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Sunday, April 19, 2009
"Who Has The Power?"
Daniel 10

I remember growing up that we liked to thumb wrestle to see who had the most power. Then we would arm wrestle trying to show our power. When we could ride bikes, we would have squirt gun water fights, using our power to see who could get the other one the most wet.

Then we started to learn how to drive the car. How exciting it was to feel the power of the engine as one pushed down on the throttle . It still feels good.

When Ferra and I have flown on a 747 to Europe, it is always an exciting sensation to be pushed back in one's seat from the thrust of those powerful engines as one leaves the runway and climbs into the sky. In addition, to watch those huge powerful engines lift that space ship into the sky, is always an awesome sight.

We could get into the kind of power the police force has, the military has, and the government has.

We could also talk about the power of our words for building up or tearing down, the power of the tongue as James discusses in his letter in the Bible.

Yes, there are different kinds of power displayed in our world today.

But there is one kind of power that is entirely different from man's power in himself, the kind of power that he has invented, and word power.

It is the supernatural power of the true and living eternal and personal God. It is the power that is all powerful – omnipotent unlimited power. That's why it says in Revelation 19:6
 "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty, the all powerful – the omnipotent, reigns."

But what's involved in the workings of that supernatural unlimited power of the omnipotent eternal and personal God?

Our text in Daniel 10 today provides us some answers to that question.

I. God's unlimited power fulfills His promise (Daniel 10:1).

1. The time mentioned.

Daniel penned that it was the third year of Cyrus king of Persia. We know from historians that the Persians defeated the Babylonians in 539 B.C. Now three years have gone by since then, which would make the time 536 B.C.

From Ezra 1:1-11, we discover that Cyrus in his first year as king of Persia made a decree that the nation of Israel exiles could return from captivity and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

The exiles under Zerubbael would have returned, but Daniel did not return with them evidently due to his governmental responsibilities and his age.

2. The message received.

Then, Daniel pens here that the message was true, and he had conflict, still he understood the message, and had an understanding of the vision.

In other words the prophesy made by Jeremiah had come true just as God had said.

Daniel had seen the promise that he had read from Jeremiah 25:11-12 (that was mentioned in Daniel 9:2) come to reality. In fact, Daniel had experienced the prophesy, for he had seen the people of Israel began to return to their homeland.

Jeremiah foretold that the nation of Israel would be in captivity for 70 years. The promise of God was brought about by the unlimited power of God.

Daniel was taken captive by Babylon in 606 B.C. Seventy years had passed by, and in chapter 9, we saw Daniel confessing the sins of the nation, asking God to graciously intervene and restore His sanctuary (temple) in Jerusalem, fulfilling His promise to the nation through Jeremiah. God answered Daniel's prayer, and returned His people to their homeland, Israel, to rebuild the temple.

Daniel was able, now at the age of 80-85 to experience the very promise made through Jeremiah of the nation having returned to its homeland.

Don't miss what is happening here.

When God makes a prophesy in His word, you can count on it coming true. Here it took 70 years for the prophesy made by Jeremiah to come true. But that prophetic word, foretelling the future, came true right on schedule.

The prophesy of Christ's first coming, where he would actually be born, Bethlehem, prophesied by Micah, in the 7th century B.C. came true, for Christ was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 2:1-20). The prophesy of Christ's death (1000 B.C.- Psalm 22: 16-28; 7-8th century - Isaiah 53; cf John 20:5; 19:24), and the prophesy of Christ's bodily resurrection (1000 B.C - Psalm 16:10-11; cf. Acts 13:34-35) all came true.

God's unlimited power brought his promise to reality in Daniel's day, and God's unlimited power brought His promises to fulfillment regarding the coming, the death, and bodily resurrection of His Son and our Savior through faith.

Certainly God's unlimited power will bring to fulfillment the promises He has made that haven't been fulfilled as yet – The promise that Christ made that He will return to earth. The promise that He will put down all rebellion against Him, and some day create a new heavens and earth.

II. God's unlimited power brings His presence to us (Daniel 10:2-9).

1. Challenges of life experienced (10:2)

In verse 1, Daniel mentioned that he knew that God's promise of returning Israel was true. He had seen those in exile return to their homeland. He had experience the fulfillment personally, as he saw those from the nation of Israel return to their homeland. That must have been quite a day when Daniel heard Cyrus the great give the edict for Israel to return to their homeland to rebuild their temple.

Still, in experiencing the fulfillment of God's prophesy, Daniel had great conflict (10:1) and was in mourning for 3 weeks (10:2). He also fasted, by not eating and drinking, or using any ointment.

Why did Daniel experience conflict? Why was he in mourning and in fasting?

2. Challenges of life brought to the Lord first (10:2-3).

It has been suggested that Daniel may have been having an inner conflict, was in mourning, and fasted due to hearing that the work on the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 1-3) had been stopped (Ezra 4;4-5).

Perhaps Daniel had been fasting for the needs of those in his homeland, **praying to God about what the future held for his people, and asking that God would intervene on their behalf.**

Here we see Daniel's life again as being a man sensitive to the needs of his people, but knowing exactly where to bring those needs – to the Lord in prayer first. Already we have seen that Daniel was a man of prayer in **Daniel 2:17-18, as Daniel went to his three friends to ask them to pray that he might have understanding into the vision of Nebuchadnezzar. Then in **Daniel 6:10-11**, we see**

Daniel praying in his house. In spite of knowing what the king's decree was about giving full allegiance to him, Daniel went ahead and continued his life of prayer and devotion to the true and living God. Then in Daniel 9, he made his great prayer of confession and intercession to the Lord on behalf of his people, Israel.

Evidently, Daniel didn't give up in his praying but had continued persistently for some 3 weeks asking God to intervene on behalf of His people.

Daniel knew that praying wasn't the least he could do, but the best that he could do. He knew that all needs and desires must be brought to the Lord first, before doing anything else.

God is aware of everything that is happening in our lives -- in our physical and emotional challenges, yes, in our spiritual challenges and struggles. God does not sit in His so-called ivory tower without knowing what is taking place in our daily lives. At the same time, He bids us bring our needs and requests to HIM.

Of course, the atheist, believing that God doesn't exist, doesn't pray.

The agnostic isn't really sure of what God is about if there is a God in the first place. Then the person who has some concept of God thinks that God is around particularly when he or she has a definite need or some challenge.

Regardless of the different ideas about God's interest in how we feel, the real answer is that God in his awesome unlimited power is also omniscient, and He is aware of every thought we have, every feeling that we have, and is vitally concerned about what is going on in our lives (Read Psalm 139 some time).

He wants us to bring our every need to Him in prayer. He wants us to keep asking, seeking, and knocking, as Daniel did.

The psalmist realizes he can't get away from God's presence whether in the light or in the dark. He is always there with Him, and knows his rising up and his sitting down. He even knows what his thoughts will be before they come into his mind. Since God knows all about us, and the challenges we are having in life, He wants us to bring our all our needs to Him at His throne of grace.

3. God showed up (Daniel 10:4-9).

(1) The time (10:4a).

At the end of the three weeks, the 24th day of the first month, which is Nisan, or March-April. The Jewish Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread fell on the 14th- 21st of the first month. The Jews did not observe these festivals in captivity as they had done in their home land. Three days after this festival would have been commemorated, God showed up to Daniel in a vision.

Perhaps Daniel had been thinking about Passover, which pictured God's deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage many years before. This may have caused Daniel to think about God's people who He had returned from exile to their homeland to rebuild the temple which now the building had been stopped. As mentioned, this may have been why Daniel had been mourning, fasting, and praying to the Lord with persistence for 3 weeks.

(2) The heavenly visitor (10:4b-7).

Daniel was by the bank of the great river Tigris on the 24th day of the month and a man appeared him. Evidently it was a miraculous vision that the Lord permitted him to see, but the others with him did not see the man that came to Daniel. A great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves (10:7).

Who was this heavenly visitor that came in a vision to Daniel?

Note first of all the clothes he was wearing.

He was Dressed in linen. His waist was girded about with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz (meaning fine gold). If a place it could have been in southeastern Arabia, on the northeast African coast, or in India.

His body 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.

Someone has said that this man was like a gigantic transparent jewel reflecting the glory of the rest of the vision.

Some feel that this man was an angel sent by God. The fact that he refers to Michael coming to help him in Daniel 10:13 points out that he was an angel needing the help of another angel. Since he called Daniel a man of high esteem in Daniel 10:11,19, and Daniel was called a man of high esteem (a man of preciousness) in Daniel 9:23 by Gabriel, this may be Gabriel who has come again to speak to Daniel.

Others feel that the man that came to Daniel in Daniel 10:5-6, was actually the preincarnate Jesus Christ, a theophany, which occurred in Daniel 3 to the three Hebrew young men in the fiery furnace, and it could have been the preincarnate Christ to Daniel in the lions' den in Daniel 6 when the angel came and shut the lions' mouths.

In fact the description of the man who came to Daniel in this vision, is similar to Daniel 7:9; 13; 12:6; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Revelation 1:12-20). Christ revealed Himself to Daniel in this way. Then he left, and an angel did the speaking.

It seems though from what follows in the words this man says to Daniel about being sent to Daniel (10:11), and then his encounter with the prince of Persia, and Michael coming to help him, indicate that this was an angel. There does not seem to be a change in who the messenger was who came to Daniel.

(1) The earthly reaction (10:8-9).

Daniel was overwhelmed by this heavenly visitor and his incredible bright appearance and the sound of his voice. It was an unnerving experience to stand in the presence of this awesome person from heaven. He grew pale and seemed to faint at the appearance of this heavenly messenger. I would think that each of us would probably react the same way if an angel of this description appeared to us.

(2) The heavenly response (10:10-12).

Note how gracious the heavenly messenger is with Daniel. There is some phenomenal happenings here as the angel graciously brings his God's presence into Daniel's fainting and fearful condition.

- ∞ He touched Daniel who had become pale and fainted and helped him to his knees – giving him physical strength (10:10).
- ∞ He spoke to Daniel calling him, highly esteemed, a man of preciousness, of infinite value.
- ∞ He encouraged Daniel to stand up telling Daniel that he had been sent to him.
- ∞ He spoke again to Daniel reassuring him that God had heard his humble prayer.
Note Daniel 10:12, "Don't be afraid, Daniel from the first day you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before God, your words were heard."
What an encouragement this should be to us today. Even when we think that our prayers are not being heard by God, He does hear our prayers, when our hearts are right with God as Daniel's was here.
- ∞ He had been sent to give the answer to Daniel.

But something happened when Daniel was praying to God about the situation of his people in Jerusalem. Daniel had been praying for 3 weeks and no answer had come. The angel provides Daniel an explanation.

III. God's unlimited power is challenged by the evil one (Daniel 10:13).

As Daniel prayed and kept praying there was opposition to the answer coming from the Lord to Daniel. Note it wasn't in the praying to God that the opposition occurred, rather it was in the answer coming to Daniel. God always hears our prayers given in the spirit of humbleness and faith. The answer is what may be delayed.

1. The opposition from the evil one (10:13).

"The prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for 21 days."

That has to refer to Satan, or one of his helpers, his demons, who withstood the angel from bringing the answer to Daniel concerning his prayer.

Daniel was a part of the Persian government, a Jew who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was praying to the Lord about his people Israel whom the evil one opposed and wanted to keep from doing the Lord's will.

This is one of the most eye-opening accounts on the battle that goes on in the invisible world of reality between the forces of the biblical God and the forces of the evil one, Satan and his cohort.

The battle here centered on God's answer to Daniel's persistent praying for 3 weeks. The prince of Persia hindered the angel from bringing the answer to Daniel's prayer. This does not mean that God always answers prayer with an angel. But in this particular situation, due to Daniel's position in the Persian government, and the desperate situation of Israel, God wanted to send the answer to Daniel with an angel.

The prince of Persian hindered the angel (perhaps Gabriel) from bring the answer to Daniel right away. In fact, as the text tells us, another angel Michael (who seems to be a guardian over the nation of Israel – Daniel 12:1, and also designated the arch angel in Jude 9 – chief of the princes) came to help him so that the answer could come. But the struggle with the evil one was so great that it took 21 days before the battle was won and the answer could be brought.

2. The teaching for us.

What do we learn here?

1. Satan is alive and well and out to thwart God's plan for His people Israel.

That was true in Daniel's day, it is still very true in our day as we see what comes from those nations hating Israel today.

2. It appears that Satan may have different demons (princes) seeking to control and influence nations today.

"The prince of Persia withstood the angel God sent to bring the answer to Daniel's prayer (10:13).

"I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia" (10:20a).

"The prince of Greece is about to come" (10:20b). Who would be the next nation in power after Persia, of course the nation of Greece. This is consistent with the rest of the prophecies in the book of Daniel in the image and in the vision of the four beasts.

3. Satan's influence is to cause nations to not follow the true and living God but to follow him.

He influences those in places of governmental leadership. He influences those in places of higher education. He influences those who teach in the seminaries. Eventually this all trickles down to the person in the pew, and those who have influence in the various aspects of our society and culture.

Our country was established on Judeo/Christian principles. A true study of history bears this out. What has happened? Satan's influence in Germany, the German rationalism, came to universities and seminaries in America in the 1900's, and those like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, which were

established on biblical truth, yielded to the German rationalism, and became the bastions of influencing the thinking of those receiving an education – the Bible was no longer truth but nice literature and man through the Darwinian influence is the product of evolution. Now man becomes the measure of all things, and life does not have infinite value. Marx's and Lenin's ideas also spread to America, taking root among academia and some labor leaders. Both the philosophies of educator John Dewey and Roger Baldwin, founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), have had a profound influence in mobilizing forces against the Judeo/Christian .

Right now we are seeing how those in power have been influenced by these anti-Judeo Christian principles and the Darwinian way of life, plus thinking that biblical economics can be replaced by man's economics which keeps loading up the country with phenomenal debt.

I would suggest for your thinking today, that there could be a prince of the United States who is influencing our country to go farther and farther away from the Judeo/Christian principles upon which our country was founded. It looks like we are on a downward slide unless there is a change coming.

4. As Daniel prayed for God to intervene into his nation Israel, so we should be praying for God to intervene in our country as well.

That's why God used Paul to tell us to pray for those in authority over us so that we may live godly and peaceable lives and that the gospel may have influence on people's lives.

The real problem in our country is not economics or the environment. The real problem in our country is spiritual. Yes, we are hearing that we are no longer a Christian nation. Although the recent Rasmussen poll showed that 79% believe the central claim of the Christian faith--that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Only 10% say they do not believe the first Easter resurrection really happened, while 11% are not sure.

Of course it's one thing to say one believes that Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead, it is quite another matter to let Him influence one's life in every area. Of course that is the problem in our nation today. For the main influence in our culture in the media and entertainment world is certainly not biblical. Some of the decisions coming out of Washington are not biblical.

We need to keep praying that God would influence the thinking of our national and state leaders to realize that the problem in our country is spiritual, and they need to look to the Lord.

This kind of praying is spiritual warfare praying. It's hard work. It takes time. It requires humility before God, being right before God, and persistence. That's why on the first Thursday of May there is always the National Day Of Prayer – a reminder that we need to look to the biblical God for His wisdom and direction in our nation. As a nation, we need repent of our sin and turn to the Lord, and seek to do His will.

5. If Satan can hinder the answer to our prayers regarding nations, it seems that he may be able to hinder our prayers personally, as a family, and as a church family.

That may be why Paul tells us not only to put on the whole armor of God to stand against the wiles of the evil one, but also to be people of prayer with perseverance and petition for all the saints, that he may also have boldness to share the gospel of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:11-20).

We need to be like Daniel, people who persist in prayer knowing that we are in a spiritual battle, claiming the victory in Jesus Christ.

**IV. God's unlimited power is victorious over the opposition of the evil one (Daniel 10:14).
What does the angel tell Daniel in Daniel 10:14?**

"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."

The angels of the true and living God, Michael and Gabriel, won the battle against the opposition of prince of Persia, and Gabriel said that God would provide an answer to Daniel's prayer, which is given in chapters 11 & 12.

Daniel would receive more information about God's plan for Israel and the world than he had already received. God always wins the victory over the evil one. In Daniel's day it took 21 days. Peter was sifted by Satan (Luke 22:31-32) but Jesus told Peter that He would pray for him, and God won the victory as Peter repented of his sin and the Lord restored him to fellowship. He was used mightily by the Lord at Pentecost and afterwards in the Book of Acts.

That's why we need to pray that God would protect our children from the evil one and give them discernment between good and evil. Why we need to pray that God would work in the lives of our children or loved ones who may not be walking with the Lord. There is a spiritual battle, and God uses prayer to win that battle. The key is to be persistent, to not give up. God will bring positive results. I have seen it happen.

V. God's unlimited power comes to minister directly to our personal needs (Daniel 10:15-21).

When Daniel hears these words of the angel, he became speechless. The angel touched Daniel's lips and he began to speak:

1. Daniel's response to the answer of the angel (10:16-17).

"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."

Overwhelmed by what he has just heard from the angel, Daniel is humbled that this angel would come and give him the answer to his prayers and deal with him so kindly.

2. The angel's gentle, yet strong encouragement to Daniel (10:18-19).

(1) He touched Daniel and strengthened him (10:18).

(2) He spoke directly to Daniel (10:19).

"O man of high esteem - O man of preciousness – infinite value (cf. 10:11).

The respect the angel had for Daniel.

"Do not be afraid." "God's perfect love casts out fear."

"Peace be with you." "All is right between you and God and others."

"Take courage and be courageous." "Take your courage from the Lord and be bold in HIM."

(3) Daniel received renewed physical and spiritual strength from the angel of the LORD whom God had sent. "May my lord speak – tell me the answer to my prayer - You have strengthened me."

(4) The angel continued, the battle will go on between the forces of the evil one and the forces of the biblical God (10:20). The battle wasn't over in Daniel's day. The battle is not over yet in our day, and will not be over until the Lord returns and eventually ushers in the new heavens and new earth.

(5) Before I return to the battle, I will give you what is inscribed in the writing of the truth. Michael is with me (10:21-11:1).

What an incredible passage of Scripture.

Humble Daniel praying to the Lord on behalf of his people Israel that God would intervene, kept praying for 21 days before he received an answer. He believed in the power of God, but Satan was hindering that power from being released in the answer God had for Daniel. Still God had the

greater power. He is the Almighty, all powerful, God. In His time He brought the victory and the answer to Daniel.

How can we summarize this incredible passage of Scripture?

(1) The biblical God is the all-powerful, almighty God.

In that power He fulfills His promises to us. He brings His presence to us. He wins over the evil one who tries to hinder our prayers, He answers our prayers, and ministers to us in our personal lives according to our needs.

(2) He is available always for the believer to bring his or her requests to Him, today, through Jesus Christ. We should always pray first before doing anything else.

(3) God always hears the prayers of the humble believer who is in fellowship with Him.

(4) We are to pray for our country and the nations that God would show Himself strong and bring His victory over the evil one who wants to deceive and control the leaders as well as the people.

(5) Satan can hinder the answer to our prayers for the nations and prayers we make to the Lord for our personal, family, and church needs.

(6) We are to be persistent in prayer never giving up.

(7) God in His time will answer for the good of the nation, and the good of us His people through faith in Jesus Christ and for His glory.

(8) As we wait on the Lord in prayer, and serving Him, He provides us His personal touch designed for each of our personalities.

We are of infinite value – accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6), precious in His sight.

“Do not be afraid.” “God’s perfect love casts out fear.”

“Peace be with you.” “All is right between you and God and others.”

“Take courage and be courageous.” “Take your courage from the Lord and be bold in HIM.” Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10).

What a great almighty God we know through faith in Jesus Christ! His unlimited resurrection life and power are in our lives. Let’s keep putting our faith in Him this week as we pray and serve Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.