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Overview

This seminar session, held on a Sunday, was the fifth day of a multi-day international Christian seminar focused on the theme of **« Knowing the Lord »** (*Poznanie Pana*), guided by the guiding verse from Isaiah: *« Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. »* The session brought together youth and guests from multiple countries, including Poland, the United States, Austria, Australia, and Brazil. The day included worship, group discussions, a practical reflection exercise, a detailed Bible study on the Book of Daniel (Chapters 7–9), and a devotional study on Ecclesiastes 12.

Key Concepts or Theories

- **Knowing God through prayer:** Regular, sincere prayer as the foundation of a Christian's relationship with God, modeled by Daniel's thrice-daily prayer practice
- **Understanding vs. memorizing:** The distinction between merely hearing or memorizing Scripture and truly internalizing it so that it bears fruit in one's life
- **Practical application of truth:** The importance of translating spiritual knowledge into concrete personal, congregational, and global action
- **Prophetic time periods in Daniel:** The 2,520-year prophecy (Babylon to World War I), the 1,260/1,290/1,335-year prophecies, the 490-year (70 weeks) prophecy pointing to Christ's first advent, and the 2,300-year prophecy
- **The Book of Daniel as church history:** The first six chapters of Daniel as a picture of the Gospel Age church and its three enemies: the dragon (political power), the beast (papacy), and the false prophet/image of the beast (Church

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of England)
- **Ecclesiastes 12 – Youth and old age:** Solomon's poetic description of aging as a call to remember God and act faithfully while one is still young and capable

Important Questions Raised

- How important is prayer in the daily life of a Christian, and why must it come from our own initiative?
- What is the difference between *understanding* (*rozumienie*) and merely *grasping* (*pojęcie*) Scripture?
- What practical changes can young people make now, at a personal, congregational, and global level, based on what they have learned?
- Why does Daniel Chapter 8 use different animals (ram and goat) to represent the same empires as Chapter 7 (bear and leopard)?
- Who is Darius the Mede, and how does the Hebrew grammar of Daniel 6:28 clarify his identity as Cyrus the Persian?
- What does the « daily sacrifice » represent, and how did papacy replace it with the Mass?
- What are the three possible starting points for the 2,300-year prophecy, and what events do they each point to?
- How does Ecclesiastes 12 speak to young people today about the urgency of dedicating their best years to God?

Key Takeaways and Summary of Learning Objectives

- Prayer is indispensable to the Christian life; it must be regular, sincere, and self-initiated, as modeled by Daniel
- True understanding of Scripture means it changes behavior and produces fruit, not merely that it is memorized or recited
- The guiding theme of the seminar — *« Come, let us reason together »* — calls

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believers to active, thoughtful engagement with God’s Word
- The first six chapters of Daniel depict the Gospel Age church and its three persecutors: pagan/political Rome (dragon), papacy (beast), and the Church of England (false prophet/image of the beast)
- Daniel Chapter 8 introduces the Medo-Persian Empire (ram), the Grecian Empire (goat), and the Roman Empire (little horn), with the 2,300-year prophecy pointing to approximately 1843 AD
- Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian are the same person, confirmed by Hebrew grammar and historical evidence from Donald Wiseman and the British Museum
- The « daily sacrifice » represents the perpetual ransom sacrifice of Jesus; papacy replaced it with the Mass (transubstantiation), corrupting the true Christian faith
- The 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9 begins in 458 BC and points precisely to the first advent of Christ, ending at Pentecost in 33 AD
- Ecclesiastes 12 urges young people to dedicate their energy, memory, and capacity to God *now*, before the physical and mental limitations of old age arrive
- Practical initiatives proposed by participants include: online international discussion groups, using AI to spread biblical truth, exchanging contact information across borders, deeper personal Bible study, and sharing testimonies of witnessing

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Topic 1: The Role of Prayer and Understanding Scripture

The session opened with a devotional reflection on the *Manna* text for the day, centered on Psalm 95:6 — *« Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. »* Robert led a discussion on the indispensability of regular prayer in the Christian life, drawing on the example of Daniel, who prayed three times daily without fear of persecution. Participants were invited to share their thoughts on why prayer matters.

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Marek observed that prayer is essential to building a relationship with God and deepening one's knowledge of Him. Another participant emphasized the scriptural call to *« pray without ceasing »* and noted that prayer should be the first response to any difficulty. A participant speaking in English reflected that humanity is built with an innate need to commune with a higher being — a need that, for new creatures in Christ, must be directed toward the true God continually.

Robert then transitioned to the seminar's central theme: the difference between *understanding* and merely *grasping* Scripture. He cited Jesus' parable of the sower, noting that only the seed sown in good ground — the one who *hears and understands* — bears fruit. He distinguished between *pojąć* (to grasp, to take hold of) and *zrozumieć* (to truly understand, to process and internalize), arguing that genuine understanding is defined by its fruit in one's life.

Relevant Q&A

Question (participant): Why should we pray if God already knows all our thoughts?

Robert: The example of Adam and Eve is instructive. When they sinned, God asked, « Where are you? » — not because He did not know, but because Adam had hidden himself. The initiative for contact must come from our side. Prayer is not about informing God; it is about maintaining the relationship.

Topic 2: Practical Reflection Exercise — « What Good Must I Do? »

Robert introduced a structured group reflection exercise based on the question posed by the rich young ruler in Matthew 19: *« What good must I do to have eternal life? »* Participants had spent 30 minutes in small groups (two Polish-speaking, two English-speaking) discussing practical applications of the seminar's teachings at three levels: personal, congregational, and global.

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Upon reconvening, groups shared their reflections on colored cards, which were posted on a board. Key proposals included:

- **Personal level:** Asking God specifically for understanding (following Solomon's example); writing down a question every time one reads the Bible; investing more time and energy in Bible study; making personal reflections after each study session; choosing a biblical character each month to study as a model of God's principles
- **Congregational level:** Discussing lectures with people outside the community to broaden perspectives; helping those who do wrong (following the example of the Apostle Paul); dedicating more time to Bible study as young people with energy and capacity; adding a Q&A period after lectures; observing one another's spiritual growth over two-week cycles and offering practical encouragement
- **Global level:** Creating an online international discussion group (via Zoom) for studying difficult questions, inviting knowledgeable brothers as guests; sharing testimonies of witnessing the gospel internationally; exchanging phone numbers and contact details with international brethren to maintain ongoing relationships; creating a shared contact board for those who wish to stay in touch; training AI models with biblical truth by uploading lecture transcripts and asking AI questions about key doctrines (restitution, hope for Israel, etc.) so that AI responses reflect accurate biblical teaching; monthly choir practice sessions with Mateusz; contacting established platforms such as *Christian Questions* to host global conferences

Robert highlighted the initiative of using AI to spread biblical truth, noting that young people are uniquely positioned to train AI models by uploading lecture transcripts and engaging AI with questions about core doctrines.

Relevant Q&A

Question (participant): How can we make our international connections last beyond the seminar?

Robert: The simplest and most practical step is to exchange phone numbers

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directly with people you have met here. Do not wait for a formal group to be organized — if you have spoken with someone, exchange contact details and maintain that relationship after the seminar ends.

Question (participant): How can AI be used to spread biblical truth?

Robert: If lecture transcripts are processed into PDF documents and uploaded to the internet, AI models will read and learn from them. When someone in the future asks AI about restitution or the hope for Israel, the model will have been educated by our materials. Young people who understand technology — like Mateusz — can lead this initiative.

Topic 3: Bible Study — Daniel Chapters 7–9 (led by Brother David)

Brother David led an in-depth study of the Book of Daniel, continuing from the previous day's study of Chapter 7 (led by Brother Bill Dutka). The session covered Chapters 8 and 9 in detail.

Daniel Chapter 8 — The Ram, the Goat, and the 2,300 Years

Brother David reviewed the structure of Daniel: the first six chapters depict the Gospel Age church and its three enemies (dragon, beast, false prophet), while the last six chapters contain four prophetic visions given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. Chapter 8 presents three world empires — Medo-Persia (ram), Greece (goat), and Rome (little horn) — without Babylon, since the vision was given near the end of the Babylonian Empire.

The ram's two horns represent the Medes and the Persians, with the taller horn (Persia) rising later. Brother David addressed the historical puzzle of Darius the Mede, arguing — based on the work of Donald Wiseman of the British Museum and the Hebrew grammar of Daniel 6:28 — that Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian are the same person. The Hebrew conjunction *waw* in that verse can mean « even »

rather than « and, » just as in 1 Chronicles 5:26, where Pul and Tiglath-Pileser are two names for the same Assyrian king.

The goat represents Greece, with its single great horn being Alexander the Great, who died in his early 30s. After his death, four kingdoms arose from the four winds of heaven. The « little horn » of verse 9 was clarified (with a participant's help during the lunch break) to have emerged not from one of the four Greek kingdoms, but from the west — i.e., Rome — which then spread eastward and conquered the others.

The discussion of the « daily sacrifice » (verses 11–12) prompted a rich exchange. Brother Todd explained that the daily sacrifice represents the perpetual ransom sacrifice of Jesus, which papacy replaced with the Mass and the doctrine of transubstantiation, turning salvation into a commercial transaction. Brother Samuel noted that Lutherans also retained a form of transubstantiation, which led to a discussion of the historical dispute between Martin Luther and Zwingli on this point.

The 2,300-year prophecy (verses 13–14) was examined in detail. Brother David presented three possible starting points:

1. **458 BC** (beginning of the 70 weeks, during the Medo-Persian Empire) → **1843 AD** (the climax of William Miller's Adventist movement, preparing the way for the truth movement after 1874)
2. **334 BC** (Battle of Granicus, Alexander the Great's first victory) → **1967 AD** (reunification of Jerusalem under Israel)
3. **387 BC** (sacking of Rome by the Gauls, beginning of Rome's expansion) → **1914 AD** (beginning of World War I and the breakup of the old Roman-era kingdoms)

Brother David expressed a preference for the traditional view (458 BC → 1843 AD) while acknowledging that all three may be intentional, since Daniel 8 does not explicitly state where the 2,300 years begin.

Daniel Chapter 9 — The 70-Week Prophecy

Chapter 9 opens with Daniel's prayer of confession on behalf of Israel,

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acknowledging the nation’s sin and asking when the 70-year Babylonian captivity would end. Gabriel’s response — the 70-week prophecy — was presented as God’s answer pointing to a far greater restoration: the first advent of Christ.

The 70 weeks (490 years) begin in 458 BC with the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The six blessings of verse 24 (finish transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, anoint the Most Holy) all point to Christ’s atoning work. The 69 weeks (483 years) lead to Messiah; the final week (7 years, 26–33 AD) covers John the Baptist’s ministry, Jesus’ baptism (mid-week, when the old sacrificial system was superseded), and the death of Christ and Pentecost.

Brother David also shared a personal observation: 458 BC falls exactly at the midpoint of God’s 7,000-year plan (if Adam’s creation was in 3958 BC and the Millennial Kingdom begins in 2043 AD), connecting to Habakkuk 3:2 — *« In the midst of the years, revive your work. »*

Relevant Q&A

Question (Brother Samuel): What precisely is the « daily sacrifice, » and how did the Mass replace it?

Brother Todd: The daily sacrifice represents the perpetual ransom sacrifice of Jesus, which opened the way to God for all who come through Him. Papacy replaced this with the Mass and transubstantiation — the doctrine that the bread literally becomes Christ’s body — turning it into a revenue-generating mechanism and implying that Jesus must be sacrificed repeatedly, thereby negating the sufficiency of His one sacrifice.

Question (participant): Why does Daniel Chapter 8 use a ram and a goat, while Chapter 7 uses a bear and a leopard for the same empires?

Brother David / Brother Bill: Each animal highlights different attributes of the same empire. The bear (Chapter 7) emphasizes the crushing, dragging power of Medo-Persia’s large army; the ram (Chapter 8) may emphasize its covenantal role in

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God’s purposes. Brother Todd added that the ram and goat are covenantal animals from the Tabernacle sacrificial system, which may explain their use in a chapter dealing with God’s holy purposes.

Question (participant): Is Daniel 8:10 — « it cast down some of the host of heaven » — referring to spiritual persecution?

Brother David: Yes. The « host of heaven » symbolizes spiritual authority. When Rome became papacy, it claimed spiritual dominion over the heavens as well as earthly power. Casting down the host of heaven refers to the persecution of faithful Christians by papal Rome.

Question (participant): Does Daniel 8:25 — « he shall be broken without hand » — refer to what happened in 1799 with Napoleon?

Brother David: The phrase means that God, not human agency, determined the end of papacy’s dominance. The 1,260-year period was set from above. Napoleon was not even in full power when the Pope died as a prisoner — that occurred under the French Revolutionary Directory, three months before Napoleon assumed absolute control. The spiritual force that ended papacy’s dominance was divine, even though it worked through human agencies.

Topic 4: Devotional Study — Ecclesiastes 12 (led by Robert / Brother Dariusz)

The final session of the day was a devotional study of Ecclesiastes 11:6–12:6, led by Robert (with Brother Dariusz). The central verse was Ecclesiastes 12:1: « *Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them.*' »

Robert guided participants through Solomon’s poetic description of aging (Ecclesiastes 12:2–6), in which physical decline is depicted through imagery: the darkening of sun, moon, and stars (loss of vitality and joy); the trembling of the

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guardians of the house (hands); the bowing of the strong men (legs); the ceasing of the grinding women (teeth); the dimming of those looking through windows (eyes); the closing of doors (social withdrawal); the fading of the sound of the mill (voice and hearing); the fear of heights and dangers in the road (anxiety in old age); the blossoming of the almond tree (white hair); the dragging grasshopper (loss of energy); the breaking of the silver cord and the shattering of the golden bowl (death).

Participants were invited to reflect on what these images mean and what practical lesson they carry for young people today. Key insights shared included:

- A sister over 70 testified that a lifelong personal relationship with God makes old age peaceful and even joyful, despite physical limitations
- Esther connected the almond tree (symbolizing watchfulness and God's faithfulness to His promises) with Psalm 103:15 and the importance of living with awareness of life's brevity
- A participant cited Psalm 92:12–14: *« The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree… they shall bring forth fruit in old age »* — arguing that early dedication to God ensures fruitfulness even in old age
- Jakub emphasized that young people are at their peak capacity now and should offer their best to God, not defer service until retirement
- Marek noted that the brain learns most effectively in youth, making it the optimal time to invest in Bible study and spiritual formation
- Robert closed by distributing roses to the young participants, symbolizing the « flower of youth » (*kwiat wieku*), and urging them to offer their best to God now, while they are in full bloom

The study concluded with Solomon's final admonition (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14): *« Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment. »*

Relevant Q&A

Question (participant): What does the blossoming almond tree in Ecclesiastes 12:5 symbolize?

Esther: The almond tree in Hebrew culture symbolizes watchfulness and God being awake and faithful to His promises. Even as the body decays (the dragging grasshopper, the fading desire), the hope that God is watching and will fulfill His promises grows stronger as we age — if our desire is with the Lord.

Question (participant): What is the practical lesson of Ecclesiastes 12 for young people today?

Robert / participants: The lesson is to act now. Just as Joseph stored grain during the years of plenty to survive the famine, young people should store up spiritual knowledge, character, and relationship with God while they have the energy, memory, and capacity to do so. The verse does not say « remember God when you are old » — it says « remember your Creator in the days of your youth. »

Actionable Next Steps / Assignments

- Continue the study of Daniel with Chapters 10, 11, and 12 in the next session (Brother David will lead)
- Participants with remaining reflection cards are invited to add them to the board during breaks or the following day
- Those interested in the AI initiative are encouraged to connect with Mateusz to learn how to upload lecture transcripts and train AI models with biblical content
- Participants are encouraged to exchange contact details (phone numbers, emails) with international brethren before the seminar ends
- Those interested in the online international discussion group (Zoom) are encouraged to organize with the initiating participants
- The brother from Brazil is specifically encouraged to create a Zoom forum for sharing witnessing experiences globally
- A monthly extra choir practice session with Mateusz was proposed and noted for follow-up
- Summaries and transcripts of all seminar lectures (in Polish and English) are available via a QR code link shared during the session

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Supplemental Resources

- **QR code link shared during the session:** Contains summaries and full transcripts of all seminar lectures in Polish and English — available for participants and brethren who could not attend
- **Donald Wiseman,** *The Chronicles of Chaldean Kings* (or related work on Babylonian history): Referenced by Brother David as the source for identifying Darius the Mede as Cyrus the Persian and for the date 539 BC for the fall of Babylon
- **Edwin Thiel,** *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*: Referenced as the basis for the date 966 BC for Solomon's temple and the resulting chronological framework used throughout the Daniel study
- **Jim Parkinson's research on ancient coinage:** Referenced as evidence that the animals on ancient coins of Medo-Persia and Greece match the animals used in Daniel's prophecies
- **Reprints article by a Jewish brother in the truth (specific reprint number not recalled):** Explains the expression « between the two evenings » in the Old Testament, identifying it as 3:00 PM — the time of the evening sacrifice and the hour of Jesus' death
- **Josephus,** *Antiquities of the Jews*: Referenced in connection with Alexander the Great's visit to Jerusalem and his blessing of the city, as described in Zechariah 9
- **Zechariah 9:** Discussed as a prophecy fulfilled first by Alexander the Great (verses 1–8) and ultimately by Jesus (verse 9)
- **Habakkuk 3:2:** *« In the midst of the years, revive your work »* — cited as a possible scriptural confirmation that 458 BC (the beginning of the 70 weeks) falls at the exact midpoint of God's 7,000-year plan
- **Psalm 92:12–14:** *« The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree... they shall bring forth fruit in old age »* — cited during the Ecclesiastes study
- **Psalm 103:15:** *« The life of mortals is like grass »* — cited by Esther during the Ecclesiastes study
- **Proverbs 22:6:** *« Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old*

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he will not depart from it » — cited during the Ecclesiastes discussion

- **2 Timothy 2:22 and surrounding verses:** Referenced in connection with the warnings to young people in Ecclesiastes 9–10
- **Philippians 4:8:** « *Whatever is true, whatever is noble…* » — cited as a guide for the thought life of young people