Daniel 10: Time of the End, End of Time

What we are actually getting into now is the last portion of the book. I have shared with you before that neither in the Greek or the Hebrew was there any punctuation or chapter markers. The division of the Bible into chapters and verses seems to have been first made by Stephen Longdon, who became archbishop of Canterbury and died AD 1228. Now that does make for easier reading, and searching our passages, but at times it leads to wrong conclusions. In this case it divides into portions a vision of explanation that goes right through to the end of time as each of the previous visions has done. This time, however, as mentioned before, there is little or no symbolism, just explanation.

It will be remembered that in Chapter 8 Gabriel was commanded to make Daniel understand the vision. Chapter 8:16. Gabriel began to explain the symbols; but because Daniel fainted, the angel had to stop. At the end of the chapter Daniel declared that he did not understand the vision, so Gabriel had not finished the work he was divinely commanded to do. Some time later, therefore, Gabriel again appeared and explained further details of the prophetic time periods.

Daniel’s prayer and the resulting answer in Chapter 9 brings a much clearer picture to Daniel, and he is now beginning to grasp the scope of what is being told him. This vision has little to do with the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah, that foretells the return of Israel to Jerusalem, although Daniel seems to have been praying about that situation also. It has the deeper meaning of the restoration of all things to their proper place in the universe under the mighty God.

Daniel begins to see that there will be millennia of struggles between God and Satan that will affect the children of God down until the restoration of all things as God originally intended them to be. He writes in:

Daniel 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia 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.

2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.

3 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.

 The understanding of the vision does not bring the relief that Daniel expected. The more that he understood about what was being said, the more that he was concerned. His quest for understanding the time of the restoration of the temple and city of Jerusalem was one that he felt joy about. It could only be positive for this to happen. Yet as he sees the larger picture of the visions that he was given, it had to concern him.

Likewise, today, if you are not concerned about the rapid destruction of the morals and fabric of our nation, and the world, maybe you have not gotten the larger picture of the warfare that is affecting your soul.

Just as there are powers that are war with our nation, there is a much greater and more universal battle that you are personally involved in. Sometimes our earthly leaders seem blind to the facts of the worldly struggle. Too often the Christian is naïve about the war going on around him. But to survive, you must realize that the battle rages not only around you, but also within you.

Daniel’s understanding of the issues brought him to 3 weeks of mourning. Once again God honors the faithful prophet by sending a heavenly being to comfort him and give him further understanding.

As we look at this last portion we need to remember that these final chapters are just a reiteration of the previous visions. We should by now be aware that each of the visions covers essentially the same ground, but each brings out details that were not in the previous vision. The great image goes down to the end of time. The 4 beasts goes down to the end of time. The ram and he-goat goes down to the end of time. The vision of the time prophecies goes down to the end times. So we would expect that this explanation of the previous visions would go down to the end of time. If so, these last 3 chapters, which make one unit, parallel all the other visions in this book.

All the visions of the book may be regarded us arranged in a series of increasing difficulty; the prophecy of Daniel 2 is basic and gives us the key to the rest. The seventh chapter is a little more advanced in difficulty (and also in importance); the eighth and ninth chapters (really one vision) are much more difficult, and also much more important, to the people of God in the last days.

If on this basis we find this last vision very different from the others, since it seems to be given in plain, almost literal and matter-of-fact statements. The actual difficulty of this last vision may be an indication of its real importance.

Therefore, the words and phrases that we find in this passage that are present in previous passages should be considered to represent the same things as they did before.

This principle will help us to give meanings to some of the terms used in this vision, which, without this guiding rule, are likely to be misunderstood.

If the rank and file of professed Christian people could only catch some of the some inspiration, through seeing the marvelous fulfillment of all these prophecies, there would follow a spiritual revival such as has not been seen since the times of the apostles.

Now, lets look at Daniel 10:1 again.

10:1 NKJV. In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia 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..

TLB 10:1 In the third year of the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia, Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) had another vision. It concerned events certain to happen in the future: times of great tribulation--wars and sorrows, and this time he understood what the vision meant.

RSV 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

Since Cyrus became the conqueror of Babylon in 539 and began to count his reigning years from the spring of 538 BC, his third year as king in his new position would last from the spring of 536 to the spring of 535 BC.

***2. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks. 3. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.***

The return of the first small group of Israelites to Jerusalem had already taken place, and Daniel, possibly on account of his great age, had stayed behind. He was again in great anxiety concerning the welfare of his people in the future; and because of this concern he began fasting and praying to intercede with God about the matter.

But beyond that, in the previous visions, Daniel had been shown that when the Messiah did come that he would be persecuted and “cut off” from his people.

His fasting was only a partial one; though this was the usual form that fasting took among the Hebrews, since such a fast could be carried out for a long time. The term pleasant bread is a Hebrew expression in contrast with what they termed "bread of affliction," the latter being probably a form of unleavened cakes. The Oriental anointing was regarded as a luxury, and when it was omitted was taken as a sign of mourning.

Three whole weeks. The original of this expression is "three weeks of days." It may have been used here to distinguish it from the weeks of years previously used.

***4. And in the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel, 5. I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with pure gold of Uphaz: 6. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as flaming torches, and his arms and his feet like unto burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.***

The river here mentioned is the Tigris, which at its nearest point is some fifty miles from Babylon, which probably continued to be Daniel's home.

Standing by the side of the river, Daniel sees another vision of a heavenly being. This one was dressed as the others, and displayed the glory and power that the others had shown. The glory was so great that those with Daniel ran away, and Daniel’s strength left him. He fainted at the exhibition of glory, and was lying face down on the ground. Yet the voice of the holy one was audible to him.

This glorious being gently reaches down and helps Daniel part way up. Can you see a 90 year old man on his hands and knees? And it was from that position that the angel begins to talk to him.

***11. And he said unto me, O Daniel, thou man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.***

Daniel hears the comforting words and stands upright, and the angel begins to talk to him.

***12. Then said he unto me Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou did set thy heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words' sake.***

This assurance by the angel that Daniel was a man greatly beloved is the second time that he had been told that. Can you think of anything that you would rather hear from an angel about you? Perhaps the assurance that his prayers had been heard, and that an angel was present to help you have understanding, would be an equally encouraging word.

Daniel's prayer on this occasion was for understanding, for a better knowledge of what would happen to the Jewish people in the future. On this occasion Daniel was praying three full weeks before any answer appeared. Yet the angel told him that from the first day of his prayer his words were heard and that in spite of the seeming delay, the angel had been sent to inform and enlighten him on the subject of his anxiety.

***13. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there [margin, "was not needed"] with the kings of Persia.***

The obvious meaning is that there was some important action which the angel now talking to Daniel had been trying to get the king of Persia to do, probably something in connection with the young nation of the Jews at this time striving against great odds to establish themselves in their old national home. But the king of Persia did not respond to the work of the angel. Since human beings are given real free will, not a mere make-believe of free will, they do have the power to resist the workings of the angels of God, even when the latter are sent on profoundly important missions. In this case the king stood out for fully three weeks.

We are not aware of exactly what the issue was that Gabriel and Michael were working together on. However, the fact that a small group of people had returned to Jerusalem, and that they were experiencing trouble from the people who were there, was cause enough for Daniel to be praying over the situation.

The meaning of the last clause in this text seems to be that Michael came and relieved this angel (Gabriel?) so the latter could come on this errand to enlighten Daniel.

Who is the being called Michael in this connection? The margin of the A.V. would give him the title of "the first of the princes," while in the first verse of Daniel 12 he is termed "the great Prince who stands for the children of thy people." Jude 9 calls him "the Archangel," a title which would seem to be distinctive, for there would seem to be but one Archangel.

The word “angel” primarily has to do with the function of this agent of God, rather than expressing concerns of the nature or being of an angel. However, a clear distinction between God and the messenger/angel is not easily determined. For example, Hagar encountered an angel, but she referred to the Lord who spoke to her (Gen. 16:7,13; 21:17). God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, but eventually Abraham is addressed by "the angel of the Lord" (Gen. 22:1,11,15.) Furthermore archangel can mean one who rules over the angels.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 we are told that the voice of the Archangel will raise the dead, while in John 5:28 this work is predicted of the voice of the Son of God. It seems legitimate to conclude from these passages that the name "Michael" is one which is applied to the pre-existent Son of God.

Now that is not a doctrine, it is just my understanding, but looking at the texts it does not make Jesus an angel, but rather the one who rules over or leads the angels.

***14. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days.***

This verse is the key verse of chapter 10. The way that it is phrased, it is hard to imagine that there is new vision being given here. The vision for many days has been repeated over and over. We have already discussed how each of the prophecies of Daniel repeats the future of the world from the point that it is given down to the end of time. It is reasonable that the vision here to be given in detail would necessarily have something to add or it would be unnecessary.

***The latter meaning the true people of God***. The answer about the sanctuary was given back there in chapters 8 and 9; but the answer about "the host," or the true people of God is here taken up, for the angel declares that he has come to tell Daniel “what shall befall thy people in the latter days.”

As this present chapter is only an introduction to what is given in chapter 11 and running on into chapter 12, the final answer to this part of the question is found in chapter 12:1: "At that time thy people shall be delivered." Until that time, or during the long intervening centuries, Daniel's spiritual kin, the true people of God, must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism, as was the case with the Master Himself.

In chapter 8:13 the question was asked, “***How long will be the vision concerning both the sanctuary and the host?”***

This question is answered again and again.

Daniel 8:17. The vision is for the time of the end….

Daniel 11:35. And some of those who are wise shall fall….until the time of the end..

Daniel 11:40. At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him.

Daniel 12:4. …shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end….

Daniel 12:9. For the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end….

Daniel 12:13. ….stand in your allotted place at the end of the days…..

 These verses demonstrate that the 2300 days reach to the same point: the close of the prophecy of Chapters 10-12. We see in Daniel 12:1-2 the time of the end ushering in the kingdom of God and the resurrection of the dead.

This verse ties the sanctuary themes of Daniel together>>>>>>>>

***15. And when he had spoken unto me according to these words, I set my face toward the ground, and was dumb.***

This inability to speak was not voluntary on Daniel's part; but he was overwhelmed with the conviction that there impended long ages of suffering and distress for the people he loved. He was, as we have seen, a very old man. Yet he had cherished the hope that, although he himself might not live to see the fulfillment of this prophecy, yet this glorious period could not be much longer delayed.

Now he remembered with dismay the previous visions, especially the one about the 2300 years. That, with the present announcement that the vision was yet for many days, completely overcame him, and he fainted once again.

***16. And, behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spoke and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by reason of the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I retained no strength. 17. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? For as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither was there breath left in me.***

It would seem probable that the vision to which Daniel here makes reference is the vision of chapters 8 and 9, which, we have seen, constitute really one connected whole, and therefore might be termed one vision, though given in two separated parts. However, it may be that the present appearance of this celestial being had overpowered him.

18 Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me.

***19 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 the compassion of the heavenly being. Twice more he reaches out to Daniel and touches him. The word is powerful. This word of the one who was visiting Daniel, “be strong, yea, be strong,” had within itself the power of bringing about its own fulfillment.

Every command of God implies a promise.

Notice, too, the repetition of the phrase, “Greatly beloved.” Again what beautiful words to hear from heaven.

***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.***

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

This passage gives us a glimpse into the real world. The world of real power and real results.

Ephesians 6: 12 For 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.*

We right now have no idea of the supernatural struggles going on right now. By the same token, we have no idea of the power of prayer in this battle. Nations can be changed by prayer. Churches can be changed by prayer. Lives can be changed by prayer.

This passage describes spiritual warfare.

***To fight with the prince of Persia***.

This means to fight on the side of the prince of Persia. The powers of heaven were on the side of the Persians so long as God's wisdom and foreknowledge saw that this would be for the best.

***When I go forth***,

that is, when I have completed this work of upholding the Persian cause, the prince of Greece shall come. In the preceding vision, that of chapter 8, it had been definitely announced that Greece would be the next great world empire, succeeding Medo-Persia. The purpose of the visit from this heavenly messenger was to outline the future of the divided Greek kingdom, Rome, the great world empire that would follow Greece, and the smaller kingdoms that made up the divisions of Rome.

***That which is inscribed in the writing of truth.***

Reference is here made to the heavenly tablets, where the times and seasons of all the nations of earth are inscribed. In primitive times, all important records were made on clay tablets; and even in Daniel's day, though other forms of records were known, still all legal records were made on tablets, which of course had to be inscribed.

In addressing the Athenians, Paul declared that God has determined for all the nations of the earth, "their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation." Acts 17:26. That is, everything about the nations of the world is supervised and controlled by divine Providence. Paul went on to say that the reason for all this strict supervision of the nations is "that they should seek God." Verse 27. In other words, the destinies of all nations are so controlled and managed as to promote the best interests of the purposes of God. This is the Christian philosophy of history.

***None that holds with me against these***…

Here we find a statement of just how powerful God is! Michael your Prince has been already identified with the preexistent Son of God. Throughout the Old Testament dispensation, under the name of the Angel of Jehovah and other titles, He was the intermediary between God and guilty man. In the visions of Daniel He is referred to as Michael your Prince. In the present passage the angel who is speaking to Daniel, perhaps Gabriel, announces that he and Michael have the entire burden and responsibility of holding in check the forces of evil among the nations and of managing the larger affairs of the world.

What power. A power that will protect when we remain close. A power that will destroy when we move away.

 But the time comes when these heavenly forces will withdraw from the world to a certain extent, and let evil be displayed. For God to be declared just, the true nature of evil ***must*** be displayed.

Chapters 11 and 12 move on and give the rest of the story, so to speak. We will not look at those right now, but will examine them next time.