

Intro: Once again, we are looking at the book of Daniel as we approach the end of his story.

- * It's important to remember that Daniel is a pivotal book in the OT because after God created the nation of Israel through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He spent hundreds of years growing and flourishing the nation when they obeyed-----,
- But He also chastened them when they disobeyed, and in 725 BC God finally sent the 10 northern tribes into captivity for their sin, and 120 years later in 605, the book of Daniel begins as the final 2 tribes- (Judah, Benjamin) were taken into captivity for their sin.
- * From that point in history, because they had so severely dishonored God before the world, God took away their independence and placed them under godless world authorities.
- * Nebuchadnezzar's ch. 2 dream described those world powers, and all of them have come about just as God showed Daniel, and today we can see the final power, the revived Roman Empire, rising in our world today in the form of the European Union.
- * Previously in Ch. 9, Daniel's vision showed him a set time period in Israel's future, for God to deal with His chosen nation, and it showed that after Israel killed their Messiah, God would set Israel aside and not restore them to Himself until the Messiah returned in the end times.
- * Daniel has received several visions, and from here on, Daniel receives his final vision from God.
- * Ch. 10 describes how he received it, Ch. 11 gives the vision, and Ch. 12 finishes Daniel's contact with the special Messenger who brought him this final vision.
- * **Read v1 (setting)**- It's now the 3rd yr of rulership for Cyrus the Persian, 2 years after Ch 9.
- * The Persian Empire has been in power for 3 years, and the king had previously given the 1st decree allowing Israel to return to their land, and many thousands of Jews have gone back.
- * Here, Daniel describes this vision by saying -- 'it's message was true', probably because it's presented to him by a heavenly being that resembles God Himself.

Note 3 main points.

Daniel's mourning (2-3),

Daniel's Messenger (4-9),

Daniel's messages. (10:10 - 11:1)

I. DANIEL WAS MOURNING. (2-3 - read)

- * Again we find Daniel in grief, and his sorrow made him fast for 3 weeks, only eating the basics needed to survive, and as before, he practiced self-denial in the way he groomed himself.
- * This seems strange because v4 says it's the 24th day of the 1st month (Nisan) which was the time when the Jews joyfully celebrated Passover and the Feast of unleavened Bread.
- * But Daniel was troubled and **mourning for 3 reasons.**

A. THE JEWS HAD MOSTLY REMAINED SPIRITUALLY APATHETIC.

- * The decree that they could return to their land was given 2 years earlier, but only 42,600 returned to Israel with Ezra.
- * The rest desired to stay in Babylon, settled in their pagan life, refusing and setting aside spiritual dedication and sacrifice, so they could return and faithfully follow God.
- * Millions opted to give up the spiritual, to be preoccupied with the temporary things of life.
(This is why most will not be saved, and why some believers are never of use to God)

B. THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE HAD BEEN A STRUGGLE.

- * News had come from Ezra that pagan thieves had hindered the work and attacked the people, and pagan religious influence was also having a bad effect on the Jews who returned.

C. THE DECREE TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE HAD BEEN PUT ON HOLD.

- * At this time, King Cyrus had gone away traveling and left his son in charge of the Empire.
- * When his son heard the news that the rebuilding project was having problems, he forbade the Jews there to continue.

Sum- Daniel, now an old man, did not return to Israel himself because his age would have only made him a burden, but what he could do was pray, and he determined to do so, seriously.

- * Again, Daniel shows us what it means to be dedicated to the will and work of God, and that when life hits us with things beyond our control, God is waiting for us to come to Him in serious prayer.

II. DANIEL ENCOUNTERED A SPECIAL MESSENGER. (4-9, read 4-6) >>>>>

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- * Daniel wasn't in the city of Babylon, but 60 miles SW near the Tigris River, possibly on business.
- * Here, God sent a messenger to him in a vision, to answer his prayers and reveal prophecy.
- * **Note 2 things.**

A. THE APPEARANCE OF THIS "MAN". (5-6) * What does He look like?

- 1. Linen clothes**, the garment of priests and visiting angels-- a symbol of God's holiness.
- 2. A gold belt**, which pictures complete Royalty.
- 3. A body of chrysolite**, (pure topaz) a transparent jewel. This depicts the glory of God.
- 4. A face of lighting**, extremely bright, much like God's shining glory in the OT Temple.
- 5. Eye's like flaming torches**, depicting the ability to burn through anything and see everything.
- 6. Arms - legs of bronze**, portraying great power, and God's judgment on sin, (bronze altar).
- 7. He has the voice of a multitude**, literally referring to a loud thundering roar.

- * This man is holy and Royal, with a face and body bright with God's glory, all seeing eyes, all-powerful arms and legs, and a voice that thunders with authority. **2 questions.**

Who is this Messenger? Daniel has seen angels before, but this Person is different.

- * This is most likely a before-birth appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, for at least 4 reasons.
 - Christ is God, the 2nd Person of the Trinity, who is eternal in His existence.
 - Christ appeared in the OT at different times. He visited Abraham (Gn. 18), He wrestled with Jacob in (Gen 32), and earlier, He was in the furnace with Daniel's 3 friends in Dan 3.
 - Later, Daniel calls Him "Lord" several times ("Adown"- sovereign Master [adoni- Lord])
 - This description is almost exactly how John described Jesus in Rev 1:13-16, in his vision.

Why did the Lord appear to Daniel in this way? To encourage and to inform him.

- * Daniel was distraught over the Jews apathy, the building troubles, and the work being halted.
- * Also, the information Daniel will receive (ch. 11) will not seem good. It's about ongoing war, and Daniel already knew from ch 9 that Israel will reject and murder their Messiah.
- * The Lord appeared to him in this vision so Daniel would grasp that no matter how bad things seemed for Israel, God was fully in control and would keep His promise to restore Israel and give them a final and eternal kingdom (7:27).
- * Daniel needed to turn His eyes from the circumstances and rest them fully on the Lord. 3

B. THE REACTION OF DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS. (7-9- read, 10-11b, 15-17)

- * Daniel tells us he "was the only one who saw the vision", but apparently the men with him heard the thundering voice which terrorized them, so that they ran off and hid.
- * Daniel didn't run away, but he was overwhelmed by the Lord's appearance in several ways.
 - In v8- he lost all strength, turned pale, and became helpless.
 - In v9- he fainted and fell to the ground.
 - In v10- a hand raised him up to his hands and knees, as he was trembling.
 - In v11- he finally stood up when the Lord told him, and was trembling.
 - In v15- he bowed down and was speechless,
 - In v16-17- he was overcome with anguish, had no strength, and could hardly breathe.
- * This is the typical response from people in the bible, when they were confronted by God.
 - When Isaiah and Ezekiel saw a vision of God on His throne, they fell on their face, and Isaiah said-- "woe is me, I am ruined, I'm a man of unclean lips,"
 - John saw the same thing Daniel did and said- "when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead".

@ And these reactions to Christ's presence help us understand 2 things.

1. As God's people, we need to recognize the awesome greatness of our God.

- Our God is wonderfully merciful, gracious, and loving; And the Lord Jesus is our great Savior, Lord, and Friend who sticks closer than a brother, and comforts and guides us.
 - And Hebrews says because we are in Christ, our sin is all forgiven, and---- "we can come boldly before the throne of grace to find mercy and grace to help in time of need".
 - But we should remember that God is not our buddy or spiritual Santa Claus to be taken lightly.
 - We should never ignore or minimize His awesome, greatness and glory.
- Q-** One reason our lives are not more Godly is because we tend to trivialize God's awesome majesty. We may often rush into His presence shooting little prayers at Him, without worshipping Him in our heart as we acknowledge the infinite magnitude of His greatness.
- David rarely prayed without worship. In Rev. all heaven is constantly falling down in worship.

2. A lost world has much to fear from our Holy awesome God.

- Q-** If this is how the bible's Godly men responded to God's presence, just think of how sinners should face a holy God. (1 Pet 4:17-18, Rev 6:12-17) People need to fear God.
- Heb 10:31- "It's a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. "

III. DANIEL WAS GIVEN THREE MESSAGES. (10:11 - 11:1)

A. DANIEL WAS GIVEN A MESSAGE ABOUT HIS PRAYERS. (11-12- read)

* Daniel had been praying, and the Lord tells him **He answered Daniel for 3 reasons**

1. Daniel was "highly esteemed". (this is said in vs.11 and 19a)

- In Ch. 9 Gabriel was sent to Daniel for this same reason. Now the Lord Himself says it twice.
- The Lord cherished Daniel greatly, because he had a consistent godly heart and life.
- This is what causes God to pay attention to prayer. (Ps 66:18- cherish sin - He won't listen)

2. Daniel had "set his mind to gain understanding". (12)

- One thing Daniel had been praying about was for better understanding of all his visions.
- He prayed with a desire to know God's will, rather than praying to express his own will for what he wanted God to do. (we should always end prayer- "Your will be done")

3. Daniel "humbled *himself* before *his* God". (vs. 12)

- Effective prayer doesn't come from a heart of self-sufficiency as if we deserve anything.
- It's offered with a sense of unworthiness with an attitude of total dependence on God.
- Remember, Daniel was head over the top 3 governors in the land (6:3), humanly speaking, if anyone could bring change in regard to the ongoing problems in Jerusalem, he could.
- But he didn't approach the king's son who stopped the work, or gather the other governors to help him change the man's mind. He went to the all-powerful King of kings.
- Completely humble and fully dependent on the One who was really in control, he completely relied on God, without trusting in himself or his position.

B. DANIEL WAS GIVEN A MESSAGE ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE. (v12-13- Read)

* This Messenger told Daniel he was sent with an answer the first day Daniel prayed, but he was resisted for 21 days by "the prince of Persia" -- the demon in charge of Persia.

* Satan is real and he has real demons, which are 1/3rd of the original angels who rebelled with him and were thrown out of heaven, who inhabit the earth and its atmosphere.

* 1 Jn 5:19 says- "the whole world is under the control of the evil one".

* 2 Cor. 4 says- "The god of this age has blinded unbeliever's minds, so they can't see the light".

- * Eph 1, 6:12, Col 1- show Satan's demons are organized into different ranks.
- * And Satan hates God and all that belongs to Him. He hates man- who is created in God's image, hates Israel for being God's chosen people, and hates believers for repenting and yielding to Christ, and living godly lives that thwart Satan's wicked work in the world.
- * **Out of human sight**, there is a spiritual battle going on between God and Satan, as the devil and his forces constantly fight against God's plans, people, and holy angels, as they try to thwart anything God is doing in the world.
- * And here, this main demon was sent to fight this Messenger because Satan hated Daniel for following God, and being used to reveal what Satan would do in the future in regard to Israel.

NOTE Here, the Lord contended with the Prince of Persia. (12-13, 20, 21b)

Question? This being Christ, why did He allow this demon to contend with Him and delay Him from coming to Daniel? There could be various Explanations---

1. **While on earth, Jesus allowed Satan to tempt Him**, and allowed Satan's people to harass Him and finally crucify Him, even though he could have called 10,000 angels.
 - Here, Christ may have chosen to be delayed so He could defeat this demon in an argument about Daniel, much like He will do later with the devil, at His own temptation.
 2. **He also may have allowed this delay to strengthen Daniel with 3 weeks of prayer**, because this is how God often reduces our spiritual apathy and makes us stronger. (Q- God's delays are not necessarily His denials) (neighbor at midnight, lady - judge)
 3. **It fit God's purpose for Michael to assist the Lord in this confrontation**, reminding us that God chooses to use His servants (angels or humans) to accomplish His work.
 - Michael is an Archangel, (highest rank), and 12:1 says He's assigned to watch over Israel.
 - And notice- Vs 12-13, 20-21 never say the Lord was weak or was losing the conflict, and vs 13 doesn't say the Lord was detained **BY** this demon, but **WITH** him.
 - **Also** - v10:21 and 11:1 go together (**Read**)- This tells us that previously these battles with these demons of the world empires, were being fought by Michael as Israel's prince, and it was Christ who had come and "took His stand to support and protect him".
- , This statement by the Lord shows that Christ **wasn't** the One who needed help against the Prince of Persia, but that Christ was helping Michael against this demon.

FOR SUMMARY -- 2 truths about spiritual warfare in the world.

1. For the believer, Christ won our war with Satan, when He died and rose again.

- Christ conquered sin and purchased our salvation, so that those who come to Him in repentance and submissive faith, escape the sinful hold Satan has on their life.
- And in Ephesians 6 Paul teaches us to put on the believer's armor so we can stand against the devil's schemes, and live spiritually victorious lives.
- Christ's victory completely delivers us from sin in 3 ways
 - , At the moment we are saved-- He delivers us from the penalty of our sin in eternity,
 - , During our daily Christian life-- Christ delivers us from the overriding power of sin,
 - , And in the future-- Christ delivers us from the presence of sin, when we are glorified.

2. Christ will ultimately win this history-long supernatural war with Satan.

- God is sovereign and in control of all things.
 - He's not struggling to win, He is winning, and He will win.
- But as part of the curse on mankind's disobedience, He allows Satan to do his work in the world, but the devil and his forces can only go as far as God allows.
- As God brings the world to face the tribulation,
 - He will allow Satan great freedom to lead the world into great sin through antichrist.
- But Revelation shows that God will bring sin and Satan's reign to a close,
 - as He finally and completely destroys Satan and all his forces, along with his followers.
- And the Lord will deliver the righteous of all history, to our heavenly home for all eternity,
 - all according to His eternal sovereign purpose.
- God will allow this so that in the end, it will finally be proven to all creation that nothing and no one is greater than God.

The Lord's THIRD MESSAGE FOR DANIEL---

C. DANIEL WAS GIVEN A MESSAGE ABOUT "THE BOOK OF TRUTH". (20-21)

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- * As Christ's meeting with Daniel started and continued, Daniel was physically and emotionally falling apart, so in v18-19a, the Lord strengthened and strongly encouraged him.
 - * When strengthened, Daniel then agreed to receive the final vision by saying "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." (19b)
 - * Previously, the Lord had already stated how important this final message was.
 - In vs 11 He told Daniel to "consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you",
 - And in v14 He said-- "I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."
 - * But the Lord's final comment was the most encouraging thing Daniel could hear.
The Lord said in v21- **"I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth".**
 - * This is awesome because it shows Daniel that the news that Gabriel, and now the Lord had been giving Daniel, has already been written and settled.
 - * Psalms 119:89-90 says- "Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.
Your faithfulness continues through all generations;"
- Q-** (John Philips) "God assured Daniel that the future was already written on God's tablet. Nothing could fail to be fulfilled. All must come to pass.
The future was not in the hands of Satan and his dark forces, but in the hands of an all-knowing, all-powerful God who in the end will make all things work together to accomplish His divine eternal purposes."
- * As believers, we are not to live our Christian life in fear, wondering what's going to happen.
 - * We are to live for Christ while we wait for the sure victory that is being accomplished by our all-powerful infinite sovereign Lord.
 - * In a few weeks we will see the details of the final vision the Lord gave to Daniel.
A vision so accurate, most historians deny that it could have been written in the 6th century.