

DANIEL: This Is How I Fight My Battles Daniel 10ⁱ

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, Trinity! For those of you that are guests, we want to say a special welcome to you. My name is Chris Wigley, and I serve as one of the Pastors here at Trinity. Whether you are in the room or you are joining us online, we are excited to have you with us today. And on behalf of our church family, and our staff team, we welcome you here today.

We would love the opportunity to connect with you and you can do that in a couple ways. You can text the keyword, "TBCMP," that stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant, to the number 94-000. When you do that, a reply text will be sent with a link you can click on. That will direct you to a form that will then provide us with basic contact information to follow up with you.

Or you can stop by the information center in the lobby area as we have a gift there for you. Again, we would love the opportunity to connect with you.

SERIES OVERVIEW:

We are in the middle of a teaching series where we are walking our way through the Old Testament book of Daniel. We have studied the historical happenings surrounding Daniel's life and we have looked into some of the prophecies he recorded. We've learned how some of those prophecies have been fulfilled while some are yet to be fulfilled.

I am excited to be back with you today, but very grateful for Dennis Kelly as he waded through a very difficult passage last week. In fact, we thought about passing out little arm floaties for the deep waters you were in. Again, thanks Dennis for your faithfulness to God's Word.

I want to invite you today, to open your bibles to Daniel chapter 10. We are going to work our way through the entire chapter this morning. Did you know we only have three weeks left in our study. If you are wondering where we are headed when we finish the book of Daniel, I am excited about a series we will be launching on Easter that we are entitling, "Greater Than." In that teaching series, we are going to look at the fact that Jesus is greater than the grave, He's greater than my worry and anxiety, greater than my relational conflicts, my family and parenting issues, my sin and failure (Praise God), my grief, and the

fact that He is greater than everything. So, I'm really looking forward to that. But today, we jump into Daniel 10.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: An Invisible Enemy

In March of 2020, then President Donald Trump addressed the nation in the heat of the battle against the COVID-19 Coronavirus outbreak. And in that address, he called the virus quote, "an invisible, hidden enemy that is brilliant, tough, and smart."ⁱⁱ

Did you know that there is an invisible war waging around us? And I'm not just talking about a war with an invisible virus. There is a spiritual battle between the forces of God and the armies of Satan. And the effects this battle in the spiritual realm manifests in the physical world. We feel the effects of a very real spiritual battle every day of our lives. We see evidence of this battle in the news headlines in the events occurring all over the world. We feel it in tension of our relationships. We see it in our personal struggles, oppositions, and challenges.

But what is interesting to me is that according to a study published by the Barna Group, 59% of Christians do not believe that Satan is real.ⁱⁱⁱ Instead, they believe that he is simply a symbol of evil but does not truly exist.

Daniel chapter 10 is one of those rare instances, in the Bible, where God allows us to see past the physical world and peer into the spiritual world. And in our study this morning, we are going to not only see the certainty of spiritual warfare, but we will learn tools on how we can fight those spiritual battles.

Let's jump in and read the opening verse of Daniel 10 as we look at the background of this incredible passage of Scripture. *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.***

BACKGROUND:

Now Daniel, again, gives us a date. This will be the last date Daniel references. That's because the remaining chapters, 11 and 12, are the details of the vision that he receives. Daniel 10 is the setting by which that vision is given.

We read that this was the third year of king Cyrus' rule. This would have been 536 or 535 B.C.^{iv} Daniel is about 85 or 86 years of age. Now, what is significant

about that date is it is a couple of years after the Jews are allowed to return to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. King Cyrus issued a decree, in his first year, that fulfilled the 70 years of exile that was prophesied.

Daniel receives a word, a final prophecy. We learn that the vision was true and that it came with great conflict. The question is, "What was the great conflict?" It is the spiritual battle surrounding the delivery of the vision. We are going to see that in just a moment. Daniel, we are told, understood the vision.

Read verse 2. *²In those days I, Daniel, was **mourning for three weeks**.* Here we see that Daniel is upset, distraught. He was mourning for three weeks. What could have upset Daniel so?

Well, scholars are convinced that Daniel is upset by the fact that even though God had provided a way, by way of Cyrus' decree, for the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, very few took Cyrus up on the offer. The Book of Ezra tells us, in chapter 2, that only about 50,000 returned.^v That was a drop in the bucket compared to how many Jews remained in Babylon.^{vi} In other words, **the opportunity to return was met with the reluctance to return.**

This is similar to our day and time. I have been able, on many occasions, to meet with other pastors in our area, and I have heard what has become an all too familiar story; the slow return of their church members post-COVID shutdown. While that is not the experience here at Trinity, praise The Lord, where we have exceeded Pre-COVID attendance, it is unfortunately the norm in most of the churches across our country. The opportunity to return to church has been met with the reluctance to return. And what broke Daniel's heart over 25-hundred years ago is breaking the heart of pastors today.

Now, I imagine that there are many reasons why people didn't go back to Jerusalem. After all, it had been 70 years. Many Jews were born and raised in Babylon. They may have come to love the culture or even found good jobs. Many had discovered a new normal that they had grown to enjoy. And it's not like anything awaited them back in Jerusalem, I mean, the temple was destroyed and demolished. But that lack of spiritual zeal is what caused Daniel to mourn for three weeks. How many times have I taken a step back, observed the spiritual zeal of our culture, or lack thereof, and was moved to mourn? Daniel so desired to see the spiritual revival of his people.

Now, for the sake of time, I want to summarize what happens in the rest of Daniel 10 and then zoom into a few certain realities and then draw a few applications for our day.

DANIEL 10 SUMMARY

When Daniel surveyed the spiritual landscape, he spends three weeks praying and fasting. And at the end of those three weeks, he saw a man clothed in linen, radiant, with a gold sash and a powerful appearance. Daniel lost the ability to stand in this being's presence and fell to the ground. Then, an angel touches him, and speaks to him, and encourages him. The angel then gives him a vision which is recorded in Daniel 11 and 12. At the end of the vision, the angel tells Daniel that he has to get back to a battle waging in the spiritual realm.

MESSAGE:

I want to mention a few realities that we learn in this chapter, and I believe are still realities for us today. First, ...

1) The Reality of Spiritual Warfare.

Let's look at verses 4-9. I want you to notice the spiritual realm that Daniel sees. This is still a reality. *⁴On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) ⁵I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, **a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist.** ⁶His body was like **beryl**, (meaning a translucent appearance) *his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude.* ⁷And I, Daniel, **alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves.** ⁸So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and **I retained no strength.** ⁹Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, **I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.***

A couple things here and then I want to examine a couple other verses in this passage on this point. First, this was obviously a spiritual experience manifesting physically. What Daniel saw, though having the appearance of a man was not a, quote, normal man. Also, the fact that the others with Daniel did not see it but felt the presence causing them to tremble points to this being a

spiritual experience as well. It effected Daniel. He lost his strength and fell. This points to the reality of the spiritual.

The second thing I want to mention here deals in answering the question as to who this man was. Scholars cannot be sure who he is. Some have suggested that it is Gabriel while others think it is the preincarnate Jesus.^{vii} I believe this to be Jesus for a couple of reasons.

First, this is not the first encounter Daniel has had with Gabriel. We saw that in the chapters prior to 10. So, if this was Gabriel, why would Daniel have responded differently here than the previous meetings?

The second reason I believe this to be Jesus is because of how Daniel describes this being. I'm not going to read it this morning, but I want you, this week, to compare the description of this being in Daniel 10 to the description of Jesus in Revelation 1. Very similar description.

Now, the reason some scholars are hesitant to attribute this being to Jesus is because of verse 13. Let's look at that. ¹³ *The prince of the kingdom of Persia* (when you see the word prince here, think demon) *withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes* (Michael is an archangel), *came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia.* So, the messenger of the vision was withstood, engaged in battle for 21 days. Michael, had to come and help. One commentator I read said that Jesus would not have needed anyone to come to His aid as He is God and more powerful than any demonic force.^{viii}

I agree with that assessment, but I would argue that the man was Jesus that appeared to Daniel, then He left the scene when Gabriel arrived and awoke Daniel from the effects of his encounter with Jesus. So, Jesus didn't wrestle with the prince of Persia, Gabriel did. Follow me? All that to say that I believe this being to be the preincarnate Jesus.

Verse 13 also highlights the reality of spiritual warfare. Gabriel was in a battle with a demon. Notice the timeline. Daniel prays as he is mourning, word went out and Gabriel was dispatched. Daniel prayed for three weeks, why? Because Gabriel got hung up in a spiritual battle for how long? 21 days; three weeks.

Michael then comes and taps in the wrestling match so that Gabriel can complete his assignment in delivering a vision to Daniel. Then in verse 20 of

Daniel 10, Gabriel says, *"But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia."*

This shows us the fact that spiritual warfare is a certain reality. If God were to allow us to peer past the physical realm and into the spiritual realm, I promise you we would have the exact same response as Daniel and the other guys that were with him; fear and trembling. In fact, I believe right now there is a spiritual battle waging in this room. Angels and demons are fighting for your attention. Angels desiring you to responds to The Lord's lead in your life and demons seeking to distract you from that.

Now, I don't say all that to strike fear in your heart. I tell you this so that you are informed and aware of what is going on. It is also encouraging to me that the answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed because of spiritual battle. Sometimes the delay in God's response to your prayers is the result of what is happening in the spiritual realm. So, don't stop praying!

So, we've talked about the reality of Spiritual Warfare. Secondly, ...

2) The Reality of Angel Involvement in our Lives.

We see that is Daniel's experience here in chapter 10, but there are similar examples throughout the Scriptures.

Angels appeared alongside God in a vision to Abraham when they delivered the promise of Isaac's birth. In Matthew chapter 4, following the temptation of Jesus verse 11 tells us, *"the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him."* Then in Acts chapter 12, Peter is thrown in prison and an angel appears to him and rescues him. Daniel receives an actual touch from an angel three times, at least because that is all that is recorded. And Hebrews 13:2 tells us that, *"some have entertained angels unawares."* My point is that not only is the spiritual realm real, but angels are also involved in our lives.

In fact, Satan is a fallen angel. Scripture tells us that a third of the angels fell with him and were cast out of heaven. We see in verse 13 that it appears that demons are assigned to nations. Gabriel says he was detained by the demon of the kingdom of Persia. This should remind us that there is a demon assigned to our country and he appears to be winning the battle of division, in both our country and the Church. Therefore, we, as believers in Jesus Christ must engage in spiritual battle on behalf of our country leaders.

Now, the fact that angels are involved in our lives, Scripture makes clear that we are not to worship angels, but rather to reserve our worship for only The Lord God. Angels worship God, therefore, angels are not to be the object of our worship. That is reserved for God. But the reality that I am trying to communicate is that there is spiritual warfare and angelic involvement in our lives. Thirdly, ...

3) Emotions are Tools Given by God.

Our emotional response to situations and circumstances are a God-given thing. Emotions are very real and they were very real for Daniel. We see his emotions in verses 2 and 3. I want to read those verses again and see if you can pick up on key words describing the emotional response Daniel had.

*²In those days I, Daniel, was **mourning** for three weeks. ³I **ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself** at all, for the full three weeks.*

Do you see Daniel's broken heart? Do you see his emotional response? Do you see his bout with depression? He was mourning, couldn't eat, didn't bathe. That's the reference to anointing himself. Ever been there? You're not alone.

Now, I believe Scripture teaches that we are not to be controlled by our emotions. One of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control. If we are controlled by our emotions, we would do things that we would regret later. But emotions are powerful tools given to us by God. And Daniel leveraged his emotions. His feelings about the spiritual landscape led him to pray and fast. His broken heart was met with fervent prayer and the seeking of God's face.

I want you to notice something about Daniel's emotional response. Was his response based on the circumstances surrounding his life? No! He was mourning because of people's lack of spiritual zeal. In other words, his emotions were not self-focused, but others focused. And that serves as a template for us. I believe God wants us to survey the spiritual landscape of our day and mourn at the lack of spiritual zeal, pray for revival, and earnestly seek The Lord's face.

So, the three realities that we see in Daniel 10 is that spiritual warfare is real, angels are involved in our lives, and emotions are tools given by God to be

leveraged on behalf of others. In the time we have left, I want to talk through some modern-day application points I glean from this passage.

APPLICATION:

When we come to the application of this passage, I want us to think through the 3 tools Daniel uses to fight spiritual battles. The first tool is...

1) Prayer and Fasting.

As we just read, Daniel entered into a time of prayer and fasting. 3 weeks He mourned, he prayed, he abstained from food and drink, and he did not give attention to personal hygiene. Prayer and fasting are powerful tools in fighting spiritual battles. Success in spiritual war requires the use of spiritual weapons.

In Ephesians chapter 6, Paul gives us a list of the spiritual weapons we have at our disposal. Beginning in verse 11. *¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the **schemes of the devil**. ¹²For **we do not wrestle against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³**Therefore take up the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸**praying** at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints."*

Did you catch the list? Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, God's Word, and constant prayer. This is how we fight our battles. While fasting is not mentioned in Paul's list, it is mentioned in Jesus' list.

Do you remember in Matthew chapter 17 Jesus casts out a demon that had taken control of a boy? Jesus shows up on a scene and does what the disciples cannot do. Afterward they asked Jesus why were they unable to cast out the demon. Do you remember Jesus' reply? Matthew 17:21 in the Amplified Bible, *"[But this kind of demon does not go out except by prayer and fasting.]"* There it is. Spiritual battle using the weapon of prayer and fasting.

The English poet and hymnwriter, William Cowper once wrote, "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon their knees."^x Prayer and fasting are powerful tools in fighting spiritual battles. That was the case with Daniel, and it is the case for us.

ILLUSTRATION: Prayer and Fasting for Paul and Kay Newby

We recently saw the power of prayer and fasting in our church. A few weeks ago, we called our church to a time of prayer and fasting on behalf of Honduran missionaries Paul and Kay Newby. Many of you participated in that effort and we saw God show up in a powerful way. There is power in prayer and fasting. The second tool we have in fighting spiritual battles is...

2) Faithfulness to God.

Daniel remained faithful to God and his faithfulness was key in fighting spiritual battles. James reminds us that, "*The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*"

Where in chapter 10 do we see Daniel's faithfulness? Look at verse 4 with me. ⁴ *On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris).*

Nisan, not he car, is the first month of the Jewish calendar. That is March and April. We know that Daniel began his prayer 21 days before the twenty-fourth. That would have been the 3rd of Nisan.^x

The Jewish festival of Passover was celebrated on the fourteenth of Nisan.^{xi} You remember Passover. That was how God delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt.

Since the Jews were exiled in Babylon, they were not allowed to observe religious festivals. But what is Daniel doing at the time that the Passover would have been celebrated? He's praying and fasting.

And here he is, doing what he can to celebrate Passover, and his fellow Jews were not, nor were they even interested in getting back to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover in the Temple. Daniel was faithful to God in a culture and season and a time where the vast majority of others were not.

What is it that the angel says to him when he finally gets to him? Verses 10 and 11 of Daniel 10. ¹⁰ *And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my*

hands and knees. ¹¹ And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you."

It is hard to remain faithful in a world that has become unfaithful to God, isn't it? But I believe the testimony of Daniel's life, the faithfulness to God he displayed, has a correlation to the success he had in spiritual battle. Understand that this wasn't easy for Daniel. Nothing worth pursuing comes easy.

So, in the heat of spiritual battle, pray and fast and remain faithful. Thirdly, maintain...

3) A Hopeful Outlook.

I believe the result of this experience led Daniel to be hopeful. Look at verse 21 of Daniel 10. ²¹ *But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.* A couple things here about hope.

First, what is inscribed in the book of truth will come to pass. What is the book of truth? God's Holy Word. Beloved, what is foretold in these pages are not mere weather predictions. They are certainties of what is to come. And what is to come? Jesus is to come. And when He does, He will right every wrong, set up His Kingdom forever, and we will be with Him for all of eternity. Jesus wins!

Second thing that communicates hope here is look who is fighting on Daniel's behalf. Michael and Gabriel are waging war against the enemy's attacks in his life. Gabriel says that Michael is "your prince." Daniel's guardian angel.

We know Michael to be the guardian angel of the nation of Israel. Beloved, we can also know that there are angels fighting on our behalf, and that ought to bring you hope.

Regardless of the circumstances in your life, there is hope. When things are falling apart in your marriage there is hope. Why? Because the angel armies are on your side. When your life seems to be falling apart, there is hope? Why? Because if God is for you, then who can be against you?

CONCLUSION: Ask Band to Come Back Up
Gospel. Prayer. [PRAY]

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation of this message: Travis Agnew, “Daniel [Series Overview]”, article published on travisagnew.org on August 13, 2020; Stephen R. Miller, *The New American Commentary: Daniel*, B&H Publishing, Nashville, 1994; Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Resolute: OT Commentary on Daniel*, David C Cook Publishing, 2000; Gene Whithurst, “The Book of Daniel Commentary,” document sent to me via Gene; Troy Rackliffe, “Daniel part 11,” preached at Glade Community Church in Daniels, WV, October 2020; Mark Driscoll, “Kingdom Down #10: How to be Godly and Healthy in Crisis” preached at Trinity Church in Arizona on March 22, 2020; Skip Heitzig, “I Dare You: Fight!,” taught at Calvary Church Albuquerque on Sunday, June 30, 2013; J.D. Greear, “Shining in Babylon: It’s All Part of the Plan,” taught at The Summit Church on Sunday, August 1, 2021; Dr. Robert Jeffress, Pathway to Victory Podcast, episodes: *The Invisible War parts 1 and 2*, accessed online at <https://ptv.org/series/courageous-living-in-a-pagan-world/>; Dr. Jack Graham, PowerPoint with Dr. Jack Graham, “Angels part 2,” preached at Harvest Bible Fellowship and posted on YouTube on January 14, 2018, accessed online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyDuQXheMzk>.

ⁱⁱ Video of the press conference can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPaa0kIMdhM>

ⁱⁱⁱ The Barna Group, Ltd., “Most American Christians Do Not Believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit Exist,” article published April 13, 2009. Accessed online: <https://www.barna.com/research/most-american-christians-do-not-believe-that-satan-or-the-holy-spirit-exist/>

^{iv} Stephen R. Miller, *The New American Commentary: Daniel*, B&H Publishing, Nashville, 1994, page 276.

^v Ezra 2:64.

^{vi} This is pointed out by Skip Heitzig in his message, “I Dare You: Fight!,” taught at Calvary Church Albuquerque on Sunday, June 30, 2013.

^{vii} Miller, 281.

^{viii} Gene Whithurst, “The Book of Daniel Commentary,” page 80.

^{ix} No. 29, “Exhortation to Prayer”. - Olney Hymns (1779)

^x Miller, 279.

^{xi} Ibid.