

14.03.2020 FROM BATTLE TO VICTORY

“O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!” Daniel 10:19

Daniel chapter 10 refers back to chapter 9 and is also an introduction to the final vision of Daniel described in detail in chapters 11 and 12. Chapter 10 has 4 parts:

1. The preparation: 10:1-3
2. The vision of a Divine Being: 10:4-9
3. Daniel's reaction to the vision: 10:10-19
4. Summary of a long conflict: 10:20-11:1

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long (it concerned a great war); and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. 10:1

The third year of Cyrus was 536 BC; 2 years (538 BC) after Cyrus had issued the decree for the Jews in Babylon to return to Jerusalem. Daniel received a message. He says the message was true (as was the vision described in Daniel 8:26) and he understood the vision (he received understanding as in Daniel 9:22). It concerned a long war and as we shall see, this war covers centuries and is fought on earth as God's enemies persecute God's people. But God's people are assured that they are not alone for this war is fought at the cosmic level too, between the evil angels who are behind the persecuting powers and God's angels who defend God's people.

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food (delicacies), no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. (10:2, 3)

The immediate context for Daniel's mourning is probably because he had heard of the opposition to the building of the Temple by the adversaries of Judah (described in the book of Ezra). These adversaries appealed to the kings of Persia to stop the building of the Temple and the restoration of the city of Jerusalem.

In Daniel 9, we see that Daniel's mourning and prayer of confession for his people was followed by Gabriel coming to make him understand the vision of Daniel 8:13, 14. So too, after this 3 week period of mourning and abstaining from food that was usually eaten on festive days (delicacies, meat and wine) we find that Daniel receives a vision.

The Vision of the Heavenly Man: Daniel 10:4-9

Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris (Hiddekel), I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in colour, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.10:5, 6

The river Tigris lies 20 miles to the east of the river Euphrates – the 2 great rivers of the city of Babylon. God had promised Abraham that the land He would give Abraham and his descendants would extend to the Euphrates (Genesis 15:8). Many commentators believe that by extending this vision to the river Tigris, God was revealing to Daniel the universality of His covenant promise.

'The reference to the Tigris River in verse 4 gives to this passage the notion of universality, enlarging the scope of revelation given to Daniel beyond the limits of God's covenant with the people of Israel. In the previous chapter, the word "many" played the same role, enlarging (in our understanding) the group for whom the Messiah makes the covenant stronger through his death (Dan. 9:26, 27).' *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise: D Stefanovic.*

The Heavenly Man is described as being more radiant than Gabriel. He closely resembles 'the One like the Son of Man' seen by John on Patmos:

'...One like the Son of Man clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.' Revelation 1:13-15

This heavenly Man is none other than Jesus Himself.

And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. 10:7

Daniel says he alone saw the vision, for those with him fled in terror. This reminds us of the reaction of sinners when they see the coming of Christ in glory (Revelation 6:15, 16).

Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigour (splendour) was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. 10:8

Daniel himself was left alone, left with no strength. Every saint in the Bible when presented with a vision of God recognises his utter unworthiness to stand in the presence of God.

Isaiah: *I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."* Isaiah 6:5

Ezekiel: *This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face. Ezekiel 1:28*

John: *And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. Revelation 1:17*

For Reflection: If we are careless in the presence of God, it probably is because we have no concept of the vast gulf between God's holiness and our unrighteousness.

'This **Great Vision...**' 1:8 would prepare Daniel for the message of the **great war**. But the climax of the vision is good news for God's people for the **Great Prince Michael will arise and deliver His people** (Daniel 12:1).

Touched by an Angel (Daniel's reaction to the Vision); Daniel 10:10-19

In the context of the prophetic part of the book of Daniel, it is probably the angel Gabriel who is again sent to Daniel. After the vision of Christ, Daniel is left without strength. The touch of the angel sends him trembling to his hands and knees. But the angel reassures him that he is greatly loved, that because of his humility and desire to understand, God has heard his words and sent Gabriel to him.

Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words." Daniel 10:10-12

'Stand upright' says Gabriel. In the Hebrew it literally means "**and stand on the place where you are standing**".

Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come." 10:14

Daniel became speechless at what Gabriel said to him; that the vision concerned a long conflict. So the angel touched his lips and Daniel spoke, saying he had no strength or breath left in him.

Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." 10:18, 19.

When we wait upon God in humility and a desire to understand His will, He raises us up, puts words into our mouth and gives us strength **and fights our battles for us**. Hence Gabriel's command, '**Do not be afraid! Be strong, be strong!**'

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them. Psalm 34:4-7

The Cosmic Conflict in Daniel 10

"Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.** 10:12, 13

Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. 10:20, 21

Gabriel tells Daniel why he should not be afraid, why he should be at peace and why he should be strong. Though unseen by Daniel, there are cosmic forces at work. The nations that oppressed Israel were being helped by the princes of the Evil One; but Gabriel fought on behalf of God's people. So strong are the evil forces that they were able to hold out against Gabriel for 3 weeks. Gabriel, though one of the chief angels, only prevailed when Michael came to help him.

Gabriel gives Daniel an understanding of the cosmic battle being fought on behalf of God's people. He is told that ultimate victory is still a long way ahead, for after Persia, Gabriel will have to contend with the prince of Greece. But ultimate victory is assured through Michael the Prince, '*who is like God*'.

The Cosmic Conflict Today

The vision of Daniel 10 extends to our time (as we shall see in Daniel 11 and 12). Today the battle is primarily spiritual; God's enemies hate Christ's Bride, the Church. These enemies are supported by the Devil and his angels. Against supernatural foes, no human has any power to withstand. **But we have one great advantage in that we live in the age where Messiah the Prince has already confirmed the covenant at Calvary (Daniel 9:27). Satan's power is broken!** Daniel looked forward in faith to the time when Messiah would come. We must claim the victory of Messiah for ourselves.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of [c]the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

We are to follow the **example** of Daniel, the greatly beloved of God.

1. We are to pray.

When we pray, we must 'come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' Hebrews 4:16

The throne of grace is the Most Holy Place, the dwelling place of God. Satan cannot touch us there, for he has no access to heaven after Calvary.

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust." Psalm 91:1, 2

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18

2. We are to recognise that Christ is our Prince and He is and will be victorious over the forces of Death and Hell.

I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. Revelation 1:17, 18

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Ephesians 6:10

3. We are to stand where God has placed us. Christ has won the victory; we are to hold the ground He has taken back from Satan.

Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD...Exodus 14:13

Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. Job 37:14

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD. 2 Chronicles 20:17

Put on the whole armour of God; that you may be able to stand against the wiles (scheming) of the devil. Ephesians 6:11

Therefore take up the whole armour of God; that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Ephesians 6:13

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness... Ephesians 6:14

'When we read Ephesians 6:10-12, we realize that the work and responsibility of the church is spiritual warfare. The opponents in this warfare are not flesh and blood, but spiritual beings whose dwelling is in the air. Let us read verses 13 and 14. *"Therefore take up the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore."* **Here we are told that we should stand, not that we should attack. The spiritual warfare is defensive, not offensive, because the Lord Jesus has already fought the battle and won the victory. The work of the church on the earth is simply to maintain the Lord's victory.** The Lord has already won the battle, and the church is here to maintain His victory. The church's work is not to overcome the devil, but to resist him who has already been overcome by the Lord. Her work is not to bind the strong man—the strong man has already been bound. Her work is not to let him be loosed. There is no need to attack; simply guarding is sufficient. **The starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ; it is seeing that Christ has already overcome. It is not dealing with Satan, but trusting in the Lord. It is not hoping that we will win the victory, because the victory has already been won. The devil can do nothing.** *Watchman Nee.*

Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 John 5:4, 5

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Revelation 3:21

We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Romans 8:37
