

FAITH AND THE FINAL VISION

DANIEL: APOCALYPTIC IMAGINATION AND EXILE FAITH | DANIEL 10:1-12:4 | DECEMBER 15/16, 2018
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"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war." (Daniel 10:1)

The Setting of the Final Vision (Daniel 10:1-3)

Daniel's Pressure and the Angelic Encounter (Daniel 10:4-11:1)

1. First touch and spiritual conflict (10:10-14)
2. Second touch and ability to speak (10:15-17)
3. Third touch and strengthening (10:18-11:1)

The Conflict of the Final Vision (Daniel 11:2-45)

The Salvation of God's People (Daniel 12:1-4)

The Nature of Spiritual Conflict (Ephesians 6:10-17)

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you think of when you hear the phrase "spiritual warfare"? Have you experienced what you would describe as spiritual warfare?
2. As we continue our series, "Daniel: Apocalyptic Imagination and Exile Faith," this week we look at the final vision of the book in chapter 10-12. Pray, then continue.
3. *Background:* Daniel 10-12 is one extended vision occurring "in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" (10:1), which would be 537/6 BC. This also signals that the exile is drawing to a close. The book of Ezra traces the first wave of exiles returning to the Holy Land in the first year of Cyrus' reign (Ezra 1:1-3), but eventually running into difficulties around the time Daniel's final vision (Ezra 3:8; 4:24).
4. Read Daniel 10:1-9. What stands out to you about Daniel's vision of the angelic figure in linen and his response to it?
5. Now read Daniel 10:10-11:1. Daniel is touched by the angelic figure three times (vss 10, 16, 18). What do these touches indicate about the conflict Daniel faces?
6. The angel refers to "the prince of Persia" (vss 13, 20), which, while debated, is likely not the earthly prince but a spiritual power opposing God. What does this tell you about spiritual conflict?
7. Chapter 11 traces the history of empires from the Persian kings of Daniel's current day through the Greek empire to the Seleucid king Antiochus IV, who desecrated the Jerusalem Temple in 167 BC. Read 11:2-45 aloud. Then, summarize what you know about Antiochus IV based on the description beginning with vss 21-44.
8. Antiochus IV is a picture of how godless rulers resist God and oppress His people. Through history, God's people have faced rulers like this in different ways. The repeated refrain of "appointed times" and "the time of the end" convey that God's will cannot be avoided. How does this encourage you in your own circumstances today?
9. Daniel 12:1-4 offers one of the earliest clear references in the Bible to some sort of existence after death. What do these verses tell you about faith and hope in light of death?
10. What is one thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and pray for one another. If you are studying on your own, write it down and share it with someone.

TAKE IT FURTHER:

Read more about Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Maccabean revolt:

- livius.org/articles/person/antiochus-iv-epiphanes/
- 1 & 2 Maccabees: biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Maccabees+1&version=NRSV