

Today is the continuation of the sermon series entitled *Daniel's Commission* with this being *Part 3*. We've been focusing on how God worked through Daniel to establish prophecy that would lead up to the very end of mankind ruling himself on this earth, up to our time now.

It's really quite awesome when you go through more of the book, that's why we're going to go through more of it now and touch upon some things today, because God just continued to add to him, with some lessons contained throughout as well of how people should live their lives who zealously desire God's way of life, but also to understand some of those prophetic things God put into place to lead up to the coming of His Son, the first coming *and* the second coming. And it's very inspiring, especially as you see what He said about various kingdoms and the rise and fall of various kingdoms and what would happen during those periods of time, again, all of it fitting together in a very powerful way. What inspires me is to see the precision, the order, the way that God brings it all together and gives things in advance as He has, just like we talked about last Sabbath – Cyrus – what an awesome story, about Cyrus being named far in advance, 170 years in advance, of someone that God was going to raise up to, of all things, conquer Babylon and send His people back to Judah. Incredible stories! Inspiring!

So far now we have focused on the seventy-years prophecy concerning the duration of the kingdom of Babylon. We have gone through that showing how that you can fall into a trap that so many people do oftentimes, of reading your own ideas into prophetic things, but God has to give that. God has to reveal what He's saying. God's word is absolute; it's absolutely true, always! And yet people struggle with, even in God's Church through times past, of the timing of these events because of things that Daniel said. Because as we've gone into it it wasn't a matter of how long *Judah* was going to be in captivity. It wasn't going to be for how long the Jews or Jerusalem was going to be desolate, because that period of time was much shorter. If you look at the time of the desolation of Jerusalem, what happened in the final conquering that took place there around 586 BC, that leaves only about 48 years (if I have my dates right). And you go through and read various things about the desolations, if you're trying to read seventy years into it, it causes a big problem! And that's because oftentimes we read things into a matter rather than reading the entire story, and in this case understanding it was about Babylon, it was about the length of time that Babylon would exist, from beginning to end! It's an awesome story!

And then as we added to it last week as well, what an incredible thing that a king of Judah went into an area, an unwise thing to have done, to fight in the area of Megiddo against the Egyptians who had aligned themselves with the Assyrians to fight against the Babylonians, and to understand the timing of that event. That is a marking of the beginning of the events of the rise of Babylon, that Babylon had come to a point where the others were beginning to flee; they were conquering Assyria already, the Egyptians were on the run - and it started at Megiddo and ends at Megiddo. Awesome! Awesome things that God gives to us, just continuing to add more and more to our understanding.

And so again here, we've started at the very beginning, how that God inspired a dream, revealed a Babylonish system that would continue to the very end. That's why I have in times past wondered, "Why is the focus so much upon Babylon at the end, the word 'Babylon', because it was a long time ago?" And yet you come to learn in time that it's about a system that would endure to the end, until God conquered it. It's the same statue, the head of gold, is Babylon, it runs throughout the statue. It

starts at the head until it's conquered and the stone that's cut out without hands that comes and smashes the feet, the coming of the Messiah, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Incredible stories here and how God set all these things up – but also for us to understand *timing* and the timing of events. It's because of things in Daniel that we have come to more deeply understand the return of His Son, the second coming, and even more that God has showed us.

Let's turn over today here to Daniel 2 and read the last part of this again, of what happened toward the very end here, that Babylon was going to last for seventy years but also a system that would continue to the end under Satan's rule; because it's about Satan, it's about confusion, Babel, confusion, the way of Satan, the way of Satan governing. And some of the things contained, if we get to all these today, includes Satan in it, it includes what's going to happen to him in some of what God gives! These are things that we understand more fully now because of what God's given us in the last couple of years concerning Satan and how God's going to deal with him when it's all said and done, but understanding that system is fully of him and he has ruled and reigned on this earth indeed, in a system of Babylon, one that causes captivity, brings people into captivity, hurts people, oppresses people.

Daniel 2:46 – Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel, this is after the dream had been given, what the meaning of everything was, what was going to take place and then these are the words, these are the things that happened with Nebuchadnezzar, and it so moved him by what he saw that he **fell on his face and worshipped Daniel and commanded that they should offer an offering of incense unto him. The king answered and said to Daniel, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a LORD of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret. Then the king made Daniel a great man and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.** What an incredible thing to happen to such a young man! *Young* – a young teen when he was taken into captivity! Some guesstimate different time periods here, 15-16, three more years of training preparing for this occasion here, for this great dream and this to happen. Awesome!

...then he made him a great man, and gave him great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king. And being the king of Babylon and knowing human nature, it didn't take very long for pride to come right back, to enter right back into him, and some of the things that he did as we go on here.

Let's go on with chapter 3 now. So what did he do? Not a smart thing, but he was lifted up with pride so he wants to make a great statue that people can look upon that's about him, it's about himself.

Daniel 3:1 - Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was 60 cubits, approximately 90 feet high, 9 feet wide, or 27 meters high for those in Europe and elsewhere, and 2.7 meters wide; **and the width thereof six cubits: he set it on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.**

He was moved, because this is an image of gold, his head was the head of gold in the dream and so as so often happens with people in rulership in this world without God, without knowledge of God, without worshipping God, understanding the importance of humility and understanding that *God* reigns and *God* rules and you serve *God* first and above all things, His way is not our way...and that wasn't in his mind,

and although he was moved by the dream and the things that happened it was a temporary thing, it didn't last too long.

Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at the time you hear the sound of the cornet, the flute, the harp, the sackbut, the psaltery, the dulcimer, and all kinds of music, that you shall fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up: And whoever does not fall down and worship shall in the same hour be cast in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Not a very merciful individual was he? He's going to rule with tremendous power and intimidation, and if you don't do it you can lose your head, or your life, one way or another.

Verse 8 - Then at that time certain Chaldeans came near and accused the Jews, and they spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar: Why do you suppose they said that? Human nature is human nature – jealousy! We see some things later on here, it's always a matter of jealousy, people envying one another, someone else wanting to be the top dog, someone else wanting to be ahead of someone else. It's a sick, sick thing of the human mind, of individuals wanting power, of desiring power and influence, and when they get to a certain level they want more... never gratified, never there, *always* desiring more! It's the way of human beings! And so **they spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live forever;** What a joke! ...**live forever** – What a thing to say - **live forever**. No human being's going to live forever but this is how you get on the good side of someone.

You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who shall hear the sound, talking about all these musical instruments again, **shall fall down and worship the golden image: And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded you, and they do not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury...how dare! How *dare* anyone not do what I tell them in this matter! ...**fury**, it says **with fury commanded them to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king and Nebuchadnezzar spoke unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?** Didn't take him too long to forget about what happened with Daniel, did it? ...and about the God who reveals secrets? Because Daniel went to him and asked if those three individuals could be placed in these areas of government. But it didn't take him too long when something like this happens to forget all that, because of the concepts that so many have had through time, gentiles and so forth, of various gods; it's not enough to just serve the one Great Eternal God.**

Now if you are ready that at the time you hear the sound of the musical instruments and you fall down and worship the image which I have made; then well: but if you do not worship you shall be cast in the same hour into the midst of the burning fiery furnace; so now this is going to be in front of everyone, this is what's going to take place and this is what you should do; **and who is that God who shall deliver you out of my hands?** What arrogance! ...*reeking* with arrogance! I mean, you read a story like this after what he went through with Daniel and how he put Daniel in charge of the province of Babylon, in essence, under him, and then you read something like this and you think, it wasn't very long lived, humility didn't last very long, his bowing down to Daniel didn't last very long, did it? ...out of respect to the Great God who gave to Daniel what He did. Typical human nature...*typical* human nature. They don't want God in their life; not a God like this, not a God who is over all that you should be subject to and obey in everything that He says.

And so he says, **you shall fall down and worship the image which I have made; then well: but if you do not worship you shall be cast in the same hour into the midst of the burning fiery furnace; and who is that God who shall deliver you out of my hands?** Then **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not hasty to answer you in this matter.** In other words, we've thought about this, we know what we're doing. **If this is how it must be, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from this burning fiery furnace, and He,** not the word 'will' as it has here in the Old King James; **and He is able to deliver us out of your hand;** so they understood that if it's God's will God will deliver them out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, and that's exactly what they told him.

But if not, if God *doesn't* choose to do so – He is able, but if He does not, **be it known unto you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury...** What an awesome attitude – *three young men*, very young, same age as Daniel – very young men that stood up to a king knowing what it meant, had the conviction to make a comment to the king, in essence, out of their conviction **that our God is able to,** and they were going to obey God and not the king. And we go by that in ¹Acts 5:29, we live by that, we teach that. If there's a conflict with God and man we follow God, we obey God *first*; that's the way it is.

Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury and the form of his countenance was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: because of their words, because of what was said, because they let him know before the sound of the music ever started again that they were not going to bow down to this image. ...and **therefore he spoke, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was normal to be heated.** Now, I don't know how they did that but they did, and they heated it up a lot more because of *his* rage, because of *his* fury, because his *pride* had been so stepped upon, and because he did not have any kind of honour nor respect toward the Great God who gave him his kingdom, which he had acknowledged before - that God had given Him that kingdom when he was moved by what Daniel gave concerning the dream.

Verse 20 - And he commanded the most mighty men who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the strongest, the elite, if you will, to bind them **and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound with all their clothing and cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames from the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.** That's how hot it was because it was seven times hotter, and these strong men that took them up there were killed. **And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished and rose up quickly and spoke, and said unto his counsellors, Didn't we cast three men who were bound into the midst of the fire? And they said to the king, True, O king. And he answered and said, Behold, I see four men who are loose walking in the midst of the fire and they have not been harmed; and the form of the fourth is like, and it's, again here an awkward translation, the King James says **'the son of god'**, but that's not what it's saying, because he had no knowledge of those things, of what it might mean, of something of this type and because of the protestant belief and so forth it's here. This is not the right translation, it's simply saying, **the fourth is like a son of the gods.** Because he still didn't recognize God, he didn't acknowledge those things that

¹ Acts 5:29 – “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, ‘We should obey God rather than men.’”

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had just said in itself, and so all he could come up with was that this has to be one of the 'sons of god/of the gods' if you will, plural.

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants, now see, because he sees them alive he is moved, and he says, you servants of the Most High God, come forth and come here. Changed his attitude a little bit as he went through part of this. **Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came out of the midst of the fire. And the princes, the governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was there a hair on their head singed, neither were their garments altered, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.** Didn't smell of smoke whatsoever, nothing was burnt, there wasn't the smell of anything burning, there was no sign that anything had happened to them at all – perfectly good health.

Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego... And I'll just tell you, this didn't last too long either. Okay? It's the way it is with human beings. Unless God specifically calls you and draws you and works with you you're going to revert back to your carnal human nature. That's what makes people different that God works with through time, in the first 4,000 years and the past 2,000 years within the Church; only then does a person have an ability to begin to grasp and understand the things of God, to truly see God in a spiritual plane, if you will. It isn't enough just to be moved by something physical, it isn't enough.

It wasn't enough for the Israelites when they crossed through the Red Sea to be moved by that to be converted. That doesn't convert you! That doesn't change you! It might for a little bit – actually it didn't happen very long for them either, did it? It wasn't very long and all of a sudden they were murmuring and complaining and talking how it'd have been so much better if we'd just been left back there with our flesh pots and eating what we were eating and being provided for by the Egyptians and yeah, so we were slaves and life was miserable, but that would have been so much better than being out here. It doesn't take very long! It's an awesome thing to understand that God has to draw you by His holy spirit, by the power of His spirit in your mind, to begin working with your mind to help you to see things so that you can make choices and decision that are lasting and meaningful, that bring about change, and that change provided through our Passover, Jesus Christ; the ability to receive forgiveness, because it's a matter of repentance and a desire to change.

Nebuchadnezzar didn't have a desire to change, he wasn't drawn to that. And so often what has happened through time with people is that when they see something they're moved by it for just a little while. It's kind of what happened in 2008 in this country. They get shaken for a little while, just for a little while but it doesn't take too long and people get right back! Truly! And all of a sudden people are back in the same old mode and it doesn't matter what happens on the earth, doesn't matter how bad things are, "This has always been the way it's been and life is going to go on, and the *stock market is going to go back up* in time, just hold on! *Don't panic!* Keep your money in there! Don't sell off!" That's what people are encouraged to do. And in time because we're supposedly not a second rate nation... well, whatever that term was when our credit rating was taken from 'AAA'... "We'll always be a AAA..." or whatever it is. It's that pride and that haughtiness of human beings, and they don't understand, they have no belief that it can get worse or things are going to get worse, as a whole; they want to hold onto it even though there are people out there warning – very wealthy people – warning, that have made a lot of money by understanding what happens in the world economy.

And so again here, he came near there and made these comments, **blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel/His servant**, didn't know who it was; it was like one of the 'sons of the gods', a son of one of the gods or whatever, to be able to do this, because there's not this concept in that kind of a mind that God would do this, whether God is there, it has to be one of the 'sons'. ...**and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and has changed the king's word**, little bit of pride in there if you can see it. Do you see what he's saying? It's still this haughty pride - that it has to be the Great God, because only the *Great God can change my word*, because the word of the king was final. No matter what the king said it was law, literally. During those ages, so often the various rulers of kingdoms, their word, whatever they said was law, like the Pharaohs before in Egypt, and you go on to some of the other kingdoms there, Medo-Persian empire, some of those, their word, literally, is law. And so that's what he's making comment; basically only God has changed the king's word, because you're alive. So he had to acknowledge that to a degree even though in the midst of that there's still pride. Incredible! So lifted up with self importance! ...**and has changed the king's word, and delivered their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God**. Now he wasn't say the word of the gods still was he? It's their God. He saved them in their worship of *their* God.

Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speaks anything in error against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces and their houses shall be made a dunghill: he liked that term; he made it very picturesque of what he's going to do to all your belongings and all that you have, it's going to be a dunghill, **because there is no other God who can deliver after this sort. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon**. Kind of fickle. Amazing how human nature is. It's been a very inspiring story!

The stories in the book of Daniel are *awesome* as Daniel continues to go through some of this, and one of the very moving things here is to understand that anyone during the time of Babylon on this earth, during the time of 6,000 years, candidly, of mankind on this earth, anyone who desires God's way of life must indeed put God first no matter what the outcome, to understand the power of Almighty God, that we're in His hands, to believe and understand that. I think of things that have been said at different times; when you're called by God and you are a part of God's work, nothing's going to happen to you in your life save what God allows and that is for a great purpose, whatever it is. It doesn't matter what it is, even death; if it's God's purpose there is a great purpose behind it. To live by that, to grasp that, to comprehend that is a powerful thing, it truly is, and the more you grow and the more we continue forward in time, whatever that time has been for mankind going all the way back, for those whom God has called and worked with, that is the kind of life one must live.

God is first. God is Almighty. God is all powerful. And when God calls you and you're a part of God's work whatever happens in your life, whatever happens to you... now, we make decisions and they oftentimes are bad decisions or poor decisions, or whatever, and God has great mercy upon us, but God is there with us, He doesn't give up, He doesn't quit working with us, He doesn't quit moulding and fashioning us. We're the only ones that can stop that process, and generally it comes as a result of not repenting and not keeping at the fight and not desiring to move forward. You keep at the fight, whatever that is that comes your way, and a lot of things come towards your way. This is a period of time in God's Church where I have seen a lot of things happening to a lot of God's people! Things are stirred up, things are *heated* up, if you will, and it's a matter of understanding, indeed, in every respect, that your life is in God's hands and God fights the battles, and whatever comes so be it...so be it, all to the glory and the honour of God. It's a powerful thing, it truly is.

And so these individuals, three young men, set an incredible example from the very beginning, of something everyone should always follow – easier said than done – but it is how we should live our lives from the very beginning of baptism, because that’s what we told God at the beginning of baptism, my life is Yours. My life is Yours, it’s not mine any longer and I don’t want it to be mine. When you come to grow in a greater understanding you come to that point where you realize, I don’t want it to be in *my* hands, I want it to be in God’s, that whatever God moulds and fashions, wherever God is placing us in His Body – because that’s what He’s doing – His family is a matter of a Body. The example that’s given about the Church that Paul talks about, he uses the example of a body. Wherever God places us is the place of the greatest fulfillment in our lives and we all need each other and we all work together as a part of God’s Family – no one is better than anyone else! It’s not a matter of being better, or being jealous of one area over another, and yet human beings are...but not in God’s Family. It’s a matter of understanding each other, it’s a matter of a great love toward each other, it’s a matter of a great appreciation toward each other, that one can’t go without the other, or live without the other. We are a body. Incredible to understand those things, to live by those things.

Let’s continue on with the next story here in Daniel 4. We’re not going to go through all the book of Daniel but there are certain things that are good to focus upon that God is having us focus upon because of where we are in time, because of what’s ahead of us, and that’s why we’ve talked about even the use of 2T [second tithe] in a unique way, because of where we are, that as we continue to go forward the ability to be together is going to be more needful, and so if we have those opportunities, wherever we have them, then that’s good. We need each other! You can’t give what you’re able to receive out of this. There are some things you can’t receive in any other way except by experiencing them, and that kind of motivation and strength that people have by just being together, drawing closer together, spending time with each other – there’s something very powerful that God gives as a matter of His holy spirit that comes through fellowship and the excitement that’s kind of like a festive occasion at the Feast when you’re able to share those things together that doesn’t come in any other way. When God enhances that and allows us to receive more of that then thank God.

Daniel 4:1 - Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell on the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the High God has performed toward/with me. What an amazing thing now he’s saying here at this point in time, still with his carnal human nature, but he was moved by a particular point in time. These are various segments and this is a particular segment in his life where he begins to write about things that have happened to him, looking back and writing about it.

So he says, **I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the High God has performed toward/with me. How great are His signs, and how mighty are His wonders! His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and His domain is from generation to generation.** So at this point in time, very moved by his own experiences, by things that he was moved in as far as the experiences God had given to him, and we’ll get to that in a moment here as we go on; but again, it was a very moving moment in time for Nebuchadnezzar.

And he says, **I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house and flourishing in my palace:** so he’s going back and telling the story of what’s happened to him; he’s talking about this prosperity he had, how things were flourishing in his palace. **I saw things in a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and my visions of my head troubled me. Therefore I made a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me,** something being repeated again, **that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the**

soothsayers: and I told the dream before them, but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof. Kind of a slow learner. You'd think the one he'd go to was the one who helped him the first time around. Why mess around? Well, because he's still held to these different gods, all these people that he still listened to, and he was moved by different kinds of things at different times and there is a being who is over all this that messes with human beings, of which no one is a match - but that being is always there, *always there* trying to thwart, trying to hurt, trying to distort.

And so he's called all these people in. **But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god,** Who is his god? Bel... It's incredible! **...according to the name of my god...** slow learner. How much do you have to go through in life? Unless God draws you and calls you and opens your mind you're in bondage to this world and you can't come out of it; he couldn't come out of it. Incredible! And so it says he **called in Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar,** and 'Bel' talking about the keeper of secrets here in the rest of the meaning of the word here, **in whom is the spirit of the holy gods:** not just one God. He's still not there, not getting it. **...and before him I told the dream,** and this is him looking back. Even after you read this story... After you *read this story and see what happened,* and he's looking back now thinking that he should tell what happened to him in these experiences with this God.

O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no secret troubles you, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen and the interpretation thereof. Thus were the visions of my head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, different things that God has used here; again, talking about Babylon, the system of Babylon. That's what's being shown here, that's what it's talking about here, but a Babylon that would continue in time, through time. And it says, **and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of the earth: The leaves thereof were fair,** or appealing. Interesting terminology here. It's kind of like this Christmas tree thing, the coloured lights are so appealing; things are meant to be attractive when it has to do with Babylon, when it has to do with Satan's system and Satan's ways.

The economic system, it's kind of appealing. It's *appealing* for people to get involved in the stock market; it's *appealing* for people to get involved in various things in the world that they see and selling at highs and lows... and so they're drawn into these things and it isn't... not saying it is wrong to have stocks or anything. I don't know what it's like although it's like toilet paper? The point being here is that there is a system out there that is not God's. See? And everything that man has come up with, little plastic cards with 'credit' on them that we carry, it's appealing. Unlike how it was fifty years ago, as an example, when you didn't have them and you basically could only buy what you have savings to buy, or what you might be able to get a loan for, or whatever it might be, that was a lot different than what it is today. But today, *oh man,* they *love* to send you...thankfully with email you can get all kinds of offers out there and it's like just sign up for this card and that card, and this card, and they make it so *easy!* And we live in a society now where credit flows....buy now/pay later – but the whole idea is just buy, buy, buy, buy, buy until your blue in the face and you can't pay it...and it's appealing. Let's be honest! It's *appealing* to live life that way! We live in a world today that is totally different.

When my wife and I got married it was totally different than what it was a generation later. Okay? And the generations that were before that were even stronger in that way. It's kind of like the time when your word was your bond. It used to be taught in economics, and a concept that came out of Great Britain – 'your word is your bond'! A lot of people conducted life that way, whatever they said. You didn't have to have twenty lawyers, you didn't have to have a thousand documents, signing this and

signing that while nobody reads it. When they buy a house, what they're signing, "You have to sign... here are some more papers! You have to keep signing!" And you don't know what you're signing, you just keep signing! *Incredible* the world we live in!

But today, to have a new car, to have a new house, to have it all furnished...we didn't start out that way! We couldn't start out that way. It wasn't that easy. And I won't tell you how we started out but it wasn't that easy, it was much more difficult, and a lot of you older people know that. And you understand there's another generation today and because of society, what would... and it's appealing! It's just appealing! And so Satan's system, if you will, the system of Babylon has flourished and gotten greater and greater and greater through time; and I mention the economic part of it because it's a large part of the system that has blossomed now at the end-time. It has blossomed, in full bloom, at the end-time – very appealing, very attractive.

So this tree with these leaves that are appealing has great meaning to it and great significance to it. See? And it has through time – Babylon – from one kingdom to another. The Roman Empire was very appealing to people, the safety, the security of what it promised and what it gave, and kind of a little bit of a foretaste of something that would happen later on with greater technology in this country, as an example.

The tree grew and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: to where finally it was able to be seen by all the world, it was throughout all the world, 'Babylon, Babylon', it's everywhere. **The leaves thereof were fair/appealing, and the fruit thereof much,** produced a lot of fruit for those who used it, and there's a being that saw to it; **and it was food for all:** and the closer you got to it... **and the beasts of the field had shade under it, and the fowls of heaven dwelt in the branches of it, and all flesh was fed from it.** Amazing! It so engulfed the world. It's kind of like what we have today, a global economy, and if you're not a part of that... that's what I mentioned earlier here that is so incredible of what's taking place, because it's a beginning of the breaking down of that system that reached it's height and what countries are starting to do concerning currencies and so forth, a change that's slowly taking place here that's going to accelerate with time and it's going to give a boost to some of that as we go along here...that when it's time it will happen very fast.

I wanted to mention a couple of scriptures here. I'll just read them to you. **Revelation 8:7 - The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.** Might seem insignificant, but it fits into this, what's being talked about here as we go along, and it's something that has been continuing since it first began and is now at a point to accelerate.

Revelation 9:4 - And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those people who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. God's going to give us more of an understanding of what this is all about soon; but it's an awesome thing, truly is, to understand where these things are leading and what God is doing. Here in the first part of this is something that's going to happen that God is going to bring about. Here is something that is a part of a system, that they're not going to hurt themselves, they're going to try to sustain and uphold certain things.

Daniel 4:13 – let's go on – and I saw in the visions in my head upon my bed, and behold a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said, Cut down the tree, it's a prophecy

concerning Babylon, the fall of this kingdom, the fall of his kingdom, if you will, **and cut off the branches**, and specifically here now it is about Babylon, very much so, but it continues on as we're going to see here because it's a system that continues on. But this is about him and this is what was going to happen specifically to him, kind of like the head of gold. **Cut down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth**, it's going to continue, it's going to be there; not the same one, but it's going to continue, just like that statue. The gold head is going to be gone but the rest of it, that system, is going to continue all the way down to the feet until finally the stone cut out without hands smashes it and God's Kingdom is brought to this earth, Jesus Christ returns King of kings, the Messiah to rule this earth.

Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; It's going to flourish all around it. Awesome! *Awesome* that which God gives that's prophetic. ...**and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth:**

Let his heart, now it goes back, this is very specific now. The stumps going to be there and the grass is there but now we're going back to this ruler; it's now about Nebuchadnezzar, it's about what's going to happen to him and a part of what's going to happen in Babylon in time. **Let his heart/his mind be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart, or mind** if you will, talking about the mind, the thinking, **be given unto him;** in other words, that which would happen to Nebuchadnezzar as a type of what would happen to mankind until God's Kingdom comes. It's about the way man lives his life. Not a Godly heart, not a Godly mind, not thinking in that way. That's why the various things that happen, the various things that are shown at various times that we're going to get into when it talks about kingdoms being like beasts – it's because of how they function, it's because of how they operate, it's because of what they do, what they do to mankind.

Anyway, goes on to say...**and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones:** now, he still didn't understand fully what he's writing here, but these are his words looking back and it is talking about what happened to him in his life; that's what he's going back through and telling. ...**to the intent that the living may know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men**, and so this is what he came to through what he went through and deeply ingrained in his mind in that respect; not converted but deeply ingrained in his mind because of his experience. And his experience was an awesome experience, not one that any human being would ever want to have, but it changed him as so many things can change people in this world, not on a spiritual plane but on a physical plane.

...**and gives it to whomsoever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men.** A little bit of humility. **This dream I King Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now you, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but you are able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in you.**

Verse 19 - Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for an hour, and his thoughts troubled him. Candidly, he wasn't real excited about telling the king what he knew, what to say and how to say it, so he waited and thought the thing through.

The king spoke, and said, Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or the interpretation thereof trouble you. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream is for them who hate you, unique how he

explained this: **this dream is for them who hate you, and the interpretation thereof to your enemies.** Because those who hate you, and your enemies, they're going to like this, they're going to take advantage of this – a unique way of explaining it to him.

The tree that you saw, which grew and was strong, whose height reached into the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth, whose leaves were fair and the fruit thereof much, and in it was food for all; under which the beasts of the field were dwelling, and upon whom whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their home: It is you, O king, who have grown and become strong: for your greatness has grown and reaches unto heaven and your dominion to the end of the earth. At that time for what was known and the power that he had and what was conquered and so forth; but again, a prophetic thing that goes on all the way to the end.

Verse 23 - And whereas the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, Cut down the tree and destroy it, yet leave the stump of the roots thereof on the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him: This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which has come upon my lord the king: so this is from God to you, my king....that they shall drive you from men and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, literally seven years for him, **until you know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; your kingdom shall be sure unto you, after that you have come to know that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto you and break off your sins by righteousness,** in other words, if you will live by righteousness, **and your iniquities...** in other words, if this council is acceptable, if you will receive it, in other words, **and break off your sins by righteousness,** by whatever you're doing in your life. And so it's pretty strong what he had to say here, **and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, so that it may be a lengthening of time for your tranquillity/your ease/your prosperity.** If you will do this, perhaps... in other words.

It goes on to say here...**All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.** So basically it's the story here that he wasn't going to change, he wasn't going to receive the warning here, he wasn't going to be merciful to the poor, he wasn't going to serve in this kind of a manner and be bothered by what is righteous, in other words. And so twelve months passed, and **The king spoke and said, Is it not this great Babylon,** look where it led, only took a year, **that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?** Just totally lifted up with awesome pride! Pride is a powerful, powerful thing.

I can't help as I'm reading this to tell you a bit of a story of something that happened one time when I thought after the apostasy - and I believe that this was after I had resigned from the first group we associated with for a time, that I invited a minister from another area to come and talk just with us, to visit with us one time, we were visiting in our house. And I thought at that time by some email that he had sent that he really wanted to know how to reach out and help people who were scattered hurting. And the exact timing of this I don't really fully know. Sometimes to go back and go through everything we've gone through... it's a short period of time but a lot happened in reality. But anyway, he made a comment as he was going through this and he started talking about all these churches that he raised up, and he said, "And I raised up this church over here, and that church over there, and I raised up that church." And I knew right then and there, "You have so missed the mark! You didn't raise up a *thing!* If

anything is ever raised up then *God* raised it up.” What a horrible thing to say. It’s like what Nebuchadnezzar was saying, it’s like, “Look how great I am! Look what I have done!” *Sick* for human beings to think that way before God even when supposedly serving God.

Don’t ever let yourself be lifted up, because it *is* the human tendency to do so, it truly is. It is a *great weakness* of the human mind, it is a great battle that has to be fought early on. Fight it early! Hate that! Hate that kind of thinking! Loathe that kind of thinking, that kind of mind, so much so that you have the spirit and the mind as you cry out to God that you will *never* do that. You have to *hate* something to not do it, you truly do. It’s just like God’s way, you have to love it to want to do it and you have to hate the evil to stop it. That’s why when people have various sins in life, no matter what it is, the answer is you still love it. That’s the problem, you still love it, you don’t hate it yet. That’s why we cry out to God to help us to be at one with Him, to think as *He* thinks, to be in agreement with Him because it’s a matter of being in agreement, not just for the sake of not doing something because God says it shouldn’t be done. That isn’t enough. Do you know that? It isn’t enough not to sin in certain things in life just because you’re going to do it by your own willpower, because the world does that.

There are people out here who keep the Sabbath as far as a day that they set aside, as far as a day they go to services. They are not of the truth. One single religion has several million people who belong to it. They have Easter and Christmas and some other things; but they understand the Sabbath to a degree and so they do it by their own willpower and that isn’t what God’s looking for, it has to be more than that, and it has to be because of what He gives. And so when He calls us there is that which we go through as a process of conversion and repentance. Some battles you’ll fight for all of your life, and some things you will *never fully conquer* in your mind. *You cannot conquer everything in your lifetime.* You can’t! Sometimes when you’re young you think you can; I’m here to tell you, you can’t. What you *can* do is fight the fight. What you *can* do is to continue to repent and fight against the wrong and the error and the sin in life and cry out to God to *change you* and to *change* your thinking and to help you to become more at one with Him, because God is not looking for people who can keep the Ten Commandments by their own willpower, He’s looking for people who will change, for the mind to change so that you are in agreement with Him about the Sabbath, about the Holy Days, about how man’s relationship toward man should be lived. When you’re in *agreement* with that and you believe and you understand in relationships how people are to be treated, because you *agree* with that, you do it, you love it.

That’s what it’s about, it’s about *our* mind changing to where we’re at one with God and we agree with God. It’s not a matter of willpower and do’s and don’ts and you’re going to do it because God says to do something. Yes, you *start* that way, but you *grow* because you come to *agreement* with God! I hope that makes good sense, and if it makes great sense please understand there’s more to learn. The learning never ceases, always growing. But the beautiful thing is to become at one with God.

But that’s where Paul comes in the picture. If Paul hadn’t said what he said there are times and battles in my life where I don’t know if I could have made it through, because of not understanding; but because of understanding I see, and that has to do with understanding there’s a battle that goes on in this mind that is not the mind of God but it can become more Godlike, in agreement with God as time goes along, but you will *always* have things in your mind that are a matter - as long as you’re in this human body - that are a matter of selfishness, and only through *time* does God help us in the refining process to conquer more and more of that selfishness. And there are weaknesses of the mind that you will battle all your life because we have human nature.

That's why I'm really looking forward to the next four months going by, because my battle ends. I feel for you that still have the battle – seriously – because you'll still have that battle even in a different age, the human mind. It's not a small battle, it's a great battle, but you fight it till the end, until you can come to that point in time where God will *give* you a different life that is not motivated by human nature any longer but is motivated solely by the spirit and the love and the mind of God – always – no human nature in it. What an awesome thing that God offers us.

Going on here: So Nebuchadnezzar, although he saw various things, was moved at various points in time, and looked back and wrote various things, still had carnal human nature all the way through, but some improvements were made. People in the world can come to a point in time where something brings them to a low. This oftentimes happens with various kinds of things that happen in people's lives that they find themselves all of a sudden at a point in time as with – I'll use an example here – an alcoholic. It's a horrible battle. There are some people that have no problem with alcohol. When I grew up I abused it as a teenager and when I came in the Church it was nothing to quit, it didn't have a hold. But other people that I have known abused it and never could leave it.

It's kind of like smoking. Some people get addicted to the nicotine, whatever it is that's in it. Some people can quit just like that, others, it's a struggle, it's a horrible struggle. And so there are various things in life like that and we live through them. The point being is, again here, is there are things we go through in struggles and you battle all your life and you just keep battling.

I want to go back into this because I'm going off on some tangent here that I may come back to in a moment but I want to continue on here.

Verse 30 - The king spoke and said, Is it not this great Babylon, that I have built... again, this thing of pride, something you have to hate and you have to hate it enough that you're going to change... for us it's a matter of agreeing with God because God's working with us, but with the world He isn't. And some people hit a low, as I said there, and they can make a change; but here King Nebuchadnezzar, God brought him to a low, an incredible low, to where he saw himself in a way that no human being has really ever seen himself. There are people who come to see certain things in their life and they do make a change, but it's not a spiritual conversion, it's not a matter of God's spirit, of conversion. It's something they've made a choice, because of something so horrible that's happened in their life that they don't want to live like that anymore – they wake up in a gutter – they don't want to live like that anymore, whatever it might be. They wake up without anything, whatever it might be, and they change because of that, not because of God's spirit. They're still the same person but there are certain things that changed.

Nebuchadnezzar is going through a portion like this; he has a change that takes place in his life but not a spiritual one. There's a big difference. So, **The king spoke and said, Is it not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by my might and my power, for the honour of my majesty?** Attitude of leaders in the world, it really is. **And while the word was in the king's mouth there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken; The kingdom has departed from you.** What an incredible thing! All of a sudden the sound and what he's able to hear, and he says **the kingdom has departed from you,** after he spoke those words. **And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field and they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over you until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,** now, it isn't because during that period of time, it's what happens at the end of that time. It isn't that sometime during that seven times that all of a sudden he's going to be convicted of it, because that's

not what God allows here, it's something he has to experience for the full time. And so it went on to say here...**the Most High rules in the kingdom, until you come to know that, and gives it to whomsoever He will.**

The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar and he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. No trimming anymore, no nice delicate things as far as the king was concerned. He was like a wild animal. His *mind* was like an animal. He went out and ate *grass* like an animal...and so they drove him away. The king! What an incredible thing here that God did.

And at the end of days I, Nebuchadnezzar, at the end of the seven times. He said, **I lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned to me and I blessed the Most High,** I think that would move you, to see your condition, to see where you were. What an incredible thing! **...and I praised and honoured Him who lives forever and ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay/hinder His hand, or say to him, What are You doing? At the same time my reasoning returned to me;** his *mind* came back, his ability to have sound *reason* came back to him; **and for the glory of my kingdom, my honour and brightness returned to me; and my counsellors and my lords sought after me; and I was established in my kingdom,** it doesn't tell much of the story here.

What an incredible thing; here he was and all of a sudden he's brought back. What happened during that period of time? It doesn't go into it and discuss what had taken place and the condition of the kingdom at that point in time, but it talks about a change that took place in him and it talks about a change in attitude, on a physical plane, but still a change in spirit and how he dealt with people. And people sought him out – not out of fear any longer - because of a change that had taken place, and he was lifted back up as the ruler.

He says, **Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth,** believing this to a certain level, not like we understand or see it on a spiritual plane, but very deep as far as a human being is concerned; **and His ways judgment: and those who walk in pride He is able to humble.** So he learned a great lesson here; a lot was taken out as far as this matter of pride, because he was filled with it in a very big way, but he began to serve in a different capacity and in a different way after that, still having pride – human beings have pride – but not like he had before and not with the lack of mercy that he had before.

Chapter five goes on to tell the story of a king here, King Belshazzar, the last ruler of Babylon. While he was hosting a huge banquet party he experienced this handwriting on the wall. I mentioned that last Sabbath, hand writing on the wall - MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN – talking about how his kingdom is numbered and so forth here. And anyway, he saw this and the queen then told him that there was a man who could tell him the meaning of what was written and that this man had helped his father, Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 5:25 – And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. And by interpretation meaning: MENE; God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; You are weighed in the balances and are found wanting. PERES; Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third

ruler of the kingdom. But in that night, it says here, **In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.** This is when they came in and conquered. It talked about how they conquered it, how they entered in the city and everything that was written in prophecy that we discussed already. It says, **And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years,** so sixty-two years old. And then it goes on in the chapter here and this is where it starts talking about what Darius did then as being set up over Babylon.

But again, an incredible story here of the kingdom that came up right to the end and what took place and literally his conquering then and what took place in that night there as they were conquered, because it was in that particular night, again, that the writing was revealed to the king by Daniel, that Babylon fell, the Medes and the Persians came in and Cyrus who was over the Medes and the empire of the Medes and the Persians, and of course Darius who was made king of the region of Babylon. Some people get confused about Darius and Cyrus and it sounds like two different kings at two different times; it's not. It's talking about Cyrus who was over all as the Medo-Persian Empire and Darius who was placed here in this location to serve, to reign as a king in this particular region, and that's why it starts out here in chapter six...we'll pick it up here...

Daniel 6:1 – And it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, who should be over the whole kingdom; And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give account unto them, and the king should suffer no loss, in other words injury or damage - in other words, to take care of the things under him. **And then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.** What an incredible thing here – going from one time to another and here he is again – and God is the one who has to do these things. He gives that to individuals. He gives favour. You can be in a situation where God will give you favour, and I've heard stories throughout time here in God's Church where at different times, whatever it might be, that there are occasions in people's lives where people understand they've been given favour, to understand when God has intervened in your life to grant you favour, to move someone else to grant you favour. Now, we don't experience that *a lot* in God's Church because of the world, but there are times of it that God does that to give people encouragement, we hear maybe from other people of what God has done for them and we receive encouragement from that, because not everything happens to everyone in the Body the same way. God works with us in different ways and we learn from each other within the Body.

And so it goes on to say here, **verse 4 - Then the presidents and the princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no occasion nor fault;** Why? Same old story over and over again here, struggle for power, what people do, how *nasty* people will get. You look at elections and what people do; some of the nasty things that people do in politics in order to get in above somebody else because they want the power, because they believe that they're the best to serve, and people can get really, really nasty, they truly do. It's not a kind world to be in, and people who are involved in some of those things don't have the happiest of lives sometimes when they're going through some of this.

It says...**forasmuch as he was faithful,** speaking of Daniel; **neither was there any error or fault found in him.** He lived right. He did things that were right. He was noted for being this way. It's because of his attitude toward God that he was a certain kind of individual. That's why, wherever we are and whatever we do, be on the job, we should stand out as being different; we should be seen as being different. People may not be able to put their finger on it, they don't like what you do or what you believe or whatever, but there's that which they should see nevertheless, that you are different, that you treat

them differently, that you're not like everyone else. We *are* to be different. We *are* to treat people with respect; not to treat people with jealousy. And so often on jobs and various things in life people do. If you're living God's way of life they're going to recognize something different about you, they truly are, that you're not the same as everyone else. And this was obvious in Daniel. And there wasn't anything they could find in him to bring accusations against him because they were jealous. They didn't want him to be there, *they* wanted to be there.

Verse 5 - Then these men said, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel except we find it against him concerning the law of his God; so they're going to work out something here to try to make it to where... because Daniel has this God that he serves and he does things in a certain way and he's going to be faithful in doing that - what an incredible thing to be known for, for being faithful in doing that - that they're going to do something to cause accusation against him, to bring something down against him, and so they sought to establish a false claim against him by finding fault through his religious beliefs, and having a decree written by the king forbidding supplication to any God (gods) for a period of time, for one month; but only to the king, only supplication should be made to the king.

And you know the story then, Daniel prayed and ended up being cast into a den of lions. Quite an incredible story. Again, a good one to read, and just read on your own as a story; and to see what God did and how God intervened for Daniel and how that the king didn't want this to happen to him. He was fond of him, that's why he placed him where he was. He knew he was a man of integrity and trusted a great deal in him, and yet this occasion came up because the king had been tricked into making this decree and Daniel was caught in it because Daniel did as he always did, he prayed to his God, and he was seen for praying and then it was reported and he was thrown into the lions. And if you know the story, which I know you do, he lived, the lions didn't bother him, and even the king came up there and wanted to know, "Was your God able to save you?" God spared him and the king wanted to know this, "Did your God take care of you and was He able to save you from the lions?"

And then jumping on down to **verse 24 - And the king commanded, and they brought those men who accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions,** what an incredible thing here that took place; **them, their children, and their wives; and the lions,** it says, **had power over them to break their bones in pieces before they ever reached the bottom of the den.** Not a pleasant story, but again here, God took care of Daniel and didn't take care of them and it's quite a contrast here of the power they had; that indeed God protected Daniel in a very powerful way and the rest He did not protect, on the contrary.

It says, **Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast forever, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end.** These things were inspired. That's the thing to understand about certain things that were done here, even words like this were inspired to be given, because the whole thrust of the book of Daniel is about everything that leads up to the end, the end of man's rule over man and the various images, the various things that were seen here, the very stories about Babylon and how Babylon would continue, and all pointing to a specific time. And there's later in this book then about the Messiah and the various times of counting and the various times of things, things that God gave that are awesome, how precise God is in what He does. But again here, all this story about that which would come to pass, kingdom after kingdom, one would come and one would go, making it very clear God is over all. God is all powerful. God is all mighty.

As it says here, **and that kingdom shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall even be until the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.** They went along together at the same time; it's not two different reigns. Okay? Again, Darius was in Babylon, Cyrus was over all the Medo-Persian Empire; and Cyrus is the one later on we read about that gave the decree and so forth to send the children of Judah back through a process of time, and other things that are written that we'll get to in time.

But when we come to Daniel 7 we're taken back in time to when the last king of Babylon, Belshazzar came into power, and it was on this occasion that Daniel himself had a prophetic dream. And again, it's about kingdoms and what was going to come to pass, but this is one that Daniel specifically had and we're going to take the time to go through some of the meaning contained in the latter part of that dream, because again, it leads up to our time and beyond. And to me it's interesting, I hadn't gone through it for a long time, chapter seven, and all of a sudden when there are certain things in time you go through, and this one here, things that jump out in a way that they couldn't have ten years ago or twenty years ago, that jump out a whole lot more now in a very powerful way. But let's go ahead, we have time for this story as well here in Daniel 7 here today.

Daniel 7:1 - In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, it's not to be confused with Daniel's name here because it's close. One is Belshazzar, one is Belshazzar, **king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven raged upon the great sea. The four great beasts came up from the sea, different one from another.** They were all different and they came up out of the sea.

The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings: speaking of Babylon. So again, this one's about Babylon, just like the head of gold in the other dream Nebuchadnezzar had; **and had eagles wings, I looked upon it until the wings were torn off, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.** Babylon. He's describing here what God did to Nebuchadnezzar and what took place with him, basically stripped him of power. He had what happened to him as we read about that took place for seven years, and that's why you go back and you look at those things where it talked about the mind that was taken from him, and the mind and the reasoning that was given to him in the end was greater than in the beginning because of the change of spirit and change in attitude. He was a different man. He wasn't converted but he was a different man. He reigned in a different manner than what he did before, to where now people came to him, and that's why it's stated in that manner, before it was a matter of him being over them, now they came to him, to hear him.

It's a different perspective all together when you read the story; and sometimes it's easy to miss some of those things in a story but it's to understand what happened after he had been like he was for seven years and the change that it had over him as a man. It was a great change; not one of conversion, but a great change. He became a totally different king, a far more humble spirit as a king, especially compared to the kind of person he was before – ruthless – in that respect. They were some ruthless leaders. He put out the eyes of one of the kings of Judah, if you remember the story. Was it Zedekiah? Yeah, sometimes I have to go back and read myself just to make sure. But anyway, not always a nice person; demanding allegiance in some pretty harsh ways sometimes. That's why they talked about the kind of heart they had, the beast like attitude and way of dealing with people and working with people - and that's why these images are like they are - but his latter part of his reign was different. And that's

why this is stated in this manner, because the latter part of his reign was totally different than the first part of his reign and that's what it's bringing in here.

So, **it made him stand upon his feet like a man and a man's heart was given to him**, one that a human being *should* live by toward other human beings; not of God, but still a totally different spirit and different attitude and different mind.

Verse 5 - And behold another beast, a second, like a bear, This is the Medo-Persian Empire, **and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in his mouth between his teeth: and they said unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.** So again here, it's one kingdom conquering another one, one falls another rises.

It says, **And after this I looked and behold, another, like a leopard**, This is the Grecian Empire that started with Alexander the Great, **which had upon it's back four wings as a bird; and the beast had also four heads**; again, if you remember what we talked about before regarding four divisions. It gets very specific in other places in scripture too, the four divisions that took place after Alexander; the Ptolemaic, the Seleucid's and the division of the kingdom. Interesting history if people like history, things to go back and see what happened; things that actually, that there are those even of historians who, though they're not called, obviously, but that accept or receive certain things in here, whether it be out of traditional Christianity or Judaism or whatever; there are things that are recognized that agree with the story flow of what's in Daniel here, as to what happened in history, and they write about some of those things in that context because they recognize the similarities here of what took place.

...and the beast had four heads; again, talking about the divisions of the Empire after Alexander, **and dominion was given unto it.** So they had power to reign for a period of time.

I mentioned the chart that I had last Sabbath, and some have that chart, they found it somewhere on the internet, it's out there somewhere, but it talks about some of these and if you get it, it's good. It's not 100% so you have to be a little careful because some things in understanding as far as timing and what took place, but it's very much right on about most, only because of time and what God has given to us through time, but it talks about these kingdoms and some of the different images and the likes and the ones that agree with each other even all the way up to Revelation, the book of Revelation.

Verse 7 – And after this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, so now we're getting down to the other statue with the legs of iron and then get on down to the feet where it's the clay and the iron mixed together, **dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.** This is an awesome story here. This one here, of and by itself when you get to this portion here, the others are interesting as a part of history going back and seeing what happened in the Medo-Persian Empire, the Empire of Greece and so forth, but this one here, when you get to the Roman Empire, an incredible story especially when you understand some of the things that are described here, and we'll talk about that in a little bit here. To me it's very moving, very inspiring what God gave, what God said would come to pass and what *has* happened. And it talks about here how it was different from all the other beasts – became through time, in one respect, even more *cruel* in how it crushed others, that's why it brings up this thing about having great iron teeth and it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue. It speaks in different terms, not just of having power but the way it went about with its power and what it did.

You read some of the stories of what has happened in times past in the Roman Empire and just in what they did in Judah alone and the oppression that was there and the mass killings that took place from one period of time to another and the slavery that took place. What was it? ...in Rome there itself, the great Coliseum that's there where they had the type of gladiator stuff you see on TV or whatever; I can't remember the total number of Jews they brought in there but it was something like a hundred thousand to work at one time to help build that. They were slaves and treated cruelly, different people at different times all over the world that were crushed by the Roman Empire. It was a nasty thing! And not like some others did with a measure of greater mercy. Even the Assyrians, when they moved people from one area to another it was with greater freedoms and mercy, they didn't just go in and wipe people out and destroy them. They did for resistance for a time and then they took the rest to another area and let them prosper. What they were concerned about back then more than anything else was taxation; just give us our due. That's why Nebuchadnezzar went back into Judah when he did, because they reneged on giving back the taxation, if you will, and the revenue that they expected out of Judah. They decided they weren't going to give anymore and be subservient anymore, and so they came down and conquered them again, that's why they had three different periods of time there.

Verse 8 - I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, awesome, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. Haughty, proud, arrogant, because they're against God; that's what this is about. This beast here was totally unlike the others, and there's something that came up in the midst of all of them that was always there at a certain point in time after these three, that was different from all the rest. And so I've written down some of this, I don't want to miss it. This concerns the Roman Empire that began in 31 BC. That's basically when the Roman Empire began, and basically had the two divisions, the east and west that went through into time for up to about 476 AD when the primary Roman Empire fell – in this period of time of 476. Again, all these things are just a matter of history. And it was at this particular time from 476 up to 554 AD that there were three separate ruling divisions under the Vandals, the Heruli, and the Ostrogoths; and the Vandals were in one section, the Heruli, and then the Ostrogoths, the Ostrogoths took over the area of the Heruli at one point in time. But these three were the first three horns that were plucked up by the roots because they were a part of the Roman Empire, not of the original Roman Empire, but there were still various divisions, they weren't fully united in any fashion or form and it was unlike the one that had the Caesars and the type of things that were taking place for a time there, but it was still a part of the Roman Empire.

It was during this time that the Roman Catholic church - if you know the history of the Roman Catholic church - it grew in power over time. We know what took place in 325 AD when they had the Nicene council, and that's when they, the church, basically made the decision that no longer would people have to keep Passover, that Easter was going to be the period of time that would be upheld. And so it was trying to do away with Passover, we've gone through this in some of the history because the motivation behind that too was because of a belief that Jesus Christ was resurrected on Sunday morning, which we know He wasn't, they just came to His tomb and He had already been resurrected, that's what the terminology that's used there states.

But anyway, speaking of the things that took place, the Roman Empire, 325 AD then, their desire was to have Sunday worship, and so all these things begin to come in, but they didn't have great political power yet. They were growing in influence and political power in many respects, but it was more of a strictly religious movement at this time and the persecution that came along, that's talked about that came upon the Church, came later when there was political power, and that's what finally took place here,

this little horn that came up and was in the midst of the horns that were remaining. It's always been there since it started in 554 AD with Justinian who recognized the supremacy of the pope.

So that's when great political power became an influence with the Catholic church, the popes began to have *tremendous* political power; and since that time, look at it to this day, I am dumbfounded when I think about it, to have *ambassadors* that are in various parts of the world, the Vatican is recognized as a nation. It's recognized as a nation by a lot of nations that are out there. They have ambassadors that are sent to other parts of the world and people send ambassadors there. That's dumbfounding! It's a church, you know, but what happened starting in 554 grew in power through time and that influence because it's such a strong influence in Europe, it's still in the world today. It's an awesome thing that took place, and an awesome way that God described what would happen in time Biblically, of what would take place as far as prophecy was concerned. And so it talks about this little horn that would come up in the midst of the other horns and speak great swelling things, because it's against God, and it started in 325 when they started speaking great swelling things, but they gained political power through Justinian and that continued on.

Again here, that's when we start referring to it, if you've heard the expression, the Holy Roman Empire, it changed in 554 with the leadership of Justinian. It took on terms of... in the world even, different ones refer to it as the Holy Roman Empire because of the power that was there of conquering and the wielding of power that it had at that particular time. And so that was the first of the last seven horns. See, there were ten horns. The Roman Empire was there and then it had a collapse in what's referred to even, there's a period of time it talks about a deadly wound that came, but it changed when the other kingdoms started coming in, the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. But again here, 554 is when the Catholic church is recognized by Justinian, when he began to recognize the power of the pope.

After Justinian the empire lost power until the time of the Frankish kingdom under Charlemagne, and he came into power and was crowned by the pope. This was in 800 AD when the Roman Empire had a second resurrection - because we talk about the resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire - the second one to come along was then in 800. So you go from 554 when they had power, then they lost that power, and then came back on the scene again in 800 under Charlemagne, and now he's *crowned* by the pope. So now the Catholic church is exerting more influence upon the world at that particular time and at a time when they were able to have a resurgence, if you will, of control.

And then there was the third revival of the Holy Roman Empire under the German head, Otto the Great, he was crowned in 962 AD; so again, this is the third resurrection then of what we call the Holy Roman Empire. All these individuals of great notoriety, with great power to conquer, and from the time of Justinian they were crowned by the pope. Awesome!

And then there was a fourth resurrection in 1520, so a *long* period of time went by, finally another resurrection, 1520 when the pope crowned the Austrian head who was Charles the Great.

And then the fifth resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire by a French head, Napoleon in 1805. And then after the fall of the kingdom in 1814, in essence, the Catholic church through the popes began to decline in power and influence. Interesting thing to look back to in time; they began to decline in their power and influence, but by this time the Catholic belief, the Catholic faith, if you will, was so strong in Europe that although leaders had it as a part of their life they didn't have the same kind of power that they did before during these other periods of time when the individuals desired to be crowned by a pope. And so that's why when you come to the next resurrection - we still call it the Holy Roman

Empire – not because the next individuals are crowned by the pope, but because of the influence of that church still in the world and how it's recognized. It's still upheld in a very powerful way throughout Europe, but in the 6th and the 7th there is no crowning by the pope that's necessary – an interesting thing to note. To me it's inspiring to see a decline, God even shows through what's going to take place now that the decline is going to come to a point in time where there is a rift between the last resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic church. They're not going to love each other when this is over with.

And God even shows that He does this, He uses this power to help destroy the religious power that's there. So you're going to see some awesome things, unlike what some of the world of traditional Christianity teaches. They teach, they believe that there is an individual who is the great false prophet who is the antichrist, who is going to help unite the religions of traditional Christianity and the Catholic church back together again. You're not going to see it; that's not what it's about. Because we understand what anti-Christ is, but that's the world of traditional Christianity, of some of the things they teach, and I don't even know if they understand what they're saying half the time there on some of those things, think of how convoluted and distorted it is.

Again, I don't know about you but I find these things awesome, that so long ago God gave to Daniel things that would happen all the way up to the end. The clay and the iron in the feet and the ten toes and what we're waiting for, what they're starting to talk a little bit about. Right now it's kind of hush-hush, things are a little quiet because there are some people scurrying behind the scenes who are trying to come up with a treaty whereby some can come together and they can somehow keep alive and keep the euro alive and keep their economy alive and others are going to sink and they know full well that they are and how to deal with all this...? ...they don't know, but there's a being who knows, and when it's all said and done he's going to have one last hurrah.

And so again here, World War I, up through World War II, that church was recognized as being the resurrection of that Empire again with power, even though there was a lull between World War I and World War II; there was that which was not fully stamped out in Europe and taken care of, and so both are recognized as a point in time of power, that that resurrection, the sixth resurrection took place.

But the seventh one to come is very short lived and isn't very strong in one respect, and yet strong in others.

Going on here reading it again; **Verse 7 - After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: and it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was different from all the beasts that were before it and it had ten horns...**speaking of that Roman Empire again. **I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn there were eyes of a man speaking great swelling things/speaking great things.**

Verse 9 – And I beheld till the thrones were cast down, awesome, and the Ancient of days did sit, in other words, rule. It's talking about the Kingdom of God. It's another way of expressing the stone that was cut out without hands that destroys all the other kingdoms, and now Daniel is saying, this is what I beheld at the end of all this; he says, **until the thrones were cast down,** all these thrones, **and the Ancient of days did sit,** speaking of the Kingdom of God established, **whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne...**that's the description of what is given

even in speaking some of the things in Revelation and other places in the Bible, it's talking about God Almighty. **...and the hair of His head like pure wool, His throne was like the fiery flame, and wheels burning with fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands, meaning hundreds of thousands ministered unto Him,** interesting the way it says it here, **and ten times ten thousand stood before Him:** speaking of tens of millions. Well, after His Kingdom is established this is the process that begins to take place. God begins to work with mankind under His government, under His rule, and leads all the way up to a time when a great resurrection takes place.

...the judgment was set, and the books were opened. Where do you read about the books being opened? ...in another place? Talks about God Almighty and what happens at the *very end*. So it goes beyond even the coming of the Messiah, it goes on and shows what happens through His Kingdom, the Kingdom that God gives to Him to reign and rule, and then in the last hundred years it talks about a period of time, the Great White Throne. In Revelation it goes through and discusses these things, when the books were opened, the Book of Life, and they were judged out of things written in the books, speaking of God's word.

And I beheld then, because of the voice, of the great words which the horn spoke: I beheld till the beast was slain, awesome, and his body destroyed, it's talking about the one who's over it all. Because it makes it very clear in the book of Revelation who is behind Babylon, makes it very clear the individual who has always been there, who has always been in the forefront. It make it very clear when Europe comes together again in the 5th Trumpet, when they finally do what they do, a part of what comes up out of the fiery pit, as it talks about, the great pit, and it talks about the being who is over them and it talks about his name. It's talking about Satan.

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke: and where do those words come from? That horn that was always there in the midst of all the others and that great church; had the same voice through time. **I beheld until the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.** Didn't even think about this being there at the time, and it wasn't until now to add a little bit more to what God has already given that's going to happen to him, for all that it means, for when God finally takes care of them at the very end...and it gives a timing here as well that we just read.

As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. So there is one who is over it all but there are different ones who have reigned in different times, there are those who have been a part of those kingdoms and those times, and there comes a time when they have an opportunity to change, when they have an opportunity and a calling. And to me it's awesomely inspiring what God is showing here.

Verse 13 - I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom which shall not be destroyed. So again, it states that Jesus Christ is the one who is set over, by God Almighty, to reign in this Kingdom, and the things that would be accomplished during that period of time.

I'm going to stop there because there are other things I want to get into here and build forward; there are certain parts here of some things that need to be built upon.

~~~end