

Bible Study # 91
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(Handout and Sermon at end)

The Writings Series—Daniel—Part 2

We are continuing in the book of Daniel. I want to come back a little bit to some material that we have touched on a little earlier. We are going to have a chance to pick up a few details that we had skimmed over.

Daniel is organized in terms of subject matter. As you go through the book, it does not strictly follow chronological development. You will notice that many of the chapters in Daniel are dated in terms of when the prophecy came. One of the things that you note is that Daniel dates some of the chapters later on in the book as having been received at times earlier than some of the previous chapters. Now there are reasons for that.

He starts out and sort of follows the chronological order up to chapter 3. Chapters 4 and 5 are interesting because they are many years apart. Many of the events recorded in chapters 6 through 12 certainly occurred prior to some of what is here in chapter 5. Daniel 4 and 5 are back to back, not because they chronologically follow one another, but because there is a point that God is making in terms of the lesson. Chapter 4 records a lesson that Nebuchadnezzar learned.

Daniel 4:17, this lesson centered around the fact that, as it is brought out, “...in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.””

In Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar had this vision of this great gigantic tree that was cut down and severed, but it was not uprooted. The stump was left. It was bound (KJV, “banded”) with iron and bronze, and seven times, prophetically, were to pass over the stump of this tree (vv. 10-26). Then the obvious implication was that it would begin to bud and put forth life once again.

There is sort of an interesting statement recorded in the book of Job.

Job 14:7-9, “For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its tender shoots will not cease. Though its root may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant.”” The point is that a tree can be cut down, nothing but the

stump is left and you can have new life that can spring up from those roots.

There was a rather remarkable tree that I noticed that way. I think it was on that stretch of Highway 90 between Beaumont and Dayton, Texas. There was a house on the side of the road and a tree in the yard had been cut down. The original tree had grown up and it had been cut down. Two shoots had come up later; one out of one side and one out of the other side. By this time, they had grown up considerably and it was a very odd-looking tree. It was almost like a built-in seat where the original trunk was. You could see that the trunk was much thicker, but two shoots had come up and it had grown to where it was now putting out shade.

We have, here in Daniel 4, this big tree that was cut down. The tree was symbolic of Nebuchadnezzar who personified the Babylonian Empire. He was the first king of what is called in history the Neo-Babylonian Empire—the empire that began to be put together. Nebuchadnezzar became king about three years prior to the conquest of Judah in 604 B.C.

What Nebuchadnezzar saw in chapter 4—the tree being cut down—symbolized him being cut off. Yet, specific instructions were given that the stump was to be left in the ground. It was not to be uprooted or cut out. The stump was there and it was to be banded with iron and bronze. Nebuchadnezzar lost his mind and his kingdom.

A period of seven literal years went by. Nebuchadnezzar learned a lesson. When he assumed control of his kingdom again, he had learned a lesson. He had learned, as a result of those seven years of his kingdom being in abeyance—as far as he was concerned—that God rules in the affairs of men.

We pick up the story in chapter 5 a number of years later with Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson Belshazzar. In fact, we would date the seven years of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity from 569 to 562 B.C. When we pick up the story of Belshazzar, this is dated in 539 B.C. So, about 23 years had transpired between the end of chapter 4 and the beginning of chapter 5. Nebuchadnezzar had been dead for many years by this time.

We pick it up in chapter 5. Nebuchadnezzar’s son, Nabonidus, became king several years later. Nabonidus associated Belshazzar with him on the throne as co-ruler. Warfare had broken out. Nabonidus took a great army and had now been gone from Babylon for a period of a couple of years. Belshazzar was left as the ruler in

Babylon, as his father Nabonidus was leading the army that had gone out to deal with the Persians. Babylon is under siege, but in their own mind, Belshazzar and his advisors are absolutely convinced that Babylon is impregnable—that Babylon can never be broken into. So, they have a party to show the absolute contempt in which they hold the Persian army. Cyrus the Great and his army have been encamped outside of Babylon for a period of months. Belshazzar held them in contempt and thought there was no way that they were going to get into Babylon.

On this evening of the new moon in the fall of the year 539 B.C. (that was none other than the Feast of Trumpets), Belshazzar had this big drunken party. After they had been drinking for a while, he called for the sacred vessels, which had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem, to be brought in. In effect, he was showing that, ‘Look, none of the other gods have been able to deliver their people from the mighty hand of Babylon. Babylon’s gods [kings] are great over all.’ To show his disdain, he brought out these sacred vessels that would have normally been shown respect because they were considered sacred to God.

He was in there and they were drinking toasts and really boozing it up. You remember the story of the handwriting on the wall; the handwriting was interpreted.

Daniel 5:26-28, ““This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”” It was going to occur.

Now, Belshazzar had not learned the lessons that his grandfather had learned 23 years before—the fact that God rules over men. The nation had an opportunity to learn through lessons given to its first king. Nebuchadnezzar may have learned certain lessons, but, certainly, the nation as a whole and, certainly, his grandson, Belshazzar, who was sitting on the throne of Babylon, had not profited at all. We have these two chapters in a position together showing the contrast.

As we touched on last time, one of the interesting things is the use of the term “seven times” in prophecy. We noted, as we went back to the book of Revelation, that there are three synonymous terms that are used in Revelation 11 and 12: 42 months, 1,260 days and time, times and half a time.

Revelation 11:2, we find, “...they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.””

Verse 3, “...two witnesses...will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days....””

Revelation 12:6, if you come down, “Then the woman fled into the wilderness, ... one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

Verse 14, “But the woman was given two wings... , that she might fly into the wilderness ... , where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time,”

Now, 42 months is three and one-half years. Forty-two 30-day months is 1,260 days. Take 1,260 and divide it by 30 and that will come out to 42. Forty-two 30-day months is 1,260 days. Time, times and half a time is representative of three and one-half years or 42 months or 1,260 days.

I will just call to your attention that we find in the book of Ezekiel and other places, the principle of a day for a year.

Ezekiel 4:6, ““And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.””

Numbers 14:34, you will find that same statement, ““According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.””” The principle of a day for a year is utilized in prophecy. Seven times would be twice as much as time, times and half a time. Three and one-half doubled is seven. So, 1,260 years—or 1,260 days—doubled is 2,520.

We see that aspect in Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar went through insanity for a literal period of seven years. Babylon was without a king for a literal period of seven years. In effect, it was under the regency of Daniel and his friends and others, perhaps of the family. Babylon was without a king. The empire was sort of on hold for this period. Nebuchadnezzar personified that empire. He was not around for those seven years. He came back and he had learned a lesson, but his kingdom had not learned a lesson; his family had not learned a lesson.

Now, we see the reference of the stump being banded seven times. That’s what we were told in Daniel 4:14-16. The stump was to be left and seven times were to pass.

When we came down to Daniel 5, we saw the handwriting on the wall. We commented that MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN were numbers that were weights—the mina, the shekel and the peres. Just to mention, the “u” or the “v” in Hebrew as it is here in “upharsin” is just the conjunction “and.” That’s why I say peres rather

than upharsin. The name of the weight was peres. "Upharsin" means "and peres." These are simply alternate spellings. They are known by the more common Hebrew names. The mene, shekel and upharsin are the Chaldean names.

There were 50 shekels in a mina and 25 shekels in a peres. They were to be added. These are numbers (that are weights) that are to be divided. We noted that you are going to divide this down (just like in terms of math), going for the lowest common denominator. If you add something up this way, you would have to use the smallest number.

Mina is mentioned twice. The shekel is the smallest of the numbers that are mentioned here. There would be 50 shekels in one mina and 50 shekels in a second mina—that would be 100. The shekel itself would be one more—101. Then there are 25 shekels to the peres—that would be 25 more shekels. That would all add up to 126.

Now what is the significance of that?

Leviticus 27:25, "And all your valuation shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel."

The smallest unit of measurement was the gerah, and there are 20 gerahs to the shekel. We see that the numbers that were given in the handwriting on the wall added up to 126 shekels. If you divide it down to the smallest, there are 20 gerahs to the shekel. If you multiply 20 x 126, you would come up with 2,520. Here's the interesting thing. In chapters 4 and 5 you have these same numbers—2,520. They are given in two different ways, but you come out with the same thing. You have two totally different ways of arriving at it, but it comes out to exactly the same thing.

That evening was the fall of Babylon. Babylon fell.

Daniel 4:25; 5:21, the point is, "...the Most High rules in the kingdom [affairs] of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." God sets over nations whomever He chooses. That's an important lesson to learn. It has implications for us.

There are those who become upset, in terms of the Church, and have concluded that since Christ is unable to govern, they had better take over. You know, if God sets over nations whomever He chooses, how much more does He set over the Church whomever He chooses?

God governs in the affairs of nations. That doesn't mean that since God governs in the affairs of nations that the best man for the job is always there—the best man for the job in the sense of what job God wants accomplished. No,

Daniel 4:17 makes plain that, in terms of nations and governments of this world, sometimes the lowest (basest) of men are the ones that are set there, and God allows that.

Acts 17:26, "...[God] has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation..." God has a great plan and a great purpose. He puts individuals into positions that will carry out that purpose. Sometimes there are various lessons to be learned. God has done that even in the nations of the world where He's not nearly as involved as He is right in His own Church. Clearly, we have to understand and realize that God is the One who is in charge and to Whom we look.

We have this 2,520-year period that clearly refers to the time, as it is mentioned in Daniel 4, when the stump is banded. No new growth can come out of the stump; it's got a cap on it. It can't be broken through and no new growth is going to come until the band is broken or cut asunder. Then, you don't have a full-grown tree that pops up overnight, but new growth begins to come.

Revelation 18:2, the end-time empire is called, "BABYLON THE GREAT." It's not called Rome the Great or Greece or Persia the Great—it's called BABYLON THE GREAT. It's a restoration of something on a little different scale. It's of wider range than what had come before.

Both Daniel 4 and 5 indicate the 2,520 years in different ways but come to the same conclusion. Two thousand five hundred twenty years would elapse during which all the attempts at putting Babylon together again would be doomed to failure. It's very interesting in the way some of these things have worked out and the things that we see shaping up right now.

I want to go back and pick up a little of that in chapter 4 and 5. We commented on chapter 6.

I might mention that Darius the Mede was the ruler of the Medes who were tributary to Cyrus. Originally the Medes had been the dominant part of the empire. Cyrus the Great was the heir to both the Median and Persian Empire; he united them together. His mother was a princess of the Medes. She was the daughter of the king of the Medes; his father was the king of Persia. The Medes had been the dominant power until Cyrus came on the scene and changed the configuration around. Darius the Mede was an older man. He was a prince of the Medes who were associated with Cyrus.

Daniel 5:31, "And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old."

Evidently, when Cyrus saw that the situation in Babylon was over and the matter was resolved, he did not bother to enter into Babylon that night. He left Darius with a part of the army to come in, take and rule Babylon. Cyrus took the larger portion of the army and quickly went elsewhere. He was on his way to meet Nabonidus to defeat him and completely overthrow the Babylonian Empire. Cyrus did not return to Babylon for a few years. We read of Cyrus besieging Babylon and, yet, we read of Darius the Mede being the king entering in. Darius was serving under Cyrus, but he was the one who was actually there in Babylon. It was about two or three years before Cyrus returned.

Daniel 7:1, “In the first year of Belshazzar...” Now this goes back earlier than chapter 5, but it is added in at this later point. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with things during the reign of Belshazzar. God, in His organization of the book of Daniel, wanted chapters 4 and 5 back-to-back for clear emphasis of the 2,520 years. Also, the emphasis of the lesson Nebuchadnezzar learned and Belshazzar didn’t learn were clearly shown in a position with one another.

Now, we pick up some of the events in the story that happened earlier.

Verses 3-7, Daniel saw four creatures coming up out of the sea, each different from one another: the lion with an eagle’s wings, the bear that had three ribs in its mouth, the leopard that had four wings and four heads and, then, a fourth great dreadful beast.

You can look at Daniel 7 and Daniel 2 together. You remember the great image in Daniel 2:31-40—the head of gold, the chest of silver, the thighs of bronze and the legs of iron. Again, you had four kingdoms that were illustrated. Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar that he and the Babylonian Empire over which he ruled were represented by the head of gold. After him, another kingdom would arise. There were four kingdoms. Here, again, in Daniel 7:3-7, we have these four creatures.

Daniel 7:17, we’re told, ““Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.””

The **lion** represented the first one; that would have to be Babylon, the starting point.

Verse 4, it’s the only one that was mentioned that, “The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.”

God uses the analogy of wild creatures (animals of the jungle) to describe these great world-ruling Gentile empires. The reason He uses that analogy is because that was the way they acted. The “law of the jungle” is that whoever is the biggest and strongest, eats and devours the others—and this is the way these empires and kingdoms have conducted themselves. The only exception is brought out. It mentions the lion had a man’s heart given to it and stood on its feet. Nebuchadnezzar went through his period of insanity and there was a change. He came back with a little different attitude. That is very evident in Daniel 4, but that’s the only one. That lesson was lost on everyone else. Nebuchadnezzar personally learned a lesson, but others didn’t learn from his lesson. It’s had to be repeated.

Verse 5, the **bear** is the second kingdom. It represented the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. It’s pictured as having three ribs in its mouth. It is told to arise and devour much flesh. The three ribs represent the three kingdoms that were swallowed up by the Medes and the Persians when they established their empire. The significance would be that they swallowed up the kingdoms of Lydia, Babylon and Egypt.

Verse 6, the **leopard** is pictured as having four wings and four heads. The empire that swallowed up the Medes and the Persians was the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great, but it had a very short duration. His empire, as a unified empire, lasted ten years—actually less than that because he finished his conquest at the beginning of the tenth year. Alexander died and his empire split and divided. Four of his generals ultimately came out with portions of his empire. Seleucus ruled the portion that would be modern-day Syria coming across to Iraq. Let’s say that modern-day Iraq and Syria would be the portion Seleucus ruled. Coming down into Egypt, Ptolemy, one of Alexander’s generals, took that part. Lysimachus, who was the third general, ruled ancient Asia Minor, the area up in what is now a portion of modern-day Turkey. Cassander, the fourth general, ruled over the area that basically would be modern-day Greece and coming up into some of the Balkan area.

There was a splintering of Alexander’s empire. It splintered into four basic divisions, all of which were Greek speaking, Greek culture and Greek language. It was a continuation of what Alexander had started, but it splintered. They were unable to hold it all together. It’s what’s known in history as the Hellenistic period because it was the period of Greek dominance. It

was the dominance of Greek language and culture that set the stage for the New Testament period.

Verse 7, then there was a fourth **beast**, dreadful and terrible. It was something that was really so beyond all these others that there wasn't even an animal that was used to signify it. It's pictured as having great iron teeth. It swallowed up and devoured everything else. It picked up all the rest. It was the fourth. And, of course, the Roman Empire did that. It swallowed up the remains of each of the four divisions of Alexander's empire.

A lot of people have heard the story of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra. Cleopatra was a direct descendant of Ptolemy. She was the last Greek ruler of Egypt. She committed suicide when Julius Caesar's nephew Octavian, better known in history as Augustus Caesar, defeated her army. In 31 B.C., the battle of Actium marked the complete triumph of the Roman Empire and the complete devouring of what was left of Alexander's old empire.

Verses 7-8, this beast is pictured as having ten horns; among these horns, a little horn pops up and causes the first three horns to be plucked up by the roots. When the Roman Empire fell in the historical date of 476 A.D., the Vandals overran Rome and established a kingdom. Basically, three groups came in and vied for the supremacy in the Roman Empire. They are known historically as the Vandals, the Heruli and the Ostrogoths. From a historical standpoint, those would be the first three successors of the Roman Empire.

In 554 A.D. at the behest of the bishop of Rome, Justinian the Great, who was the ruler in Constantinople (the Eastern Empire), brought in an army and defeated the Vandals, the Heruli, and the Ostrogoths over a period of several years and caused their kingdom to be completely plucked up and ended. In 554 A.D., what was called the Imperial Restoration was proclaimed. This was another successor to the Roman Empire but this time at the behest of the bishop of Rome.

The first three, the Vandals, Heruli and Ostrogoths, though each of them nominally professed Christianity, were a different brand of heresy than the case of the bishop of Rome. There was quite a controversy.

We find here, in Daniel 7, this continuation that comes down and culminates in the return of Jesus Christ.

Verses 20-21, the little horn, we are told, "...the other horn which came up, before which three

fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them..."

He was not counted among the ten. But one of the successors of the Roman Empire was none other than the papacy itself. The papacy took much of its imperial trappings from the old Roman Empire. In the fading of the Roman Empire, the papacy achieved its greatest power and prestige. It's described, "whose appearance was greater than his fellows." Even though it was by comparison a little horn, it outlasted any of the rest of them. It's been around for a whole lot longer. It spoke great swelling things—great pronouncements and great claims were made. It was responsible for persecution against the true Church (against the saints), the inquisitions and such.

Verse 22, it endures until the Ancient of Days establishes His Kingdom.

Verse 25, we are told, "“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law.””

Who claims to have changed the Sabbath? Who claims the authority to change the Sabbath? The very calendar we use is called the Gregorian calendar. It takes its name from Pope Gregory because he changed the old Julian calendar that was promulgated by Julius Caesar. "Change times and laws." Well, we changed sunset to sunset—time was measured in terms of a day from sunset to sunset. Based on a papal decree in the early Middle Ages, that was changed to midnight. The day of rest was changed from the Sabbath to Sunday. The whole configuration of things was changed. Here we see that authority brought out.

Daniel 8:1-3, "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time. I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel...and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last."

This was a peculiar looking ram. This ram has two horns and one of them seems like it is growing. It pops up a little later and gets bigger. You probably have never seen a ram that you

just stand there and watch his horns grow. You've seen rams that had horns, but Daniel saw this ram and, all of a sudden, he saw these horns start growing. One came up first; then another one came up a little later and it was taller. This was a peculiar-looking ram.

Verse 4, "I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no beast could withstand him; ..."

Verse 5, "And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes." Now this was a peculiar-looking goat. It didn't have two horns; it had one.

Verses 6-7, "Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him [the ram just sort of withered down], but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand."

Verse 8, "Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven." Now, this must have been awfully peculiar. All of a sudden, the big horn got broken off and then four little horns sprouted out.

Verses 9-10, "And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land [a reference to the land of Israel]. And it grew up to the host of heaven [or "to the people of God"]; and it cast down some of the host [some of God's people] and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them."

Verses 11-12, "He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered."

Verse 14, "And he said to me, 'For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.'" Daniel couldn't figure out what all this was about. Well, we don't have to just guess.

Verses 20-22, notice what he says, "The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat

is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power."

The two horns are a very clear description of the empire of the Medes and the Persians. It spread out. The Medes represented the first horn. Even though the Persians came on the scene a little later, they became the dominant portion of the empire. Then the Greeks, characterized by this male goat, came forth and conquered and smashed the empire of the Medes and the Persians. This was represented by the one great horn—its first king, Alexander the Great. When he was cut off, four kings took his place, but none of them exercised a level of power he did. Here is a very clear explanation. When you put Daniel 8 together with Daniel 7 and Daniel 2, it is very clear who the succession of empires has to be.

Verses 23-25, "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes [KJV, "dark sentences"]. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human hand."

Here is something that obviously stretches down to the end time. There is a final king that is going to arise that is described as a king of fierce countenance. This is clearly the individual that is personified in the book of Revelation called "the beast" because he is the one that is going to stand up against the Prince of princes (referring to Christ) and will be broken without hand.

Remember in Daniel 2:34, we saw "the stone cut without hands" that's going to smash the image on its toes. Well, he (the beast) will be broken without human hand. In other words, it will be of supernatural origin.

There's a reference in verses 11-14 that the daily sacrifice would be taken away. I am going to come back here in just a moment to comment on that a little further. I want to go on here.

Daniel 9:1, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans..." He was the uncle of Cyrus the Great. Cyrus

made him king over the Chaldeans while he went elsewhere.

Verse 2, Daniel says, “in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books [or perhaps better rendered, “I understood by letters”], the numbers of the years specified by the word of the Lord, given through Jeremiah the prophet, ...”

Daniel had been studying the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah was an older contemporary of Daniel. The scroll had been taken from Jerusalem to Babylon along with all the other treasures of the temple. That’s the way the Bible was preserved during that period.

Verse 2, continuing, “...that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.” Daniel had been studying this 70-year prophecy in the book of Jeremiah. He didn’t understand what it meant. He, perhaps, even corresponded with Jeremiah about it. He had been fasting and seeking God, trying to understand where that fit in.

Verses 3-19 have his prayer of contrition to God. Verses 20-23, Gabriel the angel appeared to him in this prayer and begins to give him some information.

Verses 24-25, “Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;”

Seven weeks and 62 weeks are 69 weeks. There’s a reason why this distinction is made.

But notice, “from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.” This was the decree that was issued by Artaxerxes I. The record of it is given in Ezra 7 and the date in history is 457 B.C.

Now, here’s something the critics really have trouble with. You see, no matter how late they try to put the book of Daniel, you can’t put the book of Daniel after the New Testament because there are copies of it that are that old. So, you can’t put it that late. This really gives the critics a problem.

What does it say? “From the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there will be sixty-nine weeks.” Let’s just look. How many days in a week? –Seven. Everybody agrees on that. Seventy weeks is how many days? –Well, 490

days. So, 69 weeks would be seven days less than that—483 days. Now, do a little math. We have 69 weeks, which equals 483 days. We have already seen a day for a year. You have 483 years from the going forth of the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince. The decree was issued in 457 B.C.

Now, just do a little subtraction: 457 from 483. Well, if your math is correct, you will come out with an answer of 26. You add one to that and you have 27 A.D. Why do you add one? You’re going from B.C. to A.D. You are going from 457 B.C. and going forward 483 years. There’s no such thing as the year zero. The year 1 B.C. is followed by the year 1 A.D. There was no such year as the year zero. When you take those numbers and go through from B.C. to A.D. this way, you have to add a year to compensate for the fact that there was no year zero. You can work it out on a chart or do it however you want to if you have trouble following this, but if you start with 457 B.C. and come forward 483 years, you come out to 27 A.D. The significance of 27 A.D. is that this was the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus Christ. That’s dated in the Gospel account. I’ll give you the exact reference here.

Luke 3:1, “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, ...” It goes through all the different things.

Verses 2-3, “Annas and Caiaphas being high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching...” This was in the spring of 27 A.D.

Verses 21-23, then as we have described here, we find Jesus’ appearance, coming to be baptized of John and the beginning of his public ministry. The point is that the beginning of Christ’s public ministry was in 27 A.D., exactly when prophesied.

Now, here’s a 70-week prophecy. Sixty-nine weeks were going to elapse from the going forth of the decree until the coming of the Messiah.

Daniel 9:25, we’re told that, “...the street shall be built again [in Jerusalem], and the wall, even in troublesome times.” What it amounted to was that the decree went forth in 457 B.C. There was a period of 49 years during which the rebuilding took place and was finished by 408 B.C. That was the first seven weeks. Sixty-two weeks later, we are told, brings us down to the full 69—the Messiah would come.

Verse 26, “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and

the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city [referring to Jerusalem] and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.”

Verse 27, “Then he shall confirm a covenant [Christ the Messiah confirmed the New Covenant] with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,” We are told Christ was going to be cut off in the middle of a week. A ministry of one week (or seven years) was prophesied, but He was cut off in the midst of this. “In the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.” His ministry lasted three and one-half years; then He was crucified.

Verse 24 tells us, “Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness,” When Christ died, the need for sacrifices and oblations ceased.

Now, the clear implications of Daniel 9 are interesting, in that Christ was cut off in the middle of the 70th week. There are three and one-half years of a ministry yet to be completed. I think that when you put it together with everything else, this clearly will be what occurs in the first three and one-half years of the Millennium, the completion of His ministry to Israel. I might go into a lot of detail on that at some time. He was cut off in the middle of that 70th week. The result was that the Romans ultimately came in a few years later and destroyed Jerusalem, the Temple and the whole works.

In Daniel 10:1-7, a little later after Cyrus had come back from war, Daniel sees another vision. He is praying to God and the angel appears to him. We have a little bit of insight brought out here, a little bit of insight into what goes on in the spirit realm.

Verse 9, Daniel heard this voice.

Daniel 10:11, “And he said to me, ‘O Daniel, man greatly beloved,’”

Verse 12, “Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel,’” ‘I have been sent to help you.’

Verse 13, “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.”

The reference is to the fact that the unseen power behind the throne in many of the governments of this world is nothing other than Satan and his demons. Here was Gabriel, who having been withstood by a great demon spirit, very possibly even Satan himself, was the real power behind the throne of Persia. Michael was sent by God to assist him, and Gabriel came to reveal this information to Daniel.

Daniel 11:2-5, “And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these. Then the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.”

Daniel 11 is the most detailed prophecy in the Bible. I gave you a handout that is a reference for Daniel 11. [Daniel 11 reference is included at end of this Bible study.] If you note, it is a verse-by-verse commentary.

“Three more kings will rise in Persia.” The point is made that there were actually 12 kings of Persia after Cyrus, but there were only three that were historically significant or important: Cambyses, Darius and Xerxes. The fourth is actually Xerxes (we have to count Cyrus to get the four). He is the first important king and is the one who led the attack on Greece in 480 B.C. That set the stage for the resentment and antagonism that ultimately resulted in a mighty king (Alexander the Great) who united the Greeks, came in and conquered the Persians.

Verse 4 describes that after Alexander’s death in 323 B.C., his empire was divided among his four leading generals.

Verse 5 refers to a king of the South. Alexander’s empire split in four divisions. There were ultimately two that proved significant in terms of Jerusalem. There was a king of the North and a king of the South—south of Jerusalem was the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt and north of Jerusalem was the Seleucid kingdom of Babylon. There were problems back and forth and Jerusalem was in the middle.

We have recorded in Daniel 11 detailed squabbling back and forth as the kings of the North (the Seleucids) and the kings of the South (the Ptolemys) were going back and forth trying to dominate the area and dominate one another. I am not going to go through every detail of Daniel 11 because you have it in handout form and for the sake of time, I will let you go through it as you follow down sort of by marriage and by year all the way down.

Verse 29, we pick it up, ““At the appointed time he [Antiochus] shall return....” About this time, we are down to Antiochus who was the Seleucid king of the North. He was known in history as Antiochus Epiphanes. That was the name by which he called himself. “Epiphanes” in Greek means “of the glorious appearing.” He had a pretty favorable impression of himself.

Verses 29-30, ““At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. For ships from Cyprus [a reference to the Roman fleet] shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved,” He came down and was going to “whip up” on the king of Egypt, but the Roman fleet sided with the Egyptians. They weren’t going to let him conquer Egypt; they made him surrender. He had to go back, and he was in a pretty bad attitude when he did. So, he started back through Jerusalem.

Verse 30, continuing, “...and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.” He came back through and cut a deal with the apostate Jews giving them special favor.

Verse 31, ““And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.”” On the 15th day of Kislev (which is the tenth month) in 168 B.C., Antiochus stopped the daily sacrifices at the temple. He offered a pig on the altar. He established a statue of Jupiter Olympus in the Holy Place. This is called “the abomination of desolation.” This led to desolation or destruction in Jerusalem. There was a death penalty that was pronounced on the Jews who sought to practice the religion of the Bible. Of course, there were many who tried to jump over. You always have people that look around and whatever side is winning, they try to side with it. There are people who don’t have deep convictions of their own; they are simply playing politics and trying to come out on top. God has a way of dealing with people like that.

When Antiochus came in and tried to put a stop to the religion of God, defiled the temple, offered a pig on the altar and set up this idol, you had Jews who came over and tried to side with him. Oh, yes, they were going to “buddy-up” to him. They wanted to be on the inside track.

Any time an invader has come in, there always have been those who would collaborate. You can look at any period of history—World War II or any other period—you’ve always had those who will sell out the cause that they supposedly believed in. They sell out because they want to be on the winning side.

Here were those who wanted to be on the winning side. The problem is that sometimes the side that looks like it is winning, won’t win when it’s all over with. If you want to be on the winning side, the side you better pick is God’s side because that’s the side that’s going to win—God’s side. It may appear to be coming out on the bottom end for a while, but the end of the story is that God’s side is the one that’s going to win. Here are these who sought to do this.

“Place there the abomination of desolation.”

Verse 32, ““Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.”” This certainly speaks, in type, of the Maccabee revolt that was led by the priest Mattathias that succeeded in driving out the Syrians and cleansing the temple.

Earlier in Daniel 8:11-14, we read of the daily sacrifices being taken away and these 2,300 days. The word “days” is not the word that is rendered “days” elsewhere in the Old Testament. It is not the normal Hebrew word for “day.” Literally, what it says is, “for two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings.” –2,300 evenings and mornings. The King James translators rendered that as “days,” but if you look at the context of Daniel 8, it is a reference to the sacrifices.

Sacrifices were offered every evening and every morning. There were two sacrifices a day—one in the evening and one in the morning. If we are talking about 2,300 evenings and mornings, then you really are only talking about 1,150 days because you have an evening and a morning for every day. If you had 2,300 evenings and mornings, you are looking at 1,150 days. The interesting thing is that from the 15th day of Kislev (the day the sacrifices were taken away and the abomination set up), if you come forward until the purging of the temple and the rededication of the altar by the Maccabees three years later, it was exactly 2,300 sacrifices that

were missed. There were 2,300 sacrifices that were not offered. That's the real key to it.

In the book of I Maccabees (which is not a part of Scripture but a contemporary historical account), it gives the date. If you work it out on a calendar, that's the way it comes out. There may be some sort of end-time correspondence to it, but there was clearly a fulfillment of this abomination that makes desolate, holding sway for this period of time.

In Daniel 11, we've gone through a very detailed blow-by-blow account of the events that occurred in the Middle East during, sort of, the time between the Testaments, down to the time that the altar was desecrated and then was restored. We sort of summarized in a verse and began to jump down to the very end time—the time of the end as mentioned in verse 40, “At the time of the end....”

The summary of the history of the people of God is given.

Daniel 11:33-35, “And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purge them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.”

We have a summation. We pick it up here and come all the way down, summing up centuries in just a couple of verses.

There is a parallel in the events that occurred. Clearly, there was historically an abomination, which was the desecration of the Holy Place. It was the taking away of the daily sacrifices and the desecration that led to destruction of Jerusalem. Historically, the abomination of desolation that Daniel describes occurred with Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C.

Matthew 24:15-16, Jesus said, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place’ (whoever reads, let him understand), ‘then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.’”

Christ spoke of a time yet future—a time that He speaks of in answer to the disciples’ question about what will be the sign of His coming and the end of the age (v. 3). He spoke of a future abomination of desolation.

Luke 21:20, Luke makes reference to this, “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.”

Verse 24, “And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Mark 13:14, there's also a reference, “But when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not’ (let the reader understand), ‘then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.’” Clearly, the abomination that Daniel spoke of has significance for the end time.

Daniel 11:40-42, as we come down we are told, “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.”

Verse 44, “But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.”

Daniel 12:11, we are told, “And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.”

Clearly, the abomination that makes desolate is associated with the daily sacrifice being stopped. Right now, daily sacrifices are not going on, which means, of course, that there will have to be at least the reconsecration of an altar. It doesn't mean a full temple has to be built. Sacrifices were offered in the book of Ezra. In Ezra 3:3-6, it makes plain that an altar was consecrated and work on the temple was begun. Sacrifices were begun a long time before the temple was ever completed.

We have a summation in Daniel 12. Daniel asks the question, “How long?”

Verse 6, “...‘How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?’”

Verse 7 (latter part), he was told that this time of trouble, “...it shall be for a time, times and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.” In other words, these 1,260 days are three and one-half years when the Church has its power scattered.

Revelation 12:14 shows that the Philadelphia era, or phase, of God's Church is in her place of protection in the wilderness and no longer

actively pursuing doing a work and carrying it out in a powerful way.

Daniel 12:8, Daniel wanted to know what would be the end.

Verse 9, he was told, "... 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'" It didn't say that it would never be understood. It was written down to be understood, but it could not be understood until the end time—until this age, this time, this century.

Verse 10, "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

Psalm 111:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." The wise are going to be those who fear God and keep His commandments. They will be able to understand when the end time was to come.

Daniel 12:11-13, "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days." We can make a little sense of this. What is it that we are told?

Daniel 12:1, "At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince [the great archangel] who stands watch over the sons of your people [the children of Israel];" Michael, as an angelic being, is the one that God gave responsibility for the nation of Israel.

Verse 1, continuing, "...and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [He's talking about the Great Tribulation.], even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book."

Verses 2-3, then it concludes, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." What are we told? We are told that this is going to end up when? —At the time of the resurrection when those that sleep awaken.

Verse 13, Daniel is told, "...go your way till the end; for you shall rest [You are going to die; you

are going to lie in the grave.], and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

He gave him two sections of days—1,290 and 1,335 days. The clear implication of verse 13 is that all these days end at the same point—the resurrection, the return of Jesus Christ. You go back out three and one-half years or 1,260 days. One thousand two hundred ninety days is 30 days prior to that—that's an extra month, something that starts a month before. Then the 1,335 days is a month and a half even earlier. We are clearly told that the 1,290 days not only ends with the return of Christ, but it begins with the taking away of the daily sacrifice. That's made plain in verse 11. We are not told what event begins the 1,335 days. We are just told, "Blessed is he who waits" for this whole time.

I am going to go into some of these things in sermons and Bible studies in Revelation.

Luke 21:20, I think one aspect of it, when you tie it in, Jesus said, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near." He didn't say, 'When you see Jerusalem being bombarded with armies.' Look, if you are in a city and it's being shelled—like Sarajevo in Yugoslavia and in Bosnia right now—you don't need somebody to come in and say, 'I think the desolation of this place is pretty near.' Everybody knows that. You can look around and the whole place is falling apart.

Earlier we saw this individual—the beast power—an individual who will seek to obtain the kingdom by flatteries and how he will do that. He will enter in and will attempt to do some of these things in an underhanded way. When Jerusalem is encompassed with armies, it is not going to appear to everybody else that the desolation thereof is near.

We have Christ's warning in Luke 21 and we will know. I think it's very likely that this extra 45 days mentioned here is a time period prior to the onset of hostilities and the taking away of the sacrifices, during which God's Church will have time to flee and relocate. That's partly speculation, but if you put the whole thing together, I think it certainly fits. I realize that a lot of this is a little bit complex. We are going to come back. As we go through the book of Revelation, we are going to pick up more of this. You might go through and check over parts of it. I think the handout material on Daniel 11 will give you the information that will tie in with a more detailed explanation of that.

There are no questions to be passed out on the final Bible study in the Writings series. Next

Bible study will be Ezra, Nehemiah and
Chronicles.

BIBLE STUDY HANDOUT

References for Daniel 11

- v. 2 While there were actually 12 kings of Persia after Cyrus, there were only three important ones. They were Cambyses, Darius, and Xerxes. The fourth king referred to is Xerxes (i.e., the fourth important king—counting Cyrus as the first). He led an attack on Greece about 480 B.C.
- v. 3 The mighty king refers to Alexander the Great who led the Greek armies in the conquest of Persia.
- v. 4 After Alexander's death in 323 B.C. his empire ultimately was divided among his four leading generals—Ptolemy, who got Egypt; Seleucus, who got Syria and Babylon; Lysimachus, who got Asia Minor; and Cassander who got Greece and Macedonia.
- v. 5 Ptolemy I, the king of the South (Egypt), was a very strong king, but in 312 B.C., one of his top generals, Seleucus, took advantage of Ptolemy's involvement in a war to take Syria and Babylon for his own empire.
- v. 6 After several decades of intermittent fighting between the Ptolemys and the Seleucids, a peace was finally achieved in 252 B.C. when Antiochus II put away his wife, Laodice, and married Bernice, the daughter of Egyptian king Ptolemy II. In 247 B.C., Ptolemy II died and Antiochus divorced Bernice and took back Laodice. Laodice proceeded to murder both Antiochus and Bernice and secure the Syrian throne for her son, Seleucus II.
- v. 7 Bernice's brother, Ptolemy III of Egypt, invaded and plundered Syria in 245 B.C. to avenge his sister.
- v. 8 Seleucus II died in 226 B.C.; Ptolemy III, in 222 B.C.
- v. 10 Seleucus III and Antiochus III, sons of Seleucus II, both warred against Egypt, and in 218 B.C., Antiochus III conquered part of Egypt's empire, including Palestine.
- v. 11 In 212 B.C., Ptolemy retook Palestine from Syria.
- v. 12 Ptolemy IV made a speedy peace treaty and soon dissipated the fruits of his victory in a wanton life style.
- v. 13 In 205 B.C., after Ptolemy IV had died and was succeeded by his infant son, Ptolemy V, Antiochus launched a successful war during which he wrested Palestine from the Egyptians
- v. 14 Apostate Jews sought to aid Antiochus in his war against Egypt.
- vv. 15-16 Antiochus took Sidon, beat Egypt in Palestine, and in 198 B.C., annexed Palestine to Syria.
- v. 17 Antiochus arranged for his daughter, Cleopatra, to marry Ptolemy V, thinking in this way to gain Egypt for himself. This backfired because Cleopatra sided with her husband against her father.

- v. 18 Antiochus then turned his attention to try to conquer the islands and coasts of Asia Minor. The Romans, under Scipio, defeated him at the Battle of Magnesia in 187 B.C.
- v. 19 Antiochus then tried to recover his dissipated wealth by sacking the temple of Belus, during which he was killed.
- v. 20 Antiochus' successor, Seleucus IV, was murdered after 11 years by Heliodorus, a tax collector he had put over getting revenue for the kingdom. Heliodorus was later driven out.
- v. 21 Seleucus didn't leave an heir, so his brother, Antiochus Epiphanes—having obtained the favor of a neighboring king—succeeded in driving out Heliodorus and taking the kingdom.
- v. 22 Antiochus attempted to replace the Jewish high priest with one of his own choice.
- vv. 23-24 Though only a few were with him, Antiochus prospered and invaded Galilee and Lower Egypt. Though his fathers had favored the Jews, he hated them.
- vv. 25-26 Antiochus launched an invasion of Egypt in which he met with great success—partly because Ptolemy Philometor was betrayed by his own officers in 171 B.C.
- v. 27 At a banquet in 174 B.C., Antiochus pretended to ally himself with Ptolemy against his younger brother, Euregetes II. Both were trying to deceive one another.
- v. 28 On his way back to Syria from Egypt, he passed through Palestine and desecrated the temple in 168 B.C. He slaughtered 80,000 Jews.
- vv. 29-30 Antiochus returned to Egypt, but the Roman fleet sided with the Egyptians and made him surrender. On his way back through Jerusalem, he extended special favors to apostate Jews.
- v. 31 On 15 Kislev 168 B.C., Antiochus stopped the daily sacrifice at the temple and offered a hog on the altar. A statue of Jupiter Olympus was set up in the Holy Place. This is a type of the future Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24.
- v. 32 This speaks in type of the Maccabee revolt led by the priest Matthias, which ultimately succeeded in driving out the Syrians and cleansing the temple.
- vv. 32-35 This begins to skip ahead to the end time and provides a 2,000-year capsule history of the Church of God. The remainder of the chapter is dealing with the end-time fulfillment of prophecies.

Sermon—Feast of Trumpets
September 30, 1989
Mr. John Ogwyn

Babylon

Last night was an anniversary. It was, in fact, the 2,527th anniversary of the fall of Babylon. You may not initially see what that has to do with Trumpets, but in many ways, what we are celebrating today ties in very directly with an event that occurred 2,527 years ago last night. In many ways, the events that we are celebrating today are events that will culminate in the fall of Babylon the Great and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. These events that we are celebrating were, in many ways, prefigured by an event that happened so many hundred years ago.

I would like for us to more clearly understand the prophetic implication of the fall of ancient Babylon to see what it portends for us today and to understand it in light of this Feast of Trumpets. I would like for us to more clearly understand where we stand at this critical juncture in the course of human events—in the course of the events that are prophesied right in the pages of our own Bible.

Let's start out by setting the prophetic stage. You may wonder, where would you start to set the prophetic stage? To set the stage of events that have transpired, we would begin with Genesis 11. Genesis 11 begins the story of mankind's attempt to build his own civilization and government apart from God after the flood.

In Genesis 11, we have the story of the attempt of mankind, under the leadership of Nimrod, to build the Tower of Babel. This was the beginning of the city of Babylon. This is the tower from which Babylon takes its name. Babylon had its beginnings a little over 100 years after the flood—just a little over 100 years after God had wiped out humanity off the face of the earth and spared only the family of Noah.

The family had increased and, now, there was an individual prepared to stir up and lead mankind in a rebellious effort to establish their own government, society and civilization. There was the attempt of mankind—all branches of the human family—working together, but the problem is that when everybody works together apart from the direction, leading and inspiration of God, His Spirit and His laws, the results are catastrophic.

Mankind attempted to do something under the leadership of Nimrod—the Tower of Babel, the

beginning of Babylon. It was cut short because God stepped in and intervened.

Genesis 11:6-7, “And the Lord said, “Indeed the people are one and they have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.””

God confused their language and, verse 8, the nations were forced to scatter out on the face of the earth as God intended. At that point, we are introduced to Babylon; we are introduced to the Tower of Babel.

Now, as we come down historically, we pick up the story of Babylon in the book of Daniel.

God scattered the empire that Nimrod sought to build 100 years after the flood. God scattered the empire that Nimrod sought to build centered around the Tower of Babel. Centuries passed. A civilization continued to grow and thrive there in the plains of Shinar, the area centered around ancient Babylon.

As we pick up the story in the book of Daniel, we find an empire that began to come together centered around ancient Babylon. It became the first of four world-ruling empires.

In Daniel 2, we have the story of a great image that Nebuchadnezzar saw. He had a very troubling dream. In this dream, he saw a great image. It was an unusual image because the head was of gold, the shoulders and the chest were of silver, the thighs were of bronze, the legs were of iron and the feet were of iron and clay. Now this was an unusual mixture. Normally, when you see a great statue or image, the whole thing is made of the same thing, but in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he saw this gigantic image set upon a plain, and it was made of different things. At different points, the composition of the image changed. Then, most puzzling of all, he saw a stone cut without hands (a stone of supernatural origin), and it came down and smashed this image on its toes. When it smashed the image on its toes, it didn't just crack the toes off—the whole image turned to dust and the wind blew it away. The stone became a great mountain until it filled the whole earth.

If you had been Nebuchadnezzar and you had awakened from something like that, you'd be scratching your head, too, wondering, ‘What in the world is this?’ Maybe you would have thought it was something you ate the night before.

Nebuchadnezzar sensed that this dream had important implications. It was at this point that Daniel was brought to Nebuchadnezzar's attention.

Verses 28-30, Daniel was given wisdom by God to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the dream.

Daniel began to interpret the dream for him. He spoke to Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 2:37, “You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory...” He said, ‘You are a great ruler, a great emperor. You rule over many nations. You rule not simply Babylon but a great empire of many nations put together under your rule.’

Verse 38, “...you are this head of gold.” This head of gold represents the Babylonian Empire and was personified by Nebuchadnezzar as its king.

Verse 39, “But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.” “Another kingdom inferior to yours,” symbolized by the silver, was the empire of the Medes and the Persians that succeeded Babylon. Then he said, “A third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.” This was historically the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great that swallowed up the Medes and the Persians.

Verse 40, “And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters all things; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.” The Roman Empire succeeded and swallowed up all of those that continued through.

Verses 41-44, these two legs all the way down to the end and the ten toes at the bottom represent what is extant at the time when the God of heaven will set up a kingdom—in other words, the time immediately ahead of us.

What we have in Daniel 2 is the outline of history from the time of ancient Nebuchadnezzar (600 years before Christ) all the way out to the time immediately ahead of us. We have a summary of over 2,500 years of the history of this world that continues right on out to the years immediately ahead of us when the God of heaven is going to intervene and set up a Kingdom.

So, we are introduced to Babylon once again. Babylon is the fountainhead from which this world's civilization springs. It had its origin with Nimrod and the Tower of Babel, and, here, we

see it personified with Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire.

As we continue through the book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar had another dream. This was a most troubling dream.

Daniel 4:4-5, “I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.” He saw something that concerned him very much. He began to explain what he saw.

Verse 10, “These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great.” It was a very impressive tree; it was tall.

Verses 11-12, “The tree grew and became strong; its height reached to the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. Its leaves were lovely, its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, the birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.” There were many leaves and a lot of fruit. It was a bountiful and very impressive tree. The beasts had shade under it, and there were nests in it.

Verses 13-15, “I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher [an angel], a holy one, coming down from heaven. He cried aloud and said thus: “Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches. Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth [Don't uproot it; don't dig out the stump. Cut it down, cut off the branches, scatter it away, but leave the stump and the roots in the earth.], bound with a band of iron and bronze,” ‘Put a cap on this stump to protect it, bind it and leave it there.’

Verse 16, “...and let seven times pass over him.” Seven times would pass over it.

Nebuchadnezzar was troubled; he was wondering what this was.

Verses 20-22, he was told that the tree was symbolic of him and of the Babylonian Empire.

Nebuchadnezzar went through a very remarkable personal experience. God warned him, through Daniel, as to what this portended for him personally.

Verses 23-25, “An inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, “Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze 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: they shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

He was impressed for a short period of time, but as months went by and nothing happened, he lapsed back into his old attitude.

Verses 28-33, one night when he least expected it and was standing there surveying the great Babylon that existed, all puffed up in his pride and vanity as to what he had accomplished, he was struck with insanity, and for seven years he roamed the fields like a wild animal.

Verses 34-36, at the end of those seven years, his sanity returned and he was restored to his kingdom. He continued to rule Babylon for several years until his death.

Nebuchadnezzar went through an experience that had implications and significance, not simply for him personally, but for Babylon and for the civilization that Babylon was symbolic of. We are going to come back to that in just a moment. Nebuchadnezzar went through an event that taught him a lesson. His successors did not learn that lesson. Nebuchadnezzar was a different man when he came out of this experience.

Several years passed. We come to the next chapter, Daniel 5.

Daniel 5 is not in chronological order. It is in the order of subject matter. It is put next to Daniel 4. It is the last event of Belshazzar. Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. He was the son of Nabonidus who was the king, or the emperor, of the Babylonian Empire. He had associated his son Belshazzar with him on the throne as co-ruler. At the time that Daniel 5 records these events, Nabonidus was elsewhere in the empire with an army. Belshazzar was sitting on the throne and holding sway in Babylon.

In Daniel 5, we pick up the story of an event that actually took place on the Feast of Trumpets 539 B.C. The dating of that event is attested to in many historical documents. It is one of the most well-documented occurrences of the ancient world in terms of when it occurred. You have to understand that Babylon was, to all intents and purposes, impregnable. Babylon appeared to be the city that was impossible to conquer.

Herodotus, the Greek historian, gives us the dimensions and the information of Babylon. The

walls of Babylon were 335 feet high. Do you realize how high that is? That is as tall as a 33-story building. The walls were 85 feet wide. There was literally a racetrack for chariots that ran around the top of the walls of Babylon. There were 100 bronze gates and the Euphrates River flowed through the middle. Babylon was impregnable. The Babylonians were absolutely certain there was no way to conquer Babylon.

The armies of the Medes and the Persians were besieging Babylon and sought to besiege it. Belshazzar thought so lightly of that and treated it as such a trivial matter that he had a great feast. He had a big party, and as was often the case, these parties turned into a regular drinking bout, as we find here.

Daniel 5:1-2, “Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.”

They were sitting there really boozing it up. He began to feel pretty good and was really going to impress all of these various high-ranking rulers of the Babylonian Empire. They were sitting there, laughing and mocking this vast army of Persians that was gathered around to besiege Babylon. How ridiculous it is that anyone could think that mighty Babylon could fall. After he had boozed it up for a while, he began to feel pretty good. He said, ‘Let’s get the sacred vessels from the temple in Jerusalem in here and we will drink another toast to that because our gods [the gods of Babylon] are above all the other gods.’ They brought in the vessels from the temple and they began to drink and to booze it up out of the sacred vessels that God had commanded Solomon to make for the temple.

Verse 4, we are told, “They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.” I’m sure they drank a toast to each of them individually. By the time they got through with all of them, you can believe they had gone through quite a bit.

About this time they were well lubricated. They were really in the process of “tying one on” and they got sobered up. If you want the absolute world’s record for how quickly somebody can be sobered up, read the next verse. They were sitting there just really enjoying the party.

Verse 5, “In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand

on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." Here was this hand that just appeared out of nowhere and began to write in great letters on the wall.

Verse 6, "Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened...." KJV, "joints of his loins were loosed." If you look that up, you will find that is a rather poetic description of an "accident" that the king suffered about that time; he had a rather unfortunate accident. That's what it means when it says, "the joints of his loins were loosed." You talk about scared! I don't know about scared straight, but he was scared sober or at least about as sober as he could get, drunk as he was.

Verse 6, continuing, "...and his knees knocked against each other." He wasn't feeling nearly so great and powerful. He wasn't feeling so important and so impressive. Something had thrown cold water all over the party. The party was over.

Verse 7, "The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers," The king said, 'Bring somebody in here. Get all the wise men in here and tell me what this means.' Well, none of them knew.

Verses 10-12, the queen (she was the queen mother) told him, 'In the days of your grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, there was a man in high esteem by Nebuchadnezzar, one of the Jewish captives who was the interpreter of the secrets of God. If you bring him in here, he undoubtedly will be able to tell you what this means.'

Verses 13-17, Daniel was brought in before the king and he read the writing.

Verse 25, "'And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.'"

This phrase may be meaningless to us as reference, but the words themselves were not unknown words. It is a form of the term "mina, shekel and peres." These were weights or units of measurements. The shekel was a standard unit of measurement. There were 50 minas to one shekel. The peres was half of a mina, so there were 25 peres to the shekel. That's all well and good. If you saw something written on the wall that said, "pounds, pounds, ounces and tons," you may know the words are units of measurements and units of weight, but the words joined together that way would be absolutely meaningless to you. That's the way it was to them. The words were not some nonsense words. They were words that were known in the

Hebrew, the Aramaic and the Babylonian language. They were units of measurements with which these people were familiar, but these words appearing there didn't make sense. What was the significance?

Verses 26-28, Daniel told him, "'This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.'"

Verse 30, "That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain." That night! What he thought was impossible occurred.

Cyrus the Great of Persia had directed that the Persian troops would dig a canal to divert the Euphrates River. That night, as the party drew on, they burst the dike and began to drain off the flow of the Euphrates River as it was going through Babylon. The height of the River went down, down, down until finally they were able to put the army in the riverbed, march under the great iron gates of Babylon and emerge on the other side. Babylon fell in one night. Belshazzar was slaughtered.

Let's look a little bit. Obviously, Belshazzar had not learned the lesson that the Most High rules in the affairs of men (Daniel 4:25; Daniel 5:21). This is the lesson that God had impressed on Nebuchadnezzar. We have the story in Daniel 4 followed by the events of Daniel 5. There are other events that are recounted in the book of Daniel that chronologically come in between these two events, but these chapters are back-to-back because they tell a continuing story.

What happened to Nebuchadnezzar was symbolic for Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar was cut off. The tree symbolized him. In reality, it symbolized the Babylonian Empire. It was cut off and was banded by a band of iron and bronze. The stump was left. The roots were left in the ground. The tree was cut down. How long would the dry stump and roots be left in the ground? It said, "seven times must pass over him" (Daniel 4:16). What is a "time" in a prophetic sense?

Let's notice, very briefly, how the Bible defines its own terms. Turn back to Revelation 11. I want to illustrate the point of how long is "seven times." Let's notice some things that are used synonymously.

Revelation 11:2, "...And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months."

Verse 3, "'And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand

two hundred and sixty days,” We saw 42 months and 1,260 days. Let’s go down.

Revelation 12:6, “Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

Verse 14, go down a little further, “But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time,”

Let’s notice here. We have several terms and they are used interchangeably. Forty-two months is how long? –Three and one-half years. Thirty-six months is three years; six more months make 42. So, three and one-half years is 42 months. One thousand two hundred sixty days is 42 30-day months. You can multiply it out if you don’t trust my math. One thousand two hundred sixty days equals three and one-half years. “Time, times and half a time” is a prophetic term to refer to three and one-half years, 1,260 days or 42 months.

Daniel 4:16, we read, “...and let seven times pass over him.”

Verses 14-15, the tree was cut down, the stump was bound [banded] with iron and the roots in the ground remained. Seven times would pass over it. Seven is twice as much as three and one-half. Time, times and a half time is three and one-half years. If that’s 1,260 days, then how many days is seven times? Add it up. Take 1,260 and double it. That comes out to 2,520. Two thousand five hundred twenty days is the equivalent (demonstrated right here) for seven times or 2,520 days would pass over it.

From a prophetic standpoint, God utilizes the symbolism of a day for a year when it comes to Bible prophecy.

Numbers 14:34, for instance, ““According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year; namely forty years,””

Ezekiel 4:6, basically the same statement is made, ““And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.”” In terms of prophetic implications, a day for a year is utilized prophetically.

Two thousand five hundred twenty days is the seven prophetic times that were to pass over this stump from the time the tree was cut down and the stump was bound with iron and bronze. Seven times—2,520 prophetic days or 2,520

years—was to pass over this stump. It was banded with iron.

Let’s look a little further. We saw the handwriting on the wall, “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.” Let’s look at that a little further. We see the significance. They are numbers that are weights which are to be divided. The literal meaning of the word “peres” is “divide.” It was a term that meant a “division” or “half”—numbers that were weights and were to be divided. The shekel was the basic unit. There were 50 shekels to the mina and 25 shekels to the peres.

Let’s add up here. We want to find out how many shekels we have here. Mina, the first one, that’s 50. If you add up, you have 50 minas; then you have another mina, so you have 50 more—that’s 100. The shekel is one shekel, that’s one. And then you have 25 shekels to the peres. You have 50, 50, 1 and 25—or 126. Now what is that? Let’s go back to Leviticus 27 and notice something.

Leviticus 27:25, ““And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.”” The gerah is a smaller unit than the shekel. The shekel was the basic unit. The mina was worth 50 of them. The peres was worth half that many; it was worth 25. So, there were 126 shekels represented here. If you took these numbers that were weights and you divide them down to the smallest unit, we are told in verse 25 that, “the valuations are to be made according to the shekel of the sanctuary and there are twenty gerahs to the shekel.” If you had 126 shekels, how many gerahs would that be? Multiply 126 x 20. You notice something? Do you know what you come up to? You come up to 2,520.

| | |
|-------|---|
| MENE | = 50 shekels = 1,000 gerahs |
| MENE | = 50 shekels = 1,000 gerahs |
| TEKEL | = 1 shekels = 20 gerahs |
| PERES | = <u>25 shekels</u> = <u>500 gerahs</u> |
| | 126 shekels 2,520 gerahs |
| | <u>x 20 gerahs</u> |
| | 2,520 gerahs |

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. The seven prophetic times—2,520 prophetic days or 2,520 years—was to pass over this tree after it was cut down. The stump was left banded with iron and bronze.

Now, we come to the time when Babylon was going to fall. We come to the night of the fall of Babylon—the Feast of Trumpets 539 B.C.—the handwriting on the wall because the kingdom

had not learned the lesson that the king had learned. So, it fell. It was weighed in the balances and found wanting. Its days were numbered and it was divided to the Medes and the Persians. Babylon fell. Prophetically, there were 2,520 years that had to pass.

If you want to do a little more math, start with 539 B.C., come forward 2,520 years and you will find that brings you to the Feast of Trumpets 1982. That was exactly 2,520 years later. If you calculate it out and come out one year off from that, you have to add in one year because there was no such thing as the year zero. The year 1 B.C. was followed by the year 1 A.D. There was no such thing as a year zero. If you go through and calculate that up, you're off from just using regular math. The Feast of Trumpets 1982 is the date you come out to.

What is the significance of the Feast of Trumpets 1982? That was exactly seven years ago. We are seven years down the road from the time that those seven prophetic times were up. When the seven times were up, the band of iron and bronze that bound the stump was clipped.

Notice what Job has to tell us.

Job 14:7-9, “For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its tender shoots will not cease. Though its root may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant.”

The tree was cut down. The roots were left in the ground and they grew old. The stump was bound with a band of iron and bronze. Seven times or 2,520 years passed over from the time Babylon was cut down until the band was clipped. What happens when the band is clipped? As Job expresses it, ‘through the scent of water it will bud, and it will bring forth branches like a plant.’ The tree begins to grow again.

The tree is Babylon. The final world-ruling kingdom that is described in the book of Revelation and other places is not called Persia the Great or Greece the Great or Rome the Great. That final world-ruling empire that Jesus Christ is going to smash when He returns is called **BABYLON THE GREAT**.

Seven years ago from last night, an event occurred in Germany that was without precedent in post-war Germany. There was an abrupt switch. There had been an alliance governing Germany for a number of years. It was an alliance of the Socialist Party and the Centralist Free Democratic Party. Together they had governed Germany for a number of years. Unexpectedly (as it were “out of the blue”), that

night the Free Democrats decided to pull out of the coalition and the Chancellor of Germany was shocked by losing a vote of confidence in his own Parliament. This was on the evening that began the Feast of Trumpets seven years ago. Fourteen days later on the evening that began the Feast of Tabernacles (seven years ago), a new Chancellor was sworn in—the present Chancellor. A new government, the Christian Democratic Party, which is the official Roman Catholic Party in West Germany, came in.

We think in terms of separation of church and state. We need to understand that is not the situation in Europe. There are, in many cases, officially designated religious parties. The Christian Democratic Party, which exists in Germany, Italy, Spain and several European nations, is the official Roman Catholic political party. It was established as such in the aftermath of World War II. There is not the concept of a division of church and state there. In many cases, there are relationships that exist between church and state.

Very surprisingly, there was a remarkable governmental change that came about. The new government that took office began a series of decisions that have had implications in terms of the events that have occurred with the European Economic Community with the decisions to move forward.

Now, lost again in the events of the time, there was a matter of a few days later (right after the Feast of Tabernacles 1982), just as the band on the stump had been prophetically clipped, Pope John Paul traveled to Spain. He spent ten days traveling through Spain, speaking and conducting mass meetings. On the tenth day of his trip to Spain, he made a speech on the unity of Europe. He made, in that speech, a remarkable statement, and I want to quote it for you.

He said, “I, the Bishop of Rome and pastor of the universal church, issue to you, Europe, a cry. Give life to your roots. Give life to your roots.” A number of remarkable events occurred.

Let's step back. We're seven years downstream from the loosening of the band. Let's step back. Let's look and assess briefly the events that have transpired in Eastern Europe.

Pope John Paul was elected, or chosen, as Pope on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles 1978.

You remember the story? Pope Paul VI died and was succeeded by an Italian prelate who took the name, John Paul I. This man held office for just over one month and, shockingly, died. Everybody was caught by surprise. The College of Cardinals had to come back into session. On

the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles 1978, for the first time in 455 years, a non-Italian was elected as Pope—Pope John Paul II.

A few months later, on the Pentecost weekend of 1979, he made a trip to Poland. Not only was he a non-Italian Pope, he was a Pope from behind the Iron Curtain.

You have to understand that in the aftermath of World War II, when the Russian boot was planted on the nations of Eastern Europe and the attempt was made to wipe out religion, there was a disheartenment and disillusionment that settled. There were attempts to revolt. Poland made its attempt. Hungary made its attempt in 1956; Czechoslovakia, in 1968. At the time, Russian tanks rolled in and put a stop to that foolishness in a matter of a few days.

It took Stalin three and one-half years, from the close of World War II in the fall of 1945 to the spring of 1949, to consolidate his hold on Eastern Europe. By the spring of 1949, the Iron Curtain, as it was called, had rung down on Eastern Europe. By that time, all of the nations of Eastern Europe had communist governments. There was a three and one-half-year period from the close of World War II until Stalin was able to completely impose a communist government on all the nations that were east of the line where his troops had stopped in 1945 in the defeat of Hitler's Reich.

In 1949 the Iron Curtain came down on Eastern Europe. They imposed Soviet communist domination and attempted to wipe out the impact of religion. There was a disheartenment and a disillusionment that had spread. The attitude was, 'It's useless to resist; God has abandoned us.'

You have to understand, to realize, how exciting it was to the people behind the Iron Curtain when a Polish Pope was chosen. That was something that was remarkable, something no one expected. A few months later on the Pentecost weekend of 1979, he returned to Poland. He set in motion events that by the Feast of Tabernacles 1980 (a little over a year later), there was widespread labor unrest. In almost 40 years, the first independent labor union behind the Iron Curtain came to prominence. Solidarity was recognized legally right after the Feast of Tabernacles 1980. Things continued to rock along. There was the threat of Russian intervention and Soviet troops. Events began to unfold on the Last Great Day of 1982—the Last Great Day of the Feast. Just a matter of three weeks after the band on the stump had been clipped, the government of Poland sought to

reimpose complete communist rule. Solidarity was outlawed and Lech Walesa was put in jail. Seven years from that event, Poland had a noncommunist Prime Minister. Seven years! Those seven years have seen events that have begun to unfold, and we are now seeing the crumbling of what has existed behind the Iron Curtain.

Let's understand a little bit of the post-war world. For many centuries in Europe, there were empires. The world was dominated by empires that ruled over many nations, many languages and tongues. This was the common story.

Beginning with the events of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic period (at the end of the 18th century/beginning of the 19th century), the influence of nationalism began to spread, first to Europe and then out to the world. At the beginning of World War I, there were three great multi-national empires that ruled over many different nationalities and language groups in Europe. The Ottoman Empire ruled from Turkey. They ruled over a large grouping of the Middle East and the Balkan parts of Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled over much of Central Europe, and the Russian Empire ruled over a great deal of Central Europe as well as the whole Russian Empire on into Asia.

There were three great multi-national empires that dominated Central and Eastern Europe. The nations of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, portions of Romania, Australia, Hungary and various portions that were spun off to other nations were all created in the aftermath of World War I from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The same thing happened with the breaking of the Ottoman Empire. The Russian Empire changed. The Communist Revolution overthrew the Tsar, but the Empire remained mostly intact. A few nations were pried loose. Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were pried loose, but they only stayed loose for a very short time. By 1939, Stalin made a pact with Hitler. He moved back in and he took them back. The nationalism that was set loose at the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic period began to spread and filter out throughout Europe and elsewhere throughout the 19th century. It flamed up in World War I and even more so in the aftermath of World War II. The flames of nationalism had swept around the world.

We're now seeing that ingredient of nationalism taking root inside Russia, the only multi-national empire left in Europe. There are many, many different language groups and constituent groups conquered over a period of several hundred years

that were forged into the Russian Empire. These people have never looked upon themselves as Russians. They were subject to the Russian Empire, first to the Tsar and later to the Communists, but now the flames of nationalism have been fanned.

We have come to the end of 40 years. We have come to the end of a period of trial and testing. "Forty," as used in the Bible, is significant of "trial and testing." After the establishment of the post-war world, we are now seeing a destabilization take place in Eastern Europe.

Let's go on; let's understand. We looked at Babylon the Great. We saw the image of Daniel 2. We saw the head of gold, the shoulders of silver, the thighs of bronze—Babylon, Persia, Greece. We come down to the Roman Empire symbolized by two legs of iron that culminated in ten toes.

Now, understand something remarkable about the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire is symbolized by two legs. We have always commented on the fact that this is significant because the Roman Empire was split into the Eastern Roman Empire and the Western Roman Empire. Remember your history? It took place in the third century A.D. under Diocletian the Roman Emperor. He split the empire for administrative purposes. A matter of a few decades later, Emperor Constantine, who was the emperor that made Catholicism the official religion of the Roman Empire, made the split final. Rome was made the capital of the Western Empire and the ancient city of Byzantium was made capital of the Eastern Empire. Constantine, being the "humble" sort, changed its name to Constantinople. You'd never guess where he came up with a name like that. The empire was so vast, communication and transportation being what they were, it was impossible to administer from one city. The empire was officially split to an Eastern and a Western branch, the two legs.

When we have followed the story of the revivals of the Roman Empire, we have only followed the revivals of the Western leg. In our studies of prophecy, we have only followed the story of the Western leg. The reason is because that is what is prophetically significant as we are told in Revelation 13 and 17, where we see the Beast pictured in the various revivals.

In Revelation 17, we see that there were seven revivals pictured as seven heads on a beast on which the woman rode. The Catholic Church only dominated the revivals of the Roman Empire that took place in the West. We know the Roman Empire in history as the Holy Roman

Empire or, as it was officially styled during the Middle Ages, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. That was its official title. It took in most of central Europe. It took in Germany, Italy and a vast portion of Europe. The revivals that centered on Rome and were dominated from Rome were the only part that was the successors of the Western branch of the Roman Empire.

What is the obvious implication when we come down to the final resurrection of the empire that is symbolized by the two feet and the ten toes? The obvious implication is that the final resurrection involves putting the empire back together again. You have five toes on each foot and you have one foot attached to each leg. Have you ever seen somebody where they had two feet attached to one leg and no feet attached to the other leg? That would be a rather unusual looking image—an image where you had two feet, but all ten toes are on one foot and no toes on the other foot. No, the obvious implication is that when you get at the end, we have two feet and ten toes. The final ten toes symbolize the final revival of the empire. We have not only the successors that come through the Western Empire, but we see, at the end, the East comes back together.

Many don't recognize that. Just as there was a continuation of the Western Empire, there was also a continuation of the Eastern Empire. Rome fell. The Western Empire came to an end in 476 A.D., one of the important dates you probably had to memorize years ago in World History. The Roman Empire was revived in 554 A.D. There was the Imperial Restoration under Justinian, the restoration under Charlemagne, the restoration under Otto in the 900s, then the Hapsburgs in the late Middle Ages and under Napoleon. Finally, it collapsed in 1814. From the Imperial Restoration, for 1,260 years, we follow through these revivals of the Holy Roman Empire. Mussolini attempted to revive it once more. It was a feeble sixth resurrection that culminated in the Rome-Berlin Axis that plunged the world into World War II. There is a seventh resurrection yet to occur. That seventh resurrection is the two feet, the ten toes.

What happened to the Eastern Empire while all these resurrections centered or dominated by Rome were going on in the West? What was happening in the East? Well, the Eastern Roman Empire, known in history as the Byzantine Empire, continued down through the period of the Middle Ages until 1453 when the Turks conquered Byzantium (or Constantinople). The Turks conquered it, and the Byzantine Empire

(the Eastern Roman Empire) fell just a matter of 40 years before Columbus discovered America. The Eastern Roman Empire, under the rule of Emperor Constantine XIII, fell in 1453.

That's not the end of the story because there was, a matter of several hundred miles away, an obscure little Grand Duke by the name of Ivan III. He ruled over a small territory centered around a village of wooden buildings. The buildings were of logs. It was not a very impressive city and it was not a very impressive state. This little Grand Deutsche (that's what it was termed) was the Grand Deutsche of Moskove. It is the name from which Moscow comes. It was a very small, little state centered around the area of Moscow, ruled by the Grand Duke Ivan III. Ivan III came to the throne in the 1450s. In 1472, he married Sophia who was the daughter of the last emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire. When he married her, he took the title of "Tsar." That's the title the Russian rulers were known as, "Tsar." If you spell it out in English, it looks like "Caesar." Well, it is the Russian word for Caesar.

Moscow was then termed "the third Rome" because they viewed Rome originally, then it was transferred to Constantinople and then to Moscow.

Ivan began a process of conquest that spread out and within a matter of 100 years, gave life to the great Russian state, the Russian Empire. He was the beginning. He became known as Ivan the Great. He began the conquest that began the Russian Empire. He was the first Russian ruler to take the title "Tsar." He viewed himself as the successor to the Byzantine Empire.

Let's go back 1,000 years to 990 A.D. Next year they are going to be celebrating the establishment of Christianity in Russia. Gorbachev is going to Rome to make arrangements for it. The Pope is going to go to Moscow in 1990 to celebrate the 1,000th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity in Russia. Gorbachev is going to Rome to visit the Pope in a matter of a few weeks. Part of what they are going to be arranging is the trip that the Pope is going to make to Russia to commemorate the 1,000th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity in Russia. Christianity was established in Russia in 990 A.D.

There was a split that took place. Sixty-four years later, in 1054 A.D., what was called the "great schism" took place, which was the split between the Roman Catholic Church and the

Greek Orthodox Church. The Greek Orthodox Church was headquartered in Constantinople and the Roman Catholic Church in Rome. The Russians were Orthodox. They followed Constantinople and the Tsar. When the Grand Duke of Moscow took the title "Tsar," he viewed himself as the protector of the Orthodox Church.

In Europe, you had two rulers with the title "Caesar," coming all the way down to the 19th century. In German, they didn't call themselves "emperors." That is the English term. Their term was "Kaiser," the German spelling of "Caesar." There were two rulers in Europe for hundreds and hundreds of years. From the time of Rome, all the way down to the beginning of the 19th century, there were two rulers in Europe who used the title "Caesar" and viewed themselves as the rightful heirs of the throne of Caesar.

The Kaisers, who ruled the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, traced their claim to the title back through all of the various resurrections of the Holy Roman Empire all the way back to Rome. The Caesars, or the Tsars, who ruled in Moscow traced their claim back through Constantinople to the Eastern Empire. You had two legs of the empire that came down. One was a German-Latin dominated Western European leg of the succession of the empire that came down. It was Catholic. That is the leg whose history is foretold in prophecy.

But there was also an Eastern leg, the Slavic leg, the successor of Constantinople and the successor of the Eastern Roman Empire that came down that was personified by the Russian rulers.

We come down and find that what we term Eastern Europe is not really Eastern Europe. It is Middle Europe because Europe goes all the way into Russia. It goes all the way to the Ural Mountains. If you look at a continental map of Europe, the nations we call Eastern Europe—Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia—call themselves Middle Europe. All these nations that we think of as Eastern Europe, that's not the term that they use for themselves. The Germans do not refer to those nations as Eastern Europe but as Middle Europe. Western Europe is the German-Latin end and Eastern Europe is the Russian-Slavic end. Middle Europe is in between, and that is the area that the Russians and the Germans have fought over for hundreds of years.

Most of the time, those nations haven't even existed on the map. They have been ruled either by the Germans or the Russians. That's why it was no new thing when Hitler and Stalin drew

a line in 1939 and all the nations of Eastern Europe disappeared from the map. Hitler took part of them and Stalin took part of them. The Germans and the Russians have been doing this for centuries. You can trace it back. Poland existed on the map for 21 years, from 1918 until 1939. That was the length of its existence as an independent country. The Tsar of Russia and the ruler of Germany had divided it up between themselves way back in the 1700s. That has been the story.

What we're seeing in Eastern Europe is an unfolding. Logically, when you come down, you have the two legs, and you come to the final two feet and to the ten toes. The obvious implication is you have Western toes and Eastern toes—toes that come out of the Western world and toes that come out of the Eastern realm.

Let's look, very briefly, at the book of Ezekiel. We've kind of set the stage for some of this. I am going to try to summarize and conclude very quickly.

In Ezekiel 27, we find the description of the final great world economic combine. Notice what it says.

Ezekiel 27:12, “Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods.” We have explained that the ships of Tarshish refer prophetically to Japan and the Japanese fleet. Verse 25, “The ships of Tarshish....”

Verses 12-13, “Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods.... Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders.” Meshech and Tubal very specifically refers to Russia. Meshech is the name from which Moscow is derived; it refers to the Moscow branch of the Great Russians. Tubal refers to the Tubalsk, the Eastern and Western branches of the Great Russian people. There are three peoples called Russians: what are termed Great Russia, White Russia and Little Russia. The Little Russians are the Ukrainians; the White Russians are the Belarusians (Belorussia); and the Great Russians are Russia itself. There are two branches of Russia centered at Moscow and Tubalsk. We find, “Javan, Tubal and Meshech were your traders.”

Verse 14, “Those from the house of Togarmah [referring to the area of Siberia and East Asia] traded for your wares....”

Verse 15, “The men of Dedan were your traders;”

Verse 17, “Judah and the land of Israel were your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, millet, honey, oil and balm.”

It talks about the Middle Eastern nations. It talks about all those various things.

Verse 25, “The ships of Tarshish were carriers of your merchandise.”

Verses 26-32, it then talks about destruction that is going to come and the wailing for the destruction of the city.

You can read Ezekiel 27 at your leisure. Go through and read Ezekiel 27. Then go back and read Revelation 18. You will find that many of the expressions and descriptive phrases John gives in Revelation 18 of the fall of Babylon the Great are exact quotations that are lifted out of Ezekiel 27.

Babylon the Great is a great world economic combine. It is a world economic order that is going to arise in Europe. What we are seeing in Eastern Europe, the band has been clipped and the tree is beginning to sprout and bud. It is beginning to grow and it is going to make a great tree to fill all the earth. It is going to include all kinds of people in it. It is going to include the nations that we have viewed as behind the Iron Curtain. It is going to include nations all over the world. It will be a great worldwide economic combine. That is the description that is described.

We come to Revelation 18; it talks about, verses 3 and 15, all nations have been made rich. It is seemingly giving the world prosperity.

Then we find that there is a crisis that occurs in the Middle East that threatens the collapse of the worldwide economic order. The United States and Britain are involved in that. There is a rededicated altar that is set up in Israel, a holy place where sacrifices are to be made. There is a crisis that is precipitated in the Middle East that draws in the United States and Britain and threatens a collapse of a worldwide economic order.

Revelation 17:12-13, in response to the crisis, we find, “And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority [KJV, “power”] for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.”

There are going to be ten nations (ten rulers) in Europe, representing both Eastern and Western Europe that will collectively combine and voluntarily relinquish power to a super leader for the purpose of sending in an army to resolve the problem—as they see it—to resolve the threat of peace and prosperity. They move very quickly into the Middle East and occupy the land of Israel, and they move in very swiftly and

occupy the United States and Britain—the Anglo-Saxon nations. The problem with the tenation combine, that very quickly comes together and emerges out of this great worldwide economic order, is that they are composed of iron and clay. These ten nations (rulers) that give their power to the beast are composed of iron and clay.

As you go through Revelation 17 and Revelation 13, there are not only economic implications, but there are religious implications. There is a worldwide unity that appears on the surface. ‘Peace, peace!’ they say. They come together to put a stop to this threat to peace, as they view it. Daniel tells us that these ten nations, these ten toes, these two feet, are composed of iron and clay. They are a mixture that will not stay mixed. It is partly strong and partly brittle. It will not endure. It only lasts for a short time because there is a disillusionment that comes. First, they are disillusioned with the religious leader and that causes these nations to turn on him. That brings things to a crisis. Revelation 9 describes the breakup of this worldwide economic combine. Once again history repeats itself.

Napoleon and the Tsar of Russia were allies, and Napoleon “stabbed him in the back” because he didn’t trust him. Hitler and Stalin were allies, and Hitler “stabbed him in the back” because he didn’t trust him. We are going to find, once again, the West and the East are going to be allies, but the Germans aren’t going to trust the Russians.

Revelation 9:1-12, the first woe describes the Western European attack on the Soviet Union. They will preempt and, once again, do the same thing. They haven’t learned. Hitler didn’t learn from Napoleon, and the future ruler is not going to have learned from Hitler.

We have two woes unleashed. We have the first woe, Western Europe attacking Russia; then, verses 13-21, the counter attack is described as the second woe. This worldwide trade combine breaks into war and into catastrophe that brings us to the point that all life on this planet would be annihilated except for the fact that the God of Heaven is going to set up a Kingdom.

What did Daniel see at the end of Daniel 2? What did Daniel describe? This Stone of supernatural origin smashed the image on its toes. The ten toes and the image were smashed into dust. Daniel said this symbolizes the fact that the God of Heaven is going to set up a Kingdom.

Daniel 2:44-45, “‘And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which

shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this.’”

Genesis 11 and the story of the Tower of Babel are followed by Genesis 12. What is that story? That is the story of a man God called out of Babylon, a man by the name of Abraham. Genesis 11:31, Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldeans. Ur was a neighboring city to Babylon, a part of the land of Babylonia.

Genesis 12:1, God called a man out of Babylon to go out to a land that He would afterward show him.

Verse 4, we’re told that Abraham departed.

We are told in Hebrews 11 that Abraham departed.

Hebrews 11:8-10, “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would afterward receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

Abraham turned his back on the civilization that man sought to build, the civilization that was described and personified in the Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel represented man’s attempt to build and unify a one-world empire and a unified one-world government. Abraham turned his back on that. He left and went to where God showed him because Abraham ‘looked for a city that has foundations, whose maker and builder is God.’

The story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 is followed by the story of Abraham in Genesis 12. There are implications for us today.

Revelation 18:2, referring to Babylon, we are told, “...‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, !...’”

Verse 4, the word for us is, “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’” Just as God called Abraham to come out of Babylon, we, also, are called to come out of and turn our backs on spiritual Babylon.

We are living through the events that are mentioned in the pages of our Bible. The band has been clipped and the tree is sprouting and growing. As we are living through these events in the days, weeks, months and years immediately ahead of us, there is a warning that Jesus Christ gave to His Church in our time and in our day.

Brethren, if we are where we think we are in prophecy, what Jesus said in Matthew 24:42-51 applies very directly to us. The warnings that John gave to the Church in Revelation 3 apply very directly to us. If we are where we think we are in prophecy, these things apply to us.

Revelation 3:6, “He who has an ear, let him hear....”

Matthew 24:42, Jesus said, “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.”

Verse 44, “...be ready....”

Verses 45-48, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming...’”

He says, ‘It’s way off! Oh, it’s a long ways off! I have time to do a lot of things.’ That evil servant shall say, “My master delays his coming.”

Verse 49, the result of thinking that it is way off is, “...[he] begins to eat and drink with the drunkards...”

We find discord and animosity inside the Body. We find a worldly life style. We find they begin to eat and drink with the drunken. They begin to blend in, fit in and be part and parcel of this world.

Verses 50-51, Jesus said, “the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” That’s a very important warning for us today.

Roman 13:11-12, the Apostle Paul writes, “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”

“The night is far spent; the day is at hand.”

Hebrews 10:37-39, the Apostle Paul tells us further, “For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.”

Brethren, it is high time for us to awake out of sleep. The warning to God’s Church in the end time is the tendency to go to sleep, the tendency to go to sleep at the switch. Right before the time comes, the tendency is to begin to drift off to sleep and to be lulled into a spirit of spiritual slumber. Some are going to begin to smite their fellow servants. Others are going to begin to eat and drink with the drunken. That is the warning that is given to our time, our day and our people. That’s the warning that Jesus gave to His disciples.

We are told that it is time to wake up. God warns His people in the end time. He says, ‘WAKE UP! The night is far spent; the day is at hand.’

Revelation 18:4, He warns, “...‘Come out of her, My people,’ Come out of Babylon. Leave the world behind. Don’t drag it into the Church with you. Leave the world behind. We are told to be busily “so doing.”

Matthew 24:46, “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.” Doing the work of God.

“He who is coming will come and will not tarry.”

Brethren, do you realize what it means? The time is literally really going to come when *the air is going to be split with the blast of the trumpet* and the dead in Christ are going to rise up (1 Thessalonians 4:16), *and Jesus Christ is going to return to this earth*. He that shall come will come and will not tarry. That time is really going to come—it really, really is. It’s in the time ahead of us. We are, right now, living in the times that the prophets foresaw. We can’t set the exact day or hour. God has reserved those things into His own hand (Acts 1:7), but he is indeed blind who cannot look at the outline of what the Scriptures say, what we see on the world scene and what we see shaping up. The warning is going out. Are we going to wake up? Are we going to come out of Babylon? Are we going to be prepared, ready and so doing? –Because, “He who is coming will come and will not tarry!”