

A Heavenly Perspective

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[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[3 : 32] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. What do we do with that, right? We're going to find out. So let's pray together.

Father, thank you for this time to study your Word. Thank you for difficult passages, ones that we are not meant to just skip over, but we're to deal with. And I pray this evening that your very spirit would come and lead us into the very truth that your word wants to teach us and the perspective that we're meant to have as Christians in this world. So we love you and we're thankful for your word and the gift of your grace to be able to study it together. And we pray this in Jesus' name and God's people said, amen. You can be seated. Now imagine that you're walking down the street and the next thing you know you're standing over a pit of burning lava. That is exactly the illusion that's created by German street artist Edgar Muller. I'm not for sure if you've ever heard of Edgar or if you're familiar with his art, but he became famous for his massive 3D, three-dimensional street paintings. What he does is he goes out into these like normal everyday environments. It might be a street, it could be a mall, it might be a city park, and he turns them into this experience that literally stops people in their tracks. After getting a permit for doing this, he'll go to this ordinary setting and he starts by mapping out a perimeter. And after he's established the center point, he then paints around that this 3D experience. And I'm telling you, his work is absolutely incredible. Here's one example where it looks like you're falling into this ice cave. Like, isn't that remarkable? That's really, really cool. Here's another one. This one looks like, keep in mind, this is like in the middle of a mall. And he's created this experience where it looks like you're about to fall down this giant waterfall. Here's another one of his paintings. This is on a street, and it looks like you're about to get swept away by this raging river. Here's one more. Here it is just in a normal street, like you got construction going on. And you walk up and it looks like you're standing over this giant ball of lava. And the thing is, you can't even see it until you walk up onto it. And then once you walk up on and you stand in that center point, it looks like you're falling in. Now, how freaky would that be?

[7 : 39] And people's response to this is really incredible. They will stop. They'll kind of look around, hesitate. Many of them will kind of walk away carefully, try not to fall in. Now, Edgar has been interviewed. He's all over YouTube. If you want to check more of this out, he's been interviewed by a variety of different media outlets. And people are always asking him, like, why do you do this kind of art? And one of the things that he said in one of these interviews I thought was really, really remarkable. This is what he said, quote, in my paintings, I'm trying to question our perception of daily life by challenging the appearance of public spaces. Let me read that again. In my paintings, I'm trying to question our perception about daily life by challenging the appearance of public spaces.

In other words, what Edgar's trying to do, he's actually not trying to impress you with his artwork. What he's trying to do is wake you up. He's trying to get you to see in a different way. In fact, his core obsession is human perception. That is how we tend to view the spaces that we walk around in every single day. Because let's be honest, most people walk around in their daily life and all they see is the surface.

All you see is a park. And you see trees. And you see this big monument. And what Edgar wants to get you to begin to question is, what if there's more going on around you than what you can actually see?

Your reality hasn't changed, but your perception of reality has been forever changed. Are you with me?

Now, my guess is that that has happened to you in one way or another. Now, it may not be with street art, but it may be in another way in life. For some of you, it was the very first time you traveled outside the country. And your perception of what the world was really like was changed forever. Has anybody experienced that?

[10:09] Nobody. Okay, well, you should get out more, right? Leave Minnesota, right? There's a whole beautiful world out there. Trust me, all right? Some of you, you thought you knew what love was. You were convinced that you had some understanding of love, and then she was born. And your entire categories of love took on new meaning. You begin to understand love in a totally different way. Others of you, you thought you had an appreciation for life, and then you went through a health crisis. And your understanding of what really actually matters in life was changed forever. Are y'all with me? I've been able to have had the privilege to lead many, many mission trips. And I've watched this in my life and others take place where people begin to see poverty. And all of a sudden, their understanding of poverty and the conditions that people live in in the world, it really takes on whole new categories.

If you would stop and think for just a moment this evening, my guess is you have had an experience where your perception of what you thought reality was, was completely altered. Well, the Bible actually wants to do the same thing for us. In fact, the biblical authors want our understanding of the world in which we live in to be changed, like Edgar. The biblical authors are trying to change your perspective about the world around you, about what's real. Except different than Edgar, this is reality. It's not an illusion. Are you with me? And this is particularly true with regards to what we might call the spiritual realm or the heavenly realm. You and I are so absorbed in the physical world that to stop and talk about the spiritual world, it seems weird and it makes some of you really uncomfortable. The thing is though, the more you read the Bible, the more you realize that there's a lot more going on around you than what your eyes can see. Amen? And that's exactly the glimpse that we get throughout the book of Daniel. Now, before we dive in, I'm just going to kind of start because some of you are going to think I'm crazy tonight. And I might be, all right? But it's not because of this. It's for other reasons. But if you're a Christian, I trust most of you are. And if you're not, I really hope that you will become a follower of Jesus. But if you're a follower of Jesus, or even if you're not, my guess is that you probably already have some commitment to or some level of understanding of the spiritual realm. For example, you believe in God. I won't ask for a show of hands, but my guess is most of you believe in God. We believe that Jesus is God who took on flesh. Amen? That he left the spiritual realm and he came into the physical world. You believe in the Holy Spirit. If not, after our next series, you will, right? You believe in angels and demons or Satan. I mean, the Bible talks about that a lot. You believe that human beings have a spirit or you might call it a soul, that we're body and spiritual. You believe in a spiritual life with God. And you likely believe in some idea of heaven and hell. In other words, you already have a category for this. You already have some commitment to the spiritual realm. The problem is, for most of us as Christians, that's about as far as we go.

That our understanding, our view of the spiritual world is like something from *It's a Wonderful Life*. What's that? That's a Christmas present from a very dear friend of mine.

Look, Daddy. Teacher says, every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings. That's right. That's right.

That's about as far as most Christians go. They think about angels and these big, like, white robes with these big wings. And every time a bell rings, an angel gets another wing or whatever. Okay? That's Hollywood, not Bible. Amen? I hope we're in agreement on that. The Bible actually gives us a lot more insight to these things than that. And the book of Daniel, maybe as much as any other book, really opens the curtain for us. It peels back the layers and it shows us some insight to the spiritual realm. Now, here's the thing. It does not answer everything. It's not even trying to.

[15:24] The intent is not to answer every question you have about the spiritual realm. In fact, it will likely leave you with more questions than answers. And I'm going to encourage you here to avoid speculation. That is, go as far as the text goes, but don't go any further. Right? Because this

is not something for us to speculate or become obsessed with. Paul actually warns us of this in Colossians 2.18. Let no one disqualify you insisting on asceticism or the worship of angels. Going on and on in detail about visions puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind. And so there is a warning not to become obsessed with this. Amen? If you want to be obsessed with a spiritual being, be obsessed with God. Okay? Not things that have been created by God. Now, that said, what I want to do over the next three hours is walk us through just a few passages in Daniel. And we're going to connect some dots. And then we'll end it with some practical implications for us as we live our life. Are you ready? Are you ready to have some fun? Bible nerds, you're going to love this. All right, so here we go.

Let's start with the spiritual realm in the book of Daniel, which is what I'm basing most of this from. If you read throughout the book of Daniel, you're going to notice these occurrences happening frequently throughout the book. Take, for example, the fiery furnace. Familiar story to a lot of people in chapter 3. It says, Then Nebuchadnezzar was astonished, and he rose in haste. He declared to his counselors, Did we not cast three men into the fire? And they answered the king, It's true, absolutely.

And he answered and said, But I see four men unbound walking in the midst of the fire, and they're not hurt. And the appearance of the fourth is like a, say it, a son of the gods.

Now again, some see this as a manifestation of Jesus. It might be, but it could be something else, particularly given what else is said in the book of Daniel. Think about Daniel in the lion's den.

This is Daniel chapter 6. Daniel said to the king, O king, live forever. My God sent his angel and shut the lion's mouth. Now this is important for you to understand. Angels are not, that's not an ontological being. What I mean is they're not ontologically angels. Angel is their function.

[18:12] I'm trying to make this as simple as I can. An angel is simply a spiritual being that is a messenger. The word angel means, you know this, messenger. So angel speaks to their function, not their, you know, not their very essence, not their being. Next is Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 4. Do you remember that?

Right, class? You have perfect attendance. So you were here every class period. And we talked about this. Remember the big tree that Nebuchadnezzar had the dream about. And he was told that this represented him, that him in Babylon, that he was great and mighty and he had all this authority, like he's the, he's the greatest king in all the world. That was the vision. And what happened? Look at verse 13 of chapter 4. I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, little Dr. Seuss action there, and behold a what? A watcher, a holy one came down from heaven. Same thing I just told you with angel.

Watcher is their function. It's not their essence. That is, it's a spiritual being that watches over. Is everybody with me? Say yes. So an angel is a spiritual being that has a message. A watcher is a spiritual being that watches over. Okay? Very, very simple. Now, what does this watcher do? Well, he removes King Nebuchadnezzar's authority. If you remember the dream, what happens to the tree?

It's chopped down. The tree gets cut down. And where did this holy one, this watcher, get the authority to do this. Verse 17. The sentence is by the decree of the watchers. Plural. The decision by the holy, by the word of the holy ones. To that end, or to the end, that the living may know that the most high.

Now, who's that? That's God. The most high. The one who is ultimately sovereign. That he rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets it over the lowliest of men. So you have the most high, that is God. And then you have these lesser created spiritual beings. And here's what we see in the book of Daniel. Is that these spiritual beings are intermediaries between God, the most high, and these nations, these kings on earth like Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon. In other words, again, I'm trying to make this super simple for us. Notice this here. That is that God has physical messengers on earth and God also has spiritual messengers in heaven. Does everybody see that?

[21:15] On earth, God has physical messengers that carry out his plan, his will. And in the heavenly realm, he has spiritual beings, spiritual messengers, and they carry out his work in the heavenly realm.

Right? Is that simple enough? That's what we see here in Daniel. An example of this would be like a prophet is a human messenger and an angel is a spiritual messenger. And they have direct involvement in Daniel with the rise and fall of nations, specifically Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon.

Now look at Daniel chapter 7. Daniel 7 verse 9. As I looked, thrones were placed and the ancient of days took his seat. His clothing was white as snow.

His hair of his head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flames and its wheel were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him. And watch this. This is very, very similar. Think for example of Isaiah's vision in Isaiah chapter 6 or John's vision in the book of Revelation. He sees thousand thousands served him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. [22 : 34] And the court sat in judgment and the books were opened. Where is this vision happening? In the heavenly realm. That's exactly right.

In other words, just like I said, Isaiah was taken up and he sees the heavenly throne room of God. John is taken up in a vision and he sees the heavenly throne room of God. Daniel here is taken up in a vision and he sees the heavenly throne room of God.

In other words, notice it on the screen, we're not in a human courtroom. We're in a heavenly courtroom that Daniel is able to behold in this vision.

And just like in chapter 4, these spiritual beings are encircling the throne of God, the Most High. And what are they doing? They're judging.

They're bringing about judgment. And who are they judging? You're asking great questions, by the way, faith family. And that was actually what I was about to answer. Look at the next verse.

[23 : 37] Verse 11. I looked then, because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking, and as I looked, the beast. Okay?

You cannot pass the exam of Daniel if you don't know what the beast is, right? The beast is the king. The nation. The beast was killed, its body destroyed, and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beast, the rest of these nations, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

The beast in the book of Daniel are the nations. They're kings and they're kingdoms. We talked about this. You've got both the statue vision and Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2, and then you have the vision of the beast that represent, we've talked about this so many times, right? Babylon, the Medes and Persians, the Greek Empire leading all the way to Rome. And so, in other words, what you have, are you having as much fun as I am?

[24 : 43] No, no, no, no, there's no chance, right? You have these spiritual beings who are under the authority of God, and they're deliberating over the affairs of humanity, over the affairs of nations and kings.

And this is not just something you see in the book of Daniel. I'll give you just one other example. There are others. Look at 1 Kings chapter 22. Micaiah said, That's Daniel language.

That's Isaiah language. And who is in this heavenly courtroom, throne room, who is there with the Most High, but the host of heaven, the spiritual beings standing beside him, one on his right, the other on his left.

And the Lord said, Who will entice Ahab? Who is Ahab, the king of Israel? And so, you have this deliberation that's taking place among God and these spiritual beings about a king.

Just like with Nebuchadnezzar, except now this one in 1 Kings is about Ahab regarding Israel. Is everybody with me? All right. Daniel chapter 10.

[26 : 08] I'm telling you, it's all over the book of Daniel. Daniel 10 verse 11. He said to me, O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.

A messenger. An angel. And when he spoke the word to me, I stood up trembling. And he said to me, Fear not, Daniel, from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humble yourself before your God.

Your words have been heard and I've come because of your words. That is, I heard your prayers and I'm responding. This is where it gets weird, right? The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days.

But Michael, you know, one of the chief priests, chief princes rather, not one of the chief priests, that would be Pharisees. All right. Anyways, came to me for I was left there with the king of Persia and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days for the vision is for the days yet to come.

Now, where is Daniel when he receives this encounter with a spiritual being? And the answer is he's in Persia. He's in Persia. And he receives this vision about the king of Persia.

[27 : 27] And somehow this spiritual being that Daniel encounters was trying to get to Daniel earlier. He wanted to get to him sooner, but somehow he got held up by another spiritual being and what ensued was a 21-day battle.

Now you know why your prayers take so long to get answered, right? So that was actually a joke.

Okay, so. And then you're introduced to Michael, who is this other spiritual being.

And Michael actually comes to help out. And I keep reading in the chapter, verse 20. Then he said,

Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia.

And when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece. So now we've got another kingdom here. We'll come. But I will tell you what will be inscribed in the book of truth. There is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.

Your people. That is, the people of Israel. And so now you've got another spiritual being introduced here with Michael. You've got another kingdom that's introduced here with Greece.

[28 : 49] And one more verse in chapter 12, because remember I told you on Easter weekend, chapters 10, 11, and 12 all go together. It's all one encounter, one vision.

And at the beginning of chapter 12, it says, At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince, who has charge of your people, the people of Israel.

And there will be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time.

But at that time, your people shall be delivered. Everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.

So you have Michael, who is watching over Israel. Here's the point I'm making. Don't, don't, don't. If you've zoned out, what do you do?

Zone back in. The point is this. This is the only point I'm trying to make you, which I think is very clear in the book of Daniel, is that there is a relationship between human kingdoms and supernatural beings who are over those kingdoms.

[29 : 57] That are somehow connected with those kingdoms, whether it's Babylon or Persia or Greece or Israel. You see these connections all throughout the book of Daniel.

And if this seems crazy to you, it's only because you're a modern Westerner. You're actually, the ancient biblical writers think you're crazy.

Because you're, you're, you're just, the reason why this is weird for you is because you're operating out of a modern Western mindset rather than the mindset of the biblical authors.

Listen, in the ancient world, in the ancient Near East, people actually believed that kings were somehow connected with divine beings.

This was a very, like nobody's reading Daniel and thinking that strange except you. Are you with me? Now what this actually takes us back to, because I know you remember this from our, the Armor of God series, right?

[31 : 00] Do you remember that? I taught you something there that I'm going to bring back up here. And it's what happened at Babel. Do you remember what happened at the Tower of Babel?

Many people think about the Tower of Babel and they think about the human rebellion as human beings want to make a name for themselves and they build this tower back to the heavens.

And what they're essentially trying to do is recreate Eden. And, and God scatters human beings among the nations, right? Well, Moses actually shows us that spiritual beings were a part of that rebellion too.

And they got scattered to the nations as well. Look at Deuteronomy chapter, I promise you I'm going somewhere with this, all right? Deuteronomy 32 verse eight.

Remember the days of old, consider the years of your generations. Ask your father and he'll tell you, your elders and they'll tell you, when the most, where have you heard that language before?

[32 : 05] Daniel, that's exactly right. When the most high allotted the nations, that is referring to Babel, and set the divisions for the sons of humanity, he fixed the territories of peoples, the nations, according to the number of the Elohim, the sons of God.

So here's what I'm saying and I'm going to wrap up my points here with Daniel. As a result of Babel, these spiritual beings, these rebellious spiritual beings were scattered among the nations.

And, and, and I've told you this before. This is why, you see it in Daniel, why nations are at war. You see why nations rage, why there's corruption in every civilization.

I mean, is the world not almost always in conflict somewhere? Now you know why. Now you know why.

Because what Daniel helps us is to peel back the curtain and actually see, this is really important, Daniel is able to see what's going on behind his experience.

[33 : 22] If Daniel only had physical eyes, all he would see is Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon, oh, Cyrus, Persia, and on and on.

But God is opening up the curtain and showing Daniel there's actually more going on in what you're experiencing in life, Daniel. There's more happening here.

And you need to see this. Notice this on the screen, that there is a connection between what is happening in the physical world and what is happening in the spiritual world.

Do you see that? If you forget some of the things that I just mentioned, that's okay. Don't forget that because that's the main point. There is a connection between what you're seeing take place in the physical world and what is happening in the spiritual world.

That is, here's what most of you see. Most of you see this every day. Oh, it's another nightly news of a war. Oh, it's another fight that takes place at my office.

[34 : 44] Oh, it's another tragedy that happens in the streets. It's just a park. It's just a street.

And what Daniel was saying is, oh, no, no, no, there is so much more going on. And you've got to start seeing the world in which you live with a different perspective.

that there is a spiritual realm and it is real. It is not an illusion. And it is interacting with this world.

The question is, do you see it? Do you see it? And by God's good grace, he's given us books like Daniel to be able to see it.

Everybody with me so far? Now, in case you think I'm cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs, and again, I probably am, but it's not because of this.

[35 : 44] I want to show you next that this is not just the way the Old Testament views this reality. In fact, the New Testament authors are actually going to pick up on this language and they're going to say the exact same thing.

So let's just take a moment and think about how the New Testament affirms and teaches the exact same thing that we see in Daniel. Take, for example, the Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 3.

The Apostle Paul says that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the, say it, the rulers and the authorities, and these rulers and authorities are located where?

ruler in the heavenly places. In the heavenly places. Now that word ruler, it's the Greek archon, archon.

That word archon, this is so interesting. Come on Bible nerds, you're at least with me. That Greek word archon for ruler is actually the exact same word.

[36 : 57] You know what the Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It's the Old Testament in Greek. Archon is the exact same word used in Daniel for prince.

Meaning Paul is pulling from Daniel. He's using this same idea that the church is actually displaying a wisdom to the rulers and authorities that exist in the heavenly places.

And of course, we did a whole series on this. This is not just Ephesians 3. Look at Ephesians 6, 12. This is probably the most well-known verse. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but we wrestle against what?

Archons. Rulers. Against authorities. Cosmic powers over this present darkness. against spiritual forces of evil that are where?

In the heavenly places. Paul, this spiritual realm is real. And there are actual archons. Rulers.

[38 : 04] And authorities. And they interact. In fact, he's willing to say your ultimate battle isn't actually a physical one. It's a spiritual one. How many of you have read this verse and you really didn't know what to do with it?

Romans 8, verse 38. I'm sure that neither death nor life nor angels or archons or things present or things to come or powers, height or depth or anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Do you have any idea the power of that verse? You don't understand the power of the verse until you understand the meaning of the verse. And the meaning of the verse is this.

Because Jesus rules over all rulers. Jesus rules over all archons whether they be physical or spiritual.

Nothing can separate you from God's love. God's love. That's powerful. That's really powerful.

[39 : 22] And so not only do you see this in Paul a lot and I promise you I'm scratching the surface tonight. Some of y'all do want the three hour version but I ain't giving you that one. That's just Paul.

Look at in John's gospel Jesus uses this exact same language and it's really really helpful. John 12 I'm just going to give you a couple.

there are others. John 12 31 Now is the judgment of this world now will the archon or ruler of this world be cast out and I when I'm lifted up from the earth will draw all people to myself.

This is really helpful. Right? Right here. Right here. not only are there archons over the nations there's an archon over the world.

Are you with me? There are very clear in Daniel there's archons these rulers over the nations and there's an archon a ruler who's over the world Satan.

[40 : 31] and Jesus says that that archon that ruler is going to be cast down now you ought to go we're not going to go there because right now because the same author of the gospel of John is the same author of the book of Revelation and what vision does he see in Revelation chapter 12 but the archon the dragon is cast down after a war arising in the heavenly realm with none other than Michael.

Is your mind blown yet? Right? It's like okay can I breathe? Are you seeing this? Are you seeing it? Let me give you one more in the gospel of John. This is John 14 verse 29 Now I have told you before it takes place he's talking about his death the crucifixion so that when it does take place you'll believe.

Now think about this faith family Jesus is telling his disciples I'm telling you what's about to happen namely I'm going to be crucified I'm going to die and I want you to know this so that you don't freak out you don't stop believing when this takes place.

Now I will no longer talk much with you for the archon the ruler of this world is coming but here's what I want you to know this is why I don't want you to lose heart I don't want you to live in fear and I don't want you to stop believing he has no claim on me I do as the father has commanded me so that the world may know that I love the father so what we see is not only does Paul use the same language that you see in the book of Daniel and other places that there are these rulers over the nations that interact with the physical world but Jesus even says there's a single archon and he rules the world Paul calls him the small g God of this world now can I do one more I was going to anyway so but I just figured I'd ask and this is not even close to all of it

I'm just scratching the surface for you what come on come on come on what does Satan the archon of the world offer Jesus at the temptation again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory and he said to him all these could be yours you could have them all I'll give them to you if you will fall down and worship me now our first instinct with this is to say wait a minute Jesus is already king he already has authority he is God to which we would say amen that's true but keep in mind that Jesus humbled himself when he took on flesh meaning he didn't take advantage of his divinity in order that please pay attention in order that he would reclaim the authority that Adam lost in Eden listen listen

[44 : 03] Adam who had all authority before he sinned correct all dominion he could subdue the creation he had all authority and yet Adam come on now Adam handed that authority over to the serpent who became the archon of the world he has that authority because the human king gave it over it was lost through Adam in Eden so how is that authority going to be regained listen a human king a human king and how will that human king regain that authority answer a cross and an empty tomb he will not give in to the temptation of

Satan because he has come to do this very work through a cross through an empty tomb through a redeeming work and come on now what does Jesus say after the resurrection Matthew 28 all authority in the heavenly realm and on the earthly realm has been given to me so go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the father the son and the holy spirit that is through the cross Jesus takes back he's the rightful human king that rules the nations he regains what was lost in Eden notice how Paul puts this in Colossians 2 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands this he set aside nailing it to the what family the cross he disarmed the archons the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him how by the cross by the cross isn't this fun

I hope it's more than fun I hope it's deeply encouraging and so you say okay okay okay what does all that mean for us like like this just kind of feels like seminary what does it actually mean for me practically because I'm I'm trying to raise children I've got deadlines to meet at work my family's in

crisis I'm worried financially like some of you would say right now pastor I'm having a difficult time enough in the physical world much less the spiritual one amen so how does this help me what have I told you for weeks as to why Daniel was given these visions in the first place he was given these visions to give him hope to give him hope and I believe that in us looking this and taking the time to put these things together in scripture this too is not only meant to give us hope but also to give us something that helps us be faithful in exile that if we really actually believe this and we took on this perspective of life it would keep us grounded in the everyday battles and challenges of life so I'll give you three applications and we're done I believe if we really understand this the first application is we can begin to live by faith and not by fear in Daniel 10 this angelic being remember Daniel can't even hardly stand he's he's trembling and he's falling on his face and what does the angel say to him what does the messenger say he says fear not fear not Daniel there's a lot Daniel could have been afraid of and there's a lot you can be afraid of notice this Daniel was I don't mean this as a dig I actually mean this importantly Daniel was not given this vision to become a charismatic he was given this vision to remain calm Daniel was not given this to be like hey you know I'm going to become a vision seeker now and you know all these prophetic words that's not Daniel was given this vision to fear not to not be afraid in the crisis of life do you like like I think sometimes we're so disconnected from the Bible Daniel is living in Babylon and the Medes and the Persians come in and conquer Babylon imagine right now imagine right now if we were in the midst of a war where someone was conquering and taking over the United States would you be freaking out if every security that you have in this country was on the brink of being lost you'd be afraid unless you believe this unless you believed that the rise and fall of any king and any nation only happens according to the sovereign purpose and plan of

[50 : 15] God then you could sleep in Babylon because you'd have faith and you'd have hope this is why Jesus tells the disciples about his death that we looked at it's why Paul tells you that we don't wrestle against flesh and blood we wrestle against the powers and principalities it's not for you to over spiritualize everything but for you to live in an awareness there's more going on than what you see and you don't have to be afraid because you serve the sovereign you serve the sovereign faith family I gotta move on but if you watch the news maybe it'd be a good idea not to watch the news but if you watch the news and all you see is the news you're going to be really discouraged watch the news like a

Christian not like an American view what you're seeing through the eyes of faith and then you won't be afraid second is we pray as participation not just devotion we pray as participation not just devotion I did an entire message in the armor series on prayer as warfare it may be one of the greatest messages on prayer that I've preached I'm not saying it's one of the greatest messages on prayer but in terms of what I've preached I really really believe that was a significant way that the Bible talks about prayer when we think about prayer as Christians we tend to think of it as devotion or our way to ask God for things rather than engaging in war William

Cooper writes restraining! Prayer we cease to fight prayer keeps the Christian's armor bright and Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees in that sermon I also read this quote from John Piper he says prayer is primarily a wartime walkie talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness it's not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comfort God has given us prayer as a wartime walkie talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world who who who have done who!

who! who have out the book. Prayer. Prayer. So we have to begin to view prayer not as just, well, that's just my devotion to God. It's actual participation in spiritual warfare. Lastly, and maybe this is the most important one in the book of Daniel, it is certainly the most consistent theme, is that we are a people, if we're going to be faithful in Babylon, we are a people that put our hope in God's kingdom, not human kingdoms. I have tried really hard in this series to peel your heart away, and what I mean by is your ultimate allegiance. I have encouraged you be patriotic, love your country, I love our country, but I am a citizen of heaven. My citizenship belongs to Jesus, not any human kingdom. Because when you begin to put your hope all in a single kingdom, whether it's political or personal, you're going to be a nervous wreck. Why? What does Daniel teach us? Babylon's come and go. Nebuchadnezzar's come and go. If you live long enough like Daniel did, you're going to see the rise and fall of different nations or political leaders, but there is one kingdom that keeps advancing.

One kingdom that rules over all nations, and that's the kingdom of God. And so when you take this perspective and you see this, then you're able to have hope, to have real hope and encouragement to be faithful in Babylon. One last on the screen here. If you don't set your mind on the things above, you're going to lose your mind. Amen? Set your mind on the things above, like Daniel gets the vision of, or you're going to lose your mind. This world will make you go crazy if you set your heart on it. Ron Garrens, he served as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force, but later was selected to be a NASA astronaut. He went through years of rigorous training to go to space and finally was sent to space aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Now he knew going in to this whole mission that it was going to be complex. He knew that it was going to be dangerous.

[56 : 04] He even expected for there to be beauty. He really thought he'd see some beautiful things, but he couldn't even begin to expect how much he would be deeply changed. While orbiting about 250 miles above Earth, Ron found himself constantly drawn to the windows of the space station. He watched from there. These massive storm systems cross oceans. Sun rises every 90 minutes. It was breathtaking.

But something happened in him. His perspective shifted. He said, I looked down and I saw no borders, no lines separating nations. The conflicts and the politics and the things that seemed so big on the ground disappeared from above. He said, all I saw was one planet, one humanity. And when he returned after 178 days in space, he returned forever changed. Oh, reality was still the same when he came back, but his perspective was no longer the same. Faith family, the book of Daniel wants to do that for you. That in this life, there will be wars and leaders and family fights and people wanting power and God's people persecuted just like it was for Daniel. But most people will only ever see the surface. God wants you to view life from a different perspective. That there's more going on. And in the spiritual realm, there is one who reigns over all. And there is one who left that spiritual world and came into our world. And he was crucified by the beast of this world. And he is the one that it is said, for by him, all things were created, whether that's in heaven or on earth, whether it's visible or invisible, whether it's thrones or dominions or archons or authorities. All things were created through him. All things were created through him and for him. For in him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether here on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross. Faith family, your faith in him is what will make you faithful here.

And all God's people said, amen. Let's pray together. Father, I do pray that tonight as your word intends, I believe, to happen in us, that we begin to see our everyday spaces with different eyes. We just see conflict and crisis, all the different things that happen in this world.

[60 : 26] And yet, you want us like Daniel to see there's more going on. And we don't have to be afraid. When Babylon's fall, and they will, and Nebuchadnezzar's are no more, and they will one day be no more.

You remain. And we don't have to be afraid. So we can go about our life in our ordinary spaces, the coffee shops and the parks, with different eyes.

Eyes of faith. people of hope. Who do not love the things of this world, but loves the one who rules over this world.

The one to whom all authority in heaven and on earth belongs. And you have given us power. It's the power of the gospel.

To go make disciples of all kingdoms, of all nations. Oh, that we would be your messengers to the ends of the earth.

[61 : 55] And we come now to a time where we reflect on the victory that is ours in Jesus. The triumph over these archons, both spiritual and physical.

As Jesus makes peace through the blood of the cross. So tonight, let us focus on Jesus and his work, his authority, his power in our life.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.