

## Kingdom Down #8 - Possibly the Most Amazing Prophetic Chapter in the Bible

- All right, I have good news for you, there is a God, He's a good, He's a God who rules and reigns, who knows the future, has good plans for His people, and tells you the future, so that you can live backwards. If you know what the future holds, you know what to do on your way into the future. The Bible calls this, prophecy. 25% of the Bible was prophecy. God revealing the future that He is ruling, in advance. And that's exactly what we're gonna study today in Daniel, Chapter 8. If you brought a Bible, or you got one on your phone, find Daniel, Chapter 8. And this is arguably, the greatest, most amazing, insightful chapter of the entire Bible. And I am really, really honored that you would give me this opportunity to share the Word of God with you. To set up the book, the book is part of the Bible, that is how God primarily speaks to us. He wrote through human authors, 66 books in a library. We're in one of those books, Daniel. It has 12 chapters, we're taking one chapter a week, and looking at it in great detail, verse by verse. When we jump into Daniel, Chapter 8, the book was written about 5 or 600 years before Jesus walked on the earth. So we are now, roughly, 2,500 years removed from Daniel. This is ancient literature, ancient history, ancient prophecy. The human being, who is kinda the focal point, and author, is Daniel. As the title of the Book would suggest. When he was a teenager, his nation, Israel, and the temple, with the presence of God, where the Word of God was kept, and the worshipers of God met. It was sacked and overcome by a Babylonian king named Nebuchadnezzar, took them as slaves and exiles. Daniel had to march 700 miles. At this point in the story he is in his 80's. He's been there for some 70-ish years, far away from home, working for pagan kings. And he is still used mightily of God. The moral of the story for the older saints is, just because you're old, doesn't mean you're done. God still has new revelation for you, He has new assignments for you, and there are needs and opportunities that God has destined you to meet. What He's going to do today, he's going to look back, roughly eight years, when he was in his 70's. And he's gonna tell us this dream vision, this revelation, this prophetic insight into the future that God provided for him. And as we get into it, you just need to know, that it gets a little bit complicated. How many of you read Daniel 8, in advance, this week? How many of you thought, "He needs to be drug tested."? "This doesn't make any sense at all." The ram, the goat, the what the? Let me say, when God speaks prophecy, He oftentimes uses imagery to awaken our imagination. In addition, God will give us the interpretation of this imagery, in this chapter. But, just by way of comparison, He's going to use the language of horns, that refers to kings, and to kingdoms. I'll show it to you when I get into Daniel 8. But, how many of you have a pet? If your pet, what do you guys have for pets? Dog, cat, right, what else? A rabbit, okay, let's do rabbit. Rabbit versus, pick an animal with a horn. Like a big horn. A unicorn, that's not an animal, that's, what the? Unicorn, unicorn, no unicorns are mythical creatures, like honest politicians, you'll hear of them, but you can't find one. They're not real. Name another animal with a big horn.

- [Man] Rhino.

- Oh well that happened, okay, so, think of an animal with a big horn running at a bunny. Okay, okay, okay, think of an animal with a big horn running at a cat. Okay, see that feels better.

Which one loses? The one without the horn. Which one wins? The one with the horn. This shows kings and kingdoms. In the animal kingdom if you have a horn, you have a weapon, you're gonna win. Similarly, in human kingdoms, if you have a horn, you're gonna win, you have power and might to conquer. So that's what it refers to. And then secondly, it refers to here, animals. So you're gonna hear about a goat, and you're gonna hear about a ram. And for us, we get a little confused 'cause this is 2,500 years ago, but we still use animals to denote people groups, right? What's the symbol of the United States of America? The bald eagle. And the two political parties? A donkey, no don't say the other word, like the guy did at the Nine last week, potty mouth. A donkey and an elephant. How many of you have an animal that represents your college football team? Yup, lope sop, right. Clemson, tigers.

- [Man] Ducks. The Ducks, okay that one only comes out with prayer and fasting. That's a deep demon, Jesus says, the Oregon Ducks. The moral of the story is, when I say animals, you know what we're talking about. 2,500 years ago they probably knew what these animals referred to. In addition, sometimes the Bible refers to demonic beasts, by animal terms, because both are wild and dangerous, and a spirit is at work behind these nations, typified and represented by these beasts. All that being said, are you ready to jump in to Daniel, Chapter 8, perhaps the most amazing chapter in the whole Bible. It doesn't matter, I'm gonna do it either way. I was just checking, okay, Daniel 8. And what I'm gonna do here, he has a succession of visions, and then interpretations. I'm gonna group them together, to make it a little easier for you, but we will cover all of the verses in Daniel, Chapter 8. "In the third year, in the reign of King Belshazzar." He's going back here to the Babylonian Empire that dominated the first four chapters of Daniel, fell in Chapter 5, with King Belshazzar who was the grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar. If you were with us, that catches you up to speed, this is around the year 550 B.C., and he got a vision that the nation he was in, would be toppled before it was toppled. That's what he's saying. He's in the Babylonian Empire, he's gonna get a vision that it'll be conquered by another empire, and then that one will be conquered by another empire, and then ultimately comes the Roman Empire, and then the second coming of Jesus. So he's seeing all of human history into the future, so that he can live backward. But it gives us historical designation. The Bible is not about myth, it's about history. It's not about philosophy, it's about history. People's, times, dates, places, events. And what's awesome is the archeologists keep confirming that the Word of God is true. They keep telling us that these people lived at these times, and these things happened. So, "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me." So he sees something, it's divine revelation from God. Daniel says, "After that which appeared to me at the first." He had a vision earlier, this will be a corollary of it. "And I saw in the vision, and when I saw I was in Susa the citadel." This is a few hundred miles away. At the time that he received this prophetic insight, he was in Babylon. Susa would become the capital city of Persia, years later. He's looking into the future, it is a few hundred miles away. So he is seeing into the future, and he is seeing into the new headquarters for the Empire. This would become their version of our White House. All of this is geopolitical, and historical. "I was in Sousa, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal. I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. And it had two horns and both horns were high. One was higher, or stronger than the other, and the higher one came up last. I saw

the ram charging westward, and northward, and southward." A mighty kingdom is rising up to conquer everyone, and everything in its path. "No beast," so no nation, "could stand before him and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and he became great." What it's saying is, is that Babylon, the most powerful nation in the history of the world, would suddenly see an empire with two horns, these are two kings and kingdoms coming together, and historically, this is the Medo-Persian Empire. The reason why one is longer than the other is because the Persian Empire grew bigger and stronger, it then absorbed the Mede Empire. That's why if you study history, for example, in college, it'll talk about the Persian Empire, but it started as the joint, dual horn, Medo-Persian Empire. That being said, Persia rises up to conquer Babylon. Here's the interpretation of the vision regarding the nation of Persia. Daniel 8:15-20, "When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it." So Daniel receives revelation from God, but he doesn't fully understand it, it needs to be interpreted. How many of you have had this experience? You read the Bible and you're like, "I don't get it." Don't feel bad, God spoke to Daniel and Daniel said, "I don't get it." And so what God's going to do is send him a Bible teacher, named Gabriel, one of the two named angels in the Bible. I get to do Gabriel's job, but I'm not that awesome. Gabriel would be amazing, right? That would be amazing. You're studying the Bible and Gabriel's like, "Do you have any questions?" "Oh for sure I do. For sure I do, and you have wings, I know you can probably answer these." Right? This is God showing up in a supernatural way. But let me say this, if you want to learn the Word of God, and you find it complicated and hard to understand God's revelation, He does for you, something He did for Daniel, but He does it even greater for you than He did for Daniel. He sent Daniel, Gabriel, He sends you the Holy Spirit. If you wanna know the Word of God, you can learn the Word of God. It is not often immediately understood. It must be studied, prayed about, meditated upon. This is one of the reasons why, I love teaching books of the Bible. I want you to grow in your appetite to learn God's Word, and your insights of God's Word. I want the Holy Spirit to meet with you and reveal to you all that the Scripture has for you, amen?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- And oftentimes what happens is, pastors don't teach the Bible because they think, "You know what, the people can't handle it." Yes they can, with the Holy Spirit. I believe the Holy Spirit shows up to reveal the Word of God in a way that He does not for Netflix. I'll give you an example, let's say you're gonna just do a "Breaking Bad" binge fest on Netflix. Do you think the Holy Spirit is thinking, I gotta show up and help them retain all of that information.

- [Man] Nooooo. No. If you open the Bible and you're like, "God, I wanna learn." The Holy Spirit is far more willing and able to show up, and help you learn, remember, and apply, all of that information. This is amazing to me. Here's the story. "And behold, there stood before me, one having the appearance of a man." When an angel shows up, or another divine being, sometimes they appear as a human being, that's why Hebrews says, many of us have entertained angels without even knowing it, they're incognito. "And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, 'Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.'" So somebody's giving orders to Gabriel, one of the only two named angels in the Bible, along with

Michael. "So he came near where I stood, when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face." When you come into the presence of an angel or another divine being, oftentimes people are overwhelmed. We're aware of their holiness, our sinfulness, and our need for God. It's even more dramatic when you come into the presence of God. But ultimately, it goes on to say, "I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, 'Understand, oh son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.'" This phrase will be repeated on a few occasions. Some will study Daniel and say, "This was all ancient history, it's not future prophesy." I believe this is future in its orientation, it's talking about when, the end. It's looking into the future, it is in fact, futuristic. "And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face on the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up. He said, 'Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter of the indignation for it refers to that appointed,'" again, "'time of the end. As for the ram that you saw, with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.'" So, horn refers to kings and kingdoms. The two horns are interpreted as the Medo-Persian Empire. It is very clear. It can be a little complicated at first, but then it becomes very, very clear. Who is this that speaks to Gabriel and tells him what to do? It's probably Jesus, I believe it's a pre-incarnate. That's pre coming into human history. Carne means meat, and if you eat carne asada, we're gonna do so today 'cause we're Christians, that's why we're doing it. No I'm not even telling you a lie, we're gonna eat carne asada. Carne means meat. If you eat chili con carne, that's chili with meat, right? So Jesus is incarnate, that's God in meat. It's God in flesh. He has pre-incarnate, before He was born of the Virgin Mary, He shows up various times throughout history. I believe this is an occasion where He speaks from His heavenly throne, and He commands His servant Gabriel, one of His angels, to go to Daniel, to help him to interpret the vision. And the vision is this, Babylon, that you are currently a citizen of, when he first received that vision some years prior, is going to be toppled by a Medo-Persian Empire, that ultimately will be dominated by the Persians. Question, why does God care about the Persian Empire? Why, there's so many nations, why is God not talking about another country. Because for God, the centerpiece of human history is Jesus Christ. I've had some people ask me, they're like, "Where is America in here?" It's not. It's not in there. God is not waking up every morning going, "America, that's what I'm hoping in." God wakes up every morning and knows that everything will be taken care of, solved, and resolved, by the second coming of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, with the kingdom of God. And so everything in the Bible is focused on Jesus, here's why the Persian Kingdom and Empire is significant to God. They are at this point, Daniel and the children of God, 700 miles away from home, in Jerusalem. It would be the Persian Empire that would release them, to return home. They would be the equivalent of our Puritans, and Pilgrims. They're the first ones to come and resettle in that instance. Why does the, and the temple at this point is closed. There are not priests, and sacrifice, and holidays. And they're not getting together weekly, as we are, to learn the Word of God and to pray, and to worship. Why does that need to happen, in Jerusalem, at the temple? Because Jesus is coming. The Bible tells us elsewhere in prophecy, that He will arrive at the temple. God needs to get His children home, so that He can get His temple open, so that the Word of God can be preached. So that the Word of God can occur in response, and that witness of God can go out to the world. Those are the three things, friends, that God cares about. Cares about the Word, worship, and witness that comes out of the Word. And if the temple is closed, and these things are not occurring, Jesus

can't be coming. So all of this is to prepare human history for the coming of Jesus. Then there is another Empire. So the Babylonians were toppled by the Persians, historically this in fact happened. And then it prophesied a few hundred years into the future, a larger greater empire coming to conquer the Persian Empire. This is the empire of Greece. "As I was considering, behold, a male goat, came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground." Fast, moving quickly. "And the goat had a conspicuous horn between its eyes. He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath." this is a head-on collision, between kings and kingdoms, winner take all. "I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram, and broke his horns." The Greek Empire will conquer the Persian Empire. "And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. Then the goat became exceedingly great," extended and expanded the borders and boundaries of the Empire. "But when he was strong, the great horn was broken," While he's young and strong, "the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns," Four new rulers, "towards the four winds of heaven." That is in fact the vision. Here's the interpretation. "And the goat is," Not Michael Jordan, "it's the king of Greece." That was a joke for all you sports guys. Obviously it didn't work, so we'll edit that out, okay? "The goat was the king of Greece." It tells us what it's talking about. "And the great horn between his eyes is the first king." That is Alexander the Great, you ever heard of him? Yeah, the Bible prophesied him, hundreds of years in advance. "As for the horn that was broken, in a place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from this nation, but not with his power." I'll tell you the story of Alexander the Great. He was a mighty warrior king, he died at a young age, he had no male son to be an heir, and so his kingdom was divided between his four generals. God knows in advance, exactly what is going to happen, and all of it, is under His sovereign control, and all of that, is used ultimately, to bring the Lord Jesus into human history, as the King of Kings. So let me explain to you a little bit about this amazing prophecy. Firstly, how many of you wonder why God would pick a goat to be the representative of Greece? The story is told in antiquity, that the first colonist who founded what would become Greece, they went to an oracle. This oftentimes is demonic, it's like a fortune teller, or going up to Sedona and finding a guy in the lotus position, who's smoking a joint, looking at a crystal, and asking him for advice. Don't do that, but in this instance, what they did was they met with one who was supernatural, and they were told this vision, from the oracle. They were told to find a goat, to follow the goat, and that when the goat laid down, that was the destined place for them to establish a city that would flourish. They followed the goat. Eventually the goat laid down. And they named that city, Agia, the goat city. In honor of the goat. That then grew to be the great, city, state, nation, empire, of Greece. We've been to Greece as a family. We actually got on a boat, and went out into the sea. Do you know what the sea surrounding Greece is called? The Aegean sea, which means, the goat sea. The goat sea. To honor the goat that brought the first colonists to establish the beginning of what became the empire, that was prophesied as a goat, hundreds of years prior, through Daniel, by angelic interpretation, because God knows and rules the future, in explicit detail. It gets better. I'll tell you the story of Alexander the Great. He comes 200 years, roughly, after Daniel. How many of us would love to know the future? What happens is, we're trying to predict the future, and we have a lot of

anxiety and fear. Because we don't know the future. God here, reveals the future to lift the fear. God's people at this point are far from home. We're far from home. They're in enemy territory. We're in enemy territory. It looks to them like God is losing, and Satan is winning, it looks to us like God is losing and Satan is winning, but ultimately God rules the future, and Jesus is coming. That, is the source of their hope, and ours. So Alexander the Great is prophesied, in advance a few hundred years. His father was the King of Macedon, his mother was a princess. His father's longing vision, dream, and goal for his life, was to assemble a powerful army of Greek soldiers to conquer and overtake the Persian Empire, which was built on the ruins of the Babylonian Empire, and expand its borders and boundaries. At a young age, his mother and father were killed. They were murdered. As a result, he assumed the throne, as a very young man. He was in his early twenties, and now he's the king. But he was absolutely prepared as a warrior king, from infancy. What happens at this point, is that he determines in his heart, to devote his life, to fulfilling his father's ambitions. He wants to have a mighty army, he wants the Greek Empire to come, and to march against, and conquer the Persian Empire. That is the lifelong mission of Alexander the Great. What I wanna share with you now, brought me to tears in my study this week. I literally was overwhelmed at the true trustworthiness of the God of the Bible, and of the Bible. I actually sat in my chair weeping, and singing. And I don't sing well. But it was that amazing. There is an ancient historian named Josephus. He may have had some of his life cross the same timeline that the Lord Jesus was available. He was at least born a few years later, not that long after the Lord Jesus. So He comes roughly 600 years after Daniel. Josephus is considered, arguably, the greatest historian of the Jewish people. Around 94 A.D. he writes his multi-volume set, the Antiquity, or History of the Jews. He is not a believer in Jesus, but he is a teller of Jewish history. He reports, and I cannot even believe the great honor it is to summarize for you, what he says about Alexander the Great. Alexander the Great, and this is according to the historian, had a dream, or a vision. Just like Daniel. And that was, that a man that he did not know, appeared to him, wearing purple, which was the color of royalty, was very expensive and rare. And in that revelation, this man told him, "It is time for you to amass your army, to march against Persia, the time of fulfilling your father's longing, and walking in your destiny has come." He didn't know who this was, or where this came from, but he assumed it was divine revelation. And he acted upon it. This is the key, it's not enough to receive revelation, you need to act upon it. Ultimately, God blesses those who don't just hear His Word, but do it. He is not a believer, Alexander the Great is not, but he gets a revelation, and he starts marching and conquering with his army. He conquers the nation of Israel. At the beginning of Daniel, this is the same thing that the Babylonians did. And they destroyed the worship of God, and they enslaved the people of God. Fearing that history was repeating itself, the high priest decided to welcome Alexander the Great, and to honor him respectfully. And what he told all the worshipers was, "Put on white, the color of worship, that we use for our high feasts and holidays, to show that ultimately God forgives our sin and makes us clean and pure in His sight." All of this is foreshadowing the forthcoming of Jesus, the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. The high priest goes to dress himself, does not know about Alexander the Great's dream. What color do you think he chose to wear that day? Purple. The high priest, wearing purple, goes out with the worshipers wearing white. Here comes the mighty king Alexander, the conqueror. And he sees the high priest. And he stops and is stunned. And he says, "You are the man I saw, in

my dream. It was your face, and your voice, and you were wearing purple." At this moment, the high priest welcomed him. Took him into the temple, and I kid you not, this story in Josephus reports this. The high priest, opens to Daniel, Chapter 8. And says, "Alexander, your fulfilling prophecy today. The God of heaven told us you were coming. You are the mighty horn from Greece coming to destroy the Persian ram. God told our servant Daniel this, a few hundred years ago. You do not know our God, but our God knows you. And we've been waiting for you, welcome." Liberal critics of the Bible realize that the prophecy in Daniel 8, is so specific, that they will say, it had to be written after it occurred. Which is impossible, because Alexander the Great read it before he conquered. Let God be true, and every Bible critic a liar.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- Now it gets even better. How many of you, your minds just exploded? Alexander the Great then joined the high priest, in offering a sacrifice in worship to the God of the Bible, the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't know if he converted, or just honored God. But he had now a sense of divine destiny. To say it this way, Alexander the Great showed up to worship a God who was greater than he, and a kingdom that was bigger than his. Upon departing, Alexander asked the high priest, "Is there any request you would make of me? Anything I can do for you?" And the high priest said, "We have one request, when you conquer, which you will, because Daniel prophesied that you would, we ask for the freedom to worship our God, according to the Scriptures. We want religious liberty." And Alexander said, "That is granted." So that under the Greek Empire the people of God could continue the worship of God, and the witness of God, according to the Word of God, until Jesus comes. He then leaves. Where do you think he is going? He is going with full confidence in his divine destiny. If you know the future and you live backwards, here's what I'm telling you. The saints will inherit the world, King Jesus is coming back, the Kingdom of God, wins in the end, no matter what it looks like in the middle of history. That ultimately you will rise from your dead body grave, that you will walk into the Kingdom of God, that you will see Jesus face to face. That you will be given a throne, that you will judge angels, and that you will live forever under the rule of King Jesus. Knowing that, you need to live backward and walk confidently into your destiny. That's what Alexander the Great does. Now the historians tell us that he marched into battle against Darius, the Persian King. And that he had, let's say, 35,000 soldiers. Darius the Persian king, had over 100,000 soldiers. It's three to one. Who do you think won? Alexander the Great destroyed Darius the Persian. Persia in that battle lost 20,000 soldiers. Alexander lost about 100. This was the beginning of the ending of Persian rule. Because God intervened in human history, God intervened in a military campaign, God decided who the king would be, and who the king would conquer. The point is this, that our God is not just a God of history, that our God is the God over all history. That He sets up kings, He takes them down, He sets up kingdoms, He takes them down. That our God has everything under His control, and our God is in control of who is in control, and that will help you when it feels like everything is out of control.

- [Congregation] Amen. Alexander the Great, goes on to conquer the Persian Empire. He then returns to the throne that was held by Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. And at a very young age,

32, 33, about the same age that Jesus died, Alexander died. They believe he was poisoned, that he had a Judas on his team, that undermined him. He had a Satan on his team, that came against him. He died, the Empire, as I told you was divided into four kingdoms, his four generals, because he had no heir, male son, to inherit everything that was prophesied in Daniel, 800 of years prior, came to pass. Question, why does God care about the Greek Empire? There are many nations, many kings, many kingdoms, lots of geopolitical conflict. Why does God care about the Greeks? They bring education, they bring literacy, and they bring a common language. Previously, during the reign of the Babylonians, and the Medes, and the Persians. As they conquered different people groups, they each had their native language. Their mother tongue. When Alexander is done, there is a common educational system, with one common language. Modern education, the university system, many of the philosophers that we study, many of the people that we focus on in human history, are all out of the Greek Empire. God wanted there to be one language, here me in this. He raised up the Persians, so that the temple could be opened, the Word of God, the witness of God, the worship of God. And then God wanted there to be one language that everyone was speaking, so that when Jesus came to the temple, died and rose, in our place, for our sins, that ultimately the news of His son could go out, and that people could understand who Jesus is, and what Jesus was, because they have a common shared language. Question, what's the language of the New Testament? Greek. Greek. There's another empire that is prophesied in Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 of Daniel. The Roman Empire. All of this is leading up to the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was the largest most powerful empire in the history of the world. Guess what language was chosen as the language for the entire Roman Empire, Greek. Guess what was open under the reign of the Roman Empire. The temple. That's where Jesus came, when He died and He rose, the news went out in the language of Greek, and it went out on the Roman road system, Pax Romana, Roman peace was possible, because they built a highway system that connected everyone in the nation, that previously was a Greek Empire, was a Persian Empire, was a Babylonian Empire. Now it has a road system, and a common language, Jesus Christ comes in the fullness of time, in the fulfillment of prophesy, so that He could arrive at the temple, and that when He rises from death, the news of His resurrection could go out in one language, on the road system that the Romans built to expand their empire, and God used to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of Jesus Christ! Here's what I'm telling you, God is in the details. God will even cause a nation to pave a highway, if people will walk on it to tell others about His Son. Stunning, amen?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- I mean there's a verse in Revelation where it says, "There was silence in heaven for half-an-hour." It's just, everybody's like, "I gotta think about this." That's how we feel when we hear this, amen.

- [Man] Yes.

- But here's what I wanna tell you, ultimately, truly, God wrote this book. This is the only perfect thing on earth. This is the only true prophesy on earth, this is the only revelation of what is

ultimately to come, and ultimately who is coming. I am telling you to have full confidence in the Word of God. I'm telling you that no one could do what Daniel 8 says would be done, but God. No one could know what Daniel 8 reveals, except for God who knows and rules all! Am I a golfer? I'm like, "What the..." Like, "Oh yeah, yeah"

- [Congregation] Whoo!

- Good Lord, I feel like I passed through a library. I love ya, but, come on! All right, last one, here we go. Daniel 8, it's a prophecy about a rising king named Antiochus, who is a foreshadowing of the anti-christ. Both are anti, anti means opposed, and seeking to replace. Ultimately here, it's Jesus. Daniel 8:9-14, "Out of one of them came a little horn." This is gonna be demonic, satanic, evil, same imagery as Daniel 7. The moral of the story is Satan wants to start little. Just a little sin, just a little compromise, just a little white lie, just a little secret, all right just a little paving on few things in the Bible that other people find not so pleasing. He starts small and he ends big, and it's all about a war. "Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, toward the glorious land. It grew great, even to the host of heaven." Okay, let me explain this. It may take a moment. These are the parts of Daniel that I think are widely misinterpreted, and misunderstood. I believe it's because a lot of the scholarship, that did give us some great insight to the Bible in previous generations, was largely skeptical of the supernatural. And I believe as a result, when they hear supernatural things, they're more inclined to give a naturalistic answer. There is, more recent research, there's a man named Dr. Michael Heiser, who is an Old Testament scholar, and he does some good work in this area. Grace and I tried to contribute to that, with our book, "Win Your War", and what we're seeing here is a shift, not only between times and places, but realms. This is very important, you wanna understand the Book of Exodus, Daniel, Job, Revelation, whole books of the Bible, you need to know that there are two realms, but for God, one reality. There is a supernatural realm of the spiritual, in which are angels, we've also seen other divine beings in Daniel. The Watchers, the Holy Ones, the Prince, the Princes, Gabriel, Michael, they're just loaded throughout Daniel. Similarly, we are in a physical world, with human beings. And what God is showing us, is that what is happening in our world, is connected to that world. That's why our war, Paul says, is not against flesh and blood, but powers, principalities, and spirits. That at work in this world, are invisible forces from that world. I'll give you an example, some years ago, I think I was in like fifth grade. I watched a play, at our school, my classmates put it on. And everything is happening on stage, and then there's this huge curtain, and you don't know what's going on behind the curtain. Until, one of my classmates made a mistake, and lifted the curtain at the wrong time. Next thing, what you see is, everyone and everything that is serving in the unseen, that effects what's going on in the scene. Here, as is elsewhere in Scripture, God lifts the curtain. You see kings and kingdoms, and behind it, you see the host of heaven. These are angels and other divine beings. God is showing us that He is working in ways that you are not seeing. Let me say this, when people say, "Why isn't God doing anything?" Whoa, whoa, whoa, God is always at work. And we believe by faith what we read in the Scriptures until we see by sight, God doing what he's promising. God is at work, even when we are not witnessing it, in the unseen realm. And He sends angels and other divine beings to be involved in geopolitical

human affairs, and personal lives, including Daniel's and yours. Here it talks about the host of heaven, these are angels and other divine beings. "Some of the host, and the stars get threw down to the ground and trampled on them." Let me explain that too. Stars, I believe, is best interpreted as ancient language for angels, and other divine beings. God lives up there, we live down here, between us and the heavens, physically are the stars that glow gloriously. So their concept was, that the stars are like angels. They're above us, and under God, and they glorify by shining brightly. When you hear the language of stars in the Bible, it often refers to the unseen realm, to angels and other divine beings. This is why, if memory serves me correct, in Daniel 12 it says, that, multitudes that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, some to everlasting death, hell and heaven. And it says, that the people of God will shine like the stars. As the angels are in glory, and have never fallen, and reflect the glory of God, so will you as a resurrected child of God, be perfected, and radiate for the glory of God, like a star does in the sky, or like an angel does in the presence of God. No, ear has heard, no mind has conceived, of the good things that God has in store for his people. The future that God has for you, in a glorified, resurrected, perfected body, is not just better than you think, it's better than you can think. And that when God is done, his angelic and human family will come together and we will live under the lordship of King Jesus, that people, and angels, human beings, and divine beings, will inhabit all of history, and all of creation, for all of eternity.

- [Man] Amen.

- Hey, live backward. Know who you are, and live who you will be. Know where you are going, and live as a citizen of that kingdom. "Some of the hosts, some of the stars, threw down to the ground and trampled on them." What he's talking about here, is a human ruler, who rises up, and conquers people in the physical seen realm, and also declares war on spirit beings, divine beings in the unseen realm. Some people are so evil, and so demonic that they're not just hurting people, they're hurting the divine beings that are sent to help God's people. It became great, even as great as the Prince of the Host. The Host of the divine beings, the Prince would be a ruler, one that is in a position of authority. So this human being has demonic, satanic power, and is crushing human beings, and warring against divine beings, this my friends, is ultimately the spirit of antichrist. "And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him," talking about the temple. "and the palace of his sanctuary," the Holy of Holies was overthrown. "And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offerings because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground." Let me just say, the spirit of antichrist is at work in the world, any time you see the Word of God stepped on. Let me just say this, I didn't do this at the Nine, this is literally what it's saying. When Antiochus Epiphanes, when he ruled in power, he literally took the Word of God, and threw it on the street, and then commanded that people just step on it. This is the spirit of antichrist. "I'm here to edit God's word, not deliver God's word. I'm here to fight and argue with God's word, rather than repent of sin, and trust in Jesus." The spirit of antichrist is always at work. Seeking you to stand on the word of God, as if you had authority over it, the truth is trampled under foot. Our position dear friends, is this. That the word of God is not under us, it is over us.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- That we are not just seeking to have it interpreted according to what we want, but we allow the Word of God to interpret us. So that we can become what God wants. If you disagree with the Word of God, you are wrong. And unless you have a change of mind, you are opening yourself to the spirit of antichrist. Am I clear?

- [Congregation] Yes!

- I love ya, you need to believe the truth. His name is Jesus and He sets people free.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- It became great. Even as great as the prince of hosts, the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, God is no longer worshiped. The place of his sanctuary was overthrown. The temple of God is closed. "and a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, it will throw truth to the ground." It's crazy. "Well that's your truth." No there's the truth. "And it will act and prosper. Then I heard a holy one..." That's a divine being, that's the unseen realm. "speaking, and another holy one," Another divine being. "Said to the one who spoke, 'For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, and the transgression, that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary, and the host to be trampled underfoot?' How long is Satan gonna rule the temple, and have a demonic counterfeit worship service of God? "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary will be restored to its rightful state." 2,300, three possible interpretations. Evening and morning, that how God describes a day in the opening chapters of Genesis. This could be 2,300 days. They had two sacrifices a day, one in the morning, one in the evening, so, could be 1,500 days, excuse me, 1,150, I'm doing math, this is hard. I believe in Jesus and math, but math is really hard for me. So 2,300, divided by two, 1,150 days, 2,300 offerings. The third option would be an indefinite period of time. I think the first or second are most likely. The point is that God has numbered the days of the demonic, and will ultimately crush it and bring it to an end. Let me look at the interpretation. "And at the latter end of their kingdom," So it's talking here about the future. "When the transgressors, the evil-doers, the opposers of God, have reached their limit, a king of bold face." We would say he has a high self-esteem. He probably has a parade for pride. "One who understands riddles," He understands the secret things of God, because it's Satan, who was in the presence of God. "shall arise. His power shall be great. But not by his own power," but by demonic satanic power, "he shall cause fearful destruction," people who love God are terrified, "and shall succeed in what he does. And destroy mighty men and people who are the saints." The children of God. "By his cunning, he shall make deceit prosper under his hand," Wow, deceit is economically viable. "And his own mind, he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many," It's gonna be a blood bath. "He shall even rise up against the Prince of Princes," a divine ruling being in the unseen realm. "But he shall be broken, but by no human hand." God will take care of him. "The vision of the evenings and the mornings has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now." Hundreds of years in the

future. "And I, Daniel was overcome. And lay sick for some days." Daniel sees God being dishonored, and he literally can't get out of bed and stop throwing up. I pray that our hearts would be the same. "Then I rose, and went about the king's business," I went back to work. "But I was appalled at the vision and did not understand it." Here's a big theme of the whole Bible, that makes sense of Daniel 8. God creates, Satan counterfeits. God creates a kingdom, Satan has a counterfeit kingdom. God has a king, Jesus, Satan raises up all kinds of counterfeit kings, culminating in the antichrist. God is creating a kingdom where the military, the economy, the spirituality, and the politics, are all ruled by one king. Everything God creates, Satan counterfeits. He's trying to bring a one world order, where the nations would all be one. Where the economy would be one, where the religion would be one. So that then he could rule over it all. Any time you see people filled with fear, saying, "The world is in peril, the end is near, we all need to come together and just have one nation, and one religion, and one economy, and one military, 'cause if we all could come together we could build heaven on earth." that's the spirit of antichrist. Because his kingdom is not of this world. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. In Daniel 7, the beast comes up from the bottom and the kingdom of God comes down from above. The kingdom that we need does not come from this world, it comes from that realm. That's what it's revealing. All of this prophecies, a few hundred years in advance, a man name Antiochus Epiphanes. He was the spirit of the antichrist, he was the Hitler of the Old Testament. So let me give you a little bit of history on him. There are two books, 1st and 2nd Maccabees, that are good history, bad Bible. Catholics, I was raised Catholic. During the Reformation, when Martin Luther started asking, in Germany, "Hey where's that in the Bible?" "Eh, er, eh, it's not in there." So what they did is they found some books that sounded like the things they wish it said, and they shoved 'em in the Bible. Now some of you say, "Boy that's debated." It is, but that's what happened. The result is, is that the Protestant Bible has all of the original right books, the Catholic Bible has a few extra books, included in them are 1st and 2nd Maccabees. 1st and 2nd Maccabees are not bad history, they're just not Bible. 1st and 2nd Maccabees covers what's called the intertestamental period. Just let me be your nerd friend for a moment. So the Old Testament ends, and then there's 400 silent years, til Jesus comes. That's called the intertestamental period, Maccabees tells us, the history, during that period, which is very helpful, 'cause that's when Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. Maccabees tells us that he was, he just suddenly became enraged, just demonically empowered. Have you ever met somebody that just, they weren't a great person, but they just became an evil person that had great power, out of nowhere. That's what happened. In a few days he slaughtered 80,000 Jewish people. He was the Adolf Hitler of his day. He murdered elderly women, he slaughtered pregnant women, he slaughtered children. He sold many into slavery. He marched upon the temple, the presence of God, awaiting the coming of Jesus, unlike Alexander the Great he didn't come to worship God and learn the Word, he came to war against God, and trample the Word. He then took, and set up, in the presence of God, the demonic Greek god Zeus, and stopped the sacrificial system of an unblemished lamb, that was foreshadowing Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. And instead he put on the altar and had sacrificed a pig. For a Jewish person, that's an unclean animal. That's an unclean thing, in what is supposed to be the holiest place on earth. Literally what he was saying, by the power of Satan was, "Your Jesus is a pig to me." the New Testament refers to this

as the abomination that causes desolation. He uses the word desolate here. What happened. Well, when he took over, he destroyed the Bible, he desecrated the temple, he defamed God, he brought death to believers. Some of the believers fled, and they stopped worshiping there. Hey this will be strong, but just to give you an emotional equivalency, imagine, next Sunday you come here, and we're out of business. And that the sound system, and the screens, the pulpits gone, and there's a pole, and this is a strip club. And you're like, "I can't believe this." So you go around back and it's an abortion clinic. That's how the people of God, that's how the children of God felt. We're here to meet with God. How in the world could Satan take over the house of God? Satan's always trying to take over the house of God. This is why, as God's people they fled. There are certain people that God's people, there are certain places rather, that God's people should not be. Because it's antichrist, it's demonic, it's evil, we shouldn't be there, that's not where our God is, so that's not where we should be. And as a result of this abomination, there was desolation. Meaning all the worshipers fled. It looks like Satan has won, because now the temple is closed, and Jesus can't come. And then, the most incredible thing happened. To Antiochus Epiphanes. Out of nowhere, he got a bowel infection. His body went toxic. He lost his mind, and he died. By the finger of God, not by any human hand. Do you know what Antiochus means? God man. Do you know what Epiphanes means? Mad man. He said, "I'm the God man.", counterfeit Jesus. God said, "No, you're the mad man, I'm done with you." that's what God can do to kings and kingdoms, nations and rulers. Just poked his bowels. That's awesome! That's awesome! Amen?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- The Jewish people then started a festival, do you know what it's called? When they got to return, and literally they got to turn the lights back on in the temple, they started a festival, do you know what it's called? Hanukkah, the festival of lights, the lights are back on, Lord Jesus you're welcome here, please come, light of the world. This is a double fulfillment of prophecy. It was the spirit of antichrist that raised up Antiochus Epiphanes. And then will come again in the last days, to empower a demonic ruler, who is antichrist, to ultimately seek to win where this first ruler lost. I'll prove it to you. I'm losing my voice. I'll be done in a few hours though, it'll be fine. We live in a privileged position of human history. Daniel was looking 600 years to the coming of Jesus, we are looking 2,000 from the coming of Jesus. He believed by faith, what we now see by sight. All that remains of Daniel's vision, God's revelation to him is the raising up of an antichrist, and then the second coming of Jesus Christ. I'll prove it to you. 1 John 2:18, "Children," New Testament, in Greek, "Children it is the last hour, and as you have heard the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know it's the last hour." We're on the precipice of human history. The last thing is that there will be many antichrists, there's always a Nebuchadnezzar, there's always a Darius, there's an Antiochus Epiphanes, there's always a Stalin, a Hitler, a Lennon. There's always an antichrist, and then there is the antichrist. We're in the last hour. We're awaiting the final revelation of history. Paul says it this way, 2 Thessalonians 2, "Rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness," That's the antichrist that Daniel predicts. "is revealed. The son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself." That's antichrist. Oppose and exalt. Oppose and replace, that's the spirit of antichrist.

"himself against every so-called God or object of worship, so that he takes a seat in the temple of God." The temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. That means that there must be a rebuilding of the temple forthcoming. "Proclaiming himself to be, God. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth." Jesus can take care of this guy. "and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming." Jesus is coming. Antichrist is coming first, and then Jesus is coming forever. "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan, with all power, false or counterfeit signs, and wonders, wicked deception, for those who are perishing, because they refuse to love the truth." And be saved, the Bible tells us, not just what happened, but what's always happening, and what will happen in the end. Now some of you are struggling to believe this. Question, would you believe Jesus? I'm gonna give the final word to Jesus. I had a guy recently say, I talked to him about something Jesus said, he said, "Well that's Jesus' opinion." Let me just, "Oh hey man, let's have the conversation, but I wanna get a safe distance from the lightening. Yeah, that is Jesus opinion, so go with it." Matthew 24, "When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel." Jesus says, Daniel wrote Daniel. Jesus says, that what Daniel said, would be fulfilled by Him. "Standing in the holy place, let the reader understand, let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. He says when antichrist rises up again and takes over the temple, and wants to be worshiped like God, just like Daniel prophesied, run for your life, the end is coming. "For as the lightening comes from the east, and shines as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man." Where did he get that title? Daniel 7! Whoo! The Son of Man, he is telling us, Daniel 7, I'm so excited I can't wait! Daniel 7, he's the Son of Man, he tells us, the Son of Man is coming, gets better! "Then will appear in heaven, the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man, coming on the clouds." What's that? Daniel 7, that's Daniel 7, that's amazing! "With power and great glory, and he will send out his angels, with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Whoo! "Pastor Mark what does that mean?" Jesus is God, Jesus is alive, Jesus is worshiped by angels right now! Jesus is coming again to judge the living and the dead! Jesus is the fulfillment to prophesy! Jesus is the center of history! Jesus Christ will crush Satan, demons, and antichrist, he will raise the children of God from the dead! And he is coming on the clouds! Whoo! I don't know why preachers skip the last half of the book. Wow! Let's worship this God, amen?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- Father God, thank you for Jesus, wow! Lord, our minds exploded! God, you are amazing! And perfect, and truthful, and faithful. Lord Jesus thank you, that we get to look back on what Daniel was looking forward to. We pray against the enemy, his servants, their works and effects. We rebuke you, Satan, demons and spirit of the antichrist. We invite you Holy Spirit to give revelation and transformation to the children of God. And Jesus, in a moment, we're gonna start singing. And we do so to practice for the day when we see our King, coming on the clouds of heaven, and we're gonna be singing. And smiling, as our Jesus is arriving, and reigning. Give us faith to believe in that day, until on that day we see it by sight, in Jesus good name, amen.