

**Daniel 10-11:1**  
**January 17, 2016**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Q: What is your “theology” of spiritual warfare? [Let people share]

Q: How in tune are you to spiritual warfare? [Use scale of 1-10]

Spiritual warfare is alive and well, and you will soon see how alive it is. The final vision **given to Daniel** came **in the third year** of the reign of Cyrus which was 536 B.C. Exiles had returned from Babylon and had begun rebuilding the temple. (Perhaps Daniel had not returned with the exiles because of his age.) Israel’s captivity had ended. Jerusalem was being reoccupied, and the nation seemed to be at peace. The **revelation** in the vision given to Daniel on this occasion shattered any hope the prophet might have had that Israel would enjoy her new freedom and peace for long. For God revealed that the Israelite nation would be involved in many conflicts (**a great war**). This “great war” is a spiritual war.

**Transition:** Though today’s vision deals with the nation of Israel, spiritual warfare goes on in our own lives. Satan is always looking for an angle to take us down, but in the end, he never wins. He might ensnare us from time to time through temptations and win these “battles,” but Satan will never win the “war” in our lives. So I am proposing today that **all of us can emotionally rest knowing that God’s future for us cannot be thwarted by observing the WAYS God takes care of His children in this chapter.** Let’s listen to Daniel’s vision.

**BOOK (NIV 1984):**

V.1:

- In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.

V.2:

- At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks.

V.3:

- I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

V.4:

- On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris,

V.5:

- I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist.

V.6:

- His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

V.7:

- I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves.

V.8:

- So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless.

V.9:

- Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

V.10:

- A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.

V.11:

- He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

V.12:

- Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

V.13:

- But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

V.14:

- Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

V.15:

- While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless.

V.16:

- Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless.

V.17:

- How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”

V.18:

- Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength.

V.19:

- “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.”
- When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

V.20:

- So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come;

V.21:

- but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.)

## **Chp 11**

V.1:

- And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

### **Process Observations/Questions:**

**Background:** Each of the four visions (chaps. 7–12) is dated, and the visions appear in two groups of two: the first and third years of Belshazzar and the first and third years of Cyrus. Cyrus’s third year would have been 536/535 B.C., two years after Gabriel’s appearance to Daniel in chap. 9 and a short while after the first return of the Jewish exiles to Palestine.

Q v.1: What do you think is meant by “It concerned a great war?” [The phrase could refer to a great earthly war (or wars) that would occur in the future, or it could even describe spiritual warfare between the forces of God and the forces of Satan. Both interpretations would suit the context well, for a conflict between spiritual forces is described in chaps. 10 and 11, and great wars are prophesied in chap 11.]

**Point of Interest:** This “understanding of the message that came to him in a vision” resulted in Daniel’s prayer to God. By now the Jewish captives had returned to Palestine, but their plight was precarious. Work on the temple was being opposed by the Samaritans, and it is possible that reconstruction had already been halted (cf. Ezra 4:5, 24). Archer suggests that this development may have led to Daniel’s renewed concern for the Israelite people.

Q v.2-3: What do we see Daniel doing again to humble himself before God? [He is fasting (perhaps a semi-fast) and praying. Through fasting, a person demonstrates sincerity before God, a genuine desire to hear God’s voice. When we’re willing to deny ourselves and come before God humbly, He will answer, and Daniel knew that.]

**Observation** v.4: Daniel was standing on the bank of the Tigris river, which means he was away from Babylon, the capital. Some theologians suggest he was away on official business, but since Daniel was in an extended period of prayer and fasting, he likely had left the capital in order to spend uninterrupted time with the Lord.

Q v.5-6: Who did Daniel see in this vision? [The majority of scholars identify him simply as the angel sent to deliver the message to Daniel. Montgomery has suggested that this interpreting angel was Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel previously (cf. 8:16; 9:21). Yet Lacocque cogently argues that this being could not have been Gabriel, for when Daniel met that angel in 9:21, he was not afraid whereas here he was overcome with fear and had to be revived three times.

On the other hand, some have identified the “man dressed in linen” as none other than God himself, probably in the person of the divine Messiah (see comments on 3:25). That this person was God seems to be the correct view not only because of the overwhelming effect of his presence on Daniel but because of the similar description of the theophany presented in Ezek 1:26–28 and the even closer parallel to the portrait of Christ in Rev 1:12–16. In 12:6 this “man in

linen” also seems to have had knowledge that transcended that of the other angels, and in 12:7 he took a divine oath.

However...an argument is commonly raised against the idea that this person is the pre-incarnate Christ. Why? Because the angel described in vv. 10–14 was clearly inferior to God. For example, this angel was “sent” to Daniel (v. 11) and required Michael’s help to fight against other angelic forces (v. 13). ***Since when does Christ need Michael’s help to fight other angelic forces?*** Another theologian, G. C. Luck, offered the proper solution to this problem, which is that the “man dressed in linen” and the interpreting angel introduced in v. 10 are distinct personalities. At least four holy angels (the interpreting angel [10:10–14 and throughout chaps. 10–12]; Michael [10:13, 21]; and two others [12:5]) appear in this vision, and the “man dressed in linen” is unquestionably in charge (cf. 12:6–7). Therefore the personage described in 10:5–6 is a theophany, but the contents of the vision are related by the interpreting angel, who is introduced at v. 10. In the Book of Revelation there is a similar pattern.

Q v.7: How many saw this vision? [Only Daniel] If Daniel was the only one who saw the vision, why did the men with him flee? [They felt a “terror overwhelm them” They obviously felt a supernatural presence. Paul had a similar experience when he met Christ on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1–7). Only he saw Jesus, but the others with him felt the presence of the Lord and became speechless with fear.]

Q v.8-9: What happened to Daniel when he gazed at this great vision? [Daniel evidently was so overwhelmed with shock at hearing the voice of God that he “fell into a deep sleep” with his “face to the ground.” God spoke, presumably, words of greeting to Daniel after which the prophet seems to have lapsed into a state of unconsciousness. Daniel’s severe reaction to the presence of this person confirms that this being was no mere angel.]

Q v.10: We read that “a hand touched” Daniel and set him “trembling on his hands and knees.” Who touched him? [An interpreting angel, and most likely Gabriel. Although it is strange that his name was not given as in the previous two visions (cf. 8:16; 9:21), many scholars identify this angel as Gabriel, a view that probably is correct. Gabriel served as a communicator of God’s messages on several occasions (cf. 8:15–16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26–27). Furthermore, the interpreting angel evidently had great power (cf. 11:1), which would be true of a prominent being like Gabriel.]

Q v.12: The angel (probably Gabriel) tried to comfort Daniel. What did he tell Daniel? [Don’t be afraid]

Q: How soon did God hear Daniel’s prayers according to the angel? [Since the first day that Daniel set his mind to gain understanding and to humble himself before God.]

Q v.13: What caused the angel a delay in getting to Daniel? [“The prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days.” Finally, Michael, one of the most powerful and important angels, came to the interpreting angel’s aid. Evidently the reason that Michael became involved and not another powerful angel was that Daniel was interceding for Israel, a nation especially entrusted to Michael’s care (v. 21).]

The point of the verse is clear. Gabriel had been on his way from heaven with a message for Daniel but had been prevented by the prince of Persia. Michael had helped him to have victory over this foe, and Gabriel was then able to continue his journey. Jeffery seems correct in stating that the conflict probably was not an attempt to prevent the angel from bringing the message to Daniel (though this was the result), for the conflict was resumed after the revelation was delivered (cf. 10:20), but rather this warfare involved “something apart from the message.” The nature of this encounter will be discussed later.

Point of Interest: Michael is introduced in this verse and is also mentioned in Dan 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9; and Rev 12:7 in Scripture. In Jude 9 he is called the “archangel,” which means “first (chief) angel.” Michael has been assigned by God as Israel’s prince (cf. 10:21); he is “great” in power and protects the Jewish people (cf. 12:1). The implications of these statements are clear. Israel has a mighty angelic supporter in the heavenly realm. Therefore, regardless of Israel’s political, military, and economic weaknesses, its existence is assured because no earthly power can resist their great prince.

Q: Who was this “prince of the Persian kingdom” who resisted Gabriel for three weeks?

- He must have been an angel since no human prince could have withstood Gabriel. Moreover, Israel’s “prince” was the angel Michael (10:21), and it is reasonable to suppose that in the same context the “prince” of Persia was also an angel.
- Since this prince opposed God’s angel, he may safely be assumed to have been an evil angel, that is, a demon. Leupold remarks: “Bad angels, called demons in the New Testament, are, without a doubt, referred to here.”
- He is called the “prince of the Persian kingdom,” so Persia must have been his special area of activity. Therefore this demon was either a powerful angel assigned to Persia by Satan or possibly he was Satan himself. Persia ruled the world in that day, and Satan would surely have concentrated his personal efforts in this most influential area. If the demon was Satan, it would explain why Michael, one of God’s most powerful angels, was needed to fight against him. The angelic warfare continued, for v. 20 reveals that the good angel would return to fight against this demon. Young suggests that it was this evil angel who “influenced the kings of Persia to support the Samaritans against Israel.”

From this passage several important facts are evident concerning angels:

- angels are real;
- there are good and evil angels;
- angels can influence the affairs of human beings. Particularly this passage teaches that angels inspire human governments and their leaders. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who was described in chap. 8 (also chap. 11), was certainly encouraged by demonic forces in his attempts to eradicate the Jewish religion. Antichrist, depicted in chaps. 7; 9; and 11 of this book, also will be satanically inspired (cf. 2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:2). In Daniel’s day Persia ruled the earth. Satan would naturally have attempted to influence the decisions made by the Persian government because policies made there would affect the world. Today Satan continues his attempts to sway earthly powers, and he focuses his attention on nations of the world with the most influence. On the other hand, Dan 10:13, 20 and 11:1 demonstrate the positive activity of holy angels on governments.

- **There is an invisible, spiritual warfare being waged that involves angels and believers.** The apostle Paul said, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph 6:12). This warfare is an ongoing struggle (cf. v. 20). (5) God’s angels act on behalf of the saints. Here they are instrumental in delivering to Daniel a message from God. Believers probably would be surprised to learn of the many acts performed for them (e.g., protection) by the Lord’s angels.

Daniel’s experience should not be interpreted to signify that God is weak or that demonic forces have power to thwart the will of God. The Book of Daniel teaches throughout its pages the absolute sovereignty of the Almighty, and God could easily have ensured the delivery of the message to Daniel in a moment. Archer rightly comments: “While God can, of course, override the united resistance of all the forces of hell if he chooses to do so, he accords to demons certain limited powers of obstruction and rebellion somewhat like those he allows humans. In both cases the exercise of free will in opposition to the Lord of heaven is permitted by him when he sees fit. But as Job 1:12 and 2:6 indicate, the malignity of Satan is never allowed to go beyond the due limit set by God.” Believers should take comfort in these words, “The one who is in you [God] is greater than the one who is in the world [the devil]” (1 John 4:4).

In this instance, within the omniscient wisdom of God and the divine plan of God, the delay was permitted. Reasons for this delay are not outlined in the text, but it may be assumed that God allowed three weeks to pass in order to perform some work in Daniel’s spiritual life or for some other unknown purpose. Many times God permits believers to wait for their prayer answers in order to teach them valuable lessons, for example, spiritual commitment, patience, faith. There are also times when God fully intends to respond affirmatively to a request but in his wisdom delays because he knows that the proper time has not yet come.]

Observation v.15-17: Evidently Daniel was still frightened or overcome with emotion, for while the angel was speaking to him, he “bowed” his face “toward the ground and was speechless.” Gabriel “touched” his lips and enabled him to speak. In this context “my lord” (’*ādōnī*) has roughly the force of the English “sir.” “I am helpless” is literally “I have not retained strength.” Evidently Daniel’s pains and lack of strength were due to fright and emotional distress. He asked the angel how he as a mortal man (“your servant”) could dare speak to a heavenly being.

Q v.18-19: Daniel in the previous verses questioned whether he could even speak to a heavenly being, much less have the strength to do so. How does the angel respond? [He met Daniel’s need by first quieting the alarm in Daniel’s heart (**Do not be afraid**; cf. 10:12, **O man highly esteemed**; cf. 9:23; 10:11), and second, **strengthened** him physically and emotionally. Daniel was then ready to receive the details of the message.

Observation v.20-21: The angel tells Daniel that he is getting ready to return to fight against the prince of Persia, and then the prince of Greece will arrive.

Q v.20: Is anyone else going “huh?” What is the angel talking about? [The angel announced that soon **he must “return to fight against the prince of Persia,” a battle that would continue for two**

centuries of Persian rule (539–331 B.C.). This struggle involved all of the decisions and relationships pertaining to the Jews during the Persian period (e.g., the reconstruction of the temple, deliverance for the Jews during the time of Esther, permission for Ezra and Nehemiah to return, and their subsequent construction of the city). Of course, even in the Old Testament period the scope of God’s activities reached beyond the affairs of the Jews.

Q v.20: Who is the “prince of Greece?” [The prince of Greece” would be Satan or one of his demons. This evil spirit would come later when the empire of Greece rose to power, indicating that the angelic conflict would continue into the time of the Greek Empire. Angelic support for God’s people would be needed then, for chap. 11 details many of the struggles of the Jews during the Greek period, especially the crisis during the rule of Antiochus IV. Thus the statement of conflict during the Greek period is noted because it is preparatory to the revelation presented in the following chapter.]

Q v.21: The angel tells Daniel that he will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. What is the Book of Truth? [The “Book of Truth” figuratively refers to God’s plan for Israel and the world, not merely the revelation entrusted to Daniel.]

Observation Chp 11:1: It is clear that this verse should be connected with the statement in 10:21 concerning the reciprocal aid between Michael and the interpreting angel. Leupold asserts, “Nothing could be clearer than that this verse still belongs to what was just considered.” Evidently the inclusion of a date, “in the first year of Darius,” similar to the headings of some other chapters (cf. 7:1; 8:1; 9:1; 10:1), led to the division here.

In 10:13, 21 it is revealed that Michael had helped the interpreting angel; now in 11:1 Gabriel related that he had supported and protected Michael. The first year of Darius the Mede was ca. 538 B.C., two years before this vision. Gabriel’s awesome power is evidenced by the fact that he was called on to “support” Michael. How he would have protected Michael is not known since the harming of an angel in any way is certainly a strange concept. Angelic conflicts may occur in the earthly arena (as this passage teaches) or in heaven (cf. Rev 12:7).

Therefore an intense spiritual conflict took place during the first year of Darius the Mede. Since Michael (Israel’s prince) was involved, the battle must have concerned the Jewish people. The text does not name the occasion of this particular struggle, but it may have been the fall of Babylon (Young), the conveying of the “seventy sevens” prophecy in chap. 9 (cf. 9:1), or the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to return to Palestine (Archer, Wood). All of these events took place in the first year of Darius the Mede (Cyrus), but the latter suggestion seems to be most likely. If so, the conflict involved Cyrus’s decision to allow the Jews to return to their homeland. Archer remarks: “Knowing that such a development could lead to the ultimate appearance of the Son of God as the Messiah for God’s redeemed, Satan and all his hosts were determined to thwart the renewal of Israel and the deliverance of its people from destruction.”

In this passage humanity is afforded a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes activity that took place in the Persian government. Cyrus released the Jews, but unknown to the Persian monarch angelic forces played a part in this decision. Satan and his demons had been bound so that the will of God would be accomplished.

**LOOK:**

Spiritual warfare is alive and well, and it's one of the reasons Paul goes to great length to tell us how to protect ourselves with the "full spiritual armor of God!" We have angels on earth and in the heavenly realms who are for us and who take on battles on our behalf. We are created for a purpose, so remember that Satan has no ability to thwart God's future for each of us. Keep the faith and continue to trust Him fully for what He has in store ahead.

**Close in Prayer**



## Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

**The New American Commentary Miller, S. R. (1994). Daniel (Vol. 18, pp. 276–290). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.**

### *(1) Setting (10:1–3)*

**<sup>1</sup> In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.**

**<sup>2</sup> At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. <sup>3</sup> I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.**

**10:1** Daniel's final "revelation" came "in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia." Each of the four visions (chaps. 7–12) is dated, and the visions appear in two groups of two: the first and third years of Belshazzar and the first and third years of Cyrus. Cyrus's third year would have been 536/535 B.C., two years after Gabriel's appearance to Daniel in chap. 9 and a short while after the first return of the Jewish exiles to Palestine. About this time the lions' den incident took place, though it is not certain if it happened shortly before or after the vision.

Verse 1 forms a general statement of introduction to the vision, and the third person seems to have been chosen for that reason. Daniel interjected his Babylonian name, "Belteshazzar," apparently to emphasize that he was indeed the same individual spoken of earlier in the book. After all, it had been over seventy years since he had been taken into captivity; he would now have been about eighty-five years of age. Yet he was still alive and serving the Lord.

Probably Daniel's advanced years and responsibilities in Babylon prevented him from making the long and arduous journey to his homeland with the other Jewish returnees. The respected statesman may also have felt that he could be of greater service to his people in Babylon than in Palestine.

Although the vision was extraordinary, Daniel stressed that "its message was true [*'emet*]." "It concerned a great war" has been variously interpreted. "War" is a translation of Hebrew *šābā'*, "army, war, warfare, or service." The NASB takes the phrase to signify that the message was "one of great conflict [*šābā'*]" (cf. "it concerned a great conflict," NRSV), and the KJV understands it to mean that the message was for the distant future, "the time appointed [taking *šābā'* to mean "service, time of serving"] was long [lit., great]." The KJV's interpretation would be very unusual and is unlikely.

Literally the Hebrew text reads simply "and a great war" or "conflict," with the verb to be supplied. The phrase could refer to a great earthly war (or wars) that would occur in the future, or it could even describe spiritual warfare between the forces of God and the forces of Satan. Both interpretations would suit the context well, for a conflict between spiritual forces is described in chaps. 10 and 11, and great wars are prophesied in chap. 11. Probably all the conflicts (or warfare) recorded in these last chapters are involved in the expression, whether conflicts between nations or angels.

The final sentence of v. 1 literally reads, "He understood the message, and understanding came to him in the vision." The parallel relationship between these two clauses seems plainly to show that "he understood the message" and "understanding came to him in [i.e., "in the matter of"] the vision" are synonymous in meaning (cf. 9:23). Porteous points out that "vision" in this context (as in 9:23) is employed not "in the ordinary sense of the word" but "in the sense of the

substance of a revelation.” Thus the text does not indicate that Daniel received understanding “by means of” a vision (NIV and Leupold) but that he “had an understanding of the vision” (NASB).

This understanding came as an answer to Daniel’s prayers (cf. 10:12). Evidently the prophet was again praying for wisdom concerning the future of his people, the Jews. In the previous three visions God had already revealed much pertaining to Israel’s fate, but Daniel desired to know more. By now the Jewish captives had returned to Palestine, but their plight was precarious. Work on the temple was being opposed by the Samaritans, and it is possible that reconstruction had already been halted (cf. Ezra 4:5, 24). Archer suggests that this development may have led to Daniel’s renewed concern.

**10:2** “At that time” (lit., “in those days”) either refers back to the third year of Cyrus (536/535 B.C.) or to the days immediately preceding the revelation. “Mourned” is a participle in the Hebrew that has the force of “continually mourning,” a state of mourning. The word “mourned” (*’ābal*) denotes mourning for the dead (Gen 37:34), over sin (Ezra 10:6), and over a calamity (Ezek 7:12). Years later Nehemiah (Neh 1:4) “mourned” (same Hebrew word) over the condition of the Jews who had returned to Palestine, and this is evidently what so deeply concerned Daniel here. His mourning involved prayer (cf. v. 12) and fasting (cf. v. 3; cf. also Matt 9:14–15).

“Three weeks” is literally “three sevens of days.” Lacocque correctly remarks, “This preparation lasts ‘three weeks of days’; manifestly the Author added the term ‘days’ to prevent confusion with the ‘week (of years)’ from chapter 9.”

**10:3** For three weeks Daniel had been fasting when he received the revelation—“I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips.” In Hebrew there is a conjunction between these two clauses that could be rendered “even,” which would explain that the “choice food” omitted from Daniel’s diet was “meat and wine.” Daniel seems to have engaged in a semifast rather than refraining from eating all food for this three-week period. He may have existed on bread and water. “I used no lotions at all” means that Daniel “neglected the usual niceties of personal grooming, such as fragrant oil on his hair or body.”<sup>12</sup> Anointing the body with oil was a common practice among the Jews and other ancient peoples, its purpose being to soothe and refresh the skin and to protect against the heat.

Fasting is a neglected discipline for most Christians today, but it was commonly practiced in biblical times. Some have associated fasting with legalism, but only one fast was commanded in the biblical law code. Once a year on the Day of Atonement the people of Israel were to “deny” themselves by fasting and mourning over their sins (Lev 16:29–31). Even then individuals had to choose to come to Jerusalem and participate in the feast. Other fasts recorded in the Bible were voluntary. Through fasting, a person demonstrated sincerity by denying one of humanity’s strongest urges, that of satisfying hunger.

Fasting is a personal matter between the individual and God. It is voluntary. However, if giants of the faith like Moses, David, Esther, Daniel, Paul, and Jesus himself felt the need to fast, it would seem reasonable that modern saints should be willing to deny themselves in order to pray more earnestly for the furtherance of the kingdom of God in a world that lies in deep spiritual darkness.

## *(2) Vision of the Heavenly Being (10:4–9)*

<sup>4</sup> On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, <sup>5</sup> I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt

of the finest gold around his waist. <sup>6</sup> His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

<sup>7</sup> I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. <sup>8</sup> So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. <sup>9</sup> Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

**10:4** Nisan (March–April) was the first month, and so Daniel had begun his time of prayer and fasting three weeks before the twenty-fourth day, that is, on the third of Nisan. Passover was celebrated on the fourteenth of Nisan, immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted for seven days (cf. Exod 12:14–18). Likely the season of the year had been a factor in Daniel’s decision to fast and pray. Passover was the time of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, and this may have turned Daniel’s thoughts toward the present deliverance and “exodus” of the Israelites from Babylon.

Daniel was beside the Tigris (Heb. *ḥiddāqel*) in bodily presence, not in vision, when a heavenly being appeared to him. For some reason he was away from Babylon, the capital. Archer thinks Daniel may have been in the area on official business, but since the prophet was involved in an extended period of prayer and fasting, he likely had left the capital in order to spend uninterrupted time with the Lord. The Tigris River originated several hundred miles to the north of Babylon and flowed through Babylonia to the Persian Gulf, passing within about twenty miles of the capital. Consequently, Daniel may have been as close as twenty miles or as far as several hundred miles from the city of Babylon (although his age probably precluded distant travel).

**10:5** The NIV’s “there before me” is a translation of *hinnēh*, “behold, look.” *Hinnēh* is an interjection and contains an element of excitement the NIV does not convey. The prophet was amazed at this heavenly being. Keil observes that since this person is presented in 12:6 as being in the air above the waters of the Tigris, his location probably was the same here. Daniel was standing on the river bank, and the phrase “I looked up” may also intimate that this person was above the prophet.

This being, called a “man” because he appeared in human form, was dressed in white “linen” garments (*baddīm*). Priests (cf. Exod 28:42; Lev 6:10 [Heb. Heb. 6:3]; 16:4) and the angel in Ezek 9:2–3, 11; 10:2, 6–7 (cf. Rev 15:6) are specifically stated to have been arrayed in white “linen” garments. However, it may not have been the material as much as its white color that was significant, since white is symbolic of purity (cf. Isa 1:18; Dan 11:35; 12:10). Saints in heaven also are depicted as wearing white robes (cf. Rev 3:5; 6:11; 7:9, 13), and earlier in this book (7:9) God himself was described as being clothed in white garments. So the significance is that this was a holy personage.

Archer comments that this golden belt may have been “in the form of chain-links, hinged panels, or gold thread embroidery.”<sup>19</sup> A linen belt embroidered with gold thread is most likely. Di Lella remarks that a golden belt “was part of the costume of the wealthy and royal classes in the ancient Near East (cf. 1 Macc 10:89; 11:58).” In this context the symbolism may suggest a king or judge.

**10:6** Hebrew *taršīš*, “chrysolite,” occurs a number of times in the Old Testament (e.g., Ezek 1:16; 10:9) and denotes some kind of gold-colored precious stone, although its exact identification is unclear. It has been variously translated as “chrysolite,” “beryl” (KJV, NKJV, NASB, NRSV, Montgomery), or “topaz” (Goldingay). Driver remarks that this gem is “said ...

to be the topaz of the moderns—a flashing stone, described by Pliny as ‘a transparent stone with a refulgence like that of gold.’ ”<sup>22</sup> Some yellow colored stone must have been intended because the term describes the body of the heavenly being as glowing like golden fire (cf. the later description “his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze”). Lacocque adds that the gem was named after the city from which it was exported, Tartessos in Spain.

The face of this awesome being appeared as brilliant as a flash of “lightning,” and his eyes were like “flaming torches.” “His arms” and “legs” (lit., “feet,” but the legs are included here) gleamed like “burnished bronze,” indicating that his body had a fiery appearance, like burning metal (cf. Ezek 1:27). When he spoke, “his voice” (lit., “the sound of his words”) thundered like “the sound of a multitude” of people.

Who was this person? The majority of scholars identify him simply as the angel sent to deliver the message to Daniel. Montgomery has suggested that this interpreting angel was Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel previously (cf. 8:16; 9:21). Yet Lacocque cogently argues that this being could not have been Gabriel, for when Daniel met that angel in 9:21, he was not afraid whereas here he was overcome with fear and had to be revived three times.

On the other hand, some have identified the “man dressed in linen” as none other than God himself, probably in the person of the divine Messiah (see comments on 3:25). That this person was God seems to be the correct view not only because of the overwhelming effect of his presence on Daniel but because of the similar description of the theophany presented in Ezek 1:26–28 and the even closer parallel to the portrait of Christ in Rev 1:12–16. In 12:6 this “man in linen” also seems to have had knowledge that transcended that of the other angels, and in 12:7 he took a divine oath.

An argument commonly raised against the equation of this person with deity is that the angel described in vv. 10–14 was clearly inferior to God. For example, this angel was “sent” to Daniel (v. 11) and required Michael’s help to fight against other angelic forces (v. 13). G. C. Luck offered the proper solution to this problem, which is that the “man dressed in linen” and the interpreting angel introduced in v. 10 are distinct personalities. At least four holy angels (the interpreting angel [10:10–14 and throughout chaps. 10–12]; Michael [10:13, 21]; and two others [12:5]) appear in this vision, and the “man dressed in linen” is unquestionably in charge (cf. 12:6–7). Therefore the personage described in 10:5–6 is a theophany, but the contents of the vision are related by the interpreting angel, who is introduced at v. 10. In the Book of Revelation there is a similar pattern. On occasions John encountered Christ himself (e.g., 1:12–20), whereas at other times he was instructed by an angel (e.g., 17:1–6).

**10:7** Only Daniel saw (extremely emphatic in the Hebrew—“I saw, I, Daniel, I alone”) this heavenly person in the “vision,” although the other men felt a supernatural presence. “Such terror [lit., “a great trembling”] overwhelmed” (lit., “fell upon”) Daniel’s companions “that they fled and hid themselves.” Paul had a similar experience when he met Christ on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1–7). Only he saw Jesus, but the others with him felt the presence of the Lord and became speechless with fear.

**10:8–9** Daniel was left alone with this awesome being whose appearance drained him of all his strength. As the heavenly personage spoke, the prophet evidently was so overwhelmed with shock at hearing the voice of God that he “fell into a deep sleep” with his “face to the ground” (cf. John’s experience in Rev 1:17). God spoke, presumably, words of greeting to Daniel after which the prophet seems to have lapsed into a state of unconsciousness. Daniel’s severe reaction to the presence of this person confirms that this being was no mere angel.

### *(3) The Interpreting Angel's Explanation (10:10–14)*

<sup>10</sup> A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup> He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

<sup>12</sup> Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. <sup>13</sup> But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. <sup>14</sup> Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

**10:10** Now the vision of Christ has passed, and the interpreting angel enters the picture. He touched the prophet and raised him from the ground so that he was resting on his “hands and knees.” Daniel was “trembling” with weakness and fear and was barely able to keep himself from falling back down on his face. Although it is strange that his name was not given as in the previous two visions (cf. 8:16; 9:21), many scholars identify this angel as Gabriel, a view that probably is correct. Gabriel served as a communicator of God’s messages on several occasions (cf. 8:15–16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26–27). Furthermore, the interpreting angel evidently had great power (cf. 11:1), which would be true of a prominent being like Gabriel.

**10:11** Daniel was addressed as “you who are highly esteemed” (cf. 9:23) and was instructed to listen carefully to the angel’s words. Archer remarks that Daniel would certainly need to listen carefully, for the message he was about to receive (particularly chap. 11) was “full of confusing detail couched in somewhat vague terms—from the standpoint of 535 B.C., at least.” Modern believers should note that the prophecies set forth in this revelation that have been fulfilled (see discussion of chap. 11) were fulfilled literally and exactly. This demonstrates that the prophecies yet unfulfilled will be accomplished in similar fashion.

Daniel was told to “stand up” with renewed courage and strength, for a mighty angel from the very presence of God had been sent with the answer to his prayer. He should have been honored and excited. At the angel’s command Daniel mustered his strength and rose to his feet though he was still “trembling.”

**10:12** Gabriel continued to comfort God’s servant by telling him not to be afraid. Daniel was then informed that from “the first day” that he had “set” his “mind” (lit., “heart”) to pray for understanding (“to gain understanding”) and had begun to fast (“to humble yourself”) before God, his petition was heard. “To humble” oneself before God was an expression that many times was equated with fasting (cf. Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32; Ps 35:13), as it is here (cf. v. 3). God was touched by his servant’s determined prayer (“your words”), and the heavenly messenger was sent (emphatic in Heb., “I, myself, have come”) “in response to” Daniel’s pleas.

**10:13** One of the strangest accounts in the Bible is now unfolded. The angel related that he was coming to bring Daniel the answer to his prayer but was delayed because “the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days.” Finally, Michael (whose name means “who is like God?”), one of the most powerful and important angels (“one of the chief princes”), came to the interpreting angel’s aid. Evidently the reason that Michael became involved and not another powerful angel was that Daniel was interceding for Israel, a nation especially entrusted to Michael’s care (v. 21).

The NIV's "detained there with the king of Persia" could mean that the angel was prevented from leaving the area ruled by the human king of the Persian Empire. Yet the Hebrew word translated "king" is plural, and the concept of the angel's being "detained with" the earthly kings of Persia seems untenable. In the context of angelic warfare, these "kings" likely were spiritual rulers who attempted to control Persia.

Regardless of the exact meaning of this last clause, the point of the verse is clear. Gabriel had been on his way from heaven with a message for Daniel but had been prevented by the prince of Persia. Michael had helped him to have victory over this foe, and Gabriel was then able to continue his journey. Jeffery seems correct in stating that the conflict probably was not an attempt to prevent the angel from bringing the message to Daniel (though this was the result), for the conflict was resumed after the revelation was delivered (cf. 10:20), but rather this warfare involved "something apart from the message." The nature of this encounter will be discussed later.

Michael is introduced in this verse and is also mentioned in Dan 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9; and Rev 12:7 in Scripture. In Jude 9 he is called the "archangel," which means "first (chief) angel." Michael has been assigned by God as Israel's prince (cf. 10:21); he is "great" in power and protects the Jewish people (cf. 12:1). The implications of these statements are clear. Israel has a mighty angelic supporter in the heavenly realm. Therefore, regardless of Israel's political, military, and economic weaknesses, its existence is assured because no earthly power can resist their great prince.

Who was this "prince of the Persian kingdom" who resisted Gabriel for three weeks? (1) He must have been an angel since no human prince could have withstood Gabriel. Moreover, Israel's "prince" was the angel Michael (10:21), and it is reasonable to suppose that in the same context the "prince" of Persia was also an angel. (2) Since this prince opposed God's angel, he may safely be assumed to have been an evil angel, that is, a demon. Leupold remarks: "Bad angels, called demons in the New Testament, are, without a doubt, referred to here." (3) He is called the "prince of the Persian kingdom," so Persia must have been his special area of activity. Therefore this demon was either a powerful angel assigned to Persia by Satan or possibly he was Satan himself. Persia ruled the world in that day, and Satan would surely have concentrated his personal efforts in this most influential area. If the demon was Satan, it would explain why Michael, one of God's most powerful angels, was needed to fight against him. The angelic warfare continued, for v. 20 reveals that the good angel would return to fight against this demon. Young suggests that it was this evil angel who "influenced the kings of Persia to support the Samaritans against Israel."

From this passage several important facts are evident concerning angels: (1) angels are real; (2) there are good and evil angels; (3) angels can influence the affairs of human beings. Particularly this passage teaches that angels inspire human governments and their leaders. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who was described in chap. 8 (also chap. 11), was certainly encouraged by demonic forces in his attempts to eradicate the Jewish religion. Antichrist, depicted in chaps. 7; 9; and 11 of this book, also will be satanically inspired (cf. 2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:2). In Daniel's day Persia ruled the earth. Satan would naturally have attempted to influence the decisions made by the Persian government because policies made there would affect the world. Today Satan continues his attempts to sway earthly powers, and he focuses his attention on nations of the world with the most influence. On the other hand, Dan 10:13, 20 and 11:1 demonstrate the positive activity of holy angels on governments. (4) There is an invisible, spiritual warfare being waged that involves angels and believers. The apostle Paul said, "For our struggle is not against

flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph 6:12). This warfare is an ongoing struggle (cf. v. 20). (5) God’s angels act on behalf of the saints. Here they are instrumental in delivering to Daniel a message from God. Believers probably would be surprised to learn of the many acts performed for them (e.g., protection) by the Lord’s angels.

Daniel’s experience should not be interpreted to signify that God is weak or that demonic forces have power to thwart the will of God. The Book of Daniel teaches throughout its pages the absolute sovereignty of the Almighty, and God could easily have ensured the delivery of the message to Daniel in a moment. Archer rightly comments: “While God can, of course, override the united resistance of all the forces of hell if he chooses to do so, he accords to demons certain limited powers of obstruction and rebellion somewhat like those he allows humans. In both cases the exercise of free will in opposition to the Lord of heaven is permitted by him when he sees fit. But as Job 1:12 and 2:6 indicate, the malignity of Satan is never allowed to go beyond the due limit set by God.” Believers should take comfort in these words, “The one who is in you [God] is greater than the one who is in the world [the devil]” (1 John 4:4).

In this instance, within the omniscient wisdom of God and the divine plan of God, the delay was permitted. Reasons for this delay are not outlined in the text, but it may be assumed that God allowed three weeks to pass in order to perform some work in Daniel’s spiritual life or for some other unknown purpose. Many times God permits believers to wait for their prayer answers in order to teach them valuable lessons, for example, spiritual commitment, patience, faith. There are also times when God fully intends to respond affirmatively to a request but in his wisdom delays because he knows that the proper time has not yet come.

**10:14** The angel now declared the purpose for his visit. Daniel’s prayer had been for insight concerning the future of his people, the Jews, and God was granting him knowledge about these matters.

“In the future” is a translation of the Hebrew *bě’ahārît hayyāmîm*, usually rendered “in the latter days.” Normally the phrase describes events that will occur just prior to and including the coming of the kingdom of God upon the earth, and Di Lella considers the expression “clearly eschatological.” The climax of the historical preview provided by the angel is the future kingdom of God. During the course of this preview, the persons of Antiochus IV and Antichrist receive particular attention.

#### *(4) Daniel Strengthened to Understand the Vision (10:15–11:1)*

<sup>15</sup> While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. <sup>16</sup> Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. <sup>17</sup> How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”

<sup>18</sup> Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. <sup>19</sup> “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.”

When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

<sup>20</sup> So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; <sup>21</sup> but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

**<sup>1</sup> And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)**

**10:15–17** Evidently Daniel was still frightened or overcome with emotion, for while the angel was speaking to him, he “bowed” his face “toward the ground and was speechless.” Gabriel “touched” his lips and enabled him to speak. In this context “my lord” (*ʾădōnî*) has roughly the force of the English “sir.” “I am helpless” is literally “I have not retained strength.” Evidently Daniel’s pains and lack of strength were due to fright and emotional distress. He asked the angel how he as a mortal man (“your servant”) could dare speak to a heavenly being.

**10:18–19** Once more the angel touched Daniel and gave him strength. The prophet was admonished a second time not to be afraid and was again designated as one “highly esteemed” (cf. 9:23; 10:11) by the Lord. “Peace” was a common greeting wishing well-being and blessing upon the recipient. Montgomery remarks that “peace to you” is “generally the initial salutation in the O.T., e.g., in the address of letters, 4:1 [3:31], 6:25 [26], etc.,” but placed in mid-sentence these words would not seem to be a salutation. Rather, Hartman probably is correct in seeing the idea here as, “You are safe.”<sup>37</sup> The angel was thereby assuring Daniel that he did not need to fear because his concern was for the prophet’s well-being (“peace”). Twice (for emphasis) the angel told Daniel to “be strong” (cf. Josh 1:9). As the angel spoke these words of encouragement, Daniel’s vigor returned. Then Daniel told the angel to speak because the “strength” he had been given enabled him to listen.

**10:20** Daniel was asked if he knew why the angel had come. The question obviously was rhetorical since the answer had already been given in vv. 12 and 14 and would be reiterated in the next verse. Young probably is correct in regarding the question as a device to call Daniel’s “attention to what has already been said.” Leupold believes that this was necessary because of “Daniel’s weak and perturbed state” in which he was unable to retain “all that he had been told.”<sup>39</sup>

Parenthetically the angel announced that soon he must “return to fight against the prince of Persia,” a battle that would continue for two centuries of Persian rule (539–331 B.C.). This struggle involved all of the decisions and relationships pertaining to the Jews during the Persian period (e.g., the reconstruction of the temple, deliverance for the Jews during the time of Esther, permission for Ezra and Nehemiah to return, and their subsequent construction of the city). Of course, even in the Old Testament period the scope of God’s activities reached beyond the affairs of the Jews.

“When I go” probably would be better translated “I am about to go” (taking *yôšē* as a participle of imminent action). Gabriel’s time with Daniel would be short, and then he must depart. The angel added that later “the prince of Greece will come,” implying that he would fight against this prince also. In keeping with the identification of the previously mentioned prince of Persia, “the prince of Greece” would be Satan or one of his demons. This evil spirit would come later when the empire of Greece rose to power, indicating that the angelic conflict would continue into the time of the Greek Empire. Angelic support for God’s people would be needed then, for chap. 11 details many of the struggles of the Jews during the Greek period, especially the crisis during the rule of Antiochus IV. Thus the statement of conflict during the Greek period is noted because it is preparatory to the revelation presented in the following chapter.

**10:21** Gabriel told Daniel the purpose of his visit, answering the question asked in the previous verse. The “Book of Truth” figuratively refers to God’s plan for Israel and the world, not merely the revelation entrusted to Daniel. Keil comments that it “is the book in which God has designated beforehand, according to truth, the history of the world as it shall certainly be unfolded.”



Before sharing the message, the angel added further parenthetical information. Michael's special assignment apparently was to assist and protect the nation Israel. No one except Michael supported Gabriel in his spiritual warfare—not because no one else was available but because no one else was needed.

**11:1** Although the Masoretic Text, the LXX, Theodotion, and English translations place this verse with chap. 11, it is clear that it should be connected with the statement in 10:21 concerning the reciprocal aid between Michael and the interpreting angel. Leupold asserts, "Nothing could be clearer than that this verse still belongs to what was just considered." Evidently the inclusion of a date, "in the first year of Darius," similar to the headings of some other chapters (cf. 7:1; 8:1; 9:1; 10:1), led to the division here.

In 10:13, 21 it is revealed that Michael had helped the interpreting angel; now in 11:1 Gabriel related that he had supported and protected Michael. The first year of Darius the Mede was ca. 538 B.C., two years before this vision. Gabriel's awesome power is evidenced by the fact that he was called on to "support" Michael. How he would have protected Michael is not known since the harming of an angel in any way is certainly a strange concept. Angelic conflicts may occur in the earthly arena (as this passage teaches) or in heaven (cf. Rev 12:7).

Therefore an intense spiritual conflict took place during the first year of Darius the Mede. Since Michael (Israel's prince) was involved, the battle must have concerned the Jewish people. The text does not name the occasion of this particular struggle, but it may have been the fall of Babylon (Young), the conveying of the "seventy sevens" prophecy in chap. 9 (cf. 9:1), or the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to return to Palestine (Archer, Wood). All of these events took place in the first year of Darius the Mede (Cyrus), but the latter suggestion seems to be most likely. If so, the conflict involved Cyrus's decision to allow the Jews to return to their homeland. Archer remarks: "Knowing that such a development could lead to the ultimate appearance of the Son of God as the Messiah for God's redeemed, Satan and all his hosts were determined to thwart the renewal of Israel and the deliverance of its people from destruction."

In this passage humanity is afforded a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes activity that took place in the Persian government. Cyrus released the Jews, but unknown to the Persian monarch angelic forces played a part in this decision. Satan and his demons had been bound so that the will of God would be accomplished.

**Pentecost, J. D. (1985). Daniel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, pp. 1365–1367). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

*a. The occasion of the vision (10:1–3)*

10:1–3. The final vision **given to Daniel** came **in the third year** of the reign of Cyrus which was 536 B.C. Exiles had returned from Babylon and had begun rebuilding the temple. (Perhaps Daniel had not returned with the exiles because of his age.) Israel's captivity had ended. Jerusalem was being reoccupied, and the nation seemed to be at peace. The **revelation** in the vision given to Daniel on this occasion shattered any hope the prophet might have had that Israel would enjoy her new freedom and peace for long. For God revealed that the nation would be involved in many conflicts (**a great war**). **Understanding** the significance of the **vision**, Daniel fasted **for three weeks** (lit., "three sevens of days"; cf. comments on 9:25). During this time of mourning he abstained from **choice** foods and apparently waited on God in prayer (cf. 10:12) concerning his people's destiny.

*b. The heavenly messenger (10:4–11)*

10:4–11. After three weeks (cf. v. 3) Daniel was visited by a messenger as the prophet **was standing** by **the Tigris River** (cf. 12:5). The messenger was an angel from heaven, not a human being. He was **dressed in linen** (cf. 12:7) and had a dazzlingly bright appearance. Since Gabriel previously had been sent by God to reveal truth to Daniel (8:16), probably Gabriel was also the visitor on this occasion. Angels, who dwell in the presence of God who is light, are themselves clothed with light, and Daniel saw something of heaven's glory reflected in this one who visited him (10:5–6).

Some Bible students say that the **man** was the preincarnate Christ because of (a) the similarity of the description here to that of Christ in Revelation 1:13–16, (b) the response of Daniel and his friends (Dan. 10:7–8), and (c) the fact that this “Man” may be the same as the “Son of Man” in 7:13 and the “Man” in 8:16. On the other hand, in favor of this messenger being an angel is the improbability of Christ being hindered by a prince (demon) of Persia (10:13) and needing the help of the angel Michael, and the fact that the person is giving a message from heaven.

Daniel's companions evidently **saw** the brilliance of the light without seeing the visitor and **they fled** to hide from its shining. Daniel remained **alone** in the angel's presence and, being weak, Daniel prostrated himself before the messenger. In that position Daniel **fell** asleep. He was then aroused from his **sleep** by the angel so he might receive the revelation the angel had come to deliver. The angel, calling the prophet **highly esteemed** (cf. 9:23; 10:19), declared, **I have now been sent to you** by God, who had heard Daniel's request for understanding.

*c. The explanation by the heavenly messenger (10:12–14)*

10:12–14. Encouraging Daniel **not to be afraid** (cf. v. 8), Gabriel explained the reason for the delay in God's answer to Daniel's prayer. When Daniel first began fasting and mourning in response to the vision of a great war (vv. 1–2), **God** had dispatched Gabriel with a message for him, but Gabriel was hindered by **the prince of the Persian kingdom** (cf. “the prince of Persia,” v. 20). Since men cannot fight with angels (Jacob's wrestling was with God, not an angel; cf. comments on Gen. 32:22–32), the prince referred to here must have been a satanic adversary.

God has arranged the angelic realm in differing ranks referred to as “rule, authority, power, and dominion” (Eph. 1:21). Gabriel and Michael have been assigned authority over angels who administer God's affairs for the nation Israel (cf. Michael in Dan. 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9). In imitation Satan has also apparently assigned high-ranking demons to positions of authority over each kingdom. The prince of the Persian kingdom was a satanic representative assigned to Persia. To seek to prevent Gabriel's message from getting to Daniel, the demonic prince attacked Gabriel as he embarked on his mission. This gives insight into the nature of the warfare fought in the heavenlies between God's angels and Satan's demons to which Paul referred (Eph. 6:12): “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of the dark world, and against spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms.”

The battle between Gabriel and the prince (demon) of Persia continued for three weeks until **Michael, one of the chief princes** of the angelic realm (cf. Dan. 10:21; 12:1), **came to** Gabriel's assistance. Such angelic-demonic conflict indicates something of Satan's power. While **the king**

**of Persia** was fighting Michael, Gabriel was able to bring a message to Daniel concerning **the future** of Israel, Daniel's **people** (cf. "your people," 9:24). It was to be a revelation of the warfare (10:1) between Israel and her neighbors until Israel is given peace by the coming Prince of peace. This vision contains the most detailed prophetic revelation in the Book of Daniel.

*d. The strengthening of the prophet (10:15–11:1)*

10:15–19. Daniel had been weakened at the appearance of the messenger (v. 8; cf. 7:15; 8:27). Now he was also overwhelmed (**speechless**, 10:15) at learning of the angelic-demonic conflict that delayed the answer to his prayer. Moreover, he was **overcome with anguish** (v. 16) at the content of **the vision** of Israel's coming sufferings. He was left totally debilitated (cf. v. 8) and gasping for breath.

In addressing the messenger as **my lord** (cf. v. 19; 12:8) Daniel was using a title of respect something like the modern-day "Sir." To meet the prophet's need, the angel first quieted the alarm in Daniel's heart (**Do not be afraid**; cf. 10:12, **O man highly esteemed**; cf. 9:23; 10:11), and **strengthened** him physically and emotionally. Daniel was then ready to receive the details of the message.

10:20–11:1. The messenger then stated that when he returned **to fight against the prince of Persia** (cf. "the prince of the Persian kingdom," 10:13), **the prince of Greece** would **come**. These princes, as stated earlier (see comments on vv. 11–14), were demons, Satan's representatives assigned to nations to oppose godly forces. Persia and Greece were two major nations discussed in detail in chapter 11 (Persia, vv. 2–4; Greece, vv. 5–35).

