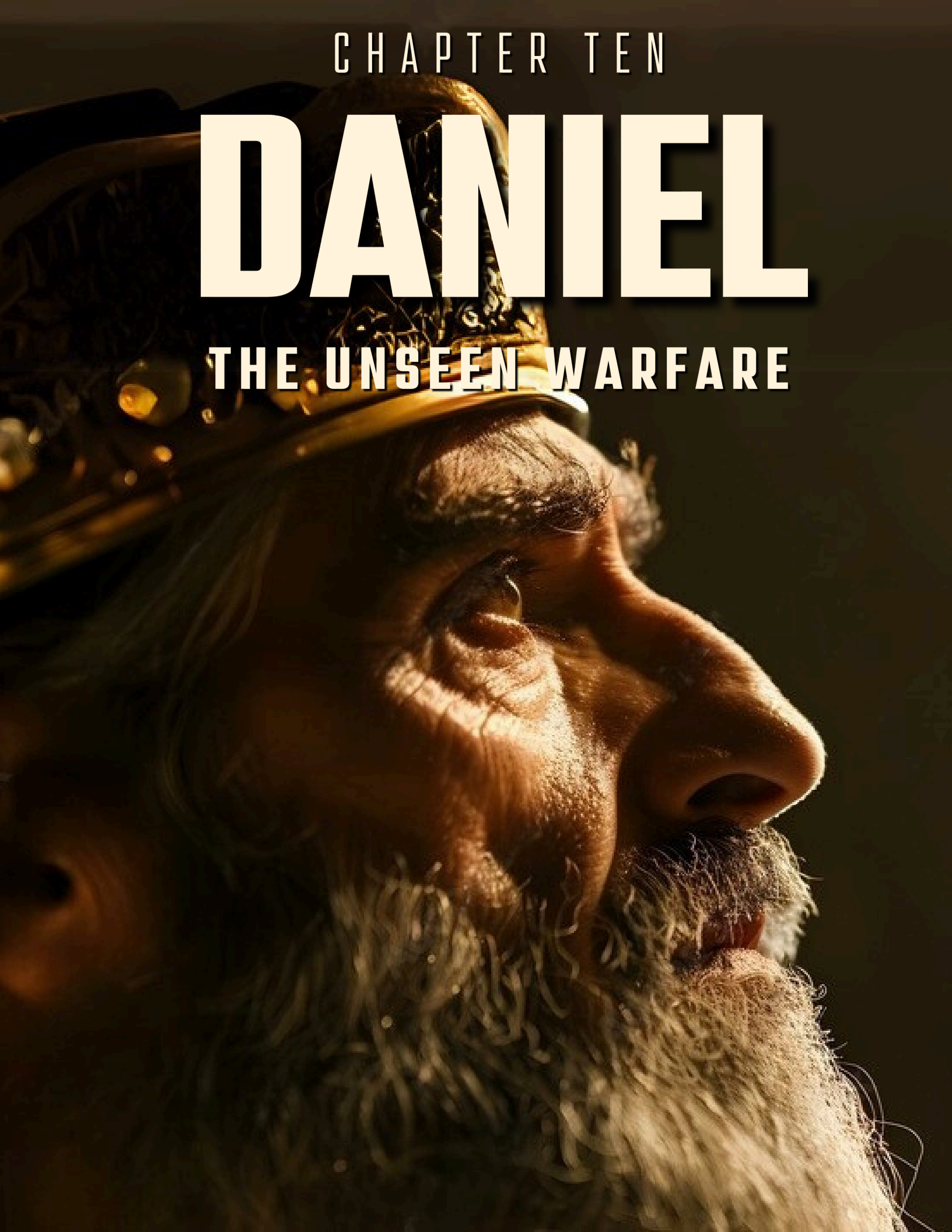


CHAPTER TEN

DANIEL

THE UNSEEN WARFARE



Introduction

This chapter is really the beginning of the end of this marvelous book.

Chapters 10-12 contain Daniel's fourth and _____ vision.

Up to this point the visions have all been handled in one chapter each.

But now we find a fourth vision explained in chapter 11, with chapter 10 presenting the setting and circumstances of the vision, and chapter 12 wrapping it all up.

Now, before we dive into chapter 10 this evening, we must pause to consider some questions we will often hear from hurting unbelievers.

→→ How do we account for all the evil and chaos in the world?

→→ If God created everything perfect in the very beginning, then why is there so much pain and suffering?

→→ And why does it seem to be getting progressively worse with each passing year?

Some people will blame a particular person, or a particular political party, or even a particular culture.

But that simply focuses on a symptom of the problem, not the real cause.

The real cause of much of the world's evil and suffering is the fact that Satan is very real and very _____.

He hates God and everything that God loves and cares about.

Jesus referred to him as *"a liar and the father of lies"* (John 8:44).

And the Apostle Paul calls him *"the god of this world"* (2 Cor. 4:4, NASB) or *"the god of this age"* (2 Cor. 4:4, NKJV).

However, he is nothing like God!

He is a _____ being, just like everything else outside of God.

He is neither omniscient, omnipotent, nor omnipresent.

But having said that, we would be foolish to underestimate this Archenemy.

He is far more powerful and intelligent, and far more clever and cunning than any _____.

Furthermore, the devil is not alone in his work.

He has a whole horde of demonic henchmen that also work tirelessly against God and God's people.

And we are called to be on the **alert** against the devil (1 Pet. 5:8) and to _____ his work (James 4:7).

This confrontation between the demonic hordes and God's people is what is often called "spiritual warfare."

But we find in Daniel 10 that God's _____ also war against the devil's demons on behalf of God's people.

QUOTE:

"If once the curtain were pulled back, and the spiritual world behind it came to view, it would expose to our spiritual vision a struggle so intense, so convulsive, sweeping everything within its range, that the fiercest battle ever fought on earth would seem, by comparison, a mere game. Not here, but up there—that is where the real conflict is waged. Our earthly struggle drowns in its backlash"
(Abraham Kuyper, 1837-1920).

The effects of those battles influence our politics, our philosophies of life, our worldview, our schooling, our form of government, our press, our entertainment, our music, our religious views—in reality, every single thing about us.

Daniel chapter 10 pulls that spiritual "curtain" back and gives us a brief glimpse into this world of spiritual warfare that is very real, though unseen by mortal man.

And in these final three chapters he is going to walk us through what he witnessed there.

The Setting of Daniel's Vision (vv. 1-3)

Daniel 10:1-3

- 1** *In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and **the message was true** and one of **great conflict**, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.*
- 2** *In those days, I, Daniel, had been **mourning for three entire weeks**.*
- 3** *I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.*

Once again, the prophet Daniel gives us an exact time stamp as to when he received this fourth vision.

It was *“in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia.”*

So, the year was _____ BC.

It had been less than three years since King Cyrus had put an end to King Belshazzar and the Babylonian Empire of chapter 5.

Daniel would have been well into his _____ at the time of this vision.

He had also recently witnessed the wonderful return of some 50,000 Israelites back to their homeland as a result of God’s faithfulness and Cyrus’ decree (Ezra 1:1-4).

The book of _____ tells the story of those Jews who were led back to the Promised Land by Zerubbabel and who laid the foundation for the 2nd Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3-5; Hag. 1).

It’s worth noting that Daniel did not join the returning exiles. No doubt he longed for his homeland. But as far as we know, he never made the journey back to Israel. Perhaps he was too old, or perhaps his health was poor.

Or perhaps he was too important of a government official in the empire of the Medes and Persians to be _____ to leave.

Whatever the case might have been, we know that God was still using Daniel as an exile, and we know that his will was always _____ to God’s will for his life.

And really, folks, THAT same mindset should be true of *every* disciple of Jesus Christ.

Daniel is identified here in chapter 10 as *“Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar.”*

This is the first time since chapter 5 that he has been called by his Babylonian name.

We have no idea as to why this name comes up again.

Perhaps it was simply a reminder that Daniel still remained in _____ and did not have the joy of returning to Israel.

At the end of verse 1, Daniel says that *“the message was **true** and one of **great conflict**.”*

Of course the message was *“true,”* since it had come from God Almighty Himself.

BUT Daniel also knew that it was a vision comprised of *“great conflict.”*

Daniel had earlier been made prophetically aware of the End-Times conflicts that awaited his people, the Jews (7:21, 25; 8:24-25; 9:27).

He also knew of the significant _____ that would befall his people at the hand of the “*little horn*,” a.k.a, the Antichrist (8:10-14).

And so, the revelation of a “*great conflict*” was no doubt very disturbing for this prophet of old.

In verses 2 and 3 we are told that Daniel spent three entire weeks *mourning*, _____ (at least partially), and *praying* (see v. 12) prior to the receiving of this fourth and final vision.

→→ Why?

Perhaps he was mourning as a result of the visions he had already received about future troubles for the Jews.

Perhaps he was mourning the extremely poor condition of the captives returning to Israel.

Perhaps he was mourning because of the destruction of the Temple and the difficulty that the Jews were encountering as they were trying to rebuild it.

That would have been heartbreaking for Daniel, since his great desire was for the full _____ of Jerusalem and its Temple.

And in God’s perfect timing, He answered His faithful prophet’s prayers.

Look at verses 4-9 with me, where we see the arrival of God’s heavenly messenger.

The Arrival of God’s Messenger (vv. 4-9)

Daniel 10:4-9

4 *On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,*

5 *I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was **a certain man** dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure **gold** of Uphaz.*

6 *His body also was like **beryl**, his face had the appearance of **lightning**, his eyes were like flaming **torches**, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished **bronze**, and the sound of his words like the sound of a **tumult**.*

7 *Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me **did not see** the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they **ran away** to hide themselves.*

8 *So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet **no strength** was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained **no strength**.*

9 *But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into **a deep sleep** on my face, with my face to the ground.*

Now go back up and look at verse 4 with me once again. Daniel tells us what happened “*on the twenty-fourth day of the first month.*”

When the three weeks of *mourning, fasting, and praying* were over, Daniel was on the banks of the Tigris River—a major river in Mesopotamia, with a number of significant cities along its banks—Nineveh being among them.

Daniel doesn’t tell us why he was by the river—simply the fact that he *was* there.

Perhaps he was on government business or even on some kind of personal vacation—hence the time of fasting.

But the fact that he was there provides further proof that he had not gone back to

_____ with the other exiles, for the Tigris River is only about 20 miles from Babylon, the seat of the old Babylonian government, and about 160 miles from Susa, the seat of the Persian government—but over 700 miles from Israel.



Now, imagine strolling by a river with some of your friends or co-workers, when suddenly someone in your group jumps up and begins staring into the sky.

At first you might think it’s a joke, but then you see utter awe and terror on the person’s face.

→→ What would you do?

We know what Daniel’s friends did; they hightailed it out of there!

Verse 7 says that “*they ran away to hide themselves.*”

They were aware that something _____ was taking place, but they couldn’t see what Daniel saw.

Something similar happened to the Apostle Paul when he was on the road to Damascus.

He alone saw and heard the Lord speaking to him, while Paul’s traveling companions heard something, but weren’t able to _____ the voice; and they were aware of the light, but didn’t see the vision that Paul did of the resurrected Christ (Acts 9:3-8; 22:9; 26:12-14).

But Daniel stayed put when his friends ran.

And what he saw was utterly glorious, yet at the same time, absolutely terrifying!

But even if Daniel had wanted to run away too, he couldn't move. His body was incapacitated.

Instead of running, he fell flat on his face and slipped into a strange kind of _____ in which his body slept, but his mind was still able to register the words that were being spoken to him.

We find the same kind of phenomenon in Revelation 1:17, when Christ appeared to John on the island of Patmos, and John *"fell at His feet like a dead man."*

Daniel 10:5-6

5 *I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was **a certain man** dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure **gold** of Uphaz.*

6 *His body also was like **beryl**, his face had the appearance of **lightning**, his eyes were like flaming **torches**, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished **bronze**, and the sound of his words like the sound of a **tumult**.*

→→ Who was this heavenly messenger?

Notice all the words which point to aspects of light or _____ color—"gold," "beryl," "lightning," "flaming torches," and "polished bronze."

Because there are similarities between this vision and the Apostle John's description of the glorified Christ in Revelation 1:14-16, some scholars see this as an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ (a _____).

Other Bible scholars—myself included—take this "man" to be one of God's holy _____, for several reasons.

For one thing, angels are often described in Scripture as looking like men (Daniel 10:16, 18, 12:6-7; Rev. 10:1-11).

Sometimes they look like men who _____ with heavenly glory, like the angels at the empty tomb (Luke 24:4).

Other times they simply look like any other man, as in the story of the three angels who appeared to Abraham; we are told that when he *"lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, **three men** were standing opposite him"* (Gen. 18:2).

In fact, angels can sometimes appear so human-like that the author of Hebrews exhorts us, *"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels **without knowing it**"* (13:2).

Angels also often appear in shining _____ and/or gold apparel, like this heavenly messenger does (Luke 24:4; John 20:12; Rev. 15:6).

But perhaps the greatest reason why I think that this is an angel is because of what he tells Daniel in verse 13.

Daniel 10:13

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

The problem with viewing this heavenly being as the pre-incarnate Christ is that since Jesus is 100% God, He is _____ (all powerful) and would NOT need help battling one of His own fallen angels.

In fact, Christ is going to vanquish Satan one day with nothing but a _____ (2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:21).

Thus, in view of this one pivotal fact, it seems best to take this “*certain man, dressed in linen*” as a glorious angel, and not the pre-incarnate Christ.

Daniel 10:8-9

8 So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet **no strength** was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained **no strength**.

9 But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a **deep sleep** on my face, with my face to the ground.

Daniel’s response to this heavenly angel put him in some good company.

When angels appeared to people in the Bible, those who saw them were usually utterly _____—unless they appeared looking like normal humans.

Often the very first words out of the angel’s mouth were, “*Do not be afraid*” (Luke 1:13, 30).

The Roman guards who were posted at Jesus’ tomb, upon seeing an angel on Resurrection morning, “*shook for fear of him and became like dead men*” (Mat. 28:4).

And on two separate occasions in the book of Revelation, the Apostle John was so overcome by the presence and words of a mighty angel that he fell at his feet, intending to _____ him—though each time the angel intervened and directed his worship to God (Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9).

So Daniel’s response of falling flat on his face was not an uncommon one.

And now we come to the heart of this chapter.

The timing is in place—536 BC.

The setting is in place—the River _____.

The messenger is introduced—this mighty, shiny angel.

Daniel's reaction is recorded—he's _____ on his face before the angel.

And at last we come to the angel's message.

But first, he has to get Daniel back on his feet.

The Ministry of an Angel to Daniel (vv. 10-14)

Daniel 10:10-14

10 Then behold, **a hand touched me** and set me trembling on my hands and knees.

11 He said to me, "**O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand** the words that I am about to tell you and **stand upright**, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

12 Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for **from the first day** that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and **I have come** in response to your words.

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was **withstanding me** for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, **came to help me**, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

14 Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the **days yet future**."

Daniel doesn't tell us how long he lay incapacitated on the ground.

But at some point, the angel reached down, touched him, and set him up on his hands and knees (v. 10).

This was the first of three angelic "_____" that Daniel received (vv. 10, 16, 18).

This first touch enabled Daniel to get up off his face and rest trembling on his hands and knees.

He is no longer in "*a deep sleep*" (v. 9).

In the next verse (v. 11) Daniel tells us that he received some words of encouragement by this same angel.

Daniel 10:11

11 He said to me, “**O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand** the words that I am about to tell you and **stand upright**, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

Daniel is called a “man of high _____.” What a commendation!

When the angel Gabriel had come to Daniel two years earlier, he had declared the same encouraging truth to him (9:23).

Next we read that the angel encouraged Daniel to stand up and _____ carefully to the message with which he’d been sent.

And so, the elderly Daniel got up off his knees and stood on his own two feet, still shaking.

Daniel 10:12

12 Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for **from the first day** that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and **I have come** in response to your words.

Since the first day Daniel began to _____, this angel had been commissioned to come to him with an answer to his prayer.

As soon as God saw His prophet’s humble heart and heard his words of mourning and intercession, God had dispatched this angel with an answering message for Daniel.

But the angel had encountered a problem along the way.

Daniel 10:13

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

“The prince of the kingdom of Persia” hindered the heavenly angel in fulfilling his mission of carrying a message to Daniel. Whoever this powerful demon was (maybe Satan himself), the heavenly messenger was prevented from dispatching his duty to Daniel for three whole weeks.

That angel, possibly _____ (cf. 8:15-16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26-27), had been ganged up on by a number of demons (note the plural at the end of verse 13, “the **kings** of Persia”).

When _____ was dispatched to help out, the battle between good and evil was tipped in the direction of good, so that the angel could continue with his mission and deliver his message to Daniel.

Michael is the archangel (Jude 9) who, according to verse 21, is _____ protector and prince.

QUOTE:

“Michael is introduced in this verse and is also mentioned in Daniel 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9; and Revelation 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 (Dan. 10:21); he is “great” in power and protects the Jewish people (Dan. 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” (Miller, 285).

What we have in this chapter of Daniel is a remarkable glimpse into the unseen battle between the good and evil spirits, between the holy angels and demons.

And it fits perfectly with what we know about spiritual warfare from other passages of Scripture. Let’s survey just a few of those passages.

Job

It’s widely thought that the book of Job was the very _____ book of the Bible ever to be written.

So, let’s start there.

If you’re familiar with the book of Job, then you’ll remember the exchange between God and Satan in chapters 1 and 2.

These chapters do not speak of outright warfare or struggle, but they do reveal to us a scene in Heaven in which the devil and his angels appear before the throne of God, and God questions Satan about His righteous servant _____.

Job 1:8

The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.”

Satan then replies to God that Job only fears Him because God has blessed him.

He challenges God to take away those blessings, and he said that Job would _____ God to His face (vv. 9-11).

God grants Satan the permission to take away all that Job has.

Later God grants Satan permission to take even Job's health. And even after that Job does not sin, at least not right away.

Instead, he asks his wife, “*‘Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips*” (Job 2:10).

Micaiah

In 1 Kings chapter 22, we are given another insight into the spiritual warfare that surrounds us and the work that God does through His people.

In this chapter we are introduced to the true prophet of God, _____, and the 400 false prophets of wicked King Ahab of Israel.

When Ahab asked Micaiah whether Israel and Judah should go up and fight against Ramoth-gilead, Micaiah said that he had seen the host of Heaven standing all around the King of Heaven.

And the LORD said, “*Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?*”

There were a number of suggestions, but finally one spirit said,
“*I will entice him.*”

“*The LORD said to him, ‘How?’*”

And he said, ‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets’” (v. 22a).

And that is EXACTLY what happened.

The four hundred false prophets of Ahab all prophesied falsely that he would win the battle.

The LORD sent Ahab the _____, however, through his godly prophet Micaiah, who told Ahab that he would most certainly die in the battle.

Listen to what Micaiah said to Ahab.

“Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you” (v. 23).

The ending of this story is too good not to read, so listen to the next couple of verses.

1 Kings 22:24-28

24 *Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, “How did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?”*

25 *Micaiah said, “Behold, you shall see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself.”*

*26 Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son;
 27 and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this man in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely."'"*
*28 Micaiah said, "If you indeed return safely the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "**Listen, all you people.**"*

Joshua

Another account of spiritual warfare is in the book of Zechariah.

This second to last of the Minor Prophets has a vision of the high priest _____ (the same one who with Zerubbabel the governor had led the 50,000 Jews back to Jerusalem just a year or two before this vision of Daniel's).

Zechariah sees Joshua standing before God's altar, and Satan is right there ready to accuse him.

Joshua is clothed in filthy clothes, symbolic of his own and his nation's _____, and Satan is no doubt pointing out the filthy nature of his and his nation's sin, asking what right a man so morally bankrupt has to minister before God in His Temple.

But God rebukes Satan.

And the angel who was accompanying Joshua says to those standing by, "*Remove the filthy garments from him*" (Zech. 3:4a).

And in place of those filthy garments he is clothed with "*festal robes*" and "*a clean turban*" (v. 4-5) which is symbolic of the Lord's _____ righteousness (v. 5).

Michael

In Revelation chapter 12 we're given another scene of Heaven and this spiritual warfare.

In this scene an actual _____ is described, again involving the archangel Michael.

Revelation 12:7-12

*7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war;
 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.
 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

*10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for **the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.***

11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

12 For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

Paul

Now, let's look at one more passage of Scripture, that is probably known as THE premiere passage of Scripture dealing with spiritual warfare.

Listen to these well known words to the church in Ephesus.

Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

*11 **Put on the full armor of God**, so that you will be able to **stand firm against the schemes of the devil.***

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

*13 Therefore, **take up the full armor of God**, so that you will be able to **resist** in the evil day, and having done everything, to **stand firm.***

*14 **Stand firm** therefore, having girded your loins with **truth**, and having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**,*

*15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**;*

*16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of **faith** with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.*

*17 And take the helmet of **salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God.***

*18 With all **prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit**, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,*

Beloved, the Apostle Paul makes it crystal clear that we are to _____ ourselves with the armor and weapons that God has, in His wisdom, provided for us, so that we will be able to stand firm against Satan's spiritual attacks.

Now, having looked at these five examples of spiritual warfare, it's important to keep in mind that the Bible doesn't actually tell us very much about the spiritual world all around us.

In other words, the examples that we've looked at only give us _____ into this unseen world.

But God, in His perfect wisdom, has given us everything that we do need to know.

God's holy angels are mentioned in the Old Testament over _____ times, and in the New Testament they are mentioned over _____ times.

We are told that they are God's messengers—that is what the word "*angel*" actually means.

They are created beings; in other words, they had a beginning.

They are _____ beings; that is, they cannot die.

They exist in vast numbers.

John, in the book of Revelation, mentions seeing "*thousands of thousands*" of them (Rev. 5:11).

They possess intellect, emotion, and _____, and they render pure, holy, intelligent worship unto God.

However, alongside these holy angels are also a huge number of unholy angels known as _____.

These angels followed Satan in his rebellion against God (see Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28). They hate God and do everything they can to thwart His purposes. They hate what God loves and love what God hates.

The Bible describes these fallen angels as a terrifying force, not to terrify us, but to instill a godly fear in us, so that we might draw near to God for His protection.

At the head of these demons is none other than Satan himself. The Bible describes him as the _____ of God and of all God's people.

Now, when we talk about Satan being powerful, we must not exaggerate the case.

Oftentimes out of Biblical ignorance, people tend to view Satan as God's evil _____.

But Satan is NOTHING like God.

It's true that he appears to be a counterpart to the greatest of God's holy angels, including Michael and Gabriel.

And it's true that he *thinks* of himself as god, and wants to be _____ like God; but he will NEVER be like the Almighty.

God is ***omnipotent***—all-powerful.

Satan is not; his power is _____.

God is ***sovereign***.

Satan is not; Satan can only do what God _____ him to do.

You'll remember in Job's account, that Satan had to ask God's permission to do what he did against God's servant, Job.

God is also **omnipresent**—everywhere present at the same time.

Satan, however, can only be in _____ place at a time. Sure, he has many wicked henchmen working for him all over the world.

And sure, he has put into place all the worldly religions and wicked philosophies to get people sidetracked from the one true, living God. BUT understand that his power and his presence is limited.

Finally, God is **omniscient**. That means that He knows everything.

Satan does not. While he knows far, far more than we do, he doesn't even come close to our God's omniscience.

Beloved, make no mistake, Satan is undoubtedly a powerful foe. But we are not tremble in fear.

→→ Why not?

Because the Bible teaches us how to _____ against him.

According to Ephesians chapter 6, we are to take up the full armor of God, so that we might resist him in the strength and power of God.

And if we do that, we will always prevail.

Martin Luther understood this powerful enemy. He understood what real spiritual warfare looked like. He himself was no doubt engaged in a great spiritual battle in his day. And yet, Luther did not fear.

Listen to that great hymn that he wrote over 500 years ago.

A Mighty Fortress is our God

First verse...

*A mighty Fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing;
Our Helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*

Third verse...

*And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
**We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us:**
The Prince of Darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.*

Now, back to Daniel.

With the aid of Michael and the continued _____ of Daniel, the angel had finally arrived in order to give Daniel “*understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days*” (v. 14).

In other words, the angel’s words were clearly going to be eschatological, for he says, “*for the vision pertains to the days yet future*” (v. 14).

Brothers and sisters, there is no created being (whether man or angel) who knows the end from the beginning, as our great God does.

Isaiah 46:9-11

9 “Remember the former things long past,
**For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,**
10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;
11 Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My purpose from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have planned it, surely I will do it.”

Beloved, there are no surprises for God.

Not only does He **know** what’s going to happen in the future, but He _____ it, and He will **execute** it.

And here He lets Daniel catch a glimpse of what is coming to the people of Israel in the future.

And once again, it’s a lot for Daniel to handle, as verse 15 makes clear.

More Heavenly Help for Daniel (vv. 15-18)***Daniel 10:15-18***

15 *When he had spoken to me according to these words, **I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.***

16 *And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, “O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength.*

17 *For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me.”*

18 *Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me.*

Now go back up and re-read verse 14 once again, because I think this is at least part of the reason WHY Daniel responded the way he did in verse 15.

Daniel 10:14

14 *Now I have come to give you **an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.***

Think about it. The angel's words to Daniel implied that dark days were still ahead for Daniel's people, the Jews.

This news must have been hugely _____ to Daniel, who had so recently rejoiced to see the Jews return to the Promised Land after 70 years of captivity.

Now, it's also possible that Daniel's reaction was due in part to the fact that he was still in the presence of a glorious angel.

He may also have been weakened by _____ after discovering the level of spiritual warfare that had erupted in response to his prayer.

Whatever the cause of his dismay, Daniel either bowed down his head under the weight of this revelation or again assumed his previous position on his hands and knees.

Either way, this faithful servant of the Lord needed to be strengthened once again.

So in verse 16 we read that Daniel received strength after the angel specifically _____ his lips.

This is reminiscent of what happened with both Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Isaiah 6:5-7

5 Then I said,

“Woe is me, for I am ruined!

Because I am a man of unclean lips,

And I live among a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs.

7 He touched my mouth with it and said, *“Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven.”*

Jeremiah 1:4-9

4 Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

5 *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,*

And before you were born I consecrated you;

I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

6 Then I said, *“Alas, Lord God!*

Behold, I do not know how to speak,

Because I am a youth.”

7 But the Lord said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’

Because everywhere I send you, you shall go,

And all that I command you, you shall speak.

8 *“Do not be afraid of them,*

For I am with you to deliver you,” declares the Lord.

9 Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me,

“Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.”

In like manner, responding to Daniel’s continued weakness and now muteness, the angel touched Daniel’s lips. And immediately Daniel opened his mouth and spoke the following words to this angel.

Daniel 10:16b-17

16 ... *“O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength.*

17 *For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me.”*

Daniel was still _____ and filled with anguish for two reasons.

First, he told the angel that he was weak because of *“the vision”* (v. 16).

And the **second** reason was because he felt utterly unworthy to be speaking with this _____, angelic messenger (v. 17), for Daniel was continuing to identify with his people, who had so grievously sinned against the Lord (Dan. 9).

Beloved, God is always right there, ready to strengthen His children for whatever task He has called them to accomplish.

→→ How does He do that?

He does it in a number of ways.

Sometimes He uses _____.

Sometimes He uses His Word.

Sometimes He uses a friend or pastor.

That is the “_____” kind of living that the Bible repeatedly emphasizes.

→→ And do we need that?

You bet we do. And especially as we get closer and closer to that Final Day.

Hebrews 10:23-25

*23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;
24 and let us consider how to **stimulate one another** to love and good deeds,
25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**;
and **all the more as you see the day drawing near.***

So those are all _____ ways that God strengthens His people.

But **sometimes** God uses a divine touch, as in the case of Daniel.

Daniel 10:18

*18 Then this one with human appearance **touched me again** and strengthened me.*

This is the _____ time that this heavenly angel touched Daniel.

And with that third and final touch, he strengthened this beloved man one last time, so that he could receive the rest of the heavenly message.

QUOTE:

“One might wonder if this helpless, sleeping, shaking, speechless, breathless man will ever be in shape to receive the angel’s vision” (Davis, 144).

Well, it took a while, and specifically three angelic “touches,” but Daniel was finally ready to receive the heavenly message.

Look at the last section where this fourth and final prophecy is introduced.

The Prophecy Introduced (vv. 19-21)

Daniel 10:19-21

19 *He said, “O man of high esteem, **do not be afraid.** Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!” Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, “**May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.**”*

20 *Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.*

21 *However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the **writing of truth.** Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except **Michael your prince.**”*

For a third and final time, Daniel is touched by this heavenly messenger (10:10, 16, 18).

And for a _____ and final time he is told that he is “*highly esteemed*” (9:23; 10:11, 19).

Whenever I read those words, I am always taken aback.

Here was this old man who had lived a long and faithful life as the Lord’s servant in a foreign country, far, far from home.

And yet, no matter what situation arose, Daniel always took a courageous stand for the Lord and by _____ did the right thing.

Daniel most likely knew that he was pleasing to the Lord.

But what a HUGE encouragement it would have been to hear _____ times from angelic being that he was “*highly esteemed*” or “*greatly beloved*” as some translations say.

And then, after having touched Daniel three times, and having encouraged him three times, the angel now delivers a _____ message to him:

- “*Do not be afraid.*”
- “*Peace be with you.*”
- “*Take courage.*”

And Daniel answers, “*May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me*” (v.19).

Next, in verse 20, the angel asks Daniel a rhetorical question: “*Do you understand why I came to you?*”

He had already told him why he had come, at least in part, in verses 12 and 14.

But this was a necessary question in light of Daniel's _____ strength and capacities.

After that, the angel once again pulled the proverbial curtain back and informed Daniel that he had to leave and continue his fight against "*the prince of Persia.*"

This ongoing battle would eventually bring about a victory over the prince of Persia, but the warfare wouldn't end there.

The Persian Empire lasted from 539 to 331 BC.

Then after the angel battled the Persian demons, he would go on to engage the evil demonic forces involved with _____.

That empire would exist, in some form, from 331 to 63 BC.

And it too would have a powerful evil spirit trying to use that nation _____ Israel.

Thus, Daniel was informed by the angel that he must now leave for Persia where the angel Michael (the prince of Israel) was doing battle for God.

Michael is referred to here as "*your prince,*" the prince of Israel, *i.e.*, Israel's _____ angel.

That, no doubt, brought great comfort to Daniel.

It's clear that Michael has his hands full, because we know that Satan and all his forces have a deep and abiding hatred for Israel.

But Satan will be opposed by Michael and his fellow angels until the devil and his minions are _____ from Heaven (Rev. 12) and cast down to earth, half way through Daniel's 70th Week (Dan. 9).

At that point, after suffering a sound defeat and being cast out of Heaven for good, the devil will persecute Israel like never before, because he knows his time is short.

BUT regardless of Satan's vile hatred of the Jewish people, he will not succeed in destroying them.

The Bible tells us that _____ of the Jews will survive the Tribulation.

Before the angel leaves for his second deployment, he informs Daniel that he will tell him, "*what is inscribed in the writing of truth*" (v. 21).

What an apt description of God's written revelation!

And as we're going to see in Daniel 11, this particular revelation details God's future plan for Israel and for the kingdoms of this world.

Life Lessons

Life Lesson #1—The Word of God is _____.

At the beginning of this chapter Daniel acknowledged that the heavenly message that he had received was “*true*” (Dan. 10:1). And at the end of the chapter the angel calls God’s revelation “*the writing of truth.*”

This corresponds with hundreds of verses all throughout God’s Word.

Psalm 19:7-11

7 *The law of the Lord is **perfect**, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is **sure**, making wise the simple.*
8 *The precepts of the Lord are **right**, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the Lord is **pure**, enlightening the eyes.*
9 *The fear of the Lord is **clean**, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord are **true**; they are righteous altogether.*
10 *They are more **desirable** than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.*
11 *Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
In keeping them there is **great reward**.*

And Jesus Himself prayed the following in John 17:17: “*Sanctify them in the truth; **Your word is truth.***”

Beloved, NEVER doubt the veracity of God’s Word. The Psalmist didn’t. Daniel didn’t. Jesus didn’t. And neither should we! BELIEVE what it says!

Life Lesson #2—Have _____ for God.

Daniel’s deep reverence for God is seen all throughout this book as we find him obeying God rather than men, earnestly interceding for his people, and spending weeks in fasting and prayer.

The Bible repeatedly calls on people to fear God (Deut. 10:12, 20-21; Prov. 1:7; Luke 12:5; Heb. 10:31).

For the unbeliever, the fear of God boils down to fear of God’s judgment and eternal death.

However, for the believer, the fear of God is something much different. Believers are not to be scared of God and His coming judgment, because we have His promise that nothing could ever separate us from His love (Rom. 8:38-39). We also have His promise that He will never leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

Thus, for the believer, fearing God means having an appropriate reverence for Him that greatly impacts the way we live.

The fear of God is respecting Him, obeying Him, submitting to Him, and worshipping Him in awe.

The book of Hebrews has a good description of this type of fear.

Hebrews 12:28-29

28 *Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;*

29 *for our God is a consuming fire.*

Life Lesson #3— _____ when God speaks.

The angel put Daniel back on his feet and told him to listen to the message God was sending him.

And that's a great lesson for each one of us. When God speaks, we need to pay careful attention to what He says. We need to stay focused and alert, not drowsy or distracted.

Let me encourage you to set aside a good time every single day to read your Bible.

If all you ever get is a few minutes of listening while driving to work, while that's certainly better than nothing, it's not the most effective way to be reading your Bible.

We also need to come to church on Sundays ready to listen—not drowsy or distracted. Rather, we need to be all ears to the teaching and preaching of God's truth.

And that means, as you've heard me say over the years, that Sunday morning begins on Saturday evening, with careful planning ahead to get to bed at a good time.

Life Lesson #4—Answers to our prayers will sometimes be _____.

As we learned, sometimes the answer to our prayers will be delayed.

God sometimes dispatches angels to take care of our prayer requests (Acts 12:6-19). And sometimes fallen angels will oppose them. This happened when Daniel prayed.

Thus, it's important for us to remember that we must remain fervent and faithful in our prayers and not automatically assume that God isn't listening or that He doesn't care, simply because His answer is delayed.

Beloved, we are in a spiritual war, and we must be mindful that we simply do not know what's going on behind the scenes in the spiritual world all around us.

Life Lesson #5—Our God is _____.

And lastly, may we NEVER forget that our God is sovereign, and there is no demon so strong that he can ever thwart—nor bend even the tiniest bit—the purposes of God.

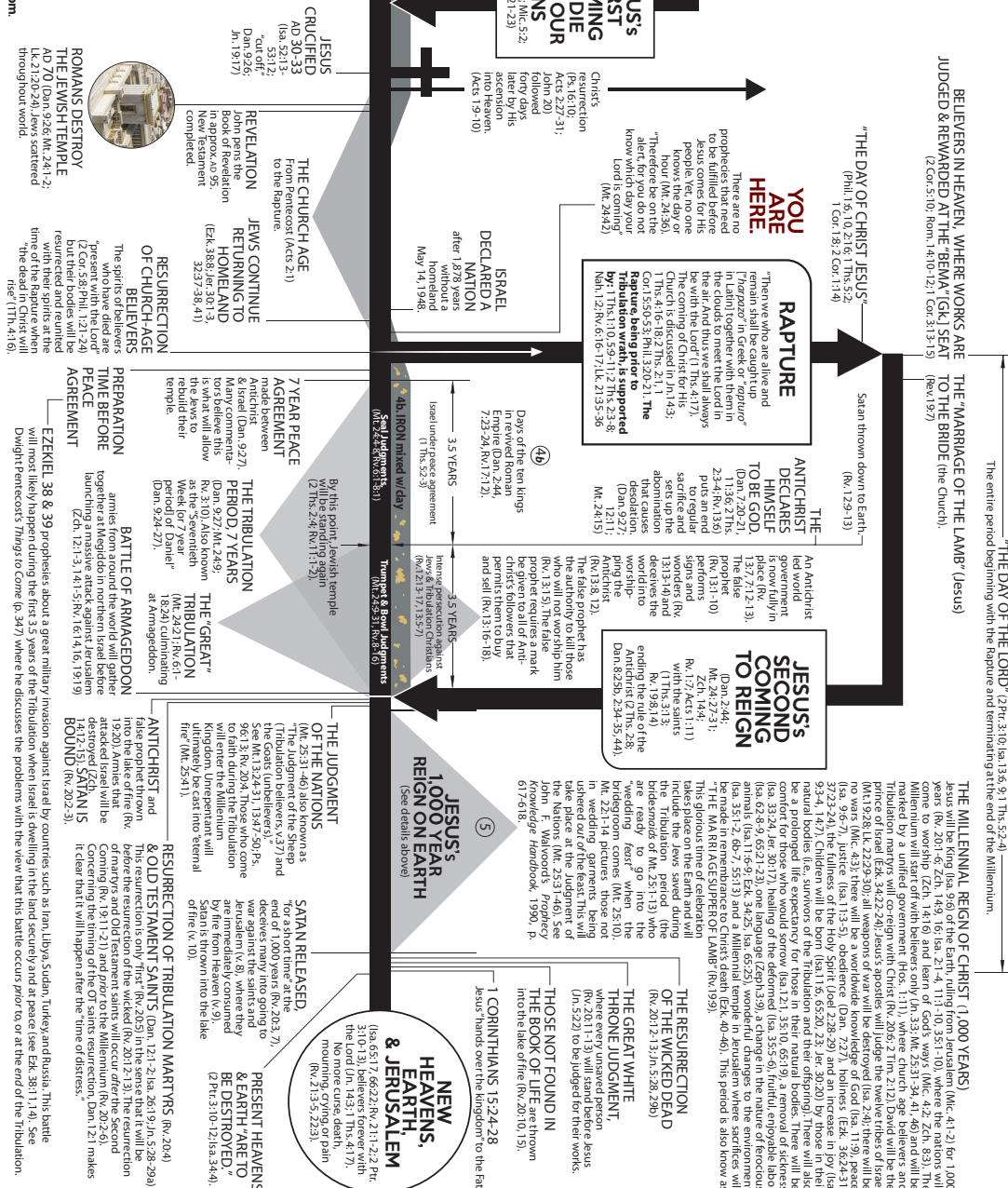
Romans 8:28

28 *And we know that **God** causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Beloved, we are utterly safe in the hands of our mighty God!

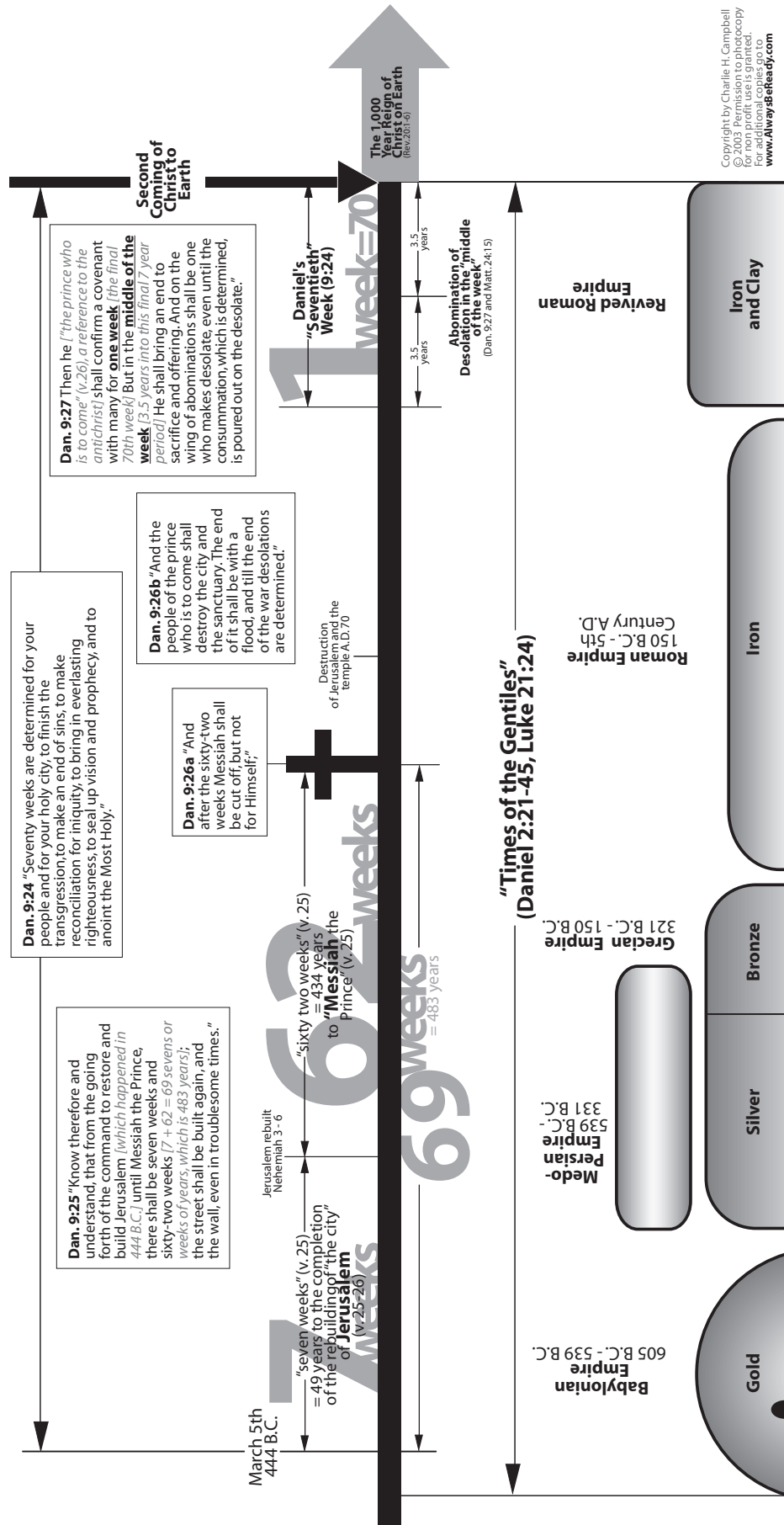
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"Daniel's Seventy Weeks (or Seventy Sevens)"

Daniel 9:20-23: 20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:



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