

Translation of Daniel 10-12

Frank W. Hardy

Daniel 10

[10:1] In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a matter was revealed to Daniel, also called Belteshazzar. The matter was true and concerned a great conflict. He understood the matter and gained an understanding of the vision.¹

[2] In those days I, Daniel, was in mourning for three full weeks. [3] I ate no choice food and no flesh or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all until the three full weeks were completed.

[4] On the twenty-fourth day of the first month I was at the side of the great river, Tigris. [5] I looked up and saw a Man clothed in linen.² He was wearing a belt of fine gold from Uphaz. [6] His body was like a beryl and his face had the appearance of lightning. His eyes were like burning torches, and His arms and legs had the gleam of burnished bronze. The sound of His words was like that of a multitude.

[7] I, Daniel, was the only one who saw this vision. Those who were with me did not see it. A great trembling³ overtook them, and they fled and hid themselves. [8] Only I remained and saw this great vision. No strength remained in me. My appearance utterly changed, and I retained no strength. [9] I heard the sound of His words, and as I heard Him, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground.

[10] A hand touched me and raised me to my hands and knees. [11] He said to me, Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, understand what I am about to tell you and stand up on your feet, for I have now been sent to you. As he spoke these words to me I stood up trembling.⁴

[12] He said to me, Don't be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I am here in response to your words. [13] The prince of Persia withstood me twenty-one days. Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the prince of Persia. [14] I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the future, because the vision⁵ applies to the future. [15] As he said these things I fell back down with my face to the ground and fell silent.

[16] Then One who looked like a man touched my lips. I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the One standing there before me, My lord, I am in pain because of the vision and retain no strength. [17] How can my lord's servant speak with my lord? My strength is gone and no breath remains in me.

¹ Hebrew *mar'eh*. Also vss. 8, 9, and 16.

² The description of Christ in Rev 1:12-16 corresponds closely to this one.

³ Hebrew *ḥārādā* (<*ḥrd).

⁴ Hebrew *mar'id* (<*r'd).

⁵ Hebrew *ḥāzôn*.

[18] Again the One who looked like a man touched me and strengthened me. [19] He said, Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed. Peace to you; be strong.

[20] Then He said, Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return and fight with the prince of Persia. And when I leave him, the prince of Greece will come.

[21] But now I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. Apart from me no one else can contend with these except Michael, your Prince. [11:1] In the first year of Darius the Mede I stood to confirm and strengthen him.

Daniel 11

Opening Bookend

[11:2] And now I will tell you the truth.

Empire III: Greece

Three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth will be far richer than any of the others. When he comes to power he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. [3] Then a mighty king will arise and rule over a great kingdom, and he will do whatever he wants.⁶ [4] And as soon as he arises, his kingdom will be broken and divided to the four winds of heaven, but not to his offspring, and not with the power he exercised. Instead, his kingdom will be uprooted and given to others besides these. [5] Then the king of the South will become strong, but one of his princes will become stronger than him, and will rule a greater territory than his. [6] After a few years they will form an alliance and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to confirm the agreement. But she will not retain her influence and neither he nor their son will succeed. She will be handed over, along with the one who brought her, and her child, and the one who put her in power during that time. [7] And one from his roots will stand in his place. He will come to power and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and will succeed against them⁷ and be strong. [8] Their gods also and cast images, and their treasures of silver and gold, will be brought to Egypt. For some time he will leave the king of the North alone. [9] Again the king of the South will come, but he will return to his land. [10] Then his sons will become provoked and raise a vast hord. They will come and overwhelm the enemy, pressing on as far his fortress. [11] At this the king of the South will be enraged. He will go out and fight with him, i.e., with the king of the North, and raise a great hord of his own, but it will be given over to him. [12] When he does this his heart will become proud. He will cause tens of thousands to fall in battle, but it will all come to nothing. [13] Then the king of the North will come back and raise a greater force than before. After some years he will come with a great army, well supplied. [14] At that time many will rise up against the king of the South. The

⁶ Dan 8:4; 11:3, 16, 36. The first reference introduces Persia (empire II); the next, Greece (III); the next, Rome as a secular power (IVa); and the last, Rome as a spiritual power (IVb).

⁷ The ones he encounters there.

violent ones among your people⁸ will rise up [against the king of the North] to fulfill the vision,⁹ but they will fail. [15] The king of the North will come and prepare siegeworks and capture fortified cities, and the forces of the South, including even his best troops, will not be able to withstand him.¹⁰

Empire IVa: Secular Rome

Rome and Jerusalem

[16] The one who comes against him¹¹ will do whatever he wants, and no one will be able to stand against him. He will stand in the Glorious Land and bring destruction. [17] He will set his mind on coming with the full force of his kingdom and make alliances with him. He will succeed, and the Daughter of Women will be given over to him to destroy her. She will neither withstand him nor submit to him. [18] He will set his mind on conquering remote places and take many of them. A prince will put an end to his insolence, but this affront will come back to him. [19] He will set his mind on conquering the fortresses of his own land, but will stumble and not be found. [20] In his place a raiser of taxes will promote the glory of the kingdom. After a while he will be broken, though not in anger or in battle. [21] In his place a despicable person will arise, who is not given the splendor of kingly rule.¹² He will come in peace¹³ and secure the kingdom by flattery. [22] An army of people will be swept away before him, and also the Prince of the covenant.¹⁴

⁸ Dan 11:14; 12:1.

⁹ Dan 8:13; 11:14. The first example has, and the other does not have the definite article.

¹⁰ Verse 14 describes citizen uprisings (“many,” “the violent ones”), while vs. 15 describes official military actions. Jews still celebrate their victory over Antiochus IV Epiphanes at Hanukkah. Antiochus had defiled the temple and the Maccabees restored it to purity. They did not fail to remove Antiochus; in this they were brilliantly successful. What they failed to do was fulfill the “vision” of Dan 8:13-14, which has nothing to do with the temple in Jerusalem.

¹¹ The “one who comes” is the new Roman king of the North; “against him” is the earlier Greek king of the North. At this point the story line shifts to Rome.

¹² What the despicable person fails to receive is not “the kingdom,” but “the splendor of the kingdom.” He does receive the kingdom, as the next verse makes clear, but is not esteemed as his predecessor was.

¹³ Dan 11:21 and 23 (correctly delimited). The problem is that vss. 23/24 are not correctly delimited. In the Hebrew vs. 24 begins one word left of where it should, which causes syntactic problems. Only NEB and REB get this right among English translations. (Moving the verse number does not change the text!)

¹⁴ See “stone” (2:34, 35, 45); “like a son of the gods” (3:25); “a watcher, a holy one” (4:13, 23; cf. Job 7:20); “one like a son of man” (7:13); “the Prince of the host” (8:11); “one having the appearance of a man” (8:15); “an anointed one, a prince” (9:25); “an anointed one” (9:26); “a man clothed in linen” (10:5); “Michael, one of the chief princes” (10:13); “Michael, your prince” (10:21); “the prince of the covenant” (11:22); “the one beloved by women” (11:37); “Michael, the great prince” (12:1); “the man clothed in linen” (12:6, 7). See also 9:24 (life, death, priestly ministry [with respect to sin]; life, death, priestly ministry [with respect to holiness]); 10:5-6 (parallel clause for clause with Rev 1:12-16). The Prince in 11:22 is Christ.

Jerusalem and Rome

[23] From the time an alliance is made with this king he will act deceitfully. He will rise and become strong with only a small people, in peace. [24] He will enter the richest parts of the province and do what neither his fathers nor his forefathers had done. He will distribute plunder, spoils, and booty among them, but only for a time. [25] He will marshal his forces and his heart will be against the king of the South, who will come out to war with an enormous force, strong beyond measure. But he will not succeed, for plots will be devised against him. [26] Those who eat his fine food will destroy him and his forces will be swept away. Many will fall down slain. [27] The two kings will deal falsely with each other. Sitting at one table they will tell each other lies. But their plans will not succeed, because the end will still come at the appointed time. [28] He [the king of the North] will return to his own land¹⁵ with great wealth. His heart will be set against the holy covenant, and he will succeed. Then he will again return to his own land.

Empire IVb: Spiritual Rome

Before the wound

[29] At the appointed time¹⁶ he will again come against the South,¹⁷ but this time things will not be as they were before or as they will be afterward. [30] Ships of Kittim will come against him and he will become discouraged. He will again vent his wrath against the holy covenant and succeed. He will again acknowledge those who forsake the holy covenant.¹⁸ [31] Forces from him will rise up, defile the temple fortress, and turn aside the regular [ministry]. They will set up the desolating transgression. [32] He will seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God will successfully withstand him. [33] For some time those who are wise among the people will instruct many, but in the process they will fall by sword and flame, captivity and plunder. [34] When they fall, they will be given a little help and many will join them

¹⁵ One can't return twice without going out twice. The first reference brings closure to 11:25-28a; the second brings closure to a separate conflict in 11:28b. The one is against "the king of the South" (25); the second is against "the holy covenant" (28b).

¹⁶ Dan 11:29, 35. This term in the first word of vs. 29 and the last word of vs. 35. Together they frame 11:29-35 between them and show that this is one bloc of text.

¹⁷ "Against the South" (11:29) corresponds to "against the king of the South" (11:25); "against the holy covenant" (11:30b) corresponds to "against the holy covenant" (11:28b). There are not just two conflicts here, but two sets of conflicts (South, covenant; South, covenant). The one set involves secular Rome, the other involves spiritual Rome.

¹⁸ The word *šāb*, which normally means "return," means "again" when immediately followed by another verb. See *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics (EHLL)*, s.v. Auxiliaries: Biblical Hebrew, §4. Contrast Between *בָּשׁוּ* *šāb* and *יָשׁוּב* *yāsap/יָשׁוּב* *hōsip*.

by flatteries. [35] Some of the wise will fall so as to be refined, purified, and made white until the time of the end,¹⁹ which will come at the appointed time.

[36] The king²⁰ will do what he wants. He will exalt and magnify himself against every god, and against the God of gods he will say wonderfully awful things.²¹ He will have success until the wrath is over, for what must be done will be done. [37] He will pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or the One desired by women, or any other god for that matter. He will exalt himself over them all. [38] In place of them he will honor a god of fortresses. A god his fathers did not know he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and choice gifts. [39] He will act successfully against the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. He will multiply honors to those who acknowledge him, and cause them to rule over great territories. He will distribute the land for a price.

The wound

[40] At the time of the end²² the king of the South will lock horns with [or gore] him. Then the king of the North will sweep out against him like a windstorm, with chariots, horsemen,²³ and many ships. He will enter lands, and overflow, and pass through. [41] He will come against²⁴ the Glorious Land and thousands will fall. But these will escape him: Edom, Moab, and the first of the Ammonites. [42] He will extend his hand against various countries, and the land of Egypt will not be spared. [43] He will take over the hidden treasures²⁵ of gold and silver and all the precious things of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites following along.

After the wound

[44] But reports from the east and north will alarm him, and he will set out in a towering rage to destroy and annihilate many. [45] He will pitch his palatial tents

¹⁹ Dan 11:35, 40; 12:3. Separately, in Dan 11:35 we have “refined, purified, and made white until the time of the end”; in Dan 12:10, “purified, made white, and refined.”

²⁰ Dan 11:29-39 recalls Dan 7:25, where the little horn speaks proud words against God and performs violent acts against His people – all within a window of time (“a time, times, and half a time,” 7:25). Here we have the inverse of this: first violent actions (especially 11:30b-35), then proud words (11:36-39) – but again, all within one window of time (“a time, times, and half a time,” 12:7). Verbal parallels establish the latter connection. In both cases, the same king speaks and acts, acts and speaks. Dan 11:29-39 is an expansion of Dan 7:25.

²¹ Here *nīplā'ôt* (<*pl'); in Dan 12:7 *happēlā'ôt* (<*pl').

²² Notice that 11:35 brings to “the time of the end” and 11:40 resumes at “the time of the end.” This is because the relationship between 11:29-35 and 36-39 is the same as that between 7:25b and 7:25a. In Dan 7 the horn’s proud words are mentioned before his violent acts; in Dan 11 the king’s violent acts are mentioned before his proud words. But in both cases he both speaks and acts, acts and speaks.

²³ According to Klein, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, s.v. *pārāš*, the reference is probably to chariot drivers, rather than cavalry. Thus, “chariots and their drivers.”

²⁴ In this context the preposition *bē-* could mean “in” or “against” (11:29, 30, 41, 42).

²⁵ The word *mikmān* occurs only once in the Hebrew Old Testament, but in Middle Hebrew it takes on the meaning, “hiding place” (*The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, CD-ROM Edition © 1994-2000 Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands), s.v. *mikmān*. In Modern Hebrew it means “treasure.” So the sense here is, “hidden treasure.”

between the seas at the Glorious Holy Mountain, but he will come to his end and no one will be able to help him.

[12:1] At that same time Michael will arise – the great Prince who rises to protect your people – and there will be a time of distress like no other since there was a nation to that time,²⁶ and at that time your people will be delivered, all whose names are found written in the book. [2] Many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake – some to everlasting life, others to everlasting shame and contempt. [3] But the wise will shine like the shining of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

Closing Bookend

[4] Now, Daniel, close up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will study these things and their knowledge of them will increase.

Daniel 12

Verses 5-7 (A)

[5] Then I, Daniel, saw two others standing, one on this side of the river and the other on that side. [6] One of these said to the Man clothed in linen who was over the water of the river, How long will it be to the end of these wonderfully awful things?²⁷ [7] I heard the Man clothed in linen who was over the water of the river as He raised His right hand and His left toward heaven and said, It will be for a time, times, and half a time. When the shattering of the power of the holy people ends, all these things will have reached their end.²⁸

Verses 8-9 (B)

[8] I heard but I did not understand, so I said, What will be the outcome of these things? [9] But He said, Go,²⁹ Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.

²⁶ This “time of trouble” (12:1b) is described earlier as the king’s desire “to destroy and annihilate many” (11:44). The reason why the king “will come to his end” (11:45), rather than succeeding in his plan to destroy many, is that Michael “will arise” (12:1a). It’s not that Michael will arise, it’s what He does next.

²⁷ Here *happ^elā’ôt* (<*pl’); in Dan 11:36, *nīplā’ôt* (<*pl’).

²⁸ The one bolded word is *ûk^ekallôt* (<*klh), the other, *tikleynâ* (<*klh).

²⁹ The first half of the chapter is characterized by questions and answers (6, 7; 8, 9). Both halves contain an AB sequence (AB:A’B’), such that A/A’ is the subject matter dealt with (“a time, times, and half a time”; “1,290 days”; “1,335 days”) and B/B’ is the way things end. Here we have, “Go, Daniel” (*lĕk daniyyē’l*); “go your way until the end” (*lĕk laqqēš*); also, “until the time of the end” (*’ad-’ēt qēš*), “at the end of the days” (*l^eqēš hayyāmîn*). Thus, A’ is a continuation of A; B’ is a continuation of B.

Verses 10-12 (A')

[10] Many will be purified, made white, and refined.³⁰ The wicked will do wickedly and none of the wicked will understand, but the wise will understand. [11] From the time that the regular [ministry] is turned aside until the abomination of desolation is set up will be 1,290 days. [12] Those who wait for and arrive at the 1,335 days will be blessed.

Verse 13 (B')

And now, go your way until the end. You will rest and will stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.

³⁰ Here "purified, made white, and refined"; in Dan 11:35, "refined, purified, and made white until the time of the end."