

Daniel 10-12 (part 1)

A Study Of Daniel 10-12 (part 1)

Chapters 10, 11, and 12 of Daniel document two visions either side of an angelic prophecy and they can be considered as one long chapter broken for convenience into three smaller ones. Because the subject matter is complex, I will break the study up into three parts. In the first I will summarize the chapters and explain how Daniel 10-12 completes our understanding of the 490 years of punishment spoken of in Daniel 9:24-27. In the second part I will study the intricate prophetic details that describe the lead up to the Great Wrath of AD 67-73. In the final part I will make some concluding observations, and discuss some other hidden meanings in the vision.

Daniel 10

It is 536BC, two years after the fall of Babylon, and Medo-Persia is now the global superpower. Daniel is still a citizen of Babylon, and has been fasting for 21 days and he is on the banks of the river Tigris with a group of people, when he has a vision of a man of extraordinary appearance. The vision is terrifying for everyone there, but none of his companions actually see it, they are simply impacted by its blinding light, and scatter in fear. The man in the vision, called the Man In Linen, is described as:

Clothed in linen

With a belt of Uphaz gold

A body like beryl

A face like lightning

Eyes like flaming torches

Arms and legs like burnished bronze

A voice like the sound of multitudes roaring

Daniel is left terrified and enfeebled by the vision, and when the Man In Linen speaks, Daniel falls on the ground in a trance. Then another man appears. (It is not clear whether he is alone or there is a second man, so I will go on the understanding there is just one man). The man touches Daniel on the shoulder, thereby strengthening him, and Daniel is able to get to his knees, and is then told to stand up, which he does, though still trembling. The man, who is an angel in human form, explains that he has come to help Daniel to understand what will happen to his people at “**the end of days** (‘achariyth yowm - lit: later days)”, and “**to tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth**”. He also talks about his conflicts with the Princes Of Persia, Grecia, and his support of Darius The Mede.

Daniel 11

He then proceeds to “**announce the truth**” to Daniel. Throughout chapter 11 and into chapter 12 the Angelic Man gives a very detailed prophetic account of what will happen in Judea from this point forward until the end of the Judean judgement, that being the Roman invasion and sacking of Jerusalem. As we will study this in my next study, I will gloss over the details here.

Daniel 12

He concludes by instructing Daniel to “**keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end (eth qets).**”

Then Daniel receives a second vision. Two more men are now standing on either bank of the river. The Man In Linen is upstream and one of the men asks him how long until the end of these ‘**wonders**’ (i.e. the extraordinary events already described)? The Man In Linen raises his right hand and left hand to the sky, and answers that it will be “**a time, two times and half a time.... and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished**”. This makes no sense to Daniel, who then asks “**My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?**”

The Man In Linen replies:

9 He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end. 10 Many shall be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked shall continue to act wickedly.

None of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. 11 From the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that desolates is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred ninety days. 12 Happy are those who persevere and attain the thousand three hundred thirty-five days. 13 But you, go your way, and rest; you shall rise for your reward at the end of the days.”

All of this information is dense, complex and perhaps confusing, so we need to take a step back and recapitulate, if we wish to move forward.

In Daniel 8, Daniel is by the River Ulai in 551BC where he is presented with a timeline of events culminating in the Abomination Of Desolation which will occur at the hand of a particular Greek regent, (now known to us as Antiochus Epiphanes). In Daniel 9 the Angel Gabriel comes to Daniel in 538BC, at the end of the 70 year exile, and explains that the punishment on the Jews will now continue for another 490 years and will conclude with the Abomination Of Desolation. 490 years from 538BC arrives at 48BC, so Daniel therefore has an understanding of the Judean punishment period that it will end in 48BC after a period of wrath involving the Abomination Of Desolation under a particular Greek regent. We can call this his Ulai revelation, as rivers themselves represent the flow of time, and Daniel sees the flow of time thus. (The 70th week is depicted as being cut in the middle, whilst the Abomination lasts 3 years 70 days, so that allows for a cut in the middle year of the seven, but not at the exact middle point of the year).

Then in chapters 10-12, two years on, he is given a new revelation which presents further information and an extension to the timeline. He is now by the River Tigris, so we can call this his Tigris revelation. The full picture of the flow of events is that of the River Ulai flowing into the River Tigris, so in his Ulai revelation he received a partial revelation, and now he receives the full picture. As the Ulai is a tributary, we can also see that the Abomination of Antiochus is not really the main event on the prophetic chart. The main event is the Great Wrath of AD 67-73, which is of course very easy for us to see with the benefit of historical hindsight, but not so clear to Daniel until it is all expounded for him. So, the timeline has not changed, but it has previously been a partial revelation, (which necessarily leads to a misconception of its exact nature), and now it is a complete revelation. In a sense, we can see the Ulai as representing Greek rule and the Greek Abomination under Antiochus, and the Tigris as representing Roman rule and the Abomination under Titus.

After describing the rise of Antiochus in verses 21-34, including the Abomination, the Angelic Man tells Daniel:

35 Some of the wise shall fall, so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed, until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed (eth gets mow'ed).

The Angelic Man then gives a further description leading up to the end of the judgement of Jerusalem, so that Daniel most likely realizes that the previous endpoint, the Abomination instituted

by Antiochus, has been superceded by another endpoint.

Then one of the men on the bank asks the Man In Linen:

“How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?”

The Man In Linen then says the events will conclude after - **mowed, mowed, chetsiy** - **“a time, two times, and half a time and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished”**.

Daniel says that he heard these words but they made no sense to him. He then asks:

“My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” The Hebrew here is **“'achariyth** “ which implies that Daniel's question might even be as simple as: **“When does all this actually end?”**

It is actually academic whether Daniel at this point realizes that Antiochus' Abomination is not the final endpoint, the main issue here is that he knows that the period of Jewish subjugation ends 490 years from 538BC, ergo in 48BC. So when the man on the bank asks when the wonders will end, he is bringing a new perspective to the table, insofar as he is effectively telling Daniel, (and us), by implication, that the assumed endpoint of 48BC is wrong. The Man In Linen's reply is also confusing and cryptic. If he means three and half years, then this contradicts the 3 years 70 days prophecied in Daniel 8. 3.5 as a function of 490 would mean units of 140, which would not make any sense either, (notwithstanding that two years have now elapsed from 538BC so the total punishment period is now 488 years). Whatever Daniel understands by 'three and half', it does not accord with the 490 years, so this is surely the reason for him at this point being confused.

However, the words used by the Man In Linen which are translated as **“a time, two times, and half a time”**, **“mow'ed mow'ed chetsiy”**, really have a different meaning to that given by the translators. 'Mow'ed' means an appointed time, and 'chetsiy' means a half, so the correct translation, which I believe is also Daniel's understanding at the time the words were spoken, is:

“An appointed time, an appointed time, cut down the middle”

So the conversation I believe goes something like:

The man on the bank: “When is the end of everything?”

The Man In Linen: “An appointed time, an appointed time, cut down the middle”

Daniel (clearly totally baffled): “When is the end of everything?”

Daniel is baffled because the the Man In Linen is talking cryptically. The Man In Linen then gives

some more information, and Daniel ultimately is able to work out the correct understanding of events and their timeline, as he has already told us at the start of chapter 10 that he was able to understand the words after having processed them through the vision.

10 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. He understood the word, having received understanding in the vision.

So we know that although Daniel was initially baffled, he was finally able to make sense of it all, although he was under strict instructions to keep things sealed, i.e. to keep it all encoded and away from prying eyes, that is to say, he is not allowed to spell things out in unencrypted form.

(I have already explained in my introductory notes to these studies how Daniel is clearly encrypted. This is a matter that is reiterated several times by the Man In Linen and throughout Daniel. These prophecies are meant for the wise and not for the wicked. The wicked are condemned to fall, and therefore are not allowed by God to see the timelines, because if they did, they would have been able to escape the wrath of God's judgement on Jerusalem and Judea.)

So, how did Daniel unlock the meaning of prophecy, and the timeline?

Firstly let us consider the Man In Linen's cryptic utterance. 'An appointed time, an appointed time, cut in half.' Although there are several appointed times alluded to in the Book Of Daniel, the only two appointed times whose actual date he knew with surety were the beginning of the captivity, 608BC, and the end of the captivity, 538BC, (which also, initially, marked the beginning of the 490 year period of judgement). The other appointed times were all in the future, and undetermined at this point.

Taking 608BC and 538BC and finding the midpoint, cutting in half, we come to 573BC. So this is the reference point which the Man In Linen has created. As he was upstream, we have a second confirmation that he is taking us back in time. We also have a further confirmation in the first line of chapter 10.

In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel

The primary purpose of the vision of Daniel 10-12 is to show us the precise dates of the 490 year judgement period. So the first piece of information given us in these chapters is a date, the third year of King Cyrus. Ostensibly this refers to the date of the revelation, 536BC, the third year of King Cyrus' reign. However, it also encodes a second piece of information, another date, literally, **within 'the third year of king Cyrus' a word (of truth) is revealed.** King Cyrus was born in 575BC, so the third year of his life was 573BC. This is yet another confirmation of the starting point of 573BC being used by the Man In Linen. (Daniel here does not say in the third year 'of his reign', as elsewhere, [Dan1:1, 2:1, 8:1, 9:2], simply, 'in his third year').

Daniel tells us the vision helps him understand the words, and at the end of the vision, the Man In Linen gives him two numbers, 1290 and 1335. On their own they are fairly meaningless, as they are encoded, so now we need to use the vision to decode them, as Daniel tells us.

$$1290 + 1335 = 2625$$

The Man In Linen holds up his hands in the vision. He holds up the right hand and the left hand we are told. A basic biblical principle of interpretation is that repetition denotes emphasis and importance. Whenever something is repeated, it means it is being drawn to our attention how significant it is. Daniel could have said that the Man In Linen held up his hands, but he actually emphasises that he held up each hand. The hand here is a key to interpreting the other numbers. The hand, with 5 'digits', clearly is signifying the number 5.

So now we can interpret the 1290 and 1335.

$$2625 / 5 = 525$$

525 is the precise median point of 490 and 560 (i.e. is $(490 + 560) / 2$). 490 is the duration the 70 weeks. 560 is the duration of the 70 weeks plus the 70 years in Babylonian captivity. So 490 and 560 equate to 538BC and 608BC respectively in calendrical terms. 525 therefore equates to 573BC, and is yet another proof, this time of a mathematical nature, that the Man In Linen has set 573BC as the reference point for interpreting the times.

So now we have established our starting point, we should be able to find our endpoint.

In Daniel 8 we see the Angel Gabriel use multiplication and division by 2 in his expression of the 1150 days as 2300 evenings and mornings, so we already have a precedent for division by 2 in the decoding of the prophecy.

Now, reviewing the Man In Linen's cryptic utterance, "**an appointed time, an appointed time, cut down the middle**", let us apply it to the two numbers he has given us. We can view this utterance as a general decoding key, so now taking the 1290 and the 1335 as the "appointed times" in question:

$$1290 / 2 = 645$$

$$1335 / 2 = 667.5$$

We now have two durations of time, 645 years, and 667.5 years. We can now run them from 573BC.

645 years after 573BC is 73AD (The year 0 AD/BC does not exist, so we need to add 1 to the 645

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for the correct sum)

667 and 1/2 years after 573 is 95/96AD

Daniel has asked how long until all this is completed. We now have our answer. 645 years from 573BC leads to 73AD. This of course precisely the date given to us by Daniel's 70 weeks, and we now have an unequivocal proof that 73AD is the endpoint of of the 70 weeks, the endpoint of the old covenant, and the endpoint of the judgement on Judah and Jerusalem, (if anyone was in any doubt about the correct interpretation of Daniel's 70 weeks, which I believe I have already given).

The 1335 days refer clearly to the Book of Revelation, which was clearly written after AD73 according to any sensible reading, and according to the Early Church was written in AD 95/96. Now we have a precise confirmation of these dates. Why is the Book Of Revelation important? Put simply, it is the next great book of prophecy, and the natural continuation from where Daniel has left off, detailing the ongoing history of the Church, the rule of the Babylonian empire in the guise of the fourth and fifth empires, the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay. Revelation is really the sequel to Daniel, and both books employ the same complex symbology and pattern of Hebrew thinking.