

Pillar Passages – Dan. 10
Jed Brown
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Today we are looking at another Pillar Passage, and that passage is Daniel 10.

In chapter 9, Daniel received the famous vision of the 70 weeks and while we might look at the prophetic connections of that, today we are going to look at chapter 10, Daniel's seeking of an interpretation and how God answers that. Some of the implications of how God answers Daniel's request for an interpretation.

It says here, Daniel received a word from the Lord.

(Just as a side note here, we see that Daniel has taken on the Babylonian name of Belteshazzar. It just goes to show that the imposition of culture upon us—how strong that is—that even Daniel took on a name that was not a Hebrew name but a Babylonian name.)

The word was true, and it was a great conflict. What does that mean? The word “was a great conflict”, well we're about to find out.

Daniel understood the word and had understanding of the vision after there was a great conflict. What does that mean?

Verse 2, Daniel begins mourning after receiving the vision for 3 weeks. Daniel sees a vision and mourns for 3 weeks. It says that he ate no delicacies. This was not a complete fast. He did not fast from food entirely, but from the finer things of life; meats, wine. He does not anoint himself as you would for celebrations, for parties, for a full 3 weeks.

On the 24th day of the 1st month, he's standing next to the Tigris River, and he lifts up his eyes and he receives a vision. This vision is of a man clothed in linen with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz wrapped around his waist. He is striking. Even more striking than how Michael and Gabriel are described in the Bible. Which lead some interrupters of this passage to conclude that this is a pre-incarnate of the Son of God. There are questions about this, but that seems to be one very solid interpretation. He is like God.

Daniel alone saw the vision (verse 7). Those who were with him did not, but they feel the holiness of God, nevertheless. And what do they do? They flee. They flee the holiness of God. This is man's default response when faced with the holiness of God. Like roaches fleeing from a bright light that's just been turned on, we flee from the holiness of God. God is holy, holy, holy.

That Hebrew phrase—Hebrew originally did not have a word for best. If you wanted to say something was best, you would say this is the cake of cakes; this is the party of parties. When Adam sees Eve, he says that she is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. God she's just like me

only the best form of me. But when we talk about God, it goes one step further. God is holy, holy, holy. He is other. He is—if we can put it this way—beyond best. He is good. He is other. He is perfection. He is God.

So they sense the holiness of God and they flee. Even Daniel has no strength left in him. His appearance is fearfully changed, and he has no strength. In fact, he passes out. He faints. He is undone by the holiness of God.

We might just stop for a moment and consider the vast gulf that truly does lay between us and God. In His holiness, the gulf that Jesus would bridge for us on the cross.

The hand—presumably here of God—touches Daniel and sets him on his hands and knees still trembling. This man—this messenger for God—says to God (ruminate on this words) “Oh Daniel, man greatly loved.” Don’t you want God to say that of you? “Man greatly loved. Now I come to you because I want you to understand the words. So stand upright for I have been sent to you.” So Daniel stands, still trembling. The messenger says, “Fear not, Daniel, for from *the first day* that you set your heart to understand (number 1) and (number 2) humbled yourself before God by fasting these three weeks—from *that day*—from that very moment—your words have been heard. From that very moment, God has been hearing your words, Daniel.

This is very important because it took Daniel 3 weeks of fasting to get this answer. The messenger is saying, from that moment his words have been heard. So why the delay? The messenger says, “I have come because of your words.”

Now things are going to get—this is like Mr. Toads Wild Ride at Disney—this is going to get like Mr. Daniel’s wild ride here, starting in verse 13.

“The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for 21 days—for 3 weeks.” So basically—“I wanted to come to you sooner, but I was busy” “But Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia.” What does that mean? I don’t know that I know, entirely. But this messenger has come now “to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

Daniel hears these words and says—well basically he doesn’t say anything—he just says “Okay.”

“Then one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me”—essentially—I retain no strength. How about you talk. I have not strength left to talk.

Again Daniel was strengthened. And again the phrase, “Oh man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you.” Fear not. That recoiling instinct in you, it has been cured by me—by God. Therefore, be strong and of good courage; just as God told Joshua; and just as Jesus would tell the disciples, “Be of good courage. I have overcome the world.” It is the word of God that

strengthens Daniel, and give him strength to stand before Him and speak. Yet still, Daniel is humble before the holiness of God, and he says, “Let my lord speak.” How about you speak.

Then the messenger said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the king of Persia. When I go out, behold the prince of Greece will come, but I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.”

Okay, a couple observations here. Why the delay? Why the 3 weeks? Because there was something else going on in heaven. There was a battle in heaven. The timelines that God works in on earth, are often affected by the timelines of the battles that are going on among the princes of the power of the air in heaven. From the very moment Daniel turned—what matters most in your life is not where you are at on any given trajectory. It is, what trajectory are you on? Where is your nose pointed today? Have you set your heart to understand God? Have you humbled yourself before Him? That’s all God wants.

It’s not as though God was saying to Daniel, “You know, I’m going to wait until day 20 to really see if he’s authentic, if he’s real.” No. Then very *moment* Daniel humbled himself and set his heart to understand the vision, God heard him. That humility drew God’s eye; drew God’s ear; drew God’s attention. God resists the proud, proverbs says, and is repeated twice else in the Bible. God resists the proud but gives grace—to who? To the humble.

But sometimes when God turns His attention toward us the timelines He works on are not set, and do not play out in the ways that we would wish they would here on earth. There are many things that are happening today that you might say, why is this happening, oh God. Won’t You change this? It may very well be that if you have prayed for it and you have prayed for change and you have sought the God—sought Him humbly—by fasting by seeking Him in authentic humility, He might have already said yes. But there’s a timeline He’s working out on levels that we do not understand. So the Lord’s servant must wait patiently. Not barking at the Lord, but waiting in humble, faithful, quietness before the Lord.

As we do, we are strengthened by the gospel. It is the gospel that strengthens us. It is the Word of God that keeps talking to us, that grounds us, that gives us strength—As. We. Wait.

This is one of the great questions in life for all Christians. Can you wait? Can you wait for God to do the changing work in your spouse that you’ve long prayed for? Perhaps, God has said already, yes to. Can you wait in strength and good courage, fearing not and at peace—in Shalom.

Can you wait?

The way that we wait, is by believing the gospel. By believing the promises of God to us. By believing Him and waiting. And then saying, “I thank You for Your strength, oh God, now let You speak and I will listen.

So much of our trouble in life is that we listen to ourselves speak ourselves far, far too much and we listen to the Lord speak far too little. But this is where strength and good courage come from. By being strengthened by the gospel and then standing before Him in His strength; before His great holiness; before His awesome power; before His timeline that we cannot comprehend and say, "Let my Lord speak, for You have strengthened me."