**DANIEL CHAPTER 10**

[Cover slide] Two years pass between the end of Chapter 9 and the beginning of Chapter 10 (today’s lesson). During that time something important happens…

[Q1] Cyrus the king of Persia issues his famous decree that allows the Jews to return to their homeland of Judea (536 B.C.). This decree is recorded in the book of Ezra. We noted in last week’s lesson (Chapter 9) that Daniel anticipated the end of the 70 years of Babylonian captivity. This came after he read the words of the prophet Jeremiah. And sure enough that’s what happened.

After Cyrus’s decree we know from the book of Ezra that about 50,000 Jews returned to their homeland under the leadership of Zerubbabel. It might surprise you that the number that returned made up only 5% of the entire Jewish population that was living in exile. So the vast majority of Jews remained in Babylon. This includes Daniel, who is between 85 and 90 years of age by this time. Though many of the remaining Jews are elderly or in poor health, most of them are young and healthy. So why do such a low percentage of the Jewish people return? They are very much at ease in Babylon. As we saw last time this is a matter of deep concern for Daniel – the spiritual complacency of his people.

Life for the Jews in Babylon is relatively good. They are treated well by the Persians in Daniel’s day. However, read the book of Esther. It takes place 50-60 years after the book of Daniel. In Esther we see that the persecution of the Jewish people escalates. They begin to be treated as second-class citizens. As time goes by they’ll be pressured into abandoning their worship of the one true God. They’ll be forced to conform to the pagan culture of Persia. Those that remain faithful to God, like Mordecai, will experience harsh treatment by their Gentile neighbors and coworkers. So that’s what will happen to the Jews that remain. But that’s decades into the future. Back to Daniel Chapter 10.

The last vision that Daniel records takes place a couple of years after the decree releasing the Jews from captivity. This vision is quite long. It starts in Chapter 10 and continues thru Chapters 11 and 12. Chapter 10 basically introduces us to the vision. In this chapter we get a very interesting view of the invisible battle being waged between the forces of God and Satan. Spiritual warfare is taking place all around us every day and we aren’t aware of it. Let me start by reading a passage from the N.T. that explains this. READ Ephesians 6:12.

You need to understand this. It will be talked about in today’s lesson.

READ Daniel 10:1-3. As the chapter opens Daniel is in mourning. He remains quite distraught by the spiritual condition of his people the Jews; so much so that he fasts, mourns and prays for three weeks straight.

At the end of this three-week period Daniel receives yet another vision. It is the fourth and final vision that he records. As before, Daniel is quite disturbed by what he is shown. He describes what he sees in the vision in v 1 as “a great conflict.” The details of this vision will be covered in Chapters 11 and 12.

So Daniel is sitting and meditating by the Tigris River. Suddenly he sees a glorious figure, a supernatural visitor, one that appears like a man.

READ Daniel 10:4-7a. Notice that this mysterious person appears to Daniel in a vision. Who is this?

[Q2] I am going to give you the answer but before I do that I would like to read a couple of passages to you. The first is in Revelation Chapter 1. You’re familiar with this one. The Apostle John is exiled on the island of Patmos when he receives a heavenly visitor.

READ Revelation 1:12-15. So here we have a very similar description to what Daniel is seeing. OK then, who is it that John sees in Revelation 1? As you read the next few verses He identifies Himself as the Lord Jesus. Hold on to that thought. Let’s go to our second passage from the book of Ezekiel. This passage is not as familiar to you.

READ Ezekiel 1:26-28. Here we have a description of the physical appearance of the glory of God. It takes on human form. There are the elements of fire, gleaming metal, a loud voice, and brightness all around this person. The Lord God Himself in human form appears to Ezekiel. The second person of the Trinity?

Based on the similar descriptions in these two parallel passages we just read, I believe that the “man” Daniel meets on the banks of the Tigris River here in Chapter 10 is the pre-incarnate Jesus. So the answer to Q2 is “Other.”

[I read several commentaries on this passage. Of note, J. Vernon McGee, John Phillips, Matthew Henry and John MacArthur view this passage like I do. They all believe the figure in Daniel Chapter 10 is the second person of the holy Trinity, the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus. However, in all fairness, there are others, like John Walvoord, who believe that the figure Daniel sees is more than likely an angel, such as Gabriel who he saw earlier].

I’m not going to be dogmatic about it, but the similarities to what Daniel, John and Ezekiel see are striking. So I tend to lean toward the view that the “man” speaking to Daniel is Jesus Himself. Let’s go back to Daniel 10…

READ Daniel 10:7-9. In the presence of holiness, Daniel is overcome with his own corruption and sinful nature. Daniel is a good man, a very godly man, even a holy man. But who can stand in the presence of holy God?

[Q3] Daniel falls with his face to the ground. This is not unlike the reactions of the Apostle John and the prophet Ezekiel when they see God.

READ Revelation 1:17 first sentence. READ Ezekiel 1:28. Daniel has the same reaction. I want to show you something else interesting from Daniel’s encounter with the Lord Jesus.

READ Daniel 10:7. Here we see that there are some other men with Daniel at the time he sees this vision. But they don’t see the bright and glorious figure that Daniel sees. This is similar to what happened to Saul and his fellow travelers in Acts 9:7. READ it. Like the men who were with Daniel, none of the men accompanying Saul saw Jesus, though they heard His voice.

[show Daniel 10:7-9 slide] I believe, just like in the Acts account, that the men who are there on the banks of the Tigris River with Daniel hear the booming voice and are frightened. So they all run away leaving Daniel alone. Though Daniel records that the Lord spoke audible words to him, he does not record what He said. Verse 9 concludes with Daniel falling into a deep sleep, perhaps even in a state of unconsciousness.

[show next slide] We have no idea how much time passes. But at some point Daniel is awakened. He comes out of his vision and is once again there on the banks of the Tigris River, but now all alone. Look at verse 10…

READ Daniel 10:10. This is a heavenly messenger but it is an angel and not the Lord Jesus. Remember, Daniel saw Jesus in a vision and described His appearance in great detail. Now the vision is over. This heavenly messenger, this unnamed angel reaches down and touches Daniel. Daniel is still shaken by the vision he has seen.

The angel speaks positive words of reassurance to Daniel. Unlike the words of Jesus in Daniel’s vision, the angel’s words are recorded.

READ Daniel 10:11.

READ Daniel 10:12-14. Notice the spiritual forces that are at work. They are invisible to us. Daniel could not see them and neither can we. This portion of Scripture gives us a glimpse into the dynamics behind prayer. It’s a bit like taking the cover off of the computer hard drive and exposing the system board, memory modules, wires, nodes, power supply and all the various elements that make it all work. In the same way this chapter removes the veil that conceals the energy behind our prayer.

There are several points made here that we need to understand:

* [Q4a] God heard Daniel’s prayer and immediately responded. The moment Daniel began to pray he was heard and an answer was on its way. “For from the first day…your words have been heard.”
* [Q4b] On the way to minister to Daniel, opposition from evil forces was encountered. “The prince of Persia withstood me.”
* [Q4c] The enemy was a real person known as “the prince of kingdom of Persia.” We do not know exactly who this is, but he was a powerful spiritual being who was influenced by Satan. This spiritual being opposed God’s angelic messenger.
* [Q4d] After a time, God dispatched the archangel Michael to help in the battle against this evil opposition. “Michael came to help me.”
* [Q4e] Daniel’s answer to prayer finally arrived. We know this is the case because in these verses the angelic messenger who had been delayed for 3 weeks is now speaking to Daniel.

There’s a lot going on behind the scenes that we don’t see with our human eyes. Spiritual warfare is very real.

READ Daniel 10:14. This angelic messenger has been sent by God to help Daniel understand the vision he just saw. In this final vision Daniel sees more detail about what will happen to the Jewish nation in the future. So that’s the answer to [Q6]. The great conflict, the vision Daniel sees involves the Jewish nation (Daniel’s people).

READ Daniel 10:15. Daniel is overwhelmed by what he hears.

READ Daniel 10:16-19.

[Q5] Three times in this chapter the divine messenger touches Daniel. Notice that it was not the touch that strengthened Daniel so much as the words that were spoken. Daniel says in v 19, “as He spoke to me, I was strengthened.”

READ Daniel 10:20-21. The angelic messenger informs Daniel what will happen to the Jews in the days to come. He says that heavenly warfare will be directed against the demonic forces that guide the nations of Persia and Greece. Daniel is about to see the terrible and endless conflicts that will take place on the earth in the years ahead.

[Q7]

The Promised Land, the Jew’s homeland, will become a battleground as hostile pagan kingdoms oppose them. In our own lifetime we have seen various nations and terrorist groups launching attacks against Israel. It has happened throughout history and will continue until Jesus returns. In Chapter 9 we saw that God has a plan for the Jewish nation that will continue throughout history, to the end of the seventy “weeks” when Jesus the Messiah finally returns. In Chapter 10 we see that the Jewish nation will continually be oppressed and persecuted by forces of evil (powerful rulers who are led by Satan). God’s angels will be dispatched to fight on behalf of God’s people. Evil will not prevail because God is in control of it all. Ultimately HE writes the end to this story!