

Ministry on Daniel

Part 8

Speaker	Ernest Brown
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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Chapter 10 In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. And the thing was true. The time appointed was long, and he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth. Neither did I anoint myself at all, till three full weeks were fulfilled. On the fourth and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hittikel, then I lift up my eyes and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with the fine gold of her fires. His body also was like the bell, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his [00:01:03] feet like inculcate polished grass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw not the vision. But a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me, for my countenance was turned in me unto corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words. When I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep and my face, and my face toward the ground, and behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands, and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words I speak unto thee, and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent. When he had spoken [00:02:05] this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chaste thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. 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 with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall my people in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days. And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb, and behold, one like the solitude of the sons of men touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spake, and said unto him that stood [00:03:03] before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. But how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? As for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.

And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak, for I was strengthened. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia, when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee [00:04:02] that which is noted in the scripture of truth, and there is none that holdeth with me in

these things, but Michael the apprentice. There are at least three very good reasons why I am suggesting that we look at Daniel chapter 10 this afternoon. Firstly, I've often in the past been almost on the point of suggesting it for one of our monthly meeting readings or one of our fellowship meeting readings, because I'm sure the subject matter merits discussion. Secondly, we've been spending this last week looking at the book of Daniel. [00:05:03] We've had nine periods allocated for the study, six addresses, two gospel messages, and one bible reading. And I felt that of all the ways of looking at it, it would be best to allocate this afternoon's reading to chapter 10. Thirdly, I'd like to suggest it because I know almost nothing about it, and I would value greatly hearing what the brethren have to offer. I feel I have more questions than answers about Daniel chapter 10. The other contribution that I would make is that Murray has indicated that the local brethren would like to serve tea at quarter to six. [00:06:04] My contribution to that end will be to pace the reading, as the Lord helps us all, to aim at finishing our discussion about half five or maybe twenty five to six, to allow time for a hymn in the prayer before quarter to six. If we find we have nothing more to say before then, so be it. If we have more to say, let us demonstrate that by joining in well at the beginning of the reading instead of waiting to the end. As with other things in the book, events are pinpointed by declaring which kingdom is in the ascendancy, which king is on the throne, and which year of his reign it is. The third year of Cyrus, king of Persia.

[00:07:09] Now, if we turn back, well, if we look at the book of Ezra, is it?

We'll see at the beginning of Ezra something that happened in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the imperial decree giving permission for the restoration of the temple [00:08:03] was given. In the book of Daniel itself, we learn from chapter one that Daniel continued until the first year of king Cyrus. Now, that does not conflict with what we get at the beginning of chapter ten. He did continue until the reign, the inauguration as king of Cyrus, as king of Persia. In fact, his life continued a few years into the reign of king Cyrus. And here, perhaps after his active, responsible years of service to the king were over, we find that here he is in the condition in which we find the beginning of chapter ten.

[00:09:10] I think we should do well if we consider who was involved, who are the persons referred to in the chapter, and what are the issues or the principles involved. And perhaps we may be able to discuss in what way this relates to the rest of the book of Daniel. Is there need to consider that the reference to Cyrus, king of Persia, and then later down in verse 13, the kings of Persia, and towards the end of the chapter, the prince of Persia, are all of these different people? I would rather you phrase that differently, David. As I see, [00:10:07] I know so little about it. Rather than you ask me if I think it's a good thing to do, I'd like you to suggest that we do it. Would you do it again and give us your suggestions plainly? Well, it must be a question, because I'm not too sure whether they are or not, and I'll throw the question even wider. Maybe that will help. As to whether the references for the king of Persia, Cyrus, king of Persia, the kings of Persia, and the prince of Persia, are these different people? Would you pinpoint the verses? Verse one is Cyrus, king of Persia. Then verse 13, kings of Persia, and then towards the end of the chapter, in verse 20, [00:11:02] certainly the prince of Persia. I think that's the verses.

Right. Well, that's a good, clear question. What do the brethren think? You did say, Bill, the other night, that this is one of your favourite chapters in the whole of Scripture. So, I'm sure you have thought quite a bit about this. Would you like to make a suggestion in answer to David's proposition? Well, I'll make a reply and say that I don't think they are the same people. I think the princes of Persia are different from the kings of Persia. So, what have you got to say to that, David? Well, I think that all that you're suggesting is as good as any. The first verse, surely, is the king that reigned there at

that [00:12:08] time. Yes, the king of Persia. In regard to the prince, I think it's true to say that most interpreters think it's probably an angel who visited Daniel.

Did we interrupt you, Bill, just as you were about to make a suggestion there? Well, I think the three announcements that David made in verse 1, verse 13, and verse 20 are all connected with the same angel. Yes, thank you. You can't get away from that. Yes, I think we'd go along with that. The king was on the throne. A prince isn't on the throne, [00:13:04] but he has influence. Now, would that be acceptable as a generalisation, David, that this person spoken of as a prince of Persia is one whose activities affect what goes on in the kingdom? That's right, and I think it's important to say that in verse 13 there is another prince identified, Michael, one of the chief princes. So, there is a person who is influencing the activity in the kingdom of Persia, and there is also, so it seems, another influential person who is active at the same time. Don't you think the most important thing of this chapter is Daniel, the vision that Daniel [00:14:04] was given? And I think it's most important to keep on the line the vision that Daniel received from the Lord himself. Well, let's take it up from there, Bill. We'll follow your suggestion, because the brethren are still a bit slow in coming in with suggestions, so we'll follow yours, which is a definite one. Daniel is found here, and he's mourning. Now, why is he mourning?

Now, we know from other chapters, don't we, that he is aware that the nation to which he belongs has been in captivity for 70 years because they are sinners. They have sinned against God.

Now, Daniel is set to be true to God. He wants God to be honoured, but he laments, doesn't he, [00:15:10] that the nation to which he belongs, instead of ruling over the nations, they're at the bottom of the heap. And because of that, he mourns not only because they are at the tail of the nations instead of the top, instead of being the head of the nations, they're at the tail, and he laments because he knows it's because of their sin. Would you go with that? And that's why he's found here. He's mourning because of the sinful ways and the sinful acts of the nation to which he belongs. Now, we did look last night and the night before at the beginning of chapter 9. He studied the scriptures. He was found in prayer before God.

[00:16:08] He confessed his part in the general sinful condition, and it was to a man like that, like Daniel, that the revelation is given. Now, we're taking your suggestion that in verse 2, in those days, I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. He didn't even enjoy his food. He didn't dress himself up, and for three whole weeks, he was mourning the sin of the nation, and he was praying to his God. Now, you're suggesting, and I'm following that up, that we look at the chapter in the light of that. Is that all right? There also would be, in his mourning perhaps, a suggestion that he entered into in a feeling way [00:17:11] what the nation would pass through. There are several places in the book of Daniel where it makes it apparent that whilst God is moving to an end, where in the light of Deuteronomy 32, Israel would become the head and not the tail. They would pass through distressing times before that end is reached, and when you read about Daniel mourning, you're almost impressed that it's the same kind of spirit that marked his Lord in a later day. I was just looking quickly at Luke 19. This is Luke 19, verse 41. The Lord Jesus, and when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou, even thou hadst known at least in this thy day the things which [00:18:08] belong unto thy peace, but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the day shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench around thee, and encompass thee on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee. I mean, Daniel wasn't an impassive spectator to the things that he heard, was he? He was a man who was affected by the word of God, and I think that's the thing we all ought to take account of, the fact that the scripture has not just given us to inform us,

scripture has really given us to affect us. So he studied the scriptures in a prayerful attitude before his God. This led him into an understanding, not only [00:19:05] of what was happening to the nation, but why, and what they would have to pass through before eventually they were brought into blessing. And as we read the scriptures that he was reading at the time, Jeremiah and others, we can see why Jeremiah is called the weeping prophet.

Weeping because of the condition of the people, and weeping because of the discipline that would be necessary before the nation was brought into blessing. I was thinking about Jeremiah being a weeping prophet, but I was also thinking of Paul. He wept day and night over the church at Coven.

He practically moaned over them because of the condition that they were in. And here we have [00:20:03] Daniel moaning, as you already said, over Israel, which was so disobedient that it was led away into the son of the edge of captivity. We need to try and bring these things before our minds and our hearts, to get something out of it, to prove in our lives, individually as well as collectively, that we know even in this dispensation where apostasy is creeping in, where the church is not what it used to be. Therefore, Daniel is in the same position as what we are today. The church is in a sad state of affairs. Now, the phrase in verse 1 supports what has been said.

[00:21:01] The time appointed was long. There was no quick remedy.

It would be necessary for a long, painful process to be endured before the nation of Israel was eventually brought into blessing. And one of the reasons he mourns is that this is revealed to him. It won't be done overnight. You quoted last night, I think it was, from Proverbs.

Let thine eyes look right up, and thy eyelids before them. And, you know, that statement in verse 1, the time appointed was long, is an important statement, really. We know that there's some of the material that Daniel has yet to be fulfilled, [00:22:03] but scripture is intended to govern those who have long sight, long vision, and it may take years for things to work out, but God's word governing parts of life are important, long before the things themselves eventually reach the end of their course. That's a very significant remark about prophecy in general, isn't it? It's prophecy is not usually to tell us what's just around the corner, what's going to happen tomorrow. It's giving us a long-term view of what God has set himself to achieve and the way that he will do it, and with the intention that we act now in the light of what God will eventually bring in. So, it's a general comment about prophetic truth, isn't it? Long-term view, seeing things by God's focus, and then being [00:23:02] affected at the present time by it. Now, Daniel lived that out. The result of the revelation to him was that at the present time he mourned. Well, as I said to you last night, Ernest, Daniel's prophecy speaks of past, present, and future.

Q. In that connection of this effect that it is having upon Daniel, is it worthwhile then pursuing David's thought again and seeing that these influences which are happening behind the scene, of which Daniel was at the beginning unaware, were put into effect [00:24:02] from that very first day, it says in verse 12, doesn't it? From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself, or to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. A. Yes, well, I think perhaps that's the best verse to look at in a preliminary way, to understand the detail. We may get the impression that Daniel had to pray three weeks because his prayer wasn't heard, or if it was heard, it wasn't receiving an answer. But the answer was there, it was on its way, but there were hindrances to it being brought to Daniel's attention. Now, verse 12 tells us that, doesn't it? Now, if we could take along with that an understanding that chapter 10 is not to be

[00:25:05] considered only on its own, but it's the introduction of the section from 10 to 12. Now, chapter 11 gives us many details about wars that are going to happen in the middle future and in the distant future, to when Daniel was writing. And these were wars on earth between physical men, people who actually lived upon earth, and it's fairly easy to determine who these kings were, kings of the north, kings of the south. And that during all these battles, the battlefield would be God's pleasant land, the land of Palestine, the land of Israel, and during all these periods, the people of God would suffer. Now, that puts chapter 10 into perspective again, that one of the things [00:26:09] Daniel is given to understand is that almost in a secondary way, the people of God are going to suffer, and God is going to allow them to suffer because of their condition at the time. Now, if we also look at Revelation chapter 12, as another general comment, we read last night over 20 references to the end time, when God will bring all things to a proper climax, the time of the end, the last time, the latter end, the end, the appointed time, and so on. Now, when we get to Revelation chapter 12, we find that the time will certainly come when there's not only war on earth between the kings [00:27:08] of the north and the kings of the south listed in Daniel 11. Revelation 12.7 says there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. Now, we need be under no delusion about who the dragon is, because now in verse 9, we read, the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan. So here, we have two combating hosts in heaven, Michael and the holy angels, the good [00:28:07] angels, who have not lost their first estate, and they are opposed by Satan and his angels, who, when Satan sinned, went along with Satan, and they are linked with Satan in what, and in passing, scripture tells us that hell was prepared originally and initially for the devil and his angels. So, the devil has his hosts, his servants, setting themselves against the accomplishment of the will of God. You've been trying to get here. Oh, that's all right. I think this prince, you know, of Persia, is one of the devil's angels, really, who is preventing the movement [00:29:01] that is to come. But is it not the fact that these last three chapters, whilst they were partly fulfilled before now, are looking primarily to the end, to the great tribulation, and to the banishment of that which will keep Israel out of the flesh? So it's really something that hasn't yet been fulfilled. No, we are still in the period where there are hindrances to the nation of Israel being brought into blessing. We want to say more. Yes, you were, in Revelation chapter 12, which we speak about, in verse 7, and there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the [00:30:01] dragon fought, and his angels. That, I take it, is before the great tribulation begins, and is introductory to it. So it's something that lies even beyond the present, altogether. Yes. If there is a suggestion at the beginning of chapter 4 of Revelation of the rapture, the translation of the church, going up to be with the Lord, going from earth to the presence of the Lord, in chapter 12, we read in verse 9 here that he was cast into the earth. Now, it may well be that his being cast out of the heavens, onto the earth, precipitates the terrible time, or certainly coincident with the beginning of the day of Jacob's trouble. That may prompt it. Now, I hope you teach side by side, and we'll not wait till the [00:31:02] end of the meeting before you start explaining this chapter to us. Is this vision that Daniel gets, is it present, or is it future? Because the word vision is mentioned four times in this chapter. He received the vision at the time, but it's telling us about how God will wind things up eventually, and these three chapters take us to the very brink of the world to come.

I quite agree with that, but it doesn't seem, Paul, that Daniel is passing through, not only in mourning and weeping, but he's passing through a great weakness in himself. [00:32:03] Yes. And I think of the words that the angel touched him, and he gave him that strength. We think of the words of Paul, when I am weak, then am I strong. And I think we've got to realize in our own individual selves that there's times when we are weak, and we need to turn to the Lord for strength. Yes. That's what Daniel was waiting on, for the angel that touched him, he'd given this strength that he needed to entomb the vision, whatever it was, the vision. It doesn't say so in this chapter, does it? There's

safety in feeling our weakness. There's safety. There's danger in thinking we are strong. [00:33:04] If you take the visions of Scripture, and there are quite a few, the effect is always to bring man to his right position before God. The apostle Paul, when he was on the road to Damascus, it brought him down. And when John is in Patmos and gets the vision from the Lord, then he falls down. And here we've got Daniel in the same condition. It's the vision, surely, that makes the difference. Yes. Without actually going into the details, the fact that there was a vision of itself is really quite an encouragement. When you think of the circumstances, God's people in captivity, no continuous voice of a prophet, you wonder how are the godly to [00:34:03] be sustained? Well, God sustained a man like Daniel, and later on perhaps we'll think about Daniel's moral and spiritual character in connection with the verse that David has spoken about, verse 12. But there's a lot of encouragement to be drawn from the fact that God never leaves his people without encouragement on thinking of a verse in the Psalms. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show unto them his covenant. We'll never be without direction from God about what we should do, even in the most difficult of circumstances. And even though the impact of what Daniel saw and what he received was very great on him, the way that he entered into the spirit of the thing, the fact that there was a vision from God of itself, is really one to thank Stephen for the encouragement. [00:35:04] There was direct help available in that way. There was also indirect help available, as perhaps we'll see as we go down the verses. Now, I don't want to stifle discussion, I'd rather promote it, but in looking down the chapter, there is a suggestion I'd like to make as a basis for discussion, to make a bit of progress. I'm not stating it dogmatically, it's not to stifle other suggestions, but among other things, consider this. From verse 5 to the end of verse 9, it does suggest itself to me as being one person.

The wording used suggests to me that 10 to 15 is another person. [00:36:07] 16 and 17 may be the first person referred to again, and verses 18 to 21 may be the second person again. Now, as a suggestion for discussion, but I'd very much like to hear other suggestions, go on. I've got to say that before you touch on verse 5, these hypocrites that you've been speaking about when you stood by the river, hinting, Carol, that it does mean a violent opposition against God, and it means rubbish, according to Charlie Courts. Well, Charlie's not here today, you'll have to speak for him. [00:37:03] The meaning of the word certainly is swift, it was a freely flowing river.

The modern name for it is the Tigris. Yes, well you're taking us into Ezekiel, certainly, and Tigris is referred to there as well. Very good. Yes, I would suggest for discussion that verses 5 to 9, and the language that is used, compared with where other places where the language is used, I would suggest may be one of the Old Testament theophanies. One of the appearances of the Lord in a way that could be recognised having the semblance [00:38:01] of a man. That's a suggestion. Now, there are things that are said, and we can look at them, there are things about that presentation of the person which suggests supremacy and glory, and glory. But when we come to verses 10 to 15, this person seems to be a subordinate person whose power is limited. Now this is the one David drew our attention to initially.

There is one there who is opposed by the prince of the kingdom of Persia. Verses 16 and 17 may be another brief reference to the one referred to in verses 5 and 9.

[00:39:01] If that's not acceptable, I'd like to hear why. And then verses 18 to 21, again, is this subordinate person. I'm not pressing that. It's a basis for discussion. But if we look at verses 5 to 9, first of all, certainly the suggestion is feasible that this is one of those very strange Old Testament portions where those who are in need, those who are faithful to God, godly people, before the Lord came into the world in incarnation, there were rare occasions where those who were true to God

needed help, needed support, needed encouragement, and God manifested himself to them in a personal way. Now, do you think the language [00:40:06] in these verses suggests that this certain man may be a pre-incarnate revelation of the Lord to Daniel to encourage him?

There are certainly some similarities, Ernie, with the reference in Revelation chapter 1, the one who appears to John when he was on the Isle of Patmos, the reference to the eyes, and maybe the golden girdle, certainly are similar.

What kind of image or vision is it? What kind of person or what kind of office is suggested by this kind of clothing or attitude, David?

[00:41:03] It is purity. It is God within. Personal purity is involved. This is not the glory of the person that shines here. Yes, I think our brother is drawing us on to that, that these are personal attributes, personal attributes also that make him fit to fill the office of Jesus Christ.

Personal attributes also that make him fit to fill the office of judge when the time is necessary, and both those things would be of great consolation to Daniel in his day, feeling his weakness, feeling the shame that was upon the nation, and distraught that it would be a long, long time before things were put right. [00:42:06] Well, once you speak of personal characteristics here, Ernie, the whole emphasis is upon that glory of the Lord that he would speak on as being official, an official glory, but there is tremendous comfort in the fact that he is supreme and almighty. I was saying to somebody recently talking about a statement that George Davison used to make, which I thought was a bit inappropriate at the time, but the more I think about it now, I realised how appropriate it was. He used to say he took great comfort from the fact that God will judge every man, and he used to think, well, that's a bit inappropriate, maybe we ought to rejoice in the fact that he's a saviour God, but I can only see exactly what he meant, there's a tremendous amount of comfort in the fact that God himself who was sent to convey the message had all the attributes of power and glory, that in itself [00:43:06] was a tremendous comfort, wasn't it? Yes. Wouldn't you say, Ernest, this verse 6 would be future, because as David has already said, you get the same quotation in the first book of Revelation, verse 18, not the same words, but near to the same words, so it would be future as Michael has already said. The judgment is full before Daniel here for the future coming in. The vision was present for Daniel, he was given the vision then, but it was a consolation to him at that time that the time will surely come where the Lord will take up every outstanding matter and settle things righteously. The Lord, the righteous judge, we are very pleased to learn [00:44:05] about from John's epistle, aren't we? One of the reasons Joseph was such a full type of the Lord was he was a revealer of secrets. We learn in Thessalonians when things are building up to the climax that the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven, and when he is revealed from heaven, he will put everything in proper perspective. He will show everything in their right colours. There'll be no veils, no clouds, everything will be seen as it really is. The Lord, the righteous judge, will make things plain. Now, that must have been an immense comfort to Daniel at the time. I don't really think it is comfort here, really. The next verse tells you that he's quaking and he's dreaming. That doesn't tie in very well with comfort. [00:45:04] It seems to me, Mr Stevenson, that you have to contrast that with what happened to the men who were with him, and it seems they fled away. Whilst it is true that in the presence of the Lord as judge we do quake and so on, there is this, as it were, this consolation that we are seeing things in the right way. I thought it would be a confirmation to Daniel of the glory of the person that is speaking to him. I'm sure that's true. The Lord would bend him low, personally. The people that were with him didn't have anything to do with it. They fled away. When Paul went on his journey to Damascus, he alone got the vision. The people that were with him didn't get it, did they? Yes. Other things happen in the book where Daniel gives

the record of himself that he either grieved [00:46:03] or he was disturbed, but it doesn't say that about him here, does it? He says, verse 7, I, Daniel, alone saw the vision.

He was the only one who had mourned. He was the only one who had confessed his sin. He was the only one who'd been low in the presence of God, and in answer to that kind of condition, he alone saw the vision. The others, not in the same spiritual condition as himself, very much like those who were the companions of Saul of Tarsus, when he alone saw the vision of the Lord. Others about thought that it thundered. But here, he alone is given the discernment, and that again is a challenge to all of us [00:47:04] as to whether or not we are in that spiritual and moral condition that means that while others might be quaking, that we understand what the will of the Lord is. But he was troubled, wasn't he? It says in verse 8, I was left alone and saw this great vision.

Yes. There remained no strength in me, for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. It seems to me that he was bound in the presence of this vision, and the mighty glory of it altered his whole outlook. How good a picture that is, that in the presence of the Lord, he was absolutely drained of his own [00:48:01] strength, and the only right position was to be prostrate in the presence of the Lord. Now, it's that kind of thing that encourages me to understand that these verses do tell us about a pre-incarnate vision of the Lord. I have said earlier before that in verse 6, it was future, because it speaks there just of a man. Now, in action, the apostle says, God has appointed a day in which he shall use the world in righteousness from that man in whom we have appeared.

Yes. The fulfilment of this is future. We begin to understand when we look at verse 6, why it is so rightly said that we need an understanding of the book of Daniel, if we are to understand the book of Revelation. And at the beginning of the book of Revelation, [00:49:06] there is that which is recounted of a vision that John the Apostle was given, likewise, including many of the same features, these personal glories of the Lord, which show that he's the only one who's competent to fill the office of judge on behalf of God. And verse 6 lists some of these features. I suppose it's true that Daniel may have had some concern for what is very blessed in the following verse, not the disciple discussion on the earlier verses, but in verse 11, the other person who comes, an angelic being, one would possibly say, he says to Daniel, O man, greatly beloved, and does this not bring an element of comfort and remove any doubts or fear which he may have had, [00:50:07] and sets him aright, in a sense, to be ready to listen to what this messenger has to say.

If there's any doubt as to his standing, his relationship, he finds he's a man greatly beloved. I think there's a tremendous comfort in that, that others might not take account of the way in which your heart beats or the determining course of your life, but there's very real assurance here that even if nobody down here takes account of it, God takes account of parts that have been true to him. Yes, that's confirmed in verse 12, isn't it? In regard to the prayer, God sees, God knows, God hears, and God answers. So this is the start, really, [00:51:05] you know, this condition of soul is the start of movement God-wish, and the possibility of being used by God, even to take in the vision and to give it out. Now, a good reason for understanding that verses 10 to 15 are not the Lord is because in verse 13 there is opposition, and the person who is referred to appeals to Michael, the archangel, for help. Now, we cannot envisage that the Lord himself would need or feel constrained to appeal to Michael, the archangel, for help. As we saw in the vision in verse 6, the Lord is personally supreme. You couldn't think of any contradiction. No. Michael, we know from other scriptures, [00:52:12] comes to light very often when Israel, as a nation, is in view, seem to have special responsibility for the nation of Israel, among other things. And the person who's referred to here seems to be subordinate

to Michael, and has this interest in the nation of Israel.

He's the only angel that's called the prince. Sorry? He's the only angel, Michael, that's called the prince. Verse 13, the prince of the kingdom of Persia. Yes. Do you take that amount, or do you [00:53:04] take it as one of Satan's angels? In the light of Revelation 12 verse 7, I understand this to be one of the angels who fell with Satan, and takes a particular interest in attempting to thwart the will of God in relation to Persia, and it's the attitude of the nation of Persia to the nation of Israel. Opposing the will of God, and using the Persian nation as such. Benny, time is moving on, and I think we should spend some time on verses 11 and 12, about the angel's characteristic. Well, would you wind up a general summary on verses 10 to 15, then, and then that will [00:54:07] accelerate things. Well, I was really concerned to talk about Daniel and his personal and spiritual characteristics, really, because we've got a key to a life which is useful for God, and a challenge about the way in which we live our lives. Yes, well that's extremely important, provided we do make some time for getting an understanding of the layout of the chapter as a whole. If you'd like to go into 11 and 12. I'd like to just pinpoint a couple of things. Firstly, that it says in verse 12, from the first day that thou didst set thine heart. You know, this matter of purpose of heart, I'm looking at chapter 1 and verse 8, but Daniel purpose in his heart that he would not defile himself with the fortune of the king's [00:55:04] name. It's really quite vital what you set your heart on in early life, because that governs the whole course of your life. I've listened to it for quite a long while, and people have been speaking on the verse, where your treasure is there with your heart. They also are emphasising it's the heart that comes first. In fact it isn't. It's what your mind determines is valuable, because it says where your treasure is, and it's your God-given mind that determines what the treasure is. And then it says there will your heart be also. And then Daniel emerges here as a man who was prepared to be governed by what pleased God. And what a lovely assurance, hanging it on to that phrase that David has just referred to in verse 11. A man greatly beloved. What a lovely [00:56:05] thing to learn, that from the very first day that he set his heart in that particular way, God took it out of him. Do you not think that this particularly refers to verse 1, Michael? Sorry, I didn't catch the last piece of that. Verse 1. Do you not think that the quotation in verse 12 throws you back to verse 2? The thing that was happening with Daniel at that time as a man. Do you not think that? Yes, I think that's right, yes. You seem to say you're going a bit further back. It's right to go further back, because I think being further back would bring me to the point of verse 2. Would verse 2 and verse 12 in this particular chapter do, I think, tie up together? Yes. He acted in this way, in this particular instance, because it was the way [00:57:06] he lived his life. So both are true, aren't they? Yes, they are. And we ought to say that generally speaking, you might find rare exceptions to this, generally speaking, you only are in later life what you've set the course of your life to be. I've come to the conclusion over many years that a lot of us, if we had a second life, would be very good Christians, but we only have one life, and therefore it's absolutely vital how you use your life for the pleasure and glory of God. We have a heart, there's no doubt about Daniel's heart, where it was, because I often think he was a man, if it was man after God's own heart. If your heart's right, then you'll be right with God.

[00:58:03] Yes. Good, well... Can I just make one other observation? I'm sure you'll leave me something to say tonight. He did it after the scripture, and it was what he set his heart to do. He set his heart to understand and to chasten himself. Yes. I think we're all very good at applying scriptures to other people. Master, speak to my brother. That's right. What other people should do, but Daniel's first concern was to allow God's word to radically affect himself. Yes, indeed. Now, as we know, the declared topic to be considered tonight is the moral lessons to be learned from the book and about Daniel, so I wouldn't want, really, to spend time talking about the angels or these principalities in power, so perhaps for the last 10 minutes or so, [00:59:03] we can try to agree on the layout of the

chapter so that we can take it away and meditate on it further. Certainly, as far as angels are concerned and their functions, as far as we are concerned, we learn in Ephesians that they are observing us. They are learning lessons from us. The all-variegated wisdom of God is perceived by the angels in the way that Christian believers live. They are observing. We know from Hebrews 1 that they are ministering spirits, and that's important. They are helpers. They are servants. It is given to some, certainly one, Michael, the archangel, we are told that one of his roles is to contend. Jude tells us that [01:00:06] Michael contended with the devil over the body of Moses. But here, I'll make the suggestion, or the brethren can comment, verses 10 to 15 tells us that one of the reasons why the answer seemed to take a long time is that while there are those good angels trying to help on the work of God, the devil's angels seek what they can do to oppose it. They all have their sphere of responsibility, and one of the devil's angels is referred to as the prince of the kingdom of Persia. Well, that would be one of the reasons then that we should say the heart is set right. [01:01:02] The heart is set right where the affections exist. Yes, indeed. Because in Colossians 3, we get such an affection. It's got affections there. Yes. Now, yes, go on. Verse 13, the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me. Now, this me, the suggestion is, is a holy angel devoted to God whose sphere of influence is assisting Michael, the archangel, in looking after the welfare of the people of Israel. Is that acceptable? Yes. Now, how about verses 16 and 17?

The suggestion is, for your judgment, that the me in verse 13, therefore, the [01:02:06] person referred to in verse 10 to 15, the me is the holy angel that assists Michael in looking after the welfare of the people of Israel. Do you not think it's the man that touched? Yes, yes. 10 to 15. Yes, in verse 10, you're connected with verse 10. Yes. That's right. Yes, that's right. There's a change of person from verse 9 to verse 10. Is that all right? Yes, yes. Now, I suggest that likewise, there's a change of person or a reversion from verse 15 to verse 16. There's one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips, and then Daniel says to him, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows [01:03:06] are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. Is that acceptable, or do the brethren think that right through from verse 10, it's the angel serving God in looking after the welfare of Israel? It's a matter of judgment. I think what you say is right. It seems to me that the withstanding continued throughout the whole period that Daniel was praying and fasting. Yes, yes. It says he fasted three weeks, and the opposition was there, it says, for so many days. Yes.

That's 13, one in 20 days. Yes, 21 days. Three weeks. So, as long as there was the exercise [01:04:06] there, in Daniel's heart, there was the opposition on the other side, but the secret is that at the end of it all, he gets the benefit. It certainly would preserve us from being fatalistic and saying, well, if it's the Lord's will, it'll happen. I can do nothing about it. It pleases God to fulfill his will by giving devoted souls an interest in what is according to God, so that they, having mourned their own part in the general sorrow and sinfulness, can appeal to God, according to his glory and honour, that he will bring his will to pass. To a cynical man, that seems a very convoluted way of doing [01:05:02] things, but it's the way it pleases God to achieve things on earth, isn't it? Would you not say that Daniel was a man of faith, a man of obedience, and he was a faithful servant? Yes. And because of those virtues, God used him for the accomplishment of his purpose. Now, if I would desire to be used, there's no easy way to that.

I must follow Daniel's path, morally and spiritually. Now, how do we put this into effect in regards to the practical side of it now? Now, I've come for thy words. Is this Jeremiah 15? Tell me what I need to find.

[01:06:01] Some of us have been looking during the week at the beginning of chapter 9, where blessing

and revelation and usefulness in service for Daniel flowed from the study of the Scriptures, much prayer, and the confession of any sin. Now, that's practical. If there's anything outstanding between me and the Lord, and I don't confess it, and I don't repent of it and turn away from it, there's no prospect that I will be useful to the Lord or will receive any fresh vision. Would you say that this greatly beloved is in heaven or upon the earth?

Oh man, greatly beloved. Does the love come from heaven? The appreciation from that side, [01:07:07] or is it from the other side? Well, doesn't his name mean beloved of God? That's what counts. There were times on earth, according to the book, where he certainly wasn't popular. He may have earned a grudging respect, but there were those who were ready to trip him up whenever they got the opportunity. But being right with God is the all-important thing, isn't it? I was thinking of Caleb. He was a man that always followed the law. Yes. Daniel, a man greatly beloved. Good. Paul, a man in Christ. And Timothy, a man of God. It's a pity it's not an open ministry meeting tonight. You could have developed those for us. We'll have to wait for another occasion. It must be a very lovely thing, though, to move down here, conscious that you're loved in [01:08:05] a great way by God himself. I mean, the great love is God loves a man like this. This is the kind of man that God set his heart upon. There wasn't one man around here who was marked by all things perfectly in a practical way. But the believer should go through this world conscious of this resting upon his spirit, that he's very loved by God. What a difference it makes in a hostile world with all the kind of opposition that can arise to know that everything between the soul and the Lord is continuing on in an undisturbed serenity. Undisturbed serenity. There's no outstanding matter. I think he's already got this message to assure himself and to settle his mind in will and free, if you like, free spirit.

[01:09:08] After all, if we are in any doubt about that, we'll not be able to carry out what we have to do, will we? If we're in a duress or straight, or in any sense. And here the message comes, I take it, from the man who touched it, which was not a man on earth. I think White Angel was greatly beloved. He never put a word wrong, nor a beat wrong, in those. He was in captivity. He was greatly beloved. I think of that word in the song that fell on me. I am my beloved, and my beloved is mine. I'm sure Daniel would own this love to be due to the grace of his God. Yes. But I'm sure God would say that it was every bit deserved. [01:10:04] He was morally suited, and he morally deserved to be the recipient and the object of such a wonderful love of God. We've nearly reached your deadline. Yeah. And perhaps you'd like to make a comment on the phrase in the last verse of the chapter, the Scripture of Truth. Yeah. I will show thee that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth. Moral suitability, moral accord with God is essential for communion, and Daniel enjoyed it.

But that having been said, faith rests upon the revelation of God in the Word of God.

And here, the consolation to him is, and the strengthening is given, in that that which is [01:11:08] that which is going to be shown him is the truth, the Scripture of Truth, the holy writing of truth. Now, which aspect of that you'd like to develop? Perhaps you'd better state. Well, as I was concerned to underline was, firstly, there is the abiding Scripture. Yes. It's there. It's not going to be altered at all. It's sure, certain, trustworthy. That's where truth comes from. Yes. It's not just that truth is in the Scripture. Truth is the Scripture. The Scripture is truth. You can rely upon it. It's an eternal validity. And there's revelation in connection with it. I've come to show thee that which is [01:12:02] noted in the Scripture. Now, this takes us full circle back to the beginning of chapter 9. This revelation began by his spending time meditating upon what the Scripture of Truth said.

His moral condition was suited to the reception of the Word of God. And now, when he's given a

vision consequent upon his understanding of the Scripture, this is reinforced that it's not moral condition. It's not the revelation itself given to him in a personal way. Everything has to be judged and understood against the plumb line of the Word of God. Yes, thank you for that. He received the Word, he understood it, and he obeyed it.

[01:13:06] And it was when he obeyed it that further progress was possible. I was going to say that it's absolute here, isn't it, that what the Scripture says will happen. It's in the context of the opposing influences. And he says, now I'm going forward, and there's only one who's with me in this, and it's Michael. He's strength with me against these others. But in the sheer knowledge, isn't it, that good overcomes evil, and God's Word, the Scripture, cannot be broken? And so, for the last vision, it will go on, and the everlasting kingdom will be settled. The end will be reached. It's a suitable point, isn't it, in this chapter, that everything that God had previously said would happen will come to pass because God has said so. [01:14:05] Daniel had the Word of God for it. Now, we'll have to leave for private meditation the New Testament references that confirm that now, in our day, there are spiritual wickednesses in high places seeking to oppose the accomplishment of the Word of God. But there are those that the Lord uses for our spiritual welfare too. Now, if we want to have our welfare not only looked after, but the will of God brought to pass for us, it can only be by responding as Daniel did, meditating on the Scriptures, much prayer before him, and then confessing any unresolved sin.

Questioner 2 This is a picture of truth, the book of God, really, all that God is going to effect. [01:15:09] It's mentioned in chapter 12, in verse 1, everyone that shall be found written in the book. So, God has a plan, and he will have that plan, there'll be opposition to it, there is no doubt about that. But what he has written in the book will certainly come to pass. Questioner 1 Yes, and for us, there is the additional support of the Lord's Prayer, the Son's Prayer on our behalf. Sanctify them by thy truth, thy Word is truth. I think we'll have to leave it there for today.