

## ***PORTALS TO AN UNSEEN WORLD, DANIEL 10***

Unshakable Faith #10

◆**Intro:** Tell me what the following have in common: Thor. Stargate. The Twilight Zone. Dr. Strange. Alice in Wonderland. Chronicles of Narnia. Wizard of Oz. If you said “access to another realm” you were thinking what I was thinking. For a secular culture like our own, that asserts the materialistic and naturalistic views that this world is all there is, with no spiritual reality, afterlife, or purpose for that matter -isn't it just a bit odd that so many of our stories postulate other realms?

◆Daniel 10-12 is the last vision God gives his prophet. And indeed, as his other visions have all been about the same coming world history, each one including finer and finer detail, this is also what we find in this final vision. Chapter Ten sets it up by giving us insight into the very nature of reality. And this insight is for the purpose of giving God's people the courage and peace in which to face the hard realities of the future. It is my hope it will do so for us as well.

◆What captures our attention most is that our text highlights the existence of another realm, and that fact that our universe interacts with that world all the time. What we see clearly in Daniel 10 is that ...

◆**1. There are spiritual empires behind the human ones.**

Perhaps you've noticed so far in our study of Daniel's records that the very fact that there is a source revealing other people's dreams to Daniel, stopping fire from burning, and lions from eating is proof positive that there is more than the world we can

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see and touch. While this may be new to some of us, it is not new to the records of God's word, or to science for that matter.

Science tells us that every reality requires a cause. Well what is the cause of existence itself? The complexity of microbiology and the immensity of galactic planets and stars all point to design, which points to intelligence, but one outside created reality! And, on a simpler level, we pray and things happen that you can't explain with our science.

◆A friend of mine once called in a panic to say there were two red eyes floating in the air in his basement. He said he had been praying for a woman in our church who had mentioned she wasn't well. I asked if he was praying out loud. He said "Yes, how did you know that?" It was a guess, because I don't believe demons know all things like God, but they can hear perfectly fine, and can read your actions too. You see, this woman had come to me bothered by demonic forces in her house. The Elders had even gone there to pray over her property. These were her struggle, which my praying friend knew nothing about. "What do I do?" he wanted to know. I told him to keep praying and renounce the forces of evil in Jesus name out loud, so they couldn't miss it!

◆We see this realm in Daniels visions too, don't we. Daniel has been fasting, and mourning for three weeks (21 days). Why? Ezra 1 tells us that, God prompted Cyrus of Persian, in the first

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year of his reign, to allow the Jews to return to their land and rebuild.

◆ Ezra 1:1-3 (NIV) In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing: "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD

◆ So our text comes 2 years later (v1). We also know from Ezra's book and Nehemiah's that the locals made it difficult, and even appealed to Babylon to stop the Jews from rebuilding, an order that Cyrus's son set in place while Cyrus was off at more war. So Daniel is likely fasting and mourning over this.

◆ Next, powerful angelic beings appear to Daniel along the Tigris River. Daniel's companions see nothing but are so terrorized that they run away to hide (7). Daniel is scared to death himself, requiring healing touches from the angel just to stand up and listen (10). The angel tells Daniel something very interesting (12). His prayers were heard the day he began to fast and pray. And God dispatched his angel to answer, but the "Prince of Persia" (demon assigned to Persia) fought him and delayed his coming! Michael (a great arch angel mentioned in other Scripture as well) came to his aid (13).

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◆ B. So what do we see here? There are wars going on on the earthly level and simultaneous spiritual wars going on in the heavenly realms. As Sinclair Ferguson put it, “Human events are inextricably intertwined with events in heavenly places.” And Daniel was given a glimpse into it. The angel explicitly tells Daniel that the Persian empire has a demon-prince assigned to it. And the next world power, Greece, also has a demon-prince influencing it (v20). And God’s angel-princes are at war with them(v21).

◆ Let me ask you: has it ever crossed your mind?

◆ “How can our world be so messed up as to not know what gender every cell in our bodies tells us we are?”

◆ Or “How in the world can an agency dedicated to killing human babies in the womb call themselves an organization that helps plan parenthood?”

◆ Or “How is building a \$250 million San Fransisco rail system COVID relief?”

◆ The answer is, evil and wrong are a reality we deal with!

◆ *Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

◆ Abraham Kuyper said, “If once the curtain were pulled back, and the spiritual world behind it come to view, it would expose to our spiritual vision a struggle so intense, so

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convulsive, sweeping everything within its' range, that the fiercest battle ever fought on earth would seem, by comparison, a mere game. Not here, but up there– that is where the real conflict is waged. Our earthly struggle drowns in its' backlash."

◆ Let's get closer to home. Have you ever puzzled over an action of one of your children thinking, "Why on earth would she do that? She's a good kid." Or "Why would my husband choose porn over me." Or "Why can't he see he's killing himself?" Well friends, demons set up camp in homes as well as capital cities like Babylon, or Washington. You, and I, and our children are capable of opening up portals into the evil realms.

◆ The games we play. The movies we watch. The books we read. The sins we decide to play with. Where we go on the internet. This isn't just innocent stuff. You open that website and you have opened a dark spiritual door into your home. There are spiritual powers attached to these things. Paul writing to the Church at Ephesus told them that even anger in your home gives the devil a foothold for operations there!

◆ *Ephesians 4:26-27 Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*

◆ C. We need to wake up and take evil seriously. Evil is not a mist, or a concept. It is personal, intelligent, and conscious. Demons work overtime to disrupt God's good plans. Meaning the , Spiritual conflict is not optional for Christians. Once you

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become part of the Kingdom of Christ, you are fully at war.

Ephesians 6:12 told us the spiritual forces of evil are in the “heavenly realms”. Eph 2:6 says WE (Christians) are seated in the heavenly realms with Christ! So we’re in the thick whether we realize it or not.

◆**2.** What else does Daniel 10 show us? This is the good part. **I can interact with the power of God’s realm too!** This is repeatedly happening in the Book of Daniel, isn’t it? God sends information to earth, to Daniel from heaven. He tells in great detail hundreds of years of human world history all before it happens!

◆**A.** This is good news, people. There is a God who created you, and all that is in God’s realm cares for, and responds to ours! God knows and tells Daniel 400 years of future history, but God also knows and hears this one man praying. And guess what, he hears your prayers too. Just because you can’t tell, doesn’t mean he doesn’t. Daniel couldn’t tell at first either! Jesus said even the very hairs on your head are numbered. That means when A17 falls out he knows. And if C3 is out of place, God is that aware of our realm! Only somebody who loves is like that.

◆**B.** Our world’s collide! And it’s for our good. And prayer is my primary way of stepping into the heavenly realm, so I need to pray all the time. Do you think you or I have any power compared to the spirit realm? No, but the one who lives in us, the Holy Spirit of Jesus, he’s the ruler of that realm.

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◆ 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

◆ Susan Starnes of Louisville KY writes, "One night I went into my 8-year-old daughter's bedroom to pray with her before she went to sleep. In the course of her prayer she said, "Jesus, please lock the doors if they haven't been locked." I held back a chuckle at her unexpected request and thought nothing more about it. The next morning I opened the front door to find the keys outside in the lock. I stood amazed at how the Lord led my little girl to pray--and thanked him for his protection." Years ago I read a missionary's report from the bush. He was taking a dangerous road alone, on his bike, at night to bring some food home, while his family prayed for his safety. Some time later a man confessed to being part of a group of vandals that night who intended to kill him as he rode home. "Why didn't you?" the missionary asked. "Well, because of all those shiny soldiers with swords that were with you, of course!"

◆ So take it to the Lord in prayer, friends. Paul writes that we should pray about everything. We're not talking about a little sentence prayer at the end of a devotional reading. Those are baby steps. Prayer needs to grow. Discuss your day with God. Tell God about the people at work. Ask God your questions. Step

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through the portal, there's a powerful realm you can access! What if we prayed and entered the spiritual realm over our children, or the volleyball players in our gym on Monday nights, or the White House? No matter your age or skill, you can step through the portal of prayer and plead the case of people on earth. One more insight.

◆C. My behavior has a direct effect on my prayers. Listen, if you think there are dark forces at work in your life or the life of someone you love, and if you want to wage war against those forces in prayer, you better get your business right with God first. Why did Daniel's prayers bring angels from the throne room? Because he was "highly esteemed" (11). Why was he highly esteemed? Because he was "humble" (12). What does Apostle James say?

◆*James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

◆There's the importance of confession chapter 9 was all about, and the value of keeping your life right with God, chapter 10. Isaiah said it too.

◆Isaiah 59:1-2 (NIV) Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

◆The Apostle Peter said the same thing: Men, lets read this...

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◆ *1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*

◆ **Conclusion:** I want to close by telling you about the greatest movement between the spirit world and the human world ever to take place. I'm talking about when God's son, Jesus, came and lived among us for a while. And how he cast demons out of people with a mere word. And how he died on the cross to ruin satan's plans to make our lives miserable in sin. And how he's ruling in heaven even as we speak, and how he's coming back here someday to establish the Final Kingdom. The Bible says he himself is the one portal between man and God. You need him most of all! We can pray to God in heaven only because of his merit!

◆ *1 Timothy 2:1-8 "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, ... For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. ...Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands..."*