

Daniel 10:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

Analysis

This verse provides rare biblical insight into spiritual warfare's cosmic dimensions. The phrase "the prince of the Persian kingdom" refers to a demonic power exercising spiritual influence over the Persian Empire. The term "prince" (sar, שַׂר) indicates a ruling authority, here referring to an angelic or demonic being rather than human ruler. This reveals that earthly kingdoms have corresponding spiritual powers—fallen angels—that oppose God's purposes and influence national policies and cultures.

The statement "withstood me one and twenty days" indicates genuine spiritual conflict delayed the angel's mission to Daniel. The verb amad (אָמַד, "withstood") means "to stand against" or "oppose," suggesting active resistance and conflict. This wasn't mere disagreement but warfare hindering God's messenger from accomplishing his mission. The specific duration—twenty-one days—corresponds exactly to Daniel's fasting period (10:2-3), suggesting his persistent prayer influenced the conflict's outcome.

"But Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me" reveals angelic hierarchies and specializations. Michael is identified as "one of the chief princes" (achar hasar harishonim, אַחַר הַשָּׂרִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים), indicating highest rank among angelic beings. Michael specifically serves as Israel's protector (Daniel 12:1, Jude 9, Revelation 12:7). His intervention enabled the messenger angel to break through demonic opposition and reach Daniel. This demonstrates that spiritual

warfare involves both human prayer and angelic assistance, working in concert to accomplish God's purposes.

Historical Context

This spiritual warfare occurred during Cyrus's third year (536 BC), when Persian policies directly affected Jewish restoration. The "prince of Persia" likely opposed efforts to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, explaining fierce opposition Jewish returnees faced (Ezra 4). Spiritual powers influencing earthly rulers created political obstacles to God's restoration purposes. Daniel's intercession, combined with Michael's angelic intervention, influenced the spiritual realm in ways that affected earthly politics.

This passage shaped Jewish and Christian understanding of spiritual warfare, revealing that political and historical events involve cosmic conflict between good and evil spiritual powers. Early church fathers cited this passage when explaining persecution's spiritual roots—earthly opposition to the gospel reflects demonic resistance to God's kingdom advancing. This encourages perseverance in prayer and evangelism despite fierce opposition, recognizing that visible resistance often stems from invisible spiritual warfare.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does understanding demonic influence over nations and cultures change your perspective on political events and cultural trends?
2. What role does persistent, earnest prayer play in influencing outcomes of spiritual warfare affecting nations and people groups?

Interlinear Text

הַשָּׂר יִם	מֶלֶךְ וְת	פָּרְס:	עִמָּד	לְנִגְדִּי	עֲשָׂר יִם	אֶחָד
But the prince	of the kingdom	of Persia	withstood	H5048	and twenty	me one
H8269	H4438	H6539	H5975		H6242	H259
וְיָמֵינוּ	וְהָיָה יוֹם	לְמִיכָאֵל	אֶחָד	הַשָּׂר יִם	הָרָאשֵׁן יִם	בָּא
days	H2009	but lo Michael	me one	But the prince	of the chief	came
H3117		H4317	H259	H8269	H7223	H935
לְעֻזָּר בִּי	וְאֲנִי	נֹתַרְתִּי	שָׁמָּה	אֵצֶל	מֶלֶכִּי י	פָּרְס:
to help	H589	me and I remained	H8033	there with	the kings	of Persia
H5826		H3498		H681	H4428	H6539

Additional Cross-References

Jude 1:9 (Parallel theme): Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Daniel 12:1 (Parallel theme): And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

Revelation 12:7 (Parallel theme): And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Colossians 2:10 (Parallel theme): And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Ephesians 6:12 (Parallel theme): For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 (Parallel theme): Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

1 Peter 3:22 (Parallel theme): Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

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