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DANIEL 10: 1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, even a great warfare: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

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This and the two following chapters give an account of Daniel's last vision, wherein the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is described, together with the wars that should take place between Syria and Egypt under the latter monarchy. The last part of the vision (from Dan 11:36) seems to relate chiefly to the persecutions of the Church in the times of Antichrist, till it be purified from all its pollutions; after which will follow that glorious kingdom of the saints spoken of in the seventh and eighth chapters. This chapter begins with an account of Daniel's fasting and humiliation, Dan 10:1-3. Then we have a description of the Divine person who appeared to the prophet, not unlike him who appeared to the apostle in the isle of Patmos, vv. 4-21. See Rev 1:10-16.

Verse 1

In the third year of Cyrus - Which answers to the first year of Darius the Mede.

The time appointed was long - וצבא גדול vetsaba gadol, but the warfare long; there will be many contentions and wars before these things can be accomplished.

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DANIEL 10: 2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks.

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Verse 2

I - was mourning three full weeks - The weeks are most probably dated from the time of the termination of the last vision. Calmet proves this by several reasons.

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DANIEL 10: 3 I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, until three whole weeks were fulfilled.

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Verse 3

I ate no pleasant bread - This fast was rather a general abstinence; living all the while on coarse and unsavory food; drinking nothing but water; not using the bath, and most probably wearing haircloth next the skin, during the whole of the time.

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DANIEL 10: 4 In the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel,

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Verse 4

By the side of - Hiddekel - The same as the Tigris. the great river of Assyria; as the Euphrates of Syria, and the Nile of Egypt.

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DANIEL 10: 5 I lifted up my eyes, and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose thighs were adorned with pure gold of Uphaz:

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Verse 5

Clothed in linen - The description is intended to point out the splendor of the garments.

Gold of Uphaz - The same as Ophir.

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DANIEL 10: 6 his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as flaming torches, and his arms and his feet like burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

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Verse 6

His body also was like the beryl - The description of this person is very similar to that of our Lord in Rev 1:13-15.

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DANIEL 10: 7 I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; for the men who were with me didn't see the vision; but a great quaking fell on them, and they fled to hide themselves.

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Verse 7

The men that were with me saw not the vision - An exactly parallel case with what occurred at the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, Act 9:7. There was a Divine influence which they all felt, but only Daniel saw the corporeal appearance.

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DANIEL 10: 8 So I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

DANIEL 10: 9 Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I fallen into a deep sleep on my face, with my face toward the ground.

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Verse 9

Was I in a deep sleep - I fell into a swoon.

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DANIEL 10: 10 Behold, a hand touched me, which set me on my knees and on the palms of my hands.

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Verse 10

A hand touched me - Nothing was apparent or palpable but a hand. A hand had written Belshazzar's fate upon the wall; and the hand is frequently mentioned when the power or majesty of God is intended. Perhaps by hand God himself may be meant. It is remarkable that in a very ancient MS. of the Septuagint, more than a thousand years old, now in the imperial library of Vienna, adorned with paintings which have been engraved for the catalogue of Lambechius, and transferred to that of Nesselius, all the appearances of God are represented by a hand in the clouds.

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DANIEL 10: 11 He said to me, Daniel, you man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright; for am I now sent to you. When he had spoken this word to me, I stood trembling.

DANIEL 10: 12 Then he said to me, Don't be afraid, Daniel; for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard: and I have come for your words' sake.

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Verse 12

I am come for thy words - On account of thy prayers I am sent to comfort and instruct thee.

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DANIEL 10: 13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but, behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

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Verse 13

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me - I think it would go far to make a legend or a precarious tale of this important place to endeavor to maintain that either a good or evil Angel is intended here. Cyrus alone was the prince of Persia, and God had destined him to be the deliverer of his people; but there were some matters, of which we are not informed, that caused him to hesitate for some time. Fearing, probably, the greatness of the work, and not being fully satisfied of his ability to execute it, he therefore for a time resisted the secret inspirations which God had sent him. The opposition might be in reference to the building of the temple.

But lo, Michael - Gabriel, who speaks, did not leave Cyrus till Michael came to take his place. Michael, he who is like God, sometimes appears to signify the Messiah, at other times the highest or chief archangel. Indeed there is no archangel mentioned in the whole Scripture but this one. See Jde 1:9; Rev 12:7.

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DANIEL 10: 14 Now I have come to make you understand what shall happen to your people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days:

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Verse 14

For yet the vision is for many days - There are many things which remain yet to be revealed, and the time of their accomplishment is very distant.

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DANIEL 10: 15 and when he had spoken to me according to these words, I set my face toward the ground, and was mute.

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Verse 15

I set my face toward the ground - He was standing upright, Dan 10:11, and he now bent his body in reverence, and looked down upon the ground.

And became dumb - Found himself unable to speak.

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DANIEL 10: 16 Behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spoke and said to him who stood before me, my lord, by reason of the vision my sorrows are turned on me, and I retain no strength.

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Verse 16

Like the similitude of the sons of men - I think Gabriel is here meant, who appeared to Daniel in a human form; and so in Dan 10:18, and see also Dan 9:21.

Touched my lips - Before this he was unable to speak.

By the vision - The vision that I have already had, and of which I have not a proper knowledge has greatly afflicted me, because I see it intimates grievous calamities to my people. See Dan 9:26.

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DANIEL 10: 17 For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, immediately there remained no strength in me, neither was there breath left in me.

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Verse 17

Neither is there breath - He could not breathe freely; he was almost suffocated with sorrow.

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DANIEL 10: 18 Then there touched me again one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.

DANIEL 10: 19 He said, "Greatly beloved man, don't be afraid: peace be to you, be strong, yes, be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak; for you have strengthened me."

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Verse 19

O man, greatly beloved - איש חמדות ish chamudoth, man of delights; the most amiable of men.

Let my lord speak - I am now so strengthened and encouraged, that I shall be able to bear any revelation that thou mayest make.

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DANIEL 10: 20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia. When I go out, behold, the prince of Greece shall come."

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Verse 20

Knowest thou wherefore I come - So high art thou in the favor of God, that he hath sent me unto thee to give thee farther satisfaction; though I was elsewhere employed upon a most important mission, and I must speedily return to accomplish it, viz.: -

To fight with the king of Persia - To remove all the scruples of Cyrus, and to excite him to do all that God designs him to do for the restoration of my people, and the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem. Nothing less than a supernatural agency in the mind of Cyrus can account for his decree in favor of the Jews. He had no natural, no political inclination to it; and his reluctance to obey the heavenly motions is here represented as a fight between him and the angel.

The prince of Grecia shall come - I believe this refers to Alexander the Great, who was to destroy the Persian empire. See Dan 11:2-3 (note).

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DANIEL 10: 21 But I will tell you that which is inscribed in the writing of truth: and there is no one who holds with me against these, but Michael your prince."

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Verse 21

Noted in the scripture of truth - Perhaps this refers to what he had already written down. See the preceding visions, which Daniel did not fully understand, though a general impression from them had filled his heart with sorrow.

Michael your prince - The archangel mentioned before, Dan 10:13, and who has been always supposed to be appointed by God as the guardian of the Jewish nation. It appears that God chose to make use of the ministry of angels in this work; that angels, as they could be only in one place at one time, could not produce influence where they were not; and that, to carry on the operation on the mind of the Persian king, it was necessary that either Gabriel or Michael should be present with him, and when one went on another commission another took his place; see Dan 10:13. But we know so little of the invisible world that we cannot safely affirm any thing positively.

