

The Great War

- A. The Great War always aligns with an Earthly Context 10:1
- B. The Great War is the Great Conflict. 10:1
- C. The Great War was impacting Daniel. 10:2-3
- D. God Reveals the Great War. 10:4-21

Good evening, Messiah Bible Church. Tonight we will continue the study of Daniel. We are in chapter 10. So far we have seen three visions as we have studied chapters 7-9

Vision #1 – Daniel 7 - First year of King Belshazzar (~553BC).....the Four Beast

Vision #2 – Daniel 8:1- Third year of King Belshazzar (~551BC)...the Ram and the Goat

Vision #3 – Daniel 9:23 - First year of Darius the Mede (~538/539BC)...the Seventy Weeks

All three of these visions dealt with future events. Chapter 10 does not follow this pattern. It reveals something that has been raging since the demise of satan and his demons. It reveals something, that if we could see it, we would fall to the ground trembling.

Let me describe it this way, every ungodly marital argument, every gathered group of gossipers, every rebellious action of teenagers, every Church split, every display of disunity within a congregation or it's leadership, every ungodly thought, every bitter or harden heart, and on a larger scale, every riot in a nation, every political upheaval, every war, and every genocide has this one thing in common, an unseen war is raging. This unseen spiritual war occurs every minute of the day. It is a spiritual war that satan is waging against every plan of God and every person on the planet.

If you google the phrase "The Great War" you probably will get something about WW1 or WW2. Google is wrong.

I tell young men all the time that we are in a war. Then I say, "If it was not so, Ephesians chapter six would not be in the Bible. Listen to what it says:

Ephesians 6:10-13

- **"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the**

authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. “ (ESV)

Who are we battling against? It is not your spouse. It is not your children. It is not with people in the church, etc.. Verse twelve says we do not wrestle with flesh and blood. The word wrestle means fight. We do not fight against flesh and blood. Our fight is with rulers, authorities, cosmic powers over this present darkness, and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. In simple terms you and I are at war with satan and his minions. And it is going on right now in the spiritual realm.

In his message on Ephesians 6:17, **David Platt** said this about this spiritual war,

- **“The devil and his demons are actively and always working to destroy your life.”**

Verse one of Chapter 10 calls this war the great conflict. Other verses call it a great warfare. That is why the title of this message is The Great War.

Before we get started, lets get are bearings:

- In verse 1 Daniel gives an overall conclusion for Chapters 10-12
- Verses 2-3 Describes Daniel’s distress, alluding to the fact he is praying and fasting.
- Verses 4-21 Is the start of God’s answer to his prayer, and it sets the stage for Chapters 11-12

Write this down as point 1

- **The Great War always aligns with an Earthly Context. 10:1**

Look at verse one.

Daniel 10:1

- **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.**

The content of Chapters 10-12 occurs during the third-year reign of Cyrus, the Persian king. This is about two years after Daniel had seen the third vision shown in chapter 9. So, a significant amount of time had passed. Also, an important event had occurred during Cyrus's first year as king. God had moved in his heart to make a decree. Cyrus decreed that the Jews could go home. (Ezra 1:1-4) They could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. The 70 years of captivity were over!

You would think that all the Jews would have returned to their homeland, but according to Ezra 2:64 only 42,360 Jews returned to Jerusalem. This would have disheartened Daniel.

So, that is the historical context. Now Daniel gives a broad view of the vision shown in chapters 10-12.

Write this down,

- **The Great War is the Great Conflict. 10:1**

As I mentioned in the introduction, the great conflict could be translated great warfare. The warfare that Daniel is referencing is not just the physical warfare that will come, though the inhabitants of earth will see it that way. It is also the unseen spiritual war between God and satan. I do not believe that Daniel really understood this until he saw what is in this chapter.

Daniel also says that the content of chapters 10-12 is true and that he understands it. It is almost like he is saying that what I am going to describe is out of this world and listen it is true! And I understand it!

He also says it was a "word revealed." Besides the content of chapters 11-12, what he sees in Chapter 10 reveals the unseen war engulfing what is described in chapters 11-12. Chapter 10

puts everything together for Daniel so that when he sees the remaining vision in chapters 11-12, he gets it. In the past, he did not always understand what the visions meant. Look at what he says about the vision of Chapter 8,

Daniel 8:27

- **And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.**

And that was after the angel Gabriel had explained the vision to him!

After the events of chapter 10 and the continuance of the vision in chapters 11-12, Daniel will understand and Daniel will know with certainty that the word is true.

Now, we are going to pull back from Daniel's conclusion and see how Daniel got to this point of understanding. This is so important.

Write this down,

- 3. The Great War was **impacting Daniel**. 10:2-3, 12

If you scan through accounts in the Bible, you will find God's people praying and fasting. Most often it is when circumstances compel them to abandon everything thing and to seek God who created the entire universe. For example, Nehemiah was told of the horrible state of Jerusalem and he prayed and fasted. King Jehoshaphat is given news of the coming armies amassing against them, and he calls all of the people, both men, women, and children to come together and pray and fast. Ester, knowing it will take a work of Almighty God to save them from annihilation, calls all the Jews within the kingdom to pray and fast. All of these circumstances were engulfed in the Great War. The Great War affects us all. And so it is with Daniel.

Daniel 10:2-3

- **In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.**

Though it doesn't explicitly say that he was fasting and praying, it is definitely implied. He is in a state of deep-seated grief, and he has curtailed his eating habits. He fasts and prays for three weeks. What has brought him to this point? What circumstances has driven him to call on the God of all creation. The sovereign God over that universe. The all-powerful, all-knowing God. The text doesn't say, but there were past events which would compel him to fast and pray.

First, 2 years before, he had received the 3rd vision. It was, in the end, a positive vision about the future of the Jews, but it would be through troubling times. Messiah would be cut off, the Jews would make a pact with the anti-Christ, and the anti-Christ would abolish worship of the true God and require all to worship himself. Then there was the response to the decree by Cyrus which freed the Jews from captivity to go rebuild the temple. Only a minority group of Jews wanted to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and the city.

Our own Daniel Armstrong, who preaches next week, also found that the progress of rebuilding the temple was hindered by opposition. This also could have been weighing on Daniel.

And to add salt to Daniel's wounded heart, he was fasting and praying during the time of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, which they were not observing. The Passover began on the 14th day of the first month, the month of Nisan. And went for 7 days. So, Daniel is fasting and praying, during a time when he would be reflecting on their deliverance from Egypt by the mighty hand of God. Everyone of these circumstances were engulfed in the Great War and it impacted Daniel.

Don't miss this. God did not immediately answer Daniel. Daniel did not get an answer for twenty-one days. Why doesn't God answer immediately? Hold on.... We will get there. Here is God's answer:

God answers his prayer with another vision. This vision will extend through chapter 12. The part of the vision shown in chapter 10 will put everything into perspective for Daniel. Here is the vision:

- God reveals the **Great War**. 10:4-21

Daniel 10:4-6 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude.

As Daniel is standing by the Tigris River, he looks up and sees a warrior. This is no common warrior.

God reveals to Daniel the Warrior King.

Now why do I call him the Warrior King?

Well, because of the close similarity that this description has with the description shown of the Warrior King in **Revelation 1:10-17**

- I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.

Daniel saw the pre-incarnate Son of God, not as the lamb, but as the Warrior King.

What was Daniel's reaction? Similar to John's reaction in Revelation. John fell at his feet as though dead. Daniel fell on his face in deep sleep with his face to the ground.

Daniel 10:7-9

- **And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.**

So the pre-incarnate Son of God is revealed. Right then and there. This was not prophecy, this was real-time. The pre-incarnate Son of God stood before him. This is a huge statement. Ultimately God is in control of the Great War, and ultimately satan and his minions are toast. The third vision was prophetic and showed the Messiah being cut-off which resulted in our opportunity to be saved. Now this real-time vision shows the Son of God as the Warrior King, who will ultimately end the Great War. This sets the tone for the rest of chapter 10 and for Chapters 11-12.

The Vision continues:

Daniel 10:10-12

- **And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.**

God reveals the comforting and exhorting messenger sent to him.

The phrase “I have been sent to you” gives us a clue that this is not the Warrior King, but an angel. Most likely Gabriel. The same angel sent to him previously in chapter 9. The angel does two things. He brings comfort and encouragement. He comfortingly pulls him up and then encourages him by telling Daniel that he is greatly loved. Exactly what Gabriel had told Daniel in chapter 9. He also tells him that he was heard from the very first day that he began to fast and pray. He had come because of his words. What words? The words that he had prayed.

The angel came because of prayer and fasting. Does that tell you that prayer and fasting is important? Yes! An angel came to give Daniel answers! What do we do when we want answers? We go ask someone their opinion. And if that doesn't help, we ask someone else. Yes, we may say a short prayer, but do we pray for twenty one day straight?

By the way, why did it take over twenty days for the angel to come and answer him?

God reveals the reason for the delay – Spiritual Warfare

Daniel 10:12-14

- **Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”**

The angel was held up because he was fighting the prince of the Kingdom of Persia. Now we know the angel was not referring to the earthly king of Persia for the angel could easily have destroyed the king and all his army. The angel was referring to the real enemy. The one who can control and manipulate earthly kings. The real enemy was in the spiritual realm.

The real enemy was satan's demons. The fact that the angel was not able to overcome the demon, shows that the battle is real in the heavenly realm. Yet the demon was not the victor, Michael the archangel came to the rescue, and his impact appears to be immediate. The angel was there with Daniel after 21 days and he is going to tell him what is going to happen to the Jews in the latter days, far into the future.

We gain some real important insight from this bit of Scripture. First satan's demons controls and manipulate nations and God's angels fight against them. This is the Great War. Secondly, God allowed the battle to rage while Daniel prayed earnestly. God allows the battle to continue to rage right now. It is a reality. There will be an end to this battle and God will be the victor, but it is not now.

He allows it to continue, therefore nations can be influenced, people groups can be influenced, families can be influenced, and people you know can be influenced just like the earthly king of Persia. You can be influenced, if you allow it! This is why we put on the whole “armor of God.” We do not put on our armor, which is the armor of flesh. In the flesh we will be defeated. In the armor of God, we will be victors.

We are at war. We are in the Great War. Matter of fact, at the moment you were about to believe in the Gospel and put your faith in Jesus, there was a war going on to stop you. I have noticed when I share the Gospel, all kinds of distractions occur. Why, there is a war going on. You may be here tonight, and you have not put your trust in Jesus. Well, I tell you, Satan doesn't want you to even hear the Gospel. Too bad! Here it is. Jesus was born of a virgin, was God in the flesh, lived a perfect life, went to the cross for you, bore your sins on the cross, shed his blood for the remissions of sin, willingly died, and rose again on the third day. And if you put your trust in Him your sins will be forgiven, you will be a child of God, and you will have eternal life. That is the Gospel. Trust in Him right now. There is a war going on right now for your soul!

Thirdly, God allows the battle to rage on which causes us to rely on Him more. What did Daniel do after the second day of praying, after the third day of praying, the fourth day of praying.... He continued to pray for 21 days. He did not have any answers. He did not have any relief. Daniel basically said “I got nothing, I need to continue to pray.”

You and I are in the same position. We got nothing without Jesus. We can do nothing without Jesus. Spiritual warfare is raging in our lives every single day and we are hopelessly impotent without the whole armor of God.

Satan will kill, will steal, and will destroy if we allow him to win our spiritual battles. Daniel did not stop praying and the angel arrived to give him a word of things to come for the Jews. Let's learn from this.

By now Daniel is really shaken up by the things he has seen. Look what happens next. It is very unique.

Daniel experiences angelic intercession.

Daniel 10:15-19

- **When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute. And behold, 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, “O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.”**

Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. And he said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.” And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

Daniel is freaked out by what he has seen and heard. An unseen spiritual war was occurring between the angels of God and satan's demons. And the demons were controlling the actions of nations. This was astonishing to Daniel, and he went to the ground again. Basically, Daniel is paralyzed. Listen to what John MacArthur says:

“Well, here's Daniel standing there just tottering around, and after he gets that information, verse 15, “When he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground and became dumb.” And some commentators feel that the Hebrew means he fell down all over again; he hit the dirt again. He's never heard anything like this in his life. He never knew anything about angelic warfare, not like this. And he's lost his speech, and he falls down all over again. He's flooded with a renewed state of weakness, and he lies prostrate on the ground. His mouth is slammed shut; he can't even speak.”

The angel intercedes and touches his lips, and Daniel speaks. Daniel has lost all strength, and the angel touches him again. Daniel regains strength. Not only that, but he is also given courage to hear the word. This is a rare glimpse of an angel strengthening someone overwhelmed with fear. This is real-time. This is not some cosmic illustration.

We see the same thing after Jesus' wilderness victory over satan. He is strengthened by angels. We also see this when Jesus prays in the Garden. Yes, angels can be sent to strengthen us, but the source is always God.

Now Daniel is ready to hear the word.

Daniel 10:20-21

- Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and 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.

The angel states a rhetorical question. Why he has come. Why did he come? He came to give Daniel a word based upon his own prayerful words. What is the word?

Back in verse 14, the angel told him, He **came to make him understand what is to happen to his people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come, ie Chapter 11-12.**

So, the angel will give Daniel the word, but afterwards he is going back to war. He will battle against the prince of Persia. When Greece comes to power, he will battle against the prince of Greece. After Greece falls, another nation rises up, he will battle against the demon in control of that nation, and so on and so on. So, we see that

God reveals that the Great War Will Rages On.

And look at what he says about this this war in verse 21. He says,

- **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.**

He is saying, Michael and I got this. We do not need anymore angels to handle these wars. He says it is written in the book of truth. There will be no oops we need help. God is in control and God has ordained it. He also calls Michael his prince. Michael is the prince for Israel. Michael defends Israel in the spiritual realm. The prince of Iran will not be the victor. The prince of Hezbollah will not be the victor. No prince of any nation will annihilate Israel.

God’s plan will be completed. Satan is fighting a battle that is already lost. It is a scriptural truth. Which leads us back to the summary given in verse 1. The word (chapters 11-12) is true and Daniel understood it. God had revealed to Daniel the Great war in the unseen realm, and he had given him the word. What was the word.....come back next week to see.

A few takeaways:

Collectively

1. Things are not getting better globally. Satan and his minions will not stop controlling nations. There will be no peace until it comes through the Warrior King, Jesus Christ. Mankind is not the source for peace.
2. Every nation that God wants to fall will fall and every nation that God wants to stand will stand.
3. God allows satan to have his time on earth.

4. God will consume His enemies in the end, but not now.

Personally

1. We need to look at people differently. We are not fighting against people.
2. The unseen spiritual war raging around us is real and has a lot to do with all of our own ungodly conflicts. Satan knows how to team up with our flesh.
3. Putting on the whole armor of God is essential for us to wage war in a godly manner.
4. Prayer must become our “go-to” position. We too often seek earthly opinions rather than answers from God through prayer and His Word. When we are at our limits, then we must pray and fast.