DISCOVERING DANIEL

10
LESSON

WORKBOOK STUDY COMPANION · LESSON 10

The *Unseen Warfare*

DANIEL 10

Scripture written out in the NASB95, every question answered in one sentence, cross references, verse-by-verse commentary from three trusted teachers — and for each question, a point of critical thinking and a key question to carry into the week.

Amir Tsarfati
DISCOVERING DANIEL

John MacArthur
GRACE TO YOU

David Guzik
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PREPARED FOR ED & PAUL SMITH · BIBLE STUDY

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

What do I see?

USING YOUR BIBLE, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1 Read Daniel 10:1-3. What happened to Daniel, and how did he respond?

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DANIEL 10:1 (NASB95)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.

DANIEL 10:2-3 (NASB95)

In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

IN MY WORDS

God revealed a true message to Daniel about great conflict, and it hit him so hard that he mourned and gave up rich food, meat, wine, and ointment for three full weeks.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 1:4** Nehemiah also sat down, wept, and mourned and fasted for days when he heard hard news about his people — grief driving a man to prayer is the pattern.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes that this is now the third year of Cyrus, which means Daniel is in his mid-eighties and the first wave of exiles has already gone home under the decree of Cyrus. Daniel did not go with them. He stayed at his post in Persia, and what troubles him is not his own comfort but what he has just been shown about the future of his people.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik points out that Daniel does not fast because a rule told him to. He fasts because he is genuinely grieving, and food simply lost its appeal. Notice the detail about ointment — in that climate skin care was ordinary daily hygiene, so setting it aside is the ancient equivalent of a man who stops shaving and stops caring how he looks because his heart is somewhere else.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel says he understood the message — and understanding it is exactly what made him mourn. We usually assume that if we just understood God's plan we would feel better. Here, clarity produced grief, because what Daniel now saw clearly was trouble coming in the latter days to the people he loved.

KEY QUESTION

When God makes something clear to me that I would rather not know, do I take it to prayer the way Daniel did, or do I distract myself until the weight passes?

2 What clues do you see in verses 1-3 that spiritual warfare was taking place?

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DANIEL 10:1 (NASB95)

...and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.

IN MY WORDS

The message itself is described as one of great conflict, and Daniel's three weeks of mourning line up exactly with the twenty-one days the messenger was later held up, so the battle was already underway while Daniel was praying.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ephesians 6:12** "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that the text gives us the human side first and the heavenly side second, which is the order we actually live in. Daniel felt the resistance for three weeks before he was ever told what it was. The believer's experience of spiritual conflict is usually the burden first and the explanation much later, if at all.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati draws attention to the phrase rendered "great conflict" — the Hebrew carries the sense of warfare or a great army. The subject of the vision is conflict, the delivery of the vision was contested by conflict, and the man receiving it was worn down by conflict. The whole chapter is soaked in it.

CRITICAL THINKING

The timing is the clue most readers walk past. Daniel mourned for three entire weeks, and the messenger says he was withstood for twenty-one days. Those are the same three weeks. Daniel's prayer was answered on day one; what took twenty-one days was the delivery, not the hearing.

KEY QUESTION

Am I willing to keep praying into week three about something that felt like silence in week one?

3 What did Daniel see when he stood by the Tigris River (see verses 4-6)?

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DANIEL 10:4-6 (NASB95)

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.

IN MY WORDS

I see a glorious man dressed in linen with a belt of pure gold, a body like gemstone, a face like lightning, eyes like flaming torches, arms and feet like polished bronze, and a voice that sounded like a roaring crowd.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 1:14-15** "His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes how carefully the description is built out of things Daniel could name — linen, gold, beryl, bronze, lightning — because Daniel is reaching for earthly words to describe someone who does not belong to earth. The linen and the gold belt are priestly and royal at once.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati treats this figure as a Christophany, an appearance of the Son of God before His incarnation, and points to how closely John's vision of the risen Christ in Revelation 1 tracks these same details. He also observes that the glorious man of verses 5-6 and the speaking messenger of verses 10-14 behave differently — the second one can be delayed by a demonic prince; the first is never said to be.

CRITICAL THINKING

The location matters. Daniel is standing on the bank of the Tigris — open ground, in the heart of the empire, not in a temple and not in a private room. God's most overwhelming self-disclosures in Scripture rarely happen where religion is conducted; they happen where the servant happens to be standing.

KEY QUESTION

Am I expecting God to meet me only in the places I have labeled spiritual, and therefore missing Him on the riverbank of an ordinary Tuesday?

4 How did Daniel's companions respond (see verse 7)?

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DANIEL 10:7 (NASB95)

Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.

IN MY WORDS

They did not see the vision at all, but a great dread fell on them anyway and they ran off to hide.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 9:7** The men traveling with Saul on the Damascus road stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one — a companion can be caught in the edge of an encounter without receiving it.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur points out that the vision was given to Daniel and to no one else, yet the presence of God was heavy enough that men who saw nothing still felt something and fled. The reaction of the companions is evidence that this was not a private psychological event but an objective presence in that place.

CRITICAL THINKING

Their instinct was to hide, and hiding is the oldest reflex in the Bible — Adam hid in the garden the moment holiness came near. Daniel stays and is drained; the companions leave and are spared. Proximity to God costs Daniel his strength, and it is the men who kept their strength who went home with nothing.

KEY QUESTION

When God's presence turns uncomfortable, do I stay in the room and let it cost me something, or do I find a reason to be somewhere else?

5 What happened to Daniel physically in response to this vision (see verses 8-9)?

P. 217

DANIEL 10:8-9 (NASB95)

So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

IN MY WORDS

All my strength drained away, my face went deathly pale, and the moment I heard his voice I collapsed face-down into a deep sleep.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 1:17** John, seeing the glorified Christ, fell at His feet like a dead man — the same collapse, the same reason.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that this is the consistent biblical response of even the most godly man to genuine glory. Daniel is the man who faced lions without flinching; here he cannot stay on his feet. The difference is not courage, it is company.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur connects this to Daniel 8:17-18, where the prophet also fell frightened on his face and sank into a deep sleep until he was touched and set upright. The pattern is that God overwhelms first, then restores — He never leaves the man on the floor.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel did not faint at the sight; he collapsed at the sound. Verse 8 has him weakened by what he saw, but verse 9 says it was hearing the words that put him under. The word of God is heavier than the vision of God, which is exactly why God gave us a book and not a photograph.

KEY QUESTION

Do I handle Scripture as something weighty enough to knock a prophet flat, or have I gotten so used to it that it no longer moves me at all?

6 Read verses 10-11.

DANIEL 10:10-11 (NASB95)

Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

a. What did the visitor do to Daniel?

IN MY WORDS

He touched me with his hand and raised me from flat on my face up onto my hands and knees, then told me to stand upright — and I stood, still trembling.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 8:18** "Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright."

b. What endearing words did this visitor say to Daniel?

IN MY WORDS

He called me "O Daniel, man of high esteem" — the older translations render it "man greatly beloved," meaning heaven held me dear.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:23** "...and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati highlights that Daniel is lifted in stages — first to his hands and knees, then to his feet — and that the strengthening comes with a name and a term of affection attached. Heaven does not merely issue Daniel an order; it tells him who he is to God before it tells him what is coming.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that Daniel stood up trembling. The touch restored his ability to stand but did not remove the awe. Being loved by God and being undone by God are not opposites.

CRITICAL THINKING

The command is "understand the words" before it is "stand upright." The messenger asks a man who cannot even hold himself off the ground to engage his mind first. God's comfort here is not a feeling delivered to a passive man; it is truth delivered to a man expected to think.

KEY QUESTION

Do I actually believe God speaks of me the way he spoke of Daniel — and if I believed it this week, what would I stop apologizing for?

7 According to verse 12, when did this visitor begin his journey to respond to Daniel?

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DANIEL 10:12 (NASB95)

Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.

IN MY WORDS

He set out on the very first day I set my heart to understand and humbled myself before God — my words were heard immediately.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 65:24** "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur emphasizes that there was no delay whatsoever on God's end. The prayer was heard on day one and the answer was dispatched on day one. Every day of the twenty-one belongs to the journey, not to God's deliberation.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati points out the two things named as the trigger — Daniel set his heart on understanding, and he humbled himself. Both are present tense choices, not achievements. God responded to a posture, not to a performance.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel spent three weeks assuming nothing was happening, and he was wrong the entire time. The answer was already en route on day one of what felt like silence. Nothing in Daniel's experience told him this — he only learned it afterward, from the messenger's own mouth.

KEY QUESTION

What am I currently calling unanswered prayer that may simply be an answer still in transit?

8 How long did it take for this visitor to reach Daniel, and why (see verse 13)?

P. 220

DANIEL 10:13 (NASB95)

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

IN MY WORDS

It took twenty-one days, because the prince of the kingdom of Persia stood against him until Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 12:1** "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise." — Michael is repeatedly the one assigned to Israel's defense.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati reads the prince of Persia as a demonic power assigned to that kingdom, not the human ruler — a human king could not detain an angelic messenger for three weeks. Behind the visible empires of the earth are invisible powers contending for influence over them.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik cautions that Scripture pulls the curtain back only this far and no further. We are told there is real resistance in the heavenly places and that God's purpose is not stopped by it. We are not given a system, a map, or a technique for fighting these princes ourselves — and the silence is deliberate.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur notes that Michael is called "one of the chief princes," and Jude 9 names him the archangel who, disputing with the devil over the body of Moses, would not pronounce a railing judgment but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" Even the archangel defers the verdict to God.

CRITICAL THINKING

Notice what the delay did not do: it did not change the message, shorten it, or stop it. The enemy's best effort against the word of God bought twenty-one days and nothing else. Delay is the most the adversary managed here, and even that ended the moment reinforcement arrived.

KEY QUESTION

Do I treat resistance as evidence that I am on the wrong road, when it may be evidence that I am on exactly the right one?

9 What was the visitor's reason for coming to Daniel (see verse 14)?

P. 221

DANIEL 10:14 (NASB95)

"Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future."

IN MY WORDS

He came to give me understanding of what will happen to my people, Israel, in the latter days, because the vision is about days still in the future.

CROSS REFERENCE **Amos 3:7** "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati stresses "your people" — this is about Israel, and the chapters that follow in Daniel 11 and 12 spell it out in detail. The messenger crossed a war zone for one purpose: so that a praying man would understand prophecy.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that God expended heavenly resources — a messenger, a twenty-one day conflict, an archangel's intervention — to deliver understanding. That is God's own estimate of how much prophecy matters.

CRITICAL THINKING

The whole cost of this chapter was paid for information about the future. Not for rescue, not for healing, not for provision — for understanding. Whatever we think of Bible prophecy as optional or advanced material, heaven fought over its delivery.

KEY QUESTION

If God went to this much trouble to make prophecy understandable, why have I been content to leave it in the too-complicated pile?

10 What was Daniel's emotional and physical response at this point (see verses 15-17)?

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DANIEL 10:15-17 (NASB95)

When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me."

IN MY WORDS

I turned my face to the ground and went speechless, and when my lips were touched I could only say that the vision had brought anguish on me and left me with no strength and no breath.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 6:5** "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips..." — Isaiah's mouth also failed him and also had to be touched before he could speak.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes the progression across the chapter: Daniel loses his color, then his strength, then his speech, then his breath. Each fresh word from heaven takes something more out of him, and each time he is touched and given back enough to continue.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur points out that Daniel's protest is not "this is too frightening" but "how can such a servant talk with such as my lord?" It is not fear of harm; it is the sense of being unqualified for the conversation.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel's anguish comes from the content of the vision, not from the appearance of the messenger. He is not upset that an angel is in the room. He is undone by what the angel has just told him is coming to his people — this is a man grieving over a nation, not a man startled by the supernatural.

KEY QUESTION

Does what God says about the future actually cost me anything emotionally, or have I learned to read the hardest prophecies without ever feeling them?

11 What encouragement did the visitor give Daniel (see verse 18)?

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DANIEL 10:18-19 (NASB95)

Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. He said, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

IN MY WORDS

He touched me a second time and strengthened me, calling me a man of high esteem and telling me not to be afraid, to have peace, and to take courage — and the strength came the moment he spoke.

CROSS REFERENCE **Joshua 1:9** "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes that Daniel is touched three times in this chapter — to lift him, to open his mouth, and now to strengthen him. God does not deliver one dose of grace and expect it to last; He meets the man again at each point of collapse.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik observes the order in verse 19: strength came as soon as he spoke. Not after Daniel worked up his resolve, and not before the word was given. The words themselves carried the strength.

CRITICAL THINKING

The messenger repeats the same title he opened with — "man of high esteem." Daniel has done nothing in between except go to pieces and lose his voice. His standing before God did not move an inch while his strength was going to pieces.

KEY QUESTION

When I am at my weakest, do I assume God thinks less of me — and where did I learn that, since He clearly does not?

12 For what reason did the visitor say, "I must return" (see verse 20)?

P. 224

DANIEL 10:20-21 (NASB95)

Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince."

IN MY WORDS

He had to return to keep fighting against the prince of Persia, and he warned that the prince of Greece was about to come next.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 8:21** The male goat of Daniel's earlier vision represents the kingdom of Greece — the empire that would in fact replace Persia.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur draws out that the conflict does not end because the message was delivered. The messenger returns to the same fight he was just released from. There is no chapter of Scripture in which the war is described as over before the end.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes the striking detail that the prince of Greece is named as coming next — the very succession of empires Daniel had already been shown in chapters 2, 7, and 8. The spiritual conflict tracks the political map exactly, which is why the two chapters that follow read like history written in advance.

CRITICAL THINKING

The messenger says only Michael stands with him. That is a startlingly small coalition for a heavenly war — and it is said without a hint of worry. The outcome is never in question in this chapter; the cost simply is not hidden.

KEY QUESTION

Am I praying like a man who believes there is a live conflict going on over the things I am asking for?

02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

What does it say and mean?

USING BOTH YOUR BIBLE AND YOUR COPY OF THE BOOK DISCOVERING DANIEL, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1 How do we account for all the chaos, hatred, and misery in the world (see page 216 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 216

EPHESIANS 6:12 (NASB95)

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

IN MY WORDS

The chaos, hatred, and misery are not merely human problems — they trace back to a real spiritual conflict, with Satan and his forces at work behind what we see.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 John 5:19** "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati argues that a purely political or psychological explanation for the world's condition will always come up short, because it accounts for the symptoms and never for the source. Scripture is not squeamish about naming a personal adversary behind human evil.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur is careful to hold both truths: men are genuinely responsible for their own sin, and there is a real adversary. Blaming the devil for what my own flesh wanted is not biblical realism, it is an excuse.

CRITICAL THINKING

The Bible's diagnosis is worse than the world's and its prognosis is better. Secular explanations of evil tend to be optimistic about the cause — bad systems, bad education — and pessimistic about the cure. Scripture reverses both.

KEY QUESTION

Where have I been treating a spiritual problem in my life as though it were only a scheduling, personality, or willpower problem?

2 What does Satan's army of minions do (see page 217 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 217

1 PETER 5:8 (NASB95)

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

IN MY WORDS

They work to tempt, deceive, accuse, discourage, and hinder God's people, and to keep the world blind to the truth about God.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 4:4** "...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ..."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that Peter's picture is a lion prowling and looking, not a lion that has already pounced. The devil's power over a believer is real but bounded — he is described as seeking someone to devour, which implies he does not simply take whomever he wants.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati emphasizes that the primary work of these forces is against knowledge — keeping people from understanding God's plan for Israel, the church, and the nations. Ignorance is not a neutral condition; it is a strategic objective.

CRITICAL THINKING

Note the specific tactic in Daniel 10: not violence against Daniel, but interference with a message. The enemy's first move in this chapter is censorship, not attack — which tells you what he actually fears.

KEY QUESTION

Is there a part of Scripture I have quietly stopped reading, and who benefits from that?

3 Where do the battles between good and evil take place, and what effects do these skirmishes have (see pages 217-218 in Discovering Daniel)?

PP. 217-218

EPHESIANS 6:12 (NASB95)

...against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-4 (NASB95)

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

IN MY WORDS

The battles are fought in the unseen heavenly realm, but their effects spill over into our world in real ways — in nations, in circumstances, and in the delays and difficulties God's people experience.

CROSS REFERENCE **Job 1:6-12** The scene in Job opens in the heavenly court, and everything that happens to Job on earth follows from a conversation he never hears.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that Scripture consistently shows the invisible realm driving visible events, but never invites us to speculate beyond what is written. We are told enough to pray with confidence and not enough to build a system.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik points out that Paul says our weapons are not fleshly, which means the response to spiritual conflict is prayer, truth, and obedience — not clever human strategy and not aggressive spiritual technique.

CRITICAL THINKING

The effect on Daniel was a delay, not a defeat. That is a narrower and more useful definition of what the enemy can do than most spiritual-warfare talk allows. He cost Daniel three weeks. He did not cost him one word of the message.

KEY QUESTION

When something in my life stalls, do I ask God what He is doing in the wait — or do I just get frustrated and quit asking?

4 How do the ESV and NIV more accurately translate Daniel 10:1 (see page 219 in Discovering Daniel), and why do you think this distinction is significant?

P. 219

DANIEL 10:1 (NASB95)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision.

DANIEL 10:1 (ESV)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

DANIEL 10:1 (NIV)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.

IN MY WORDS

Where older versions say the appointed time was long, the ESV says the word "was a great conflict" and the NIV says it "concerned a great war" — and that matters because it tells me the subject of the chapter is warfare, not merely a long wait.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 10:13** The chapter itself proves the point — "the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days" is a battle report, not a timetable.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati makes the point that the underlying Hebrew word carries the sense of warfare or a great army, and that translating it as conflict or war rather than as a long appointed time sets the reader up correctly for everything that follows in verses 12-21.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that the NASB95 itself preserves this sense with "one of great conflict," and its own margin offers "warfare" as the alternate reading. The translations are converging on the same thing: this chapter announces a war.

CRITICAL THINKING

Look at what the NIV additionally does — it collapses the two statements into one, so that the vision becomes the *means* by which Daniel understood, rather than a second thing he understood. The NASB95 and ESV keep them parallel. Small connectives carry real freight.

KEY QUESTION

Do I ever compare translations on a verse that troubles me, or do I settle for the first rendering I read and move on?

5 What does the fact Daniel was called "man greatly beloved" tell you about how the Lord viewed Daniel (see page 222 in Discovering Daniel)? Why do you think this is important with regard to God revealing this and other visions to Daniel?

P. 222

DANIEL 10:11 (NASB95)

He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you."

DANIEL 9:23 (NASB95)

"At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision."

IN MY WORDS

It tells me the Lord genuinely delighted in Daniel and held him precious, and that is important because God entrusts His deepest revelation to people who love Him and are close to Him.

CROSS REFERENCE **John 15:15** "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes that Daniel is addressed this way three separate times in the book, and always in connection with receiving revelation. Affection and disclosure travel together — God tells His secrets to His friends.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur is careful to say this esteem was not earned as a wage. It reflects a life of consistent faithfulness over some seventy years in a pagan court, but the love came first and produced the life, not the other way around.

CRITICAL THINKING

Every time God calls Daniel beloved, it is immediately followed by an instruction to understand. The affection is not sentimental — it is the ground on which difficult truth gets handed over. God tells the hardest things to the people He has first made secure.

KEY QUESTION

Do I know I am loved by God well enough that He could tell me something hard without it destroying me?

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6 **James 5:16 — "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" — tells us of the cause and effect of prayer. In Daniel 10:12, the messenger said to the prophet, "I have come because of your words." When it comes to our own prayers, why do you think it is helpful for us to keep this cause and effect in mind?**

P. 223

JAMES 5:16 (NASB95)

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

DANIEL 10:12 (NASB95)

"...from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words."

IN MY WORDS

It helps me because it proves my prayers actually cause things to happen in heaven, so I keep praying instead of assuming nothing is moving.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 8:3-4** The prayers of the saints rise before God from the golden altar — Scripture treats prayers as things that arrive and are acted upon.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur emphasizes that James's word rendered "effective" describes prayer that is actually working, not merely loud. Fervency in Scripture is measured by persistence and sincerity, not volume.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that the messenger's phrase is "in response to your words" — a direct causal link between a man on his knees in Babylon and movement in the heavenly realm. Prayer is not therapy for the one praying; it does something.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel's prayer was answered before he ever felt answered — which means the feeling of being heard and the fact of being heard are two different things, and only one of them is reliable. Daniel had the fact for twenty-one days without the feeling.

KEY QUESTION

What have I stopped praying about because I could not feel anything happening?

7 List some of the reasons given for delayed answers to prayer, according to pages 224-225 of Discovering Daniel.

PP. 224-225

ISAIAH 55:8-9 (NASB95)

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

IN MY WORDS

Answers can be delayed because God's timing is different from mine, because He is growing my faith and perseverance through the wait, because unconfessed sin or wrong motives are in the way, because the answer is no or not yet, and — as in Daniel 10 — because there is real spiritual opposition to the answer's delivery.

CROSS REFERENCE **James 4:3** "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati's point is that Daniel 10 adds a reason most believers have never considered — that the delay may have nothing to do with them at all. Daniel had no sin to confess and no motive to correct. The holdup was in the heavenlies.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur cautions against the reflex of assuming every delay is discipline. Sometimes it is; sometimes it is the ordinary shape of a faith that God intends to make durable.

CRITICAL THINKING

The most humbling reason on the list is the one Daniel got: the delay was not about him. We instinctively read every silence as a verdict on ourselves, and Daniel 10 says that sometimes the universe is simply busy with something larger.

KEY QUESTION

Which delay in my life am I taking personally that God may not intend personally at all?

8 **God sent a messenger in response to Daniel's prayer, but the messenger was delayed by "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" (Daniel 10:13). This prince of Persia evidently did not want Daniel to receive an answer to his prayer. What thoughts come to your mind as you consider the existence of the very real world of unseen spiritual warfare?** P. 225

DANIEL 10:13 (NASB95)

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

2 KINGS 6:16-17 (NASB95)

So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

IN MY WORDS

It sobers me and steadies me at the same time — my prayers matter enough to be opposed, and the opposition never gets the last word.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 8:38-39** "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities... will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik warns against two opposite errors here — treating the demonic as fiction, and becoming fascinated by it. Daniel is not told to engage the prince of Persia. He is told to understand the words and stand upright.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati's application is that this should make believers pray more, not less. If an adversary considers a praying old man in Babylon worth a twenty-one-day blockade, prayer is evidently more powerful than we treat it.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur adds that the believer's confidence is not in his own strength against these powers but in Christ's finished victory over them at the cross, where the rulers and authorities were disarmed and publicly triumphed over.

CRITICAL THINKING

Elisha's servant and Daniel's companions saw the same category of thing and reacted in opposite ways — one was calmed, the others fled. The difference was that Elisha's servant was shown the armies on God's side too. A half-open curtain is terrifying; a fully open one is not.

KEY QUESTION

Do I live as though the unseen realm is mostly threatening, when Scripture keeps insisting that those who are with me are more than those who are with them?

03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?

CROSS-REFERENCE THE PASSAGE AND LET SCRIPTURE INTERPRET SCRIPTURE.

1 **Read Daniel 10:5-6 and compare it with Revelation 1:12-16. What similarities do you see between the two passages? (This serves as affirmation that Daniel saw a Christophany, or a preincarnate appearance of the Son of God.)** P. 226

DANIEL 10:5-6 (NASB95)

I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.

REVELATION 1:12-16 (NASB95)

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

IN MY WORDS

Both describe a man in a long garment with a gold sash, eyes like fire, feet or limbs like glowing bronze, a face shining like lightning or the sun, and a voice like a roar — and in both cases the prophet collapses at His feet.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 1:17** "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man." — John's response matches Daniel's exactly, and Christ's answer, "Do not be afraid," matches the words spoken to Daniel.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati holds that Daniel 10:5-6 is a Christophany — the Son of God appearing before Bethlehem — and points to Joshua's encounter with the captain of the LORD's host outside Jericho as another instance of the same kind of visitation.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes the strongest structural argument: the figure in verses 5-6 is never said to be hindered, while the speaker of verses 12-14 was withstood for twenty-one days and needed Michael's help. That difference is best explained if they are not the same person.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur's emphasis falls on the effect rather than the identification — wherever the glory of Christ is genuinely seen in Scripture, the response is never enthusiasm. It is a man on the ground unable to speak.

CRITICAL THINKING

The one detail Revelation adds is the sword out of His mouth. John sees the same glory Daniel saw, plus the weapon — and the weapon is His word. Daniel 10 is a chapter about a word that an enemy tried to stop; Revelation shows that same word as the thing that finally ends him.

KEY QUESTION

If the risen Christ appeared in the room right now the way John describes Him, would anything about how I spent this week look different?

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2 In Daniel 10:11, the prophet was told he was a "man greatly beloved." What similar affirmations do we see given to… P. 226

ISAIAH 41:8 (NASB95)

"But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend,"

1 SAMUEL 13:14 (NASB95)

"But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

LUKE 1:28 (NASB95)

And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

JOHN 21:7 (NASB95)

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.

a. Abraham in Isaiah 41:8?

IN MY WORDS

God calls him "Abraham My friend" — the man He chose and drew near to as a friend.

CROSS REFERENCE **James 2:23** "...and he was called the friend of God." — the New Testament repeats the title, so it is God's settled description of Abraham, not a one-time phrase.

b. David in 1 Samuel 13:14?

IN MY WORDS

God calls him "a man after His own heart" — someone whose desires ran in the same direction as God's.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 13:22** "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will." — Paul quotes it centuries later as David's defining description.

c. Mary in Luke 1:28?

IN MY WORDS

Gabriel greets her as "favored one" and tells her the Lord is with her — she was the object of God's particular grace.

CROSS REFERENCE **Luke 1:30** "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God." — the same reassurance given to Daniel: named, told not to fear, then told what is coming.

d. John in John 21:7?

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> He is simply called "that disciple whom Jesus loved" — the name he chose for himself was the fact that Christ loved him.

CROSS REFERENCE **John 13:23** The same disciple is described as reclining on Jesus' bosom at the last supper — the affection was not a claim he made but a closeness others could see.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that in every one of these cases the affirmation precedes or accompanies a hard assignment. Abraham was asked for Isaac, David for a lifetime of pursuit and warfare, Mary for a sword through her own soul, John for exile on Patmos. God's endearments are not decorations; they are provisions.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that John never names himself in his own gospel. Of all the titles available to an apostle and eyewitness, the one he keeps is the one that describes what Jesus felt toward him rather than anything he accomplished.

CRITICAL THINKING

Three of these four are said *by* God or His messenger; John's is said by John about himself. He is not boasting — he is doing what a believer is supposed to do with an affirmation like Daniel's: take it as his own identity and live out of it.

KEY QUESTION

If I had to describe myself in one phrase the way John did, would the phrase be about what I do or about what God feels toward me?

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3 **In Daniel 10, the curtain is pulled back and we're given a glimpse of how a demonic spirit attempts to prevent Daniel from receiving an answer to his prayer. This is the way Satan has operated since the beginning, in the Garden of Eden. He does all he can to hinder God's communication to His own or to cause them to misunderstand God. How do we see this manifest in Matthew 16:21-23?** P. 227

MATTHEW 16:21-23 (NASB95)

From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

GENESIS 3:1 (NASB95)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> Right after Jesus revealed God's plan of the cross, Satan used Peter's own mouth to contradict it — the same tactic as in Eden, attacking God's word the moment it is spoken.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 11:14** "...for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." — the opposition often arrives sounding protective and well-meaning.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati's point is that the pattern is consistent from Genesis 3 to Daniel 10 to Matthew 16: whenever God speaks clearly about His plan, the adversary moves immediately to block, twist, or contradict it. In Eden he questioned the word; in Daniel he delayed the word; in Matthew he opposed the word through a friend.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur underscores how Jesus diagnoses it — "you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." Peter was not conscious of serving Satan. He thought he was defending his Lord. That is precisely what makes the tactic effective.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes the sequence: Peter had just made the great confession that Jesus is the Christ, and minutes later he is called Satan. The high point and the low point are back to back, which should keep any of us from assuming we are past being used this way.

CRITICAL THINKING

In Daniel the opposition came from a hostile prince; in Matthew it came from a devoted friend. The second is far harder to spot. The adversary's most effective delivery system for a lie is a person who loves you and means well.

KEY QUESTION

Whose well-meant advice have I been following lately without ever holding it up against what God has actually said?

04 EXECUTE

How does this affect my life?

TAKE IT OFF THE PAGE AND INTO THE WEEK.

1 **What do you think are some of the reasons Daniel was called "man greatly beloved" in Daniel 10:11? List them here. Which one or two of these characteristics would you like to strengthen in your own life? What are some ways you can make growth happen?** P. 227

DANIEL 10:11-12 (NASB95)

He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you."... "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard..."

IN MY WORDS

Daniel was uncompromising, prayerful, humble, hungry to understand God's word, faithful over decades, and burdened for his people — and the two I most want to strengthen are humility and a persistent hunger to understand what God has said, by keeping a fixed daily time in the Word and praying through what I read instead of just finishing the chapter.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 6:10** Daniel prayed three times a day with his windows open toward Jerusalem, "as he had been doing previously" — the habit was decades old before it was ever tested.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur repeatedly points to the fact that Daniel's character was formed in obscurity long before it was displayed in crisis. The teenager who would not defile himself with the king's food in chapter 1 is the same man on his face by the Tigris in chapter 10 — seventy years apart, unchanged.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes that Daniel could have gone home to Jerusalem under Cyrus's decree and did not. At nearly ninety, he stayed where God had placed him and kept interceding for the people who did go. Faithfulness is often the decision to stay at a post nobody is watching.

CRITICAL THINKING

Every quality on that list is unspectacular on any given day. Daniel was not beloved for a heroic moment; he was beloved for a pattern of ordinary Tuesdays repeated for seventy years. Which means the growth question is not "what will I do?" but "what will I still be doing in ten years?"

KEY QUESTION

What is one small habit I could still be keeping in ten years, and have I actually started it — or am I still planning to?

2 **On page 226 of Discovering Daniel, we read that "there are demonic spirits today that do not want anyone to know God's plan for Israel, the church, or the nations." In what ways do we make ourselves spiritually vulnerable when we're ignorant of what God teaches us in Scripture?** P. 226

HOSEA 4:6 (NASB95)

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

EPHESIANS 4:14 (NASB95)

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

IN MY WORDS

When I do not know what God has said, I have no way to recognize a counterfeit, so I am easily frightened by events, misled by teachers, and drained of the hope prophecy was given to supply.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 4:4** Jesus met every temptation in the wilderness with "It is written" — the defense He used was the text itself, which is only available to someone who knows it.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati's core argument in this chapter is that the enemy is delighted when churches do not teach prophecy, because prophecy is the part of Scripture that shows how the story ends — and it ends with God winning. Keeping believers ignorant of the ending keeps them despairing about the middle.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that Hosea does not say the people were destroyed for lack of sincerity or lack of effort. It was lack of knowledge. Zeal without content has never protected anyone.

CRITICAL THINKING

Ignorance does not feel like vulnerability — that is what makes it dangerous. A man who does not know the Bible does not walk around feeling exposed; he walks around feeling fine, which is exactly the condition an adversary would design if he could.

KEY QUESTION

What is the one book or section of Scripture I have avoided the longest, and what would it cost me to start it this month?

3 Spiritual warfare is a constant in the Christian life. Why do you think prayer is such a vital tool for us when we face spiritual battles?

P. 227

EPHESIANS 6:18 (NASB95)

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.

JAMES 4:7 (NASB95)

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

IN MY WORDS

Because prayer is how I fight a battle I cannot see with weapons I do not personally possess — it puts God's power, not mine, between me and the enemy.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 10:4** "...the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik draws attention to the order in James 4:7 — submit first, then resist. A man who has not submitted to God has no standing from which to resist the devil, which is why resistance so often fails.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that in Ephesians 6 prayer is not listed as a seventh piece of armor but as the manner in which the whole armor is worn. There is no way to use any of it apart from dependence on God.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati's application from Daniel 10 is direct: Daniel's weapon was three weeks of prayer and fasting, and it moved heaven. He never confronted the prince of Persia; he prayed, and God sent someone who did.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel never addressed the enemy once in this entire chapter. He prayed to God, and God handled the prince of Persia. That is a quieter model of spiritual warfare than we are often sold, and it is the one the text actually gives us.

KEY QUESTION

When I am under pressure this week, will prayer be my first response or the thing I get to after everything else has failed?

4 **Daniel was deeply burdened by what God revealed to him. Can you think of a recent example of a time when a specific Bible passage weighed heavily on your heart? What passage was it, and what do you believe God was trying to teach you?** P. 227

DANIEL 10:2-3 (NASB95)

In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

JEREMIAH 20:9 (NASB95)

But if I say, "I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name," then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it.

IN MY WORDS

Daniel 10 itself has weighed on me — the reminder that my prayers are heard instantly even when the answer takes weeks to arrive, and that God was calling me to keep praying through a silence I had already given up on.

CROSS REFERENCE **Hebrews 4:12** "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword... and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur teaches that Scripture is meant to be felt as well as understood. A passage that only informs a man and never disturbs him has not yet been read the way it was written to be read.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that Daniel's grief was not despair. He mourned and he prayed at the same time, for three straight weeks. Biblical sorrow moves a man toward God rather than away from Him.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel's burden lasted twenty-one days and produced a chapter of Scripture. Most of us give a heavy passage about twenty-one minutes before we move on to the next thing. The weight Daniel carried was not a mood — it was sustained attention.

KEY QUESTION

What is the last passage that genuinely troubled me — and did I stay with it long enough to find out why?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Spiritual warfare is real. Satan is determined to defeat us. Though he can never take away our salvation, and he can never separate us from Christ's love, he will do all he can to discourage us, impede our spiritual growth, or lure us into sin through various kinds of temptations. His attacks against us will be relentless.

First Peter 5:8 urges us to be of sober spirit and on the alert, because our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. This is why 1 Peter 1:13 calls us to prepare our minds for action and keep sober in spirit — the older wording is to gird up the loins of the mind. We are to be watchful and alert.

James 4:7 gives insight on the best first step we can take when it comes to spiritual battle: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Submit to God — only then can we resist the devil. Here, to submit means being fully yielded. Our inclination is to cling to favorite little sins in the corners of our lives, and to think such sins aren't all that harmful to us. But to do this hurts us because it means we are less than wholly submitted to God.

All through the book of Daniel, we have seen the prophet characterized by an uncompromising life. As one fully submitted to God in all things, he is our example of what it takes to resist the influences of a secular culture and to stand strong in spiritual battle. At times, the intensity of the warfare overwhelmed Daniel and left him feeling worn out. This will happen to us as well. But Daniel did not surrender. He endured. And with God's enablement, so can we.

Remember what this chapter actually reports. Daniel prayed, and he was heard on the first day. An answer was dispatched immediately. A hostile power delayed that answer for twenty-one days and accomplished nothing else — it did not change one word of what God intended to say. Then help came, the message was delivered in full, and the man who had been undone three times was touched, strengthened, and set back on his feet with the words, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid."

...Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.

DANIEL 10:12 · NASB95

The battle over your prayers is real, and it is already decided. Keep praying into the silence. Heaven heard you on day one.

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