of three is Joseph with the sheaves and the sun, moon, and stars bowing. Right? Well, the last one in Daniel is Daniel chapter 7. He sees four beasts.

There's a wind, ruach, that hits the sea, the chaotic troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt, and from it emerge four beasts. The first is a lion, and he's got wings like an eagle, and he ends up morphing into something with two feet. So that's strange enough.

But then he sees the second beast, which is a bear, and it's got three ribs stuck in its teeth. That's followed by a leopard, and it's got four wings, but they're not the wings of an eagle. They're the wings of a bird.

What do we just say about birds? These are bird wings. They're not eagle wings. They're not like on the back of your quarter.

They're not noble, majestic wings like you would pin on if you're a pilot. They're bird wings. They're like sparrow wings.

They're crow wings. Probably a few missing feathers. They're nasty wings, and it ends up

having four heads.

So it's a disturbing-looking leopard. It's like one of these CGI things you see in the movies now where they've got these, you know, that dog Cerberus or whatever it is. It's got all the heads, and it's just disturbing, and that's followed by a fourth beast that he can't even describe.

He doesn't say it's like a lion. It's not like a bear. It's not like a leopard.

He says it's just terrible. It's a terrible beast, and it's got iron teeth, and it's got ten horns. Ten horns.

In case you missed it, ten horns. And it's a unique beast. He says it's like no beast that's ever been seen.

I can't even compare it to something. It's not like a gazelle. It's not like a zebra.

It's not like a giraffe. It's not like a platypus. It's a terrible beast.

I can't even tell you what it's like. But these ten horns, what happens? Three of the horns are uprooted and go away. How many does that leave? Seven.

And then what happens? The three that went away are pushed out and replaced by one horn. So now how many horns do you have? So it was a ten-horned beast. Then it's a seven-horned beast, and then it's an eight-horned beast.

Then, in the same dream, you end up with a throne. Once you see this beast, then suddenly there's a throne, and the Ancient of Days is seated upon it, and this beast is slain, this last horrible beast. But he says the other beasts live on for a short time.

Weird. I always thought, you know, it's like the Medes and Persians and the Greeks and the Romans and then the revived Roman Empire, the terrible beast. But then he says the terrible beast is slain, but the other beasts live on after the terrible beast is slain.

So what, the Greeks are coming back? I don't get it. And then the final closing scene in that dream, if you look at Daniel 7, and we're going fast here, but it is the Son of Man. Was it at the last of the other one, with the stone cut without hands and Joseph? And now we've got this Son of Man.

And so this sort of mirrors the first one. You've got a succession of kingdoms, apparently, but instead of being made an inanimate object made of metal, you've got an animate object made to resemble these beasts. But they're strange beasts.

They have parts they're not supposed to have. They're an amalgam. They're genetic experiments gone wrong.

Genetic experiments gone wrong. Hello? Genetic experiments gone wrong. Lions are not

supposed to have wings, but this lion does.

Bears are not supposed to be misshapen and have one shoulder higher than the other. And, you know, who are the ribs? Where did the ribs come from? Leopard with bird wings and foreheads. It's a monstrosity.

It's an aberration. It's like the five-legged cow I saw at the Rogers County Fair one time. It just makes you want to go look at something else.

And then this terrible beast with iron teeth. No beast grows iron teeth. This is a synthetic addition.

This is technology added to a living thing. This is a hybrid of life and technology, something forged by man, something dug out of the ground and put in it, right? And then when this is all replaced, and I've got to go real quickly. We'll get into this more in Daniel 7, but you think about the destruction of that fourth beast, but the other three live on for a while.

What do you think is going to happen in the Millennial Kingdom? There will be a return to earlier days where the nations of the earth depend on agriculture, depend on agronomy and on cultivation of animals, and the iron teeth are gone. There is life, but it's much diminished. These are not powerful beasts.

Now they are subdued. The lion lays down with the lamb. The bear does not destroy.

The leopard and the wolf are tame, right, in the Millennial Kingdom. It's the peaceable kingdom. And these monstrosity parts are removed, and they are back to being what they're supposed to be.

There are nations on the earth outside the Kingdom of Israel. This will be the Millennial Kingdom. What will be missing? The terrible beast with all of its horrible horns and iron teeth and the rest of it.

That is utterly destroyed, but you have a return. You have an echo. You have a diminished and subdued version of the others that persist for a time, and that's just the time of the Millennial Kingdom before that, too, is wrapped up, and you end up looking at the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.

That corresponds to, by the way, Joseph's dreams, a pair of dreams in Genesis. And what is it? It is first the sheaves. What are sheaves? They are living things that grow out of the ground, right? And they are earthly.

They come from the earth. They come up, and they bow down to the sheaf of Joseph. This is human people bowing down to the sons of David who rule in the Millennial Kingdom.

The second dream Joseph has is the sun, moon, and stars bowing down to him personally. Sun, moon, and stars don't grow out of the ground, do they? What do they partake of? Heaven and

earth will be subject to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. The earth is represented by the sheaves, and the earthly rule in the Millennial Kingdom will be the sons of David representing and imbued with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

During that time also, the Lamb that was slain who has opened the seven seals and was found worthy and has accomplished everything in chapter 4-19 of Revelation when he rules for a thousand years, heaven and earth, every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, right? Sun, moon, and stars and the sheaves. Joseph, the Lord Jesus Christ. See the parallel.

What does it mean to us? Our Heavenly Father has got this thing all figured out. We are so privileged. We are so provided for.

We are so given more grace as those who are humble to fulfill our assigned part in his wonderful, detailed, immaculate plan. What a privilege. What an opportunity.

What a perspective to maintain to redeem the time. Time is money when it comes to spiritual things. Lay not up for yourself treasure on earth, gold and silver, where moth and rust corrupt, where thieves break in and steal.

Things you do in this life will disappear and be used up. We were redeemed not with corruptible things, gold and silver, the precious blood of Christ. Lay up for yourself treasure in heaven where nobody can take it, where nothing can corrupt it.

It is eternal. It is a heritage. And it is the foundation on which we will stand and serve and be useful to the Lord Jesus Christ and to God the Father evermore.

Day by day, this seems so trivial. These little story problems that God sets for us don't seem important. They're critically important.

Our day by day investment of our time, looking to the future in hope, motivated by hope. Characterized by love, walking by faith and not by sight. This is how we enter into this eternal plan and purpose of God so beautifully expressed and laid out for us in these dreams in Genesis and these dreams in Daniel.

Well, we'll pick up in Daniel chapter five and look at Belshazzar and the handwriting on the wall next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for its encouragement, its comfort, its power, its delineation of everything that we need to know to live our lives in a way that pleases you and glorifies the Lord Jesus. We pray that it will accomplish that goal in us, both individually and as a group, as we see ourselves in this wonderful context of your overarching divine plan and purpose. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.