

The Prophets

Lesson #41

Daniel 10:1-12:13

Outline

I. *The Prophecies Of Daniel (7:1-12:13)*

- A. The vision of the heavenly messenger (10:1-11:1).
 1. Daniel's vision (10:1-9).
 2. God's strengthening (10:10-21).
- B. The times and "the time of the end" (11:1-12:13).
 1. The Persian and Grecian Empires (11:1-4).
 2. The South versus the North (11:5-20).
 3. Antiochus IV Epiphanes (11:21-45).
 4. The "resurrection" (12:1-4).
 5. Final words (12:5-13).

Notes

Daniel 10:1-9

- The tenth through twelfth chapters more fully describe the vision in the eighth chapter by a second vision on the same subject, just as the vision in the seventh chapter explains more fully that in the second. The tenth chapter is the prologue; the eleventh, the prophecy itself; and the twelfth, the epilogue. This vision's message related to a great conflict, signaling troublesome times for the people of God.
- The "third year of Cyrus," or 536 B.C., identifies this vision as the latest recorded in the book of Daniel and was probably just a few years before his death. The name "Belteshazzar" had been given to Daniel nearly seventy years earlier by Nebuchadnezzar (1:7). The message that Daniel received was true.
- The first month of the year was traditionally a time for feasting. The Passover was celebrated on the fourteenth day; the Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated from the fifteenth to the twenty-first days. Anointing oneself with oil was a sign of rejoicing (Psalm 45:7; Amos 6:6; 2 Samuel 14:2), but on this occasion Daniel denied himself.
- In early spring, Daniel received his vision through an angel while standing by the Tigris River, evidently there on some kind of official business. As Daniel looks up, he sees a man dressed like a priest in linen (Leviticus 6:10; cf. Jeremiah 13:1; Ezekiel 9:2-3, 11; 10:2, 6-7; Mark 16:5; Revelation 15:6) and wearing a belt of gold. The humanity of this messenger is emphasized in vss. 16 and 18. Vss. 5-6 are probably the most detailed description in scripture of the appearance of an angel.

- Although Daniel's companions did not see the vision, they sensed the angel's presence and fled in terror (cf. Acts 9:7; 22:9). Left alone with this awesome messenger, Daniel once again was emotionally overwhelmed (cf. 8:27). Based on Daniel's description, his experience was not one to envy!

Daniel 10:10-21

- The combination of touch and command enabled Daniel to get to his feet. Just as Jesus was One in whom the Lord delighted (Isaiah 42:1), Daniel was "greatly beloved." This remarkable greeting reassured him of God's love and concern for His faithful servants. This love and concern is evident from the fact that this messenger had been sent in response to Daniel's prayer.
- Why a three-week delay if Daniel's prayer had been heard at the beginning? The "prince of the kingdom of Persia" was to blame. A representative of Persia in the heavenly realm is intended here. In vs. 20 Greece has an angelic counterpart, and in vs. 21, Michael (Jude 9), one of the chief princes, belongs to Israel. This glimpse into spiritual warfare anticipates Paul's description of spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12; cf. Revelation 12:7).
- The vision of vs. 11 is the revelation of chapter 11. Despite the touch of vs. 10, Daniel in vs. 15 is again prostrate and, in addition, "dumb" or without the ability to speak. The messenger touches Daniel a second time (vs. 16), this time on the lips and gives him the power of speech. Daniel was then ready to give close attention to God's revelation of the future and write it down with the utmost care.
- The heavenly warfare is directed first against Persia and then Greece, because each in turn will have power over God's people. The supernatural messenger and Michael are the only two who support Israel in this warfare. In spite of the persecution that will befall Israel, especially under Antiochus IV Epiphanes, God's people will survive. The revelation of chapter 11 gives unshakable assurance that as desperate as the situation will be, God is so fully in control He is able to disclose the sequence of events before they happen.
- The angel revealed that he was still in combat for the Lord and would soon return to the battlefield to fight against renewed attacks from the demon assigned to Persia. This antagonist would be succeeded by another satanic champion called the "prince of Greece." The "scripture of truth" contains the course of future history as shaped by God (Malachi 3:16; Psalm 139:16; Revelation 5:1).
- Michael was and would be locked in battle with Satan's deputies in Persia and Greece. Michael's victory over satanic foes must have paved the way for Queen Esther to thwart Haman, who wanted to obliterate the

entire Jewish nation. Michael's victory over satanic foes would pave the way for the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the reconsecration of the temple for the worship of Almighty God.

- The tenth chapter unfolds the spiritual world as the background of the historical world (Job 1:7; 2:1; Zechariah 3:1-2; Revelation 12:7), and angels as the ministers of God's government of men. Therefore, there is a connection between rebellious earthly powers and evil forces; a direct correlation between evil government and governors and demonic influence. God allows satanic beings liberty to move around and great power at one time or the other. Demonic influence is also evident in the worship of idols (Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:36-38; 1 Corinthians 10:20; Revelation 9:20) and in false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1).

Daniel 11:1-4

- Daniel 11 predicted a time of religious persecution for God's people. It is amazing in its detail and accuracy. The "first year" of Darius was that year in which royal orders were given which allowed God's people to return to Jerusalem.
- The "three kings" were (1) Cambyses, (2) Gaumata or Bardiya and (3) Darius I Hystaspes. The "fourth" king is Xerxes, who, without any just cause, invaded areas controlled by the Greeks. After he had burned Athens, his fleet was battered at the battle of Salamis in 480 and his army crushed the following year at the battle of Plataea. This Greek-Persian conflict begun in earnest by Xerxes ended with Alexander the Great.
- After his untimely death, Alexander's kingdom was split into four and ruled, not by his descendants (Alexander IV was his son), but by Alexander's four leading generals (7:6; 8:8), the *Diadochoi* ("Successors").
- Philip III, Alexander's half-brother, and Alexander IV were murdered in 317 and 311 respectively, fulfilling the prophecy of vs. 4. In the material that follows, the kings of the North (Seleucids) and the kings of the South (Ptolemies) are descendants of two of the *Diadochoi*, Seleucus and Ptolemy. The Seleucids had their power base in Syria, while the Ptolemies had their base in Egypt. Judah was caught in the middle.

Daniel 11:5-20

- The "king of the South" is Ptolemy I Soter (322-285), who had taken Egypt from the point of Alexander's death. In 312 Ptolemy and Seleucus defeated Antigonus at Gaza. Seleucus then recovered Babylon, and eventually, captured the rest of Antigonus' empire. In wresting control from Antigonus, Seleucus became even stronger than Ptolemy I.
- Ptolemy III Euergetes invaded the Seleucid empire, gained control of its capital city, Antioch, and plundered its wealth. In 217 Ptolemy IV Philo-

pator engaged Antiochus III in battle at Raphia, the Egyptian stronghold on the border with Palestine. Fourteen years passed before Antiochus III would again invade the Ptolemaic kingdom. This time he would do so in alliance with Philip V of Macedon.

- In 199 Antiochus defeated the Egyptians at Paneas (Caesarea Philippi) and in 198 at Sidon. After a century of Ptolemaic rule, Palestine now came under the control of the Seleucids.
- Since Antiochus had gained control of Palestine, he was in a position to invade Egypt and put an end to the Ptolemaic Empire. Fearing Roman intervention, he hoped to undermine Egypt through betrothing his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V. But Cleopatra encouraged an alliance with Rome.
- Antiochus turned his attention to the coastlands, attacking Macedon, Thrace and Greece. In 191 he was defeated by the Romans at Thermopylae and in 190 at Magnesia. He became a vassal to Rome. Antiochus IV, his younger son, was taken to Rome as a hostage.
- Antiochus returned to Syria, the core of his empire. He was assassinated in 187, attempting to pillage the temple of Bel in Elymais. Seleucus IV Philopator, Antiochus' successor, was trapped beneath the burden of tribute imposed on his father's empire. Seleucus died in 175, assassinated in a plot engineered by Heliodorus and Seleucus' younger brother Antiochus IV (2 Maccabees 3).

Daniel 11:21-45

- In 175 Demetrius I, the oldest son of Seleucus IV, was sent to Rome to replace Antiochus IV as a hostage there. Antiochus IV took power as guardian to and co-regent with Antiochus, the younger son of Seleucus IV. In 170 Antiochus died leaving Antiochus IV to rule alone.
- The "prince of the covenant" is the high priest Onias III, replaced in 175 because of his Egyptian sympathies by Jason from the pro-Syrian Tobiad party.
- In 170 an Egyptian army set off to recapture Palestine. Antiochus defeated this army, entered Egypt, took Ptolemy VI prisoner and occupied much of Egypt. Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI then united to regain the throne for the latter, as a Seleucid puppet.
- During a visit to Jerusalem in 169, Antiochus IV confiscated some of the temple treasury (cf. 1 Maccabees 1:21-23). In the meantime, the two Ptolemies (VI and VII) agreed to reign jointly. So in 168 Antiochus invaded again. The Roman consul Gaius Popillius Laenas intercepted Antiochus and ordered him out of Egypt.
- Responding to a rumor that Antiochus had died in Egypt, Jason, whom Antiochus had earlier deposed in favor of Menelaus (2 Maccabees

4:23-29), returned to Jerusalem and led a rebellion against the latter and the Tobiad ruling party (2 Maccabees 5:5-10).

- Vss. 33-34 suggest that God's people would endure the sword (1 Maccabees 2:9, 31-38), fire (2 Maccabees 6:11; 7:1-41), captivity (1 Maccabees 3:41) and being plundered (1 Maccabees 1:31).
- The persecution has its purpose in God's plan, and He will bring it to its appointed end. Mattathias led a group of patriots in the struggle for independence against Antiochus IV and the Seleucid Empire (cf. Zechariah 9:13).
- Vss. 36-39 evaluate Antiochus' religious attitudes. His egotism was reflected in the title "Epiphanes," his plundering of temples and suppression of other religions. He came into sharp conflict with the God of Israel (cf. 1 Maccabees 1:24).
- Vss. 40-45 summarize the career of and depict the doom of Antiochus. At the moment of his triumph, Antiochus would be called away by disturbing reports (cf. 2 Kings 19:7). In a fury, he marched north and east and met his end.

Daniel 12:1-4

- Michael, who was previously mentioned in 10:13, 21, is the "great prince" who delivers God's people from the midst of suffering. Daniel begins by speaking of a great time of trouble. Jesus used similar language when speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19). "The book" is the book of the living (Exodus 32:33; Psalm 69:28; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Revelation 20:12-15). The disciples were told to flee the city (Matthew 24:15-17).
- "A time of trouble" implies heavy loss of life, both godly and ungodly. "Sleep" implies a temporary state from which we normally awake. Vs. 2 does not necessarily refer to the resurrection at the end of time, although the Old Testament certainly embraces the doctrine of eternal life (Psalm 17:15; 73:23-24; Isaiah 25:7-8). For example, Ezekiel 37:1-14 was fulfilled in the resurrection of the nation of Israel and Jesus speaks of a spiritual resurrection in John 5:25 and the final resurrection in John 5:28-29.
- Daniel speaks of "many," not all (in the final resurrection, all will arise). However, the argument based on "all" is not absolutely conclusive. "Many" can mean "all" as is shown in Deuteronomy 7:1, Isaiah 2:2-3 and 52:14-15.
- The "wise" are those who give attention to the truth of God's word (9:13). They also encourage others to faith (11:33).
- "Shut up" keeps the words safe until the time they are needed or fulfilled. "Seal the book" preserves them intact. These words contain the

truth as to the future and, accordingly, are the only true source of knowledge (Amos 8:12).

Daniel 12:5-13

- Two additional heavenly figures appear in vs. 5 and one raises a question. The root translated "wonders" is used for the deeds of Antiochus in 8:24 and 11:36. Daniel's heavenly messenger, the one clothed in linen, raises both hands in solemn oath and answers.
- When asked how long it would be to the end of these wonders, the angel answered that it would be "for a time, times and half a time." This is the same time that the woman spent in the wilderness (Revelation 12:14). This is also the same time as the 42 months of the beast out of the sea (Revelation 13:5), the period of Roman persecution against Christians. Revelation 10:5-7 records the time when the mystery of God would be finished, "as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." The sounding of the seventh trumpet judged the Roman Empire and vindicated the establishment of the kingdom of God as indestructible (cf. Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14; Hebrews 12:28). Deliverance will come at an unlikely time. When evil seems to have become overpowering, it will be slowed and then stopped.
- Wanting to know more, Daniel asks a question. The celestial messenger responds by affirming that since the revelation is shut up and sealed, Daniel should leave the matter alone. Additionally, the wise understand that the suffering of God's people serves the positive goal of preparing them for God's presence. In contrast, the wicked will continue to be wicked, not suspecting that in the end they will be overwhelmed by God's judgment.
- The 1,290 days were approximately three and one-half years, roughly the time of the desecration of the temple under Antiochus's reign of terror. This reign, however, has its appointed end. Blessed are the wise who endure this evil time (cf. Matthew 24:13). Perhaps the numerical difference between these two numbers suggests the subsequent death of Antiochus, that is, his death follows in point of time the desecration of the temple.
- Both 1,290 and 1,335 days are symbolic of the time of difficulty and persecution through which Christians must endure. The book of Revelation applied these times to the persecution of the Roman Empire, but they are applicable to any period of time in which children of God are being punished because of their loyalty to the Lord.
- Vs. 10 adds, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and refined ..." Those who are converted to the Lord (those who were awakened) were faithful, but many were not. It seems that these are the ones spoken of in vss. 2 and 10.

- Daniel is told twice to “go thou thy way” (vss. 9, 13). In other words, “Keep on living and being faithful.” When living is done (“thou shalt rest”), then Daniel will “stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” The picture of death as rest is found in Isaiah 57:2; Job 3:13, 17. In other words, God would be in control. The book of Revelation proved this very point.