

Daniel 10:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.

Analysis

The angel explains the spiritual warfare context: 'Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.' This reveals the angelic conflict behind geopolitical events—earthly kingdoms have corresponding spiritual powers ('prince of Persia,' 'prince of Grecia'). The angel's need to return to spiritual battle indicates ongoing warfare. This teaches that human history's visible events reflect unseen spiritual realities. Reformed theology affirms both divine sovereignty and spiritual warfare: God rules absolutely, yet permits angelic/demonic activity within His determined purposes. The prince of Grecia's coming (after Persia) anticipates the historical transition from Persian to Greek dominance under Alexander (332 BC), showing God's foreknowledge and control of future geopolitics.

Historical Context

The 'prince of Persia' likely indicates a powerful demon assigned to or influencing the Persian Empire. Ancient Near Eastern worldviews recognized spiritual forces behind nations (Deuteronomy 32:8 LXX, Psalm 82), but biblical revelation clarifies these aren't legitimate gods but fallen angels. The angel's battle with this demonic prince explains the 21-day delay in answering Daniel's prayer (10:12-13)—spiritual resistance delayed (but couldn't prevent) the answer. This theological framework explains geopolitical events: empires rise and fall not randomly but through providentially-ordered spiritual warfare. Persia would fall to Greece (332 BC),

fulfilling both Daniel's visions and this angelic prophecy. For believers, this reveals that prayer engages real spiritual warfare, and persistence matters—Daniel's 21-day prayer commitment resulted in angelic victory and received revelation.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does angelic warfare with territorial demonic princes teach about spiritual realities behind geopolitical events?
2. How does the 21-day delay in answering prayer (due to spiritual warfare) encourage persistence in intercession?
3. Why does God reveal spiritual warfare realities to some believers (like Daniel) but not all?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	הִנֵּה עֵתָּה	לָמָּה	בָּא:	אֵלַי יְכֹ	וְעַתָּה הִ
Then said	he Knowest		shall come		
H559	H3045	H4100	H935	H413	H6258
אֲשֶׁר וְכֵן	וְעַתָּה	לְהִלָּחֵם	עִמָּ	שֶׁר	פַּרְסָא
unto thee and now will I return	to fight		lo the prince	of Persia	
H7725	H3898	H5973	H8269	H6539	H589
וְכֵן אֲנִי	וְהֵנָּה	שֶׁר	יִ	בָּא:	
and when I am gone forth	lo the prince	of Grecia	shall come		
H3318	H2009	H8269	H3120	H935	

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 8:21 (Parallel theme): And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

Daniel 10:13 (Parallel theme): 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.

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