

if you choose to do so, but it is very important to keep that principle in mind. Don't be dogmatic where it is not stated <sup>with</sup> absolutely <sup>clarity</sup> clearly.

Now let's look at ch. 8. Chapter 8 is not one of the best known chapters in Daniel. It is certainly not one of the most obscure by any means. You might say it is one of the clearest in Daniel. *But the reason that...* is that it does not have much that deals with events thousands of years after Daniel's time. It deals more with events in the next few centuries. These next few centuries are extremely important to Daniel and they are important in every one of the chapters of the prophecy that Daniel gives. So to understand and know about these centuries is tremendously helpful in understanding what it deals with in things that are yet *still* future. So we look at ch. 8 and we find in the first place that it is clearly dated. "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto Daniel." And he says "And I saw in a vision and it came to pass when I saw I was in Shushan Susa in a palace in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai." Now this is dated then in the reign of Belshazzar. Now just to remind you of the precise situation, there was --- We have on the map up here -- you can see the region of Mesopotamia which was so important in ancient times. It was called Mesopotamia because it was the region between the two rivers -- the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. In the 2nd millennium B. C. this city <sup>of</sup> Ninevah here became a great city. And this area around here *of Assyria (?)* became a center from which armies went out all over this direction and conquered different areas and it took the Northern Kingdom of Israel and carried them away captive. But they did not conquer this area ever here except at very near the <sup>end</sup> of the Assyrian Empire they conquered a part of it for a brief time. Then this grt. Assyrian Empire that bulks very large in much of the OT was succeeded by an empire that had its headquarters here in Babylon. The people that spoke the same language as the Assyrians though a different dialect, differing about like the average speech in ~~England~~ <sup>England</sup> differs from the average speech in this country. But the writing system differs very materially. And these Babylonians starting in 604 B.C., they overcame this region in 606, I believe it was, they destroyed ~~it~~ them, and about 605 or 604 they get control of all this area.