

[Unless otherwise noted, Scriptures are from the New King James Version of the Bible; this series of posts first published 13 May, 2012. Revised October, 2014; February, 2016; August, 2016; November, 2018; April, 2021; July, 2021; April, 2023]

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[1-A: Background Setting \(10:1-3\)](#)

These chapters 10, 11, and 12 in the Book of Daniel together contain a wide-ranging message received by the prophet Daniel near the end of his life on earth.

And it deserves our closest attention. Why? Because we can learn so much about the near future of human history. Thus, to better understand how these words apply to the modern historical situation will be the objective of this study.

Instead of relegating so much of the prophetic message to ancient events and personages, this study will try to show how the prophetic message focuses primarily on future events, while past events serve mainly as a backdrop or echo of the prophecy's primary fulfillment in the near future.

In addition, this unique revelation treats us to a stunning glimpse of what it is like for a human being to step out of the natural earthly realm into the realm of the supernatural while receiving messages from the angelic beings who dwell there.

10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia." This date (536 B.C.) comes about three years after Gabriel had appeared to Daniel and given him the "70 weeks" message found in Daniel 9:24-27. (See post on the ["Second Coming"](#).) Two years before this, the Babylonian empire had fallen to the Medo-Persians, and Daniel, who was probably very old by now, had begun once more to enjoy favor in the royal household. . . of the new regime of the Persian monarch Cyrus.

Again, as in chapter 9 and other passages in the Bible, the specific dates in the introduction are evidence of the passages' authenticity; they are the original written documents, copied faithfully and accurately as they were passed on from one generation to another.

"Belteshazzar." Daniel was obliged, as a foreign captive in the king's court, to take on a Babylonian name. The mention here of his old name Belteshazzar was done perhaps to identify him, the author of the following prophetic passage, as the same person who, 72 years earlier, had been hauled off from Jerusalem and brought as a captive to Babylon.

"The message was true." Despite its great length, or maybe because of it, Daniel was quite certain that the message was true. He had every reason to believe so,

considering the strange introduction to it that we are about to read in the next few verses.

“The appointed time was long.” A more accurate meaning for the Hebrew word used for *“time appointed”* is *“long warfare”*, which is the translation found in several Bible versions. Indeed, the whole prophetic message to follow is just that: a lengthy account of the wars and conflicts that were to befall the Jewish nation and Mid East region in the near future relative to Daniel’s time. As for the more distant future, the message continues to catalogue the wars and conflicts that would befall the modern Israeli nation... and the modern people of God who, since the time of Christ, are to be found now in every nation on Earth.

Daniel may have been expecting that, in the wake of king Cyrus’ proclamation two years earlier to end the Babylonian Captivity, the Jewish nation would march gracefully into a new golden era.... And perhaps he could not understand why there was so much obstruction, conflict, and delay in that great enterprise of reclaiming the Jewish homeland. (Already the first party of returning Jewish exiles had to cease their re-building work due to opposition.) Well, certainly after the message he is about to receive, Daniel would come to understand that a very long period of conflict awaited the people of God - Jews in the Old Testament and followers of Christ in the New Testament - and this would last for many centuries until the very end of the present age of history.

In Chapter 12 we learn, when that future day arrives, *“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation”*. (12:1) But this is followed, finally, by the wonderful news that Daniel was hoping for: *“at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.”* Perhaps for Daniel, after learning how much future conflict awaited the people of God, he felt less troubled about the frustrating circumstances that seemed to be hindering Jews of his time and their emigration from Babylon to Jerusalem.

“He understood the message.” In contrast to a previous revelation where Daniel says, *“no one understood it”*, here in this case he does understand it. (8:27) Perhaps that was because this revelation was a message given in words, it made more sense; whereas chapter 8 was a vision whose mysterious symbolism could not be deciphered so easily.

10:2-3 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.

I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint

myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Evidently, Daniel was very disturbed about something, and this had moved him to spend “*three whole weeks*” in fasting and prayer. What the issue was we are not told, but as mentioned already, likely it had something to do with his Jewish people and whether or not they were going to re-claim their homeland now that the recent proclamation from king Cyrus had released them from the Babylonian Captivity and granted them permission to return to the land of Judea.

Daniel may have been hoping for more immediate results and was concerned about certain political obstructions and/or the slow pace of his people’s emigration to their homeland. (More information about these events may be found in the previous post, [“When will be the Second Coming? \(Part 4\)”](#))

Continue to [**Part 1B: Encounter with Great Christ-like Supernatural Being**](#)