

Daniel 10 – The Vision of Daniel With the “Man Dressed in Linen”

Hebrew¹ – Modified Translation of NAS95

Dan. 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The message was true and one of great conflict, and he gained an understanding of the message and an understanding of the vision.²

Cyrus the Great³ –

Third year of Cyrus' rule over Babylon
With actually Darius the Mede in Babylon

559-529 B.C.
536 B.C.

Dan. 10:2 In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks.⁴

Dan. 10:3 I did not eat any tasty food. Nor did meat or wine enter my mouth. I also did not use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

Dan. 10:4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,⁵

Dan. 10:5 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

Dan. 10:6 His body also was like beryl. His face had the appearance of lightning. His eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and feet were like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words were like the sound of a tumult.⁷

Dan. 10:7 Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision. Instead, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.⁸

¹ **Daniel 1:1-2:4** is written in **Hebrew**, along with **8:1-12:13**. The rest of Daniel, **2:5-7:28** is written in **Aramaic**.

² Verse 1 is an introductory and summary statement of the message/vision and its interpretation in chapters 10:2-12:13. Daniel is most likely referring to the third year of Cyrus' ruling over Babylon as the king of Persia. Consequently, this conversation with the “man dressed in linen” takes place in 536 B.C., after Cyrus had conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.

³ **Babylonian Persian (Mede) Greek Syrian Greek Egyptian Greek Roman Middle East Messianic**

⁴ With the words “In those days... (בָּיָמֵינוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ) (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις), Daniel begins telling the story of eventually his receiving the vision/dream and then coming to an understanding of it from the “certain man dressed in linen.”

We find out here that Daniel has “been mourning for three entire weeks,” probably over the current situation of his fellow Jews and him, that they are exiles in Babylon and long to go back to Israel and Jerusalem.

⁵ The 24th of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar, means that this is just ten days after Passover and two days after the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The city of Babylon is on the Euphrates River, so that Daniel has traveled north with several men (cf. v 7) to the Tigris River on the other side of the Mesopotamian Valley. He says that he sees “certain man dressed in linen,” and he is clothed with a “belt of pure gold from Uphaz,” whose location is unknown.

⁶ Is this man an *angelos* (messenger) of Yahweh, i.e., a theophany? Cf. Exodus 3:2, מַלְאָכִי מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם (ἄγγελος κυρίου). Probably not, because this “man” says in v. 13 that he was inhibited from acting by “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.” Therefore, he is more likely a conventional angel who perpetually inhabits the heavenly realm so to speak, and he is appearing in this vision/dream which God is giving to Daniel.

This is the like the vision of Jesus who appeared to John in Revelation 1:12-15, “Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.”

⁷ Beryl is a transparent, pale green, blue, or yellow mineral consisting of beryllium and aluminum.

⁸ The Expositor's Bible Commentary says of this verse, “One who sees a heavenly being must be spiritually alert. And so Daniel was left to face this awesome messenger of God.” But what in the text requires that the responsibility for

Dan. 10:14 “I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the last of the days, because the vision pertains to days yet to come.”¹³

Dan. 10:15 When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

Dan. 10:16 But, behold, the 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.”¹⁴

Dan. 10:17 “For how can a servant, my Lord, this person, speak with my Lord, this person? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me. Nor has any breath been left in me.”¹⁵

have the ability to act independently of God.

Instead, I think that the Bible presents a completely different perspective, whereby God is the absolute, sovereign origin at every moment of every aspect and detail of the creation, including the typical misunderstandings of Christians, as He writes the story that He has planned and purposed from before He brought the creation into existence and started writing the story.

In the light of this, how is it best to understand what the man is saying in v. 13? The key is to continue interpreting what is happening to Daniel as a vision that God is causing him to see. I think that this angelic being is saying simply that “the prince of the kingdom of Persia,” who is ultimately God’s archenemy, Satan, was influencing the course of events surrounding Daniel while “one of the chief princes” of God, the angel Michael (מִיכָאֵל = “Who is like God?”), whose responsibility is to align himself with the Jews (see verses below), and the “man dressed in line” were opposing him. The implication also is that in spite of how “good” Persia was to the Jews, e.g., Cyrus the Great’s decree that they return and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, nevertheless it was primarily characterized by Satanic forces, just as all empires, kingdoms, countries, and nations are characterized—until Jesus returns and establishes the first stage of the Kingdom of God on earth with the restored Kingdom of Israel centered in Jerusalem.

Daniel 12:1 “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.”

Jude 9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war...

¹³ The “man dressed in linen” says that he is relating to Daniel what will happen to the Jewish people “in the last of the days.” The Hebrew phrase for these words is בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים, while the Septuagint uses ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν, both of which mean as I have translated it, “in the last of the days.” Daniel’s ancestor, Jacob, uses the same phrase in Genesis 49:1, “Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, ‘Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the last of the days.’” (בְּאַחֲרֵי יְמֵי הַיָּמִים = in the last of the days) (ἐπ’ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν). The Jews have always been told that there will be an end to the present age and that they will play an important role in this end. In other words, God’s goal for the present age is for it to come to an end, in order to provide a transition to the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20 and then to the eternal earth and Kingdom of God of Revelation 21. In Jacob’s statements to his sons, clearly Judah will play the most important role within Israel to the extent that he will rule over the rest of them. We know that the final, individual ruler will be the Davidic King of the eternal Kingdom of God, Jesus of Nazareth, as the final and complete Messiah/Anointed One from the tribe of Judah, who will usher in the age so that the people of Israel will become the most powerful nation in all human history.

Thus, the man is telling Daniel that the message that he received from God three weeks ago is information mainly about the future of the Jewish people, leading right up to the end of the present realm (and Jesus’ return). This is why it makes sense that Daniel 11:36ff. in the next chapter transitions from Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the 2nd century B.C. to the Man of Lawlessness, whom the apostle Paul mentions in 2 Thessalonians 2 and who is still future to us and will live just before Jesus’ return.

¹⁴ I think that this is the same “man dressed in linen” in the vision who now touches Daniel’s lips, resulting in his speaking to him. Daniel explicitly indicates that fear, anguish, and sadness have so overwhelmed him that he has no strength to speak.

¹⁵ The Hebrew syntax is difficult, but I think that the Septuagint helps, “How is the child able to speak with his Lord?” It seems that Daniel is viewing this “man” as certainly an important being, even perhaps an *angelos* of Yahweh, a theophany. Daniel calls him “my Lord.” And He is wondering how such a weak and sinful person as himself can speak with such an important person as this apparition in front of him. Of course, even God’s appearing and speaking with

Dan. 10:18 Then, the one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me.¹⁶

Dan. 10:19 He said, “O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Shalom to you. Take courage and be courageous!” As soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, “May my Lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”¹⁷

Dan. 10:20 Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia. I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.”¹⁸

Dan. 10:21 “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.”¹⁹

sinful human beings has occurred before in OT history, and Daniel must be aware of this, the same way that he was aware of what Jeremiah had written about the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile (cf. Daniel 9:2).

Nevertheless, Daniel is experiencing first-hand what it is for an angelic being to appear to and speak to a sinful human being who deserves God’s wrath and condemnation, and he cannot help himself but say, “How is this even possible?” Because of both the impression that Daniel has gotten so far from the original message mentioned in v. 1 and the angel’s willingness to speak to him here, Daniel admits that this experience has all but sapped him of his strength.

¹⁶ This supernatural person once again touches Daniel to assure and strengthen him in his weakened condition.

¹⁷ The “man dressed in linen” has touched, spoken, and encouraged Daniel. Daniel then encourages him to speak and provide him with the message that is intended for him.

¹⁸ This “man” indicates that he opposes the forces of evil that originate with Satan and that are influencing the Persian Empire—as they do all empires, kingdoms, countries, and nations. His “fight” is with the supernatural forces and not with human beings. And he says that “the prince of Greece is about to come,” who is most likely the same satanic being, even Satan himself, who will influence Alexander the Great and his spread of the Greek Empire into the Middle East and India.

And here we have a specific reference to both Persia (𐤎𐤓𐤏𐤍, τῶν Περσῶν) and Greece (𐤀𐤍𐤌𐤍, Ἑλληνῶν), the latter being a kingdom that has not yet arisen to dominate the Middle East when Alexander the Great bursts onto the scene in 334 B.C.

¹⁹ The statement “what is inscribed in the writing of truth” (𐤍𐤏𐤍𐤓𐤏𐤍 𐤁𐤏𐤍 𐤁𐤏𐤍 𐤁𐤏𐤍, =“the inscribed thing in the writing of truth”) (τὰ πρῶτα ἐν ἀπογραφῇ ἀληθείας, =“the former things in the list of the truth”) seems to be a reference not only to the vision, but also to the fact that this vision is from God, the transcendent Creator of the story of reality. There is no mention of anything actually being written somewhere in front of Daniel that constitutes part of the vision. Consequently, I think that the “man dressed in linen” is saying that God has “written” a story in His mind, and it is unfolding as He desires. And now this man is going to inform Daniel of what God has written with respect to the kingdoms that will eventually result in the Man of Lawlessness of 11:36ff.

He also says that it is Michael, obviously a created angel of God, who as “your prince,” i.e., the supernatural angel on the side of the Jews (“your” is plural in the Hebrew text), helps him to oppose the forces of evil at work in the Persian Empire—and in all empires, kingdoms, nations, countries, and human political entities.