


The Angelic Conflict Behind Nations

 Daniel 10:1-21

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In Daniel 9, Daniel thought from his study of the book of Jeremiah that Israel and Jerusalem would be restored after the 70-year captivity in Babylon and he prayed for restoration on the basis of confession. But he hadn't understood the prophecy correctly so Gabriel was sent to him to explain that the final restoration would be after seventy times seven years, which is 490 years. These years relate to Israel and Jerusalem. The 490 years are 360 days each. The years begin with the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem which was issued by Artaxerxes Longimanus on March 5, 444BC. They are divided in three segments; the first segment is seven sevens of years or 49 years to rebuild Jerusalem with plaza and moat during times of distress, the second segment of sixty-two sevens of years or 434 years is continuous and lasts until Messiah the Prince. It transpired on the day of the Triumphal Entry on March 30, AD33. After that there is a gap of time in the calendar during which three things will occur; first, the Messiah will be crucified and have no kingdom, this occurred on April 3, AD33, second, Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed, this occurred in AD70, and third, war and desolation will characterize the rest of Israel's time under divine discipline. A third segment of one seven of years will begin when a firm covenant is made between the anti-Christ and the Jewish leadership. In the middle of that seven years he will break the covenant, commit the abomination of desolation, setting up an image of himself as the center of the one world religion. He will continue until the end of the seven years when He is destroyed by the Messiah at His Second Coming. Then the seventy sevens prophecy of 490 years will have run its course and all Israel and Jerusalem will be restored in the kingdom of God.

Question: What do the Jews do with this prophecy and has it been useful in evangelism.

Answer: The Jews have liturgical readings in synagogue from the Law and the Prophets that cycle every three years. Daniel 9 is not part of those readings. Neither is the famous Isa 53. The rabbis know about these passages but they are not common knowledge among Jewish people. Dan 9 has been used in Jewish evangelism. I cite S. Lewis Johnson who, in his Daniel lectures, recounts an event in the 17th century by a pastor named Jeb Orton. Orton said, "In the last century there was a public dispute at Venice between a Jew and a convert from Judaism concerning the sense of this prophecy. And so a noted rabbi was chosen as moderator of a conference in which they would discuss this. A great many Jews were present. The Christian Jew urged his arguments against the

Jews with so much force that at length the rabbi finally said, 'Let's shut up our books, for if we go on examining this prophecy any further we shall all become Christians. It cannot be denied that the time of the Messiah's coming is already past, but whether Jesus of Nazareth be the person, I cannot determine.'"¹ In other words, the main importance of this prophecy for evangelizing Jews is that it proves the Messiah has already come. How could He not have come? No matter which decree you choose as the starting point of the calendar the first 483 years of this prophecy have transpired and Messiah was to come after that time and be cut off. Since Messiah has already come and been cut off then who is the Messiah? The rabbi felt the pressure of the argument. An additional word about Jewish evangelism. Far more Jews become believers through Gentiles sharing the gospel than through Jewish believers sharing the gospel. That's a fact of statistics and it's what Paul is saying in Rom 11:11 when he wrote, "salvation has come to the Gentiles to make them jealous." The Greek word "jealous" is from *παραζηλω* and means "to come alongside and cause to burn." When a Gentile has the Jewish Messiah and comes alongside a Jew presenting the Jewish Messiah it causes him to burn and that is how most Jews come to be believers. I would also recommend a book to help in evangelizing Jews called *Messianic Christology* by Arnold Fruchtenbaum. This book is an exposition of OT Messianic passages from the original Hebrew text, including the famous Isa 53, and it shows what Paul would have been doing in Acts 17:1-3 and elsewhere when he went into synagogues. He would have been showing how the OT Messianic passages give evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. Another resource you might look at that summarizes this is my lesson on Acts 17:2-3 in the Acts series.

Turn to Daniel 10. Let me make a few introductory remarks. First, this is a vision that begins in chapter 10 and continues into 11 and 12 so don't pay attention to the chapter divisions since they block you from seeing that this is all one vision. Second, we get more prophetic details in this vision than in any of the previous prophecies in Daniel. If you think we've seen a lot of detail in Dan 2, 7, 8 and 9, you are in for a big surprise. Dan 11 alone records over 130 prophecies. The detail is so profound it is overwhelming to any human being. I won't expect you to memorize every detail. I don't have every detail memorized myself. Third, what I do expect is for you to get the general picture. All of the details relate to Medo-Persia and Greece and in particular the Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes IV who foreshadows the Antichrist who will be the ruler of future Rome until he is destroyed and Israel is brought safely into God's kingdom. So there are a lot of details that are viewed telescopically as you gaze through the corridors of future history but they all deal with that general picture.

With that general picture in mind we come to Daniel 10. The background is that Daniel has had a vision that greatly disturbed him so he went to God in prayer hoping to get understanding of the vision. I think 10:1 is a summary of the vision after he has received understanding. Verse 1, **In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.** It was the **third year of Cyrus**. This was 536BC. Cyrus had already made the decree for the Jews to go back to their homeland and rebuild the temple. Some Jews returned and they repaired the foundations and rebuilt the altar but struggled to finish the Temple. Daniel was not among them. He stayed in his administrative post under the rule

of Darius the Mede who served under **Cyrus the king of Persia**. It was during the **third year of Cyrus** that this **message was revealed to** him. Observe that the verse is careful to point out that this Daniel **was named Belteshazzar** so that we are alerted to the fact that this is the same Daniel we've been following all along and not a different Daniel. In the middle of verse 1 the main **message** of the vision was a **great conflict**. The Hebrew word **conflict** means "warfare." What Daniel saw was great warfare coming for Israel. Dan 11 and 12 explain this great warfare beginning with Medo-Persia but quickly moving to Greece and Alexander the Great, who rose quickly to power but died young upon which his kingdom was parceled out among his four generals. Two of the divisions of the kingdom are singled out as affecting greatly the Jewish people. These were the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. These two kingdoms are seen engaging one another in heavy military conflict eventually resulting in the Seleucids taking control. Many evil kings would rule from the Seleucids but one king would be extremely evil. He is Antiochus Epiphanes IV and he would deceive the Jews, commit an abomination of desolation and turn to destroy the Jewish people. His career is viewed telescopically as foreshadowing the career of the anti-Christ who will come in the last days to deceive the Jews, commit the abomination of desolation and turn to destroy the Jewish people once more. At that time Michael, the guardian angel of Israel, will arise and protect the nation Israel from certain destruction. Those who do not believe in the Messiah will be destroyed and those who do believe will be rescued and taken into the kingdom. Daniel saw all that and more but he did not understand it, only after the **message was revealed** in 10:1 did **Daniel understand the message and the vision**.

So I take it that Daniel did not initially understand the vision but after the explanation he did understand it and we'll get into the details of that explanation in coming weeks but Daniel 10 sets the stage by explaining Daniel's distress caused by the vision and his desire to understand and how he came to understand.

You see in 10:2 that after Daniel had seen the vision he was in a state of **mourning for three entire weeks** of days. That's why verse 3 he **did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the three weeks were completed**. Daniel was fasting with prayer to get an understanding of what this vision of great warfare meant. It's verse 12 that explains that he had been praying in this way for twenty-one days. "Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this vision and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words." So Daniel's fasting is interpreted as humbling himself before God seeking an answer to prayer. The fasting is described three ways. First, he didn't eat any **tasty food**. Tasty food was the fine, delectable food enjoyed by high administrative officials and Daniel didn't eat any of it. Second, he didn't eat any **meat or take wine**. These were standard fare for administrative officials. Third, he didn't **use any ointment**. The **ointment** was oil that was typically put on the skin to moisturize and protect from sunburn. It was a sign of joy and gladness so if you were in mourning you would not anoint yourself with oil. Daniel was not joyful about what he had seen in the vision, he was in mourning because the great warfare surrounding his people was extremely distressing and he didn't understand. What did Daniel eat and drink if he didn't eat and

drink these things? A simple diet of bread and water. This went on for twenty-one days in hope that the Lord would respond to his prayer.

Now we already know from Daniel 9 that prayers are heard by God the instant they are uttered and you can see from verse 12 that indeed God had heard his prayers from the very first day. But for twenty-one days Daniel must have wondered if God had heard his prayers and so he just kept on praying and fasting the entire three weeks.

At last, in verse 4 Daniel meets a strange person in vision along the Tigris River. The identity of this person is debated. Observe, **On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the greater river, that is, the Tigris. 5I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. 6His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.** Who is this awesome person? Some think this is an angel and others think this is the Son of Man. I think it is the Son of Man because if we were to look ahead to Revelation 1:13-15 we'd see an almost identical description by John of One who is undoubtedly the Son of Man. I've put this chart together showing you the similarities so you can study these things for yourself and see whether this isn't so.

Daniel 10:5-6	Revelation 1:13-15
A certain man	A son of man
Dressed in linen	Clothed in a robe
Waist girded with pure gold	Girded across chest with a golden sash
Face like lightning	Face shining like the sun
Eyes like flaming torches	Eyes like a flame of fire
Arms and feet like gleam of bronze	Feet like burnished bronze glowing
Words like sound of tumult	Voice like sound of many waters
John fell at His feet like a dead man	Daniel had no strength left in him

Observe that Daniel saw a certain man and John saw a son of man. Daniel said he was dressed in linen and John said he was clothed in a robe; Daniel said his waist was girded with pure gold and John said he was girded across

his chest with a golden sash. Daniel said his face was like lightning and John said his face was shining like the sun and so forth, there are many similarities. The last one, when John saw Him in Revelation 1 he says, "I fell at His feet like a dead man." And if you glance down to verse 8 Daniel says, "no strength was left in me...my natural color turned to a deathly pallor...I retained no strength. 9But I heard the sound of his words and as soon as I heard...I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground." So the similar descriptions and the similar responses to the Person's appearance lead me to conclude that the person in vv 5-6 is none other than the Son of Man in awesome appearance. And therefore the word **Man** in verse 5 ought to be capitalized and the word **His** in verse 6 ought to be capitalized so that you are clear that this is the Son of Man in powerful appearance.

Now when Daniel saw Him it just about killed him. The reason is because the Lord Jesus is so holy and we tend to have a very shallow view of His holiness but if we were to come face to face with His holiness while we were still in our sinful bodies it would reveal in remarkable contrast the putrid vomit that you and I are in comparison to Him. That's why you see these responses when people are confronted with God. Daniel almost died, he came face to face with the Lord Jesus who is Perfect Holiness and the sinfulness of Daniel was starkly exposed and when we face that the repercussions of how sinful we really are are very difficult to deal with. It put Daniel into a coma literally in verse 9. When he saw Him and **heard the sound of his words** that was it, he went into a coma.

Now there were other men with him on the banks of the Tigris River as you see there in verse 7. **Daniel, alone saw the vision while the men who were with him did not see the vision;** they were all on some governmental business over near the Tigris River, but they didn't see Him. **nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.** It's very interesting. It's a lot like Saul on the Damascus Road. There were other people with him and they all knew something was going on but only Saul saw the resurrected Christ. These men also knew something was going on, we don't know how, all we know is that a sense of **great dread** came upon them **and they ran away** and hid. The presence of the Son of Man in this awesome appearance is not something people flock to, it's something terribly dreadful. So now Daniel is **left alone** and when he heard his voice he went into a coma right there on the ground, face first, verse 9 says. **I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.**

In verse 10, I think we meet another being and I don't think this is the Son of Man. From what is said about this being down in verse 13 I think this is someone less than the Lord Jesus Christ. **Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. 11He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you."** This being helps Daniel compose himself, helps him at least come out of the coma and sit up on his **hands and knees**. There's a recovery here that has to take place before Daniel can understand the message this angel has, which is the explanation for the vision of great conflicts that Daniel saw earlier. That's this guy's mission. If you ask me why there are two different beings that appear to Daniel I think the Lord Jesus appeared to him to

impress upon Daniel that He is the ultimate revealer of the explanation that this second being is going to give. Daniel is going to conclude back in verse 1 that **the message was true** because it ultimately came from Him who is the truth.

Now the second being here is a messenger. Who are God's messengers? Well, they are angels. This is an angel because of the heavenly conflict this angel wages in verse 13 and the fact that Michael comes along to help him in this conflict. So this is an angel who has been sent by the Lord Jesus to reveal the explanation of the vision to Daniel. Now we are about to have our minds opened as to the complex role that angels play in history. History is not just human movements, angels are a part of history too and they influence and vie for power over humans in the airspace above earth. If you take the book of Ephesians seriously you already understand this. When you were an unbeliever you were living under the power of Satan and his minions. They work in unbelievers. And believers realize that they've have been taken out of that and are in a spiritual battle with Satan and demons. Daniel 10 came long before Ephesians and it's one of the most insightful chapters on the roles of angels and demons in history. This chapter peels your eyelids back so you see that much more is going on behind the scenes than just human politicians and nations involved in giving shape to history under God's sovereignty. There are angelic powers much greater than human beings that in some way are able to manipulate human beings and nations. This should not be a surprise to those of you who were paying attention in Daniel 7 because there we saw four great beasts coming up out of a sea that was being stirred up by the four winds of heaven. And we did a little study of the four winds and the sea there and concluded that the four winds are the influences of demonic beings upon nations which are easily stirred up like waters into a dangerous chaos. So we know demonic beings are strong influences on nations and in particular, their leaders. That's the picture we get from Daniel 7, it's a picture we see in Acts 13 when Paul is addressing Sergius Paulus, a ruler on the island of Paphos who was under the demonic influence of an adviser named Elymas the magician and that's the picture we see again in Daniel 10. Great demonic oppression. This casts a whole new light on how you think about our nation and the turmoil that we are going through right now. There is tremendous demonic influence going on in America and what is very interesting is that the most intense demonic influence is politics. That's why for unbelievers politics is ultimate. It's the venue through which demons expend most of their influence. And when Christians buy into the deception that politics is ultimate they have become idolaters. Politics is not ultimate. But Satan and unbelievers want you to think it is.

What this should do for you is open up your view of history. All down through history and right now all across the world there are great heavenly conflicts going on between good angels and evil angels for the influence of people and nations. Paul Benware says, "...the truth revealed here ought to open our spiritual eyes to the fact that beyond human politics and wars there is fierce and intense warfare within the unseen angelic ranks. There are forces that promote God's agenda in this world and those that resist it. And those human leaders who abandon God's truth and God's agenda become pawns in the wicked hands of these powerful spirits."² I cannot put it anymore pointedly than that. I know of no better biblical analysis of what is happening in our world and

our nation. Our nation's leaders have abandoned God's truth and thereby become pawns in the hands of wicked, powerful spirits. The gospel is the only thing that can break through all that. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation and Satan blinds the minds of the unbelieving lest they see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ and believe it (2 Cor 4:4). That is the last thing Satan wants for our political leaders, someone to preach to them the gospel.

Now, in verse 12 we see how good angels can influence a nation for God's truth. And the angel explains this by saying, **"Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days.** Now there are many keys to interpreting history here. The first one is simply to recognize that there is heavenly conflict going on between good and evil angels. This good angel was sent by God but when he got over the air space of Persia he was met by a demonic angel referred to as **the prince of the kingdom of Persia** and they engaged in combat for **twenty-one days**. The evil angel obviously did not want to permit God influence into the nation. The second thing I want you to observe is that prayer is a means by which God sends good angels to influence a nation in the right direction. If it wasn't for Daniel's prayer to understand the course of history then this angel would not have been sent. So prayer is a means God uses to send good influence upon a nation. Third observation, notice that Daniel's prayer was heard by God the very **first day** it was uttered. It didn't take twenty-one days of prayer for that prayer to get to God, it got to God immediately and God heard the prayer. The fourth thing to recognize is that a good angel was sent immediately to answer the prayer. God sometimes uses angels to answer our prayers. Fifth, when they are sent to answer our prayers they may be interfered with when they reach the air space over the country of the one praying. Sixth, angels are involved in our lives all the time. Heb 1:14 says angels are sent out to render service for those who will inherit salvation. Angels minister to us in time of need. They've probably done all sorts of things for you and me and one day God is going to point out case after case after case where various angels did things in your life. Then you're going to be surprised at how involved angels were in your life.

So here we have a good angel in verse 12 sent by God to minister to Daniel on the very first day of Daniel's prayer, and we know from Daniel 9 it only takes about three minutes for an angel to travel from the throne room of God in the third heaven to planet earth, but notice in verse 13, when this angel got into the air space over Persia he was met with opposition. **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.** This angel couldn't break through, he couldn't defeat the demon and so **Michael** joined him. And this shows you that just because he's a demon doesn't make him weaker than a good angel. All angels were originally created in a rank or hierarchy and Ephesians 6 refers to this hierarchy as the rulers, the powers and world forces of darkness. Those are ranks of authority and power and when a third of the angels fell Satan became the king of all the fallen angels no matter what rank they originally held under God. When they fell they didn't lose their power and abilities, they only

used them for evil. And so some of them are stronger than good angels and Satan appointed them to certain nations to guard the air space around those nations and not permit good angels to enter and influence a nation for good. And so here is this good angel trying to get into Persian air space to get to Daniel so he can influence the nation of Persia in a good direction and he's immediately engaged in combat by this demon and it takes **Michael, one of the chief princes** coming in **to help**. This was a very powerful demon. Together they were able to defeat him temporarily and get through because you see down in verse 20 that this angel went through to Daniel but he couldn't be there long, he had to go back and continue fighting against this demon. So I take it that **Michael** is keeping this demon tied up while the other angel makes his way through to Daniel to give him the message. The final observation, and the chief one in vv 12-13 is that the delay in getting an answer to prayer was due to the angelic conflict above. It took this angel **twenty-one days** to break through and get to Daniel from the day Daniel started praying. Now you have at least one explanation for why it took God so long to answer some of your prayers. Maybe an angel assigned to answer your prayer was tied up in a heavenly conflict! Now I know this may sound new to your ears but look what this does to your whole view of history and its movements and prayer and its involvement in history. It opens a window to another dimension of involvement that is just as real as the dimension you were already aware of. There is a heavenly conflict waging behind the scenes for the hearts and minds of people and for nations.

Verse 14, **Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.** So now, after twenty-one days of prayer the reason for this angel's appearance becomes clear. He is going to give Daniel **understanding** of the **vision** of great conflict. The vision pertains to Daniel's **people**, particularly **in the latter days...days yet future**. Now when we go into Daniel 11 and 12 he starts with Medo-Persia and then Greece's Alexander the Great who rapidly defeated Medo-Persia, but it quickly moves the conflict between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies and comes to Antiochus. After that the vision centers on **the latter days...far future days** when one like unto Antiochus, the anti-Christ, comes to persecute Israel and attempt to take over the world at which time he will come to his end and the remnant of Israel will go into the blessing of the kingdom. The angel is going to explain all of this to Daniel and he is going to understand that he will die before all this takes place but will be resurrected at that time to enter into kingdom blessing.

Verse 15, **When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.** Upon realizing his people would face more warfare before the kingdom arrived Daniel was struck dumb. He literally could not speak. The current partial restoration to the land under Cyrus and the current rebuilding of the temple would not be the final one, much more conflict was decreed for Daniel's people and upon hearing this I'm sure he felt much like most of us felt this morning upon realizing the direction of our country. He **turned his face toward the ground and became speechless.**

Verse 16 **And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips;** this I take it was the same angel and he touched Daniel's lips which gave him strength to speak. **then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength.** Daniel is still reeling from the earlier vision of the Son of Man and he is having a difficult time composing himself for the angel's explanation. Verse 17, **For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord?** Daniel is astonished that this angel can speak to his ultimate Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ because his merely seeing Him has completely exhausted him. So I think **Lord** in verse 17 should be capitalized whereas in verse 16 when he addresses the angel as **lord** I think it's just a title of respect, something like our "sir." Verse 18, **Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me.** He's trying to help Daniel regain his composure so he can receive the explanation of the vision.

Verse 19, **He said, "O man of high esteem,"** and here I want to comment on Daniel's character once more. Daniel is referred to as a man of high esteem three times in the book and it points to God's evaluation of Daniel. Daniel was not sinless but Daniel was a man after God's own heart. He was sensitive to his sin and confessed it accordingly. He was humble and fasted and prayed accordingly. He was a man of the word of God and he studied to show himself approved. Therefore, God was interested in answering this man's prayers. God is not answering all believers' prayers. There are conditions for answered prayer. Just as an example, James says you must have right motives; Jesus says you must abide in His words; James says you must ask without doubting. There are many conditions we must meet for God to answer our prayers. Daniel met those conditions. Daniel was a **man of high esteem**. So the angel was sent to answer and he says in verse 19, **do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!** And that is what I say to you with respect to the course of our nation; **do not be afraid, peace be with you, take courage and** perhaps most importantly, **be courageous!** That was the angel's counsel in light of the fearful things that awaited his nation. So I give you the same counsel in this hour of our nation knowing that fearful things are coming, **do not be afraid**, you know in whom you have believed and that He is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.

Middle of verse 19, **Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."** Daniel is now prepared for the explanation; his composure has been restored. Speak. Verse 20, **Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold the prince of Greece is about to come.** The angel reveals that his mission is to go back and continue fighting with this demon and that it will not be long before this demon is defeated and another demon that is assigned to Greece will come and then he will be engaged in fighting him. There are awesome battles currently waging in the heavenlies over political influence in nations. And when a nation rejects God it is a welcome doormat for evil spirits to gain a foothold and direct its evil rulers.

However, the angel says, **I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth.** Before he goes he will reveal what is written in the decrees of God concerning the great warfare that is going to impact Israel. **Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.** Now here it is revealed that the warfares that are stirred up against Israel are ultimately stirred up by demons. All the anti-Semitism that results in hatred and military attacks on Israel is being caused by demons inciting world leaders and terrorists to commit evil against Israel. And there is no one but this angel and **Michael** the archangel who stand against them. Daniel 11:1 and this should connect with Daniel 10, there is no chapter break here, the angel is still speaking and the angel says, **In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him.** That is, this angel **arose to be an encouragement and a protection for Michael** so that these two angels are protecting and guarding Israel. Verse 2, **And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches** and so forth, the angel goes on to explain the vision Daniel such that Daniel understands and we'll be looking at that explanation in Daniel 11 and 12 in the coming weeks.

In conclusion what can we learn from this chapter. There are many, many lessons here. First, God answers prayer. Some things in history are even conditioned on human prayer. And thus if humans didn't pray they wouldn't happen. God on occasion prompts men to pray. Second, God considers the character of the man praying. And it's the prayer of a "righteous man" that availeth much. Daniel was a man of high esteem and when these kinds of men pray it gets God's attention. It makes you wonder how many men of high esteem are in our country today praying. In the end, there are conditions that man must meet to have answered prayer. And God is not interested in answering the prayers of believers who aren't interested in Him. Daniel was interested and therefore God listened to his prayers and answered them. Be a believer of great character. Third, don't be discouraged. Daniel was discouraged when he saw the future wars impacting his nation but the angel gave him counsel saying, do not be afraid, peace be with you; take courage and be courageous. We need to be courageous, we need courageous leadership. We need men who will stand up for truth and not be afraid of the powers that be! Fourth, God answers some prayers through angels. He doesn't always do this but God sent an angel to Daniel to reveal the meaning of the vision. Hebrews says angels are ministering spirits sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation. Fifth, some delayed answers to prayer are due to angelic conflicts in the air space over the nation. Unanswered prayer may not be due to a wrong request but a wrong timing of the request and at the proper time, when the good angel wins the field then you'll get your answers. Sixth, and most importantly, there are great angelic conflicts going on in the heavenlies for the hearts and minds of people and nations. It took the angel twenty-one days to reach Daniel. There is much more to history than meets the eye. I think we have to walk away from this chapter understanding the intense demonic activity that is released within a nation when a nation and its leaders turn away from God. The chief consequence of which is turning against Israel, partaking of evil intent and malicious warfare against Israel. At the same time there can be good influence from good angels if the leaders turn to God. As in the case of Cyrus

the Persian who was highly influenced by Daniel. He was influenced positively by an angel when he permitted the Jews to go back to their land and rebuild the temple. God said of Cyrus, "He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire." I would say that a good angel stirred up Lord Balfour who was committed to Israel and the Scriptures to write up the Balfour Declaration in 1917 making provision for Israel to go back to their Promised Land. I would say Harry Truman who was an avid student of Israel was stirred up by a good angel when he was the first to recognize the new State of Israel on May 14, 1948. Truman made a remarkable statement to a number of Jewish dignitaries in New York's Theological Seminary when his long-time associate, Eddie Jacobson introduced Truman as "...the man who helped create the State of Israel." Truman then exclaimed, "What do you mean, 'helped to create'? I am Cyrus. I am Cyrus."³ Today, if only our president would be a Cyrus we could be enjoying the blessing of God. But as it is we are coming under the cursings. May God raise up courageous men who will lead this country back to Him and to the love of Israel, the keystone of the nations.

¹ S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., *Daniel*, Audio Message 12, Believers Chapel Teaching Ministry.

² Paul Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, p 221-22.

³ <http://www.kavehfarrokh.com/cyrus-the-great/president-harry-s-truman-i-am-cyrus/>