

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE!

Daniel 10:1-19 => Eph. 6:11-13

Army staff planning war games without live ammunition informed men: "In place of rifle, go 'Bang, bang.' For bayonet, 'Stab, stab.' For hand grenade, 'Lob, lob.'"

One soldier saw an enemy. He went, "Bang, bang," but nothing happened. He ran forward and went, "Stab, stab," again nothing happened. Finally, he ran back and went, "Lob, lob," still nothing happened.

He says to enemy, "You're not playing by the rules! I went 'Bang, bang,' 'Stab, stab,' & 'Lob, lob,' & you didn't fall dead. Other soldier replies, **"Rumble, rumble. I'm a tank!"**

Some people see spiritual conflict like that—it's all a game.

They don't think there is such a thing,

or it doesn't have practical significance in *our* life!

"Supernatural conflict happens on mission fields—far from scientific U.S."

[Have you ever wondered why . . .]

God seems to delay so long in answering call for help?

Job's example: As we struggle, we find encouragement in **Job 1**.

1. Job's example: Unaware.

Job's a participant in spiritual battle.

Spiritual conflict can affect our life,
without us even knowing it!

2. Daniel's example:

In Dan 10, he's enmeshed in struggle.

Afflicted by what God revealed to him, and by political events,

opposing spiritual forces postpone the solution to his problem.

3. *How about us?*

Do we sometimes feel alone & frightened?
*Does God ever seem far away,
 not caring what we're going through?
 Could it be that we're participating in spiritual battle, like Job or Dan.?*

Spiritual conflict (Dan 10) leads to final prophetic revelation:

6 *historical* examples show God's control,
 even in powerful pagan governments.

Prophetic revelation begins with future events affecting Gentile Nations, & their consequences for Israel (7-8) which frightens Daniel.

GOD'S PROGRAM FOR ISRAEL IN TIMES OF GENTILES 9-12

Dan. 9 = Overview

= Vision of the 70 Weeks

God reveals program for restoration of Israel

Dan. 10-12 = Specific Details = God's program for Israel, especially in immediate future—focuses on period between OT & NT.

So exact it traces history of inter-testamental period.

God knows what's going to happen, & reveals it, to encourage & motivate His people to be faithful, even in these difficult times.

Advance revelation of what's going to happen should encourage us to see *God's in charge!* [ever wonder?]

God planned it all ahead of time!

[1st Dan. tells how God prepares HIM for what he's about to hear.]

PREPARATION OF PROPHET 10:1-19

The prophecy would scare anyone—if they didn't know spiritual nature of the conflict, & Who's in control of it!

What Daniel sees causes great concern—He's upset!

- Revelation not recorded.
Can't be vision of ch. 9;
it comes on different occasion.
- Causes same reaction as 70 Weeks:
Comfort in knowing how it all ends
Frightening events in immediate future

What's Daniel's response?

His fast 1-3 *"In 3rd yr of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, & it was a great conflict. He understood the word & had understanding of the vision. ²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for 3 wks. ³I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full 3 wks."*

When Daniel learns great war is coming—with severe implications for God's people—he fasts & prays.

He suffers **3 weeks**—with fasting—considering what's going to happen.

Lesson learned from Dan.'s response:

Nothing he can DO about it.

He has to trust God!

Only recourse: PRAY—struggling & fighting, clawing his way through will do NO GOOD! All he can do is talk to God.

Not self-centered appeal—request for God's blessing for His people. Dan. won't be there when it happens!

Dan. was committed to pray, when he could do *nothing* except bring his struggle to God & leave it there.

Daniel's desperate.

He's determined not to eat or dress up [= fasting], until God responds to his cry for his people. *Just how desperate are we?*

How did God respond to Daniel's attitude & actions?

Vision of Messenger 4-11 *On 24th day of 1st mo., as I was standing on bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) ⁵I lifted up my eyes & looked. Behold, a man clothed in linen, with belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms & legs like gleam of burnished bronze, & sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. ⁷I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, & they fled to hide themselves. ⁸So I was left alone & saw this great vision, & no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, & I retained no strength. ⁹Then I heard the sound of his words, & as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground. ¹⁰Behold, a hand touched me & set me trembling on my hands & knees. ¹¹He*

said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words I speak to you, & stand upright, for I’ve been sent to you.” When he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

God responds to Daniel’s prayer

by sending a messenger to reveal His plan for His people.

Power & glory of messenger are impressive.

Those with Daniel don’t see him, but are frightened; they realize something super-natural is going on.

Only Daniel stays around to see what’s going on!

He hasn’t been waiting so long to hear from God, only to escape now!

While not revelation of God, he does reflect God’s power & glory.

Daniel struggles for words adequate to describe him.

Like those around him, Daniel is speechless & powerless.

You can’t experience such a revelation without mark on your life!

Why did God wait so long to respond to Dan.’s prayer?

Delay of messenger 12-14 “Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from 1st day you set your heart to understand & humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard. I’ve come because of your words. ¹³The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, ¹⁴& came to make you understand what’s to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

Question on Daniel's mind:

why God took so long to answer.

Messenger gives surprising answer.

Gives insight into supernatural forces unleashed as a result of prayer.

We may not realize how mighty forces unleashed by our prayer are!

Messenger left the 1st day to answer Daniel's prayer

Daniel responded properly to what he saw.

God responds immediately to his request.

Because Daniel *"Set his mind to gain understanding and to humble himself before His God,"* the Lord sent a messenger. How many times have WE doubted, wept, & remained distressed for 3 wks. or more, because we don't realize God has already answered cry?

Could it be that God's messenger was on the way & we didn't know it?

However, other interests are involved

God's messenger was delayed because he was involved in an unseen spiritual conflict!

Messenger struggles with *Satan's forces* to fulfill mission.

God assigns heavenly authorities over each nation, like Michael in 10:21; Satan has done same with his forces.

"Prince of Persia"—authority assigned by Satan to that kingdom.

Satan & his armies, are involved in the conflict.

Satan's purpose is to prevent the messenger's arrival.

Delayed 3 *wks* – *exact time Dan questions why God isn't responding! That's a LONG time, when you're suffering!*

God sends Michael, angelic “prince,” authority in celestial realm, to help messenger accomplish his mission.

Messenger sent to reveal what will occur in last days

Messenger encourages God's people who can't understand what's happening & how struggle fits in God's program.

It's important for messenger to explain what's going on; otherwise, God's people will get discouraged.

What does conflict teach us about world history?

There's more to history than what meets the eye!

Fascinating to view Middle Eastern history through lens of God's dealing with Israel.

Nations rise & fall in inverse proportion to Israel's walk with God!

Though we're not identified with *national* entity that God calls “His people,” relationship *does* exist between spiritual condition of God's people, & fate of nation in which they live!

God blesses nations, in response to godly people who live in those nations!

*** World events can't be interpreted by historical-political measures alone!**

There's more here than meets the eye!

History is intertwined with events in heavenly places.

Abraham Kuyper: “If the curtain were pulled back, & spiritual world behind it came to view, it would expose 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’s where the real conflict is waged.***”

Center of world conflict isn’t super-powers, U.S., Russia, China, or ?!

World crises are reflections of perpetual conflict between heaven & the armies of hell, which seek to turn history against God & His people.

*** We participate in *spiritual* conflict that surpasses political power!**

What’s result of this encounter for Daniel?

Strengthening of Daniel 15-19 *“When he’d spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground & was mute. ¹⁶Behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth & spoke. I said to him who stood before me, “O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. ¹⁷How can my lord’s servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.” ¹⁸Again one having the appearance of a man touched me & strengthened me. ¹⁹He said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong & of good courage.” As he spoke to me, I was strengthened & said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”*

Messenger strengthens God’s servant in midst of conflict!

His Spirit's strengthened & revived.

Someone touches his lips so he can speak.

Later he touches him again; he's strengthened again.

Daniel learns God's strength is made perfect in weakness.

When we're weak, God is able to strengthen us.

Dan. can't accomplish *anything* in spiritual battle through *his* strength.

Even ability to stand or speak is given by God.

He encourages him with a message of exhortation:

He urges him to be strong — encouragement to go on.

Facing difficult situation, don't give up,
be frightened or discouraged.

Remain faithful to God, Who gives victory in the end.

Daniel's discouraged & weak.

It seems prayers aren't getting beyond ceiling.

He's been dedicated to crying out to God for 3 wks.

Nothing's happened.

He may be about to give up.

Then God's messenger arrives.

Lack of response isn't on God's end.

They're in spiritual battle; enemy's out to defeat him.

Daniel needs reassurance!

He's loved by God.

He can count on God's peace.

He can count on God's strength.

So can we!

Notice **19b**: Once God strengthens him, Daniel no longer wishes to speak.

He has nothing to say! (Cp. Job)

Daniel realizes it's time to listen to God's messenger--NOT to speak!

Concluding words: messenger moves on to continue conflict! **20-21** *"He said, "Do*

you know why I've come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what's inscribed in the book of truth: none contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince."

Luther's struggle: At Wartburg, there's a dark spot on the wall, caused by an ink bottle he supposedly threw at the devil. Some say it was just rats inside the wall. Luther recognized that Satan sets himself in opposition to those who want to serve God & never hesitates to fight him.

We suffer because we don't understand what's happening!

We find ourselves in distressing situations that drive us to pray.

God responds, though sometimes it seems to take forever!

His delay may be due to spiritual conflict we aren't aware of!

When we find ourselves in spiritual conflict, we can trust Him.

**When we're in spiritual conflict,
God's the source of our strength!**

It seems as though "All hell is breaking loose!" We don't understand it.

Fact is: forces of hell HAVE BROKEN LOOSE, and seek to wipe us out.

Confusion is part of the plot.

Not until God sends an answer do we understand and receive His strength to face trauma of the conflict.

God not only *knows* what's going to happen in our life this week; He's in control of it!

We can trust Him with future—even in spiritual conflict.

He has a plan for us, and it's good!

If God is for us, WHO can stand against us?!!!

God's in control—in the end HE WINS!