

Introduction:

1. We're in our 5th week of our series (**PP**) "**CONTROL** in the midst of **CHAOS**."
 - a. (**PP**) we seek to live **SELF CONTROLLED** because we know & trust that
 - b. (**PP**) **GOD** is **IN CONTROL**
 - i. That is what God is revealing to Daniel in chapters 7-12
 - ii. Through 4 different visions, God is revealing the **CHAOS** that will
 1. Ensnare upon the world
 2. And His people, the Jews specifically
 - iii. But through it all, we're learning that we can
 - c. Live **SELF CONTROLLED** b/c who we know who is in **CONTROL**.
2. This morning we'll be in Daniel 10
 - a. This chapter introduces us to the 4th & final vision of Daniel.
 - i. Chapter 10: the prologue
 - ii. Chapter 11: vision of conflicts for the nation of Israel
 - iii. Chapter 12: the epilogue.
 - b. Daniel gains tremendous insight into the spiritual realm
 - i. The cosmic battle that surrounds us all.
 - ii. The reality that life isn't a playground it's a battleground
 - iii. Ever been in a battle?
 - c. Illus: Yesterday w/ my old boxing gear / girls cower / Liam growled ☺
 - i. In same way; maybe not cower, but be tactful, respect the fight
 - ii. In same way; let us growl, stoked about our king & warrior JC.
3. This morning
 - a. We're gonna learn that we can't escape **CHAOS**
 - b. But we can learn to be **Self-Controlled** in the midst of **Chaos**
 - c. As we know our enemy & we know our king/warrior – Jesus.

Text:

(**PP**) ¹In the 3rd year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) had another vision. He understood that the vision concerned events certain to happen in the future—times of war and great hardship. ²When this vision came to me, I, Daniel, had been in mourning for three whole weeks. ³All that time I had eaten no rich food. No meat or wine crossed my lips, and I used no fragrant lotions until those three weeks had passed.

1. We see that Daniel is down... did you catch that in v1 & 2?
 - a. He says he was in mourning
 - i. That means crying, lamenting, depressed
 - ii. For 3 weeks.
 - b. The question is: why is he weeping?
 - i. Notice in v1 it says, "It's the 3rd yr of Cyrus the king of Persia."
 - ii. That's important.

1. The Jews have been back in Jerusalem for 2 years.
 2. It's what Daniel saw & prayed for in previously.
 - iii. Ezra 1, it tells us in the 1st year of Cyrus the edict was given for the Jewish people to return from Babylon back to Jerusalem.
 1. So now, 2 years have passed.
 2. But, only a small portion of the Jews returned to Jerusalem.
 - a. Ezra 2, gives us the exact number—49,697
 - b. Drop in bucket compared to how many stayed in Babylon.
 - c. Why did they stay?
 - i. They got comfortable
 - ii. They'd been there for a long time
 - iii. They've raised kids there
 - iv. They've become prosperous
 - v. They've become absorbed in the culture
 - vi. Valued comfort & conv. over obedience to God.
 3. 2nd reason Dan is down: they weren't very successful.
 - a. They weren't able in 2yrs to est the monarchy again.
 - b. When they got back, it took them 7 months just to clear the rubble from the temple grounds.
 - c. And their enemies attacked them & work stopped.
 - c. Daniel, has been praying & dreaming about them returning back
 - i. But only a few returned
 - ii. And those that did return were unsuccessful.
 - iii. The work has come to a stop.
 - d. So, he's mourning & he's fasting.
 - i. And as we continue to read this chapter, we'll see he does something he's very accustomed to... praying.
 - ii. Here's a great principle we learn from Daniel:
 1. Whenever his heart is over overwhelmed:
 2. He takes it to the Lord, he prays about it, he gets on his knees.
2. Here's a KEY lesson for those of us who
 - a. Wanna live **SELF CONTROLLED** b/c we know who is in **CONTROL**.
 - b. (**PP**) When life gets too hard to **stand, kneel**.
 - i. *We can do more than pray, be we cannot do more pray until we've prayed.* – John Bunyan
 - ii. It's very true that prayer aligns me w/ the heart of God but also,
 - iii. *Prayer moves the hand that moves the world.* Spurgeon
 3. Let's see what happens next...

(PP) ⁴ On April 23, as I was standing on the bank of the great Tigris River, ⁵ I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen clothing, with a belt of pure gold around his waist. ⁶ His body looked like a precious gem. His face flashed like lightning, and his eyes flamed like torches. His arms and feet shone like polished bronze, and his voice roared like a vast multitude of people.

1. This is a POWERFUL sight to behold.
2. What happens to Daniel? → keep reading...

(PP) ⁷ Only I, Daniel, saw this vision. The men with me saw nothing, but they were suddenly terrified and ran away to hide. ⁸ So I was left there all alone to see this amazing vision. My strength left me, my face grew deathly pale, and I felt very weak. ⁹ Then I heard the man speak, and when I heard the sound of his voice, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground.

1. Remember, Daniel is nearly 86yrs old at this time.
 - a. He's been in Babylonian captivity since he was about 15yrs old.
 - b. He's seen a lifetime's worth of dreams, visions.
 - i. He's interpreted other people's dreams and visions.
 - ii. He's survived new king after new king
 - iii. He's survived death sentences: lion's den
 - c. He's no SPRING CHICKEN.
 - i. Now this luminescent being stands in front of him
 - ii. And Daniel just collapses.
 - iii. The others that were w/ him, they BAILED!
2. What's going on here? Who is this?
 - a. Some have suggested
 - i. It's the angel Gabriel mentioned in Daniel.
 - ii. Others suggest it's the angel Michael, also mentioned in Daniel.
 - iii. Others will say it's an angel of equal rank, but unnamed.
 - b. To me, the context & cross-references point to only one person...
 - i. It's the pre-incarnate Christ, which is not unusual.
 - ii. If know the OT, there's a title given to a specific person 50x called
 1. "The angel of the Lord"
 2. Who is often times addressed as "the Lord"
 3. And is even worshiped as the Lord.
 - iii. Revelation 1.11-18
 1. John hears a voice, and the voice says, "*I'm the Alpha the Omega, the Beginning and the End.*"
 2. "*So I turn to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the*

seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to his feet, girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were like white wool, white as snow, his eyes like a flame of fire; his feet like fine bronze or brass, as if refined in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; in his right hand he had seven stars, out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was like the sun shining in its strength."

3. "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his hand on me, and he said, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last,' "*—listen—*" 'I am he who lives, was dead, but behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen.' "
 - a. Who's that? That's Jesus Christ.
 - b. The only difference between the visions is the hair...
 - c. Everything else is identical to it.
- c. So, just a little tid-bit of Bible Study
 - i. John saw was the post resurrected Christ in his glory;
 - ii. Daniel saw was the pre-incarnate Christ in his glory.
3. Here's the Question is: why does he see this?
 - a. Daniel is about to be told the future battles of Israel in chapter 11
 - i. In the near future
 - ii. And in the distant future between
 1. Greece & Persia
 2. Antiochus Epiphanies & Alexander, & so on...
 - b. But God shows him another battle taking place in heavenly places.
 - c. God wants Daniel to know who's really in **CONTROL**
 - i. Though things may seem **chaotic**.
 - ii. God is in **CONTROL**.
 - d. In the spiritual battle you & I face
 - i. You better know who your commanding officer is
 1. Or you're gonna get freaked
 2. You're gonna get weak
 - ii. The Bible says in Hebrews we should be "*looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*"
 - e. Here's the problem, sometimes
 - i. When we go through difficulty or attack from the enemy...
 1. We have a tendency to **gaze** at our problems
 2. And to only **glance** at the Lord.
 - ii. Gaze at the problem—"This is tough. This is horrible. This is bad. I gotta talk to people about it. Bad, bad, bad!"

- iii. Glance at the Lord, shoot up a prayer—"Help me, Lord, help me!"
 1. Gaze, gaze, gaze. "Help me! Help me!"
 2. Glance, glance, glance. // That's a problem.
4. (PP) We need to reverse that—**GLANCE** at our problems, **GAZE** upon the Lord.
 - a. Heard about a report finding from AAA...
 - b. They noticed this interesting occurrence of drivers hitting parked cars.
 - i. "What's going on?"
 - ii. In most of the cases
 1. Neither drugs nor alcohol was not involved
 2. Weather conditions were perfect
 - c. They figured it out... Call it "the moth effect."
 - i. As a moth is inadvertently drawn to the flame, to light
 - ii. So too drivers are attracted to what their eye looks at for long enough
 1. They hit what they look at.
 2. You'll hit whatever you look at.
 - d. And if you are *gazing* at your problems and *glancing* at the Lord
 - i. You're going to be living there.
 - ii. But if you're gazing at the Lord and only glancing at your problems.¹
 - iii. You're setting yourself up for being able to live **SELF CONTROLLED** in the midst of **CHAOS**.
5. Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus
 - a. Turn you eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face
 - b. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
 - c. In the light of His glory and grace.
6. Let's see what happens w/ Daniel.

(PP) ¹⁰ Just then a hand touched me and lifted me, still trembling, to my hands and knees. ¹¹ And the man said to me, "Daniel, you are very precious to God, so listen carefully to what I have to say to you. Stand up, for I have been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up, still trembling.

1. Don't miss this...
 - a. Get impression the man clothed in linen (Jesus) vanished from the scene
 - b. And 1 of the angels, perhaps Gabriel, touched Daniel (face planted) .
 - i. The angel spoke to him & this gave him the strength to stand
 - ii. This is kind of what angels do... serve...
 1. Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13)
 2. In the garden when He prayed (Luke 22:41–43).
 - c. This is the 3rd time Daniel was touched by an angel.

¹ Much of this content was adapted from Pastor Skip Heitzig: http://skipheitzig.com/teachings_view.asp?ServiceID=2489&transcript=1#transcript

2. I love how Daniel is addressed in this section
 - a. This is the 2nd time Daniel was addressed
 - b. "Very precious to God" ...
3. That was true of Daniel
 - a. And for those who are "in Christ,"
 - i. Surrendered to Jesus
 - ii. Identify Jesus as Lord & Savior in attitude/actions // heart & mouth
 - b. We are "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6)
 - i. And the Father loves us as He loves His Son (John 17:23, 26).
 - ii. We need to know that...
 - iii. And we must so live in fellowship with Him that we "keep [ourselves] in the love of God" (Jude 21; John 14:19–24).²
4. This is a simple, but simply PROFOUND truth:
 - a. (**PP**) When you're under **PRESSURE**, remember that you're **PRECIOUS**
 - b. And God is doing something...
 - i. James 1.2-3: "*Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*"
 - c. God loves you... NEVER EVER 4get it! 😊
 - i. Romans 8.32: "*Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else.*"
5. Back to Daniel...

(**PP**) ¹² Then he said, "Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. ¹³ But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future, for this vision concerns a time yet to come."

(**PP**) ¹⁵ While he was speaking to me, I looked down at the ground, unable to say a word. ¹⁶ Then the one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing in front of me, "I am filled with anguish because of the vision I have seen, my lord, and I am very weak. ¹⁷ How can someone like me, your servant, talk to you, my lord? My strength is gone, and I can hardly breathe."

² Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (p. 124). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

(PP) ¹⁸ Then the one who looked like a man touched me again, and I felt my strength returning. ¹⁹ "Don't be afraid," he said, "for you are very precious to God. Peace! Be encouraged! Be strong!" As he spoke these words to me, I suddenly felt stronger and said to him, "Please speak to me, my lord, for you have strengthened me."

(PP) ²⁰ He replied, "Do you know why I have come? Soon I must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia, and after that the spirit prince of the kingdom of Greece will come. ²¹ Meanwhile, I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one helps me against these spirit princes except Michael, your spirit prince.)

1. Daniel is given insight into the spiritual world that's going on around him.
2. His conversation w/ the angel reveals there's an "invisible war" going on in the between the forces of evil & the forces of God.
3. The Gallup Organization noted that most Americans will believe in God
 - a. But fewer will believe in a devil.
 - i. It's convenient. Most believe in heaven
 - ii. Fewer believe in hell.
 - b. The Gallup Report showed that of those who believe there is a devil
 - i. About 50% say that he is a personal being like the Bible teaches
 - ii. The other 50% just think a devil is a word for an impersonal evil force that exists in the world
4. C. S. Lewis who said, "*Humanity falls into two equal but opposite errors concerning the devil. There's those who don't take him serious enough, and there's those who take him way too seriously.*"
 - a. There's denial on one hand.
 - i. Some just flat deny that there's any spiritual reality whatsoever
 - ii. If they can't see it, it doesn't exist.
 - iii. But yah know, you don't have an enemy more powerful than the one you can't see.
 - b. But then the opposite error is obsession.
 - i. There's some people who see the devil everywhere & in everything
 - ii. They become fascinated with him.
 - c. I think the balance is found in the words of Dr. John White who said,
 - d. (PP) "*Have no delusions about the reality of demons or their hostility. They will also oppose you as you obey Christ. If you play it cool and decide not to be fanatic about Christianity, you will have no trouble from them. But if you're serious about Christ being your Lord and God, you can expect opposition.*"³
 - e. Though unseen, the spiritual is very real.

^{3 3} Much of this content was adapted from Pastor Skip Heitzig: http://skipheitzig.com/teachings_view.asp?ServiceID=2489&transcript=1#transcript

5. Here's what I find so interesting...
 - a. For 3 weeks, Daniel had been praying & not seen any answers...
 - i. Why?
 - ii. ¹³ 21 days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way.
 - b. There was an evil agent assigned to see to it that the king of Persia did what Satan wanted him to do.
 - i. Many scoff at the idea of demonic forces and good and evil angels.
 - ii. But the Bible teaches that
 1. When Lucifer rebelled against God & was judged
 2. 1/3 of the angels followed & became the demonic evil agents who obey Satan (Isa. 14:12–15; Rev. 12:7–12; Matt. 25:41).
 - c. According to Ephesians 6:10–18
 - i. Satan has a well-organized army of spirits that obey his command.
 - ii. Here's what you need to know
 1. Through Jesus' sacrificial work on the cross
 2. He defeated Satan & his army
 3. We can claim that victory by faith.
 4. We are to put on the whole armor of God by faith
 - a. Wield the Word of God
 - b. Engage in believing prayer to defeat the enemy.⁴
 - d. Did you notice in v21 the angel tell Daniel that he will tell him what is written in the book of Truth?
 - i. Now, the Book will keep you from deception
 1. The devil is called the one who deceives the world.
 2. That's his principle arrow he shoots out of his bow.
 - ii. This Book, the Bible, keeps you from deception.
 - e. The **Word** keeps us from **Deception**, **Prayer** keeps us from **Destruction**.
 - i. We find Daniel is on his knees in this chapter & throughout his life.
 1. Listen, when you pray, you're pulling out the big guns.
 2. Prayer is bringing a gun to a knife fight.
 - ii. Don't fall into ***fatalistic, weak-sause, diminished*** view of prayer:
 1. "*There's nothing left to do except pray*"
 2. What an insult to God who has allowed us to be engaged in this warfare on the winning side by using the big guns.
 - f. What if Daniel had stopped praying, would've gotten his answer?
6. (PP) The **Word** keeps us from **Deception**, **Prayer** keeps us from **Destruction**.

Well, let's wrap this up...

⁴ Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (pp. 124–127). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

7. The angel made it clear that the battle wasn't yet over.
8. As soon as he finished talking w/ Daniel
 - a. Gabriel & Michael will battle the prince of Persia & the prince of Greece
 - b. 2 satanic agents were opposing the plans of the Lord for these nations.
9. **(PP)** Warren Wiersbe: Be Resolute:
 - a. The ruler of Persia had shown great kindness and mercy to the Jews in allowing them to return home, and Satan was against this decision. God also had plans for Greece (11:2–4) and Satan wanted to interfere there.
 - b. One reason why God commands His people to pray for those in authority is so that God's will, not Satan's plans, might be fulfilled in their lives (1 Tim. 2:1–3). The destiny of more than one nation has been changed because God's people have fervently prayed.⁵

Conclusion: We've seen that Daniel's passion & persistence in prayer lead to real results & we're that we're engaged in war that is unseen but very real!

Application: How does this apply to us as 21st cent Amer. Christians?

1. **(PP)** When life gets too hard to **stand, kneel**.
2. **(PP)** We need to **GLANCE** at our problems, **GAZE** upon the Lord.
3. **(PP)** When you're under **PRESSURE**, remember that you're **PRECIOUS**
4. **(PP)** The **Word** keeps us from **Deception**, **Prayer** keeps us from **Destruction**.
5. **(PP)** live **SELF CONTROLLED** because we know & trust that
6. **(PP)** **GOD** is **IN CONTROL**

Exhortation & Response: the GOSPEL! 😊

⁵ Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (pp. 126–127). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.