



*The Most High  
God rules over  
the kingdoms of  
the world and  
appoints anyone  
he desires to  
rule over them.*

*(Dan 5:21b NLT)*

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# God's Delayed Messenger (10:10-14)

*10:10 A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup> He 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> But 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. <sup>14</sup> Now 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."*



10:10 *And behold, a hand touched me and set me **trembling** on my **hands and knees**.* (ESV)

- The manifestation of the divine presence that Daniel had seen in the previous verses has apparently passed on, and in his place an interpreting angel comes on the scene.
- He touches Daniel and raises him from the ground so that he is now resting on his “*hands and knees*.”
- Daniel is “*trembling*” with weakness and fear and is barely able to keep himself from falling back down on his face.
- This angel who has appeared is **most likely** the angel Gabriel – although it’s strange that his **name** is not mentioned here as it was in the **previous** two visions where Gabriel appeared (cf. 8:16; 9:21).
- As we’ve seen before, Gabriel has served as a communicator of God’s messages on **several** occasions (cf. 8:15–16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26–27).
- Furthermore, this interpreting angel evidently had **great power** (cf. 11:1), which would be true of a prominent being like Gabriel.

*10:11 And he said to me, "O Daniel, **man greatly loved**, understand the words that I speak to you, and **stand upright**, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up **trembling**. (ESV)*

- Daniel is addressed here as a “*man greatly loved [by God]*” (cf. 9:23) and is instructed to ***listen carefully*** to the angel’s words.
- Daniel would certainly ***need*** to listen carefully, for the message he was about to receive (particularly chapter 11) was very detailed and will no doubt be difficult for Daniel to understand.
- As ***we*** examine these prophecies in the weeks to come, we will see that ***every one*** of those prophecies has been fulfilled historically in exact detail.
- Daniel is then told to “*stand upright*” with renewed courage and strength, for a mighty angel from the very presence of God has been sent with the answer to his prayer.
- He should be honored and excited.
- So, at the angel’s command, Daniel mustered his strength and rose to his feet though he was still “*trembling*.”

*10:12 Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.” (ESV)*

- Gabriel continues to comfort God’s servant by telling him to “*Fear not*”.
- Gabriel then **tells** Daniel that from “*from the first day*” that he had “*set*” his “*heart*” to pray and “*to understand*” and “*humbled [himself]*” before God, his petition was **heard** by God.
- To “*humble*” oneself before God was an expression that many times was equated with fasting or some other form of self-denial (cf. Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32; Ps 35:13), as it is here (cf. v. 3).
- God was touched by Daniel’s determined prayer (“*your words have been heard*”), and so a heavenly messenger was sent (“*I have come*”) “*because of*” Daniel’s request.

10:13 *The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia...* (ESV)

- Here we are given a **very interesting** glimpse of the kind of **spiritual warfare** that often takes place **behind the scenes** in relation to events that we can **see** taking place in our physical world.
- The angel says that he was coming to bring Daniel an answer to his prayer but was delayed because “*The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days.*”
- Finally, “*Michael*” (whose name means “Who is like God?”), one of the most **powerful** and **important** angels (“*one of the chief princes*”), came to Gabriel’s aid.
- Perhaps the reason that “*Michael*” became involved and not some **other** powerful angel was that Daniel was interceding for **Israel**, a nation that **seems** to have been entrusted to Michael’s care (see Dan 10:21; 12:1).
- It then says that Gabriel “*was left there with the kings of Persia*”.
- In the context of angelic warfare, these “*kings*” likely were spiritual rulers who were attempting to control Persia.



10:13 The *prince of the kingdom of Persia* withstood me twenty-one days, but *Michael*, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)

- Regardless of the exact meaning of this last clause, the point of the verse is clear.
- Gabriel had been on his way from heaven with a message for Daniel but had been temporarily delayed by the “*prince of the kingdom of Persia*”.
- At which point, “*Michael*” arrived and helped him to overcome this foe, which then allowed Gabriel to **continue** his journey.
- The conflict was probably **not** an attempt to prevent or delay the angel from bringing the message to Daniel (though this was one of the results), because, as we will soon see, this conflict was later **resumed after** the message had been delivered (cf. 10:20).
- “*Michael*”, who is **introduced** in this verse, is **also** mentioned in Dan 10:21; 12:1; Jude 9; and Rev 12:7 in Scripture.
- In Jude 9 Michael is called the “*archangel*,” which means “first (chief) angel.”
- Michael has been assigned by God as Israel’s “*prince*” (cf. 10:21).
- In Daniel 12:1 he is called a “*great prince*” and it also says there that he “*has charge of*” [“*watches over*”, “*protects*”] the Jewish people.

10:13 The *prince of the kingdom of Persia* withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)

- Who was this “*prince of the kingdom of Persia*” who delayed Gabriel for three weeks?
- He **must** have been an **angel** since no human prince could have “*withstood*” the angel Gabriel.
- Moreover, since the angel Michael is later identified as the “*prince*” of Israel in 10:21, it is reasonable to suppose that in the same context the “*prince of the kingdom of Persia*” was **also** an angel.
- Since this “*prince*” **opposed** God’s angel, we know he is an **evil** angel, or what would be referred to in the New Testament as a “*demon*”.
- Since he is called the “*prince of the kingdom of Persia*,” Persia must have been his special area of operation.



*10:13 The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)*

- Therefore, this demon was either a powerful angel assigned to Persia by Satan or ***possibly*** he was Satan himself.
- Persia ruled the world in that day, and Satan would surely have concentrated his personal efforts in this most influential nation.
- If the demon ***was*** Satan, it would explain why Michael, one of God's most powerful angels, was needed to help fight against him.
- Some commentaries suggest that it was this evil angel who influenced the kings of Persia to support the Samaritans against Israel which resulted in the Jews halting construction on the temple.

*10:13 The prince of the kingdom of **Persia** withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)*

- From this passage several important facts are evident concerning angels.
- Angels are **real**, and they fall into **two** categories: **good** angels and **evil** angels.
- We also see from this text that angels can influence the affairs of human beings.
- In particular, this passage teaches that angels seek to influence human governments and their leaders.
- In Daniel's day "**Persia**" ruled the earth.
- Satan would naturally have attempted to influence the decisions made by the Persian government because policies made there would affect the **whole world**.
- Today Satan undoubtably **continues** his attempts to sway earthly powers, focusing his attention on the nations of the world with the **most** influence.
- On the other hand, Dan 10:13, 20 and 11:1 demonstrate that **holy** angels can have a **positive** influence on human governments.

*10:13 The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)*

- We also know from the New Testament that there is an invisible, spiritual warfare being waged that involves angels and **believers**.
- The apostle Paul said, *“For we [as believers] do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”* (Eph 6:12).
- This warfare is an ongoing struggle (cf. Dan 10:20).
- God’s angels are often **sent** by God to serve his people:
  - *Are [angels] not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?* (Heb 1:14).
- Here in our text, angels are instrumental in delivering to Daniel a message from God.
- Believers would probably be **surprised** to learn how many acts have been performed on **their** behalf by the Lord’s angels.



*10:13 The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)*

- Daniel's experience should **not** cause us to think that God is **weak** or that demonic forces have power to **thwart** the will of God.
- The Book of Daniel teaches throughout its pages the **absolute sovereignty** of the Almighty – God could **easily** have ensured the delivery of the message to Daniel in a **moment**.
- While God can, of course, override the united resistance of all the forces of hell if he chooses to do so, he allows demons to have certain limited powers of obstruction and rebellion somewhat like those God allows in sinful **humans**.
- In both cases the exercise of creaturely will in opposition to the Lord of heaven is permitted by God **when he sees fit**.
- But as Job 1:12 and 2:6 indicate, the malignity of Satan (or evil humans) is never allowed to go beyond the due limit set by God.
- Believers should take comfort in these words, *“for he who is in you [God] is **greater** than he who is in the world [Satan].”* (1 John 4:4).

*10:13 The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia... (ESV)*

- In this instance, within the omniscient wisdom and divine plan of God, a ***delay*** was permitted.
- ***Reasons*** for this delay are not given in the text, but it may be ***assumed*** that God allowed three weeks to pass for Daniel's spiritual benefit or perhaps for some other ***unknown*** purpose.
- Many times, God makes us ***wait*** for our prayers to be answered in order to teach us valuable lessons, for example, spiritual commitment, patience, or faith.
- There are also times when God fully intends to respond affirmatively to a request but in his wisdom, he will ***delay*** because he knows that the proper time has not yet come.

*10:14 and [I] came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.” (ESV)*

- Here the angel tells Daniel the ***purpose*** for his visit.
- Daniel’s had prayed for insight concerning the future of his people, the Jews, and God was granting him knowledge about these matters.
- The phrase “*in the latter days*” normally describes events leading up to the Messianic Age.
- The climax of this historical preview that the angel is about to provide are part of the events that ultimately lead to the future kingdom of God being ushered in by the coming Messiah once the Gentile kingdoms prophesied in the book of Daniel have run their course.
- The specific kingdom in focus in this next vision will be the kingdom of Greece.



# The Angel Gives Daniel Encouragement and Strength (10:15-11:1)

*10:15 While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. <sup>16</sup> Then 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. <sup>17</sup> How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe." <sup>18</sup> Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength.*

# The Angel Gives Daniel Encouragement and Strength (10:15-11:1)

*10:19 "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. 11:1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.) (NIV)*

*10:15 When he had spoken to me according to these words, I **turned** my face **toward the ground and was mute**. <sup>16</sup> And behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, “O **my lord**, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. <sup>17</sup> How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? **For now no strength remains in me**, and no breath is left in me.” (ESV)*

- Evidently Daniel was still frightened and overcome with emotion, for while the angel was speaking to him, he “*turned*” his face “*toward the ground and was mute*.”
- Gabriel “*touched*” his lips and enabled him to speak.
- In this context “*my lord*” has roughly the force of the English “*sir*.”
- “*For now no strength remains in me*” – evidently Daniel’s pains and lack of strength were due to fright and emotional distress.
- He asked the angel how he, as a mortal man (“*my lord's servant*”), could **dare** to speak to a heavenly being.



*10:18 Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. 19 And he said, "O man **greatly loved**, fear not, **peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.**" And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for **you have strengthened me.**" (ESV)*

- Once more the angel touched Daniel and gave him strength.
- Daniel was admonished a second time not to be afraid and was **again** referred to as one "**greatly loved**" (cf. 9:23; 10:11) by the Lord.
- "**peace be with you**" was a common greeting in the Old Testament times (see for example, Daniel 4:1, 6:25), a way of wishing well-being and blessing upon the recipient.
- But in **this** context these words do not seem to be a mere greeting.
- Rather, the idea **here** seems to be: "You are safe."
- The angel is therefore **assuring** Daniel that he does not need to be fearful, because the Lord **loves** Daniel is **concerned** for his well-being ("**peace**").
- The angel tells Daniel to "**be strong and of good courage (literally, be strong and be strong)**" (cf. Josh 1:9).
- As the angel spoke these words of encouragement, Daniel's strength returned.

*10:20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. (ESV)*

- Here the angel asks Daniel if he knows **why** he has come.
- The question was obviously rhetorical since the answer had already been given in vv. 12 and 14 and would be reiterated again in the next verse.
- The question was probably asked in order to call Daniel's attention to what has already been said.
- This may have been necessary because of Daniel's previously weak and perturbed state in which he was unable to retain all that he had been told.

10:20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will *return to fight against the prince of Persia*; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. (ESV)

- Gabriel tells Daniel he must “*return to fight against the prince of Persia*”.<sup>1</sup>
- As long as the kingdom of Persia remains, he will need to remain there in and use his influence to advance the interests of God’s people.<sup>1</sup>
- Then, once the Persians pass off the scene as a power to be reckoned with, he says he will “*go out.*”<sup>1</sup>
- But no sooner does **one** conflict **end**, than **another** one comes along and takes its place: “*behold, the prince of Greece will come.*”<sup>1</sup>
- Once that happens, demonic forces will then seek to enlist kingdom of “*Greece*” in the efforts to destroy of God’s people.<sup>1</sup>
- Angelic support for God’s people will then be needed **again**, for the next chapter (chapter 11) details many of the struggles the Jews will face during this Greek period, **especially** during the rule of Antiochus IV.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leupold, H. C.; *Exposition of Daniel* (1949); (pp. 465–466)

<sup>2</sup> Miller, Stephen R., *Daniel*, vol. 18, *The New American Commentary* (pp. 287–288)



10:21 But I will tell you what is inscribed in *the book of truth*: there is none who contends by my side against these except *Michael*, your prince. (ESV)

- Here Gabriel tells Daniel the ***purpose*** of his visit, thereby answering the question he asked Daniel in the previous verse.
- The “*book of truth*” figuratively refers to God’s plan for Israel and the world, not merely the revelation entrusted to Daniel.
- It is “*the book*” in which God has designated beforehand, according to truth, the history of the world as it shall certainly be unfolded.”
- Before sharing the message, the angel adds further parenthetical information.
- As we have already noted, Michael’s special assignment apparently was to assist and protect the nation of Israel.
- Here we’re told that no one but “*Michael*” supported Gabriel in his spiritual warfare – not because no one else was available, but because no one else was needed.

*11:1 "And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. (ESV)*

- The Masoretic Text, the LXX, and most English translations place this verse at the start of chapter 11
- But it is clear that this verse, rather than serving as the **start** of a **new** chapter, should be connected with the **last** statement in chapter 10 (10:21) which explains the reciprocal relationship between Michael and Gabriel.
- Evidently the mention of a date, “*in the first year of Darius*,” similar to the headings of some other chapters (cf. 7:1; 8:1; 9:1; 10:1), led those who later divided the bible into chapters to place the chapter division here.
- In Daniel 10:13, 21 it is revealed that **Michael** had been of help to **Gabriel**.
- Now in 11:1 Gabriel tells of a time when **he** had supported and protected **Michael**.
- The first year of Darius the Mede was around 538 B.C., which places this event where Gabriel assisted Michael about two years earlier.

11:1 "And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to *confirm and strengthen* him. (ESV)

- Gabriel's awesome power is evidenced by the fact that he was called on to support Michael.
- We are not told specifically ***what*** Gabriel did to "*confirm and strengthen*" Michael – we're only told that he ***did***.
- Angelic conflicts may occur in the earthly arena (as this passage teaches) or in heaven (cf. Rev 12:7).
- Apparently, an intense spiritual conflict took place during the first year of Darius the Mede.
- Since Michael (Israel's prince) was involved, the battle more than likely had something to do with the Jewish people.



# Class Discussion Time

- In today's lesson I suggested that even in the ***present-day***:
  - Satan ***continues*** his attempts to sway earthly powers, focusing his attention on the nations of the world with the most influence.
  - Likewise ***holy*** angels continue exerting a ***positive*** influence on human governments.
- Do you ***agree*** with these suggestions? Do ***you*** think that angels are at work trying to influence the nations of the world today?
- If so, what might that look like?

# Class Discussion Time

- We are reminded in today's lesson that God's angels often act on behalf of believers.
- In that section I made the comment that believers would probably be surprised to learn of the many acts have been performed on their behalf by the Lord's angels. (Heb 1:14)
- Do you think there have been times in ***your*** life when God's angels may have worked on ***your*** behalf?
- Does you find it ***encouraging*** to know that problems you ***see*** taking place in the world around you and your perhaps your response ***to*** those problems may be may be a part of a ***greater unseen*** spiritual conflict?

# Class Discussion Time

- We observed in today's lesson that many times God permits believers to ***wait*** for their prayers to be answered in order to teach them valuable lessons, for example, spiritual commitment, patience, or faith.
- Can you think of a time God delayed in answering one of your prayers? How did that work out?

