



Lesson 9 January 27th, 2018

A Strong Faith

Study Scripture – Daniel 10:10-19

Background Scripture – Daniel 10-11

Key Verse:

*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".*

Daniel 10:19

INTRODUCTION

Our Study Scripture looks at a man called by an angel highly placed in the heavenly hierarchy to be a man greatly beloved by God. This was a man snatched from Judah by the Babylonians and put into captivity, made a eunuch and unable to marry and have children, renamed with a pagan Chaldean name, trained in the pagan Babylonian educational system, and forced to work in the interests of the Babylonian empire while his own nation languished in bondage.

He had survived service to the pagan Babylonian empire and the Persian empire and had had an impeccable and distinguished career, respected to the fullest extent imaginable. He was always regarded as an administrator at the highest level and though a Jew kept at the top by successive pagan rulers and given extraordinary authority.

Now in his middle to late eighties and near the end of his life he was given an unparalleled vision of the end times and what would happen to his people in the latter days.

He was quite obviously a man of great faith, fortitude, great integrity, great ability, whose life was characterized from the days of his youth as having demonstrated bold faith. His God was the true God and he proved this over and over again to the rulers, and his enemies. His faith was unbreakable.

He was a man who prayed regularly and constantly. The routine he established in his prayer life which he did for all the pagans to see is remarkable. This model stands for all those who want to be regarded by God as "greatly beloved".

Our Study Scripture now opens for us the other side of bold faith and the other side of the prayer which flows from this bold faith.

Our Study will look at the spirit world and at the subject of angelology. This chapter 10 is most important for it among other things destroys the idea that all angels are good, and explains that

there are evil angels as well as good angels. One writer introduces us to what we will see in this chapter:

“It is one of conflict and warfare but not exactly the type you are likely to see on the 6 o’clock news! When you turn on the news you see wars, battles and conflict. People not getting on, races not getting on, nations not getting on. But Daniel 10 speaks of a war that no man reports for it is one no man sees. Yet it goes on day after day and has a major impact on the wars that we do see on planet earth. Daniel 10 lifts the veil that covers the natural and spiritual realms to reveal a battle that goes on in the invisible angelic realm. So this study is a reminder of the spiritual battle that goes on around us, and one in which we are in despite it not being visible to the natural eye. There are certainly lots of mysteries in this regard, and not all answers are given. But this chapter still remains as a fascinating and unique glimpse behind the scenes in that spiritual realm.”

Our Study looks at the importance of prayer by the saints. When we pray often, fervently, and regularly and these prayers are not answered for a long time or at all we are taught by our Study Scripture to be patient for we really have no or little idea of what is happening around us. We need to remember that the delays God allows are not denials or even Nos. His response to our prayers are related to events around us in the world we do not see, and even if we saw them we cannot understand the complexity of God’s government. This should be a great encouragement to us as we pray and demonstrate our bold faith.

We are also taught that the things God has ordered come to pass through prayers Things happen according to God’s will but He has told us that in our relationship with Him we are co-workers with Him and we are critical links in the chain of the accomplishment of the will of God. Therefore we have by the foolishness of preaching allowed to save souls, we are to evangelize, pray, beseech, share our knowledge of God, and as His ambassadors represent Him and show the world what God is really like, His love, mercy, and compassion for those He created.

Remember the parable told by the Lord Jesus that we must engage in importunate prayer. This means we have to engage in continual supplication. If the Lord has not indicated His will we have to continue praying. Follow Daniel’s example.

We also learn that we must avoid the foolishness of thinking that we are able to fight the enemy by our own strength and confidence in our ability and power. Some believe in what they call “power praying” and their ability to bind the forces of darkness but frankly their results are pitiful and their actions lead to frustration of the saints and people turning away from God given their inability to get what they want from Him. We really do not have the power we fool ourselves into thinking we have. The power and heavy lifting is being done by the heavenly hosts and we are required to pray and to carry the word of God to those who are perishing. That is our duty. We are to love God and love out fellow man, showing this by our actions.



There is a cosmic conflict going on and we have to be fortified by the Spirit of God to be faithful to God and be bold in our work for God. We have no excuse to think too highly of ourselves and what we can do.

On a few occasions the Bible lifts the curtain and reveals things about the real world that are astounding. That is designed to make us be humble, understand who we really are, and stick to Jesus like glue.

In 2 Kings 2 we see how heaven views Elijah' death for he is carried into heaven by horses and a chariot.

In 2 Kings 6 we see the prophet Elisha praying to God to lift the veil from the eyes of his servant when the servant woke early in the morning only to see the enemy armies of the king of Aram surrounding the home of Elisha intending to capture Elisha and prevent him advising the king of Israel how to evade the armies of Aram. One writer states:

“The unruffled Elisha then prayed for the eyes of his servant to be opened, so that he could see the unseen realities of the spiritual realm. The servant saw the heavenly forces, the horses and chariots of fire surrounding Elisha. When Elisha prayed again, the eyes of the enemy forces were blinded, and the prophet was able to lead this enemy into the city of Samaria”.

In 2 Chronicles 18 we read the fascinating recounting by the prophet Micaiah of the Council of the Lord discussing what to do with the wicked and oppressive king Ahab and how his end would be brought about at a fight against the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead. The prophet had warned the kings of Judah and Israel:

“I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, “These have no master. Let each return to his home in peace”.

And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing on His right hand and His left.

And the LORD said, “Who will persuade Ahab king of Israel to go up that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead? So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner.

Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, “I will persuade him”. The LORD said to him, “In what way?”

So he said, “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets”. And the LORD said, “You shall persuade him, and also prevail: go out and do so”.

Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you”.

In the Luke 18:2 story of the rich man and Lazarus Jesus disclosed that Lazarus was carried away by angels to Abraham's bosom.



There are other glimpses of heaven but we should learn from these quoted that the triune God is sovereign. There is only one throne in the universe and He sits on it. God is in control and He works all things according to the counsel of His own will. Never forget that God lives in eternity and time does not sway His existence. For him Satan and his hosts are already in the Lake of Fire. Their destiny, their end is certain and cannot be changed or altered. We men however live in time and we have to put up with the machinations of the evil ones and pray to God to come quickly so that we too will be rid of Satan and his demonic brethren and enter into eternity with God.

Believers can resist Satan. The Holy Spirit who indwells all true believers will enable believers to resist evil. But under no circumstances are believers to believe or to teach that they have power to challenge the forces of evil without the direction of the Spirit. God and His heavenly messengers direct all things.

The real battle goes on between them until the Lord Jesus the Messiah returns to chain Satan and his hosts.

Note also the human physical weakness of the bold and faithful man of God as he meets the angels of God. This teaches that we should not pretend that we can see angels and stay strong. Angels are appointed to minister to us and help us, strengthening us in time of need. This lesson is made clear.

I join this wise writer in praying:

“May God grant us the ability to see the unseen here and then to live in the light of these realities”.

THE TEXT

Verses 1-9. It was the third year of the reign of Cyrus king of Persia. We are told in Daniel 1:30 that Daniel’s career continued to the first year of the king of Persia and so Daniel was now in his retirement years and over 80 years old. The Jews had been permitted to return to Israel in the first year of the Persian ruler and so the event experienced by Daniel took place in about 537 B.C. after the first wave of the return of the Jewish captives had taken place. Daniel did not return to Israel, probably because his age would make that problematic. We know that after he received these visions recorded in chapters 10-12 the language in 12:13 suggests that he would die shortly.

So Daniel wrestled with the Lord in prayer for he could do that work. This of course is an example to older persons who think they cannot do anything valuable because of age. Their prayers are really invaluable. Older believers have a powerful role to play in the plan of God.

Daniel was in mourning, an outward expression of intense sorrow. He had for three weeks separated himself from pleasant food and the worldly enjoyments to give himself to prayer. We do not know whether he was mourning over the sins of Israel, or the reluctance of the vast majority of the Jewish inhabitants of Babylon to return to their homeland, now that they had been released from captivity, to rebuild Israel and Jerusalem. Only a relatively tiny number of



Israelites had returned to the Land and their enemies had hindered the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. Ezra 4.

Though the 70 years of captivity predicted by Jeremiah the prophet had ended, the Jews showed no signs of leaving Babylon. Many had left behind their occupations as shepherds of sheep and cattle, and farming, and in Babylon had very successfully adopted the occupation of shopkeepers and wholesalers and retailers of goods and merchandise. They had forgotten that God intended they could find no blessing or fulfillment of the great promises of God outside the land.

Daniel therefore was mourning and he likely prayed for God to tell him about what would be the future of his nation. He would likely have heard the bad news of what was going on in Jerusalem and it bothered him.

He went with some friends to the banks of the Tigris River, possibly to help him pray. There he had a spectacular vision. He was not in a trance. The entire event had such a powerful effect on the party that the men with him were terrified, and fled away to hide themselves. (Verse 7). He was left alone to see the vision and was himself so overwhelmed that he fell to the ground unable to move. He described what happened to him saying his “vigor was turned to frailty, and he retained no strength”. He said his natural color turned to a deathly pallor.

Scholars debate who Daniel saw, whether this was a vision of Jesus or whether it was a powerful prince of the angels. The language seems to imply to some that this was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ. When Daniel looked up he saw a man whose face had the appearance of lightening. He was clothed in linen, the material that high priests wore. He was girded around his waist with a belt of the finest pure gold. His body was like beryl, one of the stones set in the breastplates of judgment. (Exodus 28:20) This appearance of beryl was similar to the mysterious wheels of Ezekiel 1:16. Beryl is one of the stones in the foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem. Note also that part of Satan’s adornment in the garden of God was of beryl. (Ezekiel 28:13).

Not only did the man’s face radiate the brightness and brilliance of lightening on a continuing basis, but his eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and feet gleamed like they were made of bronze. When he spoke, his voice sounded like the combined voices of a multitude of persons.

The similarity to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Ezekiel 1:26-28 vision and in the vision of the Apostle John in Revelation 1 is quite striking and it is not easy to sort out definitively whether or not this was Jesus Himself, or some other powerful angelic prince. But certainly this was a picture of majesty and power.

Note however that in the gospels Jesus is pictured as the Lamb of God with the associated shielding of his power, but in Revelation Jesus is shown to be quite different: powerful and majestic



Note also that this picture gives no physical picture which allows any ethnic group to claim Jesus looked like them.

It also shows that any attempt to picture Jesus or the powerful angels actually corrupt the idea of Jesus. He is an incorruptible person and so attempts to portray God in a corruptible way or with human limitation cannot be satisfactory. Pictures of Jesus thus leave much to be desired.

The vision had the effect of leaving Daniel, as godly as he was, with his face to the ground. This should convince us of our smallness and inadequacy when confronted by a revelation of God. He fell in a deep sleep with his face on the ground. The exhausted Daniel heard words being spoken to him but he lost consciousness.

THE TEXT

Verse 10. A hand touched Daniel and he was helped to his feet. This was the hand of Gabriel, and he encouraged Daniel not to be afraid. Some believe that this as a vision after the deep sleep Daniel was in after seeing an appearance by Jesus earlier.

Verse 11. This angel told Daniel that he was a man that was greatly beloved by heaven. He was as the Hebrew put it literally a “man greatly desired” or a “man of preciousness”. This greeting made Daniel understand that the Almighty personally loved him and was concerned about him. One writer acknowledges that all faithful saints have the boundless love of God but traces the reason for this remarkable accolade to Daniel as follows:

“Daniel’s privileged status as one especially precious to God resulted from his complete absorption in the will and glory of the Lord to whom he had yielded his heart. His was the whole-souled devotion of a Paul or a Moses”.

Daniel was told to stand up and listen carefully for he the angel had been sent to him with a special message. But Daniel stood trembling.

Charles Spurgeon comments on this passage for the benefit of all believers and to encourage us:

“Child of God, do you hesitate to appropriate this title? Ah! Has your unbelief made you forget that you are greatly beloved too? Must you not have been greatly beloved, to have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot? When God smote His only begotten Son for you, what was this but being greatly beloved? You lived in sin, and rioted in it, must you not have been greatly beloved for God to have borne so patiently with you? You were called by grace and led to the Savior, and made a child of God and an heir of heaven. All this proves, does it not, a very great and super abounding love? Since that time, whether your path has been rough with troubles, or smooth with mercies, it has been full of proofs that you are a man greatly beloved. If the Lord has chastened you, yet not in anger, if he has made you poor, yet in grace you have been rich. The more unworthy you feel yourself to be, the more evidence have you that nothing but



unspeakable love could have led the Lord Jesus to save such a soul as yourself. The more demerit you feel, the clearer is the display of the abounding love of God, in having chosen you, and called you, and made you an heir of bliss.

Now, if there be such love between God and us, let us live in the influence and sweetness of it, and use the privilege of our position. Do not let us approach our Lord as though we were strangers, or as though he were unwilling to hear us—for we are greatly beloved by our loving Father

“He that spared no his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

O believer, for despite the whisperings of Satan and the doubting’s of thine heart, thou art greatly beloved. Meditate on the exceeding greatness and faithfulness of divine love this evening, and so go to thy bed in peace”.

Verse 12. This angel told the still trembling Daniel not to be afraid at his presence. He had been sent with a message for him. Often our greatest need is to be assured we should not fear. Daniel was assured that from the time he prayed his prayers were heard and God responded immediately. The delay was not intended to make him feel God had neglected him and did not think highly of him. God knew he had prayed to understand what was happening. God knew he had humbled himself before God, and so God responded immediately.

Verse 13. The answer from God was delayed because another angel called the prince of Persia had blocked his way. This was clearly a demonic official who was influencing the king of Persia to delay any benefit to Israel. A human could not stand against and delay an angel of God and hence this opponent would have had to be a demonic spirit, a fallen angel, whose job it was to influence the king of Persia against the people of God.

Obviously, there are very interesting things going on in the spirit world that directly affect the people of God. There was an angel of darkness which represented the kingdom of Persia and he had power to delay the good angel of God. There clearly is a supernatural reality where supernatural beings come into conflict with each other. What happens on earth reflects this. What we see is not what we get.

Michael, one of the chief angels had to be dispatched to help this heavenly messenger and he succeeded in freeing him from the evil demon that had blocked his passage. The name Michael means “He who is like God”. The people of Israel were now really freed from the demonic opposition that had been delaying their progress for Michael had the power to thwart the influence of the demon on the king of Persia.

Michael has been assigned the role of protecting the people of Israel and so it is clear Israel has mighty angelic supporters in the heavenly realm. Despite their military, political, and economic weaknesses, and their continued worldly behaviour and their non reliance on God they are assured that no earthly power will succeed in eliminating them



The lesson is that evil powers do have the capacity to hinder and delay delivery of the answers to prayers sent to believers. God's response to prayers might be immediate but there is determined opposition from actual delivery of the divine answer. It appears therefore that God has given demons limited powers to obstruct and they rebel just as human are wont to do. God can of course override these demonic activities and though Satan is a malignant being and is very powerful God never allows him to go beyond certain limits set by God. The case of Job teaches this.

Believers therefore will never be tested beyond their limit. God assures us that. God builds a hedge around His people. His people are told to resist the Devil and he will eventually flee from them.

Clearly the matter about which Daniel prayed was more complicated than he knew. There were unseen realities, dark powers that worked to prejudice persons so that they repeatedly did horrible things against the kingdom of God and its people.

Verse 14. He had come to make Daniel understand what was to happen in the later days. The vision he had related to the future of the nation of Israel.

The indications are that the spirit world is organized as a kingdom of Satan. Colossians 1:16 implies there are spiritual thrones and spiritual dominions so that this prince of the power of the air mimics God and sets up his kingdom along the lines that God has set up his kingdom in heaven. In Matthew 4:8-9 Satan even offered Jesus his kingdom and Jesus referred to Satan's kingdom in Mathew 12:28.

Ephesians 6:12 tells us the reality of this operation.

We are warned therefore that we struggle not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of wickedness: there must be a recognition that we face a prince of evil who oversees a vast kingdom that is well organized with rulers and authorities, dominion and powers. There is an organization chart of evil. One writer notes:

“Wouldn't you love to see the organizational chart of the Satanic kingdom with Satan at the top and all the organization of that kingdom? And then you would come down to the kingdom of Persia and also the individual who had apparently authority territorially over certain parts of the world? It would not be surprising at all if we were able to see everything that exists in this spiritual world that we would find the world has been divided up and that there is a spiritual authority, a spiritual ruler, a spiritual power from the evil one that does have particular jurisdiction over that particular territory.

Verses 15-17. On seeing the angel and hearing the angel's statements Daniel was completely overwhelmed. He was so struck with awe that he was speechless, and fell to the ground. The angel had to help Daniel and touched his lips. This enabled him to explain after the angel had touched Daniel's lips that he had no strength and had been rendered by the vision quite breathless. He could not therefore respond to the message since he was so feeble and could not converse with so majestic a person.



Verse 18. The angel therefore touched Daniel's lips again. This touch by the angel was done for the third time in the chapter. Now Daniel confessed the touch had strengthened him and the angel could now speak to him and deliver his message, and they could carry on a conversation.

The angel again addressed Daniel as "greatly beloved man". He was told not to fear. The angel declared Peace to him, reassuring him that heaven was at peace with him. The angel then urged Daniel to be strong, emphasizing that he had to be strong to absorb the message sent to him by God about the future of his people.

Never forget that the angel had been sent to Daniel. He came from God and was a ministering spirit, encouraging and strengthening Daniel. That is a role angels have been playing and will continue to play. Their presence and activity remind us that God is there and will never forget us.

CONCLUSION

So is your faith bold and strong? Does your faith waver, going up and down?

Daniel was an old man but all his life to the very end he was not satisfied about what he had done and achieved, but spent time praying to God. He poured out his life in service to God to the very end

He was bold and strong in his faith, praying to God, fasting and mourning, seeking answers about the future of his people. This godly man courageously sought information from God about what God wanted to do for His people. There was no concern for his position, his fame, or his fortune. His focus was on what was best for his people.

The message of the angel is that we look at history through the lens of the kingdom of God and what He intended to do.

God, the angel teaches us, knows the nations of the earth very well. He tells us there is a supernatural reality and that the God of heaven is also the God over the earth.

God knows about all the terrorists but He also knows all about our political machinations, our power politics, our disregard or the weak and vulnerable of the earth, and all the big events on the earth. He will judge all nations and people by His standards of righteousness and holiness, and none that violate His commandments will escape His judgment and destruction.

The Apostle Paul reminded us in Ephesians 6 that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers of the cosmic darkness and the spiritual forces of evil. We know therefore that the kingdom of God will always come into conflict with the kingdom of man and Satan. We can expect trouble. But we must always be bold in our faith for we know God and his angels are always there to help us overcome the evil ones. We therefore should be anxious for nothing but lean always on the everlasting arms.



We are like Daniel weak and feeble and by ourselves are no match for the evil forces. But remember that Jesus has chosen the weak and foolish of the earth to confound the wisdom of the wise. In our present state we are not well equipped to live in the presence of heaven and God, and we will be changed. We are therefore anxious for our heavenly bodies that the Lord Jesus will give us at His Coming.

In the meantime we must never forget that the past and present and future upheavals have an angelic dimension. Fallen angels influence the rulers of the earth and they are responsible for a great deal of the agony on earth. There is a great deal of activity going on that we cannot see. One writer in an Army Journal written in 1962 alarms us with the evil that is going on before and after the first coming of Jesus. He states:

“Since 3600 B.C. the world has known only 293 years of peace. During the period there have been 14,531 wars and that does not count neighbor wars, wars between neighbours who are next door to each other and family struggles as well. There are large wars in which three billion six hundred and forty million people have been killed. /the value of the destruction would pay for a golden belt around the world about a hundred miles wide and 333 feet thick. Since 650 B.C. there have been 1656 arms races, only 16 of which have not resulted in war. The remainder have been terminated in the economic collapse of the countries concerned. Since the world cast out the Prince of Peace the Lord Jesus Christ by crucifying him almost 2000 years ago, there has not been one year without a war. In fact, in the last 500 years, England has engaged in 78 wars, France 71 wars, the Netherlands 23 wars. Just think of the Dutch 23 wars, Spain 64 wars, Australia 52 wars, Germany only 23, Italy 25, China 11, Denmark 20 and so on. And European nations alone engaged in 74 wars during the lifetime of the first generation born in the 20th Century. Even America in its short history has engaged in 13 wars. And so man’s inhumanity to man continues.

We note sadly that man seems content to be manipulated by the evil forces around us, forces which hate man and would like to see him destroy himself.

But believers are wiser than many men and know that the angel came to Daniel with words of encouragement to remind us that things proceed only as God in His great wisdom allows. We know that our prayers have been heard and so we should keep the faith and pray. Prayer is a great experience. By praying God will speak to us and tell us the secrets in His plans.

