

**Dan 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**

Daniel was still in Babylon 2 years after the decree of Cyrus which let the Jews return to Israel. Some speculate this failure to return to Israel had to do with his advanced age and the difficulty of such a journey for an aged man. Others speculate that Daniel, as a high ranking member of the Persian government, decided to stay in office where he could do more for the returning Jews in a political sense, than he could if he went with them, though this latter view has problems because it seems that based on Daniel 1:21 that Daniel only continued his political career until the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Cyrus, so Daniel may have been retired by this point.

The fact that Daniel seems to be near 85 years old at this point is probably a sufficient reason to explain his lack of return, but there are a number of scenarios that could explain this as well. The fact is that the text does not say clearly.

### **A message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar.**

Daniel calls himself by the name given to him by the Babylonians; one commentator suggests this is to make it clear that is the same Daniel who wrote during the Babylonian times that is writing this present letter.

### **The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long**

The truthfulness of the vision is described as the reason the vision should be preserved in the earlier vision of Chapter 8

Dan 8:26 "And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For *it refers* to many days *in the future*."

The last part of this phrase **but the appointed time *was* long** is often translated in certain bible version as being about **conflict or war** as opposed to it being a long time away.

The idea of being **long** here according to some Hebrew scholars, was that it was long in the sense of being about a great conflict therefore many translations translate this passage similar to the NET bible which says:

This message was true and concerned a great war.

Since understanding this depends on understanding a lot about the Hebrew Language and how it developed, which I do not, I will take a pass on explaining this, and only note that regardless how you take it it is true. The following 3 chapters, which constitute the message Daniel is going to receive, do have to do with great wars, but they also are not appointed for a long time.

**and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.**

This is interesting how Daniel makes it known that he understood the vision. This is perhaps in contrast to the other 2 visions he had seen, the first in Chapter 7, and then in Chapter 8 where he seems to simply record the visions, but not have a good understanding of them.

He seems to explicitly say this at the end of the vision of chapter 8 when he says:

Dan 8:27 ... I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

In the vision in chapter 9 the 70 weeks vision there Daniel is given the ability to understand the vision (9:22) and is commanded to understand it (9:25).

At the end of this vision in chapter 10 which concludes in chapter 12, Daniel says he doesn't understand what the angel says about the timing of the end of the vision, but it would appear that Daniel does claim to understand the main points of the vision, and in particular how the vision relates to his concern for the Jewish people whom we will see he is praying for before this vision is given and whom the angel says this vision is about.

**Dan 10:2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.**

**Dan 10:3 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.**

**I, Daniel, was mourning**

Why was Daniel mourning? In one sense he had gotten the very thing he prayed for in Daniel 9. The Jews were set free, they were back in the land and they had been given the authority to rebuild the city and the temple. But things were not going well with the rebuilding process back in Jerusalem. I think the cause of Daniels mourning can be found in Ezra 4:4,5 which describe a big problem with the rebuilding process which was so near and dear to Daniel:

Ezr 4:4 Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building,

Ezr 4:5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

The people back in Israel were so frustrated by the tactics employed by these people that the building process would stall altogether until God sent the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to get the Jews back on track and building again.

In other words, based on Daniel saying he was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus in verse 1, and based on Ezra 3:8 which says that the laying of the foundation, which sparked the opposition to the building occurred in the second month of the second year of their coming, it's safe to assume that Daniel had recently been given word of the stalled work on the temple.

This in my opinion is the reason that Daniel was mourning, he could see that because of the fear of man and the craftiness of their opposition the great work of rebuilding the city and the temple, that he had prayed for so earnestly, was dead in its tracks.

**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 here was doing a type of fast, which was characterized by self-denial. It wasn't an abstaining from food altogether only "choice food" nor "meat" nor "wine."

The refraining from anointing mentioned here probably refers to oils that would be put on the skin in hot and dry climates to help the skin in such conditions. This then was indeed a form of self-denial.

Stephen Miller in the New American Commentary says of fasting:

"Fasting is a personal matter between the individual and God. It is voluntary. However, if giants of the faith like Moses, David, Esther, Daniel, Paul, and Jesus himself felt the need to fast, it would seem reasonable that modern saints should be willing to deny themselves in order to pray more earnestly for the furtherance of the kingdom of God in a world that lies in deep spiritual darkness."<sup>i</sup>

**Dan 10:4 Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris,**

**Dan 10:5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!**

**Dan 10:6 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.**

During this three week fast, Daniel was by the Tigris River when he sees this great messenger.

It is often pointed out that the description of this being given by Daniel is similar to the description that the apostle John gives us of the risen and glorified Jesus in Revelation chapter 1

For example in Revelation 1 the following characteristics of Jesus are mentioned that could be considered matches:

He is girded about the chest with a golden band.

His eyes are like a flame of fire.

His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace,

His voice as the sound of many waters.

His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

He is also clothed with a garment down to the feet though I would submit that this is not a match since "linen" is not mentioned. It may seem like a minor point, but considering the very particular use of linen in scripture, and the fact that linen is mentioned being worn by the **angels** in the same chapter of Revelation I don't think it should be assumed that the fabric that Jesus was wearing was linen, though it is possible and even likely.

A few other characteristics are mentioned of Jesus such as his hair being white that are not mentioned by Daniel.

Before we investigate who this being is that appears to Daniel at the Tigris River we must also realize that very similar characteristics are also applied to several angels in the book of Revelation.

For example the so called “strong angels” that appear 3 times in the book (Rev: 5:2, 10:1, 18:21). Also in chapter 15, the seven angels with the seven viles also appear to have similar characteristics.

For example these angels:  
Are clothed in pure bright linen.  
Have their chests girded with golden bands.  
Have faces like the sun.  
And feet like pillars of fire.  
Have a loud voice “as when a lion roars”

If we stopped right there it would be a tie. But I think there is another data point found in Revelation 10 when one of the “strong angels” is being referred to.

In that passage we read the following:

Rev 10:5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven  
Rev 10:6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer,

The reason this is interesting is because back in Daniel, if you fast forward to the end of the interaction between Daniel and these beings you find an almost identical verse:

Dan 12:6 And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders *be?*"  
Dan 12:7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that *it shall be* for a time, times, and half *a time*; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished.

So here we have the same thing. A being, standing above some waters holding up hands swearing in a way that is only seen in these two passages in scripture. It certainly is not a coincidence, that they both are wearing linen and a gold belt and all the rest of it.

The difference is that in Revelation 10 the amazingly similar being is called an “angel” several times, and it is unlikely that John would make such a mistake considering he was given a lesson in not comparing angels with Jesus in Revelation 19:10 and that in the places where John is explicitly referring to Jesus he never calls him an angel or anything like it.

In addition the strong angel in Revelation 10 is contextually angelic. For example in Rev 10:8 the “Voice from heaven” which is obviously divine **speaks to the angel** severely limiting the possibility that the strong angel is Jesus, as contextually Jesus is on the throne in heaven at this time:

In addition the strong angel makes appeals to God for the end to come at the sounding of the final trumpet. Again making the context support the idea of an angelic identity.

The reason that people suggest that Daniel is visited by none other than Jesus Himself in Daniel 10 is based solely on the 5 or so characteristics that are a match with the description of the risen Christ in Revelation 1, which certainly does contain many exact and very interesting matches with the being that Daniel describes.

They hold this even though such characteristics can also be seen of particularly high ranking angels in the same book.

I believe there is a reason that Jesus shares some characteristics with angels, which I will discuss in a moment, but we must first look at some arguments against the idea that the being in Daniel 10 is an OT appearance of Jesus.

The primary problem arises because of verse 13 of Daniel 10

Dan 10:13 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.

The idea that Jesus could be withstood in such a way by man or angel as to need help from Michael the archangel is not a theology we find anywhere in scripture. Though we do find that Michael is often matched against Satan, another angelic being of a similar rank in Jude and Revelation 12.

Theologians paint themselves into a theological corner when they argue that this being is Jesus because they have to find some explanation as to why Jesus, that is God himself is unable to defeat one of his creatures namely the Prince of Persia.

I heard one commentator suggest that being helped by Michel to defeat the prince of Persia was similar to when Jesus was ministered to by angels during his temptation in the wilderness, but that explanation is no good. In that instance the temptation Jesus was given by Satan was to make bread for himself during a time of critical hunger, in other words to use his divine power to manifest bread instead of trusting His father for provisions in a situation where there was no earthly possibility to obtain food.

This temptation was only a part of our Lord's brief earthy sojourn and he was tempted and tried as we are in all ways, but that time of **self-imposed** weakness is over for Him, neither can it be said that such a weakness existed in him in his pre-incarnate state.

Other commentators attempting to have their cake and eat it too will view verse 10 as shifting from talking about Jesus to a run of the mill angel. I will quote a verse before the verse in question so you can get the context, listen for the phrase "suddenly a hand touched me" that phrase is supposed to signify the change in characters:

Dan 10:9 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.

Dan 10:10 **Suddenly, a hand touched me**, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands.

So in this reading Daniel has a vision of Jesus, but then the angels take over the conversation from there.

This is an improvement from the previous interpretation but it is unnecessary as the only reason people think they have to make this being be Jesus is because of the physical description, a description that can be shown to have at least 20% more to do with angels than with Jesus.

So we can let these angels be angels in my opinion. But it does bring up the question, Why does Jesus in his glorified state look so much like angels? I mean shouldn't he look much more awesome than they are?

The reason is that Jesus was the firstfruits of the coming resurrection (1 cor 15: 20-23), that is to say that Jesus is currently enthroned in heaven in a glorified body, a body that we too will wear once we are resurrected.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

So in some sense Jesus is still a man on the throne, even though he is in a glorified body. The next point is that this glorified body is very similar to what angels have.

Jud 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

When Jude refers to the abode or habitation that the angels left in order to come down and have sex with human women, he is using a very rare Greek word, used only twice in the bible, once here in Jude and the other time its referring to the glorified body that believers in Christ will have upon the resurrection. The verse is found in 2 Corinthians 5:2 and the word is translated there as "habitation"

2Co 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

**2Co 5:2** For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our **habitation** which is from heaven,

So we can see here than upon the resurrection we will obtain the type of body that the angels had before falling, a body type that Christ, as the firstfruit of the resurrection has right now.

This seems to be explicitly taught by the Lord himself

Mat 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.

So in conclusion on this point, there is no need to see the angel that is speaking with Daniel as Jesus, as the exact same physical characteristics are spoken of in regard to angels and the description seems to be pretty standard for most heavenly beings regardless of rank.

Jesus certainly outranks any man, though we will probably look similar to Jesus in our glorified state, by the same token, having angels described similarly to the Lord in his resurrected body is expected based on the points made above.

**Dan 10:7 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.**

A similar event to this happened with Saul on the road to Damascus in the book of Acts when Jesus appeared to him. It would seem that there is was unmistakable presence that could be felt by onlookers, in the case of Saul of Tarsus the people could see a light (Acts 9:7) and hear a voice (acts 22:9) but they could not make out any particulars about them. It also caused them to be afraid.

Some people believe this is another reason that Jesus is the being in Daniel 10, but again we remember that the book of Acts was post resurrection, as was the book of Revelation, therefore all the previous points about Jesus being in a sense like angels because of the nature of his glorified body, apply to the Road to Damascus incident as well.

It should be noted that fear, because of the overwhelming presence **of angels** is common in other places in Daniel, as well as the book Revelation and It is not uncommon in those passages for the angel to say things like "Fear not." In other words the idea of the presence of angels causing fear is well documented in scripture.

**Dan 10:8 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.**

**Dan 10:9 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.**

**Dan 10:10 Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands.**

This exact same thing happened in a previous vision of Daniels recorded in Daniel 8, though in that case the angel that caused this sleepiness was named explicitly as Gabriel:

Dan 8:16 And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision."

Dan 8:17 So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision *refers* to the time of the end."

Dan 8:18 Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright..

It is for this reason that many scholars believe the angel in Daniel 10 is the same one in Daniel 8 that is Gabriel, while I would say we cant be 100% certain of that, it is certainly possible, even probable.

**Dan 10:11 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.**

**O Daniel, man greatly beloved**

Daniel will be told this by the angel one more time in this chapter, and he was also told the same thing in the previous vision. It appears based on the next usage of the term that the angel is using Gods love for him as a kind of title for Daniel:

Dan 10:19 And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not!

This makes the comparison with the apostle John even more interesting as John too had a similar title “the disciple whom Jesus loved” and as previously mentioned both of these men were given these great apocalyptic visions by Gods messengers.

It should also be said more generally here that God wants us to know we are loved. His word declares this to us in many ways often very directly (Rom 5:8-9, John 3:16)

**Dan 10:12 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.**

What a great encouragement for us to pray this verse is. Daniel had a divine messenger dispatched “**because of [his] words**” Jesus tells us that mountains can be moved in prayer if we have faith. Scripture tells us time and time again in various ways that prayer is the catalyst for God to act in our lives.

**Dan 10:13 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.**

In discussing this verse I will also read two verses from the end of the chapter before we begin.

**Dan 10:20 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.**

**Dan 10:21 But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.**

So here we have this Prince of Persia withstanding this angel for 21 days, apparently preventing him from reaching Daniel with this message about the future of the world and the antichrist.

There have been a lot of proposals as to the nature of this Prince of Persia so we will take a few of them and see if they can be defended.

Some commentators say that the Prince of Persia is a human prince such as the son of Cyrus at the time Cambyses II, some will even say it was Cyrus himself. This view is attractive to those who lean toward an anti-supernatural view, but it has many difficulties.

- 1.) Two times the angel contrasts the Prince of Persia with Michael who is also a Prince, suggesting that they are of the same quality, and we know that in the case of Michael “prince” means angel.
- 2.) The context suggests an angelic being here because this **Prince of Persia** seems to be an even match for the angel that is speaking (probably Gabriel) and the Prince of Persia is only overcome with the addition of another angel to the fight, that is Michael. It is very difficult to think of an earthly king or son of a king being described this way for any reason whatsoever.

Some will say that the prince of Persia is Satan himself. They do this citing Matthew 4:8-9 in which Satan suggests that all the nations of the world are his, without contradiction from Jesus.

This would be supported by the idea that at least twice we see Michael engaged with fighting Satan, in Jude over the body and Moses and Revelation 12 just before the midpoint of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel.

The problem for this view shows up in verse 20 where it 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."**

If the Satan theory is correct then the Prince of Greece must also be Satan, but in this verse the Prince of Persian and Greece are contrasted making the satanic view difficult if not impossible.

I think that the Prince of Persia as well as the Prince of Greece are, similar in nature to Michael and Gabriel that is to say they are angels however in their case they are angels that have fallen and aligned with Satan and his purposes, which of course would include preventing Daniel from being given such vital information concerning his plan.

I recommend the paper in the Journal Bibliotheca Sacra by David E. Stevens called "Daniel 10 and the Notion of Territorial Spirits" in which Mr. Stephens protests the idea that these angels are "territorial spirits" and instead calls them "Empire Spirits."

In other words he says that it is wrong to use Daniel 10 as a proof that there are fallen angels assigned to every geographical territory. He points out that the actions of the Prince of Persia are generally opposing the plan of God, and not necessarily concerned with their territory per se.

But his strongest point in my opinion is in regard to the mentioning of the Prince of Greece as coming afterwards and about the nature of Michael being a prince of Daniel's "people" not of the land itself.

Persia was the empire that ruled the world at the time of this vision, the empire that would come next, which would defeat the Persian Empire was Greece, this was explained quite explicitly to Daniel in Chapter 8, probably by the very same angel, so Daniel could be expected to understand the reference to the Prince of Greece coming afterwards.

The alternative is difficult to imagine. It would mean that the angel here is telling Daniel that the territorial angel over Persia was fighting him, and he was going to go back to continue this fight and he somehow also knew that another territorial angel, that is over Greece is going to come and join the fight which was presumably not happening on its territory. The idea is possible, but it seems to be a stretch especially considering there is such a strong case that Daniel knew that the Grecian empire would follow the Persian empire.

Although it must be said that we cannot really know the exact nature of these spiritual wars, the idea of these beings being associated with whatever world power is on the scene could be a likely scenario as Stevens suggests. I might even go so far as to say that the angels could be assigned to more than one place at a given time, but the idea of territorial spirits being over every nation is not defensible from this passage in my opinion.

**Dan 10:14 Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come."**

Here we are told that the focus of the vision will concern Daniel's **people**, that is the Jewish people. Though it can be said that since the end of the prophecy concerning Israel will draw in the whole world this can also be said to be a detailed prophecy about the future of the world in the end times.

**Dan 10:15** When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

**Dan 10:16** 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.

**Dan 10:17** 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."

**Dan 10:18** Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me.

**Dan 10:19** 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."

So Daniel is made weak by the presence of the angel, but the angel strengthens him with a touch, again a similar instance happened last time Daniel met Gabriel in Daniel 8:18.

**Dan 10:20** 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.

**Dan 10:21** But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

See discussion on verse 13

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<sup>i</sup> Miller, Stephen B. (1994-08-31). The New American Commentary Volume 18 - Daniel (p. 279). B&H Publishing. Kindle Edition.