

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF DANIEL

MOURNING (DANIEL 10:1-3)

JERUSALEM IS BEING REBUILT AT THIS TIME

Some of Daniel's concerns from chap. 9 are starting to be dealt with, but there is much opposition to the city and temple being rebuilt, just like what was predicted

- Because of the prophecies of chap. 9 and the conflict in Jerusalem, Daniel has been fasting and praying for 3 weeks

THE DANIEL FAST

We see not only why we fast, but a method of doing it. Daniel ate, but nothing pleasurable, only veggies that would sustain him. It also says he used no oils, which would be a big deal in the extremely dry climate he lived in

- He did this to eliminate luxuries in order to focus on God. **It was a denial of self with the intent of receiving clarity**

TO ADD TO THE STRESS

Though he receives it after the 21 days of fasting, we also know that Daniel is about to be given a vision and "understanding" about a "great conflict" that will take place not only on earth, but in the spiritual world

- We tend to be very selfish. And though prayer and fasting will benefit us, we should ultimately move into an offensive spiritual posture, not just a reactionary defensive one.

MAN AT THE RIVER (DANIEL 10:4-9)

THE TIGRIS RIVER

Right after the fast, Daniel was standing on the bank of the 2nd largest, but most powerful, river in the territory with some other men. He was either there on business, or possibly taking a vacation after Passover 10 days earlier

HE LOOKED UP AND SAW A "MAN"

There is a lot of talk about the lack of gender of angels due to Matthew 22:30, but they are always referenced, appear as, and have the name of males

THE APPEARANCE OF THE BEING

Linen represents purity (Exodus. 28:42), the belt shows high importance. His body was like topaz (brilliant stone that can come in multiple colors), his face shone like lightning (so bright it hurt onlookers), eyes like flaming torches, skin like polished bronze, and a voice like "multitudes" (similar to Revelation 1:14)

ONLY DANIEL SAW THIS

Similar to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), only called person of God saw the vision, not his companions. They did feel something, and fled in terror and hid. They may have also heard the voice.

THIS WAS AN ACTUAL EXPERIENCE

Chap. 8 was a "virtual reality" of sorts, this was a real encounter at a real place

- When seeing the angel or Christophany, Daniel had the standard response; he went pale and became "powerless." He even went into a coma of sorts.

ENCOUNTERING GOD IS NOT ALWAYS JOYOUS

This left Daniel physically and emotionally drained. And though God is the only source of true contentment, He also calls us to have a burden for His Kingdom and for the people around us. With any great calling, there comes a great price.

- **True encounters with Christ change us**, whether we deny or accept

Coming to know Christ brings the greatest joy imaginable, but until we reach eternity, it also brings the heaviest weight, responsibility, and sometimes sadness. We have a mission, and that mission is often messy, and not always fun.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE (DANIEL 10:10-14)

DANIEL WAS PASSED OUT ON THE GROUND

In the middle of his "deep sleep," an angel touched him and he raised up to his hands and knees. The angel told him he was "treasured by God" (similar to chap. 9) and to "understand" what he was about to be told.

- We know that God loves humanity (John 3:16-17), we also know He chooses certain people for special purposes

WE ALSO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY

The Bible is clear in the OT and NT that the petitions of righteous people are effective and heard (James 5:16, John 9:31). **God hears all prayers, but doesn't listen and react if it is not in alignment with His will**

- We have the responsibility to seek His will and live by His design through **prayer, study, and righteous living**

SPIRITUAL WARFARE (V13)

The "prince of Persia" that opposed the angel of God for 21 days was not a literal prince, but a demonic spirit. During the time of Daniel's fast, spiritual warfare was raging all around him. In Ephesians 6:12-13 Paul clarifies how the Believer fights.

FALSE GODS AND EVIL EMPIRES

Theologians are almost unanimous in agreeing that this chapter indicates demonic forces have a part in evil governments and kingdoms. Here it is Persia and Greece.

- The bible goes further to say that **all false gods are demons** in Deuteronomy 32:16-17 and 1 Corinthians 10:20. Not just other religions, but all idols we create.

WHILE ONE STRUGGLED, ONE CAME TO HELP

While one unidentified angel fought with the "prince of Persia," Michael assisted

- We know Michael's role because of Revelation 12:7 when Michael leads the charge against Satan's army during the coming end time tribulation

ANGELPHOBIA AND ANGELMANIA

When discussing angels, Christians need to be careful not to overemphasize or to diminish the role of angels and demons. We often give Satan too much credit

THE UPCOMING INFORMATION IS FOR THE FUTURE

The angel that arrived to Daniel by the help of Michael was sent to tell him about what would happen to the people of God in the future.

- In the "last days" (v14) is talking about the Jews struggles with the Persians and Greeks, but it is also referring to the coming tribulation of the NT Church

We see the spiritual battles behind the struggles of the past. This should inspire us to pray, fast, and study. We must understand that God is the victor, and evil is ultimately defeated by Him, not us.

STRENGTH (DANIEL 10:15-11:1)

RENDERED SPEECHLESS

The revelation of spiritual warfare left Daniel on the ground and speechless until "one with human likeness" touched his lips

- His first response was "because of the vision, anguish overwhelms me and I am powerless...there is no breath in me."

THE SECOND TOUCH GAVE HIM STRENGTH

The 1st touch made Daniel aware of his finiteness and inabilities, but the 2nd touch gave him encouragement, peace, and strength.

- When we come into a relationship with God, we first acknowledge our brokenness (repent) before God gives us the peace, strength, and hope we need to continue on with His vision for our lives!

I HAVE TO GO FIGHT ANOTHER BATTLE

The angel says that he has to go battle the "prince of Greece" after the Persia

A GOOD TIME TO REMEMBER OUR WARFARE METHOD

Ephesians 6:10-18: Wear Truth like a belt, righteousness like armor on your chest, feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel, a shield of faith, helmet of salvation, the sword of God's spirit the Word, and pray at all times in the Spirit

- The Book of Truth is not the Bible, but the future in which God has already written

GOD IS ACTIVE IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

11:1 tells us that the angel sent by God protected Darius for several years so Daniel could reach stature he was at

- We see a correlation with Romans 13. **God will put people in power, even pagan ones, for His purposes. Though difficult, we must trust Him in this!**

THE EPIC BATTLE OF GOOD AND EVIL

Satan has known from Genesis 3 that God will send His Son to redeem mankind and eventually return a 2nd time to defeat him

- To thwart that plan, Satan has used evil empires, corruption, lust, greed, etc. to try and counteract the prophecies from God

THE NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL (1 PETER 5:8-11)

- Let's bring it down from a 30,000ft view to us as individuals. Satan cannot defeat God, so he rages against God's greatest and most treasured creation, us. As we speak, Satan is seeking to creep into our marriages, families, occupations, and personal lives in order to exploit our weaknesses and ultimately destroy us

MATURATION

- We need to take this seriously. We need to acknowledge the supernatural and start depending on God through prayer and study. We simply need to choose to live righteously and obediently.