

## **“DANIEL’S VISION OF A MAN, III.”**

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### **Scripture Texts: Daniel 10:10-21**

#### **A great cosmic conflict.**

We think of history as being long and linear, one thing happening after another, but history is also high and deep, much more than we can imagine.

What you were taught in history class was not all there was to history, and may not even be what was most important about history. Human history is intertwined with spiritual history.

I dare say the fiercest and most intense battles ever waged on earth are nothing compared to cosmic battles waged on the other side of the curtain that hides from view the unseen spiritual realm.

In chapter 11 a great conflict on earth is going to be revealed and outlined in some detail. But before we get to that conflict it is revealed to Daniel that there is another conflict, a greater conflict, an unseen war of Satan’s resistance and rebellion.

For the past 21 days an unseen battle has been wage against Satan’s war with Persia and God’s people.

Daniel knew God’s people were under attack from human enemies, but he couldn’t see the spiritual enemies. Daniel was praying for three weeks with no knowledge that His prayers were even being heard, let alone answered. As Daniel was praying, God was fighting.

I am reminded of another great man of prayer. During the time of the sixteenth-century Scottish Reformation, John Knox’s ministry of preaching and prayer were so well known that the Roman Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, is reputed to have said, “I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the assembled armies of Europe.”

What an encouragement to pray.

Satan is a great enemy. He is called a roaring lion looking to devour (I Peter 5). He is called a thief who comes to steal and kill and destroy (John 10:10). He is the prince of the power of the air. Yet he is vulnerable to the prayers of the saints.

We hear the news every day and the world seems unsettled to us, things are stirring. Nations are rising up against nations. North Korea is rattling the sabre, China is posturing, Turkey is shifting policy, Russia is being unpredictable.

But there are other forces, greater forces more menacing that are also moving and stirring. But we are not to fear. The prayers of one 70 something old man in a foreign land make a difference.

Notice how much is made of his weakness and frailty and powerlessness. He is completely dependent on God.

Let everyone here who thinks they are too old or too weak or not gifted enough to be of any use in the church or in God's great worldwide plans pay attention. If you can pray, you are of great strategic importance to the advancing of God's kingdom against the opposition of Satan.

I believe that God's best work is done through a great army of 60, 70, 80 and 90 year olds. He takes away our physical strength so we will stop doing and start praying. We have direct access into the command center of the universe, and to the commander and chief Himself.

Don't underestimate your power and authority. Unknown to Daniel his prayers were having cosmic influence. Angels were on the move, armies of angels were being mobilized, assignments are given, orders are drawn up, God was moving and acting.

Prayer sets in motion forces in heaven against the forces of hell. God has placed in earthen vessels power and strength so that none may boast, except to give the credit and glory to God.

### **There are Angels Hovering Around Me.**

**Daniel 10:12** Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.

Because of Daniel's prayers God commanded his angels to come, He gave Daniel a vision, and He gave Daniel understanding and wisdom concerning what is to come.

God has legions of angels at His command, at His beck and call, who wait to serve and do God's bidding.

**Matthew 26:53** Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?

**Psalm 91:11** He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

Even Satan knows this and quotes this verse to Jesus during the temptation.

**Matthew 4:5-6** The devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,  
"He will command his angels concerning you,"

**Matthew 18:10** See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.

**Hebrews 1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Elisha saw a mighty army of the heavenly hosts ready to do battle on behalf of God's people.

There are principalities and powers in the heavenly places. There is a mighty invincible army of the heavenly hosts ready to do God's will and to minister to His people. This is why the gates of hell cannot prevail, this is why the enemies of God will fail, this is why no harm can befall us that God cannot turn for a greater good.

We are never left alone. The battle belongs to the Lord.

### **Principalities and Powers in high places.**

Who is this mysterious prince of the kingdom of Persia who is able to fight one of God's messengers for 21 days?

**Daniel 10:13, 20-21** The *prince of the kingdom of Persia* withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia.

20 Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, *the prince of Greece* will come. 21 But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.

This prince of Persia is angelic, of the unseen spirit world.

This prince resists God’s purposes so he is an evil angel, one of Satan’s agents.

This prince is powerful enough to delay one of God’s agents.

But this prince is not greater than God or God’s agents, there is resistance, but not victory.

Finally, the conflict is not over and won’t be over any time soon. After this prince there will be another.

So this news is sobering to God’s people but not despairing, not as those without hope or help.

The gates of hell will wreak great havoc, but in the end they will not prevail.

The angel’s message is meant to encourage, “Don’t be afraid, be strong, take courage.”

Verse 21 reminds us God’s decrees are final, God has the last word, what God has written will be done.

Paul makes reference to these spirits.

**II Corinthians 4:3-4** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

**Ephesians 1:20-21** ... when he raised [Christ] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

**Ephesians 2:2** ... following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

**Ephesians 6:12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

These texts remind us of the reality of spiritual forces of good and evil.

There are rulers in the kingdom of darkness with Satan as the chief prince of the power of the air. Apparently a Satanic subordinate is over Persia stirring up great trouble. He is propagating evil thoughts and evil actions to organize resistance to the work of God's people in Jerusalem.

Some Christians have taken these verses in Daniel and them turned into great schemes and all manner of false teaching concerning *territorial spirits*. Some believe there are territorial spirits who rule over communities and nations and who bind or hold captive the inhabitants of those places.

They believe God raises up certain Christians, with powers or ability to discern and see and name and map out these territorial spirits. They in turn are able to bind these spirits.

In more charismatic and Pentecostal groups there is a practice call spiritual mapping, doing in-depth research to identify and then break spiritual strongholds over neighborhoods or cities or nations and cast down there territorial spirits.

Too much has been made of them by many. But then too little has been made of them by others. As with so many things, there are two ditches on this road. These verses are here and they say something.

But there is no Biblical warrant for saying Satan has made special assignments to particular regions, nor is there warrant opposing Satan and naming and binding demons.

I am inclined toward the cautious wisdom of a professor well versed in these matters: "Daniel had no idea of what was happening in the spiritual realm as he prayed. There is no indication that Daniel was attempting to discern territorial spirits, pray against them, or cast them down. In fact, Daniel only learned about what had happened in the angelic realm after the warring in heaven. It is important to observe that the text does not teach that Daniel, by his prayer, was able to bind, cast down, or evict the Persian prince, he remains powerfully influential for two hundred years. Of course, casting down a territorial ruler was not the objective of Daniel's prayer anyway" (Clinton Arnold).

What these verses do tell us is that there are spiritual forces of darkness influencing people through deception, lies, propaganda, persecution, hatred. They hate God's people and God's church and God's kingdom.

Satan's was opposing God's work in Persia and Jerusalem for it was the future site from which God would build His church. And when that spirit fell another rose in its place, the spirit of Greece. There are always new cults and new heresies and new false prophets.

Did not Jesus warn the disciples in the garden to watch and pray for an adversary is coming?

Life is hard. There is a reason life is hard. We live in a world of great spiritual conflict. But glory to God we are not alone and the one who is with us is greater than he who is in the world.

The root cause of our troubles in this life is not our spouse or our kids or our parents or our boss. The root cause is not even our own sins. It's not just flesh and blood, it is principalities and powers.

**Ephesians 6:12, 18** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

**Pray.** It is amazing in the face of such great odds and great powers, we are told above all, pray. That is where the power is.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. The future is the Lord's. The battle is the Lord's. At His word, all evil will be destroyed and dispelled and cast into the lake of fire.

And because of this we can face the future, as can Daniel as it is revealed to him in chapter 11.