

Daniel 10:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

Analysis

Chapter 10 introduces Daniel's final and longest vision: "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar." Dating to 536 BC, this occurs after the first return of Jewish exiles under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-2). Daniel, now about 85 years old, remained in Persia rather than returning to Jerusalem, continuing governmental service while maintaining prophetic ministry. The mention of both names—Hebrew (Daniel, "God is my judge") and Babylonian (Belteshazzar)—emphasizes his dual identity: covenant faithful yet politically engaged.

"The thing was true, but the time appointed was long" warns that the vision concerns distant future events. "True" (Hebrew: *emet*, אֱמֶת) emphasizes absolute reliability; "time appointed was long" (Hebrew: *tsaba gadol*, צָבָא גָדוֹל, literally "great warfare/conflict") indicates prolonged struggle. This vision spans from Persian period through Greek, culminating in Antiochus Epiphanes and beyond. The scope overwhelms—Daniel sees centuries of conflict affecting God's people.

"He understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision" indicates Daniel grasped its meaning through divine illumination. Unlike chapter 8 where understanding came gradually, here Daniel receives comprehensive comprehension. This teaches that God gives understanding proportional to need—sometimes immediately, sometimes progressively. The Holy Spirit's illumination

ministry enables believers to understand Scripture according to God's timing and their spiritual maturity. Full understanding awaits glorification, but God provides sufficient light for present faithfulness.

Historical Context

Cyrus's decree (Ezra 1:1-4) permitted Jewish return in 538 BC. By 536 BC (this vision's date), about 50,000 had returned under Zerubbabel and Joshua. Daniel, elderly and influential in Persian court, remained in Persia, possibly training younger Jews for government service or unable to travel. His continued presence demonstrates that not all faithful Jews returned immediately—some maintained diaspora influence. Daniel's prayers for Jerusalem (9:3-19) show his heart aligned with homeland despite physical distance, modeling faithfulness in exile.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does Daniel's dual Hebrew-Babylonian identity teach us about maintaining covenant faithfulness while engaging secular culture?
2. How should knowing that God's purposes often involve 'long' fulfillment periods shape our expectations and perseverance?
3. In what ways does Daniel's remaining in Persia rather than returning to Jerusalem demonstrate that faithful service can occur in multiple contexts?

Interlinear Text

נִגְלָה הַדָּבָר פֶּרַס מֶלֶךְ לְכֹרֶשׁ שָׁל וְשׁ בְּשָׁנָה ת
year In the third of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed
H8141 H7969 H3566 H4428 H6539 H1697 H1540

הַדָּבָר רָאָה ת בִּלְטַשְׁצַר שְׁמוֹ וְנִקְרָא אֲשֶׁר לְדָנִיֵּאל
unto Daniel was called whose name Belteshazzar was true a thing
H1840 H834 H7121 H8034 H1095 H571 H1697

הַדָּבָר רָאָה וְבִין גָּדוֹל וְצָרָה א
but the time appointed was long and he understood a thing
H6635 H1419 H995 H853 H1697

וְיָנָה בְּמַרְאֵה: לֹא
and had understanding of the vision
H998 H0 H4758

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 1:21 (Kingdom): And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

Daniel 6:28 (Kingdom): So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel 8:26 (Truth): And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.

Daniel 1:7 (Parallel theme): Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego.

Daniel 1:17 (Parallel theme): As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Revelation 19:9 (Truth): And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Genesis 41:32 (Parallel theme): And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

Daniel 12:9 (Parallel theme): And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Daniel 5:17 (Kingdom): Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

Daniel 2:21 (Kingdom): And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: