

Reformation Fellowship Notes • July 5, 2020
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Handout #12
Daniel 10

I. Introduction

- A. Plan of attack
 - 1. I will finish my presentation of chapter 9.
 - 2. Then I will present chapter 10.

II. Daniel 9:20-27

- A. See outline last week's outline for chapter 9.
 - 1. Alternate view
 - a) Jack and Earle's interpretation (appended to Chapter 9 notes)
 - b) Roger's video presentation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9WX4evP_E4&feature=youtu.be

III. Introductory comments for chapter 10

- A. The third year of Cyrus, Daniel received his final vision.
 - 1. The vision was of "a great war."
 - 2. It terrified him.
 - a) If it does not terrify us, we are not seeing what Daniel saw.
 - 3. This vision extends through the last three chapters of the book.
 - 4. Very little symbolism
- B. What was happening at this time?
 - 1. This vision was given to Daniel in 537 BC.
 - a) Cyrus issued his decree in 539 BC.
 - b) A group of exiles went back to Jerusalem shortly thereafter.
 - c) After they had been there 7 months, they rebuilt the altar (Ezra 3:1-6):

Ezra 3:1 When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem. ² Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. ³ **Despite their fear of the peoples around them, they built the altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening sacrifices.** ⁴ Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day. ⁵ After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the New Moon sacrifices and the sacrifices for all the appointed sacred feasts of the LORD, as well as those brought as freewill offerings to the

LORD. ⁶ On the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, though the foundation of the LORD'S temple had not yet been laid.

d) Then they laid the foundation stones for the temple (Ezra 3:8-13):

Ezra 3:8 In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers (the priests and the Levites and all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work, appointing Levites twenty years of age and older to supervise the building of the house of the LORD. ² Jeshua and his sons and brothers and Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of Hodaviah) and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers—all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God.

¹⁰ When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD:

“He is good;

his love to Israel endures forever.”

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. ¹² But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. ¹³ No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

e) But opposition to construction increased a short time later (Ezra 4:1-5):

Ezra 4:1 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, ² they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.”

³ But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, “You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.”

⁴ **Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. ⁵ They hired counselors to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.**

f) Construction came to a virtual halt.

g) At the time of this vision, Daniel would have known that the temple was not progressing.

(1) Daniel was probably discouraged and concerned.

IV. Daniel 10:1-3

¹*In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true, and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.*

² *At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. ³I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.*

- A. It begins with an introduction in the 3rd person.
 - 1. We saw this in chapter 7.
 - 2. It appears to add gravity to the vision.
- B. Setting for the dream
 - 1. Daniel received this third vision.
 - a) A reliable message
 - b) Concerning a great war
 - (1) There is an unusual word here (*tsava*).
 - (2) I will come back to this.
 - 2. Daniel reminds us that he was called Belteshazzar.
 - a) The name Belteshazzar is mentioned only in two places (1:7; 10:1).
 - b) This takes us back to the first chapter.
 - (1) Gives unity to the book.
 - 3. Daniel had been mourning for 3 weeks.
 - a) He fasted.
 - (1) He returned to the diet he had had at the beginning (in chapter 1).
 - (a) No choice food
 - (b) No meat
 - (c) No wine
 - (d) No lotions
 - b) He began mourning and fasting early in the first month.
 - (1) This is when preparation for Passover began.
 - (2) Daniel was in mourning because Passover could not be properly celebrated.
 - (a) I assume Daniel marked the Passover every year this way.
 - (b) He apparently reasoned that a celebratory Passover could not be held until the temple was rebuilt.

V. Daniel 10:4-6

⁴*On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, ⁵I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. ⁶His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like*

flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

A. Daniel sees a man.

1. It happens on the 24th day of the month.
 - a) What is the significance of 24th day of the month?
 - (1) Three and a half weeks.
 - (2) Cf. Haggai 1:15; 2:10, 18; Zechariah 1:7
 - (3) These all appear in post-exilic passages.
 - (4) It appears to be significant, but I don't know the meaning.
2. Many visions occur along rivers.
 - a) Daniel 8
 - b) Daniel 10
 - c) Ezekiel 1
3. A man appeared to Daniel.
 - a) Called a man and not qualified by "like"
 - b) Wearing priest clothing
 - (1) Linen
 - (2) Gold belt
 - (3) Body looked like yellow jasper
 - (4) Face like lightning
 - (5) Eyes like blazing torches
 - (6) Arms and legs like polished bronze
 - (7) Voice like sound of a large crowd
4. Some observations about the use of Daniel in Revelation
 - a) The description of this man is similar to John's description of the man who appeared to him in Revelation 1:12-16:

Rev 1:12 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

- (1) Notice—almost all the same elements in almost the same order:
 - (a) Robe (presumably linen)
 - (b) Golden sash
 - (c) White hair
 - (d) Eyes like blazing fire

- (e) Feet like bronze
- (f) Voice like rushing waters
- (g) Right hand held seven stars
- (h) Double edged sword came out of mouth
- (i) Face like the sun shining
- (2) Differences
 - (a) Daniel lists color of body, while John gives color of hair.
 - (b) Daniel lists face next, while John leaves it to last.
 - (c) Daniel has nothing corresponding to numbers 7 and 8.
- (3) What accounts for the similarity?
- b) My conclusion about the use of the OT in Revelation:
 - (1) Revelation draws heavily on the imagery from the OT.
 - (2) Often images are taken from the OT and combined to create a different picture.
 - (a) There is a beast in Revelation that has seven heads.
 - (i) Parts of each of the beasts in Daniel chapter 7
 - (ii) Revelation 13:1-2:

Rev 13:1 And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ² The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion.

- (b) Obviously drawing on the imagery from Daniel 7
 - (i) Out of the sea
 - (ii) Ten horns
 - (iii) But a composite of the first three beasts
 - (c) So the fourth beast of Daniel 7 becomes, in Revelation, a ten-headed monster with attributes of the first three beasts.
 - c) What are the implications of this for John's role in the composition of Revelation?
 - (1) The vision is God's composition.
 - (2) But John wrote the book of Revelation.
 - (a) So either John acted like a dictation machine recording what he was told to record.
 - (b) Or he is a savvy collaborator who understands the origins of the imagery he sees and records it accordingly.
 - (i) He had to know the OT very well.
 - (ii) He is recording his vision in a way that helps the reader see the OT allusions that God intended.
 - (iii) I think this is the more likely.
5. So John's description in Revelation is a conscious allusion to Daniel 10.

- a) In Revelation, it becomes clear that the man is the resurrected Jesus.
 - (1) Dressed as a priest
 - (2) With symbols of judgment and authority
- b) In Daniel, the figure is a man with divine characteristics dressed as a priest.
 - (1) Probably a Christ-like person

The man in linen is not described as a “holy one,” but the verses illustrate “the idea of the holy” as suggesting fundamentally a splendor that inspires awe rather than a purity that evokes an awareness of sin. Daniel is almost seeing God and hearing God, and almost losing his life as a consequence. (Goldingay, p. 526)

- B. John’s reaction to seeing the man is very similar to Daniel’s reaction.
 - 1. This is another similarity between Daniel and Revelation.
 - 2. Revelation 1:17-18:

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

- a) Beale makes this observation:

The fourfold pattern is found in Daniel 8 and 10: the prophet observes a vision, falls on his face in fear, is strengthened by a heavenly being, and then receives further revelation from that being, which is introduced by a form of *laleo* (“speak”). (Beale, Revelation, p. 213)

- (1) This pattern is also found in Ezekiel 1-3.
 - (a) Isaiah 6 has a similar pattern.
- 3. What should we make of this?
 - a) The choreography in these passages is significant.
 - (1) I have little confidence that I know the significance.
 - b) The shared pattern:
 - (1) A common belief in the OT is that a mortal cannot see God and live.
 - (2) These men saw a being with God-like majesty and fell on their faces nearly dead.
 - (3) Then they are revitalized by that majestic being.
 - (4) In this strengthened state, they receive a vision.
 - c) My guess:
 - (1) The awesomeness of God is too much for mortals to bear.
 - (2) The only cure for this is to be touched by God.
 - (a) That touch is revitalizing.

- (3) But being overcome by the awesomeness of God is the only thing that makes it possible to withstand the horror of seeing the vision that is to be revealed.

VI. Daniel 10:7-9

⁷I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. ⁸So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. ⁹Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

- A. Only Daniel saw it.
 1. Those with him ran away in fear.
- B. Daniel's strength was drained.
 1. "I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless"
 - a) Just being in the presence of such a being was overwhelming.
 - b) A near death experience
 2. He fell into a trance-like sleep.

VII. Daniel 10:10-17

¹⁰A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

¹² Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ¹³But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ¹⁴Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

¹⁵ While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. ¹⁶Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. ¹⁷How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone, and I can hardly breathe."

- A. A hand raised him up to his hands and knees.
 1. The hand that touched him in verse 10 appears to be Gabriel.
 - a) But the person Daniel first saw appeared to be Christ.
 - b) So at verse 16 we have a different person.
 2. "You are a treasured person."
 - a) This kind of statement from God or a representative of God is rare.
 3. Understand what I am about to tell you.

4. Stand up.
 - a) I have been sent to you.
- B. Daniel stands shaking.
 1. “Don’t be afraid.”
- C. God heard Daniel from the first day.
 1. God is very attentive to Daniel and his prayers.
 2. Daniel sought to understand.
 3. Daniel humbled himself before God.
 - a) What was he seeking to understand?
 - (1) He is trying to understand why God had said it would be 70 years, the 70 years had passed, but the temple is still not being built.
 - (a) Why the delay in the construction of the temple and God’s return to live in their midst?
 - (b) The vision is an answer to this question.
 - (i) A lot more has to happen to Israel before it is made right with God.
 4. The delay had nothing to do with God’s lack of attention to the prayers of Daniel.
 - D. The man has come in response to Daniel’s prayers.
 1. The prince of Persia opposed him for 21 days.
 - a) Michael came and helped.
 2. The man came to help Daniel know what would happen to his people in the future.
 - a) Daniel was facing the ground and speechless.
 - E. One in the image of the son of man attends to Daniel.
 1. Daniel has been drained of all strength and is distraught because of the vision.
 - a) Daniel asks how he can bear to see the vision.

VIII. Daniel 10:18-21

¹⁸ Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. ¹⁹ “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.”

When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

²⁰ So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; ²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.)

- A. This son of Adam touched Daniel again, and he was strengthened.
 1. He speaks to Daniel.

- a) Daniel is highly esteemed.
 - b) Don't be afraid.
 - c) Peace
 - d) Be courageous.
2. Daniel was strengthened.
- a) Daniel asks the man to speak now.
- B. The man asks Daniel if he knows why the man was sent.
- 1. Presumably this is to tell Daniel what is going to happen to Israel in the future.
 - 2. He needs to go to fight against the prince of Persia; prince of Greece is next.
 - a) This is being described as a conflict between heavenly powers that is reflected on earth.
 - (1) This was the cultural understanding.
 - b) This is a way of presenting what is happening on earth.
 - (1) It is possible to understand the events of world history as the result of a conflict between the spiritual powers—God and his forces vs. Satan and his forces.
 - (2) It describes God's restraining force on the development and spread of Empire on earth as a battle in the heavens.
 - (a) This will be reflected on earth.
 - 3. The man is going to tell Daniel what is written in God's book of the history of the world.
 - a) The book that describes the whole course of history
 - 4. Michael, the prince of Israel, is the one who is helping the man.
 - a) Michael appears to be the archangel who is assigned to look after the people of Israel.
 - (1) He is fighting Empire.
 - (a) Just as God opposed the construction of the tower of Babel
 - (2) Protecting God's people from the mistreatment of Empire

IX. Conclusions

- A. What is the great conflict?
- 1. The vision that Daniel will see in chapter 11 is the fighting and intrigue between two Hellenistic kingdoms which evolved from Alexander the Great's empire (Greek).
 - 2. This can be described in terms that fit the ANE worldview.
 - a) Events on earth are just a reflection of what is happening in the heavenly realm
 - b) What happens in the heavenly realm is primary.
 - c) This is profoundly true.
 - 3. But the ANE worldview saw the varying fortunes of nations on earth as a reflection of the varying fortunes of gods within the Pantheon.

4. From the biblical perspective, God is fully in control of history.
 - a) The varying fortunes of nations are the outworking of the complicated purposes of God.
 - b) Sometimes God does not act immediately to do something he wants to do.
 - (1) Because he wants to accomplish other purposes which require a delay
 - (2) This can be likened to God's forces being temporarily held off by Satan's forces.
 - c) This captures an important truth—what happens in history is not controlled by what people do.
 - (1) It just looks to us as though it is!
5. The great conflict is between God and Empire.
 - a) The outcome is not in doubt.
 - (1) God will triumph overwhelmingly.
 - b) But Empire is hostile to God and the things of God,
 - (1) As we have seen, and as we will see in chapter 11.