

Some Notes on Daniel Chapter 10

This chapter introduces the fourth and last of Daniel's predictive revelations. Taking a total of three chapters for its description, this time of revelation covers approximately the same periods of history as set forth in the vision of chapter eight (periods of Medo-Persia, Greece, and the Great Tribulation); but considerably more detail is given, especially concerning events after Alexander the Great and concerning the Great Tribulation still future. The information was presented, not in the symbolism of animals, as in the first two visions, but in direct word revelation through a heavenly messenger, who appeared to Daniel. This appearance seems again to have been in actual, corporeal form, as in the third revelatory time of chapter nine

Chapter ten tells of the coming of this heavenly messenger to impart the information. The record of his coming is significant, because it involves his conflict with an emissary of Satan, and states or implies important facts relative to angels and demons and their respective interests in the people and work of God.

A. THE GENERAL SETTING (vv. 1-3)

The first three verses present the general setting for the messenger's appearance.

1. In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a word was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the word was true and involved a great conflict. He understood the word and achieved understanding by means of the appearance.

- *The third year of Cyrus:* For the fourth time, Daniel began by giving the date of the revelation concerned. Clearly, he believed that the chronological relation of these instances to each other, and to other events, was significant. This present instance came in Cyrus' third year, which means two years after Gabriel's appearance to Daniel in chapter nine (the first years of Darius and Cyrus being the same). The four occasions came in two groups of two, then: in the first and third years of Belshazzar and the first and third year of life, and his high position in the government of Darius as one of three top presidents. Likely God saw best for him to continue in this significant place of influence, for the benefit he might there work in behalf of Jews, whether those who yet remained in the East or those who had already returned to Judah. Another significant matter relates to Daniel's episode in the lion's den. This, too, occurred in the early years of Darius, though after the king had instituted his government. Since there is no way to know how long after, it is impossible to say whether it happened later than the time of this fourth revelation or before, but it was probably near the same time.

- *King of Persia:* Montgomery and others state that this title for Cyrus does not represent contemporary usage; which shows only such designations as "the king," "the great king," "king of kings," "king of Babel," "king of lands," etc.¹ R. D. Wilson, however, has demonstrated that it was used in some instances,² and his conclusion is in keeping with its employment several other times in Scripture (2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra I: 1, 2, 8; 4:3, 5; et al.). One cannot use its employment here as an argument for the late writing of Daniel.

- *A word was revealed:* "Word" refers to the predictive information given through the heavenly messenger, recorded in chapters eleven and twelve. Called Belteshazzar: This was the name assigned to Daniel when he had first arrived in Babylon (I : 7) and used by Nebuchadnezzar for him after this (4: 8, 9, 18, 19). The reason for Daniel's mention of it here is likely to attest that, in spite of the overthrow of the Babylonian government, he was still the same person who had arrived as a captive seventy years before, when the name had been given. The word was true and involved a great conflict: The Hebrew word order has "true" coming before "word," thus giving emphasis to it. Daniel wished to reassure the reader on this count, for the information given by the messenger is remarkable (cf. Rev. 19:9; 21:5; 22:6). The word for "conflict" (צָבָא, *tsaba'*) is often used to mean an army or host of angels and sometimes the warfare itself in which an army engages (cf. Job 10: 17; Isa. 40: 2). Though the word has been translated in a variety of ways here, the meaning most in keeping with the context is "warfare" or "conflict." The thought is that the information given by the messenger involved great conflicts in history to come, which made the overall message hard to believe, and this in turn called for Daniel's reassurance that it was true nevertheless. The conjunction "and" carries the thought of "even though."

1 Montgomery, Commentary on the Book of Daniel, p. 405.

2 "The Title, 'King of Persia' in the Scriptures, *Princeton Theological Review* XV (1917), pp. 90-145.

- *He understood and achieved understanding:* The same root word (בין, *bin*) is used for "understood" (a verb) and "understanding" (a noun). The verb is best taken in reference to this fourth revelatory time, and the noun to the earlier ones, concerning which Daniel had remained puzzled at the times involved (cf. 7:15, 28; 8:27). The statement might be paraphrased: "He understood the word brought here by this messenger and achieved understanding covering all four revelatory times by means of this final appearance."

2–3. In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

- *In those days:* According to verse one, the days in reference occurred sometime in Cyrus' third year; and, according to verse four, they came immediately preceding the twenty-fourth of the first month (Nisan).
- *I, Daniel, was mourning:* For the fifth time in the book, Daniel calls special attention to himself by the use of "I, Daniel"; his interest being to set himself off from others in the mind of the reader. Daniel's mourning took the form of fasting (v. 2). He thus set his "heart to understand" and to humble himself before God (v. 12). From verse one and the context of verse twelve, it is clear that the understanding he sought concerned the future of Israel. He wanted the best for his people. One may doubt that he thought in terms of this fasting leading to another time of revelation, but the fact that God did so employ it suggests that prophets could make a time conducive to revelation by a proper attitude of heart (cf. 2Kings 3:15). It is significant also that Daniel, though a busy man in his important presidential post, still took as much as three weeks for this high spiritual purpose.
- *Three weeks of days:* The phrase "weeks of days" defines these weeks as over against those of chapter nine, which were weeks of years, the same word for "weeks" being used in each instance.
- *Delectable food ... flesh or wine:* The words for "tasty food" (לֶחֶם חַמְדוֹת, *lechem chamudot*) mean literally "food of delights." The plural form of "delights" lends emphasis to the idea. Daniel had access to the finest, most tasty food, as well as to the more standard meat and wine. He ate no food of either category, however, during the days of fasting.
- *Anoint myself:* Daniel also abstained from self-anointment. He emphasized the completeness of this abstinence by the added use of the infinitive absolute, saying literally, "anointing myself, I did not anoint myself." The custom was to anoint oneself daily, the oil being applied to exposed skin that might be burned by the sun (Ps. 104:15). Anointing was a sign of joy (Prov. 27:9), and it was normally discontinued in the time of mourning, as here with Daniel (cf. 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2). These acts of self-discipline were continued by Daniel for three full weeks. Such acts of themselves do not solicit the favor of God, but they constitute suitable exercises which, if sincere, encourage, and give demonstration of, the proper attitude of heart which does.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE HEAVENLY MESSENGER (vv. 4-8)

The messenger, who appeared to Daniel in this fourth time of revelation, now is vividly described.

4-6. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.

- *Twenty-fourth day of the first month:* The overall passage makes clear that this day immediately followed the three weeks of mourning (cf. vv. 12-14), which means that the first day of mourning had been the third of this first month (Nisan). Since the fourteenth of Nisan was the day of Passover, followed by the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th to 21st, Ex. 12 :14-18), both feasts had just nicely been completed by this twenty-fourth day. Probably the special time of the year had been a factor in bringing Daniel to choose it as the time for this fasting and prayer.
- *by the bank of...the Tigris:* Daniel was beside this river in bodily presence, not merely in vision, having companions with him (v. 7). The Hebrew name of the river is חִדְקֵל (*Hiddakel*), after the ancient Babylonian *Idigla*. The Greeks gave it the modern name Tigris, though modern Arabs still call it Diglah. Because it is the Euphrates that flowed through ancient Babylon, and not the Tigris, Daniel was away from the capital at the time of this revelation.

- *A certain man*: On this day, probably while continuing to reflect and pray, Daniel suddenly saw the person now described stand before him. The identity of this person is uncertain. He may have been Gabriel, who had appeared to Daniel for the revelations of chapters eight (v. 16) and nine (v. 21). If so, however, it is strange that he is not mentioned by name, as he was in those chapters. Also, he is described at length here, and was not before. Furthermore, as will be seen under verse twenty-one, the primary task of this person was not revelation, as was true of Gabriel, but waging warfare against particular emissaries of Satan. He may have been the second Person of the Godhead, because the description given is much like that set forth regarding Christ in John's vision on Patmos (Rev. 1:13-16). A difficulty rises here, however, since this one received assistance from the chief angel, Michael, in a conflict with one called "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" (v. 13). It is not likely that a mere angel could be, or would be called upon to be, of assistance to Christ. Some expositors have suggested that he was Michael, but this cannot be, since help is received by him from Michael, as just noted. Furthermore, according to verse twenty-one, Michael is assigned particularly as Israel's guardian prince, whereas this person fights generally against opposing princes sent by Satan. The most likely answer is that this one was another high angel, perhaps of parallel importance with Gabriel and Michael, who was sent with God's information to Daniel in this instance. The added qualifier in the Hebrew, אֶחָד, 'echad, meaning "one," is indicative of singularity for this person, and is roughly equivalent to the English indefinite article.
 - *Clothed in linen*: White linen symbolized purity; it was worn, for instance, by the priests (Ex. 28:42; Lev. 6:10; 16:4), by Jeremiah as prophet (Jer. 13:1), and by angels (Rev. 15:6).
 - *Girded with gold of Uphaz*: A cloth girdle, varying from two to six inches in width, was customarily worn about the waist. The girdle here was of gold (מִתְּנִיזוֹ הַגָּרִים בְּכֶתֶם, *mātnain chaguim beketem*) *ketem* is a poetical word, meaning "precious," likely signifying that it was woven with gold thread and perhaps covered with gold studding. "Uphaz," used one other time in Scripture (Jer. 10:9) remains unidentified. It may be the same as "Ophir" (1 Kings 9:28; Job 22: 24; 28:16; Isa. 13:12).
 - *His body also like the beryl (Tarshish stone)*: From the clothing of the person, the description now turns to the person himself. The word for "tarshish stone" is תַּרְשִׁישׁ (*tarsh'ish*). This is the name of a region at the south of Spain, the Tartessus of the Greeks and Romans, from which came the chrysolite, a gem often identified with the modern topaz. It is described as having a yellow and gold luster, quartzlike in structure, and exceedingly beautiful. The exposed parts of this person's body displayed such an appearance (cf. Ezek. 1:16; 10:9).
 - *His face like the appearance of lightning*: Reference is likely to brilliance, like that of lightning.
 - *His eyes like lamps of fire*: In the midst of the brilliant face glowed yet more brightly the eyes of this person, resembling burning lamps or torches (לְפִידֵי אֵשׁ, *lappidie aish*, from a root meaning "to flame, shine"), signifying penetrating insight.
 - *Arms . . . feet ... gleam of polished brass*: The word for "gleam" (עֵין, *ein*) is literally "eye," and "polished" (קָלַל, *qalal*) is "enlightend" (cf. Ezek 1:7 for the same phrase.) "Arms" and "feet" were those parts of the body which could be seen extending, respectively, below the sleeves and the bottom hem of the linen garments worn. These have already been described as being "like the Tarshish stone," but here additionally as gleaming (like the flash of the eye) in brightness.
 - *Sound ... voice of a multitude*: The word for "sound" and "voice" is the same, קוֹל (*qol*), meaning "voice." As this person began to speak, his voice carried the quality of a vast crowd speaking in unison: strong, deep, and authoritative.
- Taken together, the full description shows this person, though human in form, to have been most awesome in appearance. The intention of this manner of appearance was likely to impress Daniel with the heavenly origin of this one and his full authority to say what soon follows. The ensuing verses show the high degree to which this impression was made .

7–8. Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength.

- *I, Daniel, alone saw*: Though others accompanied Daniel, only he saw the awesome being. This statement by itself would suggest that the appearance was in vision only, not in actual corporeal form. In verses ten and sixteen following, however, this person is said to have touched Daniel for the purpose of strengthening him, and this indicates a real appearance. Perhaps God somehow "clouded" the vision of the companions, making the

striking heavenly person invisible to them. Likely they were pagan in belief and, accordingly, were considered unfit subjects to view so glorious a person .

- *A great trembling:* These companions, however, were made aware that Daniel saw something unusual; in fact, to the extent that they were made to tremble, evidently in fright.³ What so affected them, apparently, was Daniel's own fearful change of manner and appearance, as indicated by the following verses. They fled to hide themselves: This reads, literally, "they fled in hiding themselves," the word for "hiding" being a niph'al (reflexive here) infinitive construct. The thought is that they wanted to hide, and fled for the purpose of doing so. Their actions provide a strong commentary on the degree of change they witnessed in Daniel.
- *I was left alone:* The flight of the men left Daniel conveniently alone . This was to the good, that Daniel might concentrate more fully on what God was permitting him to experience.
- *Great appearance:* The word for "appearance" is הַמַּרְאֶה, *hamar'ah*, properly used because what Daniel saw consisted only in the appearance of this grand person. It was "great" because of who the person was and the importance of what he was to say.
- *No strength:* Daniel experienced such a strong emotional reaction that his strength left him, apparently just as when he had seen Gabriel in the second vision (8: 17, 18, 27). Loss of strength in the presence of the supernatural indicates a recognition of dependency, unworthiness, and the absence of a sense of self sufficiency (cf. Judg. 6:22; Job 42:5, 6; Isa. 6:5).
- *My natural color ... to deathly pallor:* The word for "natural color" (הוֹדִי, *hōdi*) means "majesty, splendor, beauty." Whatever lent such qualities to Daniel's normal expression now was changed. The word for "deathly pallor" (מַשְׁחִית, *marshchit*) is from the root verb שָׁחַת, *shāchat* "to corrupt, destroy." The word suggests a death-like paleness, combined with a grotesque wrenching of facial features. Daniel's sense of unworthiness was great.

C. EXPLANATORY WORDS OF THE HEAVENLY MESSENGER (vv. 9-14)

The next verses tell of the heavenly messenger imparting strength to Daniel and then of stating the reason for not having come to Daniel sooner, that reason being that he had been hindered by one identified as the "prince of the kingdom of Persia."

9–10. But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.

- *I heard the voice:* In his state of emotional shock, with his companions now having fled, Daniel heard the majestic person begin to speak. The prior description, that the voice sounded "like the voice of a multitude," would have been in view of this time of speaking. The person's words, recorded in verse eleven and following, seem to have been given only after Daniel's recovery from the faint into which he had fallen, which means that they were not those mentioned at this initiating time. It may be that Daniel, in his condition of shock, did not even understand the first words, for which reason the reference here is only to the "voice" (קוֹל, *qōl*).
- *I fell into a deep sleep on my face:* The sound of the messenger now speaking brought yet greater emotional disturbance to Daniel, causing him to fall in a faint. The same basic word (נִרְדָּם, *nirdām*) is used here as in 8:18 and, like then, seems to refer to the unconscious state of a faint, because he fell upon his face, so that his face was touching the ground. The angel must somehow have protected him from injuring himself.
- *A hand touched me:* Further, as in the second vision, the angel touched Daniel to arouse him. Since such a touch would have had to be by an actual, corporeal hand, this appearance was that of an actual, corporeal person, not merely one of a vision.
- *Set me trembling:* The word used (root, נָוַע, *nu'a*, "to move to and fro") is in the hiphil, meaning "to cause one to move to and fro." The thought is that as the angel brought Daniel back to consciousness, with ability to rise to a kneeling position, Daniel did so only to an unsteady condition, so that he tottered back and forth, trembling, on hands and knees. His strength was restored still only in part.

³ A similar situation developed when Saul of Tarsus, years later, was on his way to Damascus, accompanied by companions (Acts 9:3–7).

11. He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

- *He said to me:* Having revived Daniel to this extent, the angel proceeded to speak, his words now being recorded, in contrast to the case prior to Daniel's fainting.
- *A man greatly beloved:* This is the same expression as in 9:23 (which see). Showing God's remarkable favor towards Daniel, the expression is used again as a way of reassuring this trembling servant, so that he might fully recover more quickly from his state of weakness.
- *Give heed:* The word used (root, יָרָא, *bīn* "to perceive, understand") is a hiphil imperative. The thought pertains to becoming mentally alert. The admonition was needed to bring Daniel to the point of trying to throw off his dazed condition, so that he could properly understand the angel's words.
- *Stand upright:* Literally this reads, "stand upon your standing," the same expression as in 8:18 (which see). For Daniel to force himself to stand erect would help in bringing his mind to the necessary conscious attention.
- *I have now been sent to you:* The thought is that Daniel should recognize the favor being extended by the sending of the heavenly messenger to him, and accordingly exert greater effort to bringing himself to a state of alertness. Thus far, Daniel's recognition of this had only resulted in his fainting, which to a point was commendable; but now he should go beyond this and rouse himself to hear all that the angel had to say.
- *I stood trembling:* The angel's words did penetrate Daniel's consciousness, and he attempted to obey. He rose to his feet, but was still unsteady. The degree of difficulty he experienced in regaining his composure shows the extent to which he had been emotionally distraught.

12–13. Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia."

- *Do not be afraid, Daniel:* Seeing Daniel still trembling, the angel stated directly that he had no reason to fear. The logic of his following words is that Daniel did not need to fear, because God had already shown favor toward him in having heard his words of petition, as early as twenty-one days before.
- *Set your heart to understand and to humble yourself:* To set one's heart is to exercise strong willpower to a planned end. Daniel had been fasting and praying as the result of a fixed purpose. That purpose had been "to understand (root, יָרָא, *bien*) and to humble" himself. The word for "to humble yourself" (root, עָנָה, *'ānah* "to be bowed down, afflicted") is in the hithpael (reflexive), giving the thought "to bow oneself down." It carries the thought of self-chastening. Daniel had wanted to understand all that God had previously revealed to him and had been willing to give himself in this way for that purpose.
- *Your words were heard:* These words imply, as one might guess, that Daniel had been praying during his period of mourning, from the first of the twenty-one days, no doubt asking God for the understanding he desired. The relation of God's response to the prayer and Daniel's own sincerity in praying should not be missed.
- *I have come:* God not only showed Himself willing to answer Daniel's prayer, but to do so by a personal appearance of this majestic angel. A personal representative had been sent, much as in chapter nine.
- *Prince of the kingdom of Persia:* The angel explained why twenty-one days had elapsed between God's having sent him and his actual arrival in Daniel's presence. He had been hindered enroute by one identified as "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." Several matters must be kept in mind in determining the identity of this "prince." First, he held some relation to the kingdom of Persia. Second, though called a "prince" (שָׂר, *sar*), he must have been more than human to be able to resist this high angel and even to make necessary the assistance of the archangel Michael (v. 13). Third, since he resisted this messenger sent by God, he must have been opposed to God's will; therefore, he must have been an emissary of Satan, one of the numerous fallen angels called demons. Fourth, the relation which this "prince" held to the kingdom of Persia was a continuing one, for Daniel's visitor later stated that he must return to "fight" with him again (v. 20). These matters taken together show that this adversary was a demon, no doubt of high rank, assigned by the chief of demons, Satan, to Persia as his special area of activity. The nature of that activity may be conjectured as providing hindrance to God's will in whatever way Persia was concerned. More particularly, it would have involved God's people there,

prompting the Persian king to show ill-will and disfavor toward them, refusing their requests and bringing hardship in general. Because Greece also would have a similar "prince" assigned to her in due time (cf. v. 20), and God's people would be under Greece's jurisdiction following Persia's fall to Greece, the suggestion seems reasonable that Satan often assigns special emissaries to influence governments against the people of God. Certainly this chapter has much to contribute regarding the nature of struggles between the higher powers in reference to God's program on earth (cf. Eph. 6:11, 12).

- *Withstood me:* Literally, "one standing before me." This phrase of itself need not mean an antagonistic withstanding, but, in view of the angel's further words of verse twenty, that he was soon to "return to wage war with the prince of Persia," it clearly means that here. This enemy "prince," then had somehow been the cause of Daniel's visitor being detained in reaching Daniel for twenty-one days. The possible nature of this "withstanding" is suggested by the last phrase of the verse, to be discussed.

- *Michael, one of the chief princes:* The chief angel Michael is mentioned three times in the Old Testament, all in Daniel (10:13, 21; 12:1), and twice in the New Testament (Jude 9; Rev: 12: 7). Being called here "one of the chief (הַרְאֲשֹׁנִים, *hāri'shonim*) princes," and in Jude 9 the "archangel" (ἀρχάγγελος, *archangelos* meaning "first angel"), it is clear that he was of the highest rank among angels. The relation of Daniel's visitor to him is open to question. He may have been of equal rank, or he may have been slightly lower. It may be that these two, along with Gabriel, shared an equality as three leaders of angels. The name "Michael" means "who is of God," and he was assigned by God particularly as Israel's prince (10:21; 12:1). That God should assign this chief angel to Israel shows the greatness of His interest in His chosen people.

- *Came to help me:* Daniel's visitor needed assistance in his encounter with Satan's emissary, and, accordingly Michael, assigned to Israel's protection (no doubt to counteract just such opposition as now given by this demon of Persia), came to give it. Between the two of them, victory was achieved. The fact is noteworthy that, according to Jude 9, Michael at one time even fought with Satan himself, over the body of Moses.

- *I was left there:* The word for "was left" (root, יָתַר, *yātar*) is the niph'al (passive) form, meaning "to be left over, remain.") The word sometimes carries the thought of being left in a position of preeminence (as on a field of battle), and it is best so taken here. After the struggle with the demon, Daniel's visitor remained preeminent, as victor. That he was thus left "beside the kings of Persia" means that he remained in a position of influence with the Persian ruler, in place of Satan's representative. Apparently, then, the struggle between the two had been over this position of influence. Satan's emissary had held it, thus working to the detriment of God's program and people; and God's messenger to Daniel fought him for it, no doubt as a part of his assigned mission in coming to Daniel. A struggle of twenty-one days and the help of Michael had been necessary to win the position. After it was won, the messenger had come on to meet Daniel, as here described. The word "kings" is in the plural, likely because the place of influence won would continue with future kings of Persia, as well as belonging to Cyrus then ruling—a total period, in fact, of more than two centuries, until Greece would take over world leadership.

14. Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.

- *Now I have come:* The angel had now arrived after the delay, with Daniel quite ignorant concerning the struggle that had ensued. Little do the people of God at any time realize what contention may go on concerning them among higher powers.

- *In the latter days:* The angel directly set forth the purpose of his coming; namely, to tell Daniel what would happen to Israel "in the latter days." The time reference (בְּאַחַר־יָמֵים, *be'acharim hayām'im*) is the same as that used in 2: 28 (which see). The identity of these "latter days" is evidenced by the ensuing message of the angel recorded in chapters eleven and twelve; namely, days coming after the time of Daniel, with stress on the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, and, following the established intervening time gap, on the days of the Antichrist. It should be noted that the weight of the angel's words would concern what would happen to Daniel's people, the Jews, not to the Gentiles.

- *for these days:* "For these days" is literally "for the days"; but the article carries the force of the demonstrative pronoun, since it sets off the days in reference as the "latter days" just mentioned. Probably Daniel had been praying and thinking mainly about days in Israel's near future, but the angel was saying that his words would concern, not only near days, but those far ahead. Daniel thus was to learn and be made to understand far more than for what he had asked.

At these initial words of the angel, Daniel was again overcome with emotion. The angel ceased to speak while once more he ministered to Daniel's need. Then the angel presented further words of explanation regarding his overall mission, and this set the scene for the detailed information of the two following chapters.

15. When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

- *While he was speaking:* Literally, the phrase is "and in his speaking." An infinitive construct is used, indicating continuedness of action. While the angel was continuing to speak, Daniel did what is now described, thus causing an interruption.
- *I turned my face toward the ground:* The word for "I turned" (root, נָתַן, *nātan*, "to give") is in the perfect, indicating completed action. The thought is not, then, that Daniel kept his face turned downward all the while the angel was speaking (which would call for the imperfect, indicating incomplete action), but that he began to do this after first looking at the one addressing him. Clearly, a renewed sense of weakness flooded upon him at this point.
- *became speechless:* The word used (root, אָלַם, '*alam*) is in the niph'al form (passive) and means literally "was bound," here in the sense of not being able to speak. Because Daniel had not spoken at all since the first appearance of the angel, it may be that he had been dumb from the time of that appearance. The renewed sense of weakness that came on him at this point, however, prompted the action, now to be described, which removed the condition.

16–17. And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me."

- *one who resembled a human being:* Literally, "as the likeness of the sons of mankind." The thought is simply, "one who appeared like a human being." Though this manner of reference seems unusual, the designation is likely still of the same angel. The thought of another person being introduced merely to touch Daniel's lips seems improbable, especially when Daniel's visitor had previously touched him for a similar purpose (v. 10). The strangeness of the manner of reference may be attributed to the state of Daniel's troubled, cloudy mind. Looking down at the ground, he would not have been able to see the angel move to touch his lips; and the touch, being human in kind, could have prompted him to think of one so characterized as having done it.
- *Touched my lips:* This was to give Daniel the ability to speak again, imparting special strength (cf. Ex. 4:10-12; Isa. 6:6, 7).
- *I...spoke:* As soon as Daniel received this strength, he began to use it, stating why he was acting as he was.
- *My Lord, as a result of the vision:* "My lord" (אֲדֹנָי, '*adōnai*) is a term of respect, but not here of divinity, which would call for אֲדֹנָי, '*adōnai*. The same term is used three times in these two verses. "Because of" conveys the thought of the prefixed preposition, ב (b), which is literally "by means of," used here in the instrumental sense. The word for "vision" is מַרְאֵה, *mar'ah*, meaning literally "appearance," and refers to the grand angel's appearance.
- *anguish has come upon me* The word for "anguish" (צִיר, *tzir*) carries the thought of twisting or writhing, and is used, for instance, in reference to the pangs of child birth (1 Sam. 4:19; Isa. 13:8; 21:3). The word for "have come" (root, הָפַח, *hāphach* "to turn, overturn") is in the niph'al (passive) and carries a similar connotation of twisting or overturning. Both together signify intense pain, brought upon Daniel by the extreme emotional disturbance he felt.
- *For how can:* Racked by the pain and drained of all strength, Daniel asked how he could possibly be a participant in the revelational experience proposed by the angel. His word "speak" (root, דָּבַר, *dāvar*) is not in reference primarily to his own ability to pronounce words, for which he had now received renewed capacity, but to his ability to be a proper conversational participant, both hearing and responding appropriately. The force of his question is two fold: to state the reason for his distraught condition (namely, the greatness of the person before him), and to indicate that he needed special strength if he was to fill the role in which he was now placed. The

manner of address used was usual when the one addressed was of superior rank.

- *no strength...breath left in me*: The repetition of this thought emphasizes the extent to which Daniel sensed his inability. The idea of "no breath" being left in him suggests that he found it even hard to breathe.