**1** In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision. **2**In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. **3**I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.

**4**On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) **5**I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. **6**His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. **7**And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. **8**So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength.**9**Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground. (Daniel 10:1-9)

**I. There’s an Invisible Battle Taking Place**

**10**And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. **11**And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. **12**Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. **13**The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, **14**and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

**15**When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute. **16**And behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, “O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. **17**How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.” **18**Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. **19**And he said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.” And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” **20**Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. **21**But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.

**II. God Governs History for the Benefit of His People**

**1** “And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. **2**“And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. **3**Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills. **4**And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these. (Daniel 11:1-4)

**29**“At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before. **30**For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant. **31**Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. **32**He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.

**33**And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. **34**When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, **35**and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.

**36**“And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. **37**He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. **38**He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. **39**He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.

8And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. 9The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, 12in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:8-11)