

# Daniel

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## Chapter Ten

This chapter presents some insights into the spiritual world as well as some prophecy from Daniel's perspective. Some of the prophecy has been classified as having double reverence meaning that some was fulfilled in our history and some to be fulfilled in our future such as the historical fulfillment in Antiochus Epiphanes also giving a future fulfillment in the Antichrist. We need to be very careful about making such double meanings unless they are clearly justified by the scriptural context. I am convinced that the predictions end with the coming of the Kingdom of God when Jesus was ascended into heaven to rule forever.

Similarly we need to be very careful with elaborations on our knowledge of angels unless properly allowed. There is a great realm of reality that is hidden from our view today but we know that God was involved with Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the creation all that exists: *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. (17) He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.* (Col 1:16-17) In the heavens and on the earth are the visible and the invisible creations of God. Satan has his armies organized according to ranks similarly as to how we organize our troops. The thrones would include the archangels like Michael and Gabriel and other special envoys. The dominions would be the cherubim and seraphim. The word "principalities" is sometimes translated as rulers and would be those angels that are the angel hosts. The word "authorities" is sometimes translated as powers and seem to include the lower ranks of angels who are demons seeking to possess humans. Angels seem to be able to exercise a free will since some followed Satan in his rebellion against God. I always recommend the book by Billy Graham entitled "Angels".

Paul also told us about the warfare we have with the invisible: *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.* (Eph 6:12) Paul then tells us to put on the full armor of God (Eph 6:13-18). Probably Satan's largest department is religion for he is very much in favor of it and encourages humans to organize religion along his rules and that is one very good reason for us to carefully watch what creeps into Christianity as we have seen over the last 2000 years how he has perturbed it away from its God standard. We have many comments from Paul about Satan's attacks on the church such as 2 Cor 11:3-4; 13-15; 26 and how people will listen to myths rather than facts (2 Tim 4:3-4). Then we have the history of the church with so many deviations from Biblical standards including what is happening today.

### Dan 10:1-3

*In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he*

*understood the message and had an understanding of the vision. (2) In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. (3) I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.*

This must be the last vision recorded by Daniel since it was in the third year of the reign of Cyrus. The last three chapters should be treated as pertaining to one vision. This chapter explains how the vision came to Daniel. Cyrus began his rule of Persia in 558 B.C. but this would have not been meaningful to Daniel who was in Babylon and Nabonidus was ruling it at this time. The rule of Gubaru (Darius the Mede) would have lasted until 538 or 537 B.C. so the third year of Cyrus over Babylon would be about 535 B.C. a few years before the death of Daniel. Daniel was probably born around 620 B.C. so he would have been 90 by 530 BC. He begins by mentioning himself in the third person and even giving his Babylonian name. This first verse probably then served as an official introduction to the last three chapters of the book. Remember that there were no chapters and line numbers until the early 1500's. In verse two he changes to first person and gives only his Hebrew name so this would be the first "sentence" of this section. We are not told the nature of the vision and only know that it was about a great war as he states that it involved great conflict. Some translators have verse one reading: *the thing was true, but the time appointed was long.* It is this improper translation that leads some to postulate that what follows went far beyond Daniel's time but that is not likely. Since other visions were by an angel, we can assume that this was presented to him by an angel also. Daniel does not say that the vision was explained to him but only that he understood its meaning.

Apparently the vision involved some severe testing of the Jewish people as Daniel went into a state of mourning for three weeks. This was a mini-fast as he abstained from meat, wine, or any spicy foods and he did not use any of his usual grooming methods of anointing with oil. Forty-two thousand Jews had already returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and Joshua and they had reinstated public worship at the temple site. Ezra wrote of this in his first few chapters such as:

- Ezra 1:1-4 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying: (2) "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. (3) 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem. (4) 'Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"*
- Ezra 2:64 *The whole assembly numbered 42,360,*

Two full years had passed since these people went home (note Ezra reads that the proclamation of Cyrus was in his first year) and Daniel may have heard about the stopping of construction of the temple and was also troubled by this news:

- Ezra 3:8 *Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began the work and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the LORD.*
- Ezra 4:4-5 *Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, (5) and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.*
- Ezra 4:24 *Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

#### **Dan 10:4-6**

*On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, (5) I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. (6) His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.*

This date would have been ten days after Passover (24<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, or April 24) when he received his answer from God by an angel. This is perhaps the most complete description of an angel in the Bible. Some commentators, notably J. Vernon McGee, believe this is the transfiguration of Christ before being seen by Moses or Elijah. He actually thinks this is the vision of Christ in His post incarnation as the priestly Intercessor, Judge, and Shepherd of His sheep. This interpretation has some credibility but is not generally accepted. Moses represents the Law and Elijah represented the prophets and some think this vision is of the One who is the representative of all of God. The correlation of the vision to John is certainly suggestive of this conclusion, but I am hesitant to make it. There is no doubt that John saw Jesus as the Judge for he fell at His feet and worshipped Him and people are not allowed to worship angels:

*Rev 1:12-16 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; (13) and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. (14) His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. (15) His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. (16) In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.*

Being dressed in linen may be the same appearance of the angels to Samson's mother (Judges 13:6), the angels seen at Christ's tomb (Luke 24:4), and the angels who spoke to the Eleven at the ascension (Acts 1:10). The angel had a belt or sash of the finest gold and his body looked like a luminous color that would resemble a golden shade of beryl. His face looked like lightning and his eyes were like flaming torches evidently like Christ appeared to John: *His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.* (Rev 1:14). His arms and legs were evidently exposed and they gleamed like polished bronze so they had a

yellow appearance. The expression of his voice was like used to denote a large crowd of people, a torrential rain, or even chariot wheels. Another description is also similar: *I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;* (Rev 10:1).

#### **Dan 10:7-11**

*Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. (8) So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. (9) But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. (10) Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. (11) He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.*

The other people with Daniel did not see the angel but they sensed his presence and were so terrified that they ran away to hide. There was a similar event that occurred to Paul: *The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.* (Acts 9:7) Daniel was then left alone in the presence of this awesome angel and his strength left him as his skin turned pale as his blood rushed to keep his organs functioning. Others are recorded as being left alone with God such as Moses at the burning bush (Exo 3:2), Elijah at the Brook Cherith (1 Kings 17:5-9), and Paul in the desert for two years of being taught by God (2 Cor 12: 1-4). He could still hear the sound of his words but that sound made him fall into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. The angel then reached out and touched him and pulled him so that he was trembling on his hands and knees in a position bowing to the angel. Daniel then heard some words that the angel told him to understand those words and to stand upright before him. People are not to worship an angel:

*Rev 22:8-9 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. (9) But he \*said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."*

Daniel then stood before the angel although he was still trembling. If this were actually Jesus rather than an angel Daniel would not have been commanded to stand before him. However McGee thinks that Jesus had left him and then an angel appeared to comfort him. McGee thinks the angel is Gabriel.

#### **Dan 10:12-14**

*Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. (13) "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. (14) "Now I*

*have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."*

We see here why Daniel is favored by God in that he has always been setting his heart on humbling himself before God and seeking to understand the words of God. Because of his persistence in prayer, the angel was sent by God to give Daniel understanding. We are then given some insight into the spiritual warfare going on in the world. Much remains hidden from us (Deut 29:29). The angel had been sent by God three weeks prior to his reaching Daniel. The delay was because of the interference of one of the satanic agents involved in keeping Persia active. This angel required assistance to keep his assignment from God so Michael, one of the chief princes of God and the main angel to Israel (Dan 12:1; Rev 12:7; Jude 9), came to help the angel. Thanks to the help of Michael, this angel was able to come to Daniel. God is sovereign over all forces in the universe but He sometimes allows humans and angels to have some interference although they cannot exceed God's limits:

- Job 1:12 *Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.*
- Job 2:6 *So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."*

Satan is a powerful being but he is not God. Only God is omnipresent and omnipotent. We know of only six individual who were tempted by Satan himself: Eve, Job, Jesus Christ, Judas, Peter, and Ananias. He is like a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8) and he is subtle like a serpent (2 Cor 11:3). We are not to fear him but we should respect his power and that of his demons and put on spiritual armor (Eph 6:10-18). We read in 1 Kings 22 more insight into the spiritual warfare surrounding us. This event involves a true prophet of God, Micaiah, and the four hundred false prophets of King Ahab. There was a consult in heaven around God's throne concerning how Ahab could be lured into attacking Ramoth Gilead and dying there. One spirit then said that he would be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets. This happened and led to the death of Ahab. Also in the next to last book of the Minor Prophets there is a powerful scene taking place in heaven (Zach 3:1-10). Joshua is standing before God's altar with Satan there to accuse him. Joshua is clothed in filthy clothes that symbolize the sins of his nation. God rebukes Satan and the angel with Joshua commands that his filthy clothes be taken off and he is given clean clothes showing the imputation of righteousness from God to him. These visions should help all Christians better understand that we fight a spiritual warfare and so must have the Holy Spirit working with us or we will fail.

This episode also teaches us the importance of continuing to persist in prayer. Jesus taught his disciples to always pray and never give up (Luke 18:1). The angel tells Daniel that he will give him an understanding of what will happen to his people in the latter days, indicating the end events of the vision but not necessarily the End Times. The angel tells Daniel to be certain to understand that what he is about to tell him pertains to days in the future. The vision also pertains to the Israelites since he is told that it pertains to his people. There is no justification to interpreting this as what will happen in the Great Tribulation as some interpreters insist. He is told that the events will occur in his future.

### **Dan 10:15-19**

*When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. (16) And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. (17) "For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me." (18) Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. (19) He said, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."*

Daniel was now standing but could not look the angel in the face as he looked at the ground and could not speak. Either the original angel or another angel then touched his lips so that Daniel could speak and he explained to the angel that he still had no strength. He complained that a person such as he could not speak to a person such as the angel. The angel then touched him again and he was strengthened so that he could continue to interact with the angel. The angel then again referred to Daniel as a person who was held in high esteem by God and was told to have peace and to take the courage to act accordingly. This interaction gave Daniel the ability to continue to interact with the angel. Our weakness has to be recognized before God can strengthen us to be able to carry on His tasks: *And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. (2 Cor 12:9)*

#### **Dan 10:20-21**

*Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. (21) "However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.*

The angel then asked Daniel if he understood why he had come to him. I am not sure why he asked this of Daniel unless he is trying to get Daniel to focus on the situation and not on his discomfort. He informs Daniel that he must return to fight against the evil forces in Persia and he tells Daniel that the prince of Greece is about to come, perhaps to Persia. God had plans for Greece (Dan 11:2-4) and Satan wanted to interfere with that plan also. He then tells Daniel that he will inform him of the truth written in a book of truth to which the angel has access. He further tells Daniel that nobody but Michael your prince is available to help this angel. Perhaps Michael has been specifically assigned to be the prince to help Daniel individually as well as the nation Israel.