

# A Vision of a Son of Man

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Okay friends, let's pray. Lord God, creator and ruler of the universe, I offer this message to you with all of our meeting tonight as an act of war in an evil world, a war for the lordship of Jesus and for his honour and glory.

And we pray that by the power of your word, the sword of the spirit, you might strike down false ideas, false temptations and anything that would seek to dethrone the lord Jesus that's in our lives.

Ask in his name. Amen. Friends, it was a catastrophe of epic proportions in the life of God's people.

It was a bloody holocaust in political, racial, religious, spiritual terms. It was the ethnic cleansing of the people of God in the 6th century BC when the king of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, with his powerful and savage army, attacked Jerusalem and her leadership, her kingship, in successive ways over the course of about 10 or 14 years up until 587 BC.

The book of Daniel starts, chapter 1, verse 2 says, The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into Nebuchadnezzar's power as well as some of the vessels of the house of God.

[ 1 : 45 ]     And you can read about this in the Bible book of 2 Kings, at the end of 2 Kings. Jehoiakim is basically toward the end of a string of loser, syncretistic kings of God's people, of Judah, with a few exceptions like Hezekiah and Josiah.

But Jehoiakim ruled as basically a tool of Nebuchadnezzar. He gave himself up after trying to bribe Nebuchadnezzar, trying to sell out. He just gave himself up to Nebuchadnezzar, maybe with the hope that it would spare the temple and the city.

But he went into exile into Babylon with Daniel, with Ezekiel and a few others we might know from the Bible. At that point in Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar basically loots the temple like it's sort of a Maya stocktake sale.

He takes everything, he takes the curtains, 2 Kings tells us. And Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, is the next king. He lasts three months and is taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

He too gives himself up. At that point, Jehoiakim's young brother, who we know as Zedekiah, though that's his sort of Babylonian name, at the age of 21, is given the kingship of God's people in Jerusalem.

[ 3 : 12 ]     Just imagine spending, and he reigns for 12 years, so imagine spending your 20s trying to run God's city and God's nation under the thumb of this pagan, Babylonian, God-hating empire.

What would you do? I mean, would you seek to say, rebel against Babylon and take on this superpower and you're just a pipsqueak in world politics?

Or do you let him trample over you and set up idols around the place and totally blaspheme your God? What would you do?

You're in your 20s, you're running God's people. Well, after 12 years, he just says, I've had it. We're going to fight. And there's a siege in Jerusalem in 587 BC.

And the siege lasts 18 months where Nebuchadnezzar's armies are around Jerusalem. And so there's no food coming in. The water supplies are corrupted.

[ 4 : 17 ] It's a time of famine and pestilence and disease. It's said that they shot a constant stream of poison arrows so you couldn't even go outside into the streets of Jerusalem.

And eventually, one evening at midnight, the Babylonians break in. They find a way in. And the first thing that happens is the Jewish army in the town, they just flee.

And like, they're just wimps and they just escape. And Nebuchadnezzar comes in and this time, not only does he loot the temple, he desecrates the temple and sets up a pagan idol in the temple.

And he gets Zedekiah and Zedekiah's eyes are plucked out and he's taken to Babylon. As two kings puts it though, the Lord expelled them from his presence.

It was a judgment time from God. None of these kings of Judah were willing to turn to God during this time. They were all compromised by other evil worldviews.

[ 5 : 22 ] You know, they would have claimed that they're drawing on political wisdom from other nations or spiritual wisdom, but they were all syncretistic. They were all mingling evil beliefs and practices with biblical religion.

They were sellouts to the world. And when they weren't trying to bribe Nebuchadnezzar, they were trying to bribe Egypt to come and rescue them. Never actually calling on God and the punishment from God was catastrophic.

And so now Daniel lives as one of the exiles in Babylon. He's, rather than kill all the Jewish leaders, they try and assimilate them into the life of Babylon to try and keep them under the thumb, so to speak.

And Daniel's sort of a rogue agent. He's there in the hierarchy of Babylon, but he stands out as one who will only worship God. And we've seen that in the first chapters of the book.

But there are questions that Daniel and God's people would be whispering behind closed doors in Babylon. They'd be asking, does God still care for Israel? Has our covenant come to an end?

[ 6 : 30 ] Is God in control? And Nebuchadnezzar says, his gods have beaten Israel's God. Therefore, Babylonian gods are stronger than Yahweh, the God of the Bible.

Is that true? They would be whispering. What about God's promise to David that his throne would extend forever? It's only lasted 500 years and it's ended with Jehoiakim and Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.

It's gone. You know, the Davidic kingship has disappeared. Has God's promise been broken? They'd be whispering, what is God going to do about these great chaotic forces of pagan empires, one after the other, that just wreak havoc on the world and hate God?

What will he do about that? Has God given up on the world? Has he given up even on humanity as his image bearers? These are the questions that I think the apocalyptic part of Daniel, this second half, this spooky section of Daniel is going to address for us beginning tonight.

You see, the wonderful thing is that while Daniel has had this kind of ministry of interpreting kings' dreams and telling them about God, what God's going to do to them, he's actually, at the same time, concurrently been having his own dreams from God and God has been revealing to Daniel what God's plans are for Israel and for the whole world and what God is going to do to evil human movements.

[ 8 : 01 ] And so the second half of the book is more important than the first half of the book because the first half is just the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar and what will happen to him and Belshazzar, what will happen to him and Darius and so forth.

But the dreams here are the dreams for the whole world and for the fulfillment of the whole Bible. And so we're in the most important part of the book. And you will have noticed in our drawings, the imagery in this part of the book is amazing and fantastic.

I think being a Christian, the Christian life requires a very well exercised use of the imagination. I'm very angry when I've had a Christian parent say this to me.

He said, I'm not going to let my kid read any non-Christian books like Harry Potter and all that. It's actually good for Christians to be reading fantasy and science fiction and exercising imagination because you need imagination to understand God's purposes in things like apocalyptic.

God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and wiser than our ways. And it's not like God can always explain what he's doing in straightforward, linear language.

[ 9 : 12 ] Apocalyptic vision allows God to communicate things that can't just be explained easily. And besides, God doesn't want, in a sense, the bad guys in the world to understand what he's doing.

So apocalyptic is for us, the people of God, to discern what is going to happen in the world. God just can't name people straight because then they'll read it or something.

So apocalyptic is for us to read as God's people, to see his plans. And you know apocalyptic because you've read the book of Revelation and Revelation very much builds on Daniel.

So that's important to see. And Jesus himself was a preacher of apocalyptic in places like Mark 13, the spooky chapter of Mark where Jesus uses that kind of imagery. So let's get into it.

And I'm going to try and explain as much as I've figured out. But what I don't want to do is sort of shirk it. I think some preachers sometimes just speak generally about beasts and don't try and explain it.

[ 10 : 17 ] I want to try and name some names tonight who I think the beasts are. If I don't explain a beast it's because I don't know but I'll explain what I know. I think I know the fourth beast. So in the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed then he wrote down the dream.

I Daniel saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea and the four great beasts came up out of the sea different from one another.

Daniel's dream is actually more of a nightmare. It happens at night a time of evil. It speaks of the four winds of heaven the forces of creation stirring up and drawing forth out of the sea which was in the Hebrew mind the centre of evil and chaos drawing up out of the sea producing four beasts enemies of God enemies of God's people Daniel's dream is going to be a nightmare.

At the end of the chapter Daniel's not going to say that was all that was a good ride. He's going to say here the account ends as for me Daniel my thoughts greatly terrified me.

This is a nightmare. This is not a nice dream. And so as we approach this friends please approach it expecting to be scared expecting to see horrific things because I think we are in Australia out of touch with the persecution that happens to God's people the violent things that are done to the saints.

[ 11 : 53 ] It's so totally sus of Western Christians to publish these top selling books on their visions of heaven and how hunky-dory it would be.

The true vision of reality is here in Daniel it's a nightmare it's not easily digestible while you sip your latte in the Kourong cafe. This is a terror a horror movie.

The nightmare has four beasts an eagle man an eagle who becomes a man a bear a leopard and an unspeakable beast. And later in the chapter it's explained that each of those animals represent a kind of human kingdom but I wouldn't limit it just a kingdom you could also include it as a human empire or a human movement or a philosophy or a world view that captures large groups of people and wins them over against God.

So I don't think each beast is actually a particular person in history so you don't have to look around tonight and play spot the beast it's actually a whole movement against God in history.

Daniel uses images of beasts because he's groping for pictures to describe the horror of his vision. Beasts are important because in God's hierarchy it's actually us Adam Eve humanity who were created to have dominion and rule the earth under God.

[ 13 : 27 ] So God says in Genesis 1 let us make mankind in our image according to our likeness let them have dominion over the fish of the sea over the birds of the air over the cattle over the wild animals the beasts over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Feel the earth God said subdue it have dominion we were made to rule the world unsubmitting to God and so twisted human rule against God sinful rebellious human rule autonomous human rule is depicted as inhuman as beastly the beasts are kind of unclean hybrid evil animals and so they're twisted human rule against God.

The first beast is verse 4 like a lion has eagle's wings and the wings are plucked off and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being and a human mind was given to it and most people think and I think this is right it's referring to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon that he kind of had a glory he had a rule like the kind of lion over the world and then God earlier in Daniel we see cut him down and I think early in Daniel 4 it says when he was cut down his hair became like that of an eagle and then God restores Nebuchadnezzar so he's given some dominion again so he's given human legs and so that's the story of Nebuchadnezzar's reign beast 2 looks like a bear verse 5 it's raised up on one side it's poised for attack it's got three tusks in its mouth so it's got it's well equipped to devour and destroy and it was told by God arise devour many bodies all these beasts are given their power from God they're all given their temporary dominion from God

God is always in control here don't think that a bear is cute bears are ferocious animals they were dreaded in Palestine if you want some examples of this bears are predatory in 1915 in Japan a bear woke up from hibernation a brown bear and went into a Japanese village and just went into houses tearing down walls and killed seven people in their homes or if you read the story of google the story of Timothy Treadwell the bear lover he thought bears were cute and human like and the park ranger said they're not they're ferocious he said no I think they're like they're like you know gorillas in the mist I'm going to be like they're like our relatives and he was he and his girlfriend were slaughtered by bears with the videotape running for the documentary he was making about how cute bears are and the footage praise God it had the lens cap on and the audio they've sworn never to release so bears are predatorial ferocious animals and this bear is a nation that is ferocious in its appetite to devour maybe smaller nations and its power is given from God and then the leopard comes another appears it's a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back and four heads so the leopard this movement spreads fast and it has all this sort of ability to move in any direction because the leopard can run and it has wings that can fly so it's very mobile and it's sort of omniscient or all seeing in that it's got four heads it can it sees everything that's going on and God gives it dominion as well and I'm not sure who to match the bear and the leopard to but I think I know who the fourth beast is or some of the fourth beast up until now the three beasts

Daniel is able to find images to describe these horrible beasts but when he gets to the fourth beast he can't find an animal to match it to it's so horrific and there's no symbol he can use so he has this horror creature and he just talks about its iron teeth and its feet stamping it was different from all the beasts that preceded it and it had ten horns and so this this is a beast that is worse than any other kingdom or movement and maybe it has ten successive leaders or ten sub-kingdoms with the ten horns and this is really important this little horn appears this arrogant little horn and three horns have to kind of die or move out for it to come through and it's this little horn that Daniel is most sort of obsessed with or wants to identify and we will identify him by the end of the sermon the reality

[ 18 : 28 ] Daniel is picturing see apocalyptic shows us what the real world is like what the spiritual realm the real God's reality is like and what is it like we live in a world that's a war zone we live in a world where human kingdoms worldviews and philosophies wage war against God and against the saints and yet their power and their dominion is given by God each beast says its power is only given from God and so we are meant to be rightly hateful and dread and fear human movements that would seek to wear out the saints and make us turn against God but the purpose of the vision is not just to say there's bad stuff out there and we're in a war it's also to show us something of who God is and so then we get to the ancient of days in verse 9 Daniel is taken into the courtroom of heaven itself as I watched thrones were set in place and an ancient one took his throne his clothing was white as snow and the hair of his head like pure wool his throne was fiery flames and its wheels were burning fire it's a vision of God surrounded by holy fire like at Sinai but even more grand a stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence a thousand thousand served him that's a million heavenly servants ten thousand times ten thousand a hundred million stood attending him the court sat in judgment and the books were opened we have a picture of God himself in the heavenly courtroom it's not chaos it's not under threat it's not under siege like Jerusalem

God is in control and he has an army a hundred million ready to do his bidding and in the meantime they worship but they're ready to go out and fight they will do whatever he commands so the answer to Daniel's question the whispered question around the courts of Babylon by the Israelites is God still in control the answer by the vision is yes the veil is lifted and the reality is there is a heavenly court no matter how bad this world gets there's a heavenly court where God is in control and he is holy fire streams out he is righteous and he will achieve his purposes he will bring about a just judgment the court will sit in judgment and the books are open the books of God's judgment Daniel doesn't shirk the fact that we live in a suffering world where Christians are persecuted and killed and hung on and insulted he acknowledges that reality of evil but he says

God is going to judge and he will do something about it the world looks chaotic but God will win God's will will prevail God will judge the kingdoms of the earth not least the blasphemous little horn because while Daniel's seeing this vision of God he hears this little horn still blaspheming against God verse 11 I watched them because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking and as I watched the beast his judgment was put to death and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire so that God will judge God will destroy these evil human powers the little horn especially is first to go and destroyed and verse 12 is important if you want to do the maths or the history on the vision because it says as for the rest of the beasts their dominion was taken away but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time which gives a sense that the other minor beasts which are still a threat kind of actually keep going a little bit and exist concurrently so it might not be that these beasts are consecutive kingdoms because verse 12 talks about after the horn's gone the other beasts kind of hang around and work in tandem more concurrently this is a good vision for Daniel he lives and we live in the chaos of a spiritual war for him it was a physical war as well but for us it's a spiritual war the reality is that God is in control

God will win God will have judgment this is good for Daniel but not all these questions are answered and the big question is when will his human experience of the world and God's reality become the same reality when will God's kingdom arrive in an unstoppable way and that's when God introduces to answer that the vision of a son of man verse 13 as I watched in the night visions I saw one like a human being or literally one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven and he came to the ancient one and was presented before him to him was given dominion and glory and kingship that all people's nations languages should serve him and not these other movements his dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away his kingship is one that will never be destroyed will God's reality in the heavenly courtroom ever be our reality yes because Daniel sees one who was a heavenly being comes on the clouds of heaven but also brings with him our reality because he's also a human he's also a man he is the son of man he's a divine figure on clouds fully God and yet seems to be fully man he comes to the ancient one the ancient of days

God the father presented before him and God the father shares his throne with the ancient of days he shares dominion with him he shares glory with him he shares power with him forever and ever that all the nations of the world that is our reality they will come when the kingdom is consummated and serve the ancient one and the son of man together this one will be like the true Adam Adam was created to rule the world yet fell this being the son of man will rule the world in glory and kingship and he's fully God and fully man for Daniel this would have been an obscure vision or being like well what's that like a human figure and yet he's worshipped he's there with God in the centre of the hundred million Daniel would have had no idea and we would have had no idea except we live after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and so it's actually it's an easy puzzle to solve in the imagery we know that Jesus ascended to the right hand of God we know that Jesus is both fully God and eternal being from heaven from the clouds and we know Jesus is fully man fully God incarnate so we know who the son of man is

[ 25 : 49 ] Daniel 7 is a veiled and yet I think a clear vision of the ascended resurrected Lord Jesus Christ I mean Jesus talked about himself didn't he as a son of man or the son of man and I know at first it could have been just a throwaway line it could have been like you know the guy you know I'm just the guy I'm just the guy you know but as time goes on he uses the language of son of man in more intense ways as he gets closer and closer to his death he starts to play the Daniel 7 card more clearly so in Mark 14 they challenge him are you the Messiah are you the son of the blessed one and he says I am and you will see the son of man seated at the right hand of the power and coming with the clouds of heaven Jesus names and claims Daniel 7 that you will see in his resurrection from the dead in his exaltation from the dead you will see and he will send into heaven

Jesus is the true Adam he is the true human with dominion over God's creation God does not give up on humanity but actually in his own son invests in humanity forever and we do in Jesus and later we'll see we do reign with him the Davidic kingship the Davidic line which lasted 500 years does not end with Zedekiah or Jehoiakim it ends with Jesus of Nazareth in the line of David ascended to the throne whose kingdom lasts forever God keeps his promise to David Jesus is truly divine he is the one who crosses the line from the worshippers to the worshipped in heaven as Revelation says salvation belongs to God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb and to the Lamb and to the Son of Man we live in a world that's at war against God and in particular this is the big thing

I think in Daniel at war against the Son of Man at war against the Lordship of Jesus but we know from 1 Corinthians 15 say that Jesus must reign until he's put all his enemies under his feet so we're living in a war until Jesus is Lord over all the earth and every knee bows whether in salvation or in judgment and confesses that Jesus is Lord Daniel has seen the future he's seen the destruction of the beasts he's seen the Son of Man but he wants to know and I think that we want to know who is the fourth beast who is the little horn and it wasn't enough for Daniel to see that it's destroyed he wants to know and identify so let's go into that very quickly and what we'll do is look at what the little horn does in the second half of the chapter when the angel is explaining the fourth beast and the little horn these are the things that the blasphemous horn will do one he will speak against God and blaspheme so verse 20 has the mouth that spoke arrogantly and verse 25 the mouth speaks words against the most high so the mouth is something that speaks against God secondly the little horn makes war with God's people verse 21 as I looked this horn made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them was winning until the ancient one came thirdly the little horn will be popular and destructive verse 23 the horn will devour the whole earth and trample it down and break it into pieces and fourthly the horn will deceive and undermine

God's people and so verse 25 the horn will wear out the holy ones of the most high and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law I'm going to tell you I think in Daniel's history and we'll see more of this next week in chapter 8 the little horn is predicting a particularly virulent and evil oppressor of Israel from 2nd century BC even worse than Nebuchadnezzar there were successive kingdoms even within Daniel's time of the Persians take over and the Medes take over from Babylon and then there's the Greeks and then the Seleucids come and there is Antiochus Epiphanes the Seleucid king and you can read about him in the extra biblical book of 1 and 2 Maccabees or in the Josephus who wrote a book called The Antiquities of the Jews he basically sacked Jerusalem in the 2nd century

BC so you remember Nehemiah rebuilds the temple well he goes in there he doesn't just loot it he desecrates it he builds a pagan idol on top of the altar in the temple he slaughters a pig and spreads the blood all over the temple he tortures the priests and tries to force them to eat some of this pig and those who don't he cuts off their tongues he destroys every Hebrew Bible that he can find and he tries to create this kind of changed hybrid pagan biblical religion and changes the laws of Israel and so I think and we'll see more of this in chapter 8 where it names some of the history more tightly that the little horn is this blasphemous rabid Antiochus Epiphanes a Seleucid king but I don't want to stop there you see because the book of

[ 31 : 52 ] Revelation actually picks up you know post Jesus post the Seleucids and the Greeks it picks up the same imagery in Revelation 13 and says of not four but one beast who comes out of the sea and devours and deceives the whole earth and I think in Revelation it recycles Daniel's imagery and is actually referring to the Roman Empire with its pagan emperor worship which forced many Christians to be martyred because they would not worship the Roman emperor and so I think Revelation talks about a similar kind of beast referring to the Roman Empire which destroyed and martyred thousands of Christians and thirdly I want to say that both Daniel and Revelation are sufficiently kind of open enough to have a historical referent both in Antiochus

Epiphanes in the second century BC and in the Roman Empire and in the Caesar religion in the first century and also to have a more general referent for any human kingdom or religion or philosophy that attempts to dethrone the son of man and so in a sense Daniel's vision is fulfilled and yet stands today because Revelation picks it up and yet keeps it going post Rome whatever movement that takes over and deceives people I think is part of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation so whether that be the idolatries and distortions of the gospel within Roman Catholicism whether that be the dethroning of Jesus in Islam whether that be the denial of Jesus in atheistic communism which is a beast which has been pretty much destroyed although it is around in some places whether it's the self worship of individual autonomy which we live and breathe in our secular humanistic society whether it's western affluenza and the idolatry of greed which is an idol which is a threat to every one of us a beast that is knocking on our door is in our homes even as we speak whether it's the defiance against

Jesus as the objective word of God by postmodern pluralists whatever human empire that you submit to or you are sucked in by which seeks to either implicitly or explicitly dethrone the son of man anything that marginalizes the lordship of Jesus in your life then that that is part of the army of the beasts there is a war going on between the beasts and the son of man it's a war that extends from the heavenly places down to our kindergartens and everything in between in every season in every time of history that the war is the same God is in control and the beasts the movements will not have power forever the son of man will take away eventually all the beasts and destroy them forever and he will reign forever and friends we will reign with him and that's how Daniel ends 26 then the court shall sit in judgment and his dominion shall be taken away that is the little horn to be consumed and totally destroyed the kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to not just the son of man but given to the holy ones of the most high given to you and me their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom and all dominion shall serve and obey them we will reign with

Jesus if we are faithful to the end friends what is your present experience of being a Christian like it should be a war zone it should be a zealous seeking for the fame and glory and honour of the son of man in every sphere of life do you know think of your own say field of study or work or education do you know how are you watching how the lordship of Jesus is being undermined in your field and sphere of influence who are those around you that are seeking to wear out your faith or undermine your solid commitment to the lord Jesus does your entertainment encourage sin against the lord Jesus or does it trivialize your faith in him are we as a church in war mode let me read you this quote



I think this is a great quote about how weak the church is today in Australia and America this author says as this battle moves us all along killing and maiming crushing and roaring much of contemporary christianity fights with bumper stickers and self esteem seminars as the enemy smiles and schemes to ravage our children and decapitate our churches we try to play down our differences with our attackers and use their institutions as models for our own as they mock Christ to his face we learn to relax take a joke and create a more entertaining worship atmosphere the only thing worse than being cut to death in the middle of a war is having it happen without realising it the only thing worse than being cut to death in the middle of a war is having it happen without realising it christian brothers and sisters i summons you to fight this war with me hear paul's great words from 2 corinthians for though we live in the world we do not wage war as the world does the weapons we fight with and we fight are not the weapons of the world on the contrary they have divine power to demolish strongholds or even beasts we demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of god we take captive every thought and make it obedient to christ daniel's vision tells us the future what is your future friends that depends on whether you belong to the son of man that depends on which side of this war you are on if you do not belong to the lord jesus then your future is with that of the fourth beast and the little horn to be punished and to be destroyed by god or as daniel 12 puts it your future is shame and everlasting contempt apathy toward the reign of god as our creator is an expression of loyalty to the beasts indifference toward the lord jesus is faithful service to the beasts jesus said whoever is not with me is against me whoever is not with me is against me whoever does not gather with me scatters or friends if you do belong to the lord jesus if you do trust and worship the son of man alone without compromise without concession without corruption from other philosophies and kingdoms then your future is to reign with him if you would bend the knee to his throne if you would trust in him as lord and savior if you would rely on his gracious death for your sins on the cross then he will accept you into service in his army and in his kingdom daniel's apocalyptic vision reveals for us the black and white nature of the universe and just as with any war the key questions are who are you aligned with who do you suffer for who will you live for and who will you die for the son of man is calling you today to be faithful to be loyal to fight to persevere and to rule with him forever so friends let's pray now to him and commit ourselves to this fight our lord jesus we thank you that already we see the result of this war against you we see your victory over death and over satan we see your victory over sin through your death and resurrection lord jesus make us jealous for your glory and honor and fame make us

[ 41 : 00 ] warlike and looking out for the movements that would deceive us that would undermine your reign in the world that movements that hate you lord jesus i pray that you would have mercy on all of us and help us to put our trust in you fully i pray that none here will be aligned with the beast but lord god we will put ourselves and bend the knee to your son the lord jesus god our father we pray that you would give us strength for this fight and help us to fight not just in our own lives but as a church together and give us the victory and we look forward and we want to reign with you forever amen you