

Daniel 10:1–21 – When Heaven Moves and Earth Trembles

Daniel 10 lifts the curtain on something we usually cannot see: a praying man on earth, and at the same time, real spiritual conflict in the unseen realm. It shows us how God responds to humble, persevering prayer—and how overwhelming His glory is when He draws near.

1. Daniel's Three-Week Season of Seeking God (Daniel 10:1–3)

Daniel tells us:

“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 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.” (Daniel 10:1–3 NKJV)

By this point, Daniel is an elderly man, serving under the Persian king Cyrus. Some of the exiles have already been allowed to return to Jerusalem, but the work is slow and the situation is fragile. Daniel senses the weight of it all and enters a season of:

- Mourning before God,
- Partial fasting (no “pleasant food,” no meat, no wine),
- Focused prayer for three full weeks.

He is not just going through a religious exercise; his heart is burdened. He is grieving over the condition of his people and longing for God’s purposes to move forward.

Practical application for believers:

There are seasons when casual, half-hearted prayers are not enough. Daniel models a deeper response:

- He **sets time apart** to seek God.
- He **denies himself certain comforts** to keep his heart focused.
- He **stays with it** for three full weeks, even when there is no immediate answer.

You and I are not commanded to copy every detail of Daniel’s fast, but we are called to take God seriously. When you are deeply concerned—for your family, your church, your city, or your own walk—there are times to step away from distractions, humble yourself, and seek God with focused, persistent prayer.

2. The Vision of the Glorious Man (Daniel 10:4–9)

After those three weeks, Daniel says:

“Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.” (Daniel 10:4–6 NKJV)

This description is strikingly similar to the vision John has of the glorified Christ in Revelation 1:

- Linen garment,
- Golden belt,
- Eyes like fire,
- Feet like glowing bronze,
- Voice like the roar of many waters.

Whether this is the Lord Jesus Himself appearing in glory, or a mighty angel reflecting His majesty, the effect is the same: pure, overwhelming holiness.

Daniel continues:

“And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.” (Daniel 10:7–9 NKJV)

Daniel’s companions sense something, even though they do not see what he sees, and they run. Daniel himself collapses. His strength is gone. His sense of his own dignity and “comeliness” evaporates. Like Isaiah before him and John after him, he is overwhelmed in the presence of the Holy One.

Practical application for believers:

We live in a culture that treats God casually. But whenever Scripture shows a person confronted with the reality of God’s glory, nobody is casual:

- Isaiah cries, “Woe is me, for I am undone!” (Isaiah 6:5 NKJV).
- Peter says, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” (Luke 5:8 NKJV).
- John falls at His feet “as dead” (Revelation 1:17 NKJV).
- Daniel loses all strength and falls on his face.

Seeing God's holiness shows us our own sinfulness and need. That is not meant to crush us into despair, but to drive us to the only place we can stand: the grace of God through Jesus Christ.

Jesus shed His blood on the cross to cleanse us from sin and to reconcile us to a holy God. His resurrection declares that He is truly God, Savior, and Lord. Without His blood, we cannot stand in God's presence. With His blood, we are forgiven and welcomed.

3. "O Daniel, Man Greatly Beloved" – God's Tender Word (Daniel 10:10–12)

As Daniel lies face-down, overwhelmed, God does not leave him there.

"Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. And he said to me, 'O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.' While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling." (Daniel 10:10–11 NKJV)

Then comes one of the most encouraging statements in the chapter:

"Then he said to me, 'Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.'" (Daniel 10:12 NKJV)

Notice carefully:

- Daniel **set his heart to understand**.
- He **humbled himself** before God.
- God heard his prayer **from the first day**, even though Daniel did not see an answer for three weeks.
- The heavenly messenger says plainly: "I have come **because of your words**."

God is not indifferent. He hears the humble heart that seeks Him. Even when you feel nothing and see nothing, God is at work in ways you cannot imagine.

Practical application for believers:

If you are praying and nothing seems to be happening:

- Do not assume God is ignoring you.
- Do not assume your prayer is wasted.
- When you set your heart to seek God and humble yourself, your words are heard.

We are called to walk by faith, not by sight. Daniel 10 lets us see, for a moment, what is normally hidden: God responding, heaven moving, while the praying believer knows nothing yet of the answer in motion.

4. The Unseen Battle: The Prince of Persia and Michael (Daniel 10:13–14, 20–21)

Then comes a surprising explanation:

“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.”

(Daniel 10:13 NKJV)

Later he says:

“Then he said, ‘Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.)’”

(Daniel 10:20–21 NKJV)

This “prince of Persia” is not an earthly king. He is a spiritual power associated with the Persian empire—one of the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. Michael is described as a “chief prince” and “your prince,” a mighty angel who has a special role in protecting and contending for God’s people.

We are not told every detail, and we should be careful not to go beyond what Scripture says. But we are clearly shown at least this much:

- There are real spiritual powers of evil at work behind human systems and empires.
- There are powerful holy angels who resist them and serve God’s purposes.
- There can be real conflict in the spiritual realm connected to what is happening in history and in response to the prayers of God’s people.

This does not mean that every delay or difficulty we experience is caused by a specific demon. But it does remind us: spiritual warfare is real.

The New Testament confirms this:

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

(Ephesians 6:12 NKJV)

At the same time, we must remember:

Jesus has already won the decisive victory at the cross and in His resurrection. He disarmed principalities and powers and triumphed over them (see Colossians 2:15 NKJV). We are not fighting a battle whose outcome is in doubt. We stand in the victory of Christ.

Practical application for believers:

1. Do not be naïve.

The struggles in our world are not just political, social, or psychological. There is spiritual resistance to God's purposes and to the gospel.

2. Do not be obsessed.

Scripture does not call us to fixate on demonic activity, but to put on the whole armor of God, to pray, and to trust the Lord.

3. Persevere in prayer.

Daniel's example teaches us that delay does not mean denial. Sometimes there is more happening than we can see. Our part is to keep praying, keep trusting, and keep obeying.

5. Strengthened to Hear More: God's Grace in Our Weakness (Daniel 10:15–19)

Even after this, Daniel is overwhelmed:

"When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, 'My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.'" (Daniel 10:15–17 NKJV)

Daniel is honest:

"Lord, I am overwhelmed. I have no strength. I can hardly breathe."

But God does not crush him; God strengthens him.

"Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, 'O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!' So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, 'Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.'" (Daniel 10:18–19)

What beautiful words:

- "O man greatly beloved..."
- "Fear not!"
- "Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!"

Daniel does not dig deep and find inner resources. He is strengthened by a word and a touch from God. First he says, "I cannot," then he says, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

Practical application for believers:

There are seasons when walking with God feels heavy—when what He shows us in His Word or what He allows in our circumstances feels like more than we can bear. In those moments:

- God does not ask you to pretend you are strong.
- He invites you to admit your weakness and receive His strength.

In Jesus Christ, believers are also called “beloved.” God does not strengthen us so that we can impress Him, but so that we can hear Him, trust Him, and obey Him.

6. A Challenge to Believers

Daniel 10 presses several challenges on followers of Jesus:

1. **Will you become a person of prayer and the Word, like Daniel?**
He understood his times because he knew Scripture, and he responded not with debate, but with prayer and fasting. Our world is in turmoil. Will you respond with deeper prayer, intercession, and repentance?
2. **Will you humble yourself before God instead of blaming Him?**
Daniel’s heart posture is, “You are righteous; we are the ones who have failed.” That is the soil where real revival begins.
3. **Will you persevere when you see no immediate answer?**
From the first day Daniel prayed, his words were heard. But he did not see the answer for three weeks. Keep praying—especially when nothing seems to be happening.
4. **Will you live with a sober awareness of spiritual reality?**
We are not fighting flesh and blood. The answer is not despair or panic, but standing firm in God’s armor, trusting Christ’s victory, and resisting the devil in faith.
5. **Will you receive God’s strengthening word?**
Maybe you are like Daniel right now—tired, overwhelmed, out of breath. Hear God’s heart in this passage:
“O man greatly beloved... O woman greatly beloved... fear not. Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong.”

7. An Invitation to Those Who Have Not Yet Given Their Life to Jesus

Whenever a human being encounters even a glimpse of God’s glory in Scripture, the reaction is the same: collapse, confession, and the awareness, “I am not right before God.”

Daniel's strength melts away. Isaiah cries, "Woe is me!" Peter says, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." These are not people comparing themselves to the worst of society; they are seeing themselves next to the holiness of God.

If you are honest, you know that you, too, have sinned. You have broken God's commands in thought, word, and deed. No amount of religion, good works, or self-improvement can erase your guilt. Like Daniel, you have no strength to stand on your own.

But here is the good news that all of Scripture points to:

- Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, came into our world,
- Lived a sinless life we have not lived,
- Shed His blood on the cross to pay for our sins,
- And rose again from the dead, declaring once and for all that He is God, Savior, and Lord.

He was "cut off," not for His own sin, but for ours. His blood is enough to cleanse you completely. His resurrection proves that death and the powers of darkness have been overcome.

God does not ask you to fix yourself and then come. He calls you to turn from your sin and trust in His Son.

If you sense God drawing you, you can respond today. There is no magic formula, but you might pray something like this from your heart:

*"Lord God, I admit that I have sinned against You.
I cannot stand in Your presence by my own goodness.
I believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross for my sins
and that You raised Him from the dead.
I confess Him as my God, my Savior, and my Lord.
Please forgive me, cleanse me, and give me a new heart.
I give my life to You and ask You to lead me from this day forward.
In Jesus' name, Amen."*

If you truly turn to Him, you move from being under judgment to being "greatly beloved" in Christ. The God whose glory made Daniel fall on his face will become your Father, and the risen Jesus will be your Savior and Lord.

Daniel 10 reminds us that when a believer seeks God in sincerity, heaven moves—even when earth feels silent. It calls us to deeper prayer, deeper humility, and deeper trust in the One who shed His blood for us and rose again in power.