

The Preparation for the Final Prophecy

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the last great vision given to the aged prophet Daniel, focusing on the deep soul exercise Daniel went through and the appearance of supernatural beings. The chapter provides valuable information about unseen spirits, good and evil, and offers spiritual lessons. Daniel's prayer and fasting for understanding of the vision are highlighted, along with the delayed answer due to spiritual warfare involving the Prince of Persia. The chapter concludes with the strengthening of Daniel to receive the vision and the announcement of future events concerning the Jewish people.

Description

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Transcript

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 hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "The sermon explores Daniel's final vision, emphasizing the significance of prayer, divine intervention, and the prophetic message for the Jewish people in the end times." sermonType: "prophetic" topics: - name: "Spiritual Warfare" slug: "spiritual-warfare" - name: "Prophetic Visions" slug: "prophetic-visions" bibleRefs: - text: "Daniel 10:12" bookId: "DAN" chapter: "10" verse: "12" outline: - heading: "I" points: - "Introduction to the Book of Daniel" - "The significance of the final vision" - "Context of Daniel's life during the vision" - heading: "II" points: - "Daniel's mourning and fasting" - "The appearance of the supernatural being" - "Interpretation of the 'certain man'" - heading: "III" points: - "The delayed answer to Daniel's prayer" - "The role of the Prince of Persia" - "The intervention of Michael" - heading: "IV" points: - "The message for the Jewish people" - "Understanding the scope of the vision" - "The importance of humility in receiving God's message" - heading: "V" points: - "The strengthening of Daniel" - "The significance of divine comfort" - "The call to faithfulness amid spiritual warfare" faq: - q: "What is the main theme of the sermon?" a: "The sermon focuses on the preparation for the final prophecy revealed to Daniel, emphasizing the spiritual warfare and divine revelations." - q: "Who is the 'certain man' that appeared to Daniel?" a: "The 'certain man' is believed to be a Christophany, a

pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, who provided Daniel with divine insight." - q: "Why was there a delay in answering Daniel's prayer?" a: "The delay was caused by the Prince of Persia, a powerful evil spirit, who withstood the messenger for three weeks until Michael intervened." - q: "What does the vision reveal about the Jewish people?" a: "The vision outlines significant events that will befall the Jewish people in the latter days, particularly during the end times." quotes: - "Thy prayer is heard is sweet to faith." - "The deep sleep which overcame him corresponds to the term 'as dead' in John's experience." - "The place of utter weakness is the place of blessing." applicationPoints: - "Seek God earnestly in prayer, trusting that your words are heard even when answers seem delayed." - "Embrace humility in the presence of God, recognizing our own weakness and His strength." - "Be aware of the spiritual battles occurring in the unseen realm and rely on God's strength to overcome." keywords: - "Daniel" - "final prophecy" - "spiritual warfare" - "Christophany" - "prayer" - "humility" - "Michael" - "Jewish people" ---

The three remaining chapters in the Book of Daniel belong together. They contain the last great vision given to the aged prophet, a vision, which in some respects is even more striking than the preceding one. The tenth chapter contains the account of the deep soul exercise through which the prophet passed and how supernatural Beings appeared and talked to the man greatly beloved. It is the preparation for the vision itself contained in the eleventh chapter, continued in the twelfth, which forms a kind of an epilogue.

The chapter before us is of great interest, because it gives information which is of much value about the unseen spirits, good and evil, while other even more helpful spiritual lessons are to be found here.

The Third Year of Cyrus. The first verse tells us of the exact time when Daniel received this last great revelation.

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, but the time appointed was long :1 and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

Cyrus, the great King of Persia, was already in the third year of his reign. In his first year Cyrus had published the great proclamation in which he had given the astounding information that " the Lord God of heaven " had charged him to build him a house in Jerusalem. (Ezra i.) That he was the divinely chosen instrument for this purpose we learned before from Isaiah's great prophecy in which long before his birth he had been named and his work predicted. Daniel, however, had not made use of the decree to return and he still remained in the scene of captivity. Probably he held no longer any high office in connection with the government. The last verse in the first chapter seems to indicate this. There it is stated that he continued unto the first year of King Cyrus ; it must mean in practical association with the affairs of the Persian Kingdom. Why Daniel stayed behind is not stated. Though the decree had gone forth that the house should be built, there was a feeble response and a small number only returned. No doubt Daniel looking for new revelations concerning the time of the end, had waited on the Lord and had received the direction to tarry in the land of the Gentiles. The Lord had still some important visions for him in store relating to His own people. Now the thing, which was made known unto him was " the great warfare " (the literal Hebrew) and that great warfare in the near future and what is to take place in the distant future when Daniel's people should be delivered (xii. 1) is the subject of this final vision given to Daniel before he went to his rest. As we shall find the vision stands in closest relation with that contained in Chapter viii. It is an expansion of that vision, containing the prophetic record of the overthrow of the Persian empire by Greece and the minutest details of the wars of the Ptolemies and Seleucidae, springing up out of the divided Grecian empire. Now while at the close of Chapter viii. it is written that Daniel fainted and " none

understood," here we find that he had the understanding given to him. May it not be that Daniel continued in prayer after God had so wonderfully answered his former prayer in the preceding chapter? As none understood the vision in Chapter viii., Daniel must have asked the Lord for the understanding and then it was revealed to him. We read furthermore that for three weeks he was mourning in connection with his earnest seeking for the meaning of the vision and he also fasted.

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 whole weeks were fulfilled.

The weeks mentioned here are not " year weeks," but the Hebrew distinguishes them by associating with them days, literally " weeks of days." For three weeks he remained in that condition and there was no answer. What delayed the answer for three full weeks we shall discover in the course of this chapter.

In the fourth verse the time and the place are specified, when and where all this took place. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month Daniel was by the side of the great river Hiddekel. Hiddckel (arcadian, Iddiklat) is the river Tigris and on its(banks the prophet was bodily present.

The Appearance of " A Certain Man." It was at that time when Daniel, whose eyes had been downcast, lifted them up and beheld a supernatural Being in his presence.

And on the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and beheld a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz : His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, 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 comliness was turned in me to corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground (verses 4-9).

The question is who was this " certain man," or as it reads literally in Hebrew, "a man of desires"? Some believe it was Gabriel who appeared once more, as he had come to Daniel in Chapters viii. and ix. Others have taught it was another mighty angel. While a few expositors of this chapter have taught that it was none other than the Lord Himself who paid a visit to the Prophet, just as He came in the form of a Man to Abraham (Genesis xviii). We incline to this view and believe that the greatly beloved man was favored with a Theophany. Those who object to this view point to the thirteenth verse where one declares that he was hindered and needed the help of the archangel Michael. But it is not necessary at all to identify the speaker of verse 13 with the one who at first appeared unto Daniel. If it were the same who tells Daniel that he had to call upon Michael for help, He certainly could not have been the Lord; He needs no help from any creature, though he be the archangel. However, it is quite clear that the appearing of the Being described by Daniel in verses 4-9 is no longer in view in the tenth verse. The one who touches Daniel and addressed him is no longer He whose form He beheld, in whose presence He stood alone, before whom he laid prostrate in the dust and whose voice he had heard when he had fallen in a deep sleep.

The evidence that we have here an appearing of God the Son before His incarnation, in the form of a Man, a great Christophany, is very convincing. Daniel was blessed as the man greatly beloved with a manifestation of the Lord of Glory, just as the beloved disciple John, over 600 years later, was likewise

permitted to see the same Lord of Glory. There is only one difference. Daniel saw Him before His incarnation and John beheld Him in the island of Patmos after His death, triumphant resurrection and ascension into Glory. Both, however, are strikingly alike. In Revelation i. 12-17 we find the manifestation, which is so much like the one Daniel had on the river banks of Hiddekel. Anyone comparing this Scripture with Daniel's record of what he saw must feel convinced that it is one and the same person. And there is also a hint in connection with that vision of Glory, which Saul of Tarsus had on the road to Damascus. The men that were with Daniel saw not the vision, but a great fear came upon them and they fled. The companions of Saul were likewise filled with terror "hearing a voice, but seeing no man." (Acts ix. 7).

The effect of this great manifestation upon Daniel was the same which happened to John. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." (Revel, i. 17.) Daniel also was on his face toward the ground and his comeliness was turned in him into corruption. The deep sleep which overcame him corresponds to the term "as dead" in John's experience.

What lessons there are for us here. We may see here the blessedness of the faith life in its progress. Daniel began as the lad, the young captive in Babylon with the simple purpose of faith. God sustained him and blessed him with wisdom and understanding. This was the lesson concerning faith we found in the first chapter. Then when Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten his dream, Daniel acted in faith, when he promised to make the dream known and when he and his companion cast themselves upon the Lord, the dream was revealed unto him, God thus honored his faith. Then he talked with angels. Visions came to him. Gabriel appeared next and afterwards was sent "flying swiftly" with the great message to Daniel. And now after Daniel's prayer and fasting, the Lord Himself appeared to the Prophet, who had been so faithful. Thus he went "from Glory to Glory."

Yet though he was the man greatly beloved and enjoyed the favor of the Lord to a high degree, though he had been such a faithful servant for so many years and honored the Lord as but few of the great men of God have done, when he comes face to face with the Lord of Glory, he utterly collapses and sinks into the dust in His holy and glorious presence. And that is the place which belongs to every; saint, even the most advanced in spiritual knowledge and the most self-sacrificing in service. In His presence we must own our utter nothingness and unworthiness.

The Mystery of the Delayed Answer. And now other angelic beings under the Lord of Glory are manifested and speak to Daniel, one of them, no doubt, was Gabriel.

And, behold, an 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 that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten 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 thy 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 (verses 10-15).

Without following every detail of the experience, which Daniel here records, we turn at once to that which is the important information in these words. The heavenly visitor who addressed Daniel as a "man greatly beloved" and before whom he stood trembling, still shaking on account of the One he had beheld at the

river bank, now brings him intelligence concerning the delayed answer. Three weeks before Daniel had begun to chasten and set himself to understand, three weeks he had sought the answer to his prayer, but no answer reached him. The heavens seemed to be closed. How different it was from his experience in the preceding chapter. Then he was not even permitted to finish his prayer. His prayer of humiliation and confession was suddenly answered by the man Gabriel. And now three full weeks had gone and there had been no answer to his prayer.

The same messenger now tells Daniel that as soon as he had begun his exercise on earth, his words, that is, his prayers were heard. Blessed comfort there is in this assuring word ! As soon as we approach the throne of Grace and approach it now in this present dispensation in " that worthy Name," our words are heard. And should that not be sufficient? May it not be the very best after all not to trouble ourselves so much about the answer to prayer as some Christians do? We can leave the answer with Him " who does all things well " and acts as it pleases Him. ** Thy prayer is heard " is sweet to faith.

And the messenger assured Daniel that he has come with the answer. But why was he three full weeks late in transmitting to Daniel the message? The answer was delayed by the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia, who withstood him for exactly three full weeks and so great was the power of the Prince of Persia that the help of the mighty archangel Michael was needed to help him through.

Who then is the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia? Certainly no one would believe that the Prince of Persia here means Cyrus.² Who could for a moment think that a mere human being, though a mighty prince, could intercept a spirit being with a message from above! But if it is not the actual Prince of Persia, who then is it who withstood God's messenger? It was a powerful wicked spirit, who controlled as a messenger of Satan the affairs of the Kingdom of Persia. Satan is the head of innumerable fallen angels. As the " god of this age " he controls the affairs of the Kingdoms of this world and the wicked spirits in the heavenly sphere are his agents, by whom he effects this control. Satan is not omnipotent, nor omniscient nor omnipresent, but through the wicked spirits, who are under him, he is well nigh omnipresent and omniscient. In Ephesians vi. 12, they are called " the world rulers of this darkness" (this age). Satan did not speak an untruth when he told our Lord on the mountain of temptation, that he had the Kingdoms of the world in his power, that they were his. They are still in his mighty grasp, till some day he will be stripped of these possessions.

Now over each Kingdom he puts some evil spirit to exercise his influence. He himself as the prince of the power in the air is above them all and stands behind all these agencies. This is seen from other Scriptures. For instance in Ezekiel xxviii. 11-19, we have a word addressed to the King of Tyrus. In connection with that King a description is given of another being, who stood behind that King as the controlling power, and that description fits only one, Satan.

The power and domain of Satan is in the heavens, right above the earth and upon the earth as well. From above and through the evil angels he still has hold on the Kingdoms of the earth. And so it was that over the Kingdom of Persia a fallen angel, one ,who belongs to the principalities and powers mentioned in Ephesians, had charge. This being withstood the messenger for three weeks. There was conflict in the air. The great archangel Michael (as we know from the New Testament the only archangel of the Bible) had come to the assistance of the messenger. This is the first time we find Michael mentioned in the Bible. It is not the first time that he acted, for from the Epistle of Jude we know, that when Moses had died, Michael was present and faced the devil then. We find him generally in connection with the Jewish people. He is, so to speak, the guardian angel of Israel. " And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which

standeth for the children of Thy people." (Dan. xii. 1). This passage tells that at some future time this mighty Archangel will stand up for the Jewish people. When that will be we shall find when we read the last chapter of this Book. A great conflict in the heavenlies will yet take place when Michael and his angels will fight the dragon and the evil angels associated with him (Revel, xii.). Some teach that Michael (his name means " who is like God?") is our Lord. But this cannot 'be maintained in the light of the Epistle of Jude (see verse 9). What power Satan must possess when he was enabled through a demon prince to hold God's messenger in check and keep back God's message! 3 Here are some mysterious things. Why he is still allowed to do this work in Kingdoms, is responsible for the bloody wars among the nations and for the abominable things in idolatrous heathendom, we do not fully understand now. But the passage gives us a hint how in our individual lives as believers, he too does interfere and with his many adversaries attacks and harasses. On the other hand there is the comfort that there are the good angels, who keep and defend those who are the Lord's. " Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? " (Hebrews i. 14). Some day in the presence of the Lord we shall fully know the secret things of the unseen spirits, both good and evil.

An Important Statement. An important statement is made by the messenger when he declares that he has come to tell Daniel and make him understand " what shall befall Thy people (the Jews) in the latter days (or : the end of days) ; for the vision is yet for many days (or: for those days) " (verse 14). This ought to settle once and for all the scope of this final vision. While it has for a prelude, as we shall find, the wars which were fought by the Ptolemies and others and we behold a still more minute description of Antiochus Epiphanes, yet .the vision concerns the Jewish people in the time of the end (the seventieth week, more correctly the last 3 1/2 years). What is to befall them at that time is brought out. If this had been understood expositors would never have fallen into the fanciful and erroneous interpretations, which claim that it concerns the church and that the papacy is the Antichrist

When the messenger had concluded we behold the venerable prophet with face toward the ground and speechless. It is the attitude of deep humility and his willingness to listen only.

The Prophet Strengthened to Receive the Vision. Messengers of God appear now and they strengthened the aged servant and prophet.

And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither 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 thou hast strengthened me. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth : and there is none that holdeth with me in these things. but Michael your prince (verses 16-21).

First the prophet's lips are touched (compare with Isaiah vii. 6-7) and then he is enabled to speak. The first utterance which comes from these opened lips since the great vision had passed before him, is the expression of his great weakness and that he retained no strength. He was overwhelmed with holy awe so that no strength was left in him. And this place of utter weakness is the place of blessing. Again he is

touched. The first touch meant the opening of the prophet's lips and after his confession of weakness the second touch by which he was strengthened. And if a servant of God like Daniel needed such exercise how needful it is for us.

Then he received the message of peace and comfort. Fear not ; Peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened. His mind and heart was brought to rest and all his fears were silenced. Such perfect rest and quietness was needed for Daniel to receive the prophecy and to understand the vision. It is needed by all who desire to lay hold of the things of God relating to the future. The child of God who is in unrest and is not close to the Lord is unfitted to understand the prophetic Word. And this is one of the reasons, why there is so little desire to know what God has revealed concerning the future. The heart which does not enjoy the peace of God cannot enjoy the blessed things God has made known in prophecy.

Daniel, like young Samuel, said " let my Lord speak." The messenger intimates that he will return to fight with the prince of Persia and then the prince of Grecia was likewise to follow. He announces that he will now show the prophet what is noted in " Kitab Emeth," the " Scriptures of Truth." This remarkable expression refers not to some unwritten book, as some have taken it, but to an actual writing, as the Hebrew expresses it, "Writing of Truth." It is the name given by this messenger of God to the Book which under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was written by Daniel. In what light the critics appear, who are denying the inspiration of this book and who class its sublime revelations with myths and legends !

Persia and Greece being mentioned by the angel directs us to the vision itself as contained in chapter XI. From the conflict which is indicated between the evil spirits and God's messengers and Michael, the defender of the Jewish people, we may gather again what is going on in the unseen world in connection with the struggles on earth.

1. This phrase is a faulty translation ; the literal Hebrew is "even great warfare."
2. However some of the so-called learned commentators claim that Cyrus is meant. Here is Adam Clarke's comment: I think it would go far to make a legend, or a precarious tale, of this important place, to endeavor to maintain that either a good or evil angel is intended here. Cyrus alone was the prince of Persia, and God had destined him to be the deliverer of His people: but there were some matters, of which we are not informed, that caused him to hesitate for some time. Fearing probably the greatness of the work, and not being fully satisfied of his ability to execute it; he therefore for a time resisted the secret inspirations which God had sent him. The opposition might be in reference to the building of the Temple.
3. We recommend to our friends a very helpful book on " Satan and His Power," by F. C. Jennings. Publ. by " Our Hope," 80 Second Street, N. Y.

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