

The Book of Daniel - Number One-Hundred and Fifty-Eight

Unveiling the Vision: Understanding the Days of Mourning in Daniel

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In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel. Daniel 10:1–4.

During the symbolic three and a half days of Revelation chapter eleven, when the two witnesses are dead in the street, a “thing” is revealed to Belteshazzar. He had previously understood the “vision” (mareh), for in chapter nine, Gabriel had already come and given him understanding of the vision.

Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Daniel 9:21–23.

The “man Gabriel, whom” Daniel “had seen in the vision at the beginning,” is referencing the “chazon,” vision of prophetic history, which was referring to Gabriel interpreting the vision of the kingdoms of Bible prophecy for Daniel in chapter eight. But the “vision,” which Daniel was then to consider in chapter nine, was the “mareh,” vision of the appearance. Gabriel then provides the historical breakdown of the twenty-three hundred year prophecy for Daniel.

Chapter nine, was fulfilled in the first year of Darius. When Belteshazzar states that he “had understanding of the vision,” in “the third year of Cyrus,” he had understood the “mareh,” vision for two years. What Belteshazzar came to understand in “those days” of mourning was the “thing,” that is the Hebrew word “dabar,” and it was long, for the time appointed was twenty-five hundred and twenty years.

Daniel had already understood some of the “thing,” for he was accomplishing the Leviticus twenty-six prayer in chapter nine, and that is the prayer of the “thing.” There was increased light upon the “seven times,” that Belteshazzar came to understand during the twenty-one days of mourning, and the increase of light on the “seven times,” during those days of mourning, typified the increased light upon the “seven times” in 1856. The Millerites also previously knew of the

“seven times,” for they had proclaimed it, but there was added light that was to test them at the very point in their history when they transitioned from the Philadelphian to Laodicean movement.

Beltshazzar’s days of mourning parallel the prophetic history of when the Philadelphian movement transitioned to the Laodicean movement in 1856, and then to the Laodicean Adventist church in 1863. Both Beltshazzar’s and the Millerite’s history of the increased light upon the “seven times,” aligns with the transition of the Laodicean movement of the third angel unto the Philadelphian movement of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, and in the days of mourning, which is during the tarrying time, when increased light upon the “seven times,” was to be revealed.

Beltshazzar represents both a messenger and a movement. In the days of his mourning the messenger is to understand the “thing,” which is Truth, and he is then to present the “thing” to a movement, when Michael resurrects the two witnesses in 2023.

The Hebrew word “mareh” (vision of Christ’s appearance), that Daniel is identified as understanding in verse one, is presented four times in Daniel’s last vision. Twice it is translated as “vision,” and twice as “appearance.” The first time Daniel employs the word in verse one, he is identifying that he understood the “vision,” but the other three references identify Daniel experiencing the vision. In verse six, Christ’s face was “as the ‘appearance’ of lightning.”

And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore 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 10:4–8.

There is another Hebrew word translated as “vision,” that we will address after we set forth some characteristics of the Hebrew word “mareh.” In the previous verses it is the word “appearance,” that is the Hebrew word “mareh.” The same word is translated as “vision” in verse sixteen. In verse sixteen, the vision of Christ has made Daniel sorrowful.

And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. Daniel 10:16.

The Hebrew word translated as “sorrows,” means a hinge, and the “vision” of Christ’s appearance that Daniel saw in the verse turned a hinge. A “hinge” in prophecy represents a turning point.

“There are lessons to be learned from the history of the past; and attention is called to these, that all may understand that God works on the same lines now that He ever has done. His hand is seen in His work and among the nations now, just the same as it has been ever since the gospel was first proclaimed to Adam in Eden.

“There are periods which are turning points in the history of nations and of the church. In the providence of God, when these different crises arrive, the light for that time is given. If it is received, there is spiritual progress; if it is rejected, spiritual declension and shipwreck follow. The Lord in His word has opened up the aggressive work of the gospel as it has been carried on in the past, and will be in the future, even to the closing conflict, when Satanic agencies will make their last wonderful movement.” Bible Echo, August 26, 1895.

Verse sixteen represents a turning point in the history that Belteshazzar is representing. It is a turning point for both the Republican horn (the nation) and the Protestant horn (the church). It represents a crisis, and it represents the point where special light for that history is given. The turning point for Daniel occurred when Daniel had been “touched,” the second time of three times. Daniel would be touched three times, and the second time he was touched, was a turning point for Daniel, and that turning point was the second of three times which Daniel saw the “mareh” vision.

And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. Daniel 10:16.

We will address the three touches shortly. The first of the four times the word “mareh” is employed by Daniel, was his testimony that he understood the vision, and the final three references identify his experience when he actually saw the appearance. The third time he identifies the vision of the appearance is verse eighteen, where he is touched for the third time.

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

At the second touch, in verse sixteen, which is the second reference to the “marah” vision, his strength is gone, but at the third touch, his strength is restored. In verses ten, sixteen and eighteen Daniel is touched. In verse six, Daniel sees the appearance of Christ, and then Gabriel, and in verse ten, Gabriel touches Daniel for the first time.

Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore 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.

Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand,

and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days. Daniel 10:5–14.

Then in verse sixteen, Daniel is touched a second time, when he sees the vision of Christ.

And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Daniel 10:15–17.

Then Daniel is touched for the third time, at the appearance of Gabriel, not Christ.

Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Daniel 10:18–21.

Daniel is touched three times, and the first and third time he is touched by the angel Gabriel. The second time he is touched, it is by Christ. Daniel employed the same Hebrew word four times, but the first of the four times, in verse one, he was stating that he understood the “vision.”

Understanding a truth is important, but it is not the same as experiencing the truth, as he did the other three times.

When Daniel’s days of mourning concluded he was given an experience of the vision, which he had an understanding of before the days of his mourning concluded. The experience is made up of three steps, represented by three touches. The first and the last touches were accomplished by Gabriel, and the middle touch was by Christ. The first and the last touches, were the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In that second step, Daniel recognizes his condition as a rebellious sinner in relation to his Lord, and thus the middle touch represents rebellion, as represented by the thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

“But Peter was unmindful now of boats or lading. This miracle, above any other he had ever witnessed, was to him a manifestation of divine power. In Jesus he saw One who held all nature under His control. The presence of divinity revealed his own unholiness. Love for his Master, shame for his own unbelief, gratitude for the condescension of Christ, above all, the sense of his uncleanness in the presence of infinite purity, overwhelmed him. While his companions were securing the contents of the net, Peter fell at the Saviour’s feet, exclaiming, ‘Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.’

“It was the same presence of divine holiness that had caused the prophet Daniel to fall as one dead before the angel of God. He said, ‘My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.’ So when Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord, he exclaimed, ‘Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.’ Daniel 10:8; Isaiah 6:5. Humanity, with its weakness and sin, was brought in contrast with the perfection of divinity, and he felt altogether deficient and unholy. Thus it has been with all who have been granted a view of God’s greatness and majesty.

“Peter exclaimed, ‘Depart from me; for I am a sinful man;’ yet he clung to the feet of Jesus, feeling that he could not be parted from Him. The Saviour answered, ‘Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.’ It was after Isaiah had beheld the holiness of God and his own unworthiness that he was entrusted with the divine message. It was after Peter had been led to self-renunciation and dependence upon divine power that he received the call to his work for Christ.” *The Desire of Ages*, 246.

The “mareh” vision is the vision of Christ’s appearance, but the angel Gabriel is represented by the second and fourth time Daniel employed the word. The first time was a statement that Belteshazzar understood the vision, but the last three represent Daniel experiencing the vision. The three times Daniel experiences the vision, he is also touched.

The first time he was touched by Gabriel was after he had seen the appearance of the glorified Christ, and the experience left him in “a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.” The vision had produced a separation, for those who had been with him “saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.” In the first disappointment, Jeremiah “sat alone, because of God’s hand,” and in Belteshazzar “there remained no strength” “for” his “comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and” he “retained no strength.”

Once Gabriel touched him for the first time, Gabriel then sat Daniel upon his knees and the palms of his hands. He then commanded Daniel to understand the words he spoke and stand up, which he did, though he was trembling. Gabriel then provides Daniel a breakdown of what has occurred during the twenty-one days of Daniel’s mourning. He identified that after struggling with the kings of Persia for the twenty-one days, that Michael came down out of heaven to engage in the battle, and then Gabriel came to answer Daniel’s prayers and explain to Daniel “what shall befall thy people in the latter days.” When Michael came down out of heaven Gabriel was sent to explain the last days to Daniel.

Gabriel’s explanation was given to Daniel at the end of the twenty-one days of mourning, which, in the line upon line application of Revelation chapter eleven, represents when Ezekiel in chapter thirty-seven is twice commanded to prophesy to the dead bones, in order to raise the two prophets out of their graves. It occurs when Michael comes down out of heaven and resurrects the body of Moses, while refusing to interact with Satan in the book of Jude. Daniel is still going to be touched twice more after Gabriel had given him the overview of the days of mourning.

After Gabriel finished, Daniel, “set his face toward the ground, and he became dumb”, and then Christ Himself “touched” Daniel’s “lips,” and then Daniel “opened” his “mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.”

The experience of seeing and speaking with Christ humbles Daniel into the dust. He was dumb, and would have remained so if Christ had not touched his lips, as Isaiah’s lips had been touched by the coal from the altar.

We will continue this study in the next article.

“As Isaiah beheld this revelation of the glory and majesty of his Lord, he was overwhelmed with a sense of the purity and holiness of God. How sharp the contrast between the matchless perfection of his Creator, and the sinful course of those who, with himself, had long been numbered among the chosen people of Israel and Judah! ‘Woe is me!’ he cried; ‘for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.’ Verse 5. Standing, as it were, in the full light of the divine presence within the inner sanctuary, he realized that if left to his own imperfection and inefficiency, he would be utterly unable to accomplish the mission to which he had been called. But a seraph was sent to relieve him of his distress and to fit him for his great mission. A living coal from the altar was laid upon his lips, with the words, ‘Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.’ Then the voice of God was heard saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ and Isaiah responded, ‘Here am I; send me.’ Verses 7, 8.

“The heavenly visitant bade the waiting messenger, ‘Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; And see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, And make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And convert, and be healed.’” Verses 9, 10.

“The prophet’s duty was plain; he was to lift his voice in protest against the prevailing evils. But he dreaded to undertake the work without some assurance of hope. ‘Lord, how long?’ he inquired. Verse 11. Are none of Thy chosen people ever to understand and repent and be healed?

“His burden of soul in behalf of erring Judah was not to be borne in vain. His mission was not to be wholly fruitless. Yet the evils that had been multiplying for many generations could not be removed in his day. Throughout his lifetime he must be a patient, courageous teacher—a prophet of hope as well as of doom. The divine purpose finally accomplished, the full fruitage of his efforts, and of the labors of all God’s faithful messengers, would appear. A remnant should be saved. That this might be brought about, the messages of warning and entreaty were to be delivered to the rebellious nation, the Lord declared: ‘Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, And the houses without man, And the land be utterly desolate, And the Lord have removed men far away, And there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.’ Verse 11, 12.

“The heavy judgments that were to befall the impenitent,—war, exile, oppression, the loss of power and prestige among the nations,—all these were to come in order that those who would recognize in them the hand of an offended God might be led to repent. The ten tribes of the northern kingdom were soon to be scattered among the nations and their cities left desolate; the destroying armies of hostile nations were to sweep over their land again and again; even Jerusalem was finally to fall, and Judah was to be carried away captive; yet the Promised Land was not to remain wholly forsaken forever. The assurance of the heavenly visitant to Isaiah was: ‘In it shall be a tenth, And it shall return, and shall be eaten: As a teil tree, and as an oak, Whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: So the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.’ Verse 13.

“This assurance of the final fulfillment of God’s purpose brought courage to the heart of Isaiah. What though earthly powers array themselves against Judah? What though the Lord’s messenger meet with opposition and resistance? Isaiah had seen the King, the Lord of hosts; he had heard the song of the seraphim, ‘The whole earth is full of His glory;’ he had the promise that the messages of Jehovah to backsliding Judah would be accompanied by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit; and the prophet was nerved for the work before him. Verse 3. Throughout his long and arduous mission he carried with him the memory of this vision. For sixty years or more he stood before the children of Judah as a prophet of hope, waxing bolder and still bolder in his predictions of the future triumph of the church.” Prophets and Kings, 307–310.