



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Faith in The Midst of Spiritual Opposition (Daniel 10)

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Daniel gives us feedback on the spiritual forces involved during the rise and fall of nations in his lifetime and beyond. He prayed, was visited by an angel, received a personal commendation, and was fortified with understanding of the forces engaged to the end of time. Have you faced the dilemma of being engaged in what you felt was good work while encountering various types of intense opposition?

INTRODUCTION – THE VISIBLE DRAMA

“Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words....” (Jeremiah 25:8-9) God brought judgment on Judah after the people disobeyed His word, did evil, and worshipped other gods. The prophet Jeremiah preached repentance and judgement to the people for over twenty-three years, perhaps until 570 B.C. Judah was conquered by Babylon in 586 B.C. Most of the Jewish people were resettled. **Do you know of a nation that also saw this lesson?**

“Then it will be when seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste” (Jeremiah 25:11). The Prophet Jeremiah wrote in 579 B.C. to encourage the exiles. Medo-Persians conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. **Can you share how you plan for the long term yet stay open for a breakthrough from God?**

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, The God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem....’” (Ezra 1:1) The 538 B.C. proclamation encouraged every Jewish survivor to move back to Jerusalem and help rebuild the temple and the city. **Why do you think Cyrus showed such favor?**

CONFLICTS IN THE HEAVENLY REALM

Daniel 10:1 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. (NRSV)

Daniel sought to better understand the vision by committing to prayer and fasting. He ate no meat and drank no wine for three weeks. Some feel Daniel had heard of the obstruction by enemies of the Jews who were building the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 4:4). On his twenty-fourth day of fasting, he was in prayer by the side of the Tigris River. **Have you committed to prayer after feeling a burden about something ahead?**

THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

Daniel 10:5-6 I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His 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. (NIV)

This vision was the same as reported by the Apostle John centuries later (Revelation 1:13). Daniel lost all strength and fell into a deep sleep, his face on the ground. An angel touched him, strengthening him. **Have you been strengthened when facing a big test?**

DANIEL IS STRENGTHENED

Daniel 10:12-14 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. 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. (NIV)

Perhaps the evil, spiritual forces over Persia were enraged due to the favor given to the Jewish people by Cyrus, who allowed them to return and to build their temple. The angel promised to return to Daniel with a message from the Book of Truth, though he would next have to contend with the prince of Greece. **What spiritual forces have you been forced to deal with?**

A PRAYER

Almighty God, humble me in Your presence, yet embolden me for the trials ahead. Please carry me when my strength seems to fail. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen!