

“Discovering God’s Timetable Pt. 2”
“Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God” - Part 11
Daniel 9 continued

Review:

- 1. Daniel discovers God’s immediate plans.**
- 2. Daniel responds to the truth he discovered in worship and prayer.**
- 3. God shares with Daniel His future plans for Israel.**

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill—while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision: "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.
Daniel 9:20-24

The seventy ‘sevens’:

The angel Gabriel speaks to Daniel about 490 years specifically related to Israel and Jerusalem.

During those 490 years God would accomplish 6 specific purposes for Israel.

"Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. Daniel 9:25-27

The 490 years are broken up into three periods.

Period #1 = 49 years. The Jews will rebuild Jerusalem during troubled times. (The key issue is the date of the decree.)

Period #2 = an additional 434 years totaling 483 years. The angel Gabriel affirmed that 483 years are involved from the giving of the decree to the crucifixion of the “Anointed One”.

Period #3 = 7 years. *The final seven year period will begin with a peace covenant that will be broken after 3 1/2 years. In the middle of the 7 years the covenant will be broken and the temple will be defiled and sacrifices cut off. In the last 3 1/2 years God will defeat His enemies and Christ will return.*

A strange parenthesis:

Gabriel didn't tell Daniel what would happen between the 69th and 70th "seven". We do learn that this final seven years is called "The time of Jacob's Trouble".

Remember this prophecy of the seventy "sevens" focuses on the Jews and the temple, not the church.

The gap between the death of Christ and the tribulation has to do with the Church, the body of Christ, which was a mystery hidden in the Old Testament times.

This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 3:6

Understanding Principalities and Powers
“Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God” - Part 11
Daniel 10:1-21

1. A troubled prophet.

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.

At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

Daniel 10:1-3

Why is Daniel troubled?

One reason might be that 50,000 Jews had left for Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, but after the foundation was laid, work stopped because of opposition. (Ezra 4)

A second reason could have been his desire for a better understanding of the prophecies he had already received.

What we know for certain is—God laid a burden on Daniel’s heart; he longs for understanding so he took it before the Lord in fasting and prayer.

2. Daniel’s incredible vision.

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

Daniel 10:4-9

Who is the man in Daniel’s vision?

We do not know what Daniel is doing on the bank of the Tigris, but the situation is real, others are with him.

Daniel has seen an angel before, but not like this!

The description reminds us of the description of Christ in Revelation 1:13-15.

Some believe that this is a theophany, a pre-incarnation appearance of Christ, as the Angel of Jehovah.

If this is the Son of God, he would not need the help of Michael to fight against demonic angels. (See verse 21.)

Daniel has seen the Son of Man at the throne of God in Heaven, but this man was very near him and on earth.

It could be that there are clearly two different persons here: the vision of the Angel of Jehovah (Christ) and another angel (Gabriel) who touches and strengthens Daniel.

He is the one who is sent to give Daniel understanding and needed Michael’s help in battle.

The truth is we cannot be dogmatic.

3. Daniel is made aware of the spiritual battle over nations.

A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come." While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe." Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. "Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Daniel 10:10-11:1

The Spiritual battle:

Daniel's conversation with the angel reveals to us the important fact that there is an invisible war going on.

The prince of the Persian kingdom is a demonic angel resisting God's messenger angel. Michael is the archangel of God and the protector of Israel.

Daniel needs strengthening three times. (Reminds us of Christ in the Garden in prayer.)

"Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed," reminds us of Gabriel's greeting to Mary,

"Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you...Do not be afraid"

The angel will return to the battle after he enlightens Daniel.

Application: Daniel, through his fasting and prayer, had been involved in a cosmic spiritual battle and didn't even know it, and the Lord was using some of His highest angels to answer his prayers! That certainly raises our prayer life out of ritual and reminds us that it is one of our most important spiritual weapons.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against

the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:12-18

"Understanding Principalities and Powers" is eleventh in a series titled, "Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God." August 11, 2013. All verses are from the New International version unless noted.