

How many armed forces, currently active or not, do we have in the church? First off thank you for your service, secondly, I am sure most of you have seen warfare. Some maybe front line, some from a ship or aircraft. Maybe from a desk here state side, nevertheless warfare is difficult, dangerous, and possibly deadly. For the rest of slackers, how many of you ever been in a fight? Not exactly warfare I know. It is always scary when we are up against an enemy, we never know what they are capable of, or how to stand against them.

It is no different with spiritual warfare, our opponents are powerful, they understand our weaknesses. Just as a good general looks for a weak spot to get to the upper hand on the enemy, Satan uses our weaknesses to get a foot hold on us. He uses tactics that have worked forever. Although he has power, he cannot make you do anything. He usually works something like this, "Hey Jennifer, did you hear what Edd said about you to some of the guys?" This gets Jennifer upset, and she goes and tells her friend Carolyn something that I actually did. Carolyn tells her husband Chad what Jennifer said, and being the good friend he is, he comes and tells me. Now Jenn is upset, Carolyn thinks I'm a dirtbag, Chad thinks Jennifer is petty and I'm furious because of the little bit of truth that was in all of that. So, let's count the sins we piled up.

1. Jenn went outside our marriage confiding in someone else instead of bringing it to the source.
2. Carolyn and Chad are gossiping, even though Chad just had my back.
3. And I am ready to let Jennifer have it as soon as she gets home, I've already lost control of my temper.

He is just trying to get us to fall away from God, quit turning to Him. He didn't have to do anything for it either, we did all that on our own. We are the ones who lose control, forget all we know about how Jesus would have us react to the situation we are in. See we are quick to lose it and show everyone our tails, but then want to blame it on someone or something else.

Daniel 10 Preparation, Plan

Verse 1 Preparation

The third year of Cyrus' rule as king over Babylon was 536 B.C. Cyrus also ruled over Persia in 558 B.C., but the time we are most interested in Cyrus was during his rule over Babylon. Cyrus had issued his decree allowing the Jews to return to their land and to rebuild their temple in 538 B.C. Some of them had departed that same year, many working hard to return to a normal sense of life. They reinstated the sacrifices by 537 B.C. and by 536 B.C. they had begun to rebuild the temple. Daniel would have been in his 80s in 536 B.C., and his age may account for his not returning to the Promised Land. Daniel remained in government service until the first year of Cyrus, but he remained in Babylon for several additional years, perhaps in "retirement."

Critics have attacked the Book of Daniel because, they claim, the title "Cyrus king of Persia" was not a contemporary way of referring to him. However, this would have been a perfectly legitimate way of referring to this king unofficially, if not officially. Perhaps Daniel's Babylonian name appears again here to assure the reader that this was the same Daniel whom we met in preceding chapters. He was the Daniel who had unusual skill in understanding visions and dreams.

The message that came to Daniel was a revelation from God that included a vision. The emphasis on "message" in this verse may indicate that, in contrast to the preceding visions, this one came primarily as a spoken message. Daniel apparently understood this vision better than he had some of the earlier ones.

Verses 2-3

The vision in chapter 9 came after Daniel had been praying and fasting. The vision that follows also came to him after he had been mourning, fasting, and undoubtedly praying, for three weeks. Well kind of fasting, it would be wrong to call what Daniel did fasting. The Biblical idea of fasting is to abstain from food altogether, drinking only water. Daniel definitely practiced a form of self-denial, but it was not fasting. This lasted for literal weeks, I was not allowed to eat solid foods for 24hours for a procedure about a month ago. In the days leading up to that day I dreaded not being able to eat, more than the actual procedure. Thankfully I survived both and able to stand here and tell you that, I bet you could go one day without solid food and be ok....but I don't want to do it again!

Daniel had already been through this revelation thing before, and he knew the Jews that had decided to return to Palestine had been encountering some problems. These were the reasons for Daniel's grave concern. Even though many Israelites were returning to Palestine, God had already revealed that they would experience trouble there.

Verse 4

Daniel had gone to the Tigris River, perhaps to pray for the exiles who had returned, and he had probably gone there with other godly Jews. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread fell on the fourteenth through the twenty-first days of the first month. But the Jews did not observe these festivals in captivity as they had in their own land. Three days after these important memorial days, God gave Daniel a vision that he alone saw.

Verses 5-6

The man whom Daniel saw in this vision was probably the Son of God. The Jewish interpreters and some modern Christian scholars preferred the view that he was an angel.

Expensive linen dress is what the priests in Israel wore, and it distinguished them as God's special servants. Likewise, the sash around this angel's waist, evidently embroidered with or made completely of the best gold, would have identified Him as a special person.

The personal descriptions of this man resemble what John saw on the island of Patmos, namely: the Son of God. All these features picture a person of great glory and splendor.

The impression given to Daniel was that the entire body of the man in the vision was like a gigantic transparent jewel reflecting the glory of the rest of the vision.

Verses 7-9

Daniel's companions, sensing that something awesome was happening, hid themselves while Daniel viewed what God showed him. His personal reaction to this vision was also similar to the Apostle John's. The words of the person Daniel saw, along with his glorious appearance, caused the him to faint.

Verses 10-11

The "man" who touched Daniel and who proceeded to speak to him may have been the same one the prophet saw in the vision. That the person in verses 5-6 was God, but the person in verses 10-21 was an angel.

The angel described Daniel as a man of high esteem. We know that Daniel enjoyed a good reputation among his peers, but this title probably reflects God's estimate of him. The Hebrew words here are *'ish hamudowt* means "man of preciousness." Daniel was precious to God, not only because he was one of God's chosen people, but also because God had been precious to him. Is God precious to you?

It was only appropriate for Daniel to "stand" in order to receive a message from this impressive messenger from God.

Verse 12

Still, it was an unnerving experience for Daniel to stand in the presence of such a glorious person. The angel realized how Daniel felt and encouraged him not to fear. The angel informed him that God had heard his first prayer for understanding, and this which follows came in answer to that prayer. Humbling himself before God involved taking the role of a learner before Him.

This verse brings great encouragement to those who pray but are not answered immediately. The cause of the delay may be something totally unknown to us; just because the answer may not be immediate, the prayer is always heard immediately.

Verse 13

Someone had delayed the arrival of God's answer to Daniel's prayer. He was the "prince of Persia," evidently a fallen angel who, under Satan's authority, had a special responsibility for Persia. Clearly, "prince" here refers to an angel, since Michael was also called a "prince". The prince of Persia" must have been an evil angel since he opposed God's purpose. Angelic hostility in the unseen world had resulted in the 21-day delay of this good angel's arrival with God's message.

The powers of evil apparently have the capacity to bring about hindrances and delays, even of the delivery of the answers to believers whose requests God is clear to answer.

God can, of course, override the resistance of all the forces of hell if he chooses to do so, he gives demons certain limited powers of obstruction and rebellion somewhat like those he gives humans. But we see with Job, the wrath of Satan is never allowed to go beyond the limit set by God, who will not allow the believer to be tested beyond his limit.

It seems unlikely to me that the prince of Persia could have resisted the Son of God this way, if He were the person addressing Daniel. God's messenger had received help from Michael, one of the chief princes (angels), so it seems unlikely that he was God Himself. Some angels have more authority and power than others do.

Bad angels, called demons in the New Testament, are, without a doubt, referred to here. In the course of time, these demonic powers gained a very strong influence over certain nations and the

government of these nations. They became the controlling power. They used whatever resources they could muster to slow down God's work and to destroy His purposes.

Evidently the good angel who spoke to Daniel had performed some duty in Persia that involved the kings or rulers of that land. However, having received a commission from God to visit Daniel, he was not able to break away to deliver it because of the influence of the bad angel who exercised strong influence over Persia. Michael visited the good angel and helped him break away from this wicked angel's power so he could visit Daniel.

There may be hindrances to our praying-about which we know nothing-as we wonder why an answer to our prayer does not come. Nevertheless, we should keep on praying. This incident reminds us of the importance of prayer. If Daniel had stopped praying on the twentieth day, he might not have received the great revelation of chapter 11 on the twenty-first day.

Verse 14

The good angel had come to explain to Daniel what would happen to the Jews in the future. Daniel had already received some revelation about what lay ahead for the Jews. It was evidently this revelation that puzzled him and led to his requesting clarification in prayer.

Verse 15 *Plan*

Apparently, the angel's explanation about the angelic conflict was something about which Daniel had known nothing about. His only reaction to this information, on top of the vision that he had just seen, was to bow his head and silently accept this revelation.

Verses 16-17

The one who resembled a human being was probably an angel who touched his lips and thereby enabled him to speak. The prophet proceeded to explain to the angel that the vision had caused him anxiety and had robbed him of his strength. He said he felt so inferior to the angel that he considered himself unworthy to talk to him, he felt he did not have sufficient strength and breath to do so.

Verse 18

This is the third instance in this chapter, of Daniel receiving strength from an angel who touched him. Compare this to Luke's record of an angel strengthening Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Verse 19

The angel repeated the complimentary description "man of high esteem", which reassured Daniel. He also encouraged him not to fear, to feel at peace, and to be courageous. These words strengthened Daniel, and he asked the angel to give him the rest of the revelation.

The whole reason for these verses that dwell on Daniel's felt weakness, and the strength that the angel provided him, is to help us anticipate the following revelation, and how very important it is.

Verse 20

The angel asked if Daniel knew why he had come to him. He apparently did this to focus his attention on the vision to follow.

The angel informed Daniel that he had to return to resume fighting against the demon who was influencing Persia, and then battle the one that would be influencing Greece. The prince of Greece may be a reference to Alexander the Great. Persia and Greece, of course, are two of the kingdoms that have been the focus of prophecy in most of this book.

Verse 21

The "writing of truth" seems to refer to all that God has recorded as truth. This includes Scripture, but it also includes all that is true that God has not even revealed. The angel would make *part* of what God had established as "truth" known to Daniel. The angel intended this revelation to encourage Daniel, and us.

It is encouraging for God's people to know that he has mighty champions among the holy angels whose task is to defend the saints against the attacks of the evil one.

So, as we encounter spiritual warfare, we are to stand in our faith to God, stay strong in our prayers to God, and rely on the truth of God.