DANIEL 10

The Unseen Warfare

Daniel 10 — A Deep Dive

> *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.*
> DANIEL 10:12

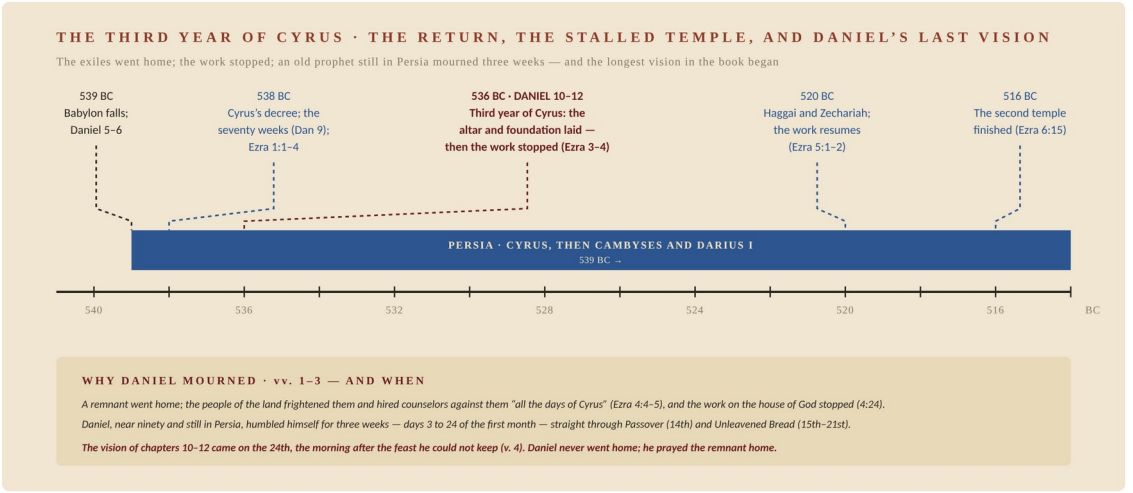
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · THREE VOICES: TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK

Where the story stands

1. Chapter 10 opens in the third year of Cyrus, about 536 B.C.

2. Two years earlier the exiles had gone home under Cyrus's decree; now the word has come back that the work on the temple has been stopped by local opposition (Ezra 4, verses 4 to 5, 24), and that only a remnant went at all.

3. Daniel, now near ninety and still in Persia, does what he did in chapter 9: he turns to God.



Three Weeks of Mourning

DANIEL 10:1

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.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati sets the scene in Persia, two years after the decree. The exiles who went home are a remnant, and the remnant is stuck, the altar is up, the foundation laid, and the work stopped by the people of the land (Ezra 4).

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur notes the understatement of verse 1: the message was true, it was about great conflict, and Daniel understood it, the man who was sick for days over chapter 8 has grown into the revelation. He reads…

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik supplies the reasons for the mourning, the small return, the halted work, Ezra 4, and the calendar: the mourning ran through Passover and Unleavened Bread, feasts Daniel could not keep in Persia and…

THE ORIGINAL **TSAVA GADOL · “GREAT CONFLICT”**

The Man in Linen

DANIEL 10:4

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati reads the man in linen as the preincarnate Christ, the same figure John falls before on Patmos, in the same linen and gold, with the same eyes and feet and voice. He notes the place, the Tigris,…

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur takes the man of verses 5–6 as a vision of the glorified Christ and the one who touches and speaks in verses 10–21 as an angel, because the Son of God is not withstood by a demon for three weeks or…

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik lays out both readings, Christ before His incarnation, or a great angel, and the common solution: the figure of verses 5–6 is the Lord, the messenger who follows is an angel, likely Gabriel, who…

THE ORIGINAL **ISH-ECHA.D. LAVUSH BADDIM · "A CERTAIN MAN DRESSED IN LINEN"**

The Man in Linen

THE MAN IN LINEN · DANIEL 10:5–9 BESIDE REVELATION 1:13–17

Two old prophets in exile, five hundred years apart, see the same figure and fall the same way — and are touched and told the same thing

BY THE TIGRIS	DAN	ON PATMOS
dressed in linen	10:5	*"clothed in a robe reaching to the feet"* **Rev 1:13**
a belt of pure gold of Uphaz	10:5	*"girded across His chest with a golden sash"* **Rev 1:13**
his face had the appearance of lightning	10:6	*"His face was like the sun shining in its strength"* **Rev 1:16**
his eyes were like flaming torches	10:6	*"His eyes were like a flame of fire"* **Rev 1:14**
his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze	10:6	*"His feet were like burnished bronze"* **Rev 1:15**
the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult	10:6	*"His voice was like the sound of many waters"* **Rev 1:15**
I fell into a deep sleep on my face	10:9	*"I fell at His feet like a dead man"* **Rev 1:17**
a hand touched me … "do not be afraid"	10:10, 12	*"He placed His right hand on me, saying, 'Do not be afraid'"* **Rev 1:17**

Who is he? Christ before His incarnation (vv. 5–6), say most — and the one who speaks and is withstood from v. 10 an angel, perhaps Gabriel. Either way: the Lord of hosts stands behind the war.

From the First Day Your Words Were Heard

DANIEL 10:10

Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati calls verses 12–13 the clearest statement in Scripture of what is happening behind the headlines: a demonic prince assigned to the empire that rules Israel, resisting the answer to a Jewish prayer,…

JOHN MACARTHUR

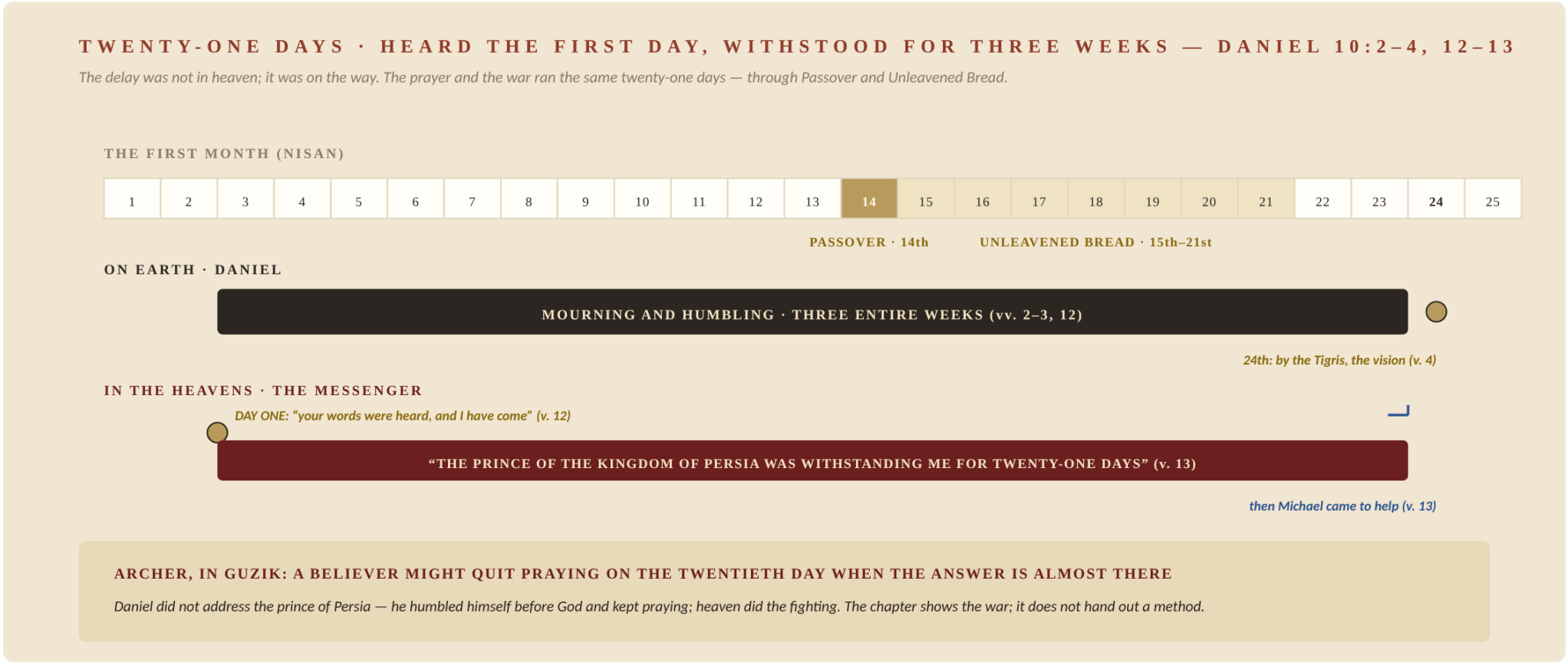
“Your words were heard.” MacArthur presses the sovereignty: God heard the first day, God dispatched the answer the first day, and God permitted a conflict that delayed it, not because He was outmatched but…

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik works through the ranks: Satan as ruler of this world, powers and principalities (Ephesians 6, verse 12; Colossians 2, verse 15), demonic forces behind nations (Deuteronomy 32, verse 8), Michael the…

THE ORIGINAL **ISH-CHAMUDOTH · “MAN OF HIGH ESTEEM”**

From the First Day Your Words Were Heard



From the First Day Your Words Were Heard

THE UNSEEN RANKS · WHO IS FIGHTING WHOM IN DANIEL 10

"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12). What happens on earth among kings reflects a conflict in the heavens.

AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"the ruler of this world"
Satan — John 12:31; 14:30; 1 Peter 5:8

the prince of the kingdom of Persia
a spiritual power over the empire that ruled Israel (v. 13, 20)

the prince of Greece
"about to come" — the next empire, with its own power behind it (v. 20)

rulers, powers, world forces of this darkness
ranks of spiritual wickedness — Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 2:15; Deuteronomy 32:8

FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

the man dressed in linen
the Lord of hosts Himself — vv. 5–6; Revelation 1:13–17

the messenger who touches and speaks
sent the first day; withstood; likely Gabriel (8:16; 9:21) — vv. 10–21

Michael, "one of the chief princes"
the archangel, "your prince," Israel's defender — vv. 13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9

the horses and chariots of fire
the army the servant could not see — 2 Kings 6:17; Psalm 34:7

AND ON THE GROUND: ONE OLD MAN, FACE DOWN, WHO WOULD NOT STOP PRAYING

Daniel never names, binds or rebukes the prince of Persia. He sets his heart to understand, humbles himself before his God, and keeps it up for twenty-one days (v. 12).

The war is fought by God's servants in response. "Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon" (Revelation 12:7) is this chapter at the end of the age.

Strengthened for the Writing of Truth

DANIEL 10:15

When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati stays on the touches. The prophet is not rebuked for his weakness; he is handled gently, set up, given speech, strengthened, and told again who he is to God.

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur reads verses 15–19 as the anatomy of grace under revelation. Daniel's weakness is total and honest, "how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord?", and heaven's response is not a lecture but a touch.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik counts the touches and the words, strength, high esteem, do not be afraid, and notes that the messenger does not hurry the man. He is patient with a trembling, speechless, breathless prophet until the prophet can say "speak."

THE ORIGINAL **NEHEFKHU TSIRAI ALAI · "ANGUISH HAS COME UPON ME"**

Strengthened for the Writing of Truth

THREE TOUCHES · HOW HEAVEN HANDLED A PROPHET WITH NO STRENGTH — DANIEL 10:8–19

Three times no strength; three touches; three times "man of high esteem"; twice "do not be afraid" — and then: "I received strength"

NO STRENGTH vv. 8–9	→	TOUCH ONE v. 10	→	TOUCH TWO v. 16	→	TOUCH THREE vv. 18–19
"no strength was left in me … my natural color turned to a deathly pallor" — face down, in a deep sleep		"a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees" — then: "O Daniel, man of high esteem … stand"		"one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth" — anguish like labor pangs (v. 16)		"touched me again and strengthened me … take courage and be courageous!" — "I received strength"

"HE GIVES STRENGTH TO THE WEARY, AND TO HIM WHO LACKS MIGHT HE INCREASES POWER" — ISAIAH 40:29

The prophet is not scolded for his weakness; he is handled gently — set up, given speech, strengthened — and told again who he is to God. "My power is perfected in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). When he can finally speak, his one request is for more of the word that flattened him: "May my lord speak" (v. 19).

What to carry from this chapter

1

Chapters 10–12 are one vision.

Chapter 10 is the prologue, the messenger's arrival, the delay, the prophet strengthened; chapter 11 is the content; chapter 12 the end.

2

Strength is the spine of the chapter.

None left (verses 8, 16, 17); three touches (verses 10, 16, 18); received (verse 19).

3

The prayer was heard the first day.

"From the first day… your words were heard" (verse 12).

4

The prince of Persia is not a man.

No king withstands an angel for three weeks.

More to carry

5

Daniel never addressed the prince.

He humbled himself before God and kept praying; heaven did the fighting.

6

Michael is Israel's prince.

"One of the chief princes" (verse 13), "your prince" (verse 21), "the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people" (chapter 12, verse 1), the archangel ass

7

The man in linen is seen again on Patmos.

Linen, gold, eyes of fire, feet of bronze, a voice like many waters (Revelation 1, verses 13 to 15).

8

History is read from a record.

"What is inscribed in the writing of truth" (verse 21; Psalm 139, verse 16).

Talk it through

1. Daniel mourned for three weeks over a stalled work he could not go and fix. What is stalled in God's work around you that you have shrugged at instead of grieved over, and what would three weeks of humbling yourself about it look like?

2. Daniel saw the man in linen and had no strength left; his companions saw nothing and ran. When has a real encounter with God's glory leveled you, and what did He do next?

3. "From the first day… your words were heard." What prayer have you stopped praying on the twentieth day, assuming heaven was silent, when the answer may have been in the fight?

CLOSING

An old man mourned three weeks for a stalled temple; the Lord in linen met him by the river and he could not stand. His words had been heard the first day, a prince of Persia held the answer for twenty-one, until Michael came. He was touched three times, called treasured three times, and told what was written before it happened.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study, reflection journal and film: see the Daniel study page.