

Americans are obsessed with entertainment, and in particular visual entertainment. TV, video, movies, cable, pay-per-view all have become part of the American passion. When teens and young adults are polled and asked, "What is your favorite way to spend your free time?" the number one answer is "go to the movies!"

Out of this media obsession has come a unique phenomenon. A very small cadre of film and movie producers have literally shaped the worldview and value system of millions of Americans. When movie producers are challenged on the harmful effects of the sex and violence they splash across our movie screens they always answer very sanctimoniously, "We're just reflecting society, not influencing it. What people watch for entertainment doesn't influence behavior."

Tell that to Madison Avenue. What people watch does affect behavior that's why companies spend billions of dollars in advertising. What we see, what we're exposed to, shapes attitudes and ultimately influences actions. In some areas of the country they've had to post extra security in mall parking lots because of the movie "Gone in Sixty Seconds." It's about stealing cars and they've had a rash of car thefts after showings.

We like to think we're autonomous and freethinking. We like to think that we're not influenced by outside factors, but that's just not the case. Media, consistently watched over time, may not cause us to all go out and steal a car but it does subtly influence our view of morality and spirituality.

Unfortunately the number one source of morality and spiritual truth for many Americans is the media.

We've had our horror movies about demons, but most of the films in the past 20 years that have dealt with spiritual issues have been about angels and the afterlife. As baby boomer film makers have gotten older, their attention has turned to what happens when we die. Unfortunately their view of spiritual things is usually just as warped as their view of morality. Everybody kind of just lives on, or becomes an angel, and yet have the same passions and desires that human beings have.

When we turn to the Bible we get a radically different picture. There is life after death but we don't become angels. HEB 9:27 *...it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.* We either spend eternity with God around His throne or we spend it alone in hell. According to the Bible there are no second chances and our destiny is sealed in this life.

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,...He was buried, and...He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Our eternal destiny depends on Jesus Christ. To put our trust in Him and His death on the cross is the way of life.

What about angels then? According to Scripture angels are spiritual beings, created by God to serve Him. Demons are former angels. They're angels that followed Satan in rebellion against God.

There is what we call an angelic conflict. The forces of evil are at work to try and frustrate God's purposes on earth. Now we can't see all this happening. But once in a while the veil is lifted and we get a glimpse into the unseen world.

For instance, in 2 Kings 6, we see a lifting of the veil with Israel at war with Aram, a neighboring nation. Every time the king of Syria planned an attack, the prophet Elisha informed the king of Israel what to expect. The Israelites were always prepared, and the king of Syria was never able to win a victory. Word finally reached the king of Syria that Elisha the Israelite prophet was the source of the "leak" in his security, and an army was sent to capture Elisha.

Elisha's servant had risen early in the morning and gone outside. In the light of the rising sun, he saw the enemy's army surrounding them and with great alarm informed his master. Unruffled, Elisha told his servant, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16). Elisha then prayed for the eyes of his servant to be opened, so that he could see the unseen realities of the spiritual realm.

When the veil was lifted and the servant saw the heavenly forces, the horses and chariots of fire surrounding Elisha. When Elisha prayed again, the eyes of

the enemy forces were blinded, and the prophet was able to lead this enemy army into the city of Samaria.

At times, the veil is lifted in the Bible allowing the us to see the unseen. At the birth and baptism of Jesus, the veil concealing the glory of Christ was lifted, and the heavens opened revealing the angelic hosts. At Jesus' transfiguration, once again the veil is lifted, allowing three of His disciples to see a preview of the kingdom of God as they saw Jesus glorified.

Chapter 10 in the Book of Daniel provides another rare passage in which the veil is lifted for us to see the unseen. Some things are similar to what we see in other passages. But Daniel 10 will also reveal some things which should challenge our preconceived ideas. These are realities we need to see and accept. We need to allow them to shape our perspective and our actions.

As the veil is lifted in this tenth chapter, may we, by God's grace, see, believe, and behave in a way that's consistent with the revealed truth. May God grant us the ability to see the unseen here and then to live in the light of these realities.

Turn to Daniel 10 pg 868

This morning we're going to see four different beings the first one is a human being. Human beings we encounter on this side of the veil.

I. Daniel – The Soldier on His Knees **Read vs 1-3**

The date in this first verse is very significant. This message, or vision came to Daniel in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia. That meant it came right at the time the prophet Jeremiah had predicted when the seventy years during which the people of Israel would be held captive was up.

The seventy years had been concluded at this time, and yet nothing was happening. The people of Israel were showing no signs of leaving Babylon. When they were in Palestine they had been an agricultural people; they kept herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. But when they were captured and taken to Babylon, they could no longer do that so they turned from a nation of shepherders to a nation of shopkeepers. They had founded Hect's, Nordstroms, even the Wal-Mart of Babylon and they were making so much

money that many of them did not have any intention of going back to Palestine.

But Daniel knew that it was God's program for his people to return and that they could never find any blessing or fulfillment of the great promises God had made this nation unless they returned to Palestine.

Some people might fast as a matter of routine. Others might fast as a means of spiritual discipline. Daniel's fast was a result of an intense burden. He was mourning. He was so burdened in his spirit, so spiritually in need of God's help, that he ate no pleasant food, no meat, and drank no wine. For three weeks, he lived on plain bread and water while he waited to hear from heaven.

Daniel was so overwhelmed by his burden that he continued to fast and pray until the answer was received – even though, as we're going to find out later, it physically exhausted him.

Daniel's time of prayer and fasting is the part of spiritual conflict we can observe. For three weeks he cried out to God – wrestling, agonizing, weeping, waiting – all the time unaware of the battle that was raging somewhere in the unseen realm of the heavens.

That brings us to the second being in chapter 10.

II. Jesus Christ – The Coming King **Read vs 4-9**

That will liven up your prayer time won't it? Could you imagine praying and seeing something like this?

Just who was this man that only Daniel could see? **Turn with me to Revelation 1 pg 1174**

Read vs 13-18

To Daniel, alongside the Tigris river and to John on the island of Patmos, many centuries later, as they were praying, the curtain dropped that separated them from the invisible spiritual kingdom and they were able to see the very One to whom they had been speaking in prayer. Now that Person was there all the

time -- it was not that he suddenly appeared -- but Daniel and his friends could not see him until the curtain suddenly dropped and their eyes were opened.

They then saw the invisible world of spiritual beings around them and especially this great figure whose eyes were like flaming torches and whose face shone like the sun in its strength. Actually, if we can equate this figure as one whom Daniel and John both saw, it was the Lord Jesus Christ revealed to them in this astonishing way, unveiling the glory and majesty of his being.

And notice in both cases the reaction: Daniel said "I was on my face, with my face to the ground." John said, "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

John MacArthur tells about a man who was waiting to talk to him after a meeting. When he got the opportunity the man explained how he saw the Lord. He said that he had these visions and that Jesus often talked with him. He said, "For example, he'll come and speak to me while I am shaving."

John MacArthur said to him, "I have just one question. When Jesus shows up do you stop shaving?" When God appeared to the prophets and the apostles it was utterly devastating. They collapsed before him like a tree being felled. They fell on their faces, not backwards, and none of them laughed. It was a revelation of the glory of God.

Back to Daniel The veil was lifted and Daniel saw the preincarnate Christ. Why? What was the purpose of God lifting the veil for Daniel in this way?

First of all remember, this was not Daniel's first introduction to Christ. In chapter 2, Christ was symbolized as the Stone cut out without hands. In chapter 7, Daniel sees Him as one like the Son of Man to whom is given an everlasting Kingdom. In chapter 8, He is called the Prince of princes. In chapter 9, He is called the Most Holy and Messiah the Prince.

Second of all, it had already been revealed to Daniel that it would be many years before God's kingdom was established on earth through Israel.

In chapter 9, God revealed to Daniel that 70 weeks of years would pass before everlasting righteousness would be established and the Most Holy would be

anointed. In verse 1 of this chapter, Daniel affirms that he understood that the appointed time was long before the visions would be fulfilled.

It makes sense that in this final vision, Daniel would see Christ in all his messianic glory. In this way, Daniel would receive the assurance that although the time was long, and there would be a point when Messiah the Prince was cut off, yet the final victory would be His. The turning point in human history will be the coming of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords to judge the world and establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

So first we're introduced to Daniel. Next we meet Jesus Christ, the the third being we meet is an angelic being.

III. Heavenly Angels – God's Ministering Spirits **Read vs 10-12**

God has commanded the angels to care for His people. In Psalm 91:11-12, the writer declares, *"For he shall give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways."* Hebrews 1:14 states that the angels are *"ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation."*

We don't see angels. For the most part we're largely unaware of the activity of angels. But we can learn from this vision some of the ministries they perform on behalf of God's people.

He encouraged and comforted Daniel. Verse 11

He conveyed the answer to Daniel's prayer from heaven's throne room. Verse 12

He strengthened Daniel. Verse 18

We will probably never know this side of heaven how much we owe to the ministry of the holy angels. Although the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the possession of the completed Word of God has made it unnecessary for angels to provide guidance or give revelation, they are still active on our behalf, joining us and aiding us in our spiritual conflicts.

These verses in Daniel are immensely important for understanding prayer. Notice the words: "I have come because of your words." Put that together with the words in verse 11: "I have been sent to you." God sent him. So the point is that God answered Daniel's prayer as soon as he began to pray three weeks

ago. "From the first day that you humbled yourself before your God your words (your prayers!) have been heard, and I have come because of your words (your prayer!)."

So this heavenly being has come because Daniel prayed and humbled himself before God and fasted. And the three-week delay was not because God took three weeks to hear. What was it then?

I. Daniel – The Soldier on His Knees

II. Jesus Christ – The Coming King

III. Heavenly Angels – God's Ministering Spirits

IV. Fallen Angels – The Militant Servants of Satan **Read vs 13**

There are not only great and good angels of God ready to help us, but there are also evil angels, fallen angels, demons, that are ready to oppose what God is doing. In some remarkable way they relate to the nations of earth. This has to be one of the most amazing passages of the Bible. Understand it and you'll understand what's going on in our world.

Only three angels are referred to by name in the Bible: Michael, who is the archangel and the defender of Israel, Gabriel, who is a special messenger to God's servants and Lucifer, the one we now know as Satan.

The word translated from Isaiah 14 as "Lucifer" is the Hebrew hehel, "the shining one." The name "Lucifer" comes through the Latin *lucere*, "to shine," from *lux*, "light."

Ezekiel 28:11-15 tells us that Lucifer was the greatest--in power, in beauty, in rank--of all the angels God created. He was called "the anointed cherub who guards," and his responsibility related directly to the throne-room of God. The Greek *diabolos*, from which we get "devil," and the Hebrew *satan* both mean "adversary" or "accuser."

How did the most beautiful creature to come from the hand of God turn into a murderer and liar and deceiver, the author of all evil? With two words: "I will."

Turn to Isa. 14 pg 667

vs 12-15

Satan, who like the other angels had free will, rebelled against God. He became enamored with himself and in his pride and arrogance he decided he wanted to be independent from, and equal to, his Creator.

Under his leading one-third of the entire angelic host revolted against God (Rev. 12:4). God convicted and passed sentence on Satan and the fallen angels: eternity in a "lake of fire" (Matt. 25:41). Though the sentence has been passed, it has not been carried out yet. Satan has been cast out of his original position in heaven, but at present he holds power over this earth.

My take on things is this: I believe Satan appealed his sentence. Before the heavenly hosts he contended that God's judgment wasn't fair. To question God's divine judgment is to slander His character. God will not tolerate this, and so He put into motion a plan for refuting Lucifer's accusations. This plan centers around man.

What is going on in human history resembles a duel. Satan challenged God by maligning His character. God has determined to show all creation that He alone is just and righteous, that apart from Him there is no good, and He is going to do this by letting Satan attempt to prove otherwise in combat. But how can there be a fair fight between an omnipotent God and a created angel? God in a sense tied His own hands by limiting His power so that it could become operative only through the free choice of a creature inferior even to the angels: God created man for the purpose of resolving the angelic conflict

The resolution of this conflict centers on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Obviously before man was even created, God knew that he would fall to temptation, and so He provided a way of salvation for all men. In this He simplified the angelic conflict by narrowing man's options in every circumstance to two possible choices. Man could choose for the plan of God, which is to take the side of grace and truth by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or he could choose against the plan of God, which is to take the side of evil and lies by relying on himself.

As all creation watches, the angelic conflict plays out in the souls of men on planet earth. God will let it run just long enough to prove absolutely that His justice and grace are perfect.

In his book *The Invisible War*, Donald Barnhouse describes it this way:

War has been declared. The great, governing cherub had become the malignant enemy. Our God was neither surprised nor astonished, for, of course, He knew before it happened that it would happen, and He had His perfect plan ready to be put into effect. Although the Lord had the Power to destroy Satan with a breath, He did not do so. It was as though an edict had been proclaimed in heaven:

"We shall give this rebellion a thorough trial. We shall permit it to run its full course. The universe shall see what a creature, though he be the highest creature ever to spring from God's Word, can do apart from Him. We shall watch this experiment, and permit the universe of creatures to watch it, during this brief interlude between eternity past and eternity future called time. In it the spirit of independence shall be allowed to expand to the utmost. And the wreck and ruin which shall result will demonstrate to the universe, and forever, that there is no life, no joy, no peace apart from a complete dependence upon the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth. (Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*, pg. 51.)

The reason this messenger of God was detained is because a spiritual being called "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" stood against him. And the reason this angelic messenger got free from this opposition was because the angel Michael came to help him. Michael is very different than John Travolta. His name literally means, "Who is like God".

This is the clearest example in all the Bible of what we might call today a "territorial spirit." Verse 13 refers to "The prince of the kingdom of Persia." The natural meaning of this phrase would be that among the supernatural beings opposed to God some, at least one, is assigned to a territory or, more accurately, to a kingdom, Persia. Presumably his job is to darken the people of Persia--to keep them from having the truth and the light of God's word.

But this spirit is not the only one mentioned. **Look at verse 20+21.** So this angel is going back to fight against the prince of the kingdom of Persia and defeat him.

And then there will appear on the scene another great enemy spirit, the prince of Greece. In other words, as different kingdoms rise and fall different

demonic spirits hold sway and have to be dealt with by God's messengers in accomplishing his purposes.

So it appears that there was a spirit over Persia and a spirit over Greece. But it also seems that Michael, the archangel, has some special assignment for Israel. Because it says at the end of verse 21: "Michael, your prince." And the "your" there is plural in Hebrew. This is not a reference to Daniel's guardian angel, but to Israel's guardian angel.

I conclude from this that there is good Biblical reason for thinking that there are powerful evil spirits with special appointments from Satan over kingdoms like Persia, Greece, and The United States.

In Luke 4:6 the devil took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and then tempts him with these words: "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish." He has an inflated notion of his power in relation to the sovereignty of God. But under God it is true that Satan is "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). And it is probably true that he gives his power to those who worship him. He is the "prince of demons" (Mark 3:22).

Since the New Testament tells us that this prince of demons "darkens the minds of unbelievers" (2 Cor. 4:4), and that he "deceives the world" (Rev. 12:9), and that he plants his weeds (unbelievers) throughout God's field (Matt. 13:39), and that he takes people captive to do his will (2 Tim. 2:25), and that he plucks up the seed of the word when it is preached (Matt. 13:4), and that he counteracts missionary activity (1 Thess. 2:18), and that he throws God's servants in prison (Rev. 2:10)--since we know the prince of demons does all that, we can safely conclude that this is what his underlings do as well.

So then, I would conclude that there are high-ranking demonic powers over various regimes and dominions and governments and realms of the world; and that they work to create as much evil and corruption and spiritual darkness as they can. They strive to interrupt Christian missions, ministry, marriages, and lives as much as they can.

That is why the prince of the kingdom of Persia tried to hinder the messenger from reaching Daniel from heaven. The messenger was bringing a message of truth. Verse 21: the messenger says to Daniel, "But I will tell you what is noted

in the Scripture of truth." (NIV says the Book of Truth) But Satan is a liar and a deceiver from the beginning. The main aim of all his princes is to keep the Scripture of truth from being known and believed. The truth frees people (John 8:32) and sanctifies people (John 17:17). So the territorial spirits like the prince of the kingdom of Persia do their main work of corruption and destruction by blinding the people of their area from the truth.

How then shall we do ministry in view of the reality of demonic forces?

1. Take the supernatural seriously and realize that we are in warfare. Be ready for the extraordinary as well as the ordinary ways that evil spirits work. Don't be presumptuous, as though demons were weak; and don't be anxious, as though they were stronger than Jesus. Be filled with the Spirit and well armed with Biblical promises about the authority of Jesus Christ and about your rights as a child of God.

Remember that two times in Daniel 10 the messenger from heaven said to Daniel "O man greatly loved." He spoke the same things in chapter 9. **Read Dan 9:22-23** He said this to take away Daniel's fear in the midst of spiritual warfare. And it should take away ours too.

2. The second thing is to notice that Daniel's prayer that has such powerful effects in the spiritual realm was not a prayer about angels and demons. He was wrestling for truth and for the good of God's people the way we saw him praying in chapter nine. He was totally shocked when an angel appeared to him. He didn't know anything about the conflict with the prince of the kingdom of Persia.

But it's no accident that the messenger said that his struggle with the prince of Persian lasted exactly the same amount of time that Daniel's fasting and prayer did - 21 days. The reason for this is that the warfare in the spirit realm was being fought in a real sense by Daniel in the prayer realm.

If you don't get anything else out of this passage grab a hold of this: Daniel's praying was not about angels or demons or Satan. And probably ours shouldn't be either. We should wrestle in prayer for the things that we know are God's will in our lives and our families and our church and our city and our world.

But by and large we should probably leave it to God how he will use angels to

get his work done. If God shows us more, we will use it. But the essence of the matter is not knowing the spirits but knowing God and praying in the power of Holy Spirit.

Turn to one last passage of Scripture. Eph 6 Pg 1128

As you do let me urge you not to get your worldview from the entertainment media. Get it from the Scripture of Truth.

Read vs 10-19