

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 10:1-9

Encounter at Tigris. Around 536 years before the Christ came to earth as Jesus of Nazareth, during the third year of Cyrus' reign, I Daniel, aka Belteshazzar, received a message from the Lord God. It concerned a true, burdensome, and great war. My understanding came through a vision.

After mourning for three weeks, similar to what I described when we first encountered enslavement by Babylonia (Daniel 1:8-16), ate no choice food, neither did meat or wine touch my lips. I didn't even clean up with olive oil²⁶ during the three weeks.

So, on the 24th of Nisan [the month during which Passover is observed], I was near the great river which the Greeks call Tigris and others sometimes call Euphrates.²⁷ I looked up and saw what none of my companions saw, even

though they were terrified, fleeing they hid. Here's what I saw...²⁸



A man dressed in linen, with a belt of gold, fine gold, around his waist. His body was like a peridot, his face was a bright as lightning, his eyes like flaming torches. He had arms and legs which gleamed like polished bronze. And his voice? Like the sound of a multitude!



²⁶Anointing oneself with oil (usually olive oil) was a common believer's practice due to the severity of the Middle Eastern sun (cf. [Psalm 121:6](#)). It was also associated with rejoicing (e.g., [Proverbs 27:9](#)) and was therefore usually not practiced during a period of mourning.

²⁷The Hebrew text has **תִּigrִis** (hiddaquel). "Tigris" appears here in the LXX, since it is the Greek name for this river. Elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures "the great river" refers to the Euphrates (e.g., [Genesis 15:18](#); [Joshua 1:4](#)), leading some interpreters to think that a mistake is involved in using the expression to refer to the Tigris. But it is doubtful that the expression had such a fixed and limited usage. The Syriac, however, does render the word here by "Euphrates" (Syr. *perat*) in keeping with biblical usage elsewhere.

²⁸Compare and contrast Daniel's description of the messenger to John's description in Revelation 1:12-16...

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,¹³ and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

DANIEL 10:1-9

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war [or *true and burdensome*]. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.

2At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. 3I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

4On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, 5I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. 6His body was like chrysolite, 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.

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

As I said, only I saw the man. I was all alone, staring at what was before me. Soon I was left weak, my face lost its blood flow—I was pale, I was helpless. Then it happened. He spoke, but as he spoke and I listened, I fell into a deep sleep, with my face to the ground.

- Q To what degree was Daniel's three week long period of "mourning" useful? Could you go that long without cleaning up? What value would that be for you?
- Q What was Daniel "mourning?"
- Q When did this period occur? So what?
- Q What differences & similarities do you see from John's description of the messenger in Revelation 1:12ff?

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,¹³ and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

- Q Given that the others did not see the messenger, what made them flee with terror and hide?
- Q What caused Daniel to freak—grow pale and lose sentient consciousness?

TEXTUAL ISSUES DANIEL 10:10-21

Peace at Tigris. After a hand touched me and set me up on my hands and knees—trembling was I. He said...

Daniel, you are esteemed, highly esteemed, so listen carefully to what I am going to tell you. Stand up—I have been sent to you. I stood up, of course, but trembling nonetheless.

Do not be freaked, Daniel. From the first day you set your mind to understand and humble yourself before the Lord God, your God, your words have been heard. I have been sent in response to your questions and pleas. The ruler of the Persians has resisted me twenty-one days [see 10:2]. But then Michael—one of the chief princes—came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now? I have come to tell you what will happen to your people, in the future, for your vision concerns a time yet to come.

While he was saying all this, and even on my hands & knees, I bowed my face to the ground—I was speechless. Then he touched my lips [see Isaiah 6:7]; I opened my mouth and spoke...

I am overcome with distress because of this vision my lord; I am helpless. How can I your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone; I can hardly breathe.

He touched me, again, giving me strength. Don't be afraid, o man highly esteemed, he said. Shalom! Be strong now, be strong [see Joshua 1:9]. After speaking to me, I was strengthened and told him—Speak, sir, for you have given me strength.

Do you know why I've come to you? he asked. Continuing he said I will return to fight against the ruler of Persia, and when I leave, the ruler of Greece will come [Alexander the Great]. But

DANIEL 10:10-21

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 [most manuscripts of the Masoretic text; one manuscript of the Masoretic text, Dead Sea Scrolls & the LXX read "Then something that looked like a man's hand..."] 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 am helpless.

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, O man 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."

²⁰ So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come;²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

first? I will tell you what is written in the “Book of Truth.”²⁹ No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

- Q What sent Daniel to his hands & knees? How has the Lord God’s touch sent you to your hands & knees?
- Q Why did the angel/messenger want Daniel to stand? Why did Daniel continue to tremble? [See Philippians 2:12 **and** 13]³⁰
- Q Why shouldn’t Daniel be afraid according to the messenger from God? How could Daniel, then, be “highly esteemed?” [See Matthew 20:16ff]
- Q What kind of strength did the messenger encourage Daniel to have? [See Joshua 1:9]
- Q Why are we strengthened by the word of the Lord God, just as Daniel? [You gotta listen, tremble, and get off your hands & knees. We get to see the face of the Lord God without dying.]
- Q Why did Daniel need to know about the defeat of the Persians by Alexander?
- Q What is written in the book of truth that Daniel will learn about? [That’s next week...]

²⁹Heb “a book of truth.” Several English versions treat this as a title of some sort (cf. NIV, NCV, TEV, CEV, NLT), although the NAB’s rendering “the truthful book” regards “truth” as an attributive adjective, as does the NET translation.

³⁰“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, **for it is God who works in you** to will and to act according to **His** good purpose.”