

The Man Dressed in Linen

Introduction

In Daniel 10:1 we are told that the “understanding of the message came to him in a vision.” Thus, three weeks after the initial “revelation,” God gave Daniel the explanation. This vision is a two-way interaction between God’s messenger and Daniel (Daniel 10:16-17).

We first read about Daniel’s dramatic reaction and then how he was comforted. Thereafter he was given the outline of the explanation. Again, according to the Hebrew way this outline is actually a condensed summary of the whole vision. The purpose is to make the reader focus on the important issue; i.e. to get the point of the story from the very beginning. This summary is found in Daniel 10:14:

*Now I have **come to explain** to you what will happen to **your people** in the **future**, for the vision concerns a time yet to come. (NIV)*

It seems that many read the prophecy too quickly and therefore miss this important information. Similar words are found in Daniel 9:24 where Daniel was told that the 70 weeks are for “your people” and “your” holy city to finish rebellion. Many have realized that the focus in the Daniel 9 prophecy is the Messiah and His first coming and that it concerns Daniel’s people.

We need to be consistent and draw the same conclusions in Daniel 10:14. This last prophecy in Daniel is not about a symbolic or imagined people that will appear sometime in the future. No, the prophecy in Daniel 10-12 also concerns Daniel’s people! This is confirmed in Daniel 12:1 where “your people,” i.e. Daniel’s people is mentioned twice.

Daniel’s Reaction

Now we can understand Daniel’s reaction. When Daniel hears that the prophecy is about his people, the Israelites, he truly becomes fearful. In Daniel 9 he interceded for his own people because he was afraid that God had divorced them, Jeremiah 3:8. The heavenly response to that prayer came in Daniel 9:24-27 – so why another prophecy concerning Daniel’s people? Maybe that is the question Daniel had in his mind here in Daniel 10. With all these thoughts in his head, Daniel became speechless, Daniel 10:15:

*While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was **speechless**. (NIV)*

This is a strong reaction and very similar to the prophet Isaiah’s experience in Isaiah 6:5. At the first encounter with the Man Dressed in Linen, Daniel fainted but when the focus of the vision was mentioned, he is crushed. He had nothing to say. He seemed to fear the message. So, the only right thing for Daniel to do, he thought – was to worship. Daniel bowed down before the Man Dressed in Linen, i.e. he worshiped him – without saying a word.

Did Daniel Worship an Angel?

Some believe that this being was an angel and in that case Daniel actually worshiped an angel. But, when Daniel worshiped the Man Dressed in Linen, he was not rebuked for doing so. When John the Revelator worshiped an angel he was immediately rebuked by the angel, Revelation 19:10, 22:9. That did not happen here in Daniel 10! This supports our previous conclusion that the Man Dressed in Linen is Christ.

The first “revelation,” which showed that the message was about the Truth, Jesus Christ, and about a great war, was very important. But that information alone would not be enough to enlighten Daniel, his people, and Bible scholars throughout the millennia. The Man Dressed in Linen had in mind to reveal details of this prophetic message. But before it could happen, Daniel again needed to be touched and comforted by the Man Dressed in Linen, Daniel 10:16-17:

*Then one who **looked like a man** touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “**I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.**” (NIV)*

This time Daniel’s lips were touched and therefore he was able to speak coherently. But he still was filled with anguish. He truly was overwhelmed by this encounter and felt helpless. Daniel honestly told the Man Dressed in Linen how he felt about this encounter and later we will see that he received more help.

Lord

Daniel perceived himself as a “servant” and the being he interacted with as “lord.” According to “Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words” the Hebrew word used here is Adon, which is a short form of Adonay. Both have Strong’s number 113 and Adon means “lord; master; Lord.” The Brown-Driver Briggs lexicon tells us that this word either refers to men or to God. That means that the Bible translator can choose how to write it. Thus, we need to let the context reveal the truth.

If the translators believe it refers to God, they indicate that by using a capital “L” writing “Lord” and if they believe it refers to a human being, they use a small “l” as in “lord.” The King James Version has this word translated to “lord” in Daniel 10:17 but the same Hebrew word in the same KJV is translated “Lord” with a capital “L” in Daniel 12:8! In both instances Daniel speaks to the Man Dressed in Linen!! This is a good example that shows how the translator’s view colors the interpretation.

Knowing that the Man Dressed in Linen very likely is Jesus Christ Himself, we certainly understand Daniel’s reaction. He felt helpless, lowly, feeble, and could hardly breathe. Another divine touch was needed, Daniel 10:18-19:

*Then **again**, the one having the **likeness of a man** touched me and strengthened me. And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! **Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!**” (NKJV)*

Once more Daniel is comforted and affirmed by the Man Dressed in Linen. Daniel is called “highly esteemed” in some versions and “greatly beloved” in the NKJV. This must have given him much comfort. Thus, he had nothing to fear! He was not going to receive a dooms message; rather God would give him the enlightenment that he had requested.

Peace Be to You

Then the Man Dressed in Linen said to Daniel, “Peace be to you.” This is actually a very unique phrase. After Jesus’ resurrection He used this phrase when He showed Himself to the disciples. It is found in John 19:19, 21, 26, and also in Luke 24:36-37:

*While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “**Peace be with you.**” They were **startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.** (NRSV)*

This in itself is not a proof but again an indication that the Man Dressed in Linen is a divine being and very likely Daniel’s Messiah. None of the angels that appeared to Daniel in other instances in the Book of Daniel

used this phrase. The words “be strong” should not be seen only as encouraging words but rather words with creative Power. The words were spoken – and Daniel was immediately strengthened! Finally, he was ready to receive what he had been praying and waiting for, Daniel 10:19:

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” (NKJV)

The Message

The Man Dressed in Linen began by revealing information that Daniel hadn’t asked for. Furthermore, this information does not really appear relevant for the prophecy. It seems that it is given to Daniel to show God’s compassion; to show that God constantly is at work and cares about what happens in the world. However, the information given, led to the next point on the agenda. The Man Dressed in Linen proceeded to give the details concerning the prophecy, Daniel 10:20-21:

*So he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the **Book of Truth**. (No one supports me against them except **Michael**, your prince.” (NIV)*

In the verses quoted above it becomes evident that Daniel, probably for the first time, was clear enough in his mind to think. No answer to the question, “Do you know why I have come to you” is recorded, so we assume that Daniel was ready to receive the information. The One speaking was obviously the same as the One who spoke to Daniel earlier in verses 12-14. He mentions the Prince of Persia in both places, for example. This shows that the Man Dressed in Linen continued to be the active person in this vision.

The Book of Truth

Now the Man Dressed in Linen comes to a very interesting issue. He will tell Daniel what is “written in the Book of Truth.” We have already found that the word “truth” refers to Jesus Christ or Daniel’s Messiah. That means this “Book of Truth” is either written by the Messiah, or at least refers to Him. Both options should be considered. What kind of book or books does Jesus have? The good news is that we don’t need to speculate. In the same prophecy, in Daniel 12:1 we read the following:

*At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time **your people** — everyone whose **name is found written in the book** — will be delivered. (NIV)*

The promise is that, “everyone” of Daniel’s people who had their names “written in the book” – would be delivered. The word for delivered could also be translated to “saved.” That sounds like the “Book of Life,” doesn’t it? Revelation 3:5. We know for certain that Jesus Christ is in charge of the Book of Life. Therefore, it is very likely that the “Book of Truth” mentioned in this prophecy is the same as the “Book of Life.” In that case this is a promise to Daniel’s people that, if their names are written in the Book of Life, they will be protected from God’s wrath at His coming. Now it is very appropriate to read John 14:6:

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (NIV)

Yes, Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father or enter His kingdom unless he or she comes through the Life-giver and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. This quotation fits very well to the “Book of Truth” and to the role of Jesus Christ. This is the Messiah’s promise of salvation to the faithful among Daniel’s people.

Michael

We have already understood that the Man Dressed in Linen refers to Christ. What about Michael then? Some believe that also Michael is a symbol of Jesus Christ. But it doesn't seem plausible to have two symbols referring to the same being, in the same passage, where both are acting side by side. Therefore, if one of them is a symbol of Christ, then the other one is not. Let us look carefully at the texts about Michael to see what the Bible says.

In Daniel 10:21 which I quoted earlier, the Man Dressed in Linen called Michael, "your prince." If we look up the Hebrew word for prince which is "sar," in Strong's Concordance it simply says, "a head person (of any rank or class)." This word is used thirteen times in the Book of Daniel and eleven times it refers to secular princes and kings. Other common translations are "commander," "captain," "chief," "general," etc.

In contrast, the Hebrew word "nagiyd," also translated "prince" in English versions, is found only three times in the Book of Daniel. According to the context this word "nagiyd" clearly refers to Christ. Daniel 9:25:

*...to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the **Prince** shall be seven weeks... (KJV).*

In the next verse, 9:26:

*...and the people of the **prince** that shall come... (KJV)*

Both times the word "nagiyd" is used and in both instances this specific word points to the Messiah, "the Anointed One," as we already have concluded. The third place where this Hebrew word "nagiyd" is found is in Daniel 11:22 where it talks about the "prince of the covenant" and this description again strongly refers to the Messiah.

But notice, the Hebrew word "nagiyd," is *not* used in Daniel 10:21 where Michael is called "Daniel's prince." This indicates that the word "prince" does not primarily refer to Christ and that Michael therefore would not be a symbol for Christ. The next text describing Michael's activities is found in Daniel 12:1:

*At that time **Michael**, the great **prince** who protects your people, will arise. (NIV)*

This passage again uses the non-specific word for "prince" to describe Michael. In 10:13 he was called "one of the chief princes" and in the quote above "the great prince." These two expressions are very similar.

The next phrase gives us more clues about his identity when it says that Michael is the one who "protects your people." He is obviously the mighty angel that is in charge of Daniel's people, the Israelites. If we look up Michael in a dictionary we actually find this text as the explanation. Maybe every nation has a specific angel – or maybe only God's Old Covenant people had this special divine help. The Bible doesn't tell!

Book of Jude

In the Book of Jude we find Michael in action again. Moses died on the top of Mount Nebo just before his people were to enter Canaan. He was buried in Moab. "But to this day no one knows where his grave is," Deuteronomy 34:6. We also know that both Elijah and Moses showed up together with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Luke 9:30-31. This happened *before* Christ's death and resurrection. If Moses was alive and in "glorious splendor" at the time of Jesus' ministry on this earth, he must have been resurrected by someone's authority.

It seems impossible that even a chief angel would have the authority to rebuke Satan and resurrect Moses to eternal life. The only Life-Giver in the Scriptures is God and the only One who has the right to give individuals

eternal life, is Jesus Christ. Therefore, Michael, in Jude 9, correctly referred this issue to God in the power struggle between Michael and the devil. Jude 9:

But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (NIV)

Do you see it? The "archangel Michael" "did not dare" to slander the devil! Michael did not dare to claim the dead body of Moses! At that time Jesus had not yet died on the cross and the resurrection of Moses was totally dependent on Jesus' future death on the cross. Therefore, it seems very logical that Michael does not choose to contend with the devil about Moses' resurrection but simply refers to the authority of the Lord. Please notice that Michael refers to the Lord in the third person. Thus, Michael cannot be the same as the Lord in this passage either.

The most interesting passage remains, Revelation 12, where Michael and his angels are fighting against the devil and his angels. But we will come back to that when we study Daniel 12. Already now we will establish that this war was won by "the blood of the Lamb," which certainly refers to Christ's victory on the cross, Revelation 12:11.

Lastly, there is another interesting aspect to this study on Michael. If we look up the Hebrew word we find that "Michael" means "who is like God." Please notice, it does not say "who is God!" No, Michael is "like" God. Maybe he is one of the highest positioned angels in heaven and consequently called the "archangel." No wonder that he is in charge of the angels in heaven, Revelation 12:7.

Summary

- Michael is one of the great archangels and the protector of Daniel's people.
- The "Man Dressed in Linen" refers to Jesus Christ.
- The focus of the prophecy is what will happen to Daniel's people in the future.
- The Book of Truth is the same as the Book of Life.

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