

“Daniel's Last Vision – Part I”

Daniel 10:1-21

“Now I have come to give you understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future” (Dan. 10:14)

The Events Surrounding the Vision (Daniel 10:1-3)

1. “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.” (Daniel 10:1)
 - This vision came to Daniel in the “third year of Cyrus, king of Persia”
 - 1) The date of this vision would have been **536 B.C.**
 - 2) The Babylonian captivity would have ended and the exiled Jews would have begun their return to rebuild Jerusalem. (**Ezra 1** and following)
 - 3) It is highly probable that Daniel was not part of the group that returned to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. We are not told either way but perhaps his age (75-85) would have prohibited him from returning.
 - 4) During their initial return to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem there was a “sense of peace” but it was short lived and the vision of Daniel 10-12 will shatter any hope that Israel would live in peace for any length of time.
 - This vision was **true**
 - This vision (Daniel 10-12) contained an enormous amount of detail as to the great **conflict** that the people of Judah and Israel would face in the future.

2. “In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed” (Daniel 10:2-3)
- Daniel understood the significance of the vision as mentioned previously; “but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision” (Daniel 10:1)
 - 1) This is an interesting contrast to how he reacted to the vision recorded in Daniel 7&8. (Daniel 7:27, Daniel 8:27)
 - 2) I think his continual dedication to *fasting* and *prayer* brought about such an understanding. The Lord provides Daniel the detail of the vision through an angel and Daniel subsequently lays out that understanding for us in the remaining three chapters. (Daniel 10-12)
 - This vision which contained such detail about the future of the people of Judah and Israel was so concerning to Daniel that he mourned for 3 full weeks and during this time he *abstained* from the delicacies afforded to him because of his position in the government.
 - 1) I think that the previous visions of Daniel 7-9 would have still been weighing heavy on Daniel’s heart and this vision added to his concern.
 - 2) The fact that Daniel was in mourning for three “full” weeks leads me to conclude that he (Daniel) was *troubled*.
 - 3) The decision to abstain from these delicacies was probably done for different reasons than his reasons for abstaining from similar items in his early days in Babylon. (See Daniel 1)
 - The key focal point here is to realize that Daniel understood that there are certain things afforded to us in this world that may be perfectly alright and permissible to partake in, but at the same time those things can become a *hindrance* in our relationship with the Lord which is why he may have chosen not to have them.
 - This choice to abstain from these delicacies had a distinct *purpose* which was to obtain an understanding of this vision that affected the future of God’s people.

The Message and the Messenger (Daniel 10:4-11)

1. “On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold there was a certain man dressed in linen whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. His body was also like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sounds of a tumult” (Daniel 10:4-6)
 - Sometime after the three week period in which Daniel had fasted and prayed he was visited by a “man dressed in linen whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz”.
 - 1) The messenger was not a human being and the best conclusion that we can draw from this passage is that this was an angel from heaven.
 - 2) The appearance of this messenger was one of splendor as he was dressed in linen, girded with a belt of gold, and he manifested an image of brightness and light because angels dwell in the presence of God who is Light. (I John 1:5)
 - 3) This may well have been the angel Gabriel who was the same angel who the Lord told to give an understanding of the vision that Daniel recorded in Daniel chapter 8. (Daniel 8:16)
 - There are some Bible scholars and commentators who conclude that this is a pre-incarnate (before the incarnation or before the birth) appearance of Christ.
 - The date of this vision would probably be April 24, 536 B.C.
 - The location is said to be the great river Hiddekel also known as the Tigris River
 - 1) The Tigris River flows from Turkey, through Syria and eventually merges with the Euphrates River and flows into the Persian Gulf. The city of Baghdad is on the banks of the Tigris River.
 - 2) The location where Daniel saw this angel was in the territory now controlled by the Persian Empire indicating Daniel had not returned to Jerusalem.

2. “Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves” (Daniel 10:7)
- Apparently Daniel had some companions with him when he saw this vision of the angel standing before him:
 - 1) The identity of these companions is unknown and it is doubtful that it was Shadrach, Meshach or Abednego or else Daniel would have named them.
 - 2) These men who were with Daniel did not see the vision but they were clearly shook up at the site of this bright light coming from the angel and they fled.
 - It was Daniel alone who remained behind with the angel but as we will see by the next verse – his strength had left him.
3. “So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground” (Daniel 10:8-9)
- This final vision that Daniel shares in the remaining chapters of his book is one of epic importance to the people of God which no doubt weighed heavy on Daniel.
 - This is a good reminder that our humanity has great limitations when compared to the “spirit world” and all of this powerful display of glory and magnificence zapped Daniel strength so much so that he fell asleep in a prostate position.
4. “Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said to me, O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling” (Daniel 10:10-11)
- The angel touched Daniel and he awoke trembling on his hands and knees
 - The angel acknowledged Daniel as a man of high esteem and worthy to receive an understanding of God’s future plan for His people.

The events surrounding the angel's visit (Daniel 10:12-14)

1. "Then he said to me, do not be afraid Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words" (Daniel 10:12)
 - It appears that from the moment Daniel set himself to understand what would happen to the people of God in the later days that God had already dispatched the angel Gabriel to deliver its explanation, meaning and understanding.
 - Daniel was held in high regard and the recipient of one of the most detailed accounts of the future of the people of the Lord.
2. "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia" (Daniel 10:13)
 - The angel (Gabriel) who was tasked to deliver the message to Daniel was held up by the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" for **21** days
 - 1) This "prince of the kingdom of Persia" is not identified but most scholars conclude that this is some sort of fallen angel or satanic adversary.
 - 2) In the same way that there appear to be ranking of good angels as to various power and duties (i.e. Michael and Gabriel), there appears to be some sort of similar ranking within the evil spirit world among the fallen angels.
 - 3) It appears here that some sort of high ranking and somewhat powerful demon was placed in a position of authority and control over the Persian kingdom.
 - 4) The power and might of this fallen angel was so great that he was able to hold the angel Gabriel up for 21 days until another angel Michael came to his aid.
 - The two angels (Michael and Gabriel) do battle with this demonic being and they successfully overpower him so Gabriel can deliver the message to Daniel.
 - We should never underestimate the power of these spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12)

3. “Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future” (Daniel 10:14)
- This 21 day struggle between the angel Gabriel and the demon identified as the “prince of Persia” had ended allowing Gabriel to come to Daniel and provide an understanding of the vision.
 - The purpose in Gabriel coming to Daniel was to bring an understanding of what will happen to the people of Israel in the latter days which is laid out in great detail in the two remaining chapters 11 and 12.
 - 1) There would be warfare between Israel and its neighbors (Daniel 10:1)
 - 2) Another kingdom (Greece) would come and control the lands and people of Judah and Israel. (Daniel 11:2-35)
 - 3) The vision further reveals that persecution and continual warfare await the people of Israel and Judah not just in their immediate future but even beyond that into the Time of Jacob’s Trouble or The Tribulation. (Daniel 11:36-45)
 - 4) A final kingdom awaited them that we often refer to as The Millennium (Daniel 12:1-4)
 - The emotional burden that Daniel faced had to be enormous:
 - 1) He receives first hand knowledge of a struggle between the forces of good (angels) and the forces of evil (demons).
 - 2) The power that existed in this spiritual realm was beyond any human comprehension and it was certainly beyond Daniel’s which no doubt required further revelation and explanation.
 - 3) The weight of knowing the future of the people of Israel that contained more persecution and warfare probably brought great concern to Daniel.
 - Daniel was uniquely tasked by the Lord to both receive revelation about the future but also to understand and explain its meaning.

Daniel is Strengthened (Daniel 10:15-21)

1. “When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish had come upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me” (Daniel 10:15-17)
 - This description by Daniel as to his current condition and state of mind is but a small glimpse as to the concern and anguish of what he truly felt inside, for he personally witnessed the mighty power of good and evil as well as seeing into the future for his people the Jews which was mixed with curses and blessings.
 - 1) He was speechless
 - 2) The vision had burdened him with anguish
 - 3) He could muster no physical strength on his own and was at the point of complete exhaustion.
 - Daniel even understood his own human weaknesses by making this statement; “For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord?”
2. “Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. He said, O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous! Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, may for lord speak for you have strengthened me.” (Daniel 10:18-19)
 - The angel brought comfort and calm to Daniel (a man held in high esteem in the heavenly realm) by telling him not to be afraid. (Luke 1:30, 2:10, Matthew 28:5)
 - Daniel received both physical and emotional strength for his own benefit but also in order to prepare him to receive the detailed description of future events for the people of Judah and Israel.

3. “Then he said; do you understand why I came to you? But I shall return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold the prince of Greece is about to come.” (Daniel 10:20)
- It is clear from this statement that the angel Gabriel is impressing upon Daniel the immense importance of this vision.
 - 1) Daniel was held in high esteem among the angelic beings and it is evidenced by the fact that Gabriel was prepared and willing to do battle with these evil forces to ensure the message was delivered.
 - 2) This vision was intended to provide not just an explanation of the events that would unfold in the future but also to provide hope that even though powerful evil forces exist – they are no match for forces of good and in the end evil will be defeated and the Lord will prevail!
 - This battle that existed in the “spirit world” was far from over and Gabriel informs Daniel that he will return to do battle with these demonic being who were assigned to these ungodly nations by Satan to oppose God and His plans:
 - 1) First he will return to do battle with the prince of Persia
 - 2) Second he will later do battle with the prince of Greece
 - No matter how powerful Satan is he is still not more powerful than God!
4. However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. **Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince**” (Daniel 10:21)
- The angel Gabriel tells Daniel that there is one who stands with him in the struggle against these evil forces and he is the angel Michael.
 - Michael is the angel assigned to protect the people of Israel (Daniel 12:1)
5. The angel Gabriel will proceed to describe the vision (Daniel 11-12) and assists Daniel with its understanding and meaning.....stay tuned!