

The Book of Daniel

"Dealing With Bad News"

Daniel Chapter 10

Introduction

In Daniel Chapter 10, we catch a glimpse of the demonic power at work in world governments. We see Daniel's prayer hindered. We see a vision of Christ. We see the prayer of faith that perseveres and prevails. We also realize the prayer of the godly matters to God and that perseverance in prayer does make a difference. And finally, we recognize that God's timing is always perfect.

It all begins with verse 1 of Chapter 10, "In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." (Daniel 10:1-3 NKJV)

By this time, the first wave of exiles has returned under the leadership of Ezra (Ezra 1-2). Daniel 10 sets the stage for a spectacular prophecy of Daniel 11, which describes a time of great persecution and testing for the people of Israel. Daniel says the message is true, but the appointed time is far off. The implication is that the period in view is long and strenuous, involving great conflict and trouble for the people of God. Daniel goes into mourning for three whole weeks. Spurgeon says, "I think that Daniel's sorrow was occasioned by the words: 'The vision is true, but the time appointed is long.' "

Daniel didn't return to Israel with Ezra's group. He was about 84 years old and could serve the exiles far better from his high position in government than he could with them in Jerusalem. He decides to fast for Israel and says he ate no pleasant food, meat, or wine. The Biblical idea of fasting is to abstain from food as a form of self-denial in order to give attention to prayer.

In verse 4, Daniel sees an amazing figure standing on the banks of the Tigris River. "Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that *is*, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist *was* girded with gold of Uphaz! His body *was* like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude." (Daniel 10:4-6 NKJV)

Some say this is Jesus, noting that the description resembles what John saw in Revelation 1:12-16.

DANIEL 10:4-6	REVELATION 1:12-16
Clothed in linen	<i>Clothed with a garment</i>
Waist girded with gold	<i>Girded about the chest with a golden band</i>
The body was like beryl	
Face like lightning	<i>Head and hair were white like wool</i>
Eyes like torches of fire	<i>Eyes like a flame of fire</i>
Feet like burnished bronze	<i>Feet were like fine brass</i>
Sound of his words like the voice of a multitude	<i>Voice as the sound of many waters</i>

In verse 7, Daniel's companions are terrified and run for cover. "And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves." ([Daniel 10:7 NKJV](#))

There is something supernatural about this vision. Daniel saw the glorious man, but his companions didn't. It reminds you of Saul on the road to Damascus when his companions didn't hear the same voice from heaven that Paul heard. We can be close to the presence and power of God and still miss the message through a lack of spiritual perception. Obviously, those with Daniel couldn't see the vision if they were in hiding!

In verse 8, we see Daniel's reaction to seeing this man. "Therefore, I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground." ([Daniel 10:8-9 NKJV](#))

Daniel was visibly shaken by this vision which shows us that even the holiest among us can't stand before God.

In verse 10, an angel touches Daniel and delivers a message from God. "Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand 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 stood trembling." ([Daniel 10:10-11 NKJV](#))

Since Daniel was overcome with weakness and lay prostrate, he was strengthened by the touch of the messenger's hand. The angel calls out, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved." This is the second time Daniel is called greatly beloved. Last week in Chapter 9, Gabriel called him greatly beloved. God chooses Daniel to be a great courier of prophetic revelation.

In verse 12, Daniel needed to stand at attention to hear and understand the vision while the angel explained the purpose of his coming and the opposition he faced on the way. "Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*" (Daniel 10:12-14 NKJV)

God responded to Daniel's prayer and dispatched His response the very moment Daniel made his request known, even though Daniel had been in serious prayer for three full weeks.

The angel says, "I have come because of your words." This is another of many reminders in the Book of Daniel that prayer matters. Prayer isn't merely a therapeutic exercise for the one who prays. When the angel says, "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me," we know this prince who opposed the angelic messenger is more than a man. This prince is some kind of evil angelic being because he opposes the word of God and delays God's angelic messenger. On three occasions, Jesus referred to Satan as the prince of this world (John 12:31, 14:30, and 16:11).

The angel was dispatched immediately with God's answer to Daniel's prayer. However, the answer to the prayer was delayed 21 days by the prince of the kingdom of Persia. Since the angelic victory came on the 21st day, is it possible that the answer may not have come if Daniel had stopped praying on the 20th day?

Gleason Archer says, "There may be hindering factors of which a praying Christian knows nothing as he wonders why the answers to his requests are delayed. Nevertheless, he is to keep on praying. It may be that he will not receive an answer because he has given up on the twentieth day when he should have persisted to the twenty-first day." (Archer)

The angel tells Daniel that, "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." In other passages, Michael is associated with the battle between good and evil angels (Revelation 12, Jude 9). Why did God allow this conflict? He certainly could have overcome in a moment any demonic opposition. Could it be that God planned to use the delay of time to develop Daniel as a man of persistent prayer?

Persistence in prayer is necessary because God uses it to train us. How many times has angelic assistance or insight been delayed or never realized due to a lack of persistence in prayer? The vision of Chapters 11 and 12 focuses primarily on the latter days, even though it also concerns the closer time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

In verses 15-19, Daniel is strengthened in his weakness. "When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And suddenly, *one* having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me." Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." (Daniel 10:15-19 NKJV)

Daniel starts out on the ground in verse 9, then stands up in verse 11, and now he's back on his face again. Daniel is so severely affected by this vision that he can barely breathe, much less deal with prophetic complexities. But Daniel says, "One having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me." This messenger is an angel. One writer says, "It is the touch of God that brings strength. Daniel was touched by God, and received strength. But "Many churches today are marked by a well-organized, heavily staffed, and adequately financed impotency." (Strauss)

In verse 20, The angel delivers his message to Daniel. "Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael, your prince. Also, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)." (Daniel 10:20-11:1 NKJV)

Daniel received the answer to his prayer, but the battle was not over for his heavenly messenger. On his way back, the angel would have to battle the demonic prince of Persia and then the prince of Greece.

God is watching out for Israel, working behind the scenes in the spiritual realm. The heavenly warfare was directed against Persia first and then Greece because they would each take power over God's people. Michael is the angelic guardian of Israel, who battles against the demonic representative of Persia and assists the angel being detained. Michael is ready to defeat all who oppose God's people. Israel may seem insignificant and weak on earth, but in the heavens, Israel had the mightiest representative of all.

As we examine Chapter 10, we see, first of all, that the prayer of the godly does matter to God.

I. The Prayer of the Godly Matters to God

The longer you serve the Lord, the more you realize you must keep growing spiritually. Billy Graham said, "Prayer is for every moment of our lives, not just for times of suffering or joy. Prayer is really a place, a place where you meet God in genuine conversation."

Prayer restores and strengthens us. When we are broken or weak, prayer revitalizes our spirit. When we're discouraged, prayer lifts us up. James wrote, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." (James 5:16)

There is power in the name of Jesus! Maybe you've seen examples of this in the "prayer warriors" in your life who have been there in your hour of need. James describes Elijah as "a man like us," whose earnest prayer held back—and then brought forth—the rain.

The importance of prayer cannot be overstated. The prayer of the godly matters to God.

II. Persevering in Prayer Makes a Difference.

When our prayers aren't answered right away, it means we have to wait. In our culture, most of us don't want to wait for anything. We want instant answers and gratification. That's why waiting upon the Lord is a perfect spiritual exercise for all of us.

Isaiah says, "But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31 NKJV)

Waiting is good discipline. When your petitions aren't immediately answered, you may experience a time of prolonged prayer; remember that the time you spend waiting upon the Lord is never wasted. The truth is, maybe we aren't ready to understand God's will yet. We say we are ready to accept God's will, but what if God's will is drastically different from ours?

When we persevere, God answers our prayer, but He also reveals His will to us, which is much more important. Persevering in prayer tests the depth of our faith. Sometimes the testing and shaping of our faith are more important to God than answering our prayer.

Persevering in prayer may not always produce a satisfying answer, but it is always a sign of authentic and sincere faith. Do you know how to persevere in prayer? Prayer is like every other physical or spiritual exercise; the more you do it, the better you get at it.

III. God's timing is always perfect.

God's sense of timing is different than ours, but His timing is always perfect. 2 Peter 3:8 says, "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Peter 3:8 NKJV) God has perfect timing. He's never early, never late. God is never in a hurry, but he's always on time.

One thing Daniel knew for sure was that God is the sovereign Lord of the future. In Isaiah 55, God says, "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV)

Sometimes it's hard to see the reason for waiting. But God knows the future and the past, and everything he plans comes to pass. "Remember the former things of old, For I *am* God, and *there is* no other; *I am* God, and *there is* none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'" (Isaiah 46:9-10 NKJV)

God knows everything, but we don't. We see the world from a limited perspective, but God sees everything as it is. He knows the future, the past, and when everything he plans will come to pass. God's word has never failed, and it never will. We can trust God's timing because when He gives you a promise, you can trust His timing because God intends to follow through no matter how long it takes.

God is deliberate and intentional when he makes you a promise. He knows what he's doing even when he allows you to wait. It may seem like your timing is better, but we know God's timing is perfect. Jeremiah 29 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:11-13 NKJV)

Conclusion

God's intentions for you are good, and He cares about you. Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29-31 NKJV)

When God makes us wait, it's always for our good and for His glory. The prayer of the godly matters to God, and it makes a difference when we persevere in prayer. You can trust God's timing because he loves you and only wants what is good for you.

God is always on time. He's not on our time, but he's on time. Waiting isn't easy, but God will see you through it if you let him. Keep the faith, keep holding on, and keep trusting God.