

The Time of the End

Daniel Chapters 10 and 12

Introduction

The third year of Cyrus was 536 BC, and the previous year some 50,000 Jews had returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. The situation may have caused Daniel to mourn, since he would have heard that the temple-building work had been stopped (Ezra 4), and that his people were suffering hardship.

The revelation “concerned a great war” (v 1), but its implications reached far beyond the immediate plight of the Jews, foreshadowing wars culminating in the “time of the end”...

A concerned prophet (Daniel 10 v 1 to 3)

- What caused Daniel to fast and pray for three weeks?
- If God knows everything and can do all things, why do you think Daniel went to so much trouble over his prayers?

An awesome vision (Daniel 10 v 4 to 9)

This passage makes sense if we take the man in Daniel’s vision (v 5) to be Christ, and the person who later speaks to Daniel (v 11 onwards) to be an angel, possibly Gabriel (as in Daniel 9).

- How does Daniel describe the man (v 5 and 6)? Do you think the various attributes are symbolic?
- How did Daniel react? (Compare this with John’s vision of Jesus in Revelation 1 v 12 – 17).

An invisible war (Daniel 10 v 10 to 21)

Daniel’s conversation with the angel reveals that there is an invisible war between the forces of evil and God. For three weeks Daniel had been praying, but the answer was delayed. Why didn’t God immediately answer Daniel’s prayer? Because the (demon) Prince of Persia had attacked the angel bearing the answer. Michael, the archangel assigned to Israel, assisted the angel and together they won the battle...

- Do you think that ‘spiritual warfare’ of the kind described in these verses is the reason the answers to some prayers are delayed? Doesn’t God always hear our prayers?
- What were the effects, or results of Daniel’s prayers?
- What do you think is the relationship between spiritual warfare and prayer? See Paul’s commentary in Ephesians 6 v 12, 13 and 18.

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The Time of the End (Daniel 12 v 1 to 13)

Chapter 11 provides a description of wars taking place over the next 400 years, and then moves on to the rise of Antichrist and the final battle at the end of time (Revelation 16). Daniel 12 wraps up the story...

- Verse 2 describes a resurrection event – how are those who wake up to everlasting life described?
- What was Daniel instructed to do? Was he able to understand everything?

Starting from the “abomination that causes desolation” (v 11) there will be 1,260 days (or 3½ years) before the end, so the 1,290 days takes us 30 days beyond the return of Christ, and 1,335 days takes us 75 days beyond that event.

We are not told why these days are important; perhaps they refer to tasks that the Lord Jesus must accomplish – including the regathering of his people from all the nations of the world...

Prayer –

Lord, thank you for these amazing truths from the book of Daniel.

As we approach the time of the end, help us to be wise and lead many to righteousness.

Help us to be watchful and prayerful.

Amen.