

Daniel 06-04-02b

Let's resume our study now in Daniel chapter 10. And as is often the case, we had a lively discussion on the break about the things that we've seen here. As is also often the case, some of my points have been anticipated in your questions and in your observations.

I have often mused to myself that there's probably no pastor that has a harder time keeping ahead of his group than I do, because you all are very thoughtful and very insightful. And one of the things that Patty brought up on the break is, in fact, one of the first points in my second session. And this has to do with our observation in the first session about the delay.

This was our main point that God does not always answer prayer immediately. And there's a reason for it. We anticipated it in Psalm 62, where David noted that one has to wait and make God his refuge.

And there is an advantage in this. There is a testing of our faith that takes place when a test persists over time. Some kinds of faith, God is testing our reactions.

How quickly do we turn to him when a trial appears? And this is sort of like a reflex test. How good are your reflexes? When something happens, do you think of a human solution or do you turn to God? And that's at the initial point. There is another more common kind of test where we have an ongoing situation.

We have an ongoing relationship. We have an ongoing challenge. And the continuity and the persistence and the endurance of our faith is what is at issue.

And as Patty brought up, and I didn't think of this example, she did, but there is a prime example when you look at Elijah and the prophets of Baal up on Mount Carmel. And one of the taunts that Elijah makes to those prophets is, how come you're not getting an answer from Baal? Is he busy elsewhere? Has he become otherwise occupied? And you could interpret this three-week delay that, well, God was busy doing something else and took three weeks to get around to Daniel's request. And that's not a valid way of understanding this, although it's a valid question to ask.

And we're going to see in the first part of our second session this morning why that is. And it has to do with the weaving together of things in God's plan. One of the things that God does that is unique to Him is working all things together for good, Romans 8, 28.

All things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose. When God gave the command to Gabriel to go provide Daniel solace and comfort and an explanation and an amplification of the vision, which he has received and which he understands. He understands the message is true.

The appointed time is long. He understood the message and had understanding of the vision.

He perceives and comprehends the communication, but it greatly troubles him, so much so that he goes into this period of fasting.

Well, God sends the messenger out on the first word of Daniel's prayer, but it takes him three weeks to get there. Now, did God know that it would take three weeks? Yes, He did. And did God allow for that in His plan? Did God call Gabriel back on the carpet and say, you know, Gabriel, you really messed that up.

I wanted you to be there three weeks earlier. Not at all. We're going to see proof of that as we move forward this morning.

But keep in mind that it isn't that we are a low priority. Patty made the point that people have argued and have even taught in the past that, well, you're unimportant in God's plan, and if it takes a while for God to answer your prayer, just realize, you know, God's got bigger fish to fry than you, and you just have to wait your turn. There is a grain of truth in that.

In that, humility recognizes that when I have a problem, God is not going to stop the universe and put all of His priorities on hold simply to answer my prayer. We are arrogant if we live in a pre-Copernican universe where everything revolves around us and we get impatient with God. What's the matter with Him that He's not answering my prayer, not relieving me of this test? But the reason we understand that and the reason we have humility is we recognize not that God is too busy to help us, but that God has incorporated whatever delay there may be and whatever the duration of that test is, that is a part of His plan.

Now, we can see that in this particular passage, and the reason we know this can be found in the very first words of verse 4 of chapter 10. What does it say? Now, on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, and here's Gabriel standing in the resplendent, reflecting glory of God. Now, the twenty-fourth day of the first month.

What is the first month? Nisan, Abib. What do we know about this in the Jewish calendar? This is the month where we have most of our spring feasts, the first half of the feast calendar. We study these in detail, looking at the feasts and offerings of Israel.

What's the sequence of events in the first month? What's the first thing that happens? Tenth day of the month, take up the Passover lamb, and you observe him for four days. On the fourteenth day of the month, at sundown, sacrifice of the Passover lamb, 14 Nisan. Then, the Sabbath, which follows, is the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, a feast which lasts for seven days.

In the year that the Lord Jesus was crucified, Passover fell on, 14 Nisan fell on a Thursday. The day begins at sundown, and that day is a Sabbath. So, from sundown Thursday to sundown Friday is a Sabbath.

They had to get the bodies off the crosses, so that they weren't there over the Sabbath, because

the day after that is the regular weekly Sabbath, and they wouldn't be able to do anything until Sunday. And so, they went and broke the legs of the thieves to be sure they would die in time to get them down off the cross. They went to Jesus.

He had already relinquished his spirit, and they didn't break his legs. No bone of his was broken in fulfillment of prophecy. And so, the three days, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, early in the morning on the third day, Jesus rose.

So, you have 14 Nisan beginning on Thursday, 15 Nisan beginning on Friday, 16 Nisan beginning on Saturday, and 17 Nisan is going to begin at sundown on Sunday. So, basically, you have those three days, and then you have the seven days. It's really a total of eight days.

There's a Sabbath at the beginning, a Sabbath at the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So, in the year that Jesus was crucified, how many days had passed from Passover until the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Seven plus three, ten days, right? So, what would the date be when the Feast of Unleavened Bread was over? 24th of Nisan. What is the date that Gabriel finally comes and gives Daniel the information that God detailed him to give? 24th of Nisan, 24th Abib.

Now, this is a symbolic date. There is a purpose in the delay. God knew that the angels were going to have to observe their priorities and do something else for three full weeks.

And until they reinforced one another, Michael came along. Gabriel would not be free to deliver this message. This is all a part of the plan of God, because it is important that this information arrive on the 24th of Nisan.

And that's why we're told it. If it wasn't important, it wouldn't be in God's Word, right? So, what is the significance of the 24th of Nisan? Well, it is exactly ten days after Passover. And it is just after the Feast of Unleavened Bread has concluded.

There's only one more feast in the spring cycle, isn't there? That's Pentecost. And when is it going to hit from the 24th of Nisan? How many days? Forty days. Forty days, right? Fifty days.

Count fifty days from the first Sabbath after Passover, and that's Pentecost, right? Always hits on a Sunday. So, we assume, because it's convenient and symmetrical, that the Passover fell on a Thursday in this year for Daniel, a very portentous year, a year in which this great vision is delivered to him, and this great communication from Gabriel takes place, and he sees the glory of God reflected. This is the same Gabriel that came to him two years earlier, in the first year of Darius, but it didn't describe him in these glowing terms.

Gabriel's appearance is different here than it was the first time. Why is that? The first appearance gives us the 70 weeks prophecy, tells us about the time of the Antichrist, the time of the prince and the people who are to come, and the covenant that he makes and breaks, and the destruction, and things that are in human terms. This time, the content of the message is different, the appearance of the messenger is different, and the date of his arrival is given to

us, and that date is significant.

The first advent is pictured in those feasts, is it not? Passover, unleavened bread, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Passover lamb, his resurrection on the Feast of First Fruits, which is the first day of that Feast of Unleavened Bread, and all of this relates to the first advent of Christ. This information is purposely delayed until just after that feast cycle is complete. Now, of course, they're not observing these things as they would had they been in the land with a standing temple and so on, but the dates are nevertheless there, aren't they? But it's in sort of a hidden form.

Daniel is over here in Persia, and I am sure that they continue to recognize and acknowledge. Now, why do you suppose Daniel felt it appropriate after receiving this vision on probably the third day of the first month to fast? He can't observe the normal Passover cycle, can he? They don't have the opportunity to do the things that had been done for hundreds of years in Israel regarding the celebration of this Feast. They're not in the land, and God specifically told them in the law, when you are in the land, these are the things that you will observe.

Well, they're not in the land. This is one of the reasons the Seder rituals and things that a lot of the Jews celebrate around the place are a little bit iffy, because the sacrifices and offerings and feasts were to be celebrated in the land. And when you're outside the land, you can think about them and meditate on them, but you can't really observe them because you're not in the place of their observance.

You're not in the time of their observance. So, this is a significant day. Now, what is the significance of it being right after Passover and firstfruits and unleavened bread? Well, what happened right after those when Messiah came? And Messiah was cut off, but not for himself.

There's 40 days of the sporadic appearance of Jesus to his disciples and so on. There's that 40-day window after unleavened bread until Pentecost. And it's a transitional time.

And there's big change coming. But the offer of the kingdom, the presentation of the Messiah to Israel that is pictured in those first feasts is complete. And the time of the cutting off of the Messiah has passed.

Right? That's what you have on the 24th of Nisan. So, 24th day of the first month, no accident that we're given this information. I was by the side of the great rivers.

No accident that we're given the location. The great river, the Tigris. What do we know about the Tigris or the Hiddekel River? What were the names of the rivers in the Garden of Eden? This is one of them, isn't it? Tigris and Euphrates.

The Hiddekel is one of those rivers. How many times have we seen Ezekiel down by the river? Got a gospel song, down by the riverside. What does the river represent? The man of faith is like the tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth his fruit in his season.

Rivers are flowing waters, living waters. It's not a stagnation. It means that things are moving on.

Things are moving forward. There is life in the river. There is life giving water.

There will be a river that flows from beneath the temple in the millennial kingdom and beneath the throne of God in the kingdom of the Father. Rivers speak of life and of growth. The tree planted, it's alive and it brings forth his fruit in his season.

So, this is a much more hopeful scene. And the messenger is much more glorious in appearance. And it is a propitious and specific time in which this vision is revealed.

And it follows this period of fasting and being deprived on the part of Daniel. The other question was raised on the break. It seems as though Daniel had set three weeks as his appointed fasting time.

It seems to be suggested by the last phrase in chapter 10, verse 3. He says, I ate no pleasant food, meat, wine, nor did I know it myself till three whole weeks were fulfilled. It sounds like he had set aside three weeks and said, I'm going to do this for three weeks. I don't see any indication that Daniel had set a time on this fasting.

I think he was going to continue this self-denial until he got an answer from God. And he is simply saying, this is how long it took. And it is emphasized because Gabriel is going to come back and say, I was delayed for three whole weeks.

And if we didn't know that Daniel had been fasting for three weeks, we wouldn't know that, yes, in fact, Gabriel had been sent forth on the first day of Daniel's fasting and praying. And I think it is just there for emphasis. And there are 21 days in three weeks.

It's three times seven. We know that numbers are important in Scripture. Three is a perfect number of God, the number of the Trinity, holy, holy, holy.

Seven is the number of perfection on earth. Sort of four is the number of earthly things, universality on earth, four directions, four dimensions and so on. Plus three, which is God.

And when God completes things on earth, you have seven. You have 7,000 years in human history, seven days in the week, six days of labor, the seventh is a day of rest and so on. So this is not accidental either, but all of this is taking place in that first month.

And during that fasting and praying on Daniel's part and self-denial on his part, you have all of the incidents associated with Passover, unleavened bread and firstfruits. So when Gabriel appears this time, Daniel is by the side of the great river. Daniel is like that tree planted by the rivers of water.

Do you think Daniel knew Psalm 1? David had penned that thing 450 years before this? Of course he did. He's by the river, that is the Tigris, which is the river that flows through the

capital city area there. He says, I lifted my eyes and looked.

We did a study once on lifting the eyes. You may remember it was in Genesis when Abram was taking Isaac to Mount Moriah. And he said he lifted his eyes and saw the mountain.

You remember what that signifies? Many, many times in the Bible, when you see the protagonist there lift their eyes and look, there is forward progress in the plan of God. There is the resolution of a conflict. There is, you know, I lift my eyes under the hills from whence cometh my help.

And this implies and suggests and connotes to us that Daniel is continually looking for God's answer. It's an expression of faith. You lift up the eyes.

He's not downcast. His countenance has not fallen. He's evidently sitting there looking at the river, going by, meditating.

Again, Psalm 1, the man who doesn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of the scornful. His delight is in the law of the Lord. He meditates in that law day and night.

He is the one by the river bringing forth his fruit. His leaf doesn't wither and what he does prospers. And so this is symbolically speaking of Daniel's faith and Daniel's patience in waiting for God.

There will be a season where fruit will be born. There will be a season where deliverance comes. And it is the season of God's choosing.

And it weaves into the perfect tapestry of God's plan. I lifted my eyes and looked, a certain man clothed in linen. This is why we are always careful about over-interpreting vocabulary words in Scripture.

Sometimes angel means a human messenger. The angels to the churches in Revelation 2 and 3, those are human pastors. And yet the word angel is used here.

We clearly have an angel in view and he's called a man. The idea first appeared in this book way back when Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were in the fiery furnace. And Nebuchadnezzar is looking through the wavy heat distortion and he says, I see a fourth man.

And his appearance is like a son of God. He appears to be of other than earthly origin, but he calls him a man. A certain man, this is a specific man.

The idea of certain here doesn't really do justice to the Hebrew adjective. It doesn't just mean, well, there was a certain man. You know, Jesus said this sometimes in his parables, a certain man went to Jericho.

Well, this means a very specific and exceptional man. I would translate this exceptional.

Exceptional, an exceptional man.

Something that you don't ordinarily see. Clothed in linen. What does linen typically, and I say typically with emphasis, what is the typology of linen? What does it connote? Linen is righteousness.

The pure, fine linen, white over and over again. That is the, and what does this mean? Gabriel, this is kind of like looking at the ribbons on a military person. You know, you can see some of the places they've been and some of the, at least the nature of their accomplishments.

If somebody's wearing a Navy commendation or an Army commendation, or they've got a meritorious service medal, or they've got a bronze star, they've got a bunch of Vietnam service ribbons, or they've got World War II service ribbons or Korea service ribbons. You can look at that and see, this person has a history of faithful service. And being clothed in linen, this is Gabriel's personal service.

Now he can reflect the glory of God that comes from God, but those linen garments that you and I, God willing, and us willing, will one day wear, those are our deeds. That's our personal accumulation of righteousness that we have claimed by faith. And whatever the means, Gabriel has been a faithful servant of God.

And this linen represents his past faithful service, his righteousness. Clothed in linen, his waist is girded with gold of Uphaz. This was the finest, purest, most brilliantly reflective gold in the ancient world.

It was prized. There was gold, and then there was gold of Uphaz. This is very famous.

You can trace it with a concordance through scripture. It is always presented as the most valuable gold there is. What does gold speak of? Gold speaks of righteousness in a different sense.

The linen garment, that speaks of the individual's acts of claiming and appropriating the righteousness of God. It sort of implies volition, that you have chosen to be obedient. You have chosen to be faithful.

And whatever the means is by which angels claim the righteousness of God, that's what Gabriel has done. I think it's a little bit different mechanism than faith, because faith is what you can't see, and the angels can see everything. But they are still obedient.

He makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. So, the linen part is righteousness with an emphasis on the individual's choices, and the individual's participation in appropriating God's righteousness. Gold also speaks of righteousness, but the emphasis here is under pressure.

Gold is refined. Gold is purified. And the only way you purify gold is by fire.

You have to heat it up. You have to melt it. And the hotter you get it, the more the impurities surface to the top.

This gold of Uphaz was the most highly refined and pure gold that you could get. Those who mined the gold, and worked the gold, and processed the gold, and refined the gold in Uphaz, they were the best. This was like, if you want a watch, you used to go and get a Swiss watch, because the Swiss were the master craftsmen with the highest precision, the closest tolerances, the highest quality.

If you want to get a car, you go to one of the car companies that is noted for their precision, and their attention to detail, and they hand craft, and hand fit, and it costs more. Well, here, this waste being girded with the gold of Uphaz, this means not only has Gabriel appropriated God's righteousness by his obedience, and his faithfulness in whatever sense angels are faithful, but there has been opposition. There has been pressure.

There has been conflict. And in that refining fire, Gabriel has brought out of it gold refined in the fire. And it much more brilliantly reflects.

White reflects all the colors of the spectrum, doesn't it? That's why it's white. Reflects everything back, and you see white as a color, or the absence of color, however you want to term it. Gold reflects in a completely different way, doesn't it? Gold, burnished gold, refined gold has a mirror-like surface.

And not only do you get the light reflected, but you have images reflected. You have information reflected. And so, it is another aspect of righteousness by obedience, and by dedication to God, and love for God.

His body is like beryl. Now, this is yet another reference to righteousness, but beryl is translucent. And so, you have brilliant white cloth that reflects light in one way.

You have brilliantly refined gold that reflects light in another way. And now you have a translucent gemstone that reflects and refracts light in yet another way. And another aspect of God's glory is revealed in these translucent gemstones.

And His whole body, what does the body speak of in symbolic terms? This is your movements. These are your activities. That's why the blood on the earlobe, and the blood on the thumb, and the blood on the toe pretty much comprehends the body, and it's what the body does.

And these are the actual actions that reflect and refract the glory of God, and make it manifest and evident. And this brilliant flashing forth. The other thing about a gemstone is, as it turns, you get those brief little flashes like lightning off of those faceted surfaces.

And you think about specific actions, specific moments, specific decisions that brilliantly reflect the glory of God. Gold is a constant reflection. White is a constant reflection.

But gemstones, in the way that they are cut and faceted, you get these brilliant flashes. And it speaks of a momentary brilliant reflection and a constant glow reflecting that bright light of the glory of God. His body is like beryl.

His face like the appearance of lightning. Lightning is brief, powerful, unexpected, unpredictable, uncontrollable. If you have a face like lightning, you've seen time-lapse photography where they've got a big dark cloud and there's all these lightning bolts coming down.

Would you ever, if the Bible didn't say it, would you say or even conceive or imagine somebody having a face like lightning? I mean, I could conceive of someone having a face that was like the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration where it glows so much that you can't look at it. But a face like lightning, I mean, you just don't imagine a lightning bolt coming up out of somebody's collar. And it's kind of like a tree shape or a jaggedy thing, you know, like the Gatorade symbol, a little lightning bolt.

How can you have a face like lightning? What does it mean? Well, once again, just like those brilliantly faceted reflections that are momentary, what is Gabriel's ministry on earth? He appears and disappears. He appears to a prophet. He appears to Mary.

He appears to Joseph. And when he speaks, it is a pure reflection of God's glory. And his face, this is what you communicate with, is your face, right? You can communicate without a word.

We watched that Kong movie and one of the things they've done with the, you know, CGA and the clay and the models they make of the big ape there, the big, is he an ape or a gorilla? He's a gorilla. If you read Tarzan by Edgar Rice Burroughs, he's real picky about the difference between apes and gorillas. Tarzan's an ape man, not a gorilla man.

But Kong is a gorilla. But one of the things they've done that I've never seen in any previous of the many incarnations of Kong is they gave him such an expressive face. Kong never says an intelligible word, but in the telling of this story, his face is so expressive and he can find humor in something and he can be angry and he can be tender and they infuse and impute all of these complex emotions and thoughts to this big gorilla.

And it's all reflected in his face. You think about how many millions upon millions of people there are in the world, how many thousands of people have we seen and no two seem to look alike. I mean, most of us have two I's and O's in a mouth and in a fairly regular configuration.

And yet we can see vast differences from face to face to face to face. The face like lightning is that which Gabriel presents to those that he confronts, those to whom he speaks. And when he speaks, it is all the power of God.

It is all the glory of God. It is an instantaneous revelation of God. And it's like lightning.

It just bursts forth. It cracks with thunder. It flashes forth with brilliance that you can hardly

look at.

His eyes like torches of fire. Fire always universally speaks of the righteous judgment of God. And when Gabriel looks at something, when Gabriel comprehends something, it is with the judgment of God that burns away that which is temporary, that which is frivolous, that which is superficial, that which is unnecessary, and finds that which is of value.

Gold, silver, precious stones, the wood, hay, and stubble is incinerated in his sight. Wouldn't it be great if we had eyes like torches of fire when we look at our life and we look at our decisions and we can instantly see here is the merit, here is the eternal value, here is the fluff and the tender and the combustibles, that which is temporary, that which is meaningless. Would God that we had eyes like torches of fire and we could judge with the perception and the standards of God as we look at the things that are in front of us.

His arms and feet like burnished bronze in color. His arms and his feet are reflecting. There is an amplification.

When they have a precious stone, it's always in a setting. And many times the setting will be constructed in such a way that it complements and augments the glory of the stone. When you have a nice picture, you want to put it in a frame that complements and supplements and enhances the main thing that is in view.

Well, Gabriel's arms and feet are not the main features of his persona. Obviously, his face is eye-catching and his garments are eye-catching. But that which remains to be described after you talk about his garment and his face and his eyes are his arms and his feet.

And those exposed portions are like burnished bronze and they complement and augment. They enhance in the same way we saw Jesus in Revelation 1 with his feet like burnished bronze. And it is a reflection of whatever light is present, this flashing forth and all the glory of the rest of it, it is going to be picked up in the contours of the arms and the feet and reflected back.

But it's not gold, is it? It's like burnished bronze. This is what they used to make mirrors out of in the ancient world. Kind of expensive to lug around a big old heavy slab of gold and polish it up to look in.

So you would use this less expensive, but durable and brilliantly reflective metal surface. It's serviceable. It's not valuable per se, but it's serviceable and it serves as a reflective augmentation of all of the rest of these things.

The sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. So how does Daniel know what the voice of a multitude sounds like? Well, they used to do a lot of chanting in the ancient world. If you've ever been in a big church, I thought about doing it here, but we haven't done it yet.

But when you do responsive reading, you go to the back of the hymnal and there'll be a passage of scripture and every other verse or every other paragraph is in boldface. And so the

leader, whoever it is, the pastor or the guy who's doing the scripture reading will read the little part and then everybody reads the boldface part and you alternate back and forth. And when all the people are speaking, if you have a big auditorium of three to 500 people, it's the most I've ever led in a responsive reading.

There's a wave of sound when everyone is reading together, everyone is saying the same thing together. If you've ever been to a vocal majority concert where you've got 100 plus guys all standing there, leaning forward with their mouth wide open, projecting their voice at you, there's a physical wave of power that you can feel strike you with the impact of those human voices. This is what it's like when Gabriel speaks.

He's like the vocal majority at the crescendo note at the end of one of their songs. It's power, it is impact. But the impact is the words that he speaks.

So Daniel alone saw the vision. Daniel has men with him. He's sitting down by the river and there are men with him.

This is another one of the things that makes people speculate that prophets going all the way back to Samuel and down through with Elijah and Elisha and that there was sort of a school of the prophets and that there were men who recognized that God had a prophet on the earth and they wanted to learn the word of God and they would stick with the prophet. They would follow him around and wait for him to speak and ask him questions and discuss the word of God and learn and grow and dedicate themselves to that and pretty much spend time with the prophet the way Jesus' disciples spent time with him. There are other men with Daniel.

They do not see this vision. Now, Gabriel is really there and he's really speaking but it is hidden to the eyes of these others. But instead, a great terror fell on them so that they fled to hide themselves.

There was some sort of, I would guess, there was some sort of flashing episode, some emanation of startling light and sound and these men got scared and ran away. It's kind of a shame. You figure if they'd had, you know, be strong and have a good courage, be not afraid, the Lord thy God is with him, they might have been able to stick around and see what Daniel saw.

But the communication from God to Daniel frightened them and they ran away. They did not have capacity to stand and receive this glorious revelation and it is a reminder to us that as we learn and grow and come to understand things in the Word of God, from God's Word, it is not necessarily going to be something that we can share with believers who don't yet have the capacity, even if they are willing. These men are obviously not dawdlers in their duties.

If they're sticking with Daniel, who knows, maybe they've been with him all of these three weeks and he's sitting down there by the river and they're sitting with him. Nothing spectacular happening. Daniel is on a fast and he's pondering and looking out over the water and he lifts up

his eyes and hears this something all of a sudden happens and these men, while they are willing, they're not ready and they are scared and they flee away in terror.

Sometimes the things that God reveals to us are for us and for those who are similarly equipped to understand and appreciate and it doesn't mean, it doesn't say, and behold Daniel did look down and sneer upon those that ran away. Daniel did taunt and mock those that could not take the vision and we should not have a condescending or belittling view of believers who don't understand the things that we may come to understand. That is not the goal.

Daniel isn't looking at the men who are fleeing. Daniel is looking at Gabriel and that's what we should be looking at. And if there are believers who don't understand what we understand, if there are believers who are frightened by what the Word of God may reveal if they look at it closely and it makes them insecure, makes them uncomfortable, well, who are you to judge another man's servant? We all have our own row to hoe, don't we? And so Daniel stands by and these men flee and hide themselves.

Daniel says, therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision. Many times God is going to reveal things even as we sit together and fellowship as a group and study the Word of God. There are going to be specific applications and specific understandings related to our circumstances and our decisions and our life that are going to be for us and we're going to be left alone.

And that's why we are individual priests. That's why we have God the Holy Spirit individually given. You don't depend on me for your spiritual life or anyone else.

You depend on God the Holy Spirit, God the Father, and God the Son, pretty much in that order. That's how we subsist. That's wherein we have our being.

Jesus Christ has been made to us for righteousness and peace and sanctification. And it's a wonderful thing to bless and be a blessing in fellowship, but there are some things that happen when we are alone and it requires that alone time and that alone meditation. And God reveals things to us in the quiet hours of solitude when we are meditating and sitting by the river alone.

That's what Daniel sees here. And when he sees this great vision, no strength remained in him. This is often the experience of Old Testament prophets when they see even the reflected glory of God.

Remember, John at the end of the Revelation wants to fall down at the feet of the angel that's talking to him. The guy says, no, wait, get up. I'm a servant of God like you.

Worship God. But to the extent that the glory and the power and the beauty of God are reflected, mortal man just becomes weak in his presence. No man can see God and live.

And you get the idea that this beauty just drains Daniel of his strength. My vigor was turned to

frailty in me and I retained no strength. Well, this often happens by way of catharsis.

Sometimes we need to be drained of our own strength. We need to be humbled. We need to recognize how great God is and how paltry and insignificant we are.

And that's when we are ready to receive the Word of God, ready to see the power of God. And that's what Daniel is ready for now. He hears the sound of the words.

He's on his face with his face to the ground and he's about to receive this great revelation. That's what we're going to pick up next time. But let's close for this morning in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the incredible information that you reveal to us in your Word. We thank you for the faithfulness of those who have gone before, beginning with the prophets and the apostles and extending down through history so that we can hold your Word in our hands, study it for ourselves, and seek that place of understanding and revelation that those before us have found and in which there is so much strength and so much opportunity and potential for fulfilling your plan and reflecting your glory. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister these things to our hearts.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.