

ANGELS AND DEMONS

Daniel 10:1-21



SYNOPSIS

This past Sunday, we continued in our study of Daniel. We find Daniel mourning and fasting as he is coming before God in prayer and intercession. He sees a vision of a heavenly being and his strength leaves him as he falls into a deep sleep, but as he wakes up - he's told that since the first day that he set his mind to understand and humble himself before God, his words were heard. This angel* came to tell him what was to happen, but the prince of the Persian kingdom came and resisted him twenty-one days until Michael the archangel came to help him.

This chapter is the prologue of the final three chapters of the book of Daniel surrounding a great war ahead, and the focus of the sermon was to bring our attention to prayer and to the spiritual realm.

Especially in Western Christianity, we tend to diminish the reality of the spiritual realm. Paul Hiebert, a missiologist, wrote an article called "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle" where he posits that Christians in the West tend to split reality into two tiers - religion and science. However, Scripture offers us a worldview that takes both the spiritual realm and the natural world very seriously. As we consider our own attitude about the spiritual realm, we are confronted with three realities in this passage - that the spiritual realm is real, that our prayers actually matter within the spiritual realm, and that the physical realm and spiritual realm are not separate, but overlapping.

As we also consider our attitude towards prayer, we see in this passage that even in the moments where we don't 'feel' like anything is happening, there is something happening. Could it be that sometimes we don't get an answer to prayer because there is an element of spiritual warfare involved? Do we need to grow in being persistent in prayer? As we grow in our understanding of spiritual warfare and prayer, may God give us to grace to persevere in prayer.



2 POINTS TO CONSIDER

1

SOFT POWER VS HARD POWER

Hard power is influence by brute force and might. Soft power is influence by ideology and information. We may think demons try to influence people through hard power, but it's actually more likely that they try to influence people through soft power. If the goal of demons is to steer us away from God, all they need to do is take our already disordered love and amplify it so that we desire those things more than God.

2

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS PRAYER

Have we considered the fact that there are times where we don't experience answers to our prayer because of spiritual warfare? Or sometimes because we do not persist in prayer? Or perhaps we have simply forgotten how God has answered our prayer? As we look at Daniel and his devotion to prayer (daily, regularly, and with expectation), let's ask God to also grow us in our desire and persistence in prayer.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Icebreaker: What picture comes to mind first when you think about angels and demons?

2

What are your thoughts or experience with angels and demons? C.S. Lewis proposes that we either disregard them or have an unhealthy and excessive interest in them. Which end of the spectrum do you gravitate dtowards?

3

Have you ever considered that there is an active force against your pursuit or God?

4

What are some examples of disorder desires that Satan and his demons can capitalize on? (In our lives, our city, our nation, the world etc.)

5

Based on Dee Duke's definition of essential, do we see prayer as "essential"? Why or why not?



BIG IDEA

Daniel 10 shows us the reality of a spiritual realm with spiritual beings (angels and demons). We aren't always aware of them nor do we regularly think about them, but it's important that we understand that there is a spiritual battle that rages on so that we can properly equip ourselves as we engage in this battle. In and through prayer, God gives us insight and understanding of this spiritual realm, so that we can become people that understand and come alongside what God is doing in our world.