

# GODLY LIVING IN A GODLESS WORLD

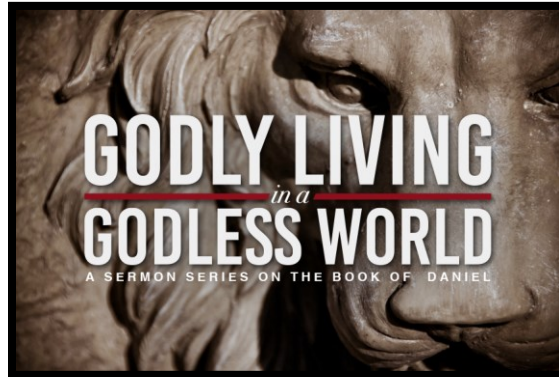
## Expositional Study Of Daniel

Daniel 10:13b-21

Written By

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Paul was not kidding when he said “. . . we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). God pulled back the proverbial curtain on this spiritual reality for me one evening while I, a high school senior, spoke with a slightly built, quiet, and somewhat shy new student. The church service had ended, and a couple of us students hung out at the base of the entrance steps talking about theological topics. Eventually, all the adults left, along with the students, leaving me and my best friend, David, waiting with this young girl’s ride to show up.

While waiting, we continued to talk about the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to this young girl who had no exposure to it. Then all of sudden her ninety pound body became as rigid as a steel beam, she buried her chin in her chest, threw her mouth open and then out came a man’s deep, base voice. “I don’t want you speak any more to her about the gospel of Jesus,” he said in a raspy tone. Realizing a demon addressed me, I remembered what I had been taught at home and at church. Never use your power to command a demon to leave, rather use the name of Jesus Christ. Believe me, I wasted no time saying, “In the name of Jesus, Jesus commands you to leave her.” Instantly, like something you would see in a horror flick, she snapped back into her normal self, not realizing anything had occurred.

Walking over to the church steps, I invited her to sit down, and I told David to go and get some adult back up. Too bad we did not have cell phones back then, right? As he left, I

spoke more with her about the love of Jesus for her, and, just like before, she went rigid on me. Within seconds out came a completely different male voice. I still to this day can't believe what I said with my teenage mouth, "Say, I thought you left?" Equally, I'll never forget the reply I received, "There are more than one of us." Say, David, man, where are you? Where are the adults? Those thoughts crossed my mind.

Eventually other people showed up along with her ride. After she stepped into the car, we found out that her mother was a local Satanic witch. At that moment of insight the entire unwanted encounter all made perfect since. No wonder she did not want to hear about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Since my Senior year in high school, I learned we, as believers, do, in fact, fight against the powers of darkness and we need not fear because Christ is with us, empowering us with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18ff). Yes, we need not fear, but that does not mean things always go smoothly either as we seek to live as Christ's ambassadors in Satan's domain (Ephesians 2:1-3). No, at times, we like the prophet Daniel experience times of conflict on various fronts, trouble, frustration, and discouragement as it appears our prayers for assistance have risen no higher than the white, puffy clouds floating by above our heads. This perception has no part of spiritual reality for as we see in Daniel chapter 10 . . .

### Spiritual Delay Could Be Because Of The Spiritual Fray (Daniel 10:1-13a)

Daniel had prayed and received an amazing prophetic answer to his prolonged prayer concerning his people, Israel, in chapter 9. God informed him that He would not only fulfill His word to send Israel back to the Promised Land, but He would also tell the prophet exactly when the Messiah would arrive in history in order to deal with sin (Daniel 9:24-27), the Devil, and to erect the long-awaited Davidic empire (2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3, 4, 28-37; Isaiah 9:6-7; 11; 24; 25; 54; 60; 61; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 33:14-17, 20-21; Ezekiel 37:24-25; Daniel 7:13-14; Hosea 3:4-5; Amos 9:11; Zechariah 12-14). This occurred in the first year of King Darius around 539 B.C. For the next two years Daniel struggled to understand the complexity and intricacies of this messianic/kingdom prophecy and its relationship with Israel. God did not let him down. God never lets us down when we pursue Him in prayer (ask, seek, and knock . . . Matthew 7:7).

In the third year of Cyrus (assuming that Cyrus and Darius are one in the same person, of course), or 536 B.C., Daniel received another powerful and historically precise prophecy, this time in the form of a high definition vision (Daniel 10:1), concerning God's dealings with Israel with the final Persian kings, coupled with the political intrigue, battles, and anti-Semitic (Anti-Christ) behavior of the kings who would form their own empires after the breakup of the kingdom of Greece under Alexander the Great. For twenty-one days Daniel fasted and prayed for God to give him a flash of rare insight into His future dealings with Israel. For twenty-one days during the month of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the heavens seemed like brass to the aged, faithful prophet. On day twenty-four, while he had a spiritual quiet time near the banks of the Tigris, a mighty angel of God gloriously broke into his dimension to first inform

him why there had been a delay in answering his prayer, and then to answer his prayer by fully explaining the vision in question.

In our last study, we commented on how Daniel's situation could be your situation. You, too, are in a time of delay when it seems like God is not listening to your prayers, when you feel like He has forgotten you, when you are hungry for divine insight into the complexity of your situation, and when it seems like your life is at a spiritual standstill. If this is you, think take some instruction on how to function to the spiritual fray. First, realize the greatest power you possess is the power of prayer, so do not stop praying, even if you do not see tangible results. God has heard and is working out His perfect plan (Daniel 10:1-3). Two, realize angelic activity is attached to your prayer life. For whatever reasons, God employs angels, at time, to execute His answers in relationship to your prayers. This spiritual motif is easily gleaned from Daniel's story (Daniel 10:4-10). Three, realize the problem behind the delay in your fray could be wedded to a demonic foe whose Satanic driven purpose is to thwart God's activity concerning you (Daniel 10:11-13a). Paul understood this reality in his day (2 Corinthians 12:7), and C. S. Lewis wrote creatively about it in his famous *Screwtape Letters*, which is a book my mother's godly sister, Roberta, gave me for one of my graduation presents from High School. Boy, did she know what she was going back in 1976.

For our purposes in this study, I want to drill down more on this particular and highly pragmatic topic . . .

### The Problem of the Fray (Daniel 10:11-13b)

There is no question about the identity of "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." The definite article (the) alerts us to the fact he is not a lesser prince, but the prince of over this empire. The fact he is able to temporarily thwart the advancement of a powerful holy angel of God demonstrates he is a demon of high rank. Hence the validity of the presence of the article. His presence and anti-God behavior also serves to substantiate the statement of Paul in Ephesians 6:10-12, as well as the words of Peter in his first letter, "<sup>8</sup> *Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for (someone) to devour.*" Lions are hungry more than they are full. Lions are also powerful and unmerciful toward their prey. Lions also like to hunt by lying in the tall grass near a clearing. When an unsuspected gazelle meanders into the grassy clearing for lunch, the lion shrewdly uses its paw to move the grass in the opposite direction of the wind in an attempt to arrest the attention of the gazelle. If curiosity gets the best of the innocent animal, he becomes a noontime meal. The Devil and his menacing minions are no different. Better wise up to the spiritual battle you are in and stop moving through life as if all you see with your eyes is all there is. Nothing could be further from the spiritual truth.

The presence of this particular demon leads to a logical question: Are angels (both good and bad) assigned to countries? It appears they are, although they are not limited to this domain, as we see from Christ's encounters with them in various individuals when He walked the earth (Matthew 8:31; Mark 1:32, 34; 5:9; 16:9; Luke 4:41; 8:35). Daniel 10, verse 20, further buttresses this premise when the angel speaking with Daniel remarks, "*And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.*" Shockingly the angel gives this prophetic words some two hundred years before the fact. What is his word? He

informs Daniel that the Devil already had a powerful demon, another prince of darkness, ready and willing to sow anti-Semitism and anti-God seeds within the kingdom of Alexander the Great. Based on this we cannot resist drawing the logical conclusion: If there are high ranking demons over two countries, there is good reason for them to be assigned to other countries. If you track the international and national news, I don't think it is too hard to see their ferocious fingerprints. Where they are there is chaos, immorality, sexual deviancy showcased as sexual normalcy, death, anti-Christian activity and rhetoric, a blatant hatred of the Church and Israel, vacuous philosophies and godless actions masquerading as godly actions. All of this is why we, as God's people, should be in prayer for our country's leaders, regardless of who they are or what party they are affiliated with. We can't vote in righteousness, morality, and peace because of the presence of wicked beings in high places. We can, however, throw a proverbial monkey wrench in their devious machinery by devoting ourselves to PRAYER. Prayer is our weapon, our daisy cutter bomb, coupled with the Word of God, which is akin to a .50 caliber sniper rifle (Ephesians 6:14-20).

A second logical question must be posed: How long will God put up with this battle in the heavenlies between good and evil? Part of our answer is buried in the rich soil of Isaiah chapters 24 through 27 which forms the Little Apocalypse (or a small version of the book of Revelation) in the Old Testament. These four chapters follow the chronological flow of Revelation. Chapter 24 speaks of universal, worldwide divine judgment on an order never seen before in world history. Chapter 25 introduces us to kingdom blessing which logically follows the divine judgment. Chapter 26 acquaints us with universal singing following God's final judgment of the wicked and the wicked world system. I wonder what we'll sing? *A Mighty Fortress is Our God? Jesus Is Coming Again?* Chapter 27 contains a detailed description of the messianic kingdom God will erect, as promised and prophesied, after His Second Coming.

With this background information in mind, I want to zero in on Isaiah 24:20-22:

<sup>20</sup> The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard and it totters like a shack, For its transgression is heavy upon it, and it will fall, never to rise again. <sup>21</sup> So it will happen in that day, that the Lord will punish the host of heaven on high, and the kings of the earth on earth. <sup>22</sup> They will be gathered together like prisoners into a pit; they will be shut up in a dungeon, and after many days they will be punished.

See the chronological structure? After God shakes and judges the earth (which is developed in detail in Revelation 6-19), He punishes the "host of heaven on high and the kings of the earth on earth." Punish, which occurs a staggering eighteen times in Isaiah 23-27, is from *pāqad* (פָּקַד) and it ". . . means to make a decision, to determine the fate of, the future of someone or something. This includes judgment as well as providence. It fits God's sovereign activity of moment-by-moment decision making, his control over life and death, blessing and curse, success and failure, his disposition of individuals, peoples, and nations, as well as the heavenly host and the divine powers. It is also an appropriate term to describe his great judgment over the land and

its peoples, including Israel and Jerusalem.”<sup>1</sup> God’s wrath is coming in due time. Where will it be unleashed? Good question. This leads to another question.

Why did the prophet throw in this last prepositional phrase, “on earth” (עַל-הָאֲדָמָה where the preposition is classified as a locative). Isn’t this a bit redundant? No. God wants you to know there is a stark distinction between the “hosts of heaven on high” and the kings on planet earth. The former are demonic beings who’ve been causing trouble for millennia, while the latter have been influenced by them for nefarious, anti-God purposes (2 Kings 22:19; Job 1:6; Daniel 4:32; 8:10). Interestingly enough, the typical word for heaven is not used here, but the Hebrew *rum* “רָוַם” is employed twice for emphasis, literally “the height in the height.” It lexically speaks of the height one would need to ascend to get into God’s presence (Isaiah 57:15; Micah 6:6). Obviously, this is an easy lexical jump to apply it to angelic beings who also can and do reside in this domain (Job 1; Isaiah 6:1-5; Revelation 4-5). I say all this to underscore the fact that their days are literally numbered!

NASA’s Kepler 2 space mission reveals the rocky remains of a world which is being obliterated as it spins and spirals around a dead white dwarf star in the constellation Virgo, a whopping 570 light years from earth. Amazingly, scientists can see debris of various sizes rotating around the dead star every 4.5 hours while they are some 520,000 miles from the star. Jaw dropping, isn’t it. According to the scientists at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, we are watching the death of solar system as powerful gravitational forces from a dead star, like a vacuum cleaner, suck up and obliterate nearby planets. Based on this evidence, scientists are quick to apply the deadly data to our sun and solar system. Their final analysis is not too comforting. Our star will die one day resulting in the shredding of our planet and all else in our solar system.<sup>2</sup>

Wow, that was encouraging. Aren’t you glad this is not what is going to happen? God is going to deal with evil in the seen and unseen world, resulting in a cosmos which does not know decay and destruction ANYMORE (Revelation 21:1ff). According to John’s words in Revelation 12, in the middle of Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week, or 3 ½ years into the tribulation (Revelation 12:14).

<sup>1</sup> Then war broke out in heaven; Michael <sup>2</sup> and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, <sup>8</sup> but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup> The huge dragon, the ancient serpent, <sup>1</sup> who is called the Devil and Satan, who deceived the whole world, was thrown down to earth, and its angels were thrown down with it (Revelation 12).

Michael, the archangel, and his troops will expel the demons from their heavenly positions, leaving them but 3 ½ years to cause havoc on earth before the Lord Jesus appears to waylay them before He erects His kingdom of holiness and peace. What does He do before He established the

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<sup>1</sup>Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*. Edited by E. Ray Clendenen (The New American Commentary. Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 424.

millennial kingdom? He locks up the demons just like Isaiah said in chapter 24, verses 22 and in Revelation 20, verses 1 through 3. Be encouraged. Peace is on the horizon. Evil will not win the day. In fact, as Jesus stated, he is a defeated foe because his person and work:

<sup>30</sup> Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. <sup>31</sup> Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup> And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself. <sup>33</sup> He said this indicating the kind of death he would die (John 12).

The death and resurrection of Christ was the final nail in the kingdom aspirations of the Devil. Paul even goes so far as to tell us how these two events resulted in Jesus not only giving sinners the option of cleansing and forgiveness, they served as a public spectacle in the angelic realm of Christ's smack down (sorry, I couldn't think of a more appropriate term) of demonic powers on their turf:

<sup>14</sup> obliterating the bond against us, with its legal claims, which was opposed to us, he also removed it from our midst, nailing it to the cross; <sup>15</sup> despoiling the principalities and the powers, he made a public spectacle of them, leading them away in triumph by it (Colossians 2).

We are now watching the final grip of the Devil and his cohorts being wrested from them as they desperately and frantically attempt to hold onto power . . . like the alien creature did with astronaut Ellen Ripley in Alien. Sorry for the spoiler to the end of this future story but Jesus wins, along with His saints.

This is the future, but what about the present.

### The Provision In The Fray (Daniel 10:13b)

When I went to Friday night movies while in high school, my dad always wanted to know who I was going with. As a law enforcement officer, my safety was always his concern on our sometimes rough border town. Whenever I said, "I'm going with Billy" he never said anything else. Why? Billy was 6' 5" and weighed about 280, and could lift the stack in the weight room at school. Billy was my backup in a BIG way. He's now my spiritual illustration. How so? Let's read on regarding the battle Daniel's angel had with the demon over Persia:

<sup>13</sup> "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

What did Daniel's angel do on day twenty-one? He received backup from one of God's most powerful angels, Michael, an archangel (Jude 9). Michael was Billy . . . to follow the analogy. What is an archangel? It/he is a chief angel of God. The fact he is called "one of the chief princes"

informs us there are more than one in God's army.<sup>3</sup> What does his name mean in Hebrew, מִיכָאֵל, mikha'el? Who is like God? The answer is "Nobody." All the gods of the world are, therefore, not gods at all. Why did this particular archangel show up? According to Daniel 12, verse 1 he is Israel's special and powerful angel (Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS should take note, but they won't). What is his job description? To guard Israel and to make sure God's kingdom/messianic purposes to them . . . and ultimately the Church . . . are fully realized in God's providential timing. What did he do for Daniel's angelic messenger? He placed himself in between this angel and the Prince of Persia, thereby allowing God's lower ranking angel to pass by to complete his divinely ordered mission to Daniel.

What can you, should you, gain from this historical narrative? The same God who listened to the pray of an eighty-five-year-old saint and dispatched an angel is the same God who hears your prayer in your fray and commissions angelic beings to assist you in unseen ways. Hebrews 1, verse 14 reminds us concerning angels, "are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" The answer to the rhetorical question is an unequivocal, "Yes!" When you are in a season of delay in your fray keep on praying because God is not playing. Billy is coming, no make that divine angelic backup, and just when you need it the most.

The youth pastor, who came to my home church after I went to Azusa Pacific University. told the story of how his wife almost died on a busy freeway in Los Angeles (not in Washington State as I said in my sermon. My mother brought clarification, as only a mother can do) on their way to a Billy Graham Crusade. Lying alongside the road and bleeding internally, she needed help fast but they couldn't get her to the hospital located on the other side of the freeway. All of sudden, up walked a man all of sudden with a black medical bag. He performed a tracheotomy to clear her airway and then left the seen as other cars stopped to assist. Later they looked him up at all the medical facilities in Los Angeles where he said he lived, and they never found a doctor by his name, ever. They even contacted the National Medical Association to find him in order to thank him and they said a doctor by that name had never been on their data base. Further, the doctors at the hospital where they eventually took her said they had never seen a tracheotomy like hers before. I think the writer of Hebrews got this right when we cautioned us, "*Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels*" (Hebrews 13:1). Amazing. Sometimes your back-up shows up physically, while at other times, and probably most of the time, they show up spiritually and do what they do best to assist you.

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<sup>3</sup>The Apocryphal books of First Enoch and Tobit show how people after New Testament times sought to fill in the missing details regarding concepts like this: Tobit 12:15 expands this idea of "chief princes" to include seven angels, though they are not named (see also 1 Enoch 81:5; 90:21-22; Rev 8:2). 1 Enoch 20:1-8 lists the names all seven of the chief angels and coins the term "archangels." Throughout 1 Enoch, Michael is in a group of four prominent archangels: 1. Michael, 2. Gabriel, 3. Raphael, 4. Sariel/Uriel/Phanuel (the fourth archangel varies). 1 Enoch 20:5 says Michael is "set over the good people [i.e., the elect] and over chaos." Michael also serves as the interpreting angel for Enoch in 1 Enoch 24:5. In later Enochic tradition, Michael is labeled as a chief captain (2 Enoch 22:6, 33:10) . . . as discussed in H. Daniel Zacharias, "Michael the Archangel," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

So do not fear the fray and fight on because backup is on the way.

- If your delay in your fray is in your marriage, pray on a prepare for backup.
- If your delay in your fray is with a troubled relationship at work, pray on a prepare for backup.
- If your delay is on a foreign field of battle, pray on and prepare for backup.
- If your delay is on the political soil of this country, pray on and prepare for backup.
- If your delay is a wayward, rebellious child, pray on and prepare for backup.
- If your delay is an unbelievably tough work environment, pray on and prepare for backup.
- If your delay is, well, I'm sure you get the idea.

Someone bigger than Billy has His divine eye on you as you live in what might seem like a monster movie. This is why you should not fear but be hopeful. Which will it be in your delay? Fright or might?