

“Be Strong”

Daniel 10:1-11:2a

Chapter ten (and the first verse and a half of chapter eleven) of Daniel is a very lengthy introduction to the fourth and final vision/prophecy of Daniel – it extends through chapter twelve. Some consider the length of the introduction indicative of the value and scope of the prophecy – a valid point for sure.

I. STRENGTH WAS NEEDED TO DEAL WITH THE GRIEF OVER WHAT HE SAW – VS. 1-3.

A. *“The third year of Cyrus king of Persia – about 12 years after chapter nine. Daniel apparently didn’t go back to Israel – at least not with the first wave of refugees that returned. Most likely because of his advanced age as well as he still had a position of prestige (albeit retired) that he could use to help influence the government in favor of Israel.*”

B. *“A thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Beltehazzar”*

1. The “thing” (דְּבַרְךָ –word, matter, thing) that was revealed was the revelation of the vision he received that is explained in the text to follow.
2. The mention of his Babylonian name seems to be given to make sure the connection remains with this being the same “Daniel” as the one mentioned 70 years prior at the beginning of the book where it is recorded that he was given that

name by Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 1:7

⁷ Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

C. "And the thing was true, but the time appointed was long"

1. "The thing was true" – reliable – wasn't a false vision but had proof within it that justified it as valid and trustworthy.
2. "But the time appointed was long" – the calamity that was prophesied has both long-reaching ramifications as well as it would last a long time – reference verse 14 as it relates to this.
 - a) The clause is made up of two Hebrew words – וַיְצַבֵּא גְדוֹל – would literally translate as "and an army [was] great." The "army" would be understood as warfare or conflict and the "great" would be seen as great in length.
 - b) Put together, it is translated in the older English versions this way to demonstrate that the conflict or warfare spoken of in the prophecy is one that will extend over time and will have great, or grave, consequences.
 - c) The ESV translates it as, "And the word was true, and it was a great conflict."

D. The latter portion of the verse shows that

Daniel had a better understanding of this vision than he had the previous one where Gabriel was sent to bring the vision and the understanding. Daniel was now older, had more "light" to use and he had a clearer picture of what was ahead.

E. Vs. 2 speaks of Daniel "mourning three full weeks" – as verse thirteen points out, once the angel brought the message, the answer, for Daniel his mourning ceased.

What he was mourning is the question that needs to be considered here.

1. "In those days" – what days is unclear but there appears to be something of significance that caused Daniel to be in distress and grief.

"I was afflicting myself; that is, he had set apart this time as an extraordinary fast. He was sad and troubled. He does not say on what account he was thus troubled, but there can be little doubt that it was on account of his people. This was two years after the order had been given by Cyrus for the restoration of the Hebrew people to their country, but it is not improbable that they met with many embarrassments in their efforts to return, and possibly there may have sprung up in Babylon some difficulties on the subject that greatly affected the mind of Daniel. The difficulties attending such an enterprise as that of restoring a captured people to their

country, when the march lay across a vast desert, would at any time have been such as to have made an extraordinary season of prayer and fasting proper.” (Barnes)

2. “Three full weeks” – שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁבָעִים יָמִים – literally, “three weeks [of] days” – showing it’s a specific number of days as opposed to the “weeks of years” we saw in chapter nine.

F. Vs. 3 explains the duress he was under and the anguish it caused him, to the point of not being able to eat anything more than the basics to keep himself alive until he heard from the Lord on the matter.

II. STRENGTH WAS NEEDED TO COMPREHEND THE VISION OF WHAT SOME CALL “THE GLORY OF GOD” – VS. 4-9.

A. Verse four gives us some details about the timing of this prayer/mourning season in which Daniel found himself.

1. “And in the four and twentieth day of the first month” – the 24th of Abib, later to become Nisan, or April – the first month of the Old Testament Jewish calendar based on the month they were delivered out of Egypt. This is significant because it would have been the time of the Passover, a time in which Daniel would have already been in the attitude of fasting and meditation on the things of the Lord.

“At the close of his season of fasting.

Though he had not set apart this season of fasting with any view or expectation that it would be followed by such a result, yet there was a propriety that an occasion like this should be selected as that on which the communication which follows should be made to his mind, for

(a) his mind was in a prepared state by this extraordinary season of devotion for such a communication; and

(b) his attention during that period had been turned toward the condition of his people, and it was a fit opportunity to impart to him these extraordinary views of what would occur to them in future days.

“It may be added, that we shall be more likely to receive Divine communications to our souls at the close of seasons of sincere and prolonged devotion than at other times, and that, though we may set apart such seasons for different purposes, the Spirit of God may take occasion from them to impart to us clear and elevated views of Divine truth, and of the Divine government.” (Barnes)

2. “I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel” – some say this is the Tigris, some say it is the Euphrates, but, considering that Genesis 2:14 points to two distinct rivers, it is most likely this is the Tigris – some 50-70 miles from Babylon. The rivers mentioned in Genesis would have been destroyed during the flood but that doesn’t change the naming

scheme for the rivers.

Genesis 2:10-14

¹⁰ And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

¹¹ The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

¹² And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

¹³ And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

¹⁴ And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

B. Verse five begins the description of "a certain man" – אִישׁ-יָחִיד – this man (literally, "one man") is what is called a "theophany," or a "Christophany" – the appearance of God in human form, in the Person of Jesus Christ. The description given, compared with other portions of Scripture, clearly describe the Person of the Godhead that others have seen. This description continues through verse six.

1. "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man" – there are some that believe this "man"
2. "Clothed in linen" – the word for "linen" is plural and as such it speaks of more than a normal linen garment, but of one that is unique, and its uniqueness in this setting would have been one of "shining white"

(K&D). The shining white color is representative of the holiness of God and His glory.

Daniel 12:6-7

⁶ And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

⁷ And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Revelation 1:13-15

¹³ And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

¹⁴ His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

¹⁵ And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

Matthew 17:1-2

¹ And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

² And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3. "Whose loins were girded with fine gold of

Uphaz” – both the refinement of the gold and the gold itself points to Christ in all His splendor and value.

4. Verse six gives more detail, all of which describe the wonder and glory of the Son of God as He is in Glory, as He is in His glorified state.

“God was impressing on Daniel that He was a God of forgiveness and faithfulness. Daniel was rightly concerned for the prospects of God's kingdom and mourned deeply over the sins and shortcomings of the people. His God, however, remained the same. He had not changed. The God of the past—of the covenant at Sinai and the sacrifices at Jerusalem—was still all-sufficient to meet the needs of His people. By reminding Daniel of the past, God was giving him encouragement to trust His adequacy for a future that looked increasingly bleak.

“An important spiritual principle is enshrined here: Knowledge of God's work of grace in the past encourages us to trust Him and seek His blessing in the present and for the future. Think, for example, of the way in which Psalm 44 describes an individual in the midst of discouragement finding encouragement from the past. The prayer would be something like this: ‘You worked before, O Lord; work again in this time.’” (The Preacher’s Commentary)

C. The entirety of this vision of the “certain man” was enough to make Daniel

collapse in both wonder and dread – vs. 7-9.

1. Vs. 7 – Daniel was not alone by the river, showing, in part, that this is a real, literal vision and not just an allegory or metaphor (as some would have it). The men with him were “scared off,” so to speak, by a peculiar and specific “earthquake” that was significant enough to cause them to run and hide.
2. Vs. 8 – “Saw this great vision” – the vision of the “certain man” of verses five and six, as well as the vision or prophecy for which this text is an introduction. The latter part of the verse uses terms to simply describe how he felt, being so overwhelmed with the emotion of it all that he became, as it were, dead.

Revelation 1:17

¹⁷ And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not; I am the first and the last:**

3. Vs. 9 – “Then was I in a deep sleep on my face” – the word for “in a deep sleep” (נִרְדַּם) is one that means to stun – when Daniel saw the man and heard his voice he was stunned into both silence and almost an unconscious state on his face.

Question: What is our reaction when we hear the Word of God, whether we read it or hear it read? Does it “stun” us? What is our reaction when we consider the glory of God, and all of His wonder?

Daniel gives us an illustration in this text both of a man who considers man to be in need of the presence of God, and of a one who recognizes man in relation to that presence.

III. STRENGTH WAS NEEDED TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE FROM THE ONE SENT TO HIM – VS. 10-14.

IV. STRENGTH LEFT HIM BECAUSE OF THE OVERWHELMING ANGUISH HE FELT OVER WHAT HE SAW AND HEARD – VS. 15-17.

V. STRENGTH WAS GIVEN (OR RETURNED) FOR WHAT WAS AHEAD – VS. 18-21.