On Sunday evening Pastor Tony Hutter brought us to Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. We were reminded of how God has a plan, and how that plan was presented throughout the centuries to the nation of Israel by the prophets. … To benefit properly, we must study these promises from the perspective of those to whom they were given, i.e. the Jewish people.

That plan is purposed to find its fulfilment in Christ … from its introduction in Gen. 3:15 to its conclusion in Rev. 22:21. In the Old Testament, all the promises pertaining to His first coming were literally fulfilled when Jesus came to this earth two thousand years ago. Peter highlighted this using the prophecies of Joel and David.

We were also reminded that even though this world is in the grip of Satan, God’s eternal plan for the ages is presently working in accordance with the Divine will. That means, of course, that the story, - His-story, - is not yet completed, for it is ongoing. Satan is undoubtedly playing his part to the full, - he has fooled himself into believing he is in control because he is too vain to acknowledge God’s sovereignty and pre-eminence … Nonetheless, in the fulfilment of God’s purpose, this world is in the grip of Satan. Peter describes him as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8). Paul also recorded the devil’s opposition as he explained to the Thessalonian believers, 1 Thess. 2:18 we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. … He is continuing in the same work as he was doing when the Lord asked him (before the afflictions that came upon Job), Job 1:7 Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. … There is coming a day, though, - God’s Word promises, - when he will be cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years … He will be shut up, a seal will bind him and render him powerless, … and he will be unable and incapable of deceiving the nations during that time of his binding.
Yes, the prophecies pertaining to His first coming have occurred in the manner by which they were presented. All has not yet been fulfilled though. There are promises in both the Old and the New Testaments that are still awaiting fulfilment. Some have taken place, while some are yet to be accomplished … and just as God gave clear indications concerning Christ’s first coming, He has also given clear indications as to His Second coming.

Horatius Bonar wrote (Prophetical Landmarks, p.72), “This is one of the advantages we possess in studying the visions of Daniel … In Daniel, for instance, we have the vision of the great image, in which we have concise views of four great monarchies which were successively to appear on the earth, from the times of the prophet to the setting up of the kingdom of the Son of man.”

We shall study the visions of Daniel … Is it edifying to be looking into the future? Is it good for us to study prophecy, and what the Lord has to say in His Word concerning the latter days? … Here is how Jesus instructs us … In the midst of increasingly harrowing times of unbelief and apostasy … when it looks as if the people of God are in danger of being wiped out, Jesus commanded, Lk. 21:28 when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

So let’s begin by taking a brief overview of the Prophecy of Daniel in preparation for spending time in the study of the visions he received from God.