The Book of Daniel: Spiritual Warfare

Daniel 10:1-21

October 20, 2019

Chapter 10 begins the final section of this prophetic book with chapter 10 recording Daniel’s vision, and chapters 11 and 12 recording the main interpretations of the vision which prophesied the future of Israel. In this vision, God would reveal to Daniel the suffering that lay ahead for the nation of Israel, but also the promises that God would watch over them and ultimately establish their promised kingdom.

In this chapter we’ll learn how Daniel’s prayers moved the hand of God to overcome satanic opposition to the plan God has for Israel. And we’ll learn the part that our prayers play in the triumph of light over darkness.

1. Daniel’s Intercession for Israel (1-4)
   1. The cause of Daniel’s concern (1)
      1. “The third year of Cyrus”
         1. In the first year of Cyrus’s reign, Cyrus decreed that the Jews might return to their homeland (Ezra 1:1).
         2. Less than 2 years later the foundation of the temple was laid (Ezra 3), but immediately opposition from renegade Jews in the area stopped the work and discouraged the workers (Ezra 4:4-5).
         3. To make matters worse, very few Jews returned to Jerusalem to aid the rebuilding efforts.
      2. “The thing was true, but the time appointed was long”
         1. This means that these things came to Daniel in the midst of extreme physical and mental suffering.
         2. Daniel was 84, and even though God had answered his prayers with the decree of Cyrus to let the Jews return to their land, they were still not living in close fellowship with God.
         3. At this point, Daniel had been interceding for his people for almost 70 years with very little change in Israel’s spiritual condition.
   2. The result of Daniel’s concern (2-4)
      1. Daniel was in mourning for 3 full weeks (2-3).
         1. This was in preparation for the Passover, a time when the Jews were to be fasting and preparing themselves for this special season.
         2. Daniel set aside three weeks to fast and pray; he made his external condition agree with his internal condition as an aid to his prayer.
         3. If it were not for Daniel’s fasting and prayer, we may not have this portion of Scripture today!
      2. Daniel was beside the river Hiddekel (4).
         1. Since Daniel was not able to journey to Jerusalem, he and his companions sought out a quiet place to pray by the river.
         2. We know from verse 7 that he was accompanied by others, possibly servants, or possibly other devout Jews who were joining him in prayer.
2. Daniel’s Meeting with the Lord (5-9)
   1. Daniel’s description is almost identical to John’s description of the Lord Jesus Christ (5-6; cf. Rev. 1:12-20).
   2. Daniel saw the vision of the Lord, but his companions were aware something supernatural was taking place, but unable to see the Lord, very similar to Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus (7; cf. Acts 9:3-7).
   3. Daniel’s experience of the Lord almost killed him (8-9).
      1. His strength was drained from him (8).
      2. His comeliness was disfigured (8; cf. Isaiah 52:14 “his visage was so marred more than any man”).
   4. Daniel could do nothing but lie on his face before the Lord (9; Isaiah 6:1-5).
   5. Application: There is a price to pay if we’re to see what God want us to see and hear what He is saying to us. Daniel didn’t have this great vision early n his ministry but at the end of a long and faithful life. Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).
3. Daniel’s Participation in an Invisible War (10-21)
   1. We get the impression that the glorious man clothed in linen vanished from the scene and one of the angels, perhaps Gabriel, strengthened Daniel (10).
   2. The angel reminds Daniel that he is greatly beloved (11)
      1. Ephesians 1:6 “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”
      2. John 17:23 “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”
   3. The angel reveals that an invisible, spiritual war raged while Daniel was praying (12-13).
      1. Ephesians 6:10ff “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places…”
      2. When we pray, god directs the armies of heaven to fight on our behalf, even though we may know nothing about the battles that are being waged in this invisible war (2 Kings 6:17).
   4. The angel strengthened Daniel for the fight that lay ahead (14-21).
      1. It is in complete harmony with Scripture to suppose that the princes of Persia and Greece who opposed Gabriel were the devil’s own angels.
         1. Jude 9 “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”
         2. Revelation 12:7 “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels”
      2. The world is the devil’s.
         1. 2 Corinthians 4:4 “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”
         2. Ephesians 2:2 “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”
         3. 1 John 5:19 “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”
      3. Christians must do wage this warfare with spiritual weapons.
         1. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)”
         2. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

Conclusion:

1. Do the needs of the world around you drive you to your knees?
2. Are you willing to pay the price to wage this spiritual battle?
3. How are you engaging in the spiritual battle? Are you withstanding the devil’s attacks, or are you oblivious to them?