

The Historical Aspects of Daniel (chs. 1-6)

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The prophetic Aspects of Daniel (chs. 7-12)

This chapter introduces the fourth and last of Daniel's predictive revelations. Taking a total of three chapters for its description, this time of revelation covers approximately the same periods of history as set forth in the vision of chapter eight (periods of Medo-Persia, Greece, and the Great Tribulation); but considerably more detail is given, especially concerning events after Alexander the Great and concerning the Great Tribulation still future. The information was presented, not in the symbolism of animals, as in the first two visions, but in direct word revelation through a heavenly messenger, who appeared to Daniel. This appearance seems again to have been in actual, corporeal form, as in the third revelatory time of chapter nine.

Chapter ten tells of the coming of this heavenly messenger to impart the information. The record of his coming is significant, because it involves his conflict with an emissary of Satan, and states or, implies important facts relative to angels and demons and their respective interests in the people and work of God.¹

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III. GOD CAUSES DANIEL TO HAVE A VISION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL, (ch. 10-12)

A. Daniel Is Prepared for the Vision, (10:1-11:1)

1. The time of the heavenly beings appearance, (1-3)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

¹ (In verse one, Daniel summarizes chapters 10-12 by saying,) **In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia** (536 B.C., two years after Gabriel came to Daniel in chapter nine, as well as about two years following the first deportation of Jews back to Jerusalem; the result of Daniel's prayer, [2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra 1:1]),² **a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belshazzar.**

NOTES:

 **COMMENTARY:**

¹ Wood, *Daniel*, p. 264

² Since Daniel was still in Babylon in this third year of Cyrus, it is clear that he had not accompanied the group, probably for two reasons: his advanced years of life, and his high position in the government of Darius as one of three top presidents. Wood, *Daniel*, p. 265

The message was true (as remarkable as it is, it is not made up), **but the appointed time** (meaning the time of an army or conflict), **was long** (i.e., the message addressed a long period of calamity concerning the future); **and he** (Daniel), **understood** (heeded), **the message, and** (as a result he also), **had understanding of the vision**, (Daniel gave heed to the vision as a whole, taking into consideration the other revelations given him in the previous chapters).

² (Now Daniel takes us back the beginning; i.e., when the message first came to him), **In those days** (just prior to receiving the message), **I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks**, (seeking to understand the suffering Israel was going to face which the previous visions addressed, v 12).

³ **I ate no pleasant food** (no delicacies), **no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.**³

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2. The effect from the heavenly beings appearance, (4-9)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

⁴ **Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month,**⁴ **as I was** (spending some time), **by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris,**

 **COMMENTARY:**

³ Daniel also abstained from self-anointment . . . The custom was to anoint oneself daily, the oil being applied to exposed skin that might be burned by the sun (Ps. 104:15). Anointing was a sign of joy (Prov. 27:9), and it was normally discontinued in the time of mourning, as here with Daniel (cf. 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2). These acts of self-discipline were continued by Daniel for three full weeks. Such acts of themselves do not solicit the favor of God, but they constitute suitable exercises which, if sincere, encourage, and give demonstration of, the proper attitude of heart which does. Wood, *Daniel*, p. 267

⁴ The overall passage makes clear that this day immediately followed the three weeks of mourning (cf. vv. 12-14), which means that the first day of mourning had been the third of this first month (Nisan). Since the fourteenth of Nisan was the day of Passover, followed by the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th to 21st, Ex. 12:14-18), both feasts had just nicely been completed by this twenty-fourth day. Wood, *Daniel*, p. 267

Daniel mourned not merely for the seven days appointed (Ex 12:18), from the evening of the fourteenth to the twenty-first of Nisan, but *thrice seven days*, to mark extraordinary sorrow. Jamieson, Robert; Fausset, A.R.; and Brown, David, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1998.

- ⁵ **I lifted my eyes and looked** (across the river), **and behold** (to my astonishment!), **a certain man⁵ clothed in linen** (symbolizing purity and was worn by the priests [Ex. 28:42; Lev: 6:10]), **whose waist was girded** (embroidered), **with gold of Uphaz!**
- ⁶ **His body was like beryl** (having a yellow and gold luster), **his face** (was so brilliant, it was), **like the appearance of lightning, his eyes** (were even more brilliant, they were), **like torches of fire** (symbolizing piercing insight and judgement), **his arms and feet like** (gleaming), **burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude,** (speaking all in unison. It was loud and strong).
- ⁷ **And I, Daniel** (though in the company of others, I), **alone saw the vision** (of this heavenly being), **for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but** (even though they did not see it), **a great terror fell upon them** (as they beheld how I was affected by the vision), **so that they fled to hide themselves.**
- ⁸ **Therefore** (as a result of everyone fleeing), **I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength** (of mind or body), **remained in me; for my vigor** (my countenance and color), **was turned to frailty in me** (I took on a deathlike paleness), **and I retained no strength.**

F APPLICATION:

Just think what it is going to be like when we see the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ! Unbelievers who survive the great tribulation will cry out for the rocks to fall upon them, (Rev. 6:16). Christ does not come to the earth again as a helpless Baby and Lamb to be sacrificed. He comes back as a King, having all power and authority; to subdue and conquer all people, nations, principalities and powers! Believers and unbelievers alike should sense some fear by our reverence for our God. Our countenance and actions should communicate that we have come into contact with a holy and just God!

Does this mean that we should exhibit fear in a mean God like some portray; who need to be appeased. Should we exhibit fear in God like we would a vicious dog who threatens to bite us if we make one false move? No! The fear we should be exhibiting is same kind of fear we should exhibit for the Niagara River, by the falls. The power of the mighty rushing river must be respected. The river is not out to get us like a temperamental dog, but if we think we can ignore its power and not be affected by it, we would certainly be swept away. God must be

⁵ Some say the man is Gabriel, some simply say that he is a heavenly being. Others say He is Christ. We cannot know with certainty who this heavenly being is. The description given of the man here is certainly similar to the description of Jesus in Revelation 1:13-17. The problem is, this person was hindered by an evil angel and was assisted by the angel Michael (v. 13). Certainly no angel has enough power to hinder Christ and neither would Christ need assistance from anyone to fulfill His will. It is interesting though, that many believe it was the preincarnate Jesus Christ that Jacob wrestled with all evening, (Gen. 32:24-32). Also, on the cross, Christ said that 12 legions of angels were at His side; ready to assist Him, (Mat. 26:53). Even though we can't say with certainty who this person is, we can't rule out that it may be Christ.

respected! The one who thinks he can ignore the power and authority of God and not be affected, is certain to place himself in great peril.

"Loss of strength in the presence of the supernatural indicated a recognition of dependency, unworthiness, and the absence of a sense of self-sufficiency (cf. Judg. 6:22; Job 42:5, 6; Isa. 6:5)."⁶ It is better to meet God on these terms in this life; than to wait to do so in the afterlife.

⁹ **Yet** (in spite of my mental and physical paralysis), **I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words** (which threw me over the edge), **I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground**, (I passed out cold).

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3. **The contact at the heavenly beings appearance, (10-17)**

 **INTERPRETATION:**

¹⁰ **Suddenly, a hand** (physically), **touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands**, (even though I was brought back to consciousness, I was still weak and unsteady).

¹¹ **And he** (this heavenly being), **said to me** (helping me to more fully recover by touching my heart after touching my body), “**O Daniel, man greatly beloved** (well favored), **understand** (pay attention now to), **the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.**” **While he was speaking this word to me, I** (in obedience), **stood** (yet still), **trembling**.

¹² **Then he said to me** (as I stood trembling), “**Do not fear** (my presence), **Daniel, for** (not only are you greatly beloved, but also), **from the first day that you set your heart** (devoting yourself), **to understand** (the prophecies that God had previously revealed to you concerning the future that He has planned for Israel), **and** (determined as well), **to humble yourself** (by fasting and prayer--bowing yourself), **before your God, your words were heard** (your prayer did not go by unnoticed, nor was it thought by God, to be trivial or self-centered--at the very moment you began to pray I set out to come); **and I have come** (standing before you now), **because of your words**.

 **COMMENTARY:**

⁶ Wood, *Daniel*, p. 270)

¹³ “**But** (I didn't arrive the first day you prayed because), **the prince of the kingdom of Persia**⁷ (one of Lucifer's high ranking demons, set over the Persian kingdom), **withstood me twenty-one days** (opposed me in coming to you); **and behold, Michael** (one of God's archangels [Jude 9]), **one of the chief princes** (who is the prince of Israel, Israel's guardian [10:21-11:1; 12:1; Rev. 12:1-9]), **came to help me** (assist me), **for** (the reason being, following this battle, having gained the victory), **I had been left alone there** (usurping the position of preeminence over the Persian kingdom), **with the** (present king as well as the future), **kings of Persia**.⁸

¹⁴ “**Now** (having described for you the *consequences* leading to my appearance, I must now tell you my *purpose*), **I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people** (Israel, the Jews), **in the latter days** (the future history of Israel culminating with God setting up His prophetic kingdom on the earth), **for the vision refers to many days yet to come,**” (this is not going to happen in the near future. It's going to take place over a long period of time).

⁷ [This heavenly messenger] . . . was hindered by **the prince of the Persian kingdom** (cf. “the prince of Persia,” v. 20). Since men cannot fight with angels (Jacob's wrestling was with God, not an angel; cf. comments on Gen. 32:22-32), the prince referred to here must have been a satanic adversary.

God has arranged the angelic realm in differing ranks referred to as “rule, authority, power, and dominion” (Eph. 1:21). Gabriel and Michael have been assigned authority over angels who administer God's affairs for the nation Israel (cf. Michael in Dan. 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9). In imitation Satan has also apparently assigned high-ranking demons to positions of authority over each kingdom. The prince of the Persian kingdom was a satanic representative assigned to Persia. . . . This gives insight into the nature of the warfare fought in the heavenlies between God's angels and Satan's demons to which Paul referred (Eph. 6:12). Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Logos

⁸ The word “had been left” means “to be left over, remain.” The word sometimes carries the thought of being left in a position of preeminence (as on a field of battle), and it is best so taken here. After the struggle with the demon, Daniel's visitor remained preeminent, as victor. . . . The word “kings” is in the plural, likely because the place of influence won would continue with future kings of Persia . . . a total period, in fact, of more than two centuries, until Greece would take over world leadership. (Whitcomb, *Daniel*, p. 141, 142)

God, of course, temporarily limits Himself with respect to the forces of evil in the world. Otherwise there would be no evil at all. Instructive in this connection are God's dialogue with Satan in Job 1, Satan's (God-given) power to resist Moses in the court of Pharaoh (Ex. 7:11, 22; 8:7), and our Lord's acknowledgment of the postponement of demonic judgment (Matt. 8:29, “Have You come here to torment us before the time?”). During His incarnation, the temporary authority of Satan as the god of this world was clearly affirmed by Christ (John 12:3 1; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 6:12; 1 John 4:4; 5:19). Obviously, this satanic authority over the kingdoms of sinful men does not compromise the omnipotence of God. What it does demonstrate is that God has a plan and a program for this world, which includes His sovereign prerogative to say to evil forces: “This hour and the power of darkness are yours” (Luke 22:53). Whitcomb, *Daniel*, p. 141

- ¹⁵ **When he had spoken** (i.e., while he was yet speaking), **such words to me, I** (Daniel, again feeling overwhelmed by everything became weak and), **turned my face toward the ground and became speechless**, (I could not do or say anything).
- ¹⁶ **And suddenly** (without warning), **one having the likeness of the sons of men** (one who had the appearance of a fellow human being), **touched my lips; then** (being strengthened by this act, [cf., Ex. 4:10-12; Isa. 6:6, 7]), **I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me** (concerning why I was acting so), **“My lord, because of the vision** (i.e., your imposing appearance), **my sorrows** (my terror [*used to speak of a woman in labor giving birth*]), **have overwhelmed me, and** (as a result), **I have retained no strength**, (I am emotionally and physically drained).
- ¹⁷ **“For how can this servant of my lord** (one who is so feeble), **talk with you, my lord**, (who are so majestic)? **As for me** (it is too much to comprehend or process), **no strength remains in me now**, (and not only that, but), **nor is any breath left in me.”** (I cannot continue to speak, or I am even having trouble breathing).

F APPLICATION:

Suggestions for the believer’s private devotional life: (1) *Fear* is not necessarily detrimental (contrast Rom 3:18). “God wishes our fears to restrain us like a bridle” (Calvin). (2) Prayer may be with *fervor* when the will of God is clear. The angel only confirmed Daniel’s knowledge (cf. I Jn 5:14). (3) Deep *humility* is a proper accompaniment of prayer in view of God’s sovereignty. (4) Fear, fervor, and humility may be joined with *confidence* or boldness, for one comes to his *own* God in Christ (cf. “thy God,” Dan 10:12). See also Heb 11:6; Jas 1:6, 7; Heb 4:16. (5) *Expectancy*. Something really happened.⁹

How little we know about what goes on about us among the angels as did Daniel.

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4. The Strength by the heavenly beings appearance, (18-11:1)

INTERPRETATION:

- ¹⁸ **Then again** (yet another time), **the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me**, (this being the third time Daniel was touched and thus strengthened altogether).

COMMENTARY:

⁹ Charles F. Pfeiffer, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Old Testament*, (Chicago: Moody Press) Logos, 1962.

¹⁹ **And he** (the majestic being), **said** (again with the purpose of encouraging Daniel), “**O man greatly beloved, fear not!** (I admonish you to not be afraid. You have nothing to fear being greatly beloved by your Creator.) **Peace be to you** (replace the fear in your heart and mind with the peace of God); **be strong** (prevail, be secure, grow stout), **yes**, (I command you to), **be strong!**” **So when he spoke** (i.e., while he spoke thus), **to me I was** (indeed progressively), **strengthened, and** (as a result), **said, “Let my lord speak** (fulfill your purpose), **for you have strengthened me,”** (you have enabled me to hear and process it what you have to say.)

²⁰ **Then he said** (asking a rhetorical question to assure that Daniel was on track and to get him thinking), “**Do you know why I have come to you**, (to answer your prayer by helping you to understand Israel's future)? **And now** (right after I explain to you the future of Israel), **I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth** (to maintain my victory over the demon prince of Persia), **indeed the** (demon), **prince of Greece will come** (that Satan will assign to the Grecian Empire following the fall of the Persian government [536-331 B.C.] -- then I will have to contend with him).

F APPLICATION:

God has created this window of opportunity to rescue His people who have been taken hostage. He has stormed the gates of hell and has created a breach in the wall for Israel to pass through. So shall He continue to do for His saints like Israel, and through His saints, like Daniel.

²¹ “**But** (before I renew my confrontation with the prince of Persia), **I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth**, (and because it is God's truth, you can fully rely upon the facts concerning Israel's future, as well as fully rely upon the fact that God will work all things out for the eventual good of those who love Him and are beloved by Him; which would certainly include the preservation and redemption of the nation Israel). (**No one upholds me against these** (opponents to God's complete and eternal plan concerning Israel), **except Michael your** (Israel's), **prince**.)

¹ “**Also** (it should encourage you to know that), **in the first year of Darius the Mede** (two years prior), **I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him** [to insure his victory over Babylon in order to bring the 70 years of Israel's exile to an end and allow Israel to return to the land of promise.)

F APPLICATION:

God does not depend upon creatures to accomplish His glorious goals, though He condescends to use them. Though "the kings of the earth take their stand . . . against the Lord," His Son, His Anointed, is nevertheless installed as King of all the earth (Ps. 2:2, 6-12). Though vast numbers of powerful angels should rebel against their Creator,

they will enter into an "eternal fire which has been prepared" for them (Matt. 25:41).¹⁰

Daniel 10 gives a brief glimpse into an area of reality concerning which most human beings are totally unaware - the role of Christ and angels in international affairs. Both God and Satan have assigned powerful angels to influence rulers and nations in their policies - particularly in their policies for or against Israel. Behind the scenes of international events there rages great supernatural conflict invisible to the human eye.

Christ's statement to the effect that the revelation He would deliver to Daniel was "inscribed in the writing of truth" (v. 21) carries with it the idea that God has prewritten the course of history. This again emphasized the sovereignty of God.¹¹

¹⁰ Whitcomb, *Daniel*, pp. 143, 144

¹¹ Showers, *The Most High God*, pp. 147, 148