

• LESSON 11 (March 18) •

Daniel 10: The God Who Wins the Ultimate Victory

Wouldn't it be nice if we knew "the rest of the story" of our lives? Or even better, how great would it be if we had perfect knowledge of what was going on in heaven parallel to our earthly circumstances? Hypothetically, if we knew an answer to our prayers was being delayed by the demon assigned to the Iranians, would we be more or less encouraged? If Job had known why he was being made to suffer, would it have made it easier for him?

In this final section of Daniel, the aged prophet was given a very specific, detailed glimpse at the future of his people. He learned that difficult hardship awaited them, but that Daniel personally would die in peace and be resurrected with the rest of God's saints. Yet, after reading the effect this all had on Daniel, I doubt I want to know too much about the future. As soon as we think we can predict future events, a twist occurs that no one expected. As early as high school, we plan out our whole lives, but they almost never go that way. Could there be more to life than always knowing what's about to happen next? (*The Derision of Heaven*, Michael Whitworth)

BACKGROUND:

- Cyrus' third year was 536 B.C. The Jews were experiencing great difficulties in Jerusalem. The foundation of the second Temple would be laid in April 536, but the project would be quickly suspended due to the Samaritans' intense opposition (Ezra 3:8, 10; 4:4-5).
- A couple of days before, on Nisan 24 (early April), Daniel saw a "man" standing on the banks of the Tigris River. The description of this "man" (10:5-6) is a majestic one, similar in many ways to what Ezekiel saw in Ezekiel 1:5-28. The "man's" clothes are reminiscent of what a Jewish priest would wear (Exo 28; Lev 6:10; 16:4).
- Daniel's description of the "man" is almost identical to the description of the glorified Christ given by John in Revelation 1:12-15. Interestingly, Daniel's reaction to seeing this "man" is identical to John's (Rev 1:17).
- In Jude's epistle, Michael is called "the archangel" (1:9). In Revelation, Michael leads his army of heavenly angels in the war against "the dragon and his angels" (12:7-9).

QUESTIONS WORTH THINKING ABOUT:

1. Why do you think Daniel was "mourning for three weeks" (10:2-3)?
2. Daniel is referred to as a "man greatly loved" (10:11,19). What ought we to make of this?
3. What is revealed in Daniel 10:12-14 is absolutely fascinating. What can we learn from this brief glimpse into the struggles we cannot see with our physical eyes?

CLOSING THOUGHT: "For we 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)