

Word Notes Sunday 11/11/2012 Michael Meeks
Daniel 10

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: Daniel 10

After a long period of fasting Daniel is given a vision of an awe-inspiring figure (vv5-6) very much like the vision of the Christ given to John in Revelation 1:12-16. Like John, Daniel falls to the ground as if dead and a messenger touches him and speaks to him (vv10-21). Daniel's messenger, probably Gabriel - the same one as Daniel encountered in Chapters 8 & 9 – gives Daniel some insight into the battle that is raging in the spiritual realm between those protecting God's people and those seeking to destroy them.

What are we to make of this talk of demons and angels – spiritual beings locked in battle for territory and people? Some take this passage (and there are few or none elsewhere which talk of territorial spirits) and build a whole ministry of prayer, binding and deliverance from it but this might not be wise. How do we ground this in the church age? There is no better place to look than in Paul's letter to the Ephesian church. Paul had stirred up much trouble when preaching in Ephesus. There was plenty of spiritual opposition emanating from the worshippers of Diana and the multi-millions of trade generated in silver figurines and the like so plenty of worldly opposition too. Yet when Paul wrote to them he emphasised two things in standing firm against spiritual forces: firstly to put on the full armour, that is know who you are in Christ and wield the Sword which is the Word of God; and secondly to pray in the Spirit – and keep on praying.

Now this doesn't mean it's never right to pray against specific spiritual entities, or to cast out demons but that there is not a rite or procedure, and it's probably not healthy to go searching for them. More important is that we be aware there is a spiritual battle and stay alert to what the Holy Spirit is saying we should do. Always we should bear in mind that Christ is supreme and not be cowed into inactivity by fear or worry (Ephesians chapter 1 and especially verses 19-22).

We may encounter angels – and many have. We may need to resist the works of the enemy and even command them to go in the name of and with the authority of Jesus, yet above all we should understand that Christ has won the victory, period, end of story, that is all.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

How we view territorial spirits and what to do about them is probably a "disputable thing". Nonetheless we must not deny the reality of the spiritual battle. What concerns do you have about spiritual warfare? – **don't seek to answer these** but allow each to share their reservations.

Read Luke 9 verses 1& 2 and also Luke 10 verses 17 to 20. Discuss these questions:

- Where does the authority to engage in spiritual warfare come from?
- In what context are the disciples expected to be driving out demons?
- What sin did they fall prey to which Jesus corrected them for?

Read Mark 3:22-27, Luke 11:15-22 and Matt 12:24-29 and discuss these questions:

- Who is this lesson for?
- Who is the Strong Man and who has bound him? What can the one who has bound the Strong Man now take away from him?

Are there concerns about spiritual warfare that are preventing any from getting involved in the business of taking ground? Being sympathetic to these concerns, pray the issues through as a group and look for the Lord's guidance and resolution.

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

What do we know about our locality, the things which oppress people and their needs? Do spiritual forces stand out as needing to be addressed, should we be loving people more radically or is there a place for both? What should we do about that?