

The Future is not in Human Hands

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if you turn with me in your Bibles to Daniel chapter 8, that's page 745 in the Church Bibles. And let me just give you the message before we get into the chapter, just in case we get lost with all these beasts.

Here it is. The future is not in human hands. So if you don't get anything else, just make sure you get that.

We're coming into these very colourful and difficult chapters, recording Daniel's dreams and visions. And it does seem that they become really ever more obscure and unfamiliar to us with the kind of imagery that they use.

We as 21st century Westerners. And this as ancient Middle Eastern writing 500 or so years BC.

So it certainly does present us with a challenge if we're to understand what it's all about. And at first, there's not a lot of encouragement when we read verse 27. Discover that Daniel himself was sickened, had to go to bed and couldn't understand it.

[1 : 1 9] We might wonder what hope there is for us. But of course, in fact, that doesn't mean that Daniel didn't understand anything. Indeed, far from it.

It's true, he didn't understand the full significance yet of what he'd been told. And there's a lot more to come in these last few chapters that expand this vision and all of these things he was seeing.

But he did understand plenty, and we too can understand plenty, and indeed more than Daniel perhaps understood himself.

Because we have the further benefit, of course, don't we, of having so much more of God's revelation since then throughout the rest of Scripture. So we should take comfort, rather, from the angel's words to Daniel in chapter 12, verse 10, where Daniel again is asking about understanding.

And the angel says to Daniel, The wicked shall not understand, but the wise they shall understand. Well, who are the wise? The wise, of course, are those who know their God, and who listen to him, and who seek understanding, who seek the righteousness that comes from God.

[2 : 3 0] And our Lord Jesus Christ, of course, tells us that blessed are those who sow hunger and thirst, because they shall be filled. So, we need to be like Daniel in verse 15 of our chapter, seeking understanding.

And when we do that, well, we get the same answer as the angel gave to Daniel. Or rather, the voice that instructed the angel, Make this man understand the vision.

So take heart, God did not record this in the Bible to confuse us, or to trick us, But he put it here to help us, and to encourage us. Remember what Paul wrote to the Romans, in Romans 15, 4?

Whatever was written in the former days, was written for our instruction. That through endurance, and through the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope. So it may take a little endurance, but it will repay us with encouragement and with hope.

So let's set to, then, looking at this chapter in a spirit of endurance. Verses 1 and 2 set the scene. We're told it's the third year of Belshazzar, and that means it's two years after the vision of chapter 7, But still before the events of chapter 5, Belshazzar's feast and his downfall.

[3 : 50] So very probably these were dark days for Daniel, and God's people. Nebuchadnezzar's apparent conversion, perhaps long in the past, And no doubt opposition to God's people, once again in the ascendant.

And it's perhaps significant that this vision focuses very much on opposition to God. There's very little in this vision of the great throne of God, and the judgments of God, And the rule of God, that we saw last time in chapter 7.

Second, we need to remember that the section from chapter 2 to chapter 7, Which you remember was written in Aramaic, That Joyce Baldwin in her commentary calls the nucleus of the book, That is now past.

We're back into the Hebrew language again here, for the rest of the book. And it's dealing with events now that are much more closely related directly to Israel, And the events in and around the chosen land, as verse 9 calls it here, the glorious land.

Chapters 2 to 7, do you remember, we're enclosed with those two visions, Chapter 2 and chapter 7, And giving such a broad sweep of the whole of world history. And of course the message was essentially the same in both.

[5 : 07] In chapter 2, the God of heaven will at last set up a kingdom which will last forever. In chapter 7, it's made so clear that the conqueror of that kingdom is none other than the Son of Man, And that he is the one who will reign forever, and his saints will reign with him.

But now in chapter 8, we're narrowing down the focus, Not to the whole sweep of history, But rather to focus on the second and the third, Especially the third kingdom, Of the four kingdoms that appeared in both of those visions.

These are the kingdoms, That would be the main players in world history, In the next 400 years or so after Daniel. The Medo-Persian kingdom, And the Grecian empire.

The third year of Belshazzar, When this vision happened, Was just a time that Cyrus of Persia overran the Medes, And so united the Medo-Persian empire.

And so Persia, Which was about to overcome Babylon, That becomes the first focus of this vision. And that's why the location, We're told, Is in Susa, The capital of the Persian empire.

[6 : 13] That's where it begins. And that's where historically, Did in fact begin, The very next phase of empire, In the ancient Near East. But as we're going to see, This is actually much more, Than a mere history lesson.

Although, Certainly it's not less, Than real world history. But it's a difficult chapter. I want to try and summarize the key elements, Under three headings, To try and make some sense for us.

First of all, Foretelling history, Then fathoming history, And then focusing history. First of all then, Foretelling real history.

This is all about revelation, From the God of heaven, About history. And the message is very clear, God alone knows the future, But, He does reveal it, To humankind.

And so we are absolute fools, If we don't listen to him. The specifics of this vision, Relate with, Really extraordinary accuracy, To the historical events, That did indeed unfold, In the years following, Belshazzar's reign.

[7 : 24] Beginning with the overthrow of Babylon, By Medo-Persia. I've no doubt that that is why, When we were back in chapter 5, Remember which happens after this, Daniel could have such confidence, In telling Belshazzar, That his kingdom was about to fall.

He'd seen this vision, He'd understood it, He knew what was going to happen. So let's just run through it, And look carefully, At the figures. Verses 3 to 4, We have the ram, And that is explained, Very clearly in verse 20, As the empire of Medo-Persia.

It came from the east, And it conquered all the way, To the north, And the south, And the west. And the second horn, The Persian kingdom, Became dominant. And that took over from Babylon, As the world's superpower, Exactly as Daniel saw in this vision.

Then, We read about the goat, That sweeps in, This time from the west. Hardly touching the ground, Destroying everything its path, Overcoming Persia, In an extraordinarily rapid, Military conquest.

And this, We're told, Is, The Grecian empire. And it, Describes almost exactly, The extraordinary military victors, Of Alexander the Great.

[8 : 41] He is the great horn, That verse 21 speaks of, The first great king. And Alexander the Great, Did indeed sweep across the ancient world, He was a brilliant general, He conquered the whole ancient world, By the age of 26.

Quite extraordinary. I suppose it's a bit like Tiger Woods, Who won the US Masters, And became world number one, At age 21. I was just reading on the internet, The CV of Tiger Woods the other day.

It's quite extraordinary. Well Alexander the Great, Took on the whole world, By the age of 26. And yet, As verse 22 foretells, He was indeed suddenly broken.

He died, Very mysteriously, Very suddenly, At the age of 32. And his kingdom, Was divided into four parts, And divided up between four generals. That's the four horns.

Verse 8 talks about, The four kingdoms. That verse 22, Tells us, Happened. Not as powerful as his had been, But nevertheless, The next empires.

[9 : 43] And it was the fourth of these kingdoms, Under a ruler called, Antiochus the fourth, The ruler of the Seleucid Empire of Syria, That kingdom, That kingdom, Now gets the focus, Of the vision.

Indeed, The major focus. That's, The little horn of verses 9 to 14. That's, What verse 23, Calls the king of bold face, The great power. This is the king, Who will do terrible things, To the Lord's land, And to the Lord's people.

And, His wickedness, Will be focused, As verse 13 tells us, On the sanctuary of God. He'll make it desolate. That's the abomination of desolation, That crops up again, In chapter 9, And again in chapters 11 and 12.

It refers, To the dreadful events, Of the second century BC. Antiochus IV was a, An extraordinarily cruel, And wicked ruler. He was rampant in power.

He called himself, Antiochus Epiphanes, Meaning, God made manifest. Just as verse 25 says, In his own eyes, He will be great.

[10 : 54] Everybody else called him, Antiochus Epiphanes, The madman. And that tells you something, About what he was really like. And, He overran Israel, On his way to, Overrun the Egyptian empire.

And he devastated it, And massacred many, Many people. In AD 169, He massacred, Thousands of people in Jerusalem, Massacred the priests in the temple, Sacrificed a pig, As the most unclean of all animals, On the holy altar in the temple.

In 167 BC, Two years later, He came back, Put down an uprising, And this time, Set up a temple, An image of the god Zeus, In the holy place of the temple.

Killed the priests, And he offered human sacrifices, On the altar. Under Antiochus, It was, It was really a systematic attempt, To utterly destroy, The religion of Israel.

To supplant it totally, With Greek culture, And with Greek religion, With Greek gods. And that was what, At the last, Led to the Maccabean revolt, When under Judas Maccabeus, And others, The Jewish people, Rose up, And retook the temple.

[12 : 10] And it was indeed, Consecrated again, In 164 BC, Just less than, Three and a half years, After, Its desecration. And that corresponds, Really to verse 14, The 2300, Evenings and mornings, Making, 1150 days, Just less than, Three and a half years.

And, Antiochus, Himself, Died, That very same year, Struck down by, A mystery illness, That hit his body, And his mind, Quite literally was, As 26, Verse 26 says, Broken, But not by human hand.

It's extraordinary, Historical detail, That we have here. It's all of it, Verifiable historical fact. That's why, Of course, Some people, Have said, Of course, These things must have been written, After the events.

They're just so accurate, They couldn't possibly be written, In advance. Well, Of course, If you, Presuppose, That God can't know the future, And can't tell the future, To anybody, Well, That's what you have to say, Isn't it?

That's what, Many liberal scholars, Have tried to say, Since the 19th century, It's what, In fact, Some people today, Called open theists, Want to say, The future is open, God actually doesn't know, The future.

[13 : 30] But of course, To say that actually, Means God isn't God at all, Is he? That's true, Of course, Of any man-made gods, Made up, Religions of this world, And idols, They know nothing, They can't tell the future.

It's not true, Of the one true God, Who made all things, And rules all things, His very uniqueness, According to the Bible, Is the very fact, That he does, Control world events, In history.

I am God, There is none like me, Declaring the end, From the beginning, And from ancient times, Things not done, I have spoken, I will bring it to pass, I have purposed, And I will do it, Says the Lord, Isaiah 46 and 10, And many, Many other places, If you want to be, An open theist, By the way, The book of Isaiah, Has to come out of your Bible, Straight away, And as you keep going, You find that many other books, Have to come out of the Bible too, But only the true God, Can do this, That's the point, Not the gods of idols, Not the gods of our, Religious imagination, Not statues of poles, Wood and marble, Of course not, Or folly, But this God, Yes, As the prophet Amos says, In chapter 3 of his prophecy, God does nothing, Without revealing, His secret, To his servants, The prophets, Only this God, Knows the future, But he does know it,

And he does reveal it, He reveals to us, What we need to know, About it, So we're fools, If we don't listen to him, But, And this is very important too, There's much more to world history, Than meets the eye, Much more than merely, The ebb and flow, Of earthly empires and nations, There's a much bigger story, Behind it all, And it's that story, That Daniel's attention, Is being drawn to here, In this chapter, The ongoing story, Of God's redemptive history, God's purpose of salvation, And indeed, It's the future, Of that story, And it's unfolding, That explains, Why God would, Indeed, Reveal to Daniel, And lay out for him, The forthcoming history, For 400 years or so, It's actually a pattern, That if we read our Bibles, We should begin to expect, If we go back to the book of Genesis,

In Genesis chapter 15, We find, That God lays out to Abraham, Something very, Very similar, A period of nearly 400 years, Stretching out in advance, Before God's people, Are going to arise, Back out of Egypt, And enter the promised land, That God had promised to Abraham, God lays that out to Abraham, In a vision, Before, The next critical stage, Of God's history takes place, The people go down into Egypt, Before, The exile happens, God makes it clear, Through his prophets, That it is going to happen, He makes it explicit, Through the prophet Jeremiah, That the exile is going to last, About 70 years, Before it happens, Why would God do, Such a thing?

[16 : 44] Well perhaps, Because both of these facts, Seem so awful, And unbelievable, That God would have to make it, Absolutely clear to his people, So that they wouldn't lose faith in him, And wouldn't lose faith, In his promise, When these things did happen, And so here you see, Daniel is being told, That it's going to be another, Long, Long time of struggle, Before, The kingdom that God has promised, Is going to be established, In the latter days, In, As verse 19 calls it, In the latter end, Of the time of indignation, Or the time of wrath, And interestingly, Daniel's reaction, When he hears this, Is very similar, To that of Abraham, Daniel is sickened, He's overcome, Just as Abraham, Was overcome, With a horror of great darkness, Because he sees, How long it's going to be, Before God's promise, Is going to come to fruition, You see those who are,

Truly longing, For the kingdom of God, Are always asking that question, Aren't they? In scripture, And today, How long oh Lord? People who are truly, Longing for the kingdom of Christ, Are never satisfied, They want the kingdom to come, They're saying, Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus, You see it's this, Bigger story, That God is showing Daniel, He needs to see, The battle, The war, Raging, Behind the events, Of world history, Because it's that story, It's the history of God's plan, And purpose of redemption, And the world, War against the forces of evil, In the heavenlies, It's that story, That lies behind, And explains all world history, And that's what explains, The focus in this vision, On the little horn, We're going to see that, Just in a moment, And that's what explains, The greater goal behind it all, It's not just the, It's not just the end, Of the immediate period of suffering, For God's people, But it's the end,

It's the latter end, It's the time of the appointed end, It's the time of the end, Of all things, That Daniel is, Is repeatedly being pointed to, Here by the angel, So we've got to move, From just the foretelling, Of real history, Which God certainly does, And tells Daniel here, To the fathoming, Of redemption's history, We need to have the response, Of the true believer, You see the message is, That God alone controls, All of history, Precisely because it is, His history, It's the history, Not just of this world, But the history of, His redeeming purpose, And therefore, To really understand, World history, Is to fathom, Redemption's history, It's to grasp, What God is doing, And therefore, To respond, And to trust him, And to obey him, And to take our place, In that unfolding history, You see,

To really fathom human history, We need to grasp, That all human history, Is part of God's story, Of salvation for his people, The history of God's people, And their future, Is what determines, The entire history, Of this world, That's what's behind, Our current affairs, That's what's behind, The future of this planet, World history is explained, Only by church history, That's why, A secular historian, Can never really understand, The world, The church, And its future, Determines, The future history, Of this planet, Did you realize that?

The future of this planet, Doesn't depend, Upon the balance, Of the superpowers, Nor on the dominance, Of the new, And rising economies, In the east, Or wherever they're going to be, Nor on the rising, Amount of CO2, In the atmosphere, Or the melting, Polar ice caps, Or all of these things, No, The future of this planet, Depends, Upon God's purpose, For his people, And the kingdom, That he's promised, That he's promised to them, To us, You see, That's why, The little horn, In this chapter, Gets so much more attention, Than the big horn, And all these other empires, In terms of world history, The big horn, Alexander the great, He was a far, Far more significant figure, You find many, Many more books about him, Than about Antiochus the fourth, But you see, To God, And to his story, Antiochus, Who was a pygmy, On the world stage, Oh, He's much more important,

[21 : 24] Why? Because he, Made his specific, Assault, On God's people, And God's land, And on God himself, Let's look at verse 9, He threatened, The glorious land, God's chosen land, God's Israel, In verse 10, We're told, He challenges, The host of heaven, He reaches blasphemy, Blasphemously, For the realms of deity, Verse 11, He even thinks, He can, He even thinks, He can overtake, The prince of the host, God himself, The Lord of hosts, Verse 25, Explains it, And says, He's deluded, By his own power, And he'll even, Rise up, Against the prince, Of princes, Himself, You see, Compared to that, All the machinations, Of world empires, There is nothing, They're just, They're just a fight, Between goats, And rams, That's actually quite a good thing, Isn't it, For our world leaders,

To remember, Mr. Bush, And Mr. Blair, And Mr. Whatever his name is, Ajemenijab, Of Iran, To God, All your antics, Are just like, The pathetic rivalries, Of dumb beasts, Goats and rams, Knocking each other's horns off, That's what God thinks of you, Now you see, Just as in chapter 7, Daniel's focus, Is exactly here, It's on the little horn, And it's on the assaults, On God's kingdom, And on God's people, And on God's city, And God's temple, Because you see, Daniel is a man, With God's kingdom, Uppermost in his heart, That's what he cares about, Do you remember chapter 6, Verse 10, When they were trying to get him, In the lion's den, And all the rest of it, Where's the focus, Of Daniel's prayer, In his time of personal distress, That's not all about his troubles, His windows open, Towards Jerusalem, He's praying, Focused, On the future,

Of the kingdom of God, And that's, Why here, Daniel is focused, On exactly that, What appalls him, What makes him sick for days, Is the horror, Of this assault, Against God's kingdom, And he's, Seeing it, He's seeing, How awful it's going to be, That's a good way, Of gauging isn't it, Whether we're, People who really fathom, Our own, History, And current affairs, What are the things, That grip our hearts, And call for our attention, Do we see these things, On the news, And everywhere else, Do we see them, Just as the rest of the world, Sees them, Do we see the big issues, As being just as, As the politicians, And the commentators do, Or do we see them actually, As they relate to the kingdom of God, Are the big horns of the world, The things that are, Our biggest concern, Or is it the little horns, Insignificant perhaps,

To the world, But the things that really, Truly threaten, The church of Jesus Christ, Is it just the world's history, That shapes your politics, Is it just, The world's, History and affairs, That shape your concerns, Your ambitions, Your investments, Or is it the current concern, Of what lies, Behind all, That's going on in our world, And ever has gone on, The kingdom of God, That's going to last forever, That's a good question, Isn't it?

You see what this chapter is about, Is the recurring patterns, All through history, Of which these, Particular historical events, Are but manifestations, In that specific time, There will always be, Little horns, Rising up, In direct opposition to God, And his people, And his kingdom, In chapter 7, That we had last time, The little horn, Arises in a different period, In the fourth kingdom, Seems to have the character, Of a final embodiment, Of evil and antichrist, And the New Testament, Of course teaches us clearly, That there will be, A final embodiment of evil, That that will arise, At the end of history, Before the coming, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul calls him, The man of lawlessness, In second Thessalonians, John in first John, Calls him the antichrist, But remember, John goes straight on, To say, Already many antichrists, Have come, And Jesus himself, Says that this will be,

[26 : 02] The pattern, For the last days, We saw it just the other week, In Matthew chapter 24, Many antichrists, And this little horn, Is just one such, Anti-God, Anti-Christ, An anti-kingdom figure, See in verse 23, This king is described, As one who understands riddles, It's exactly the same language, As is used of Daniel, In chapter 5 verse 12, He understands riddles, You see, He's an anti-Daniel, Figure, He's the antithesis, The very opposite, Of the man of God, And the point is, That such people, Will be, A recurring pattern, Throughout history, Arising, In opposition to God, And to God's people, In every age, And that is the story, Of the Bible, The story of the Bible, Right from Genesis 3, Right through to the end, The story of the seed, Of the woman, Arising, Against the seed of Satan, We see it in Genesis chapter 11,

At the beginning, When in the first Babylon, Babel, They try to build a tower, That reaches for the stars, Reaches for the heavens, Tries to topple God, You read about it, Through many of the kings, In Ezekiel 28, The king of Tyre, Is pictured as reaching, For the heavens, Trying to cast down the stars, And it's just the same here, And behind it all, Is the great enemy of God, The beast of all beasts, That ancient serpent, The devil or Satan, That's what John calls him, In his vision in Revelation 12, Uses language exactly like that here, About sweeping stars down, And destroying God's people, Behind every single manifestation, Of evil, In history, And throughout history, Lies another power, And that is the power, Of Satan himself, The bold faced king, We're told is great, In verse 24, But not by his own power,

Well no, Behind him, Lies the dark power, The enemy of God, And his people, And if he has, His incarnations, All throughout history, So, He has a recurring pattern, Of the way he works in history, Do you see how he attacks God here, Look at verse 11, He attacks, God's sanctuary on earth, That's how he shakes his fist, At God in heaven, He seeks to overthrow it, God's sanctuary on earth, Is his dwelling place, It's his home, It's his people, In the Old Testament, Of course, It's focused on the temple, But not now, Now, It's in Jesus Christ, The new temple of God, It's in all who are in him, It's in his church, And that's what he seeks to destroy, Verse 24 makes it plain, He's seeking to destroy, The people, Who are the saints, Well of course he is, That's been the devil's mission, Right from the very beginning, To destroy the people of God,

Who are his saints, And look at this, Very instructive, Very instructive, To see how, He seeks to destroy, The sanctuary of God, The church of God in Christ, Look at verse 11, He destroys, The central place, Of sacrifice, The regular burnt offering, Was taken away, In the place of his sanctuary, Overthrown, Verse 12, He throws truth, To the ground, So he destroys, The grounds of forgiveness, And fellowship with God, The acceptable offering, And sacrifice, Without which there can be, No forgiveness, And acceptance before God, And he destroys, The word and the command, The authority of God, To guide and direct his people, Well, Where is, The assault, On the church today, Well in this nation,

At least at this time, It's a bit more subtle, Than Antiochus Epiphanes, It's not, Massacres, And sacrilege, But it is, Exactly the same in principle, The combined forces, Of secular humanism, And pluralism, And post modernism, What are they trying to do, They're destroying, The uniqueness, Of the message, Of the cross of Jesus Christ, The one sacrifice, The one place of forgiveness, The one place of fellowship, With God, And along with that, They are undermining, The authority, Of the word of God, The one, Authoritative, Sufficient command of God, For his people, Isn't that what's happening today?

[30 : 52] The pagan, Greek culture, Overwhelming the temple of God, Just as surely as it did, In the second century BC, In the second century BC, And in our western church, Including our own denomination, It's being done, Even from within, The institutional church, And the little horn, Is destroying, Many who are the saints, By attacking, The uniqueness of Christ, The authority, Of his word, Scripture, And behind all of that, Is, The beast, That ancient serpent, The devil, Or Satan, Why do you think, Our denominations, In such a mess today?

And most of the rest of them too? Well this is why, You still think, This chapter is obscure, And not relevant? Of course it was, To do with specific events, In the first instance, But again and again, Daniel is told, Look at verse 19, This is about the latter days, This is about the time of the end, The latter days, First comes up in Daniel, In chapter 2, When Nebuchadnezzar, Is being told, His dream is about the latter days, And the dream is all about, The days of the incoming, Of the kingdom of God, That is going to last forever, Comes again, In chapters 10 to 12, Again and again, The latter days, The time of the end, Because all of this, Has got to do with the turmoil, That surrounds the coming, Of the kingdom of God, It is all part of the same war, It is all part of the great war, That will be till the end, We will see that in chapter 9, Daniel is told that quite clearly, And that is why Jesus, As we saw a couple of weeks ago, In Matthew chapter 24, That is why Jesus,

Picks up these prophecies, And applies them, To the coming destruction, Of Jerusalem in AD 70, And, To the entire period of the world, Until his second coming, That is why John, In his vision in Revelation 12, Says almost exactly the same thing, In almost identical type of visions, And the New Testament, Tells us plainly, Again and again, That we now live, In these latter days, In the last days, It tells us plainly, That there will be terrible times, In them, And that it will be times, Worsening, Towards the coming, Of our Lord Jesus, The prophets you see, Never, Could quite foresee, Two separate comings, Of the Lord Jesus, With anything like, The same clarity, That we now have, They saw it as one, Great coming event, One great, Day of the Lord, The time of the latter days, When God's kingdom, Would be established forever, But of course, Jesus, In his teaching, And his apostles,

They made clear, That that began, With the coming, Of Jesus, And his death, And resurrection, But it will go on, Until at last, Every enemy, Is put under his feet, And then, And only then, He will come to rule forever, And you see, What Daniel's getting, In this vision, Is some inkling of that, He's grasping, That this great battle, Was going to last, For a long, Long time, And he's grasping, That at many times, It's going to look like, Defeat, For God, And for his saints, I think that's why, He was so sick, That's why he was so horrified, He was like Abraham, How long Lord, Until this is fulfilled, It's a cry of the saints, Right till the end, In Revelation chapter 6, How long, O Lord, Till you vindicate us, Just as we may cry today, How long Lord, Until, Until at last, This world is, As we long to see it, As you promised it to be, Maybe it's a mark,

Of our western decadence, That we don't find ourselves, Praying that, I bet you anything, Believers in Darfur, Are praying that prayer today, As they meet together, How long, O Lord, Part of, Fathoming, History, Of understanding, God's story, Is coming to terms, With these terrible realities, And it's all, Part of grasping, How awful, Sin, Really is, Just what a terrible, Evil thing, Our rebellion against God, Really is, It has literally, Wrecked the universe, And it doesn't get fixed, Without cosmic upheaval, The God who made this world, Can't shed his own blood, On the cross, In this world, At the hands of the creatures, That he made, Without the whole world, Being rocked, How else could it be?

[35 : 35] So history itself, The whole of human history, Becomes, A huge battleground, We have to begin to grasp, What a terrible thing, Sin is, Against the holy God, Quite literally, Is world shattering, But, Also, To fathom, Human history, Is to see, What Daniel does, Also see here, As well as all the horror, As well as all the cost, Of that great redemption, He does, See its certainty, He sees, That God knows the future, And that God controls, Every event, Even down to the very number of days, It's going to be, Before these things are put right, Verse 14, 2,300 evenings and mornings, Or, 1,150 days,

Of course, Does apply to the events of, A.D. 167 to 164, But you see, That whole concept, Becomes symbolic, In these prophetic visions, It's taken up, Again and again, As times, Times, And half a time, Recurs again and again, In these visions, And verse 19, Is absolutely explicit, And clear, Do you see, God has appointed, The time of the end, It is an appointed time, His hand, And his power, Controls everything, It directs everything, And verse 24, Implies, If it does, That behind Antiochus, Is another power, A dark power, But all the more, It is absolutely clear, That behind even that, Is another power still, It is the power of God himself, And the evil one himself, Will just like, This little horn, As verse 25 says, Will just like that, Be broken, But not by human hand,

There will be a struggle, To the end, And God's people, Are not exempt, In fact, God's people, Are singled out, They are targeted, Precisely because, They are the saints, Of the most high God, That is what, Provokes the opposition, Friends, We cannot be unrealistic, As Christians, It will be a struggle, Till the end, But, Just as God, Shall end, Every such power, In history, Often using, Kingdoms, To rise against, Kingdoms, To do it, So, Also, When evil, Has ultimately, Overstretched itself, As verse 23, Seems to suggest, Evil, Always has a tendency, To do, It shall be broken, It shall be broken, Utterly, And forever, By the prince of princes, It will be crushed, By no mere human hand, God is in control, Of it all, God's purpose,

Will not, Fail, And that's what brings us, In closing to this, Third thing briefly, The focus, On the redeemer of history, The message is about, The reality of an assured kingdom, Because of the redeemer himself, You see, The key to this whole chapter, Lies, In the unseen, And the silent, And yet, The utterly sovereign hand of God, That does at last, Act in history, To destroy the little horn, And to destroy with him, All evil, And to bring in, God's eternal kingdom, You see, Serenely, Behind all of this, Is one who, Towers silently, In control of everything, Despite every attempt, To usurp him, And assault him, There is one, Who is in control, Verse 11, Calls him the prince of the host, Verse 25, The prince of princes, His voice,

Is the voice in verse 16, That instructs Gabriel, To reveal to Daniel, The promise of his kingdom, That will overcome, Even the highest evil, His hand, Breaks in in verse 25, To finally destroy, Every last wickedness, He is the one, Who at last, Will restore the sanctuary of God, To its proper state, Who will restore, The place of forgiveness, The place of reconciliation, Of man with God, He'll do that, So that at last, The dwelling of God, Will again be with man forever, Who is he?

[40 : 16] Who is the one, Who destroys every beast, Who rules in the heavens? Well you know the answer, John the apostle, Sees him in his vision, 500 years later, As he saw the fulfillment, Of everything that Daniel, Saw promised here, What did he see?

Well he saw a different, Kind of creature altogether, Didn't he? Listen to what he saw, From revelation 5, Verse 5, One of the elders said to me, Weep no more, Behold the lion, Of the tribe of Judah, The root of David, Has conquered, So that he can open, The scroll and its seven seals, And between the throne, And the four living creatures, And among the elders, I saw a lamb, Standing, As though it had been slain, With seven horns, And with seven eyes, Which are the seven spirits of God, Sent out into the earth, And I heard every creature, In heaven, And on earth, And under the earth, And in the sea, And all that is in them, Saying to him, Who sits on the throne, And to the lamb, Be blessing, And honor, And glory, And might, Forever, And forever, He's the lion, Who at last, Triumphs over every ram, And goat, And every other beast, Because he is the lamb,

Who restores the sanctuary of God, By making the perfect sacrifice for sin, And you see, What Gabriel, The angel, Reveals to Daniel here, Is just what Gabriel, The angel, Revealed later on, To Zechariah, And to Mary, In Luke chapter 1, It's the only other time in the Bible, When Gabriel is mentioned by name, What did he say to Mary?

The son who is born to you, He will reign forever, And for his kingdom, There will be no end, What did Zechariah respond, In his song of thanksgiving, And joy?

Blessed be the Lord, The God of Israel, For he has visited, And redeemed his people, He has raised up for us, A horn, Of salvation, You see, We have a horn, We have a horn, Who has ended, Every little horn's reign, And he appeared once, And for all, To destroy, Him who has the power of death, The devil, And deliver, All those who through fear of death, Were subject to lifelong slavery, It's been broken forever, By no human hand, That's the message, Of the gospel, Of the kingdom of God, That will last forever, That's the message, Gabriel spoke to Daniel, And Gabriel spoke to Zechariah, And to Mary, And speaks to us, It's the message of the gospel, Of the Lord Jesus Christ, So you see, We don't need to fear human history, We don't need to fear the present,

[43 : 21] Or the future, Isn't that a great relief, With wars, And crises, And climate change, And governments in crisis, And bird flu, Whatever next it's going to be, The future is not in human hands, It's in his hands, Who sits enthroned in heaven, The lion of Judah, The lamb who was slain, The future is assured, It's assured for joy, And gladness, And vindication, For all, All who through Christ Jesus, Those struggling now, Are the saints of God, It's assured, Just as it's assured, For the destruction of all his foes, Aren't you glad, Glad that our God, Is a God who controls the future, Who knows it, Who reveals it,

Who's in charge of it, Aren't you glad, That you belong to him, And that the future is not in human hands, Not even in your hands, But his hands, You do belong to him, Don't you, If you're in any doubt about that, Don't leave it any longer, Why would you want to have your future, In anybody else's hands, Than the lion, Who is the lamb, The king, Who towers over every other beast, The one who has cleansed, And made perfect, The sanctuary of God, That God may dwell, With his people forever, That's the message, Of the kingdom, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, And it's a great one,