

Prayer and the Heavenly Realm
Daniel 10:10–15¹

Introduction

In our last couple of messages Pastor Dickson and I have stressed the following propositions: (1) *We need to seek God desperately, and (2) We must remember that God answers our prayers for His glory because He is King.* Today, we continue this topic in the proceeding verses.

I am sure that I am not alone in this feeling: You spend time in prayer and then afterward wonder, *Did my prayers even get beyond this ceiling?* In a rationalistic world prayer may seem like a futile exercise. Yet the overwhelming truth in Scripture is that it is through the prayers of the saints that God will accomplish His purposes. And you will note that on many occasions in Scripture prayer is often accompanied by a record of some particular spiritual battle (e.g. Dan. 6). If you have ever wondered what happens in the unseen realm while you are on your knees, get ready to get a front row seat in Daniel 10:10–15.

Truth: *Our prayers, though they always reach heaven, may result in heightened spiritual warfare.*

Daniel 10:10–15 ¹⁰ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. ¹² Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.” ¹⁵ When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.

Preview Outline:

1. **Your Prayers Reach Heaven (vv. 10–12) — *God hears***
2. **Your Prayers Receive Answers (vv. 10–12) — *God answers***
3. **Your Prayers Result in Warfare (vv. 13–15) — *God prevails***

1. Your Prayers Reach Heaven (vv. 10–12) — *God hears*

Daniel, the faithful man who now was in in his 80th decade, had seen the Lord do many wonderful works in his lifetime. However, though someone may see God’s omnipotent hand perform wonderful deeds, this does not mean that he or she will always see such works in every situation. Daniel prayed to the Lord with the eyes of faith. He did not change his pattern nor did he presume upon God’s will. However, he did earnestly seek “to understand” (v. 12). The answer he received caused him to tremble greatly. The visitor relayed to Daniel that he came in response to Daniel’s fervent prayers (v. 12). This act happened only as a result of God’s active ear hearing the cries of His children (“chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard” v. 12, KJV). *God hears the prayers of his children.*

2. Your Prayers Receive Answers (vv. 10–12) — *God answers*

It would be one thing if God simply hears the prayers of His children but then had no inclination to doing anything about those prayers. It is an entirely different thing for God to not only listen to His children’s prayers but to also do something about those prayers. Daniel receives a personal answer from God. And we know that this is true of all of God’s children, for when His children ask for bread He will not instead give them a stone (Matt. 7:7–11; James 1:17). As we saw in the last message, God always answers prayers (whether in an affirmation of the direct request or a delay/direct no).

John 14:13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations taken from the New King James Version.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

John 16:23 “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.”

James 5:16 Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

3. **Your Prayers Result in Warfare (vv. 13–15) — *God prevails***

These next few verses contain some intriguing elements.

“*But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days*” — Who is this “prince of the kingdom of Persia? Since the messenger sent to Daniel came from the heavenly realm it can be safe to assume that the prince of the kingdom of Persia is not a mere human being. The only conclusion we can draw, then, is that the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” is either (1) Satan himself, or (2) a demonic force of some rank following orders from Satan. I believe it is best to see this as a fallen angel who follows Satan’s sordid orders. Why is he described as “the prince of the kingdom of Persia? Surely these demonic forces do not have physical residences. The best suggestions posited by Bible scholars is that Satan will actually assign his evil workers to wreak havoc in the human realm and in this text we have an example of a demon assigned to the kingdom of Persia. This is not a contradiction to other teachings of Scripture at all, for “evil angels can enter and control the bodies of human beings and animals (Mark 5:8–13) and in so doing can inflict physical maladies (Mark 9:17, muteness; 9:25, deafness) and moral impurity (Mark 5:2, uncleanness).”² Satan is the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2) and his evil intentions have clearly been manifest throughout history.

“*Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia*” — As I mention in my last message, the majestic Being described in vv. 5–9 is the pre-incarnate Christ. The “hand that touched me” was not in fact Christ, but another angel sent to bear the message to Daniel. As a result, this angel experienced fierce resistance from the demonic force, causing God’s “chief prince Michael” to come and aid in the heavenly conflict. Michael, mention only three times in the OT and all three in this book, is no stranger to conflict with the heavenly forces of evil (cf. Jude 9).

Your prayers are not wasted. They are heard by your Father who loves to give good gifts to His children. Even though your prayers enter the spiritual conflict never forget: *Our omnipotent Sovereign always wins.*

²Rolland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity: Prolegomena and the Doctrines of Scripture, God, and Angels* Vol. 1. (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 387.