



LOCKINGCASTLECHURCH

Life Group Notes – 21st March 2021

Courage in Captivity: Eternal perspective - Daniel 10-12

Please visit the LCC website to listen to the talk or read the transcript if available.

Daniel 10 ⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, ⁵ I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶ His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

⁷ I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. ⁹ Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

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.”

Daniel 12

¹ “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. ² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴ But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.”

⁵ Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. ⁶ One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?”

⁷ The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.”

⁸ I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?”

⁹ He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end. *Note this is the NIV2011 version of the text. It would be helpful to compare it with other translations.*

Comment

These visions of Daniel conclude our series ‘Courage in Captivity’ and they leave us with both comfort and more questions. Daniel was comforted by the eternal perspective of Chapter 12, with the promise of resurrection for everyone whose name is written in ‘God’s book’, but also the warnings about further times of great distress to come for the nations. Daniel concludes saying there is much ‘I did not understand’ but he was told to simply write down the vision and seal it for a later time.

The latter chapters of Daniel illustrate graphically the spiritual battle that can take place when we pray. When we set our minds to gain prophetic understanding and humble ourselves before God, spiritual warfare can ensue, and answers may take time. However Daniel shows that we nevertheless need to Ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, and knock and keep on knocking. The answers will come. The new testament picks up on a lot of the themes in Daniel. These are some of the only verses in

the Old Testament that describe resurrection to everlasting life or shame and contempt, which fuels the need for proclamation and evangelism. The idea of God's people needing to 'shine like stars' as we hold out the word of life is a theme that Paul picks up in Philippians 2. Revelation picks up on the tribulation and refers 7 times to the Book of Life – which becomes called 'the Lamb's book of life', with people's names written in it according to their righteousness through faith in Christ. In the end, Daniel was written to assure people that God is in control of the whole world and that in the end His purposes will prevail. By faith Daniel looked forward to the coming of the messiah who would make all things right for eternity: When the Man in linen in Daniel 12:7 refers to a period of time, times and half a time after which the power of the Holy people is broken when 'it is completed' could well be Jesus 3.5 years of ministry followed by apparent defeat on the cross. But when he rose again on that first Easter day, we know that 'the power of the holy people' was not defeated for ever. In Jesus we can find that eternal hope and full assurance of forgiveness and salvation.

Questions

1. What has encouraged you most from this series on Daniel?
2. How can we cope when questions of faith remain unanswered or beyond our understanding?
3. What is our role in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6)?
4. How do you feel about the concept of final judgement with everlasting consequences?
5. What do you find most challenging and also encouraging from this passage?
6. In light of this passage, what sort of church and people do you think God wants us to become in future?