

Daniel 10:11-21 (NIV)

11 He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

12 Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

15 While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless.

16 Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless.

17 How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”

18 Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength.

19 “Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

20 So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come;

21 but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

27-10-01-Joining the Prayer Force

prayer, fasting, spiritual warfare, angels, self-denial

Dan 10:11-21

Persistent prayer is a powerful force in spiritual warfare.

INTRODUCTION:

–[**NDP T-shirt slogan:** “*Aim High: Join the Prayer Force.*”] Why? **HOM.idea**, and an episode in Daniel’s supported that statement. A message came to him and for 3 weeks he fasted and *prayed to get understanding* about it; at last an angel came to him in a vision– **Dan 10:11-14**, *He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”*

–Bible scholars often explore this passage’s *prophetic meaning*. I profit more from *Daniel’s example and prayer’s effect on the spiritual realm*.

I. Spiritual Understanding is Worth a Struggle in Prayer

- A. When Daniel couldn’t understand God’s message to him, why did he go to prayer? (*Understanding is a priority in God’s Kingdom– Col 1:9*, For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.)
- B. Daniel’s *fasting and prayer* was a strong emotional response– **v.2**, At that time I, Daniel, **mourned** for three weeks. [*a’bal* (mourn, grief, lament) closely associated with *parched* or *dried up*]
 1. Do we *grieve* or *feel dry inside* when reading something in God’s Word that we can’t understand, can’t figure out?
 2. Do we *mourn* over not understanding with a *self-denying kind of persistence* in prayer, as Daniel did, till God sends us an answer?

TRANS: [**Dr. Chalmers**, a missionary to Africa was unable for 2 years to meet a village’s request for teachers. When he finally went himself, he found the people had knelt each Sunday morning for 4 hours of silent prayer, not knowing what to pray.] When God has *spiritual understanding* for us, it may take a struggle in

prayer for 3 weeks or 2 years. **Persistent prayer is a powerful force in spiritual warfare.** And this passage touches on that warfare...

II. Angels Go to Work in Conjunction With Our Prayers

- A. When Daniel went to prayer, an angel went to work— v.12a, *Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.*
- B. His prayer was already heard, but the answer delayed. (This is why we should **pray through**, not giving in to a temptation to give up. [Mary's conversion: we prayed from late at night till early AM.]
- C. Why is *praying through* often needed? (Angelic reinforcements may be needed— v.13, *But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.*

TRANS: Imagine the *warfare* in these *spiritual realms*! From our side, we humbly whisper our requests before the Lord. But on the other side of prayer is the mighty clashing of the angelic forces of good and evil. **Persistent prayer is a powerful force in spiritual warfare.** So,

III. What's Keeping Us From Joining the Prayer Force?

- A. Do we feel *too weak* for the dynamics of being a *prayer-warrior*? (Daniel did! In v.15-17, he said he was “*speechless... overcome with anguish... helpless... My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.*”
- B. But angels help us— Heb.1:14, Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Jesus had that help— Mark 1:13, He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.)
 1. Sometimes we need to be touched by an angel— v.18, *Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength.*
 2. God's angels always encourage us to be strong, v.19, “*Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,*” he said. “*Peace! Be strong now; be strong.*”
- B. Angels also need our support! Battles took place as Daniel prayed for 21 days— Dan 10:20-11:1, *So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.) (We, on the prayer front, support God's angelic troops on the front lines of battle with darkness.)*

CONCLUSION:

—**Persistent prayer is a powerful force in spiritual warfare.** God still uses angels to help us. But now, in NT times, Jesus indwells us through the Holy Spirit to *strengthen* and *encourage* us. Yet, someday we will surely meet and thank the angels who touched our lives down here, and we may hear them thanking us for the prayer support we gave them.
 —If we're **not** prayer-warriors like Daniel, we need to ask of Jesus what the disciples did in Luke 11:1, “Teach us to pray.”