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Overview

This transcript documents a multi-session Christian seminar and choir gathering, held over what appears to be its final day. The event brought together an international, multilingual community of believers — with participants and speakers communicating in Polish, English, Ukrainian, German, French, and other languages, supported by live translation. The sessions covered three main thematic areas: a devotional discussion on compassion (współczucie) led by Filip, an in-depth prophetic Bible study on the Book of Daniel led by Brother David, and a closing evening session on trust in God led by David Sutrick. The gathering concluded with logistical announcements regarding the transition to an upcoming convention.

Key Concepts or Theories

- **Compassion (Współczucie):** Defined as the shared feeling of another's suffering, rooted in love and leading to merciful action — not merely sympathy, but an impulse to help.
- **The Ship Metaphor:** A Christian in the world is like a ship on the ocean — safe as long as the world's influence does not seep in; identity and faith must be preserved amid worldly contact.
- **The Book of Daniel — Prophetic Structure:** Daniel is divided into two overlapping halves (chapters 1–6 and 7–12), with chapters 7–12 containing Daniel's own visions, including three major time prophecies (1,260; 1,290; and 1,335 days/years).
- **Michael Standing Up (Daniel 12:1):** Interpreted as Jesus Christ taking the throne at his Second Advent (1874), initiating the harvest, the time of trouble,

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the restoration of Israel, and the resurrection of the sleeping saints.
- **The Abomination of Desolation:** Has multiple fulfillments — literally in Antiochus Epiphanes, historically in the Roman armies (70 AD), and spiritually in the Roman Catholic papacy.
- **The 21-Day/Year Parallel:** Daniel's 21 days of fasting (Daniel 10) are seen as prophetically connected to the 21 years (536–515 BC) during which the temple's construction was halted and then completed.
- **Trust in God vs. Trust in Man:** God's faithfulness is perfect and unchanging; human trust always carries the risk of disappointment. True trust in God involves humility, surrender of personal control, and reliance on His Word.

Important Questions Raised

- What does it mean to truly have compassion, and is Christian compassion unconditional?
- Should we give money to beggars, knowing some may deceive us? Does awareness of deception free us from the obligation to show compassion?
- If we do not deeply love someone, does that excuse us from showing them compassion?
- Why did the Levite and the priest pass by the wounded man in the parable of the Good Samaritan?
- What does the temple of God represent spiritually, and what is the significance of the 21-year gap in its construction?
- When does the thousand-year reign of Christ begin — at the opening of the harvest (1874) or after the church is complete?
- Is it beneficial for Christians to know a specific date for the completion of the church?
- What are the main obstacles that prevent people from placing their trust in God?
- Is it possible that Queen Esther was the mother of Artaxerxes?

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Key Takeaways and Summary of Learning Objectives

- Compassion is more than sympathy — it is a spirit-moved emotion that stirs the whole inner being toward merciful action, as demonstrated by Jesus throughout the Gospels.
- Christians are called to be « neighbors » to others, not merely to identify who their neighbor is — echoing the lesson of the Good Samaritan.
- Jesus showed compassion especially to those who recognized their own need and came to Him — suggesting that compassion is most fully expressed when the recipient understands their condition.
- The Book of Daniel is divided into two structural halves; chapters 7–12 contain Daniel’s own visions, introduced by an angelic messenger (likely Gabriel) in chapter 10.
- The 21 days of Daniel’s fasting correspond prophetically to the 21 years (536–515 BC) during which the temple’s construction was interrupted — itself a type of the Gospel Age church’s development being hindered by spiritual enemies.
- Daniel 12:1 identifies three events at the return of Christ (Michael standing up): a time of trouble unprecedented in history, the restoration of Israel, and the resurrection of the sleeping saints.
- The three time prophecies of Daniel 12 (1,260; 1,290; and 1,335 years) all begin at 539 AD and point to 1799, 1829, and 1874 respectively — dates significant in the history of the church and the truth movement.
- The thousand-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20) is understood to be future — beginning after the church is complete — while Christ’s reign and authority commenced at his return in 1874.
- Trust in God is absolute and unchanging, unlike human trust, which is always subject to failure; the three main obstacles to trusting God are pride and self-sufficiency, love of money and material security, and attachment to the world.
- Developing trust in God requires humility, consistent engagement with Scripture, and the conscious choice to depend on God despite fear or uncertainty.

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Topic 1: Devotional Discussion — The Manna Text and the Ship Metaphor

The morning session opened with singing, prayer, and a reading from the Manna devotional text, which used the metaphor of a Christian being like a ship on the ocean: safe as long as the waters of worldly influence do not enter. Robert facilitated a multilingual discussion on this image, drawing contributions from participants including Timi, Ludzia, Estera, and Dariusz.

The group reflected on how worldly influence can seep in gradually — through relationships, media, and personal devices — and how the danger lies not in living among people, but in losing one's identity and faith in the process. Sister Estera offered a nuanced reflection: just as a small amount of water on a ship may seem harmless at first, it progressively undermines buoyancy. The group agreed that Christians must live in the world without being of it, as expressed in Jesus' prayer in John 17:14–16.

Robert summarized by noting that the Apostle Paul acknowledged that complete isolation from the world is impossible and undesirable; the call is to maintain distinctiveness while engaging in witness. The term « world » in the Bible, particularly in 1 John, refers to the lusts of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life — the entry points through which the adversary seeks access.

Relevant Q&A

Question (Timi): Is it not worthwhile to have fellowship with people of other denominations, since we can learn from everyone?

Response (Robert): There is a difference between having contact with others for the purpose of witness and sharing the Gospel, and adopting their beliefs or tolerating worldly influences within the congregation. Fellowship for the purpose of proclamation is encouraged; compromising the standards of truth within the

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assembly is not.

Question (Estera): Does the ship metaphor mean we should avoid all contact with the world?

Response (Robert): No — Paul himself says that to avoid all contact with sinners, we would have to leave the world entirely. The point is not isolation but preservation of identity and vigilance against gradual compromise.

Topic 2: Session on Compassion — What Is Współczucie?

Filip led an interactive session on the theme of compassion (współczucie), framing it as a question-and-answer discussion rather than a lecture. He opened by asking participants to define compassion, and the group offered a range of perspectives across multiple languages.

One participant noted that the Polish word itself — współczucie — literally means « feeling together, » pointing to its relational and empathetic core. Another cited the example of Jesus weeping at the tomb of Łazarz (John 11:33–36), even knowing He would raise him, as the supreme illustration of compassion rooted in deep love. Sister Anika (German-speaking) distinguished between two German words for compassion — Mitgefühl (feeling with) and Mitleid (suffering with) — and emphasized that true compassion must lead to action, not merely feeling.

Filip introduced the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37) and the healing of the two blind men (Matthew 20:29–34) as biblical models. He drew attention to a key observation: in both cases, those who received compassion understood their own need and actively sought help. This led to the central question of whether compassion should be unconditional.

Filip also shared a psychological experiment conducted at an American university, in which seminary students who had spent a week studying the Good Samaritan

parable walked past actors posing as people in need — focused on winning a prize. The experiment illustrated how even deep theoretical knowledge of compassion can fail to translate into action when personal goals take precedence.

The session concluded with a reading from 1 Peter 3:8–9, calling believers to be « sympathetic, brotherly, merciful, and humble, » and with Filip's reflection that compassion carries a cost — as the Samaritan's did — but that this cost is part of the Christian calling.

Relevant Q&A

Question (participant from Romania): When beggars have deceived me in the past, how should I respond when someone asks me for money?

Response (Samuel/group): Rather than giving money, which may be misused, it is better to offer food or drink directly. There is also organized begging, where individuals are exploited by groups. Awareness of this does not remove the obligation to show compassion, but it may shape how that compassion is expressed.

Question (Filip): Does knowing that someone may deceive us free us from the obligation to show compassion?

Response (group): No. Compassion is not contingent on the worthiness of the recipient. One participant shared a personal encounter with a homeless man, noting that the man's mindset was so shaped by survival that deception, if it occurred, would reflect his broken condition rather than a moral failing to be judged.

Question (Filip): If I do not deeply love a person — a stranger, a beggar — does that excuse me from showing compassion?

Response (Ania/group): No. The aspiration to be part of the future church — to serve as ministers of reconciliation — requires developing a care for all people now. We must learn to love, even when that love is not yet deep or natural.

Question (Janek): Is it possible to show compassion to someone who does not recognize their own need?

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Response (Filip): The biblical examples suggest that Jesus' compassion was most fully expressed toward those who came to Him, who recognized their condition. The Pharisees, who believed they had no need of a physician, did not receive that same compassion in the sense of shared suffering. This suggests that compassion, while universal in its orientation, finds its fullest expression when the recipient is open to receiving it.

Topic 3: Bible Study — The Book of Daniel, Chapters 10–12

Brother David led a detailed study of Daniel chapters 10 through 12, covering the historical and prophetic context of Daniel's final vision, the structure of Daniel 11, and the three time prophecies of Daniel 12.

Daniel Chapter 10 — Introduction to the Final Vision

The chapter is set in the third year of Cyrus, when Daniel was fasting and mourning for 21 days. Brother David explained that the reason for Daniel's distress was the interruption of the temple's reconstruction by Israel's enemies (Ezra 4). The temple had been stopped in 536 BC and was not completed until 515 BC — a period of 21 years. The 21 days of Daniel's fasting were seen as prophetically connected to this 21-year delay, and further, to the approximately 21 centuries of the Gospel Age during which the spiritual temple (the church) has been under development and opposition.

An angelic messenger (identified as likely Gabriel) appeared to Daniel and explained that he had been delayed 21 days by the « Prince of Persia » — understood as a fallen angelic being supporting the kingdoms of this world, not a human ruler. Michael (identified as Jesus Christ) intervened to free Gabriel. This was seen as a type of the opposition the church has faced throughout the Gospel Age from spiritual enemies working under Satan's direction.

Daniel Chapter 11 — A Complex Prophetic History

Brother David outlined the structure of Daniel 11, noting that the first half (verses 1–20) traces the history of the Ptolemaic (King of the South) and Seleucid (King of the North) empires following Alexander the Great's death with remarkable precision — so precise that critics have historically argued the text must have been written after the fact. He affirmed the authenticity of Daniel's authorship, citing archaeological evidence such as the rediscovery of the name Belshazzar.

Verse 21 introduces Antiochus Epiphanes, the « vile person » who desecrated the Jerusalem temple and persecuted the Jewish people — the subject of the Books of Maccabees. Verse 31 introduces the « abomination of desolation, » which Brother David argued has three fulfillments: literally in Antiochus Epiphanes, historically in the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem (66–70 AD, as referenced in Matthew 24:15–16), and spiritually in the Roman Catholic papacy (the « man of lawlessness » of 2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Verses 36–39 describe the lawless king (papacy) who does according to his own will. Verse 40 marks « the time of the end, » interpreted as beginning with the Reformation (when the Ottoman Empire's pressure on Christendom gave Martin Luther room to act) and culminating in the French Revolution, when Napoleon's forces took the Pope prisoner (1799). Verses 41–45 were applied to Napoleon's military campaigns through Egypt and the land of Israel.

Daniel Chapter 12 — The Return of Christ and Three Time Prophecies

Daniel 12:1 was the focal point of the final session. Three events are associated with Michael (Jesus) standing up:

1. **A time of trouble** such as never was before — fulfilled beginning with World War I (1914) and continuing through the present.
2. **The restoration of Israel** — beginning with Benjamin Disraeli's influence in 1874 and the Berlin Congress of 1878, culminating in Israel's nationhood in 1948 (70 years after 1878, echoing Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy).
3. **The resurrection of the sleeping saints** — those written in the Book of Life, raised at the Lord's return.

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The three time prophecies were summarized:

- **1,260 years** (time, times, and half a time): 539–1799 AD — the period of papal dominance.
- **1,290 years**: 539–1829 AD — the year of the Albury Park prophetic conferences, where six conclusions about God's plan were reached, identified as the « first feeding of Elijah. »
- **1,335 years**: 539–1874 AD — the beginning of the harvest, the return of Christ, and the « blessed » waiting described in Daniel 12:12.

Daniel 12:4 — « many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased » — was interpreted as referring primarily to increased biblical understanding at the time of the end, not merely technological advancement.

The session concluded with the observation that the church today has access to a « feast of truth » greater than any previous generation, fulfilling Revelation 3:20 (the Lord knocking at the door of the seventh church period). Brother David emphasized that regardless of specific dates, the evidence of the harvest — the understanding of prophecy, the restoration of Israel, the time of trouble — confirms that the church is living at the end of the age.

Relevant Q&A

Question (participant): If the temple began to be built in year two (Ezra 3:8), does that make the gap 22 years rather than 21?

Response (Brother David): This is a valid and intelligent observation. The 21-year count begins from Daniel 10:1 (the third year of Cyrus, 536 BC) to the temple's completion in 515 BC. The year-two start of construction is acknowledged as a complication without a fully satisfying answer, and Brother David invited further research.

Question (participant): Do you think God would allow us to know an exact year for the completion of the church?

Response (Brother David): Yes, he believes the Bible does provide such an

indication, and that understanding it is valuable — not to encourage complacency, but to motivate earnest service in the remaining time. He noted that Brother Russell himself acknowledged uncertainty on this point, and that the full answer only became clear as history unfolded after Russell's death.

Question (Brother Bill): Does Revelation 20 (Satan bound for 1,000 years) not suggest the thousand-year reign has already begun?

Response (Brother David): The thousand-year reign is future — it begins after the church is complete and the ransom is applied. Christ's reign and authority commenced at his return (1874), but the priestly work of reconciling mankind to God has not yet begun. Brother Russell himself never applied Revelation 20:4 to 1874, and this distinction is important.

Question (participant): Is the « man of sin » in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 better translated as « man of lawlessness »?

Response (Brother David): Yes — the NIV and at least one Polish translation render it « man of lawlessness, » which is the more accurate manuscript reading. This connects Paul's reference directly to Daniel 11:36 (« the king shall do according to his will »), identifying the Roman Catholic papacy as the fulfillment.

Question (Esther): Is it possible that Queen Esther was the mother of Artaxerxes?

Response (Brother David): This is an interesting question he has wondered about himself. His tentative view is that Artaxerxes was more likely the son of Vashti, Xerxes' first wife, rather than Esther. He invited further research on the matter.

Topic 4: Evening Session — Trust in God

David Sutrick (from France) led the final evening session on the theme of trust in God, structured as a presentation with interactive discussion. He introduced himself as belonging to the ecclesia of La Morlait, near Paris, which has met primarily via

Zoom since the COVID period.

The session was organized around four questions: the definition of trust, the main obstacles to trusting God, the three essential biblical foundations for developing trust, and practical advice for staying focused on God.

Definition of Trust

Human trust involves relying on someone while accepting the risk of being disappointed, deceived, or hurt. Trust in God, by contrast, is absolute — resting on a character that is perfect, faithful, and unchanging. Key scriptures cited included Proverbs 3:5–6 (« Trust in Yahweh with all your heart »), Malachi 3:6 (God does not change), James 1:17 (every good gift comes from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variation), Numbers 23:19 (God is not a man that He should lie), and 2 Timothy 2:13 (He remains faithful even when we are faithless). Jesus in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39) was presented as the supreme example of trust — surrendering personal will to the Father’s.

Main Obstacles to Trusting God

Three primary obstacles were identified:

1. **Pride and self-sufficiency** — the belief that one can succeed without God, illustrated by the builders of Babel (Genesis 11) and the Pharisee in Luke 18:9–14.
2. **Love of money and material security** — wealth as a false refuge, addressed in 1 Timothy 6:6–10 and Proverbs 3:13–14.
3. **Attachment to the world** — illustrated by Demas (2 Timothy 4:10) and warned against in 1 John 2:15–17.

Sister Anika raised an additional and important point: for those struggling with depression or low self-worth, the obstacle to trusting God is not pride but a lack of self-acceptance and the experience of being loved. She called on the community to respond to such individuals with compassion and encouragement rather than simply exhorting them to « read the Bible and trust God. »

Biblical Examples of Lack of Trust

Participants contributed numerous examples: King Saul offering sacrifices without waiting for Samuel; Abraham lying about Sarah out of fear; Sarah giving Hagar to Abraham; Gideon requiring signs before battle; Peter walking on water but sinking when he looked at the waves; David feigning madness before Abimelech; Adam and Eve; the ten spies of Israel; Aaron making the golden calf; Jonah; Thomas; and the people of Israel in the wilderness.

Relevant Q&A

Question (David Sutrick): What is the fundamental difference between trust in human beings and trust in God?

Response (participant): Human beings fail; God never does. Trust in people always carries the risk of disappointment, while trust in God rests on a faithfulness that is perfect and unchanging.

Question (David Sutrick): What are the main obstacles that prevent people from trusting God?

Response (participants): Not knowing God or His plan; failing to personally appropriate the promises of Scripture; living in material comfort that removes felt dependence on God; pride and self-sufficiency; love of money; and attachment to the world.

Question (David Sutrick): What is the greatest example of human pride in the Old Testament that had consequences for all mankind?

Response (participant): The builders of Babel, who sought to reach heaven by their own strength, resulting in the confusion of languages.

Actionable Next Steps / Assignments

- Participants staying in rooms used for the seminar are asked to check out by breakfast (8:30 AM the following morning), ideally arriving already packed, and to return room keys promptly so that hotel staff can prepare rooms for convention guests.
- Those sleeping on mattresses are asked to tidy their sleeping areas and surrounding common spaces (corridors, kitchens) before departing.
- All participants are asked to vacate the main hall promptly after the final session, taking all personal belongings, to allow the room to be reconfigured for the convention.
- The convention office will open approximately at 10:00–11:00 AM the following morning; convention badges, keys, and room assignments will be distributed there.
- Lunch the following day is at 12:00 PM; a choir concert is at 2:30 PM, followed by the opening of the convention program.
- Baggage may be stored in the main hall throughout the convention day; hotels have been informed of late check-in and no one needs to leave sessions early.
- Brother David offered to send detailed PDF files analyzing Daniel chapter 11 verse by verse to anyone who emails him.
- Anyone who finds a text in which Brother Russell applied Revelation 20:4 to 1874 is asked to bring it to Brother David’s attention.
- Anyone who finds reliable information about whether Queen Esther was the mother of Artaxerxes is asked to advise Brother David.

Supplemental Resources

- **Book of Maccabees** — Referenced in connection with Antiochus Epiphanes and his persecution of the Jewish people; available in some Bible editions (not part of the Protestant canon).
- **Young’s Literal Translation** — Recommended for checking nuanced word meanings (e.g., « one of » vs. « first of » in Daniel 10:13); available on Bible

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Hub online.

- **Bible Hub (**http://www.biblehub.com) — Recommended by Brother David as a resource for comparing multiple Bible translations and checking original language meanings.
- **Isaac Newton's writings on Daniel and Revelation** — Referenced as an important early work on prophetic interpretation; Brother David owns a copy and considers it valuable.
- **Brother Russell's Volume 3** — Contains analysis of Daniel chapter 11 (from verse 17 onward) and the time prophecies of Daniel 12; recommended for further study.
- **Brother Russell's Volume 4** — Contains the « Man of Sin » chapter with detailed analysis of the Roman Catholic papacy as the abomination of desolation.
- **Reprint articles by Brother Russell** — Several were cited during the study, including Reprint 2739, in which Russell acknowledges uncertainty about when the thousand-year reign begins; available in the reprints collection.
- **PDF files on Daniel chapter 11** — Detailed verse-by-verse analysis available upon request by emailing Brother David directly.