



## THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

### *Lesson Number 30*



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible, NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

# A SPECIAL THING IS REVEALED TO DANIEL

“ 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. <sup>2</sup> In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. <sup>3</sup> I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. <sup>4</sup> And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; <sup>5</sup> Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: <sup>6</sup> His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. <sup>7</sup> And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. <sup>8</sup> Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. <sup>9</sup> Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.” <sup>KJV</sup> (Dan 10:1-9)

## INTRODUCTION

Because Daniel is “*greatly beloved*,” the Living God has vouchsafed to him insight concerning the coming Redeemer. Looming on the horizon One was coming who would lay down His life a ransom for many. He would do so in a timely manner, or in the fulness of the time. He would bring to an end the administration of the First Covenant, which was “*weak through the flesh*” (Rom 8:3) – a covenant which, though given by God Almighty, left Him “*finding fault*” with those with whom it was made (Heb 8:8).

Daniel is told that the coming

Messiah would be “*cut off*” four hundred and eighty-seven years from the command to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple – in the middle of the seventy-week prophecy given to him. Commensurate with that appointed death, sacrifices and Temple statutes that were ordained of God ceased. The statutes themselves had been in force for 1,500 years. Bloody sacrifices had been in place from the beginning of time. The first animal sacrifice was made by God Himself, in order that He might give to Adam and Eve “*coats of skin*” (Gen 3:21). The first recorded sacrifice made by a man was that of Abel (Gen 4:4). That

sacrifice is said to have been respected, or regarded, by the God of heaven. For nearly four thousand years, animal sacrifices continued, being offered by every person who had faith in God. Prior to the Law these included Noah (Gen 8:20), Abraham (Gen 15:9-10; 22:13), Isaac (Gen 26:25), and Jacob (Gen 31:54; 46:1). From the time of the exodus, and under the Law, animal sacrifices increased in both their number and the times in which they were offered. **But when the life of Jesus was “*cut off*,” the entire sacrificial system – ordained by God – was abruptly**

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*Following a three-week fast, Daniel has a vision of a glorious being, and all of his strength leaves, by Given O. Blakely*

## OUTLINE

- ▶ THE THIRD YEAR OF CYRUS (10:1)
- ▶ THREE FULL WEEKS OF MOURNING (10:2-3)
- ▶ THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH (10:4-6)
- ▶ ONLY DANIEL SAW THE VISION (10:7)
- ▶ LEFT ALONE (10:8)
- ▶ HE HEARD THE WORDS ANYWAY (10:9)

terminated. They were replaced by the superior sacrifice what God had appointed before the foundation of the world. He caused *“the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”* (9:27). He then *“confirmed”* a *“better covenant, established upon better promises”* (9:27; Heb 9:6). That covenant was ratified and put in force by the blood of Jesus Christ – by His vicarious death.

All of that has now been proclaimed and clarified in the Gospel, through which faith comes to us (Rom 10:17). **However, this glorious Gospel in embryo speaks of things that took place about five-hundred years after Daniel’s death.** There are at least two things that can be observed in this circumstance.

- ▣ First, behold how *“greatly beloved”* Daniel was! **His tender heart and submissive spirit so endeared him to God that He shared “secret” things with him, and showed him “His covenant”** (Psa 25:14). As in the case of Abraham, God did not hide from Daniel the thing that He was going to do (Gen 18:17-19). It is ever true, *“His secret is with the righteous”* (Prov 3:32). Daniel, because he is *“greatly beloved,”* has therefore been *“given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”* (Matt 13:11). Therefore Gabriel said to him, *“As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you*

*are highly esteemed”*<sup>NIV</sup> (9:23).

- ▣ Second, **the Lord desires to make His purpose known.** He not only shares His secret with those who are righteous and beloved, He does so because He wants to – it is His nature to do so. The saints are described as those to whom God *“has chosen to make known”*<sup>NIV</sup> things that formerly were mysteries (Col 1:26-27). This is particularly true regarding the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Before Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden, God revealed the coming of One who would crush the head of Satan (Gen 3:15). He spoke extensively to His friend Abraham concerning a miraculous offspring through whom the world would be blessed (Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18). He also divulged His intention to David (2 Sam 7:11-16; Acts 2:30). Repeatedly, the great God of heaven spoke of the coming Redeemer through the Prophets, referring to *“a righteous Branch”* (Jer 23:5), *“wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace”* (Isa 9:6), *“Commander of the people”* (Isa 55:4), the *“Desire of all nations”* (Hag 2:7), *“Immanuel”* (Isa 7:14), *“A Light to the Gentiles”* (Isa 42:6), and a Man who would be *“as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land”* (Isa 32:2). **God has a desire to communicate His purpose.** In Daniel He found a man with whom He could profitably share that purpose. How about you?

In these days, enough cannot be said about these two things: being *“greatly beloved,”* and God’s desire to

share His heart and mind with men. Too often religion is man-centered. The Scriptures, faith, salvation, and the New Covenant are approached as though man was the center of it all. Thus the problems of humanity tend to be accentuated, and purported problem-solvers rise to the top of the religious heap. But God Himself is really at the heart of things. **It is His desires that are primarily met in Christ Jesus. It is His purpose that Jesus fulfilled on the cross, and is now fulfilling at God’s right hand.** In salvation, God is not merely solving a problem, but executing an *“eternal purpose.”*

**That purpose has eternal ramifications. It does not terminate in or with this world.** It does not reach its apex in the removal of sin, but includes bringing in *“everlasting righteousness”* (9:24). It is not fully realized when those enslaved by the devil are liberated from the tyranny of sin, but includes them receiving the kingdom in all of its glory and fulness (Dan 7:27). When all is said and done, and the world has passed away, *“in the ages to come,”* God will *“show the exceeding riches of His grace toward us through Christ Jesus”* (Eph 2:7). Glory will be brought to God *“in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen”* (Eph 3:21). **Daniel has been given to see portions of this great purpose.** At some point, our religion must extend beyond this world.

### A PRELUDE TO CHAPTERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE

The tenth chapter of Daniel is a prelude to chapters eleven and twelve. In it, the prophet tells us how the vision given to him affected him, and some of the heavenly circumstances related to him receiving it. Revealing some of the complexities associated with getting a

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message from heaven to earth, an holy angel makes known to Daniel “*what is written in the book of truth*”<sup>NIV</sup> (10:21).

The magnitude of this revelation is seen in the circumstances attending it – the glory and majesty of the messenger, and

the staggering impact it has upon the man of God. The content and affects of this vision are anything but ordinary.

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## THE THIRD YEAR OF CYRUS

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**“<sup>10:1</sup> In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.”**

Among other things, our text

of political strategies, and the likes, would be splashed cross the literary world. I can see now: “My experiences in Nebuchadnezzar’s court,” “The unique differences of the Persian empire,” and “How I survived during the reigns of four different kings.”

But this is not how Daniel writes. He is being moved along by the Holy

purpose are pushed into the background. In such a context, health, wealth, ease and comfort, and prosperity are given undue prominence. In such a case, the heavens become like brass (Deut 28:23), God hides Himself (Isa 45:15), and spiritual famine sets in (Amos 8:11).

**If God is going to work among men for their advantage, His own purpose must become prominent, His fellowship sought, and His Word and will highly valued.** If these things do not occur, spiritually dry times will dominate. Convenient explanations for such spiritual poverty may be developed by men. They may say, for example, that God no longer works in this way or that way. **But the truth of the matter is that God does not work marvelously and profitably where He Himself and His purpose are disdained or put into the background of thought.**

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teaches us to properly assess our own lives. Outwardly, the life of Daniel was lived in a political arena. Nebuchadnezzar made him “*a great man*,” making him “*ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon*” (2:48). He was “*master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers*” (5:11). Belshazzar made him “*the third ruler in the kingdom*” (5:29). Darius made him the first of three presidents. He so favored him that he “*thought to set him over the whole realm*” (6:2). He was prominent in the government, and prospered over a period of more than seventy years, from Nebuchadnezzar through the reign of Cyrus (1:21) – serving during the successive prominence of the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires.

How will such an individual record the events of his life? One can only imagine the sort of books that would be written by such a man today. The inner workings of government, critical political decisions, the weaknesses and strengths

Spirit of God (2 Pet 1:21), and thus is not writing a mere recap of his own life. **The pinnacle experiences that he describes are those in which he received revelations from God. The times that he particularly notes are those during which he was in communication with heaven.**

Exactly the same thing may be observed in the writings of Moses, David, the holy Prophets, and the Apostles. With unwavering consistency, their writings focus on Divine communication, not human experience. The affairs of men are always secondary. Even when they are mentioned, they are considered within the greater context of Divine purpose.

**One of the marks of a deteriorating generation is the vaunting of things pertaining to men** – whether they are desires and satisfaction, problems and their resolution, or impressive achievements. When such things are enthroned in human consideration, God and His

Now, behold how Daniel speaks of his experience. He will tell us of the time when he sought the Lord, his prayer was heard, and understanding was given to him concerning the working of the Lord. When such occasions are highly valued, they will occur with greater frequency, and in enlarged measures.

**THE THIRD YEAR**  
**“<sup>1a</sup> In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia . . . ”**

The previous revelation took place during “*the first year of Darius*” (9:1-2). That is estimated to have been around B.C. 538, whereas the third year of Cyrus is thought to have been B.C. 534, four years later.

Previously, the prominence of Daniel was traced from Nebuchadnezzar “*unto the first year of king Cyrus*” (1:21). That “*first year*” is said to have been the time when God stirred up Cyrus’ spirit to make a proclamation, around B.C. 536, or

two years after Babylon was overthrown by Darius the Mede. *“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ‘Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up’”* (2 Chr 36:23; Ezra 1:1-2). **At that time, Cyrus called for volunteers to return to Judah for the commencement of the project for which God has raised him up.**

*“Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem”* (Ezra 1:3). In that *“first year,”* Cyrus made a decree to *“build the house of God,”* and to return the vessels Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple, and from which Belshazzar drank on the evening his kingdom was stripped from him (Ezra 5:13-14; 6:3-4). At that time 42,360 people returned to Judah, with 7,337 maids and servants, 200 singing men and women, 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 asses (Ezra 2:64-66).

The relevance of this to our text is that **Daniel did not return to Judah during that time.** God kept him in Babylon where He would deliver to him remarkable insights concerning the future. **Thus, the man who prayed so fervently for Jerusalem was not himself allowed to return there.** It is as though the revelation now given to him provides a reward for his willing and submissive spirit, as the Lord communes with him in the province of Babylon.

**A THING WAS REVEALED**

*“<sup>1b</sup> . . . a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar . . .”* Other versions read *“a message,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“a revelation,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“a word,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“a secret,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“another vision,”*<sup>NLT</sup> and *“an oracle.”*<sup>TNK</sup>

**Men Cannot Schedule Revelation**

It is important to note that men

cannot schedule revelation. A godly man like Daniel reveled in the truth. Yet, he could not cause insights to be given to him, even though he was *“greatly beloved.”*

The previous revelation occurred four years before this, in the first year of Darius the Mede (9:1), around B.C. 536. The interpretation of Belshazzar’s vision of a writing hand took place around the same time. Prior to that, a vision was given to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar’s reign, around B.C. 548. Before that, in the first year of Belshazzar, around B.C. 550, a vision was given to him (8:1). Prior to that, Daniel was granted the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar vision of a tree that was

concerning the seventy weeks – *10 years later.*

☐ **B.C. 534:** The vision and interpretation now under consideration – *4 years later.*

**Here is a classic example of the manner in which revelations were given prior to the removal of sin and the administration of the Lord Jesus.** The Holy Spirit reveals this manner in a very succinct way. *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets”* (Heb 1:1). Other versions read *“various times and various ways,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“many portions and many ways,”*<sup>NASB</sup> and *“many times and various ways.”*<sup>NIV</sup>

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT MEN CANNOT SCHEDULE REVELATION. A GODLY MAN LIKE DANIEL REVELED IN THE TRUTH. YET, HE COULD NOT CAUSE INSIGHTS TO BE GIVEN TO HIM, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS “GREATLY BELOVED.”**

cut down (4:20-26). This was around B.C. 570. Before that, He was granted an understanding concerning Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great image (2:31-45). That occurred around B.C. 604. Notice how sporadic the revelations appear that were given to Daniel.

☐ **B.C. 604:** The interpretation of the vision of the great image.

☐ **B.C. 570:** The interpretation of the tree that was cut down – *34 years later.*

☐ **B.C. 550:** The vision of the four beasts during the first year of Belshazzar – *20 years later.*

☐ **B.C. 548:** The vision of the ram and the he-goat during the third year of the reign of Belshazzar – *2 years later.*

☐ **B.C. 538:** The vision and message

Notice how this is fulfilled in the revelations given to Daniel.

**Sundry times.** Over a period of sixty eight years six revelations were given to Daniel. The gaps between them were 34 years, 20 years, 2 years, 10 years, and 4 years. That is *“sundry times!”*

**Divers manners, or ways.** God spoke to Daniel through the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, the vision of Belshazzar, and insights given to him. He received visions, and visits from angels. None of them could be scheduled upon earth, nor was there a pattern to them that could be discerned by men.

All of this emphasizes why the things of God are to be held as precious. **When our understanding is opened, every effort must be expended to keep what has been committed to us.** During a time in history when Divine communications were very sparse, it is written, *“And the word of the LORD was*

precious in those days; there was no open vision" (1 Sam 3:1). Other versions emphasize precisely why every word of God was precious: "there was no widespread revelation,"<sup>NKJV</sup> "visions were infrequent,"<sup>NASB</sup> "there were not many visions,"<sup>NIV</sup> and "visions were uncommon."<sup>NJB</sup>

I can only imagine the high value

as "Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar" (5:12).

Although a foreign name had been imposed upon Daniel, yet he referred to himself as one of the chosen people, not merely one of the prominent Babylonians. The man of God therefore says something was revealed to **Daniel** "whose name was called *Belteshazzar*." The latter name is

demons did not want Daniel to hear from the God to whom they all answer, and by whom they have already been judged (John 16:11; Jude 1:6; Rev 12:9). **Yet, there in Babylon, a citadel of Satanic power and delusion, there was a single man who heard from heaven, and was favored by God.** Those holy experiences confirmed that Bel was no god at all, and that the dark powers behind him were in subjection to the "God of gods" (Dan 2:47; 11:36).

#### THE THING WAS TRUE

<sup>1c</sup> "... and the thing was true . . ."

The words "the thing" do not demean what was revealed, or suggest that it was not of great value. Rather, they emphasize that **only a portion** of the truth was revealed – particularly as compared with the "truth as it is in Jesus" (Eph 4:21). Here the words mean "a **particular thing** was revealed to me" – something specific.

The word "true" means certain, trustworthy, assured, established, and right. It was "certain" because it had been established by God. It was "trustworthy" because it had been revealed from heaven. It was "assured" because of Divine determination. It was "established," being written upon the tablets of eternal purpose. It was "right" because governed by Divine righteousness, and in strict accord with the Divine nature.

The words "the thing was true" confirm that the message was real, accurate, and without any flaw. **What was revealed to Daniel was cast in stone.** It was not a message of probabilities or possibilities, but of something that was coming to pass, and could not possibly be averted. Such a word forbids doubt or skepticism on the part of men. Daniel sees this and does not question the message. Rather, receiving it to be absolutely true, he seeks for an understanding of it.

#### THE TIME WAS LONG

<sup>1d</sup> "... but the time appointed was long . . ." Other versions read, "the appointed time was long,"<sup>NKJV</sup> "one of great conflict,"<sup>NASB</sup> "it concerned a great war,"<sup>NIV</sup> "even a great warfare,"<sup>ASV</sup> "the appointed time of trial was long,"<sup>DARBY</sup> "a true revelation of a great conflict,"<sup>NJB</sup> "times of war and great hardship,"<sup>NLT</sup> "it was a great

**HERE WAS A MAN WHOSE NAME INDICATED HE WAS FAVORED AND PROTECTED BY THE GOD BEL. YET HE WAS ACTUALLY BELOVED OF THE GOD OF HEAVEN, WHO WAS OVER BEL. HE WAS ALSO VISITED BY HOLY ANGELS WHO PIERCED THE DARK DOMAIN OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF, WHO WAS THE IMMEDIATE GOD OF BEL.**

of the words sent to Daniel from heaven. His mind must have often been dominated by them. **How the children of God should rejoice today for the abundance of truth that has been revealed in Christ Jesus!** The storehouse of revelation was greatly increased for men when Jesus finished the transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

#### CALLED BELTESHAZZAR

" . . . whose name was called *Belteshazzar*." This was the name given to Daniel when he was a young man by the man who had charge of him (1:7). This was a Babylonian name meaning "Bel's prince," or "whom Bel favors." "Bel" was a Babylonian god, or idol (Jer 50:2; 51:44).

This name is mentioned ten times in Scripture.

- ▶ When the name was given to Daniel (1:7).
- ▶ The prophet is identified as "**Daniel whose name was Belteshazzar**" (2:26; 4:8,19; 10:1).
- ▶ Nebuchadnezzar addressed Daniel as "*Belteshazzar*" (4:9,18).
- ▶ Belshazzar's queen referred to Daniel

how men in Babylon referred to him. But when a messenger came from heaven, he did not address Belteshazzar, but said "*O Daniel*" (9:22; 10:11,12; 12:4,9).

By saying "*Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar,*" the children of God are assured the prophet is one of them, and not a mere Babylonian. He was still one of the chosen people of God, even though honored by the kings of Babylon. The people of Babylon would also learn that one among them had heard from the God of heaven, whom they neither worshiped nor served.

#### Idols and Demons

Here was a man whose name indicated he was favored and protected by the god Bel. Yet he was actually beloved of the God of heaven, who was over Bel. He was also visited by holy angels who pierced the dark domain of the devil himself, who was the immediate god of Bel. According to the Scriptures, service directed toward idols is actually toward demons, who are behind them. Thus we read, "*They . . . offer their sacrifices to demons, not to God*" (Lev 17:7), "*they sacrificed to demons, not to God*" (Deut 32:17), and "*the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God*" (1 Cor 10:20).

You may be sure the devil and his

*task to understand the prophecy,*<sup>”TNK</sup> and *“the warfare is great.”*<sup>”YLT</sup>

The various readings are not at all harmonious. Some emphasize the time, while others focus on a particular conflict, or war. This is because the word from which *“time appointed”* is rendered (tsaba) comes from a root that can also mean a mass of persons organized for war. Thus some versions reject the phrase *“time appointed,”* choosing to translate the word “great conflict,” “great war,” “time of trial,” “and great hardship.”

Strong’s word definitions points out that of the 485 times this word is used, 393 refer to a military host, 41 to a war, 29 to an army, 5 to service, 3 to an appointed time, 2 to warfare, 1 to soldiers, 1 to a company, and 5 to other miscellaneous words.

The message delivered to Daniel was going to take place in the future. That is, it was not appointed to take place immediately. The sense of the text is much the same as a word delivered to Habakkuk. *“For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.”*<sup>NIV</sup> (Hab 2:3).

Daniel’s words are intended to encourage us to appropriate proper understanding, and not be satisfied with

quick and seemingly easy learning. **The fact that what was revealed was in the future did not make it irrelevant, because it was something God had both determined and**

**There is a sense in which an individual through whom God speaks becomes another man.** Such a thing was said of Saul when he was anointed king by Samuel. It is written,

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**THE FACT THAT WHAT WAS REVEALED WAS IN THE FUTURE DID NOT MAKE IT IRRELEVANT, BECAUSE IT WAS SOMETHING GOD HAD BOTH DETERMINED AND REVEALED.**

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**revealed.** Also, care must be taken not to settle for a cursory understanding of the matter, for God had extended Himself to get true understanding to Daniel through a heavenly messenger. Such Divine activity must not be met with indifference on the part of men.

**IT WAS UNDERSTOOD**

*“<sup>1e</sup> . . . and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.”*

Daniel is speaking of himself. He speaks in the past tense much like Paul did when recounting a lofty experience he had. *“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven”* (2 Cor 12:2).

*“And the spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man”* (1 Sam 10:6). Such men are lifted above the course of nature, in order that they might fulfill commissions for which nature is not adapted.

By speaking in this manner, Daniel is ascribing his understanding to the Lord. His insights were not the product of his own reasoning, contemplation, or Babylonian credentialed wisdom. **He had understanding because it was given to him – brought by an angel from heaven! It was a gift, a dispensation, a token of Divine favor.** Now he will recount it point by point. No part will be omitted. He takes great care, however, to inform us of the source of his wisdom, thereby glorying in the Lord.

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## THREE FULL WEEKS OF MOURNING

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***“<sup>2</sup> In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. <sup>3</sup> I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”***

In the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, Daniel knew from Jeremiah’s writings that the seventy-year Babylonian captivity was about to end. At that time he set his face *“unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”* During this time of fasting and prayer,

the angel Gabriel came to Daniel by the command of God, to give him understanding. Now, four years later, Daniel again enters into a time of extended fasting and preparation. This time he is again in quest of wisdom and understanding.

**We learn from this that revelation is granted in the context of the subduement of the flesh.**

Whether by fasting, the crucifixion of the flesh, resisting the devil, or other forms of subduing the carnal nature, one must move away from the prominence of the

flesh to hear from the Lord.

**IN THOSE DAYS**

*“<sup>2a</sup> In those days . . . ”* These are the days during which *“a thing was revealed”* to Daniel. The man of God now makes known the circumstances under which the revelation was vouchsafed to him. For him, it was not a time of joy, but one of extended mourning.

**THREE FULL WEEKS**

*“<sup>2b</sup> I Daniel was mourning three full weeks . . . ”*

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*Following a three-week fast, Daniel has a vision of a glorious being, and all of his strength leaves, by Given O. Blakely*

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### I Was Mourning

Other versions read, “gave myself to grief,”<sup>BBE</sup> “was in heaviness,”<sup>GENEVA</sup> and “a three week penance.”<sup>NJB</sup> Mourning is related to lamentation, sadness, being troubled, and bewailing. It is a way of buffeting the body, and bringing it into subjection. Mourning is the result of insight – particularly insight into self and the affairs of men. **It is the result of Divine glory shining upon the human condition.**

Daniel does not say why he was mourning “three full weeks.” We know from the text, that two years had passed since Cyrus had issued the decree to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:1-4). History

enemies had hired counselors against them (Ezra 4:4). These may have been the very counselors who turned the heart of Cambyses, son of Cyrus. It is said that these men sought to “frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia” (Ezra 4:5).

Men of God cannot help but be troubled when the work of the Lord moves along slowly, or when those who have been granted liberty to leave Babylon choose to remain in it.

### Mourning Before the Lord

The mourning of Daniel is not that of despair, but of deep sorrow before the Lord. He has been deeply affected by

of Daniel’s prayer was to obtain understanding, and to chasten himself before the Lord. As it is written, “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words” (Dan 10:12). Once again, the presence of sin and its affects are what created the need to understand, and the desire to chasten himself before the Lord.

### Three Full Weeks

The extent of the impact of the above circumstances on Daniel is confirmed by the duration of his mourning – “three full weeks.” This is a most remarkable circumstance, revealing the sensitivity of the prophet. Few people are capable of sustaining godly mourning for any period of time. One would be hard pressed to find someone that eager to understand, and that desirous to be humbled before the God of heaven. But here is a man in whom faith had done a marvelous work. **He had a heart and mind to know the things of God, and a compelling concern for the city, Temple, and people upon whom God had put His name.** The weight of these things moved him to mourn in a state of spiritual alertness for “three full weeks.”

### The Fast

“ . . . I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth.”

The extent of Daniel’s fasting reveals the depth of his intention, and the extent of his pursuit of understanding from heaven. **Perhaps the reason why many obtain very little understanding is that they never really pursue it with zeal, taking the kingdom, as it was, by force** (Matt 13:11). Solomon’s words may be applied in this matter. “*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding*” (Prov 4:7). In Christ Jesus, there is more wisdom to be had than was available to either Solomon or Daniel. But it is to be sought with all diligence and fervency – with the same spirit now seen in Daniel.

Pleasant food means “tasty food,”<sup>NASB</sup> “choice food,”<sup>NIV</sup> or “delicacies.”<sup>RSV</sup>

Daniel refrained from eating anything

## THE FACT THAT WHAT WAS REVEALED WAS IN THE FUTURE DID NOT MAKE IT IRRELEVANT, BECAUSE IT WAS SOMETHING GOD HAD BOTH DETERMINED AND REVEALED.

tells us there had been an interruption of the Temple building. Cyrus was engaged in a war against the Sythians. His son Cambyses, corrupted by his military men, had halted the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple. If this is true, perhaps word had come back to Daniel, and he was lamenting over the report.

In my judgment, there are other possible reasons why Daniel may have been mourning.

- ▣ The implications of the word he had received from Gabriel earlier, concerning desolation to come upon the land (9:1-27).
- ▣ That all Jews had not returned to Jerusalem, even though released to do so by the mandate of Cyrus (Ezra 1:3).
- ▣ The report that the builders in Jerusalem were being troubled by their adversaries. The hands of the people had been weakened, and the

condition of his people in a godly manner. To a certain degree, it may be said of him as it was said of the Lord Himself, “In all their affliction He was afflicted” (Isa 63:9).

Our blessed Lord said, “*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted*” (Mat 5:4). This mourning is produced by an awareness and impact of sin and man’s proclivity to it. **The guilt and defilement produced by sin, as well as a hearty disdain for it, causes mourning to erupt in the soul.** This can be personal sin, or the sin of those with whom one is associated. In Daniel’s case, it was both. The impact of sin had caused his people to be in captivity for seventy years. There was mourning because the Temple building had been delayed. There was also the matter of being unable to grasp the full intent of the revelations given to him. Sin was the mother of them all.

Later, we will find that the intent

“pleasing,”<sup>BBE</sup> or “tasty.”<sup>TNK</sup> The prophet purposefully withheld enjoyable food from himself, depriving himself of things that were lawful, yet were not expedient at the time. **There are times when lawful pleasantries draw men away from higher and more noble things.** Blessed is the person who knows this, and can distinguish such times.

#### Neither Did I Anoint Myself

Other versions read, “neither did I use any ointment at all,”<sup>NASB</sup> “I used no lotions at all,”<sup>NIV</sup> “I put no oil on my body,”<sup>BBE</sup> and “and used no fragrant oils,”<sup>NLT</sup>

The anointing to which Daniel refers is common in the East, and related to the promotion of personal comfort. This was a common way of preparing oneself to mingle in society. Jesus referred to the practice when speaking of fasting. “But thou, when thou fastest, **anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly**” (Mat 6:17-18). This was apparently associated with refreshment, and was a common courtesy to which Jesus referred when “a woman of the city” washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them. When a Pharisee

reasoned within himself that this was inappropriate, Jesus responded, “*My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment*” (Luke 7:46).

The thing to see here is that

Those who would be used by God must, to some measurable degree, have such experiences. They move men from the periphery of the mundane into the holy of holies. **There must come a time when the human spirit is separated from the distracting affairs of this**

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## ALL OF THE REVELATIONS GIVEN TO THIS MAN OF GOD WERE OF SUCH MAGNITUDE THAT TO THIS VERY DAY THEY HAVE CHALLENGED THE MINDS OF THE MOST PRODIGIOUS SPIRITUAL THINKERS OF THIS DAY OF SALVATION.

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Daniel was so absorbed in his quest for understanding, that the normalities of life were no longer appealing. He withdrew himself from all bodily comforts because they were unimportant to him at the time. His heart and mind were given to great and more important things. I do not believe Daniel had to work at depriving his body of such pleasantries. **Rather, in the presence of the Lord, and while engaged in such a fervent quest, such things were simply not appealing to him.** It is surely in order for us to seek such a frame of mind.

**world, and life in the flesh.** This is why Jesus often withdrew from the multitudes and everyday life for long vigils of prayer (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12; John 18:2; Luke 21:37).

**Such experiences culture the soul, preparing it to receive things from God that cannot otherwise be obtained.** There is a certain spiritual soil in which the truth must grow. Many a poor soul remains in a state of ignorance and confusion simply because they live too close to the world.

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## THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH

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“<sup>4</sup> **And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; <sup>5</sup> Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: <sup>6</sup> His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.**”

Beginning with this verse, Daniel records the answer to his prayer. For twenty-one days the man of God has prepared his soul by subjecting his body to

the higher desires of his spirit. The words of our Lord ought to be remembered here. He taught there are some matters that can only be addressed by “*prayer and fasting*” (Matt 17:21). While the subject of His words pertained to the casting out of demons, the principle applies to a host of other things.

**There are matters of such magnitude that they cannot be resolved by ordinary kingdom manners. There are also spiritual insights and understanding that cannot be appropriated by study and general godly demeanor alone. Some matters require aggressive and extended effort.** These things ought to be apparent, and require no further

comment.

Not only has Daniel been able to pray with more fervency and focus, he has also, in that process, become more sensitive to the heavenly domain. His efforts were not in vain, for those who seek **do** find (Matt 7:8).

This is now the sixth time Daniel records a response to his prayers – prayers that spanned over a period of nearly seventy years.

☐ Daniel and his three friends prayed for “*mercies of the God of heaven*” to reveal the secrets of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great statue. Their prayers were answered

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*Following a three-week fast, Daniel has a vision of a glorious being, and all of his strength leaves, by Given O. Blakely*

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(2:18-19).

- ▣ When Darius was deceived into passing a law against asking anything from God, Daniel offered his supplications anyway, and was delivered from the lion's den into which he was cast for praying (6:10-11,22).
- ▣ During the first year of Belshazzar's reign, Daniel had visions of great

*measure*" (2 Cor 12:7).

Now Daniel receives a sixth insight of things to come. **All of the revelations given to this man of God were of such magnitude that to this very day they have challenged the minds of the most prodigious spiritual thinkers of this day of salvation.**

This is a most excellent example of

the first month of the Jewish year, and corresponded to our month of March. This "first month" was established when Israel was delivered from Egypt. That night, the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Ex 12:2). The fourteenth day of this month was established as "the Passover of the Lord" (Num 28:16). The Passover feast began on the fifteenth day of this month, and extended over seven days (Num 29:16-17).

**IF SUCH A THING WAS POSSIBLE, THERE WOULD BE NO DISTINCTIVE MEN LIKE ABRAHAM, DAVID, DANIEL, PAUL, AND OTHERS. THEIR DISTINCTIVENESS IS FOUND IN THE FACT THAT THEY RECEIVED MORE THAN ORDINARY MEN – EVEN MORE THAN ORDINARY GODLY MEN!**

significance. When he asked concerning their meaning, he was given the interpretation of them (7:1,16,19).

- ▣ When beholding the vision of the ram and the he-goat, Daniel "sought for the meaning" of the vision, and received what he sought (8:15-16).
- ▣ During the first year of Darius' reign, Daniel knew by Jeremiah's writings that the Babylonian captivity was about to end. He set himself to seek the face of the Lord, and God responded by sending Gabriel to give him understanding (9:3,20-21).

Now, for the sixth time, a revelation of great magnitude is given to Daniel. **When you ponder the insights that have been given to the sons of men, it will be apparent that very few have received things from God that transcended His normal communications with men.** Some of the great prophets of God received only one or two such insights. Paul, you will recall, confessed to receiving "visions and revelations" from the Lord that were of a most extraordinary nature (2 Cor 12:1). They were of such significance, and so far removed from ordinary spiritual experience, that he was "given" a "thorn in the flesh" lest he be exalted "above

how God interacts with those who are "greatly beloved" by Him. I fear that the "God-loves-everyone-the-same" mentality that pervades the modern church world has robbed people of this perspective. Even though this view has been concocted to encourage people that they are loved by God, it has actually resulted in the spread of mediocrity. **It has given people a reason to remain aloof from God, all the while thinking their standoffishness really has no effect upon the Lord at all.** Such thoughts are pure delusion.

If it is possible for an individual to be "greatly beloved" of God, it is not possible that He will treat everyone exactly the same, without discrimination vouchsafing to all the precious things of heaven. If such a thing was possible, there would be no distinctive men like Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul, and others. **Their distinctiveness is found in the fact that they received more than ordinary men – even more than ordinary godly men!** Although this is a rudimentary observation, it is hardly known in our day.

**THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY**

*"<sup>4a</sup> And in the four and twentieth day of the first month . . ."*

This was the twenty-fourth day of

Thus, Daniel had been mourning and praying during the Passover, "a feast of seven days" (Ezek 45:21). We know he had been mourning for three full weeks, the conclusion of which was the twenty-fourth day. The Passover took place on the fourteenth day, and the "feast of unleavened bread," commenced on the fifteenth day of the first month (Lev 23:5-6), and extended for seven days, or through the twenty-second day. The time of our text, therefore, was two days after the conclusion of the Passover and its associated feast of unleavened bread.

There is no evidence that the actual Passover feast, or feast of unleavened bread, was being kept during the time of Daniel. In fact, the feast had not been properly kept for some time. During the reign of Josiah, he renewed the Passover feast, which had been greatly neglected. Of that feast it is written, "And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (2 Chron 35:18). Some time after Daniel, during the time of Ezra, "the children of the captivity kept the Passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month" (Ezra 6:19). **However, there is no record of it ever being kept by the people when they were in Babylon.**

Our text suggests, however, that Daniel had not forgotten the feast that celebrated Israel's deliverance from "the iron furnace" of Egypt (Deut 4:20; Jer 11:43). It cannot be coincidence that his "three whole weeks" of mourning extended over the entirety of the Passover

and the feast of unleavened bread.

### After Three Whole Weeks

The events of our text also took place at the conclusion of Daniel's three-week period of mourning. **He was now ready to receive from God. His heart and mind had been purged of the ordinary concerns relating to life in the flesh.** He attention was now focused upon the city of God, the Temple of God, and the people of God.

### An Observation

Once again, I want to observe that **many people never hear from the Lord, or receive insights from Him, because they simply are not in the right frame of mind to do so.** They remain too close to this world, too absorbed in its activities, and too enamored of its manners. Consequently their hearts are not tuned to the heavenly frequency. If God was to speak to them, like those obtuse Jews of Jesus' day, they would think it "thundered" (John 12:29).

In an effort to obscure this circumstance, Satan has fostered all manner of doctrines that lead people to believe they can suddenly and profitably be blessed by the Lord while they are in a carnal state of mind. Perhaps God will suddenly strike them down through the touch of another person, or throw them into an unconscious state in which they will suddenly become spiritual, and utter words in a heavenly language. Perhaps they will walk into a realm that is more dominated by the Holy Spirit, and thus will be forcibly wafted into a godly state of mind.

Whatever value may be assigned to such views, they are wholly without any Scriptural precedent. **Great blessings generally follow great preparations.** Before Jesus began His productive ministry, He spent forty days fasting in the wilderness (Matt 4:2). Before He chose His disciples, He spent all night in prayer to God (Luke 6:12-13). Before He presented Himself to those who would take His life according to Divine appointment, He prayed fervently in Gethsemane (Matt 26:38-44). Before the disciples chose one to fill the vacated bishopric of Judas, they spent time in prayer (Acts 1:13-14,24). The day of Pentecost was preceded by "devout men,

*out of every nation under heaven,"* being gathered together for the observance of the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:5-12). Before Saul of Tarsus was given his commission, he spent three days during which he prayed, and did neither eat nor drink (Acts 9:9,11).

Enough cannot be said about this. Multitudes of people go to assemblies totally unprepared to receive a blessing. Others depend upon instant prayers during a crisis to bring down the blessing of God. **Let it be clear that God does not bring great crops from unprepared soil.** Thus the prophet

*water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 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"* (Gen 2:10-14).

The particulars of why Daniel was

**HE WAS NOW READY TO RECEIVE FROM GOD. HIS HEART AND MIND HAD BEEN PURGED OF THE ORDINARY CONCERNS RELATING TO LIFE IN THE FLESH. HE ATTENTION WAS NOW FOCUSED UPON THE CITY OF GOD, THE TEMPLE OF GOD, AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD.**

admonished, "Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns"<sup>NIV</sup> (Jer 4:3). Such activity is necessary if men are to be directed by the God of heaven.

Daniel has broken up the unplowed ground, and tuned his heart to hear from heaven. Although he is personally unaware of what will actually take place, he is now ready to hear from the Lord.

### THE GREAT RIVER

*"<sup>4b</sup> as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel . . ."*

The "great river Hiddekel" is understood to be the Tigris River, and is so translated in most other versions (NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, RSV, DOUAY, ESV, NJB, NLT). Versions representing the river as "Hiddekel" include KJV, ASV, DARBY, GENEVA, WEBSTER, and YLT.

**This was the third of four rivers into which the river flowing through Eden was separated.** As it is written, "And a river went out of Eden to

on the banks of this particular river are not provided. It appears that he was actually there, versus being transported there in a vision. Later, in the seventh verse, he affirms there were others with him when this event occurred: "And I Daniel alone saw the vision: **for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.**"

### Eden's River

One can only imagine the massiveness of the river that flowed through Eden, giving us some sort of indication as to Eden's size. All of the rivers separating from it were exceedingly large.

Historians identify the Pison river with the **Ganges River** (Joseph, Eusibius, Ambrosins, Epiphonus, Jerome, and Augustine. <sup>McCLINTOK STRONG</sup> Some also maintain it was associated with the Nile, although that view has proved difficult to substantiate. Whatever view one wishes to take, the river was exceedingly large. Today, the Ganges River is 1,560 miles long, rising in the Himalayas, and emptying in into the Bay of Bengal, draining a quarter of the territory of India. <sup>BRITANNICA 2003</sup>

*Following a three-week fast, Daniel has a vision of a glorious being, and all of his strength leaves, by Given O. Blakely*

## SUCH MEAGER SIGHTS, THOUGH THEY GAIN THE ATTENTION OF THOSE LIVING CLOSE TO THE EARTH ARE WEAK AND BEGGARLY AFTER SPENDING TIME IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

The Gihon River is said to encompass "the whole land of Ethiopia." The reference to Ethiopia has led men to believe this was the Nile River. Although the exact identity of this river is difficult to establish, it also was one of significant size. Today, this river is 4,132 miles long, with its basin including Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, and part of Egypt. BRITANNICA 2003

The Hiddekel River, as already stated, is identified with the Tigris River, which ran Eastward to Assyria, as Genesis 2:14 states. Today, this river is 1,180 miles in length, standing on one side of the Mesopotamia, the "cradle of civilization," with the Euphrates River on the other side.

The Euphrates River is mentioned fifteen times in Scripture (Gen 2:14; 15:18; Deut 1:7; 11:24; Josh 1:4; 2 Sam 8:3; 2 Kgs 23:29; 24:7; 1 Chron 5:9; 18:3; Jer 46:2,6,10; Rev 9:14; 16:12). Today, the river is 1,740 miles in length.

Thus, the river flowing through Eden divided into four rivers that today have a combined length of 8,612 miles. That is over three times the distance from New York City to Los Angeles, CA. Think of it another way, the total watercourse flowing out of Eden was much greater than the following distances, which are all as the crow flies. All are from New York City: to London England (3,470 miles), to Moscow Russia (4,680 miles), to Cairo Egypt (5,621 miles), to Tokyo Japan (6,760 miles), to Bombay India (7,800 miles), and to Johannesburg South Africa (7,980 miles).

### I LOOKED

*"<sup>5a</sup> Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked . . . "* Another version reads, "I raised my eyes to look about me." NJB

It is as though Daniel senses there is something to see, and therefore lifts up his eyes and looks about him. His spirit has been sensitized by the previous three weeks, making him more alert to his surroundings. He is not admiring the enormity and majesty of the "great river," for it is known to have been a

swift moving river. **Such meager sights, though they gain the attention of those living close to the earth are weak and beggarly after spending time in the presence of the Lord God of heaven and earth.**

I realize that many are persuaded they can feel closer to God in a surrounding of natural beauty. However, there is no Scriptural basis for such a suggestion. Jesus spent time in the Mount of Olives at night, not in the day (Luke 21:37). He was not there to admire the trees and foliage, but to get away from the multitudes and the distractions of public life and its associated obligations.

### Probably A Time of Devotion

It appears as though Daniel was in a state of devotion during this time. Perhaps this was right at the conclusion of the three full weeks he had spent mourning before the Lord. The language indicates that his head had been bowed toward the earth. Perhaps he was walking on the bank of the great river, similar to Isaac, who "went out to meditate in the field at eventide" (Gen 24:63). At any rate, it is highly unlikely that his presence there was a casual one, with no regard to the Lord and the thought he had entertained during his three week vigil. **Those who are experienced in the Kingdom know that few people ever realize great spiritual experiences in the midst of the mundane.** A Divine call or summons may be realized while one is mending nets (Matt 4:21), plowing (1 Kgs 19:19), or sitting at the seat of customs (Matt 9:9). However, one will be hard pressed to find a single example in Scripture of anyone receiving a revelation of the magnitude of this text while engaged in such activities.

### A CERTAIN MAN

*"<sup>5b</sup> . . . and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded*

*with fine gold of Uphaz: <sup>6</sup> His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."*

There are some valuable lessons to be learned as we consider this vision. We know from what follows that this was not a "man," but a heavenly personality. His touch strengthened Daniel. He was sent from God. He had been engaged in a great battle with spiritual forces. **This was not a man, but an angel who had come in the appearance of a man.** The human form veiled the glory of the angel, making Daniel able to perceive him, and neutralizing the fear that would have otherwise dominated him.

His clothing and body will give us some indication of how angelic hosts adapt themselves to men. I do not know what liberty angels may have in how they appear to men, or if that appearance is part of their assignment. But whatever the answer may be, we have here a heavenly manner – a way heaven thinks about appearing before men. The glorified Christ, for example, when seen by John was "clothed with a garment down to the foot" (Rev 1:13). When God clothed Adam and Eve, it was with "coats of skin" (Gen 3:21). The high priestly vestments were designed to cover the flesh to such an extent that the priests were covered from their waists to their thighs (Ex 28:42). It is enough to say that such things ought to be duly noted by all who wear the name of the Lord.



### A Certain Man

This was a specific personality who had been sent on a specific mission to a specific person, and at a specific time. There are no generalities here.

### His Clothing

*" . . . clothed in linen."* This angel is not attired in immodest clothing, or scanty clothing, or some other demeaning garb. **Whatever people may think of**

**clothing, due attention ought to be given to the manner in which this angel made himself known to Daniel.**

He was *“clothed in linen.”* Later, in the twelfth chapter, Daniel will encounter a messenger *“clothed in linen”* (12:12:6-7). Ezekiel was given a vision of an angel commissioned to *“Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof”* (Ezek 9:4). It is said of this angel that he was *“clothed in linen”* (Ezek 9:2-3,11;10:2,6,7). Ezekiel was also told that those who entered the sanctuary to minister to the Lord were to be *“clothed with linen garments”* (Ezek 44:16-17). John the beloved saw seven angels come out of the temple with seven plagues. They were all *“clothed in pure and white linen”* (Rev 15:6). The bride of Christ, the glorified church, is said to be granted to be *“arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,”* which depicted *“the righteousness of saints”* (Rev 19:8). The *“armies of heaven”* are also said to be *“clothed in fine linen, clean and white”* (Rev 19:14). When Jesus was buried, he was wrapped in *“linen clothes”*(John 19:40; 20:5-7).

All of this was foreshadowed in the attire of the high priest. He wore an *“ephod”* and *“intricately woven band”* (girdle) that was made of excellent material that were woven with *“fine twined linen”* (Ex 28:5-8). His *“breastplate”* was also made with *“fine twined linen”* (Ex 28:15). His overgarment was a *“cost of fine linen,”* and he wore a *“mitre,”* or turban, and *“breeches”* of the same material (Ex 28:39,42).

The significance of the angel being clothed in linen is seen in this. The message dealt with things pertaining to God, and thus it was appropriate that a garment be worn that was befitting of purity and sanctity – like the high priest.

#### **His Loins**

His *“loins,”* or waist, were girded with a belt made of the *“gold of Uphaz.”* Other versions read *“pure gold,”*<sup>NASB</sup> and *“finest gold,”*<sup>NIV</sup> and *“best gold.”*<sup>BBE</sup>

Girded loins are a depiction of readiness to do the bidding of the Lord – a sort of preparation to labor in an unhindered way. Those who were about to go on a mission were told *“Gird up thy loins”* (2 Kgs 4:29;9:1; Jer 1:17). The girding of the *“loins of the mind”* is also a summons to engage in deep thought concerning the words of the Lord (Job 38:3; 40:7; 1 Pet 1:13).

Jeremiah mentions *“gold from*

*struck down with fright by the sight.*

#### *His Body*

*“His body also was like the beryl.”*

This was one of the stones in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex 28:20; 39:13). The wheels of Ezekiel’s vision of the wheel in a wheel were the color of beryl (Ezek 1:16;10:9-10). In Ezekiel’s delineation of the fall of Satan, he states that he, as the *“anointed cherub,”* was once in *“Eden the garden of God,”* and

**THIS ANGEL IS NOT ATTIRED IN IMMODEST CLOTHING, OR SCANTY CLOTHING, OR SOME OTHER DEMEANING GARB. WHATEVER PEOPLE MAY THINK OF CLOTHING, DUE ATTENTION OUGHT TO BE GIVEN TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS ANGEL MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO DANIEL.**

*Uphaz”* (Jer 10:9), but nothing else is said in Scripture of either this kind of gold or this place. It was apparently a place yielding especially pure and precious gold.

When John saw the glorified Christ, He was also girded about with a *“golden girdle,”* belt, or sash (Rev 1:13). **The belt of pure gold signifies that everything worn by the angel was held together and kept in place by value and true heavenly worth.** Nothing was out of harmony with the truth or purpose of God. From the New Covenant point of view, this is like the believer having his *“loins girt about with truth,”* thereby holding all of the armor in place (Eph6:14). This depicts a certain order that penetrates all of the Kingdom.

#### **His Body**

There is considerable detail provided concerning the bodily frame of this messenger. Reference is made to *“his body,”* *“his face,”* *“his eyes,”* *“his arms,”* and *“his feet.”* **While most impressive according to appearance, this appearance was like a veil draped over the exceeding glory of this heavenly messenger.** This veil enabled Daniel to see the messenger, and not be

was covered with all manner of precious stones, including the beryl (Ezek 28:13). The beryl was also the eighth foundation of the wall of *“the great city, the holy Jerusalem,”* that John saw *“descending out of heaven from God,”* which was identified as *“the bride, the Lamb’s wife”* (Rev 21:10-20). Wherever it is mentioned in Scripture, it is always significant.

The identity of the beryl is not easy to determine. There are a variety of views on this subject. Strong’s Hebrew definitions say it is “perhaps a chrysolite, yellow jasper, or other yellow colored stone,” or “topaz.” Luther was of the opinion it was turquoise. Others have thought the color was amber. Kalisch says it is chrysolite, which is usually green of varying shades. Schleuser says it is a gem of the genus of the emerald, but less valuable than the emerald. Humble says the colors of the beryl are “grayish green, blue, yellow, and sometimes nearly white.”<sup>McCLINTOK AND STRONG</sup>

Nelson’s Bible Dictionary says the beryl “ranged in color from bluish green to yellow, white, pink, and deep green.”

Unger’s Bible Dictionary says the color of the beryl is “the deep-green variety being emerald.” It also says it is represented as “a deep red stone.”

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The International Standard Encyclopedia of Bible Knowledge says it has a sea-green color."

Calvin says the angel's body was "sky-colored . . . of a golden hue." Barnes says it is "green and bluish-green," being "identical with the emerald." Delitzsch and Keil say it is "the chrysolite of the Old and the Topaz of the New Testament." Matthew Henry says it was "of a sky color." John Gill says the beryl is "said to be of an azure and sky color," that some think it was "a sea color, greenish," while others say "the sardonyx is meant, which is of a flesh color."

It should be apparent that we cannot establish the color of the beryl with any degree of certainty. It is therefore pointless to speculate about it. **From the Scriptural use of this word it should be obvious that this stone is especially associated with the presence of the Lord.** It was the first stone in the fourth row upon the high priests breastplate. It was associated with the glory of God shown to Ezekiel. It was related to Eden, the garden of God. And it was one of the foundation stones of the glorified church.

**The body of this messenger had a color that reflected the glory from which he had come.** It confirmed he had been sent from the presence of the Lord. That, in my judgment, is the point of emphasis.

#### His Face

"His face as the appearance of lightning." The face of this messenger flashed brightly like shots of penetrating lightning. One version reads, "From his face came flashes of lightning."<sup>NLT</sup> This was doubtless the emission of Divine glory, similar to the appearance of Moses' face after he had been in the presence of the Lord (Ex 34:35).

Lightning is frequently associated

with the God of heaven. In David's depiction of Sinai at the giving of the Law, he said God sent out "lightning and discomfited them" (2 Sam 22:15). He is said to scatter His enemies by lightning (Psa 144:6). In Ezekiel's "visions of God," there were appearances of lightning (Ezek 1:13-14). Zechariah associated the flashing of lightning with the coming of the Lord (Zech 9:14). **The lightning flashes from this messenger's face confirmed that he had come from heaven – from the presence of the Lord.** He was much like the angel of the Lord who "descended from heaven," rolling back the stone from the tomb where Christ once lay, and sitting triumphantly upon it. It is said of that angel, "His countenance was like lightning" (Matt 28:3).

#### His Eyes

"His eyes as lamps of fire." Other versions read his eyes were like "torches of fire,"<sup>NKJV</sup> "flaming torches,"<sup>NASB</sup> and "burning lights."<sup>BBE</sup>

The eyes of the messenger were penetrating, and nothing was hidden from him. The matters of which he would speak were clear to him. He was not declaring something of which he knew little or nothing. It is apparent that although this person had the appearance of a man, it was not a man, but a member of the heavenly court.

This is the same kind of description given of the glorified Christ: "His eyes were as a flame of fire" (Rev 1:14; 2:18; 3:18; 19:12). Because of this, some are of the opinion that this was not an angel, but a vision of the Lord Himself. However, this cannot be true, for that would require that God or the Word be humbled to take a bodily form, come to earth, and deliver a message to one of the sons of men. When God came down upon Sinai, it was in resplendent glory, not in

the form of a man. When He revealed Himself to Moses, it was in the form of a proclamation, uttered in the afterglow of His glory, and not in the form of a man. Christ's appearance as a man to John was after He had been glorified as "the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). There can be no doubt that this was an angel sent from God, and not the Lord Himself.

#### His Arms and Feet

"His arms and his feet like in color to polished brass." Other versions read "burnished bronze,"<sup>NKJV</sup> "the gleam of polished bronze,"<sup>NASB</sup> "glittering brass,"<sup>DOUAY</sup> "shining brass,"<sup>Septuagint</sup> and "bright brass."<sup>YLT</sup>

When Ezekiel saw a revelation of God, there were four living creatures in the midst of the marvelous glory. He said of their feet, "And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass" (Ezek 1:7). In our text, the heavenly messenger has both arms and feet that were glittering brightly like highly polished brass. This personage has the form of a man, but there the likeness ends. This is in order to confirm to Daniel that he is receiving something from heaven. It is a high and lofty message than cannot be obtained from earth. Yet, in a singular display of Divine grace, the message is brought down to him, and presented so he can comprehend it.

However, with all of this, great care is taken that does not allow the heavenly messenger to be too close to the earth – too much like man. The message is, indeed, brought to earth, **but only a godly man will be able to receive it.**

#### His Voice

"The voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." Other versions read, "the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult,"<sup>NASB</sup> "his words like the roar of a multitude,"<sup>NRSV</sup> "his voice was like the sound of an army,"<sup>BBE</sup> and "his voice was like the roaring of a vast multitude of people."<sup>NLT</sup>

When the messenger spoke, it sounded like the shouts of a multitude of people. The sound as well as the message was vast, impressive, and inspirational. Those who like quiet devotional talks

**THE LIGHTNING FLASHES FROM THIS MESSENGER'S FACE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD COME FROM HEAVEN – FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.**

would certainly have been ill-at-ease on this occasion. The impression I receive from this text is that the heavenly message had an overpowering effect, drowning out, as it was, the sounds of earth. When this angel began to speak, the roar of the rushing Tigris River could no longer be heard. Distractions lost their power, and Daniel's attention was riveted on the message being brought to him. The affairs of state certainly did not enter into Daniel's mind at this time.

#### **Not Daniel's First Vision**

Keep in mind, this is not the first vision Daniel has received, nor is it his first encounter with a heavenly being. He had previously overheard two heavenly personalities talking (8:13-14). He had

been personally tutored by the angel Gabriel, who was also in appearance as a man (8:15-27; 9:21-27). But this angel is even more dazzling in appearance. Whether or not it was because he was a superior angel, I do not know.

It is enough to observe that the revelations given to Daniel appear to increase in both volume and the nature of the things revealed. This also is a manner of the kingdom – to continue to grow and expand. Thus, the things revealed to Daniel in the latter years of his life were of greater magnitude than those revealed at the beginning of his prophetic tenure. It is in order for us to expect such things.

#### **Something To Be Learned**

If ever the human spirit can be tuned to the heavenly frequency, and the heart and mind become occupied with eternal verities, the things of this world will begin to lose their attractiveness and power. **Heaven always speaks louder than the earth.** However, as we will see from this text, only those who have given their attention to holy things will be able to discern what is being said.

**When the earth is like unwanted static to our souls, and its sounds are an unwanted interruption to our spirits, then, and only then, will the heavenly voice drown them out.** As long as the things of this world are viewed as superior, heaven will be silent.

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## **ONLY DANIEL SAW THE VISION**

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***“<sup>7</sup> And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.”***

There are messages and insights that are NOT for everyone – messages that are brought to specific people at specific times. God's communication at Sinai was only for Israel. His face to face communication was only for Moses. Following His resurrection, Christ appeared only to His disciples, showing them things that, at the time, were for no one else. Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, but His word was for Saul alone, not those who were with him. When Paul was wafted into the third heaven, he heard words intended for him alone, and for which there was no human capability to communicate the message to others.

Now Daniel is brought a message that those who are with him are not intended to receive. Whether men wish to accept it or not, there are discretionary revelations from God – words that come to specific people at specific times. Some of them may be told later, like the word to the shepherds on the night our Lord was born. But the angels appeared only to the shepherds, not all of those to whom they

reported. So it is in our text.

#### **ONLY DANIEL SAW**

*“<sup>7a</sup> And I Daniel alone saw the vision . . . ”* Another version reads, *“I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision.”*<sup>NIV</sup>

In the flesh, one might suppose it impossible to hide a dazzling heavenly messenger from whose face lightning bolts flashed, who was girded with gold, whose eyes were like brightly burning torches, and whose arms and legs glistened like highly polished brass.

This is why the appearance is called a *“vision.”* **It was not something contained in the course of nature,**

**but was transcendent to nature.** As I understand it, a vision is perceived by the mind, not the eye. Thus the Scriptures speak of visions as being in the *“head”* (Dan 2:28; 4:5,10,13;7:1,15). Visions are not detected with the physical senses, for they are a spiritual experience.

This opens the meaning of the expression, *“Where there is no vision, the people perish”* (Prov 29:18). That is, where people are not given to see spiritual realities, or where the things of God are not revealed to them, they will perish. Thus other versions read, *“Where there is no revelation,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“When there is no prophecy,”*<sup>DARBY</sup> *“When prophecy shall fail,”*<sup>DOUAY</sup> and *“When people do not accept Divine guidance.”*<sup>NLT</sup>

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**IN THE FLESH, ONE MIGHT SUPPOSE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO HIDE A DAZZLING HEAVENLY MESSENGER FROM WHOSE FACE LIGHTNING BOLTS FLASHED, WHO WAS GIRDED WITH GOLD, WHOSE EYES WERE LIKE BRIGHTLY BURNING TORCHES, AND WHOSE ARMS AND LEGS GLISTENED LIKE HIGHLY POLISHED BRASS.**

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*Following a three-week fast, Daniel has a vision of a glorious being, and all of his strength leaves, by Given O. Blakely*

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Daniel is receiving revelation, a prophecy, a word from God, and Divine guidance – and he is the only one who will be granted to perceive and understand it.

#### THE MEN WITH HIM

*“<sup>7b</sup> . . . for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.”*

It is apparent from this that some awareness of the supernatural events registered upon those who were with Daniel. We are not told who they were. They could have been fellow Jews. They

suddenly upon them so that they could not remain. The vision was intended for Daniel alone, and thus the presence of the angel is more than they can bear.

God has revealed that He can “appoint” a terror over people, causing it to come upon them (Lev 26:16). He can make people “flee when none pursueth” (Lev 26:17). He can even cause “the sound of a shaken leaf” to chase men, so that they flee “as fleeing from a sword” (Lev 26:36). That is something to put into your spiritual arsenal when enemies or circumstances begin to cause you undue

**comes in all of His glory, and the glory of the Father, and the glory of all His holy angels?** Those who imagine there will be an alliance of the ungodly who will fight against the glorified Christ betray a very distorted understanding, to say the very least, and to be undeservedly charitable. Jesus will “consume” the loftiest of all His adversaries “with the spirit of His mouth,” and “destroy” him “with the brightness of His coming” (2 Thess 2:8). Even the heavens and earth will flee from before His face (Rev 20:11). When His enemies see Him coming in glory they will call out to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, for from the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev 6:16).

When Jesus comes “to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe,” His enemies – all of them – will shrink back in terror, for He is also coming at that time to destroy them. As it is written, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; **when He shall come to be glorified in his saints . . .**” (2 Th 1:10).

**As confirmed in this vision, glory and flesh cannot mingle. Even the glory of holy angels must be significantly veiled before messages and benefits can be passed from them to men. And even then, those to whom they have not been sent run and hide in fear.** Let us have done with views of glory that tend to take this truth from us! Such teachings are dangerous beyond all description. They are shallow soil in which all manner of erroneous and damaging thought will grow.

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## DANIEL IS RECEIVING REVELATION, A PROPHECY, A WORD FROM GOD, AND DIVINE GUIDANCE – AND HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO WILL BE GRANTED TO PERCEIVE AND UNDERSTAND IT.

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could also have been official attendants to Daniel, serving some of his needs. He was still remained in a place of political prominence.

#### A Great Quaking

Note the Divine discrimination. **A vision was sent to Daniel, and a “great quaking” to those who were with him.** Other versions read, “an exceeding great terror fell on them,”<sup>DOUAY</sup> “a great fear fell upon them,”<sup>GENEVA</sup> “great amazement fell upon them,” Septuagint “a great trembling overtook them,”<sup>NJB</sup> and “they were suddenly terrified.”<sup>NLT</sup>

These men sense something, we do not know exactly what it was – but it was related to this majestic personality that had been sent to Daniel. Alarm fell

concern. If the presence of an angel can have such an affect upon men, what of the presence of the Lord Himself?

#### They Fled to Hide

Fear so gripped these men that “fled to hide themselves.” This confirms the reality of what happened to Daniel. The men who were with him were only exposed to the residue of angelic glory, and yet it was still more than they could bear. **Believe me, God can rid the ranks suddenly and effectively of those who do not understand.** It is good to learn to bank on this.

#### An Observation

If such a fear fell on the men who were with Daniel when but a single angel came down from heaven to him (not to them), **what will occur when Jesus**

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## LEFT ALONE

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*“<sup>8</sup> Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into*

*corruption, and I retained no strength.”*

Again, I want to take care to

emphasize the impact this heavenly messenger had upon Daniel and those with him. This was a most sobering occasion, which is the manner of the

kingdom. **The closer one gets to the Lord and heavenly influences, the more sober and serious they become.** This needs to be known in a day when casualness and haphazardness has barged into the church with disruption to sensitive hearts. Those who have genuine encounters with the powers of heaven do not easily forget them, and are most assuredly sober during such occasions.

When the glory of the Lord appeared on Sinai, it is written *“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off”* (Exo 20:18). This is not to mention the impact the voice of God had upon Adam and Eve after they had sinned. They also hid (Gen 3:8).

Let me give you an even more vivid example of the effect of the spirit world upon men in the flesh. Eliphaz the Timanite told Job of an experience he had. *“Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up”* (Job 4:12-15). If that is what *“a little thereof”* can do to the flesh, what can be said of an abundance?

#### I WAS LEFT ALONE

*“<sup>8a</sup> Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision . . . ”* Just as the disciples forsook Jesus when His hour came (Mk 14:50), so all of those with Daniel forsook him when this hour came. Instead of fleeing with those with him, Daniel remains to face the heavenly messenger all alone. In this respect, he was like the patriarch Jacob, who alone wrestled with a heavenly messenger (Gen 32:24-29).

The point here is that Daniel was left alone **looking at this vision**. No kindred souls were with him. Other versions read, *“So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision,”*<sup>NIV</sup> and *“So I was left alone to see this great vision.”*<sup>NRSV</sup>

#### Application

**For every child of God, there is a Peniel** – as that of Jacob who

wrestled there through the night (Gen 32:30). It is a time when the magnitude of Divine glory is more immediately confronted, leaving an unforgettable impact upon the human spirit.

#### NO STRENGTH

*“<sup>8b</sup> . . . and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.”*

How will a confrontation with the spiritual world affect Daniel? As with us, that world was always there. But now Daniel knowingly encounters it.

#### No strength

terminated when we are *“like Him, for we shall see Him as He is”* (1 John 3:1-2).

#### Comeliness Turned to Corruption

Other versions read, *“my vigor was turned to frailty,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“my natural color turned to a deathly palor,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“my face turned deathly pale,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“my complexion grew deathly pale,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“radiant appearance was fearfully changed,”*<sup>RSV</sup> *“the color went from my face.”*<sup>BBE</sup> and *“my glory was turned into corruption.”*<sup>Septuagint</sup>

Daniel’s face assumed the pale and yellowish palor of death. The sight before him was so awesome that his physical power nearly shut down completely. The

## THE CLOSER ONE GETS TO THE LORD AND HEAVENLY INFLUENCES, THE MORE SOBER AND SERIOUS THEY BECOME. THIS NEEDS TO BE KNOWN IN A DAY WHEN CASUALNESS AND HAPHAZARDNESS HAS BARGED INTO THE CHURCH WITH DISRUPTION TO SENSITIVE HEARTS.

Other versions read, *“yet no strength was left in me,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“I had no strength left,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“My strength left me,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“all my strength went from me,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“I was powerless,”*<sup>NJB</sup> and *“I was drained of strength.”*<sup>TNK</sup>

The mere confrontation of a person from *“the world to come”* utterly depleted all human, or fleshly strength. No war was fought, no display of angelic strength and power was given. The vision of the angel caused the strength of a holy man, greatly beloved in heaven, to wither and disappear. John experienced the same thing when the glorified Christ appeared to him on Patmos. *“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead”* (Rev 1:17).

**All of this confirms that presently there are conflicting things between heaven and earth.**

The closer God gets to the flesh, the more it trembles. **The presence of heavenly glory is disruptive to the flesh.** For those in Christ Jesus, this will only be

confrontation of a glorious person from the heavenly realms was too much for the flesh – and that was a glory that was much veiled! Earlier, Daniel had a similar experience when his countenance was changed within him at the conclusion of the vision of the four great beasts from the sea (7:28).

**Habakkuk** responded similarly to a message that was delivered to him. He records, *“When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself”* (Hab 3:16).

**Moses** had a similar experience on Mount Sinai. There, amidst the thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud upon the mount, and a tempest blowing upon them, Moses cried out, *“I exceedingly fear and quake!”* (Heb 12:21).

**What we have here is nature convulsing in the presence of glory, being weakened in the presence of**

**I AM PERSUADED SOME PEOPLE WOULD PLACE MORE VALUE ON THE BODILY EXPERIENCE OF DANIEL THAN THE VISION THAT HE WAS GIVEN TO SEE. HOWEVER, THE DRAINING OF DANIEL'S STRENGTH AND THE CHANGE OF HIS COUNTENANCE WAS NOT THE BLESSING. THE BLESSING WAS THE MESSAGE THAT HAD BEEN SENT TO HIM FROM HEAVEN.**

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**glory.** What happened on Mount Sinai is happening in Daniel's person. What took place in nature when Jesus died, is taking place in the body of the beloved of God. It is a miniature picture of what will take place when the Lord Jesus is revealed in all of His glory. **There will be a violent disruption of the entire natural order.** At that time *"The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again"* (Isa 24:20).

Heaven and earth shall pass away,

but not from mere old age – even though the heavens and the earth shall *"wax old like a garment"* (Psa 102:25-26). **They will be made instantly "old," and pass away in the blaze of the glory of God, Christ, and the holy angels.**

#### **The Folly Of A Fleshly Religion**

These days it is important to point out the folly of a religion that is anchored to the flesh, or the body. When too much attention is given to the body, or fleshly experiences, it is quite evident that not much glory has been seen. **The more of God a person sees, the more deficient the flesh becomes.**

I am persuaded some people would place more value on the bodily experience of Daniel than the vision that he was given to see. However, the draining of Daniel's strength and the change of his countenance was not the blessing. **The blessing was the message that had been sent to him from heaven.**

In Christ Jesus, the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit withers the flesh, robbing it of its power. This is involved in the following words. *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"* (Rom 8:13-14). **The Lord came to deliver us from the flesh, and the Spirit leads us in that deliverance.**

With Daniel, the subduing of the flesh came by means of a heavenly messenger wrapped in subdued glory. His flesh could not be prominent then, but fell beneath that weight of glory. For those in Christ Jesus, it comes through the enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit, who leads us in crucifying the flesh.

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## **HE HEARD THE WORDS ANYWAY**

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***"<sup>9</sup> Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground."***

Daniel's spirit was more alert than his body. While his outward man reeled to and fro at the sight of the angel, his inward man could still hear what was being said to him. **This confirms to us that our outward nature is vastly inferior to our inward one.** There is, in this case, a vast difference between the fear and dread that moved Israel to cry out, *"let not God speak with us, lest we die"* (Ex 20:19), and the response of Moses, which was *"show me Thy glory"* (Ex 33:18).

#### **THE VOICE OF HIS WORDS**

*"<sup>9a</sup> Yet heard I the voice of his words . . ."* Other versions read, *"the sound of his words,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"I heard him*

*speaking,"* <sup>NIV</sup>

The focus was not the appearance of the heavenly being – although that was very impressive. It was the message that he brought that was the center of attention. Although his appearance was dazzling and arresting, it was nevertheless quite subdued. **The angel was not the point, but the message – not his glory, but the glory of his word.** Therefore, Daniel says he heard the voice of his words, even though his appearance had registered such a formidable impact upon his flesh.

#### **I WAS IN A DEEP SLEEP**

*"<sup>9a</sup> . . . and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground."* Other versions read, *"I fell into a trace, face to the ground,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"I fell into a deep stupor on my face,"* <sup>DARBY</sup> *"I lay in consternation upon my face,"* <sup>DOUAY</sup> *"I was pricked in my heart, and I fell with my face toward the earth,"* <sup>Septuagint</sup> *"I fell fainting, face toward the ground,"* <sup>NJB</sup> and *"overcome by a deep sleep, I lay prostrate on the ground."* <sup>TNK</sup>

**I cannot help but notice the**

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**WHILE HIS OUTWARD MAN REELED TO AND FRO AT THE SIGHT OF THE ANGEL, HIS INWARD MAN COULD STILL HEAR WHAT WAS BEING SAID TO HIM. THIS CONFIRMS TO US THAT OUR OUTWARD NATURE IS VASTLY INFERIOR TO OUR INWARD ONE.**

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**clash of the spiritual with the order of flesh.** When exhilarating and awe-inspiring fleshly experiences occur, they generally do not put us to sleep. In fact, fearful sights have a way of driving sleep from us. But that it not what happened here. The flesh was anything but alert!

Of course, the site was not natural, or in the flesh. It was rather in the spirit and mind. **It was a vision, and visions from God have a calculated affect upon the flesh, subduing its power, and enabling the human spirit to gain proper focus.** The flesh simply cannot traffic in the domain of spiritual realities. It not only has no interest inn such things, it cannot survive in such holy climes.

The vision vouchsafed to Daniel, and the words that were spoken in it, overpowered the flesh, causing Daniel's body to fall to the earth in a stupor, or trance. Mind you, this was not a carnal man, or one who was a stranger to the

things of God. This was a man confessed to be "*greatly beloved*" in the heavenly realms. The meaning here is that his spirit remained alert, even though his body was overcome. In the Word of God, this is not an unusual experience.

The words "*deep sleep*" mean an unconscious state, a heavy sleep, or fast asleep. It is a state wherein the flesh becomes non-functional. **Yet, this is not a state where Divine or heavenly communication cannot be realized.** Some examples will suffice to establish this point.

When God ratified His covenant with Abram, **He did so while a "*deep sleep*" had fallen upon the patriarch.** As it is written, "*And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict*

*them four hundred years . . .*" (Gen 15:12-13). With God, all things are truly possible.

When conversing with Job Eliphaz said he had visions in the night when "*deep sleep falls upon men*" (Job 4:13). Job acknowledged the same experience (Job 33:15). Earlier, in another vision, an angel communicated with Daniel while he was "*in a deep sleep on his face toward the ground*" (8:18). Later, the angel will enable Daniel to marshal his bodily energies. However, until then, the communication is going on.

It is not appropriate to make more of this occasion than the Spirit intends. **The point is that flesh is a severe limitation to us, and therefore must often be put to the side in order that God can speak to us.** It should be apparent to us that when our flesh is dominant, it causes our inner ears to be deaf, and the eyes of our understanding to become clouded.

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## CONCLUSION

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The stage has now been set for a momentous revelation to be given to Daniel. He has spent three full weeks mourning before he Lord, and seeking for an understanding of things revealed to

him, nor hear the words that he heard.

If one wonders why Daniel has had such a disconcerting experience, remember that he has been mourning for

three full weeks, keenly aware of his own shortcomings, and the reprehensible conduct of his people. Four years before this, aware that the Babylonian captivity was about to end, he had raised an extended prayer to the Lord in which he

confessed his own sin and that of his people. He had offered supplications for the holy city and the Temple, where God had placed His name.

In the midst of this, the mighty angel Gabriel had visited him, divulging the coming Messiah, and how He would be cut off from the land of the living, thus finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, bringing in everlasting righteousness, fulfilling the vision and prophecies of the ages, and anointing the most holy place for the entrance of the redeemed of the Lord.

All of this had honed the spirit of this man of God to a fine edge, sensitizing him to the purpose of God, and drawing him into holy involvement with that purpose. He is more aware of heaven than of earth, and more alert to the Lord than to either Darius or Cyrus.

As I said at the beginning of this lesson, this chapter prepares the way for

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**ALL OF THIS HAD HONED THE SPIRIT OF THIS MAN OF GOD TO A FINE EDGE, SENSITIZING HIM TO THE PURPOSE OF GOD, AND DRAWING HIM INTO HOLY INVOLVEMENT WITH THAT PURPOSE. HE IS MORE AWARE OF HEAVEN THAN OF EARTH, AND MORE ALERT TO THE LORD THAN TO EITHER DARIUS OR CYRUS.**

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him. He is withdrawn from the normalities of life, on the banks of the Tigris river. At this point those who were with him have been repelled by their awareness of supernatural things, even though they did not see the vision Daniel

three full weeks, keenly aware of his own shortcomings, and the reprehensible conduct of his people. Four years before this, aware that the Babylonian captivity was about to end, he had raised an extended prayer to the Lord in which he

the last two chapters of Daniel. Some might wonder how this could be, since the eleventh chapter begins with the words, "Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him" (Dan 11:1). Since that first year of Darius was considerably

before the third year of Cyrus, how, then, can the tenth chapter possibly be a prelude to chapters eleven and twelve? The answer is quite simple. The first verse of chapter eleven are not the words of Daniel, but of the angel who begins speaking to Daniel in the tenth chapter.

**We therefore have every right to expect some remarkable insights to be ministered in this chapter. We also have a beloved and sensitive prophet to receive and record them.** Be assured of this: nothing mediocre can come from this!

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 3/7/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 10-21 of the tenth chapter. The title of our lesson is, "AN ANGEL BATTLES HIS WAY TO EARTH TO BRING AN INTERPRETATION." This is one of the most intriguing texts of Scripture, revealing something of what can be involved in the appropriation of understanding. There are hindrances between heaven and earth that require heavenly activity on the behalf of those to whom understanding is sent. Much will be seen in this remarkable text. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

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