

STUDY NOTES
DANIEL 10

ALPHA
+
OMEGA

DANIEL 7-12



Daniel 10

Chapters 10-12 of Daniel are a unity, with chapter 10 the prologue and chapter 12 the epilogue. For the purposes of this study we will examine chapter 10 as a separate entity and move on to chapters 11-12 for our final view of this remarkable book.

The final prophecy of the book is again an expansion on the symbolic material of chapter 7. Chapter 10 explains when and how this final vision came to Daniel, and introduces us to the other worldly conflict of good and evil angels, between the Kingdom of God, represented by Jerusalem and its sanctuary, and the Kingdom of Satan represented by the nations.

Vv 1-3 | God's Timing

Vv 1-3 reveal Daniel's understanding of this great conflict and its impact on him. The third year of Cyrus places us in the year 536 BC. Daniel has been mourning for three weeks alongside observing dietary restrictions symbolising his state of humble submission before God, seeking a further revelation in the light of the answer to his prayers provided for him at the end of chapter 9.

Vv 4-14 | God's Prophet

The vision and the message are given in vv 4-14, the heavenly battle theme alluded to in v 13. The destiny of Israel in the last days is the subject of the angelic message brought.

God once again sends a divine messenger whose appearance is overwhelming (vv 5-6). His presence sees the men with Daniel flee from the scene to leave him alone, falling into a deep sleep as the angel begins to speak (v 9). Daniel is once again reaffirmed as the prophet who would be the vehicle for the revelation of God's divine purposes.

Three times the angel approaches Daniel and strengthens him (vv 10, 16 & 18). Daniel is highly esteemed and depicted as the one who will receive God's word and consider it seriously (v 11). As had taken place in chapter 9, the angel comes as a response to Daniel's prayerful dependence on God (v 12). The angel's urging for Daniel not to be afraid underlines the humble and self-effacing character with which he approaches the task of prophecy, similar to that of Isaiah when he is commissioned (Isaiah 6). Daniel, trembling stood up to receive the prophecy. Intriguingly, the angel explains his delayed arrival due to a heavenly battle he had to engage in, and which he received support from the angel Michael (see Revelation 12:7) as he fought a heavenly battle with the King of Persia. Now that he has arrived Daniel is about to learn about the future for Israel (v 14) beyond the exile.

Vv 15-21 | God's Message

In vv 15-21 the angelic messenger reassures Daniel and returns to complete the conflict with the Satanic Prince of Persia who would be succeeded by another Satanic foe, the Prince of Greece.

As Daniel is overwhelmed by the experience an angel touches his lips (v 16). This experience is similar to that experienced by Isaiah (Is 6:1-7) where the coal touching the prophet's lips is an act of purification. Whether this is a similar act for Daniel we are not told. Whatever the case, Daniel has the experience once again in v 18 so that he may be strengthened in the midst of the extraordinary privilege of having access to heaven and its divine purposes revealed to him. It is this strengthening that equips Daniel with a readiness to receive the message to be delivered (v 19). A heavenly battle is about to take place which will result in the changing of the guard for the forces who opposed the King of Heaven, but not before the contents of the Book of Truth will be shared with Daniel (v 21).

The Heavenly Kingdom and the Human Servant

We should not miss God's personal care and concern for Daniel in the chapter, set against the background of heavenly battles and forces opposed to the divine agenda to bring history to its intended end. Behind earthly nations and events lies the reality of a world which the bible openly acknowledges is itself in conflict (Ephesians 6:12).

The spiritual battle pre-figured in Daniel's experience is one all Christians partake in, and for which they are equipped with weapons from above (Ephesians 6:10-20). Rather than being overwhelmed, the strength of the Spirit equips to

prevail through the power of the cross. We do well to remember that the death and resurrection of Christ has given us access to heavenly blessings which both enable us to advance and defend the Kingdom of God.

Daniel 10 has in so many ways been preparatory. But essential to recognising and being reminded that the Lord of Heaven and Earth has chosen to reveal his purposes to his people and seeks our obedient and prayerful response to his Word. In the midst of our struggles God is as much committed to being present with us to strengthen and encourage, as he is to ultimately delivering us into his Kingdom.

If God is for us, who can be against us?

Getting Started

1. How do we know God is 'for us'?
2. When are we tempted to doubt this truth?

Into the text

Read Daniel 10:1-21

3. Daniel is given a further glimpse into a world beyond his daily experience. How does this chapter describe his reaction?
4. What change has taken place in Daniel throughout this chapter?
5. What is the place of the angel(s) in the plans and purposes of God (see also Psalm 103:20)?
6. What is the role of the angel in providing for Daniel in this chapter?
7. In what ways do we face the experience of Daniel in Ephesians 6:12?
8. What strength and comfort are we provided with in our spiritual conflicts to prevent us being overwhelmed?

Takeaway

9. How has this chapter changed your view of reality?
10. How has this chapter changed your view of dealing with suffering?