

Daniel: The Vision of a Man and a True Word

Daniel 10:1-12:4

MPS God is the Sovereign of all, and His people will persevere because He has appointed the time of the end to rescue unto eternal life all who believe in Jesus Christ.

OBJ Every person should trust in Jesus Christ to stay focused on faithfulness because of Three Realities of God's sovereignty.

TRANS Daniel's vision comes in the third year of Cyrus' reign. Historically, the Medo-Persian empire is in control. Under Cyrus' decree, a group of exiled Jews returned to Jerusalem to begin the process of rebuilding the altar and Temple. And while the rebuilding started with great hope, they quickly encountered strong opposition from the Samaritans that stopped construction, for a time, and caused a spirit of defeat among the people. This is important because Daniel has heard of the difficulty of the returned exiles, and as we saw in chapter 9, he has been interceding for them. That brings us to our text for today.

READ Daniel 10:1

*In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision. **Daniel 10:1***

[.2-9] Daniel's final vision will be the biggest. The word that comes to him is a true word that reveals a great conflict. The vision comes to him in three weeks of great mourning. His description of this season shows the great burden he felt. In this season of prayer, he is visited by "a man clothed in linen". The description(.5-6) is startling, but distinctive as some form or representative from God, with priest-like clothing and divine attributes. While there is much speculation over who this person is, we can only say that it is an angel. Daniel states that only he saw the vision, while the others with him trembled and fled. The affect the arrival of this visitor had on Daniel is also significant.(.8) His strength was immediately gone from him, and he fell face down to the ground.

[.10-14] The visitor touched Daniel and made him tremble. But when he spoke, he strengthened him by telling him that he was greatly loved, and that he had been sent to Daniel. At this, Daniel was able to stand. He addressed Daniel by telling him, "*Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.*"(.12) These words are a comfort and great encouragement to Daniel. Though held up for a time, the reason he came to Daniel is to tell him of a vision of the days to come.

[.15-21] Daniel remains so weak that he slumps again and is unable to speak. But the angel touched his lips so he could open his mouth to speak. Daniel tells him that it is because of the vision that these great pains have come upon him, and they have taken all his strength and his breath. This time the angel touches him again and repeats words to strengthen Daniel by saying, "*And he said, 'O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.'*"(.19a) These words strengthen Daniel even more to be able to listen to what he will share.

Here we finish a whole chapter on just getting Daniel ready to hear what the messenger will speak to Him! The burden Daniel carried was great, far beyond his physical, emotional and spiritual strength to bear up under it. And his seeking and searching of the Lord to understand the vision and the meaning of it required more than he had to give.

TRANS Next, the angel tells Daniel why he has come.

READ Daniel 10:20-21

*Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince. **Daniel 10:20-21***

The angel tells Daniel what will occur not only in the immediate future, but all the way to the time of the end. Daniel is given



insight and understanding of what will transpire through history until history ends in eternity, referred to as “*the time of the end*.” Once the angel finishes telling these things to Daniel, he will return because along with Michael, only they are contending against these forces.

[11:1-4] The angel begins to recount the progression of kings that arise in history. First, in Persian empire, three more kings will arise. Then a fourth who will be rich and become strong because of his riches. But when he opposes Greece, he will be met by a mightier king who shall rule with great dominion. This king is Alexander the Great.¹ As quickly as Alexander rises to power, though, he is gone, his kingdom is broken and greatly divided “*toward the four winds of heaven*” (.4)

[.5-20] Once Alexander’s kingdom is divided, a time of great turmoil and unrest begins as kings vie for dominance and power. From a king from the south who makes alliances but is not strengthened, to kings of the north who war and prevail at times. This extends into generations as one wages war to conquer the other, only to be defeated by another. And each time a kingdom rises it seems more powerful than before, each war growing worse and with greater destruction, and each king more exalted to prevail than previous rulers. But none shall rise to dominance, only to be destroyed by the next rising army.

The vision described in chapter 11 involves the Seleucid and the Ptolemie empires, and others, warring for dominance, but none being able to completely conquer. And in the midst of all this war, the Jews, Daniel’s people, will be caught up in it, trying to form alliances that advance their mission but only failing to overcome and succeed. Because they choose the wrong ally, it comes back to cause them even greater suffering. Verse 17 tells of the king of the north (Seleucids) who then tries to seek peace with the Ptolemies, so they can wage war against greater enemies. But in war, each is out for their own good, no one trusts another, and none are loyal to the other. In all of this, the angel describes a time of great unrest from rising war and increasing instability among nations and armies. The first twenty verses of chapter eleven cover roughly 350 years of history, a period of great war and destruction at the hands of greedy rulers with great lust for power. And also a period of time that will lead to the altering of time itself.

[.21-35] Verse 21 introduces a new king who ravages the coffers of other nations to finance his wars. He reaches a wealth and gains a following greater than those who came before him. This king is Antiochus IV, whom we were introduced to in the previous vision. His military victories are far greater than the armies before him as he utterly decimates all who oppose him. He quickly makes alliances, but does nothing to bother keeping them, only to deceive others for his own advancement. And when he encounters great armies, he conquers as others aid him by undermining his opposition. His dominance becomes so great he turns his sights beyond earth to conquer holy places. What Daniel envisions here is the great suffering of his people by this king. But this king’s demise is inevitable as he sets himself against the God of the Jews. Verse 31 records how he profanes the temple and the burnt offering, to set up “*the abomination that makes desolate*.” There is a remnant of people who know their God and stand firm and take action. But all that is described for Daniel in the vision is of seeming utter devastation until such is “*the time of the end*”, the “*appointed time*” God has set for all this to cease. [When the appointed time comes, wars cease and kings are no more.](#)

[.36-45] Verse 36 introduces another king who picks up where the former left off. Immediately it says he exalts himself and magnifies himself not only among the kings of the earth, but above every god, specifically “*speaking astonishing things against the God of gods*.” Paying no attention to those who have come before him or others, he magnifies himself above all. Instead, he honors a god his fathers did not know. Kings of the south and north attack him, but to no avail. When he comes into the land, tens of thousands fall, though they will be delivered from his hand. As he hears of things that concern him in every direction, he goes out in great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction. Then verse 45 records that at the height of his power and might, “*And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him*.” And while he will not be introduced until the New Testament, this king pre-figures the Anti-Christ.

¹ Paul R. House, [Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary](#), ed. David G. Firth, vol. 23, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2018), 171. House notes, “the mighty king in 11:3 is Alexander the Great (c. 336–323 BC), who defeated Darius III of Persia in a series of battles beginning in 334 BC.”



READ Daniel 12:1-4

“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. ²And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” **Daniel 12:1-4**

Daniel 12 begins “at the time of the end.” Michael, the great archangel, arises. And while there is a time of trouble never seen before, God’s people will be delivered. And the power, and the majesty, and the glory of God, the Ancient of Days, will be revealed in the resurrection unto eternal life of those who are His. And with this, the angel tells Daniel to shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end.

TRANS And with these words the final vision is complete.

God is the Sovereign of all, and His people will persevere because He has appointed the time of the end to rescue unto eternal life all who believe in Jesus Christ.

How we handle any study of the end times matters. But of greatest importance is that we maintain our focus on what we do with these revealed truths for our life here and now. That the end will come and how the end comes is important as a focus of our hope in Christ. **And that certainty strengthens us to believe and walk by faith with Jesus every day as our first priority.** Our aim is to answer and understand every question as much as the Scripture reveals, to strengthen our faith and anchor our hope in staying focused on Jesus for each day, now. **How do we strengthen our faith to stay focused on faithfulness?**

OBJ Three Realities of God’s Sovereignty that strengthen faith to stay focused on faithfulness.

1. God’s Truth Revealed.

If you want to understand the message, you must consider the messenger. The angel tells Daniel why he is bringing the message. **God’s reveals truth to affirm His love for us and comfort our fears of the times, to bring peace that sustains, strength to endure, and courage to persevere.**(.1, 11-12, 19)

Truth is always our aim. We live in an age when everyone is talking about “my truth” and “your truth”, but this is a deception of the Evil One. There are not multiple truths, there is only truth, and God is the author of all truth. But truth is far more than information or data. Truth is a person, Jesus Christ. And until you know that person you cannot know truth. You may know true facts and data, but you do not know truth. Knowledge of the truth means that one exercises faith, believes, to enter into relationship with the living God who IS truth through Jesus Christ. As followers of the One who is truth, there is so much that is so far beyond us. Our aim is not merely to ascertain intellect, but to follow by faith the One who IS truth. When we live by faith to follow the One who is truth, Jesus Christ, then that which God gives by revealing His truth becomes true of our life.

True words always produce greater godliness, but they are not always easily received. Truth demands faith. And in our pursuit of truth, trust is imperative because truth will always include more than we are capable to withstand. And we know we can trust God as truth because what shall be has already been recorded in the book of truth.(10:21) The issue for each one of us is this: will you listen to the One who is truth, or will you listen to every other voice that makes a false claim. Until you believe in Jesus Christ, you will always be subjected to the winds of competing ideologies and truth claims that come and go with the times. False claims strip identity, stir up anxiety, worry, and fear, steal our peace, zap our strength, and strip of courage. But **Jesus Christ, the One who is truth, bestows all these by faith in Him.**(John 14:6)



2. God's Timing decreed.

Throughout the vision it seems as if control is increasingly lost to the evil that spreads. But this is a façade perpetrated by the Evil One to strip you of hope and faith. The timing of God is never in question because the end has been decreed from the beginning. [God always does what He decrees.](#)

*"Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, ⁹remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' ¹¹calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it." **Isaiah 46:8-11***

We read in Daniel that God decrees that history operates by His timing. We hear of all the plans and conquering of the earthly kings and kingdoms when it states, *"In those times..."* (see 11:14), but then we read, *"...but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found."* Faster than they rise, earthly kings and kingdoms stumble and fall never to be found again. **Why is this? Where do they go? What becomes of them, their strength, might, power, and accomplishment?** We see glimpses of what is transpiring in verses like 11:27 when at the height of their glory it states of their plans, *"but to no avail, for the end is yet to be at the time appointed."* Or, as 11:35 states in speaking of their exploits, *"until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time."* Then, verse 36 reminds us, *"He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done."* [The study of history can cause us to question God; but we only truly understand history when we listen to God, for He has decreed what shall be.](#)

We must be careful to not take lightly any study of end times. These are serious matters that entail hard truths, what could be considered the hardest of all history. And the more serious our study of them may have a similar effect on us as the vision did for Daniel, stripping us of strength to stand and faith to believe. But we must remember that while details of the "how" of history holds an importance for us, we must never allow it to become of principle importance to us, to excel above our overcoming in Jesus as the sustaining hope and strength of our life!

3. God's Victory is certain.

Stay with the vision to the end, because while the middle gets intense the end is sweet. And here is the end: the enemy can make war, but what he will never make is victory. [God is intricately involved in the affairs of humanity, laboring to bring His glory on the earth.](#)

*For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. **Habakkuk 2:14***

Here is what you must understand from Daniel's vision; earthly conflicts are never absent of heavenly involvement. (10:20) Christ-followers, we are not agnostics. God did not set this world into orbit and walk away. He is actively involved in this world by His sovereign hand. Daniel 10:13, 20 tell us that there is a war that rages in the heavenlies where the armies of God's angels are battling Satan's demons. And God is not struggling to win, but warring for His purposes. [Spiritual Warfare is never occasional and incidental, nor rare, but is real, ongoing, continual, and intricately involved in the affairs of human history. And God's angels fight to guard and protect God's people.](#)

READ Ephesians 6:12-13

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. **Ephesians 6:10-13***

READ 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

*For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. **2 Corinthians 10:3-4***

[God's victory is certain, and by His truth, has given us all we need to overcome, when we trust in Him to walk by faith.](#)



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