

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## DANIEL 9-10

A patient left his doctor's office with a prescription. He stuck it in his pocket, but forgot to get it filled...

However, every day he showed it to a train conductor who accepted it as his railroad pass... Once it got him into a concert... Another time into a ballgame...

Once he went to the symphony, showed the piece of paper at the door, and was escorted to box seats...

His daughter found the paper, played it on the piano, and her rendition was so good it won her a scholarship to the conservatory of music... *What a prescription!*

Yet some folks say Bible prophecy is just as vague, uncertain, and as open to interpretation as the doctor's prescription. Tonight, Daniel shows us that's not true!

**God is not ambiguous!** He doesn't communicate in nebulous generalities. When God speaks He never uses terms like "roughly speaking," or "approximately."

God is always exact in His calculations. *Precise are his prophecies.* God's predictions strike their targets with pinpoint accuracy. Though they fly across the centuries, they always hit bulls-eye. *As in Daniel 9...*

Verse 1, "In the first year of Darius (or 538 BC) the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans - in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the

prophet, that He would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”

Daniel is now in his late 80s. He's seen kingdoms rise and fall. He was there when Babel conquered the world. He was also there the night Babel fell without a fight. And Daniel had seen his people, the Jews, living peacefully in Jerusalem, only to be invaded, drug off as slaves, and made to settle in a distant, pagan land.

One day as Daniel read the Scriptures, a detail, *he may've never seen before*, leaped off the page.

He was reading Jeremiah 29. The prophet was in Jerusalem writing to the captives in Babylon, “Thus says the LORD: after 70 years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” At the time, the Jews had been in Babylon for 67 years. Daniel realizes their sentence is about to expire. The Jews are about to go home.

*But what would the future hold?* Jerusalem had been reduced to rubble. The *temple* had been *toppled*.

The city of Jerusalem and the nation Judah, would have to be rebuilt. *Were they up to the challenge?*

Verse 3, “Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” Apparently, Daniel also read the next three verses in Jeremiah, in which God says, “Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And

you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you... and I will bring back your captivity.”

Daniel knew even though the 70 years were almost up, there was still some unfinished business. The Jews weren't ready to return. They owed God an apology.

Recently, I ran across a list of English words that are difficult to pronounce. Here're a few... “rural, isthmus, anesthetize, penguin, mischievous (miss-chievous), Worcestershire (wuss-ter-sheer) (as in steak sauce).”

But the three hardest words to say, “*I was wrong.*”

Daniel knew, unless the Jews confessed their sin, their captivity would've been wasted. You never learn from a mistake you deny. It's been said, “A man who never admits his mistake can never learn from it.”

In verse 4 Daniel intercedes for the Jews...

“And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, “O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.

Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.”

Notice Daniel's humility and his identification with his people. Daniel is one of Bible's godliest men. I'm sure he

sinned, but the Scripture never mentions it. Yet, he doesn't pray *"they have sinned,"* but *"we have sinned."*

And he doesn't try to gloss over their sin. He doesn't soften sin by renaming it. It's not a "slip" or a "mistake."

Notice the words Daniel uses... *"sin"* means "to miss the mark" - *"iniquity"* is "to distort or warp" - *"wickedly"* speaks of "deliberate defiance" - *"rebel"* means "to hate authority" - *"departing from your precepts"* could be translated "to ignore and turn aside." Sin isn't a mere *slip-up*. It's high-handed rebellion. Our nature has become warped. We've bucked God's authority. We've deliberately ignored Him in order to do as we please.

God wants us to be free from our sin, but until we're brutally honest in defining it, we're not ready for His deliverance. CS Lewis once said, "The first prayer above all other prayers is, 'Lord, let it be the real I who prays and let it be the real You that I pray to.'"

Daniel sees God as He is: *"great and awesome, who keeps His covenant and mercy..."* And he sees himself as he really is: *"warped and wicked and rebellious..."*

He continues in verse 7, *"O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day - to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the Lord our God belong mercy and*

forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.” What a contrast. To us belongs shame, but to God belongs mercy and forgiveness.

A fireman was once instructing a kindergarten class what to do in case of a fire. He said, "The first thing you do is go to the door and feel if its hot. Second, you drop to your knees. Does anyone know why you drop to your knees?" One little boy raised his hand, "*Sure, to ask God to get you out of the mess your in.*"

Daniel felt the door was hot. God was ready to move, so he dropped to his knees and asked for mercy.

“We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.” The Law of Moses contained blessings if they obeyed, and curses if they didn't. They were allowed to write their own history by their adherence.

But the Jews chose curses rather than blessings.

Deuteronomy 28:47 had predicted, “Because you did not serve the LORD Your God... you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you.”

“As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.

And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day - we have sinned, we have done wickedly! “O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.” Verse 18 sounds like it was taken from the NT. Bless us Lord, not because of our *“righteous deeds”* but *“Your great mercy.”* Daniel knows grace!

He knows not to barter *good works* for *God’s pardon*. Forgiveness is about *God’s mercy*, not *our merit*.

Verse 19, “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city

and Your people are called by Your name.” Notice, three exclamation marks in one verse.

Daniel is not just praying, he’s praying with passion... *and so should we.* There’s a difference between *saying prayers*, and *praying prayers*. I’ve heard it said, “The prayer God answers comes not from the roof of your mouth, but from the root of your heart.”

Verse 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, 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.” Daniel remembers the time of the day the angel Gabriel, came to him - *at the evening sacrifice*.

And this is interesting. Daniel had been away from Jerusalem for 67 years. The Temple had been lying in ruins for a generation. There had not been an evening sacrifice for seven decades. Yet Daniel still reckons time based on the Temple worship. His home may've been in Babylon, but his heart never left Jerusalem.

Likewise our home may be in this world, but our hearts should be in the heavenlies with our Lord Jesus!

And Gabriel’s timing was no accident. The evening sacrifice, as with all the sacrifices, spoke of Jesus.

Moses ordered in Numbers 28 that a unblemished lamb (one year-old), was to be offered to God each evening. The evening sacrifice occurred at 3:00 pm.

And recall it was at 3:00 pm Jesus died on the cross. He was our unblemished lamb who knew no sin.

Gabriel is about to unveil specific details about the Messiah. That's why it's no accident that even the time of his arrival points to Jesus... Verse 22, **“And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.**

**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...”** The vision Gabriel is about to reveal is known as **“The Seventy Weeks of Daniel.”**

And an accurate grasp is crucial to understanding end time prophecy. This is one of the most intriguing, phenomenal, faith-building prophecies in all the Bible.

Understand, Daniel's concern is the future of his people and the holy city - the Jews and Jerusalem.

After seventy years in exile the Jews are about to be released. Daniel won't live to see what happens, so God shows him what is determined for Israel.

Verse 24 begins, **“Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city...”** In God's eyes humanity is broken down into three people groups: **the Jews, the Church, and the Gentiles (or lost world).**



This prophecy relates to just one of those groups. It doesn't relate to the Church or Gentiles. These seventy weeks are determined for the Jews and Jerusalem.

Now Gabriel says that a timeframe is "*determined*" or "*divided out*" - it's marked off on God's calendar. God has blocked off in His DayTimer a period of seventy weeks to accomplish certain purposes for Israel.

And understand the language here. The word "*week*" in our text is actually the Hebrew word for "*seven*." So literally God is reserving a period of "*seventy sevens*."

But here's the question, "*seven what?*" *Seven hours? Seven days? Seven years?*" There are three reasons I believe this refers to *seventy periods of seven years*.

**First**, to speak of "*a week of years*" in Daniel's day was a common phrase. We call ten years *a decade*. The Hebrews spoke of years in *groups of sevens*.

**Second**, Daniel 12:11 mentions a period of 1290 days from the defilement of the Temple to its purification. That period is roughly equal to the last half of Daniel's last week. Thus, if half a week is right at 3.5 years then a full week would be seven years.

Then **third**, Moses commanded that every seventh year the land should rest. The fields should go uncultivated - this would replenish the nutrients - keep the farmland fertile. But because of greed the Jews ignored this command. 2 Chronicles 36:21 tells us that for 490 years (*or seventy sevens*) they failed to let the land rest. They violated seventy Sabbath years. That's why they spent seventy years in

captivity. God saw to it that the land would get its rest one way or the other.

Here's the point: it took the Jews seventy sevens or 490 years to get into this trouble, and God has allotted the same amount of time to get the Jews out of trouble.

And here's are the six promises God will accomplish in the coming 490 years... "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

**First**, God will end "*the transgression.*" This is the cosmic revolt led by the devil. Satan will be sacked.

The next two promises address the problem of sin. **Second**, God stops the sinner. And **third**, He cancels out sin. He issues a pardon, and establishes a means by which sinners can find peace with a holy God.

**Fourth**, God completes our salvation. He "*brings in an everlasting righteousness.*" Everything that sin has defiled will be cleansed and made right again with God.

**Fifth**, he confirms the Scriptures. All God's promises will be fulfilled... And **sixth**, God cleanses the Temple. He anoints or rededicates the Holy Place in Jerusalem.

And how many of these promises have been kept?

**Only one.** *The third...* On the cross Jesus made "*reconciliation for iniquity.*" Some of the others have seen partial fulfillments, but not a total fulfillment.

Yet understand the promise - God vows to fulfill all six of these promises over a period of 490 years.

Verse 25 gets specific. God puts parameters on this timeframe. *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.”*

Here’s the starting point for the seventy weeks - *“the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem...”* Nehemiah 2:1 tells us the Persian King Artaxerxes issued a Jew named Nehemiah orders to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls on March 14, 445 BC.

God breaks down these seventy sevens into three groups of weeks... There’s *“seven,”* then *“sixty-two,”* then a final week. The first seven, or 49 years, takes us from 445 BC to 397 BC, which was the time of Malachi and the culmination of the OT canon of Scripture.

The second section includes the first - 7 weeks plus 62 weeks equals 69 weeks. So from *“the command to restore and build Jerusalem until (Mashiyach Negeed or) Messiah the Prince, there shall be (483 years)...”*

Now when we compute Daniel’s dates realize where the prophet is living. He’s in Babylon! And the ancient Babylonians used a 360 day per year calendar. That means 69 weeks, or 483 years equals 173,880 days.

Realize, what our text is saying, add 173,880 days to March 14, 445 BC - and you’ll discover the exact day Messiah comes. *He’s identifying the promised Savior!*

Now to extrapolate this onto our Julian calendar you have to account for leap years, and other nuances. Robert Anderson in his classic book, [“The Coming Prince”](#) does an excellent job with tedious calculations.

And after all the technicalities get applied, Anderson concludes that 173,880 days from March 14, 445 BC brings you to April 6, 32 AD. This was the Sunday before the Passover when Jesus rode a donkey down the Mount of Olives and formally presented Himself to the nation as Messiah. The crowd sang a Messianic psalm (118), and shouted, [“Hosanna”](#) or [“save us now.”](#)

Realize, 570 years in advance Daniel is shown the exact day God’s Messiah will come to save His people.

It’s ironic, His Triumphant Entry was the only public rally Jesus ever orchestrated or allowed. He knew Daniel’s prophecy and cooperated with its fulfillment.

This is why in Luke 19 Jesus wept when He saw that the Jewish leaders had rejected Him. He cried, [“If you had known... especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!... You did not know the time of your visitation.”](#) Daniel had booked an appointment for Israel to meet it’s Messiah. Sadly, it was a meeting that the Jews missed. And the Lord held them responsible for not recognizing, [“the time of their visitation.”](#)

Even to this day the Jews refuse to even consider this Daniel 9 prophecy. A famed 13th century rabbi, Maimonides, wrote a letter entitled [“Igeret Teiman.”](#) He said, [“Daniel has elucidated to us the profundities of the knowledge of the End Times. However, since they are secret, the Wise... barred the](#)

calculation of the days of the Messiah's coming so that the untutored populace will not be led astray when they see that the End Times have already come but there is no sign of the Messiah. For this reason the Wise... have decreed: *'cursed be he who calculates the End Times..'*"

Because the Jews might interpret Daniel's prophecy and see that it points to Jesus, they were forbidden by their rabbis from even engaging in its calculations!

And the prophecy isn't over, verse 26, **"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself..."** Between the end of the 7 plus 62, or 69th week, and the beginning of the 70th week there's a gap of an unspecified time in which two events occur...

**First**, Messiah will be **"cut off."** The Hebrew term **"karath"** implies a violent death or execution. And as we know, four days after His entry, Jesus was crucified.

As Daniel puts it, Messiah was **"cut off, but not for Himself."** It's true, Jesus was innocent of any wrong-doing. He died in our place, as a sacrifice for our sin.

But Daniel mentions another event that will happen between the 69th and 70th week - Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed... **"and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood (an idiom for an invasion), and till the end of the war desolations are determined (the war's results will be devastating)."**

This destruction occurred in 70 AD when the Roman General Titus and four Roman legions leveled the city.

The Romans killed over a million Jews, burned the Temple, and scattered the Jews to nations all around the world. So for the last two millenniums the Jews have been living as strangers in strange lands.

Now we know from this prophecy that the gap of time between the 69th and 70th week consists of at least 38 years. Jesus was cut off in 32 AD. Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in 70 AD - 38 years later.

But this gap of time is actually much longer.

In the NT, Paul writes to the Romans that God is now working among the Gentiles. God has temporarily set aside the Jews, in order to build His church. In Romans 11:25 he explains, “hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.”

The gap of time between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel is being used by God to extend salvation to the Gentiles and build His Church. In the NT Paul calls this a mystery. It was a development hidden from the Hebrew prophets. They were only focused on the 70 weeks determined on the Jews and Jerusalem, they didn't see the gap between the 69th and 70th week. And that gap of time is now 1,984 years and counting.

But there is a 70th week, or final week of Daniel. There has to be to fulfill God's six promises.

And remember these six promises are determined on Israel. This is one reason I believe the Church will be raptured before the start of the seventieth week.

And he gives us parameters for this last week.

“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.” This final week begins when a ruler signs a treaty with Israel. And according to the previous verse this ruler is the prince of the people who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, or the ruler of Rome.

In Isaiah 28:15 we’re told one day Israel will make a “covenant with death” - an “agreement with hell.” And this is when it happens, at the outset of the 70th week.

Remember what we talked about in Daniel 2 and 7. The last empire before the return of the Messiah is a mixture of iron and clay - or a revival of ancient Rome.

Today, the European Union represents just such an political entity. And the ruler of this last days Rome is the little horn of Daniel 7, *the Antichrist*. Apparently, Daniel’s 70th week begins when he signs a treaty with the Jews. Perhaps this is the long awaited peace accord between Israel and the Palestinians. This treaty might be what allows the Jews to rebuild their Temple.

Yet once it’s signed you can count 3.5 years, and at the middle of the final 7 years, this ruler is going to break his covenant and stop the Temple sacrifices.

In 8:13 we saw that this is what Antiochus did during the days of the Maccabees. Daniel referred to it as the “transgression (or abomination) of desolation.” Here the same terminology is used for what’s done by the Antichrist, “on wings of abominations shall be one who makes desolate.” In

Matthew 24:15 Jesus refers to this same last days event as “the abomination of desolation.” This will be a big deal in the eyes of God!

This blasphemous act on the part of this last days Roman ruler will incite God’s judgment. As a result of the Antichrist’s insolence God will pour out His wrath on a deserving world and bring about great desolation.

The book of Revelation tell us that God’s judgments conclude with the return of Jesus, the destruction of the Antichrist, and the establishment of God’s kingdom.

Gabriel's description of the last week makes five assumptions that leads us to the conclusion that this final period of judgment may be just around the corner.

**First**, this obviously assumes Israel has been regathered to their ancient land, and is a nation once more. After 2000 years this occurred at 12:01 AM, May 15, 1948. Against all odds the state of Israel was born.

**Second**, the Temple Mount will be in Jewish hands and the Temple will be rebuilt. *The Antichrist can stop sacrifices that haven’t started.* And it was during the Six Day War of 1967 that the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, was seized by the Israelis.

Since June, 1967 there has been growing interest by committed and well organized Jews to rebuild their Temple. Plans are underway even as we speak.

**Third**, the final week of Daniel requires a revival of Rome. And that's exactly what's happened with the fall of



communism and the emergence of the EU. Europe now leads the way toward global unification.

**Fourth**, out of this revived Roman Empire a leader will emerge. Today, problems have become insolvable. The world is hungry for a leader with answers.

**Fifth**, that leader negotiates a covenant with Israel. And for forty years a peace treaty between Jews and Arabs has been in the works. Israel yearns for peace

Here're five reasons I believe we're living in the last days - the period just prior to the return of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 10, "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia (or 536 BC) a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision."

Daniel sees the future in Chapter 9, God will fulfill His promises to Israel - but he realizes it'll take some time - at least 490 years, plus an undisclosed gap.

Like us, He gets impatient with God's promises.

"In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."

Based on the dating in the next verse Daniel fasted through Passover. *He fasted, while Jews feasted.* Obviously, he was deeply troubled.

Verse 4, "Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in

linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.” This man looks similar to the person Ezekiel saw on God’s throne. He’s also similar to the description John gives of the risen Christ in Revelation.

But appearances can be deceiving... It’s possible this is the pre-incarnate Jesus. But there are some problems with that, that we’ll see later in Chapter 10...

“And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them...” These men didn’t see what Daniel saw, *but they sensed the supernatural*. They knew something was up. “So they fled to hide themselves.”

“Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength.”

Put ole Daniel in the lion’s den and he’s not fidgety at all, but confront him with God’s glory and he faints.

Hey, Daniel had a good handle on *what to fear and what not to fear*. The average man would quake at the lions, and remain oblivious to God, but not Daniel.

He recounts, “Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.”

“Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands.

And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.”

Notice, the messenger calls Daniel *“greatly beloved.”*

In the Bible there’s an intriguing connection between *God’s favor and prophetic insight*. The people God loves are those with whom He shares His future plans.

The great prophetic book in the OT is Daniel, who is referred to as *“greatly beloved.”* The greatest prophetic book in the NT is Revelation, written by the Apostle John. And guess which of Jesus’ apostles is referred to as *“the disciple whom Jesus loved?”* Yep, that’s John!

*God’s favor and God’s foresight* go hand in hand.

“Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.”

Remember, Daniel had been praying for three full weeks. *And when did God first hear his prayer?* Day One. So what delayed God's messenger from arriving?

He tells us, verse 13, *“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.”*

This is fascinating! Here a portal opens up that allows us to peek from the physical into the spiritual.

Most of the time we're unaware of its existence, but the Bible teaches there's another world. There is a realm, a hyperspace, a parallel universe, a spiritual dimension that's different, but complementary to ours.

Science can prove mathematically there are multiple dimensions of existence stacked on top of each other.

Theoretically, at this very moment a train could be running through this room, in another dimension. There is a spiritual world parallel to ours that's invisible, intangible, and yet it's real. So much so, that at times it dramatically effects what's going on even in our world.

Here we're told the *"Prince of Persia"* delayed God's messenger, or angel, for three weeks. Obviously, he's more than a mere man if he hindered a supernatural angel. I believe this *"Prince of Persia"* is a demon.

Apparently Satan's henchmen are highly organized. Ephesians 6:12 speaks of our enemy, *"We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."* These *"rulers of the darkness"* have echelons of rank and jurisdiction.

The vast spiritual darkness that blankets our world is at least partly caused by a strong demonic grip.

Recall when Satan tempted Jesus his final offer was the kingdoms of this world. Jesus obviously declined, but He didn't argue over Satan's right to make the offer. In John 12:31 Jesus calls him, *"the ruler of this world."*

We sing of God, "He's got the whole world in his hands." And in a sovereign sense that's true. But on a practical level we could sing the same of the devil.

Satan is currently controls the powers of this world.

Here, God's messenger identifies a demon who was assigned to the kingdom of Persia. Apparently, the godless, Gentile nations are controlled by demons.

It's well known that Hitler was steeped in the occult.

Before he launched his massive attacks he'd spend the night before consulting spirits. There are demons controlling this earth and there are individual demons who have been assigned to various nations. *Obviously, the demon in charge of America is having a field day!*

For three weeks there had been a slugfest in the heavens. The Prince of Persia hindered and delayed God's messenger... *Imagine what's going on right here, right now in the spirit realm.* If the sky opened we could possibly see a battlefield of combat and carnage.

I have no doubt that right this second there are angels and demons wrestling for your attention.

Demons are trying to distract and cause doubt. Angels are blocking those distractions to build up faith.

Without knowing it you are involved in this conflict.

It's important that you *wake up* to the warfare and *take up* the whole armor of God. 2 Corinthians 10:4 tells us, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for

the pulling down of strongholds.” God has given us spiritual weapons for us to use...

In Revelation 12:11 we find two weapons, the blood of Jesus and the word of our testimony. In the Gospels the disciples cast out demons in Jesus’ name, another weapon. Ephesians 6 tells us about our spiritual armor and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Our weapons are many, we need to use them!

Here, even though Daniel doesn't realize it, he is involved in this spiritual conflict through prayer.

A provocative point is that Daniel's fast and this spiritual skirmish both lasted 21 days. *If Daniel had stopped praying on the 20th day would the angel have broken through? We're not sure, our text doesn't say, but other passages teach that prayer is a key weapon in spiritual warfare. Recall when the disciples were unable to cast out the demon, Jesus told them, “This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”*

But notice this messenger needed help to break through the demonic resistance. Michael an archangel, comes to his rescue. He and God’s messenger double-team the Prince of Persia and together overpower him.

And this is the reason some scholars reject the idea this messenger is Jesus. Our Lord is too strong to have been hindered by a single demon, or by all the demons for that matter... It's certainly a point worth considering!

He says in verse 14, “Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days,

for the vision refers to many days yet to come.” The appearance of God’s messenger sets the stage for Daniel’s last vision in Chapters 11-12...

“When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.” Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!” So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” Notice, Daniel gets touched by the Lord’s messenger three times in this chapter...

The **first** touch is after Daniel sees God's glory and faints. The messenger's touch puts Daniel on his feet.

The **second** touch opens communication lines.

While the **third** touch gives God’s servant strength.

And God's touch still produces the same three things in us: **adoration**, and **communication**, and **fortification**. Above all else we need God’s touch on our lives!

Verse 20, “Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will

come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

In the Bible the angel Michael's mission always involves Israel. Just as demons are assigned to Gentile nations, God's angels are assigned to His people.

Hebrews 1:14 refers to angels as "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who will inherit salvation." *Is there such a thing as a guardian angel? Is there an angel assigned to you? I believe, "Yes!"*

I like what Pastor Chuck use to say, "We're not suppose to pray to the angels, but occasionally I say thanks!" After the tough time some of you put your angel through, a word of thanks probably doesn't hurt!