

Daniel 10 – Daniel’s Persistent Prayer

Chapters 10, 11 & 12 take place at the same time, 536 B.C., under the rule of Cyrus, two years after he gave the decree to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem (see Ezra & Nehemiah). Daniel was approximately 85 years old at this time. I imagine he was sad he could not go back to Jerusalem and see the temple being rebuilt, etc. I think God gave Daniel these visions as a way to comfort and encourage this faithful man.

Read Daniel 10

Vs 1 What did Daniel receive? A message (means a *word*; by implication, a *spoken matter or thing*) from God. We’ll see the details of this message in Chapter 11, which describes a time of great persecution and testing for the people of Israel. What are the 4 characteristics of this message? It is true, it will happen in the future at a time foreknown by God (the wording implies it will be a *time of warfare*), he understood (*to discern*) the word and had understanding of the vision (*something seen*).

Vs 2 – 3 What was Daniel doing during this time? He was mourning for 3 full weeks (21 days), and as part of this mourning, ate no pleasant food, no meat (*flesh*), drank no wine and did not anoint himself (*smear oil on himself*). This practice served multiple purposes: it soothed and moisturized the skin, protected it from harsh weather, and was often combined with perfumes to combat body odor. In ancient Near Eastern culture, anointing with oil was a common daily ritual, similar to using lotion or deodorant today. Why do you think he was mourning? The Scripture doesn’t say. It could be because of the messages he was receiving. It could be because he did not go with the other Jews to Jerusalem, or maybe because he heard Ezra faced severe opposition in rebuilding the temple.

Vs 4 – 6 In the first month (spring), Daniel was on the side of the Tigris river. What did he see (this is the vision he was referring to in vs 1)? A certain (*one*) man (*individual*) clothed in linen. Commentators are divided over the identity of this certain man. Some say this is Jesus, noting that the description is remarkably like what John saw in Revelation 1:12-16. Others think he is an unnamed angel of high rank, noting that Jesus would not need the assistance of Michael, mentioned in Daniel 10:13. We do know that Ezekiel saw angelic figures clothed in linen (Ezekiel 9:2). What other details do we have about how he looked? He was wearing a gold belt. Gold of Uphaz refers to a highly prized and pure form of gold mentioned in two passages of the Bible: Jeremiah 10:9 and Daniel 10:5. It is described as fine, refined gold used in the crafting of sacred objects and garments, symbolizing exceptional quality, divine splendor, and spiritual purity. The term "to look like beryl" generally refers to the distinctive appearance of its crystals: clear or translucent, with a glassy appearance. His face was like lightening (*flashing*). His eyes were like torches of fire. Arms and feet were bronze (brass). Bronze/brass represents divine judgment. What did this individual sound like? Many voices, like a crowd or multitude.

Vs 7 Was he alone when he saw this vision? No! Did anyone else see it? No! How did everyone else react? They were terrified! They ran and hid because they were so afraid. This shows that there was something supernatural about this vision that could be sensed.

Vs 8 – 9 What was the result of the actions of everyone else? Daniel was alone. How did Daniel react? No strength remained in him, he became weak. The word frailty suggests a death-like paleness, combined with a grotesque wrenching of facial features. When he hears the voice, he is slain in the spirit. This is a type of paralysis where you can’t move but can still hear. His face was toward the ground, which gives the appearance of humility.

Vs 10 What happens next? The individual touched him. He went from laying with his face on the ground to his hands and knees. The touch made his knees and hands tremble.

Vs 11 What did the individual say? Don’t be afraid, I have been sent to you. Did Daniel need to be comforted? Yes, he was weak and trembling in fear. Notice, once again, Daniel hears he is greatly loved. What comfort!! Now he is straightened and is able to stand at the individual’s command.

Vs 12 Did God hear Daniel? Yes, God heard Daniel as soon as he sought to understand. James 1:5 Look at the steps Daniel took; 1. Set his heart to understand 2. Humbled himself before God 3. He spoke (prayer). The result of these three things was what God responded to and sent this individual to explain the message (word) he received in vs 1.

Vs 13 We know God heard Daniel when he first made his petition and that God sent this individual with the answer. Why did it take so long for Daniel to get an answer? A Prince, leader or chieftain (ruler) of the kingdom of Persia stood against him (resisted him). Since this prince was able to oppose the angelic messenger to Daniel, we know this was more than a man. This prince was some kind of angelic being, and we know he was an evil angelic being because he opposed the word of God coming to Daniel and stood against the angelic messenger. The word prince has the idea of a ruler or authority. This fits in well with the New Testament idea that angelic ranks are organized and have a hierarchy (Ephesians 1:21, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 1:16, Colossians 2:15). These angelic ranks seem to include both faithful angels and fallen angels. Apparently, this was a being of high rank that opposed the answer to prayer. On three occasions, Jesus referred to Satan as the prince of this world (John 12:31, 14:30, and 16:11). How long was the messenger struggling with this prince? 21 days, the exact number of days Daniel was mourning. The correlation between Daniel's time of self-denial and prayer and the duration of the battle between the angels and the prince of the kingdom of Persia establishes a link between Daniel's prayer and the angelic victory. Since the angelic victory came on the 21st day, we can surmise that if Daniel would have stopped praying on the 20th day, the answer may not have come. What else do we learn about this encounter? He was fighting this evil prince (and others as the word King is plural) alone, until Michael, the archangel, came to help him. In other passages Michael is associated with the battle between good angels and evil angels (Revelation 12, Jude 9).

Vs 14 Why did the messenger (man) come? To help Daniel understand that the vision's purpose was show what was to happen to his people (Israel) in the latter days. This understanding is detailed in chapters 11 and 12 and is focused on the end of days, though it also relates to the closer time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

What things do we learn about this encounter?

1. God hears the prayers of a righteous man and answers them.
2. Time on earth matched the time of the spiritual battle. Since we know God is outside time, that means this battle was happening in the earth realm, likely in the 2nd heaven. Earthly events are influenced by spiritual battles beyond our physical sight (Ephesians 6:12).
3. God answers prayers according to His perfect timing and purpose, not ours 1 Peter 5:7
4. God allowed this kind of conflict because He had a purpose in allowing it. He certainly could have blasted away in a moment any demonic opposition. God's plan probably was to use the time of delay to develop Daniel as a man of persistent prayer. Persistence in prayer is necessary, but not because God is reluctant and needs to be overcome; rather, it is necessary to train us. Daniel's success makes us reflect on our failures. How much angelic assistance or insight has never been realized, or greatly delayed, because of a lack of persistence in prayer?

Vs 15 How did Daniel react to such amazing words? He humbled himself by turning his face to the ground and could not speak.

Vs 16 What happened next? A messenger (probably the same one) touched his lips so he could speak. What did Daniel say? I am overwhelmed and weak. The ancient Hebrew word translated *sorrows* has the thought of twisting or writhing pain. It is used in several places in the Old Testament for labor pains in childbirth. Daniel was so severely affected by this vision that he could barely breathe, much less able to deal with the prophetic message to come.

Vs 17 What is Daniel saying here? How can a weak man such as me talk to someone as awesome as you, I can hardly breathe!

Vs 18 - 19 What did the messenger do in response to Daniel's statement? He touched Daniel again and spoke over him; you are beloved, be at peace and be strong. Did his words have power? Yes, Daniel says now he is strong, so go ahead, I am ready to receive the message.

Vs 20 – 21 Paraphrase what the messenger says. I have come to deliver a message, but I have to go right back and fight more because I know another entity is coming I will have to fight with (Greece). He also states he has only Michael who is fighting with him. Before he goes, he will give the message, the interpretation, of the truth of Scriptures.