

Lesson Text

Daniel 10:10-19 (NIV)

¹⁰ A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

¹² Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ¹³ But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

¹⁵ While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. ¹⁶ Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. ¹⁷ How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.”

¹⁸ Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. ¹⁹ “Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.”

When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

Today’s Lesson Aims

- **Learning Fact:** To summarize Daniel’s encounter with the heavenly messenger.
- **Biblical Principle:** To explain the difference that faith in the Lord makes when facing an uncertain future.
- **Daily Application:** To memorize one or more Scripture passages that provide a personal sense of God’s presence and assurance during times when the future looks uncertain.

Introduction

What Are the Odds?

The question above pops to mind when something unusual happens or when we consider taking a risk. For many situations, an actuary has already calculated the odds. For example, the odds of being hit by lightning in any given year is about 1 in 960,000. Those with a fear of flying may be relieved to know that the odds of a person dying in a plane crash are only 1 in 8,000. Nature lovers can be confident that the odds of dying from contact with a venomous plant or animal is about 1 in 42,000. Some odds are comforting. But at other times

Power Hour
Lesson
Summary for
January 28,
2018

**“A Strong
Faith”**

Lesson Text:
Daniel
10:10-19

Background
Scripture:
Daniel 10, 11

Devotional
Reading:
Revelation
1:9-18

circumstances of life cause us to feel as if the odds are stacked against us and we can't go on. Daniel's faith gave him strength in uncertain times for himself and for his nation.

Lesson Background

Time: 539 B.C.

Place: Babylon

Last week's study covered Daniel's fervent prayer of repentance on behalf of himself, his captive people, and his homeland in Judah. The verses immediately following (Daniel 9:20-27) record a response to Daniel by the angel Gabriel while Daniel was praying. Gabriel said he had come to give Daniel understanding regarding what lay ahead for God's people. The prophecy of the seventy weeks follows. It includes descriptions of some of the Messiah's achievements, though persistent questions remain regarding how to interpret details of the prophecy.

Daniel 10:1 introduces a chronological note: "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel." This was the year 537 or 536 B.C., two or three years after the aforementioned prayer (see Daniel 9:1). The exact nature of the revelation to Daniel is not provided in the text, although verse 1 goes on to say that "its message was true and it concerned a great war." In addition, "the understanding of the message came to him in a vision." Whatever this consisted of, Daniel records a period of "three weeks" during which he mourned and suspended his daily routine of eating and grooming (Daniel 10:2, 3). We do not know the reason for Daniel's mourning.

Daniel 10:4 then describes a vision that Daniel had "on the bank of the great river, the Tigris" (also known as Hiddekel River.) An unidentified but spectacular, powerful figure appeared to him. While the figure is not identified, some suggest he may be the angel Gabriel, in keeping with other visions (Daniel 8:16; 9:21). The men with Daniel on this occasion did not see the vision but fled in terror nonetheless (10:7; compare Acts 9:7; 22:9).

The bewildered Daniel eventually fell into a "deep sleep" as the unidentified individual spoke (Daniel 10:9). This is the point at which our printed text begins.

What Do You Think?

- What steps can you take to ensure that your memory of God's love will be a source of strength during a difficult time?
- What are some ways we can help each other remain spiritually constant during hard times?
- In what ways can acknowledging spiritual warfare affect how we endure hard times?
- What has to happen to keep communication lines open with God in hard times?

Power Hour
Lesson
Summary for
January 28,
2018

**"A Strong
Faith"**

Lesson Text:
Daniel
10:10-19

Background
Scripture:
Daniel 10, 11

Devotional
Reading:
Revelation
1:9-18



Points to Ponder

- God rewards fervent prayer (Daniel 10:11-12).
- Delay does not mean denied (vs. 13, 14).
- God continually gives us strength we need when we need it most (vs. 10, 15-19).

Conclusion

Bible Complacency

The availability of the Bible in the Western world today is mind-boggling. Just the sheer number of editions is impressive in an “embarrassment of riches” kind of way. For print editions, one can choose from various bindings, print size, color coding, etc. For electronic versions, Bibles are available for all the major software platforms in terms of “apps” (short for “applications”). These allow one to have the text ready to read within seconds on a smartphone or tablet. Anyone with such a device can have the Bible alongside them while they are walking, running, or working.

Such an availability of Scripture is indeed a blessing, but it can also produce some less-than-desirable attitudes. It is easy for us who live in Western democracies to become complacent and take for granted what we are privileged to possess. With that complacency can come a decline in the passion for spending time in the Bible. Technology, while providing ready access to the Bible, can also result in less memorization of Scripture or of hiding the Word in one’s heart (Psalm 119:11). The heart then becomes more vulnerable to being filled with things that have no lasting value.

Bible Cost

The cure for complacency is to remember and appreciate the high price that has been paid in order for us to have the access to the Bible that we do. We can read in church history of individuals who paid with their lives so that the Scriptures might be available to everyone.

The struggle to communicate God’s Word traces back ultimately to individuals such as Daniel. His experience in today’s text tells us something else about the process and struggle by which our Bible has come into being. His reception of God’s Word through the visions and dreams that begin in chapter 7 left him, an elderly man, nearly unable to function. He was not a passive, unresponsive instrument who robotically received whatever God wanted him to record. Knowledge of God’s Word, which eventually became written Scripture, came at a price to Daniel, both physical and spiritual (Dan. 3:19-21; 8:27; 10:2, 11-13).

Many of us who are reading this lesson material are doing so in comfortable surroundings—at home or in the room where our class or small group meets. If the weather outside is cold, our meeting place is probably well heated. We may be relaxing in a padded chair with a cup of coffee in front of us. We hardly think of “trembling” during our encounters with the Word of God—trembling that Daniel actually experienced.

Power Hour
Lesson
Summary for
January 28,
2018

**“A Strong
Faith”**

Lesson Text:
Daniel
10:10-19

Background
Scripture:
Daniel 10, 11

Devotional
Reading:
Revelation
1:9-18



Let us never forget the price that so many individuals, including the inspired authors of Scripture, paid so that we may have and read the Bible. May we, like Daniel, set our hearts to understand and humble ourselves before God so that His Word may accomplish all that He desires of us.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, forgive us for the times we take Your Word for granted! May we be Your instruments today to take the Word to those who lack it. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thought to Remember

Prayer changes things!

Anticipating the Next Lesson

Next week we'll head to the New Testament to study how our faith needs to be demonstrated by our works. Study James 2:14-26, **"Faith Without Works Is Dead."**

Power Hour
Lesson
Summary for
January 28,
2018

**"A Strong
Faith"**

Lesson Text:
Daniel
10:10-19

Background
Scripture:
Daniel 10, 11

Devotional
Reading:
Revelation
1:9-18