

CONFLICTS IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM

TEXT: DANIEL 10:1-21

INTRODUCTION:

1. The LORD had revealed to Daniel through dreams and visions that the Messiah would come and establish His kingdom of righteousness, but that "the time appointed was long" (10:1).
2. Daniel understood that the fulfillment of the visions which he had received regarding the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the kingdom were a long way off.
3. "The thing was true, but the time appointed was long."
4. From our perspective, living 2,500 years after Daniel, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom upon earth is much nearer now than it was then.

I. DANIEL WAS A MAN OF PRAYER

1. The book of Daniel emphasizes the prayer life of Daniel (6:10; 9:4).
2. The Bible does not say why Daniel was mourning (10:2). Some captives were given permission to return to Jerusalem. Perhaps discouraging reports about Jerusalem saddened Daniel.
3. You will recall that later on, discouraging reports about Jerusalem broke Nehemiah's heart (Neh. 1). In any event, we do not know for sure why Daniel mourned.
4. Daniel 10:2 and 3 tell us Daniel fasted and prayed for three weeks. This is significant for several reasons. God's delays are not denials.

*God's delays are not denials,
He has heard your prayer;
He knows all about your trials,
Knows your every care.*

*God's delays are not denials,
Help is on the way,
He is watching o'er life's dials,
Bringing forth that day.*

*God's delays are not denials,
You will find Him true,
Working through the darkest trials,
What is best for you."*
(Grace E. Troy)

5. The answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed, but help was on the way. Daniel 10:12 and 13 tell us something about conflicts in the spiritual realm (cf. 10:12, 13).
6. By this time Daniel was a very old man, probably close to ninety years old. But he was still on his knees fasting and praying for three weeks!
7. The "great river, which is Hiddekel" (10:4) is the great Tigris River, seen in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:14). *Hiddekel* is the Hebrew name.
8. Daniel 10:5 says, "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen..." There are similarities between this "certain man" and the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ on the isle of Patmos (cf. Rev. 1:10-16).
9. Therefore the "certain man" who spoke to Daniel was the pre-incarnate Christ.
10. Some Bible teachers say this heavenly messenger was an angel, and that he is the same angel that touched Daniel in verse 10, and spoke to him in verses 11-14.
11. The *Scofield Study Bible* says the first messenger was a theophany, and the second messenger was an angel. Furthermore, Scofield says the LORD appeared again to Daniel in verse 16 (margin notes).
12. I agree with Scofield that the first messenger was the pre-incarnate Christ, and the second messenger an angel.
13. However, the speaker in verse 20 appears to be the same angel engaged in battle with the prince of the kingdom of Persia (10:13).
14. Daniel chapter 10 is one of the important chapters in the Bible on the doctrine of angelology. We see that Satan and his evil spirits form a vast, invisible structure working behind the scenes in the governments of the world.
15. "Satan and his demons are very active and seek to promote in every way possible the satanic world system" (Donald Campbell).

II. DANIEL WAS GIVEN AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

1. Daniel fell prostrate upon the ground with his face toward the earth (10:9).
2. It is evident from the words of this messenger (10:11-14) that the one who touched Daniel in verse 10, and addressed Daniel, as "a man greatly beloved" in verse 11 (cf. 9:23; 10:19) was not the "certain man" which he had seen by the Tigris River.

3. This second messenger was an angel who had come to make Daniel understand what would befall his people (Israel) "in the latter days" (10:14), which he announced to Daniel were yet far off -- "for yet the vision is for many days" (10:14).
4. The details of this vision are given in Daniel chapters 11 and 12.
5. The words "understand" and "understood" are repeated several times throughout the book of Daniel, emphasizing that God wants His people to understand Bible prophecy (8:16, 17; 9:2, 13, 22, 23, 25; 10:1, 11, 12, 14; 11:33; 12:10).
6. Daniel 10:12 reminds us that our prayers are heard immediately.

III. WHY ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS ARE DELAYED

1. This fascinating chapter explains the mystery of the delayed answer to prayer.
2. Sometimes our prayers are answered immediately. When Peter was beginning to sink, he prayed, "Lord, save me." "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14:30, 31).
3. When David heard that his trusted advisor betrayed him and went to work with Absalom, David prayed, "O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness" (II Sam. 15:31).
4. And that prayer was answered immediately. And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel" (II Sam. 17:14).
5. "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father" (II Kings 17:23).
6. But oftentimes, our prayers are not answered right away. Daniel had been praying for nearly three weeks but the answer to his prayer had been delayed and here in Daniel 10:11-14 the reason for the delay is explained.
7. Our prayers are often hindered by satanic opposition. Satan uses demons to hinder the purposes of God.
8. H.C. Leupold said, "Bad angels, called demons in the New Testament, are, without a doubt, referred to here. In the course of time, these demonic powers gained a very strong influence over certain nations and the government of these nations. They became the controlling power. They used whatever resources they could muster to hamper God's work and to thwart His purposes... We get a rare

- glimpse behind the scene of world history. There are spiritual forces at work that are far in excess of what men who disregard revelation would suppose. They struggle behind the struggles that are written on the pages of history" (cited by John Walvoord).
9. This is the real background to world events. Here in Daniel 10, the Lord draws back the veil for a few minutes and gives us a glimpse.
 10. The Bible teaches that the true angels of God are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14).
 11. On the other hand, there are evil spirits who do all they can to hinder the purposes of God.
 12. Therefore, if the answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed by three full weeks, and God had to send Michael the archangel to help his fellow angels, in order to get God's message through to Daniel, we should not be surprised or dismayed if some of our prayers are not answered immediately.
 13. While there is a conflict going on here on earth between the powers of righteousness and the forces of evil, a similar conflict is going on in the heavens above us, between God's elect angels and the devil's fallen angels, who are both struggling to influence the hearts and the actions of men.
 14. This is the struggle to which the apostle Paul referred to in Ephesians 6:11-13, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand."
 15. This revelation caused Daniel to become "dumb" (10:15), i.e., speechless (cf. 10:8; 7:15; 8:27).
 16. The spiritual battle did not end. In verse 20, the angel told Daniel, "and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come."
 17. Unregenerate worldlings know nothing of this unseen struggle between the angelic forces. They talk of battles, and terrorist attacks, and so on, but they are ignorant of the spiritual battle going on.
 18. Missionaries and pastors and soulwinners are all over the world preaching the Gospel winning souls, but Satan and his demons are actively engaged in hindering them.

19. John Walvoord said, "It is plain that behind the political and social conditions of the world there is angelic influence — good on the part of the holy angels, evil on the part of the angels under satanic control" (*Daniel, The Key to Prophetic Revelation*).

CONCLUSION:

1. In Ephesians 2:2, Satan is referred to as "the prince of the power of the air."
2. If Satan is a prince, then he must have a kingdom. Our Lord referred to Satan's kingdom in Matthew 12:26, when He said, "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"
3. Three times in the Gospel of John, our Lord referred to Satan as "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
4. In Matthew 4:8 and 9, we read, "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."
5. Evidently, as the prince of this world, Satan has some kind of rights with reference to the kingdoms of the world. Satan showed the Lord "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."
6. Satan's kingdom is highly organized. Colossians 1:16 refers to invisible thrones and dominions, and principalities, and powers.
7. Daniel 10:13 refers to "the prince of the kingdom of Persia," and verse 20 refers to "the prince of Persia" and "the prince of Grecia."
8. We can conclude that certain demons have authority territorially over certain parts of the world. Apparently the world has been divided up and demons have control over different areas.
9. Their authority comes from Satan, the prince of this world.
10. Leopold von Ranke was a great German historian. He was born in 1795, and he died in 1886. I do not know if von Ranke was saved. He was a Protestant, and he was attacked by the Roman Catholic Church as "anti-Catholic," but that is because he was honest in his history of the papacy.
11. Leopold von Ranke said that as he studied history, he felt sometimes as though an occult force were at work in the midst of the apparent confusion.

12. He admitted that he really could not explain it, but it did seem that when all was said and done there was a kind of occult force at work throughout human history.
13. Leopold von Ranke died before Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin, and yet he knew there was an occult force at work throughout human history.
14. Leopold von Ranke was on to something just as real as what we can see with our eyes and touch with our fingers. There is an intense spiritual battle going on. This struggle is invisible to man, but Daniel 10 describes it for us (cf. Daniel 10:13, 20).