

NOTES AND QUESTIONS FOR INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

PART TEN – MEETING THE PERSON OF JESUS FOR OURSELVES.

Daniel had been given some very detailed insight into the 3 kingdoms which would follow the Babylon empire which in remarkable ways would be fulfilled in the next six centuries.(chapters 7 and 8) Realising that the promised seventy years of Jewish captivity in Babylon and now Persia were almost over, he had responded to God's revelations to him in a prayer of confession and repentance on behalf of his people. The Lord had given him an intriguing timetable up to and beyond the coming of Christ but with some key elements deliberately left out.(chapter 9) The time now moved on to 536 BC, the third year of Cyrus and the 70th year of captivity and so of his ministry. He had a sense of intense expectation.(v.1)

After three difficult weeks in which Daniel knew that nothing mattered except what God wanted to teach him, he was given a new vision. This time it was not about coming events but a magnificent Person. The messenger is not named but the description is almost the same as that of Jesus Christ in Rev.1:13-15. The description is of Someone wise, pure and powerful. When we struggle to understand prophecy and history it helps just to stop and look again for Jesus. Meeting and knowing Him,(Phil.3:10) is so much more important than knowing the future.(v.2-6)

Meeting Jesus is a very personal experience rather than one for a crowd, who may nevertheless realise something life-changing is happening to the one who is being confronted by Him.(Acts 9:7) As in the previous three chapters the experience was physically and emotionally overwhelming. Hearing from God is a huge responsibility which we cannot take lightly.(v.7-9)

As when Isaiah had his vision of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory in Isa.6:1-7, a touch from the Lord revived and comforted Daniel. The Lord reassured a fearful Daniel that his prayer had been heard, and the attitude of his heart had been recognized. He was then given a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the spiritual battle that had gone on all through history between God's forces and the Devil's agents. The princes of Persia and later Greece are not earthly kings but demonic forces.(Eph.2:2) We cannot see what is happening in this unseen war but it is healthy to be aware that we are struggling not against human opposition but the spiritual forces of wickedness.(Eph.6:12) It is always a relief to know that the One who is in us is greater than the enemy.(I Jn.4:4) Michael, the archangel, brought angelic forces to support Jesus as they always did at His greatest time of need.(Lk.22:43) Joshua had a similar experience as he stood before Jericho wondering how on earth he was going to be able to capture a strongly fortified city which blocked Israel's entrance to the land God had promised them.(Josh.4:13-15) We do not need to be preoccupied with this unseen spiritual battle but still quietly confident that if we are on His side and wear our spiritual armour, He has the conflict under His control.(v.10-14)

Again Daniel was physically overwhelmed by the awareness of the One to Whom he was talking. He knew he had no right to speak to his Creator, yet the same Lord gave him the strength to speak as He would later give him the words to say. It is always good for us to

realise the awesome privilege of speaking to God personally and then speaking to others on His behalf. Don't take it lightly!(v.15-17)

One more touch from the Lord and Daniel grew stronger and more confident that he could speak to God and for God. He was now ready for a deeper understanding of his message and calling. The hidden spiritual battle which would so affect the future of his people went on.(v.18-21)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY ON DANIEL, CHAPTER TEN

Q.1 What other occasions do you recall when people saw the Lord personally? How did they respond? What purpose did God have for such meetings?

Q.2 How was Daniel's vision in verses 5 and 6 similar to John's vision in Rev.1:12-16? What do the common features mean? What extra characteristics did John see which Daniel had yet to understand?

Q.3 What indication does Daniel's conversation with the Lord give us of the nature and importance of the unseen spiritual battle in the universe? How did Daniel respond to this insight? How should we respond?