

A Strong Faith

Daniel 10:10-19
SS Lesson for 01/28/2018

Devotional Scripture: Eph 6:10-18

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW AND KEY VERSE OF THE LESSON

Key Verse: Dan 10:19

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

LESSON INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

FAITH RELIEVES FEAR (DAN 10:10-11)

Relieves fear through God's presence (10)

God's presence relieves fears because of His unending love (Ps 119:76)

God's presence relieves fears because He is the God of comfort (2 Cor 1:3-4)

God's presence relieves fears because of His compassion (Isa 49:13)

God's presence relieves fears because He is the only one who provides comfort (Isa 51:12-13)

God's presence relieves fears because He provides joy (Ps 21:6)

God's presence relieves fears because He brings rest (Ex 33:14)

Relieves fear through considering God's Word (11)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that Jesus overcame the world (John 16:33)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we have been born of God (1 John 5:4-5)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we are more than conquerors (Rom 8:37)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we have a spirit of sonship (Rom 8:15)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that godly love drives out fear (1 John 4:18)

FAITH LEADS TO ANSWERED PRAYER (DAN 10:12-14)

Answered prayer because God hears our prayers (12)

God hears us when we ask according to His Will (1 John 5:14-15)

God hears the needy and captive (Ps 69:33)

God hears and is attentive to the prayers of the righteous (Ps 34:15-17)

God hears prayers because He knows the hearts of man (1 Kings 8:39)

God hears prayers when asking in the Name of Jesus (John 16:22-24)

Answered prayer in spite of circumstances (13-14)

Regardless because God provides a way out of every temptation (1 Cor 10:13)

Regardless because we can rely on God (2 Cor 1:8-10)

Regardless because in all things God works for the good (Rom 8:28)

Regardless because God is with us (Ps 23:4)

Regardless because if God is for us, who can be against us (Rom 8:31)

FAITH RESULTS IN STRENGTH (DAN 10:15-19)

Strength in weakness (15-17)

Strength because God is stronger than man's strength (1 Cor 1:25)

Strength because it is only through Him I can do everything (Phil 4:13)

Strength because God's grace is sufficient to make us strong (2 Cor 12:8-10)

Strength because God is our strength (Ps 28:7-8)

Strength because in His strength we will not fear (Ps 46:1-3)

Strength because God saves (Ps 20:6-7)

Strength because God doesn't allow us to be shaken (Ps 125:1)

Strength through God's peace and empowerment (18-19)

Strength that comes from Jesus (Phil 4:13)

Strength that God provides (1 Peter 4:11)

Strength that God arms us with (Ps 18:32)

Strength because God is with us wherever we go (Josh 1:9)

Strength through our weakness (2 Cor 13:4)

Strength in God's mighty power (Eph 6:10)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM BOB DEFFINBAUGH

Conclusion

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

PRACTICAL POINTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR COMMENTARY

Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson teaches us to be aware of the significance of Daniel's fasting and mourning as part of his living **A Strong Faith**. The **study's aim** is to recognize the value of sincere prayer and seriously seeking God rather than expecting God to reply to our impulsive whims and selfishly conceived desires. The **study's application** is to encourage believers to obtain a heart for others and to become serious and reverent when we approach our God.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Key Verse: Dan 10:19

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."

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

10:1-3. The final vision **given to Daniel** came **in the third year** of the reign of Cyrus which was 536 B.C. Exiles had returned from Babylon and had begun rebuilding the temple. (Perhaps Daniel had not returned with the exiles because of his age.) Israel's captivity had ended. Jerusalem was being reoccupied, and the nation seemed to be at peace. The **revelation** in the vision given to Daniel on this occasion shattered any hope the prophet might have had that Israel would enjoy her new freedom and peace for long. For God revealed that the nation would be involved in many conflicts (**a great war**). **Understanding** the significance of the **vision**, Daniel fasted **for three weeks** (lit., "three sevens of days"; cf. 9:25). During this time of mourning he abstained from **choice** foods and apparently waited on God in prayer (cf. 10:12) concerning his people's destiny

10:4-11. After three weeks (cf. v. 3) Daniel was visited by a messenger as the prophet **was standing by the Tigris River** (cf. 12:5). The messenger was an angel from heaven, not a human being. He was **dressed in linen** (cf. 12:7) and had a dazzlingly bright appearance. Since Gabriel previously had been sent by God to reveal truth to Daniel (8:16), probably Gabriel was also the visitor on this occasion. Angels, who dwell in the presence of God who is light, are themselves clothed with light, and Daniel saw something of heaven's glory reflected in this one who visited him (10:5-6). Some Bible students say that the **man** was the preincarnate Christ because of (a) the similarity of the description here to that of Christ in Revelation 1:13-16, (b) the response of Daniel and his friends (Dan. 10:7-8), and (c) the fact that this "Man" may be the same as the "Son of Man" in 7:13 and the "Man" in 8:16. On the other hand, in favor of this messenger being an angel is the improbability of Christ being hindered by a prince (demon) of Persia (10:13) and needing the help of the angel Michael, and the fact that the person is giving a message from heaven. Daniel's companions evidently **saw** the brilliance of the light without seeing the visitor and **they fled** to hide from its shining. Daniel remained **alone** in the angel's presence and, being weak, Daniel prostrated himself before the messenger. In that position Daniel **fell** asleep. He was then aroused from his **sleep** by the angel so he might receive the revelation the angel had come to deliver. The angel, calling the prophet **highly esteemed** (cf. 9:23; 10:19), declared, **I have now been sent to you** by God, who had heard Daniel's request for understanding.

10:12-14. Encouraging Daniel **not to be afraid** (cf. v. 8), Gabriel explained the reason for the delay in God's answer to Daniel's prayer. When Daniel first began fasting and mourning in response to the vision of a great war (vv. 1-2), **God** had dispatched Gabriel with a message for him, but Gabriel was hindered by **the prince of the Persian kingdom** (cf. "the prince of Persia," v. 20). Since men cannot fight with angels (Jacob's wrestling was with God, not an angel; cf. Gen. 32:22-32), the prince referred to here must have been a satanic adversary. God has arranged the angelic realm in differing ranks referred to as "rule, authority, power, and dominion" (Eph. 1:21). Gabriel and Michael have been assigned authority over angels who administer God's affairs for the nation Israel (cf. Michael in Dan. 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9). In

imitation Satan has also apparently assigned high-ranking demons to positions of authority over each kingdom. The prince of the Persian kingdom was a satanic representative assigned to Persia. To seek to prevent Gabriel's message from getting to Daniel, the demonic prince attacked Gabriel as he embarked on his mission. This gives insight into the nature of the warfare fought in the heavens between God's angels and Satan's demons to which Paul referred (Eph. 6:12): "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of the dark world, and against spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms." The battle between Gabriel and the prince (demon) of Persia continued for three weeks until **Michael, one of the chief princes** of the angelic realm (cf. Dan. 10:21; 12:1), **came to** Gabriel's assistance. Such angelic-demonic conflict indicates something of Satan's power. While **the king of Persia** was fighting Michael, Gabriel was able to bring a message to Daniel concerning **the future** of Israel, Daniel's **people** (cf. "your people," 9:24). It was to be a revelation of the warfare (10:1) between Israel and her neighbors until Israel is given peace by the coming Prince of peace. This vision contains the most detailed prophetic revelation in the Book of Daniel.

10:15-19. Daniel had been weakened at the appearance of the messenger (v. 8; cf. 7:15; 8:27). Now he was also overwhelmed (**speechless**, 10:15) at learning of the angelic-demonic conflict that delayed the answer to his prayer. Moreover, he was **overcome with anguish** (v. 16) at the content of **the vision** of Israel's coming sufferings. He was left totally debilitated (cf. v. 8) and gasping for breath. In addressing the messenger as **my lord** (cf. v. 19; 12:8) Daniel was using a title of respect something like the modern-day "Sir." To meet the prophet's need, the angel first quieted the alarm in Daniel's heart (**Do not be afraid**; cf. 10:12, **O man highly esteemed**; cf. 9:23; 10:11), and **strengthened** him physically and emotionally. Daniel was then ready to receive the details of the message.

10:20-11:1. The messenger then stated that when he returned **to fight against the prince of Persia** (cf. "the prince of the Persian kingdom," 10:13), **the prince of Greece** would **come**. These princes, as stated earlier (see vv. 11-14), were demons, Satan's representatives assigned to nations to oppose godly forces. Persia and Greece were two major nations discussed in detail in chapter 11 (Persia, vv. 2-4; Greece, vv. 5-35). What is **the Book of truth**? It was probably "God's record of truth in general, of which the Bible is one expression" (John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, p. 250). The messenger was about to tell Daniel God's plans for Israel under Persia and Greece (11:2-35) and later in the Tribulation (vv. 36-45) and the Millennium (12:1-4). The messenger told Daniel he was supported by **Michael** in his struggle with demons (cf. 10:13). Michael is **your** (Daniel's) **prince** in the sense that he has a special relationship to Israel (cf. 12:1), Daniel's people. When **Darius the Mede** (11:1; see 6:1a; cf. 9:1) began his rule over Babylon, the messenger supported Darius in some way. Or if **him** refers to Michael then the thought is that the messenger supported Michael in return for Michael supporting the messenger.

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

It was the soreness that awakened me. A short time before, I had returned to camp after a summer of rest. The day before, I had pushed myself hard. I had set up high ropes, thoroughly cleaned the nature center, and worked my muscles at a grueling pace without even thinking. I just assumed that I would be able to do the job as always. My body, however, was telling me otherwise. As I rose and prepared for my day, I was amazed at the stiffness of my limbs, which no longer wanted to cooperate. I felt myself just shuffling around, barely wanting to move. Each time I moved a muscle, I was in pain. Faith works a lot that way. Like the muscles in our body, it must be exercised in order to have strength. When we do not exercise our faith, it grows weaker. We become incapable of accomplishing what is set before us because our faith is lacking. So how do we have a strong faith? Daniel knew where true strength resided. He knew that his strength was limited. Every believer must begin with the recognition that his strength will never be enough. I know what you are thinking right now. Why would God bestow upon us limited strength? Think about it. If we were very powerful, would we clearly see the need for the Lord in our lives? If we were being honest, we would admit that it would be more difficult. God wants us to understand how much we need Him, and He wants us to turn to Him for help. Also, think about how great our power would have been used had we possessed it. Prior to the Fall, there was nothing but goodness. Afterward, evil entered into us. If we were greatly powerful, consider the evil we would be capable of bringing into this world. In His mercy, our Father limits us to prevent this. That does not mean, however, that we lack access to God's strength. As we need it, we have only to ask. And God, who holds the power to order the stars (Isa. 40:26), will supply us with the strength we need (Col. 1:11). Remember, though, the importance of asking. We should not expect an answer when we do not ask, and we will not ask if we do not believe that He will provide. Maybe you are lacking in power, crying out and pleading with what seems to be no answer. Part of the secret to His

power is that He bestows it in His wisdom and on His timetable. We need to remember to wait patiently on Him. When we do, He has promised to renew our strength (Isa. 40:28-31). He will not leave us abandoned and weak. Because we are in Christ, we will share in His strength (2 Cor. 13:4). He goes with us wherever we go (cf. Josh. 1:9). Is your strength lacking? Do you find it dwindling as you walk through your day? When was the last time you asked God for strength? If you have not done that, then I encourage you to do so. If you have, remember that when God promises something, He always makes it happen. It may not happen in your timing, but do not give up! Do not let yourself be defeated. Stand fast, knowing that you do not stand alone.

Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The question ‘what are the odds’ pops to mind when something unusual happens or when we consider taking a risk. For many situations, an actuary has already calculated the odds. For example, the odds of being hit by lightning in any given year is about 1 in 960,000. Those with a fear of flying may be relieved to know that the odds of a person dying in a plane crash are only 1 in 8,000. Nature lovers can be confident that the odds of dying from contact with a venomous plant or animal is about 1 in 42,000. Some odds are comforting. But at other times circumstances of life cause us to feel as if the odds are stacked against us and we can’t go on. Daniel’s faith gave him strength in uncertain times for himself and for his nation.

Last week’s study covered Daniel’s fervent prayer of repentance on behalf of himself, his captive people, and his homeland in Judah. The verses immediately following (Daniel 9:20-27) record a response to Daniel by the angel Gabriel while Daniel was praying. Gabriel said he had come to give Daniel understanding regarding what lay ahead for God’s people. The prophecy of the seventy sevens follows. It includes descriptions of some of the Messiah’s achievements, though persistent questions remain regarding how to interpret details of the prophecy. Daniel 10:1 introduces a chronological note: “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel.” This was the year 537 or 536 BC, two or three years after the aforementioned prayer (see Daniel 9:1). The exact nature of the revelation to Daniel is not provided in the text, although verse 1 goes on to say that “its message was true and it concerned a great war.” In addition, “the understanding of the message came to him in a vision.” Whatever this consisted of, Daniel records a period of “three weeks” during which he mourned and suspended his daily routine of eating and grooming (Daniel 10:2, 3). We do not know the reason for Daniel’s mourning. Daniel 10:4 then describes a vision that Daniel had “on the bank of the great river, the Tigris” (compare Genesis 2:14). An unidentified but spectacular, powerful figure appeared to him. While the figure is not identified, some suggest he may be the angel Gabriel, in keeping with other visions (Daniel 8:16; 9:21). The men with Daniel on this occasion did not see the vision but fled in terror nonetheless (Daniel 10:7; compare Acts 9:7; 22:9). The bewildered Daniel eventually fell into “a deep sleep” as the unidentified individual spoke (Daniel 10:9). This is the point at which our printed text begins.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Faith Relieves Fear (Dan 10:10-11)

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

11 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.

Relieves fear through God's presence (10)

God's presence relieves fears because of His unfailing love (Ps 119:76)

76 May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant.

God's presence relieves fears because He is the God of comfort (2 Cor 1:3-4)

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

God's presence relieves fears because of His compassion (Isa 49:13)

13 Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.

God's presence relieves fears because He is the only one who provides comfort (Isa 51:12-13)

12 "I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass, 13 that you forget the Lord your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, that you live in constant terror every day because of the wrath of the oppressor, who is bent on destruction? For where is the wrath of the oppressor?"

God's presence relieves fears because He provides joy (Ps 21:6)

6 Surely you have granted him eternal blessings and made him glad with the joy of your presence.

God's presence relieves fears because He brings rest (Ex 33:14)

14 The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

Relieves fear through considering God's Word (11)

Relieves because God's Word teaches that Jesus overcame the world (John 16:33)

33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we have been born of God (1 John 5:4-5)

4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we are more than conquerors (Rom 8:37)

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Relieves because God's Word teaches that we have a spirit of sonship (Rom 8:15)

15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Relieves because God's Word teaches that godly love drives out fear (1 John 4:18)

18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Faith Leads to Answered Prayer (Dan 10:12-14)

12 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.

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.

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."

Answered prayer because God hears our prayers (12)

God hears us when we ask according to His Will (1 John 5:14-15)

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.

God hears the needy and captive (Ps 69:33)

33 The Lord hears the needy and does not despise his captive people.

God hears and is attentive to the prayers of the righteous (Ps 34:15-17)

15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; 16 the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. 17 The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

God hears prayers because He know the hearts of man (1 Kings 8:39)

39 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men),

God hears prayers when asking in the Name of Jesus (John 16:22-24)

22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. 23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

Answered prayer in spite of circumstances (13-14)

Regardless because God provides a way out of every temptation (1 Cor 10:13)

13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Regardless because we can rely on God (2 Cor 1:8-10)

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

Regardless because in all things God works for the good (Rom 8:28)

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Regardless because God is with us (Ps 23:4)

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Regardless because if God is for us, who can be against us (Rom 8:31)

31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Faith Results in Strength (Dan 10:15-19)

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

16 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.

17 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."

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."

Strength in weakness (15-17)

Strength because God is stronger than man's strength (1 Cor 1:25)

25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Strength because it is only through Him I can do everything (Phil 4:13)

13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Strength because God grace is sufficient to make us strong (2 Cor 12:8-10)

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Strength because God is our strength (Ps 28:7-8)

7 The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song. 8 The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

Strength because in His strength we will not fear (Ps 46:1-3)

1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah

Strength because God saves (Ps 20:6-7)

6 Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand. 7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Strength because God doesn't allow us to be shaken (Ps 125:1)

1 Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.

Strength through God's peace and empowerment (18-19)

Strength that comes from Jesus (Phil 4:13)

13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Strength that God provides (1 Peter 4:11)

11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Strength that God arms us with (Ps 18:32)

32 It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

Strength because God is with us wherever we go (Josh 1:9)

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Strength through our weakness (2 Cor 13:4)

4 For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.

Strength in God's mighty power (Eph 6:10)

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

Conclusion

This chapter points us to several important truths for our consideration.

First, our text reminds us that **Christ is the centerpiece of prophecy and the goal of history.** Daniel's vision is the concluding vision of the Book, the climax of the prophetic revelation of Daniel. Daniel's vision is of Christ. This should come as no surprise, especially for New Testament saints:

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ (Colossians 2:16-17; see also Ephesians 1; Colossians 1).

In the study of prophecy, let us be careful to never lose our focus:

(1) The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to defeat the enemies of God, to judge the world, and to establish the kingdom of God, is the climax and culmination of prophecy. The hope and the joy of the Christian is not just heaven; it is to live in the Lord's presence, eternally praising and adoring Him.

(2) This text reminds us that in our present condition we are inadequately equipped to dwell in the presence of God. Here in Daniel 10 we find Daniel utterly disarmed and disabled in the presence of God, and even in the presence of one of His holy angels. This is the norm, for we find that other men experience similar reactions when in the presence of holy heavenly beings. Indeed, there is even a sense of respect for the fallen angelic beings (see Jude 9). Only the unbelieving fallen beings show disregard for the angelic powers (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8-10).

As we observe Daniel and other godly men shrinking back in fear when they find themselves in the presence of God, or of one of the holy angels, we can understand why it is necessary for us to put off this earthly, mortal, body and be clothed with a new, heavenly body. This enables us to enter into the heavens and to enjoy the blessedness of being in the presence of a holy God:

40 There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last

trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:40-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

(3) Our text provides us with an even broader perspective. In our study of chapter 9, I suggested that prophecy provides us with a different perspective. Prophecy enables the Christian to view present events in the light of the future, which God has determined and revealed to us in prophecy. Chapter 10 provides us with yet another perspective, enabling us to see that earthly events correspond to angelic activity, normally unseen by mortal men. Just as the “veil is lifted” in 2 Kings allowing us to view human events in the light of heavenly activity, so does chapter 10. The favorable attitude of Darius toward Daniel is now seen to be related to angelic activity (11:1). The fall of Medo-Persia and the rise of Greece is also the result of angelic activity. These are not things we normally perceive, but our text “lifts the veil,” opening our eyes to the broader realm of spiritual warfare.

We have recently seen nations and world leaders rise and fall. This has not happened by chance. All of these things are a part of the plan of God. Our text assures us that behind much that has happened in the political realms, angelic activity has played a significant part, even though unseen by the human eye. We believe this to be true because the Bible tells us this is so.

This does not mean the Christian is unrelated to the angelic world or the spiritual struggle presently going on out of human sight in high places. We not only are told that the spiritual warfare is raging, but we are encouraged to take part, just as Daniel did, in prayer:

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5).

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15 and having shod your FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, 19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (Ephesians 6:10-20).

(4) Our text teaches us that even when godly angels are engaged in spiritual ministry on our behalf, they may not quickly and easily prevail. Why is it that we are willing to acknowledge that God is saving only a remnant of mankind, and yet we assume that in the angelic realm there are but a small number of disobedient angels who are easily handled by the godly angels? If the victory is not quick and easy for the angels, why would we expect it to be otherwise for us? As I understand Daniel’s teaching on angels, a number will choose to follow Satan, and thus oppose Christ, His people, and His holy city. For a time, it will even appear they are prevailing. Only when God’s time of judgment comes will disobedient men and angels be quickly and totally destroyed, and this by our Lord at His return.

(5) In prophecy, the watchword for the Christian is not immediate success, but struggle. The Christian life is not what many say it is. Many seek to market the gospel (and all too often line their own pockets) by promising converts that God cannot wait to flood them with physical and material blessings. Our Lord never promised immediate material blessings to His disciples. Instead, He called upon those who would follow Him to give up materialism and to follow Him, expecting to suffer for His name’s sake. Prophecy indicates our future holds conflict, suffering, and even apparent defeat, but in the end, our Lord will subdue His enemies, establish His kingdom, and give men their due rewards. For the time being, we do well to heed prophecy and prepare for difficult days ahead, looking to Him for the grace to endure and remain faithful to Him.

Each of us has a choice to make in this life. We may choose to suffer now, in the light of the glory to come, or, we may pursue the pleasures of this world and face the dreaded reality of God’s eternal wrath. Which is your

choice? If you have chosen to follow Christ, you will find great joy, even in the midst of the sorrow and tribulation which following Him brings:

1 Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation. 12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned (Romans 5:1-12).

(Adapted from URL: <https://bible.org/seriespage/11-lifting-veil-daniel-101-21>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The availability of the Bible in the Western world today is mind-boggling. Just the sheer number of editions is impressive in an “embarrassment of riches” kind of way. For print editions, one can choose from various bindings, print size, color coding, etc. For electronic versions, Bibles are available for all the major software platforms in terms of “apps” (short for “applications”). These allow one to have the text ready to read within seconds on a smartphone or tablet. Anyone with such a device can have the Bible alongside them while they are walking, running, or working. Such an availability of Scripture is indeed a blessing, but it can also produce some less-than-desirable attitudes. It is easy for us who live in Western democracies to become complacent and take for granted what we are privileged to possess. With that complacency can come a decline in the passion for spending time in the Bible. Technology, while providing ready access to the Bible, can result in less memorization of Scripture or of hiding the Word in one’s heart (Psalm 119:11). The heart then becomes more vulnerable to being filled with unholy content.

The cure for complacency is to remember and appreciate the high price that has been paid in order for us to have the access to the Bible that we do. We can read in church history of individuals who paid with their lives so that the Scriptures might be available to everyone. The struggle to communicate God’s Word traces back ultimately to individuals such as Daniel. His experience in today’s text tells us something else about the process and struggle by which our Bible has come into being. His reception of God’s Word through the visions and dreams that begin in chapter 7 left him, an elderly man, nearly unable to function. He was not a passive, unresponsive instrument who robotically received whatever God wanted him to record. Knowledge of God’s Word, which eventually became written Scripture, came at a price to Daniel. Many of us who are reading this lesson material are doing so in comfortable surroundings—at home or in the room where our class or small group meets. If the weather outside is cold, our meeting place is probably well heated. We may be relaxing in a padded chair with a cup of coffee in front of us. We hardly think of “trembling” during our encounters with the Word of God—trembling that Daniel actually experienced. Let us never forget the price that so many individuals, including the inspired authors of Scripture, paid so that we may have and read the Bible. May we, like Daniel, set our hearts to understand and humble ourselves before God so that his Word may accomplish all that he desires of us.

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

1. Depend on God’s strength when you feel weak and inadequate (Dan. 10:10)
2. Remember God’s love for you in times of uncertainty (vs. 11)
3. Answers to prayer may be delayed, but God hears you (vss. 12-13)
4. Spiritual leaders may understand truth that others do not (vs. 14)
5. Prayer is one of our most potent weapons in spiritual warfare (vss. 15-18)
6. We can feel strongest spiritually when we are weakened in other ways
7. God knows exactly what you need, and He is in control (vs. 19)