

“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” (דְּבַר־ –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 (wayyit'zavay' gadol) – 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.

A. Verse 10 begins with a statement of seeming transition – “And, behold, an hand touched me...” This wasn’t the hand of the previous “certain man,” but is another created being that would be considered “angelic.”

1. This is seen, not only in the way the verse begins, but in the fact that the “hand” is one of a man more like Daniel than that of the “certain man” described in verse six.
2. The second part of the verse describes Daniel’s reaction – he was found lying prostrate on the ground in verse nine, and with this touch from the hand of the angelic being, Daniel raised up on his hands and knees.

B. Verse 11 describes what the being said to Daniel.

1. He is again called “a man greatly beloved” – this was seen in 9:23 where Gabriel said this of him, pointing to his testimony for the Lord, and how the Lord loved him because of Daniel’s devotion to Him.

2. He is told to “understand the words that I speak unto thee” – something seen in chapter nine as well.
3. He is told to stand upright, “for unto thee am I now sent.” Daniel was still overwhelmed with both the vision of the Glory of God, as well as the continuing interaction with the angelic beings. He was also overwhelmed with the vision he was seeing – which seems to be taking place throughout this period.

C. Verses 12 and 13 are to be taken together and point back to verse two where this prayer and vision began.

1. Vs. 12 finds the angelic being referencing Daniel’s “mourning” in verse 2 but refers to it as his desire to “understand,” and in that desire he “[chastened himself] before [his] God.” **I wonder if we have such a desire to know God’s will that we would be willing to chasten ourselves (in this case, three full weeks) until the answer comes?**
2. “Thy words were heard” – “I am coming for [because of] thy words” (K&D) – it was because of Daniel’s intense desire to know the will of God in the matters before him in this vision that caused the angelic being to come to him to bring him the answer.

Let me say that God doesn’t need to respond to our prayers the way He did with Daniel because we have a finished Scripture and the Holy Spirit of God indwelling us from the point of salvation, but the need to have Daniel’s desire to

know the will of God for any matter is still the same for us today.

Matthew 7:7-8

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

3. Vs. 13 is one of the more puzzling verses in the text and one that has been widely interpreted and commented on. Although there is a wide variety of interpretation there is a fairly consistent pattern to that interpretation. The overall understanding is somewhat universal – the primary point of debate is what is meant by the term “kingdom of Persia.”
 - a) “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days” – simply put, the “person” spoken of here is not the Gentile world leader in a person but the demonic power behind that person (and is still true today).

The following is from the K&D commentary:

For the angel that appeared to Daniel did not fight with the kings of Persia, but with a spiritual intelligence of a like nature, for the victory, or precedence with the kings of Persia. This spirit of the kingdom of Persia, whom, after the example of Jerome, almost all interpreters call the guardian angel of his kingdom, is as little the nature-power of this kingdom as Michael is the nature-

power of Israel, but is a spirit-being; yet not the heathen national god of the Persians, but, according to the view of Scripture (1 Cor. 10:20.), the δαιμόνιον of the Persian kingdom, i.e., the supernatural spiritual power standing behind the national gods, which we may properly call the guardian spirit of this kingdom. In the עֶמֶד לְנֹגְדִי [“withstood me”] lies, according to the excellent remark of Kliefoth, the idea, that “the שֶׁר [prince, ruler] of the kingdom of Persia stood beside the kings of the Persians to influence them against Israel, and to direct against Israel the power lying in Persian heathendom, so as to support the insinuations of the Samaritans; that the angel, Dan. 10:5, came on account of Daniel's prayer to dislodge this 'prince' from his position and deprive him of his influence, but he kept his place for twenty-one days, till Michael came to his help; then he so gained the mastery over him, that he now stood in his place beside the kings of Persia, so as henceforth to influence them in favour of Israel.”

1 Corinthians 10:20

²⁰ But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

⁴ (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Ephesians 6:11-13

¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

- b) "But, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia" – the angelic being sent to help Daniel was thwarted by the demonic head of the Persian Empire at the time and Michael the Archangel was sent to free him to do his duty, and then he (Michael – מִיכָאֵל – defined as "who is as God," showing his position in the order of angels) stayed behind to continue the battle with the "kings of Persia" to keep them from interfering.

There has been a battle waged between the forces of good (and of God) and the forces of evil (the lesser Elohim) since before creation, and that battle will grow greater as the day of the Rapture approaches. We are seeing that today. The prophecy that follows this chapter in Daniel give details that Satan has always tried to stop, or at least to misdirect. It is our responsibility as believers to make sure the lost know what is ahead.

D. Vs. 14 concludes this portion on this angelic being and his purpose – it was to

bring an understanding mind for Daniel to know what the prophecy meant that he was receiving as it related to his "people" – Israel – "in the latter days."

1. The term "in the latter days" (בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים) is translated "in the last days" in Isaiah 2:2 and is referring to the time when the Messiah returns and establishes His kingdom on earth. It can be translated literally as "the end of days" – the end of days for Israel, when all is finished and eternity begins.
2. "For yet the vision is for many days" – "extends far into future time. It is probable that the prayer of Daniel referred more particularly to what he desired should soon occur - the restoration of the people to their own land; the angel informs him that the disclosures which he was to make covered a much more extended period, and embraced more important events. So it is often. The answer to prayer often includes much more than we asked for, and the abundant blessings that are conferred, beyond what we supplicate, are vastly beyond a compensation for the delay." (Barnes)

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

A. Daniel is seen (vs. 15) once again with "his face toward the ground" – looking at the ground out of deep distress, unable to verbally respond. He was, as it were,

a statue.

B. Vs. 16 finds an angelic being coming to him again (would appear to the angelic being mentioned in the context of verse 10 for he is found in verse 20 saying he must return to the battle he was fighting at the start) – this time the angel is described as having the “similitude of the sons of men” – simply put, he looked like a man with no indication he was an angel.

Hebrews 13:2

² Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

1. Once this angel touched his mouth, Daniel spoke and points back to the beginning of this chapter where this event begins, and says that the vision he was receiving (defined in chapters 11 and 12) was almost more than he could bear – “my sorrows are turned upon me.” The Geneva Bible has this, “I was overcome with fear and sorrow, when I saw the vision.” The word for “turned upon me” (נִדְּפְכוּ) is in a form that means to turn one’s self about, to turn back. “Perhaps we should express the idea by saying that they rolled upon us, or over us - like the surges of the ocean.” (Barnes)
2. “And I have retained no strength” – this was such a burden to Daniel that he literally was almost too weak to stand.

Question: Would we be so burdened, are

we so burdened, by the thought of what's ahead for "our people" that we would be like Daniel?

C. Vs. 17 shows Daniel's recognition of whom the man talking with him represented, and the authority he held in coming to him.

V. STRENGTH WAS GIVEN (OR RETURNED) FOR WHAT WAS AHEAD – 10:18-11:2A

A. Vs. 18 mentions an angelic being "like the appearance of a man" – again, would be the same angel as before because of what verse 20 relates. Not all are in agreement on this being (and the other two) being the same one but it seems relatively clear it is.

B. What is important in verse 18 and verse 19 is that Daniel was given strength to handle what was happening. This shows, as does 1 Cor. 10:13, that God will give us the ability to handle whatever He puts (or allows to be put) in our path.

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³ There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

2 Corinthians 12:9

⁹ And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Joshua 1:6-7

⁶ Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

⁷ Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

Joshua 1:9

⁹ Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

C. Vs. 20-21 of chapter 10 and verses 1-2a of chapter 11 conclude this "introduction" to the vision.

1. Vs. 20 points back to the spiritual warfare unseen by mortal eyes of verse 13 and shows that this battle is waging continually. In Daniel's case, the need to keep the "prince of Persia" at bay so this vision could be revealed was significant enough for the angel to maintain the battle for as long as needed. Once the battle was done with the "prince of Persia" was over, he would move on to fight the next battle – one with the "prince of Grecia." All of this shows the continued battle for the truth.
2. Vs. 21 - "The scripture of truth" – the written or recorded writings that are true. This is not just speaking of the Bible itself but of all the "writings that are true" that

God has written down. These writings are mentioned elsewhere in Scripture.

Deuteronomy 32:34

³⁴ Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?

Malachi 3:16

¹⁶ Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

Psalms 139:16

¹⁶ Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Revelation 5:1

¹ And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

Revelation 20:12

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

3. The battle raged on and Michael stayed in the fight with this other angel.
4. 11:1 – the time frame of this vision goes back to that of chapter 6, and the events that led up to, and that followed, Daniel

being thrown to the lions.

a) 10:1 says this vision came in the third year of Cyrus the Persian, and 11:1 says it was the first year of Darius the Mede. Remember, the nation that defeated the Babylonian empire was called "the Medo-Persian Empire," thus named because of the combined nations – Media, under Darius, and Persia, under Cyrus. The reference to Darius in this case is to connect this with what happened at the end of chapter nine.

b) "I stood to confirm and to strengthen him" – this is still the angelic being of chapter ten speaking, and is most likely speaking of confirming and strengthening Darius for the task that lay ahead of him in supporting Israel as they would return to the land of Israel. Some say this points to this angel strengthening Michael, but considering Michael being the one that helped this angel to defeat the demonic head of Persia, it's not likely that is the case. And, taking the simple truth of grammar, and the antecedent for the pronoun being the most immediate noun prior to its use, that would make Darius the likely one in view.

(1) *"Stood" seems to be a military term "standing as in a military conflict against the enemy, as in 10:13." (Walvoord)*

(2) *"To confirm (לְמַחֲזִיק) and strengthen (לְמַעֲזוֹ) him" – these are words showing a superior helping an inferior, and in particular, helping a man, so this can only be speaking of Darius. "To confirm" means to be strong, and is the same word used in Dan. 10:19 for "be*

strong.” “To strengthen” means to fortify and signifies a stronghold or fortress. This angelic being was there to make sure Darius had the strength and the fortitude to carry out the duty God set for him to do.

“In the first year of Darius the Mede when the world power passed from the Babylonian to the Medo-Persian, Persian, the angel stood by Michael, the guardian of Israel, until he succeeded in turning the new kingdom from hostility to favor toward Israel. The story of chapter 6 demonstrates that efforts were made in the first year of Darius to make him hostile toward Israel. But God sent His angel on that occasion and shut the lions' mouths (Dan 6:22). The miraculous deliverance by the angel caused Darius the Mede to reverse his policies to favor Israel (6:24-27). The beginning of the second great empire with the fall of Babylon in chapter 5 was, then, more than a military conquest or triumph of the armies of the Medes and Persians. It was a new chapter in the divine drama of angelic warfare behind the scenes, and the change was by divine appointment.” (Walvoord)

5. 11:2a shows that what has happened, and what is being said (or what will be said in the prophecy), is “the truth.” All that Daniel had lived through and all that he has seen so far in this vision has left him with a deeper understanding of what his role was in the work of the Lord. Now, as the angel brings him this prophecy, he is given the understanding that it is divine truth.

The point we, today, are to draw from this is that very same thing – that what the

Bible says is "truth." The world will tell us it is a lie, a fairytale, a story, but we know, as Daniel was told, that it is truth.

Proverbs 22:20–21

20 Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?

John 18:37–38

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, **Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Revelation 21:5

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Conclusion: Strength from the Lord will always be needed to accomplish His will. In the battle with unseen forces, as illustrated in this text, it is clear that this is a battle we cannot win on our own, no matter what God has for us. We cannot do it without Him – we need His strength.

Ephesians 6:10

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.