

Daniel 7-12 – The Visions... (4 of 7) – May 12, 2024

A Terrifying Vision & A Heavenly Messenger

Daniel 10:1-21

Chapters 10-12 forms a climatic conclusion to the book of Daniel. These 3 chapters make up Daniel's final vision and here in chapter 10 we'll see that God is the ruling King of Heaven and Earth. In the words of Daniel 4:17 (ESV) – *...the Most High rules the kingdom of men...*

1. Daniel sees an awe inspiring and fearful vision! (see Daniel 10:1, 1-9)

Daniel was mourning and when we put this together with verse 12, we see he was fasting and humbling himself before God as part of a focused period of prayer. (see Daniel 10:12)

Why was Daniel praying so intensely? We don't know all that led to his mourning because we're not told all the details but things were happening around the world during the 3rd year of Cyrus that give us some idea.

Daniel was clearly concerned about the things of God and the plight of His people and it's likely that he was mourning over the city of Jerusalem. Now that Cyrus and the Persians were in power a remnant had returned from Babylon to Jerusalem but that didn't mean things were going well. (see Nehemiah 1:4, 2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

The exile was over and a group of the Jewish exiles had returned from Babylon to their homeland and begun reconstruction on the Temple which was glorious news but reconstruction had been halted because of problems with difficult neighbors. (see Ezra 4:4)

Rebuilding in Jerusalem had started quickly but reports would have been filtering back to Babylon with discouraging news and it may be that Daniel had not returned personally because he would have been between 80-90 years old but his heart is with those who returned. And negative reports of stopped progress were deeply troubling and prompted deep and focused prayer.

Daniel saw a vision of a man. What he saw was both awesome and fearful. (see Daniel 10:4-5)

Daniel was the only one who saw this because his companions were overcome with fear and fled, hiding themselves. Daniel was left alone to gaze at this great vision and he was so overwhelmed that he had no strength and his appearance changed (his face turned pale) and then he fell into a deep sleep with his face to the ground.

Either this man whom Daniel saw was an angel or possibly there are 2 distinct heavenly beings here in chapter 10, one being God Himself and the other an angel. That would be God Himself in verses 4-6 and an angel coming to explain the vision to Daniel. Opinions differ, if you ask me, I'd lean toward seeing one heavenly being who is an angel in this passage and I'd point out that other angelic appearances in the Bible are both awesome and fearful. (see Revelation 1:13-15, Judges 13:6, Luke 24:4, Acts 1:10)

2. The heavenly messenger communicates with Daniel and strengthens him... (see Daniel 10:10-21)

Remember at this point Daniel is terrified. In verses 10-11 the angel touches him and partially restores his strength and allows him first to come up to his hands and knees and then calls him to stand to his feet through he was still trembling.

Don't miss this – *The angel's coming was in answer to Daniel's prayers!* The angel (probably Gabriel) came in direct response to verses 2-3 when Daniel earnestly humbled himself before God and cried out to Him in prayer. This picture of answered prayer is encouraging and it should encourage us in our prayers.

The curtain is pulled back and we're given a glimpse into the spiritual world and the war that rages there. There's a spiritual battle that actively rages all around us all the time.

This gives a glimpse of what's going on behind the scenes, we're told that the prince of the kingdom of Persia resisted Daniel's angelic messenger for 21 days. Then after a 21-day struggle another angel, Michael showed up and offered assistance. Fighting together the 2

angels overcame their adversary and the message was able to be delivered to Daniel – a message about the future.

Michael is a powerful warrior angel (an archangel). He's a leader of other angels in the battle. (see Daniel 12:1, Jude 9, Revelation 12:7)

After hearing that the vision concerns things to come Daniel was left speechless (understandably so) until his lips were touched by an angel. (see Daniel 10:16)

This probably leaves us thinking – WOW! Let's take a few minutes to bridge the centuries.

3. All this shows us that there is much more happening than what first meets our eyes...

There's an expression – *There's more than first meets the eyes! Have you used this expression before?* There is more going on than we see at first glance. If we quickly glance at the surface of things, we miss what is happening just beneath the surface. And more often than not there's much more going on than appears on the surface – *There's more than first meets the eyes!*

1st – *This teaches us a powerful lesson about perseverance in prayer.*

All of this is a specific answer to persistent prayer and remember that the answer did not arrive right away because there's more than meets the eyes.

What happens here should encourage us to keep on praying to not to give up – we should find ourselves encouraged to live out this call to prayer. (see Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:17)

God answers prayer. Don't give up because things don't seem to be happening right away, way more is happening than we can ever know.

2nd – *This demonstrates to us that God knows and controls the future.* (see Daniel 10:14)

There is comfort in the midst of uncertainty here. I'm convinced that at the heart of many (or most) of our fears is wondering about an uncertain future – peace is found in trusting God because He knows and controls the future. *We are not in control, God is!* (see Isaiah 46:9-10)

3rd – *This shows us the spiritual battle that all of us are engaged in.*

We all need to be honest with ourselves – *We're living in a spiritual warzone. Angels and demons are as real.* God's arch-enemy, Satan who is himself a fallen angel is real.

Satan and his evil forces were at work when at the time of Esther (in the Persian Empire) Haman put in motion a murderous plot against the Jews. He was at work behind the resistance to rebuilding the Temple and he was undoubtedly behind the evil actions of Antiochus Euphones who attempted to destroy the Jewish faith in the 2nd century before Christ.

Not all spiritual power is good. There is a spiritual battle raging behind the events that we see in our world. The Bible is clear that we live in a war zone. (see Ephesians 6:10-12)

Ignoring the war zone that we live in is deadly because a battle is raging all around us and ignoring this is perilous. Satan seeks to deceive and destroy! We need to be prepared with the armor of God and we need to be ready to fight with the Word of God and prayer! On the other hand, we need to avoid being fearful. Jesus has won! Don't be scared but don't deny it either. (see 1 John 4:4)