

Introduction:

1. If there is one thing God's people consistently need, it is encouragement.
 - a. We need encouragement in the trials of life. Sometimes we may feel like giving up.
 - b. Encouragement means to give support and strength. It is to "put courage in." It is the kind of support that inspires confidence. Encouragement gives hope. It gives us a will to continue.
2. Don't think yourself weak because you need encouragement. Some of the great characters of the Bible had the same need that you and I have. A great example of that is Daniel.

The Lesson:**I. Daniel needed encouragement.**

- A. In Daniel chapter ten the great prophet of God was about to receive a message from God.
 1. Several times in the book of Daniel God revealed His will to Daniel by visions and dreams. Each time seems to have been an ordeal for this man.
 2. We often think, "Oh, I wish God would speak directly to me!" Are you sure you would want that? When the Israelites heard the voice of God, they were greatly afraid. When Daniel received these revelations, they were physically and mentally exhausting to him.
 3. Note Daniel's reaction to the revelation given him: Daniel 10:1-3, 8, 10, 15, 17.
 - a. Was Daniel afraid because he was in the presence of a heavenly messenger? Was there something about receiving revelation from God that necessarily weakened the human body? Or was Daniel just overwhelmed by all the information given him?
 - b. We can't answer all these questions. But we do know that Daniel was drained of all his energy and vitality. He felt incredibly weak and needed strengthening.
- B. *Daniel needed encouragement in spite of the fact that he...*
 1. *Had served God for more than 70 years.*
 - a. You never outgrow your need for strengthening from the Lord. Years of service don't matter. An aged saint may need encouragement just as the new convert does.
 - b. Don't give up on yourself if you are mature in the faith and still need strengthening.
 2. *Held an important position as God's prophet.*
 - a. We might have thought Daniel's position would automatically give him strength. Position or rank does not strengthen.
 - b. Even the Lord Jesus needed strength when he was in the garden, Luke 22:39-44.
 - c. Don't think that just because a person has an important position that they don't need encouragement. Don't be hard on yourself if you are a teacher, deacon or elder and you still need strengthening.
 3. *Had experienced many trials and ordeals.*
 - a. While it is true that trials can make us stronger and prepare us for more difficulties ahead, that does not mean we have no need of help when those difficulties come.
 - b. It was Paul who wrote the words of Romans 5:3-4. Paul said trials produce perseverance. Yet, the same Paul who had experienced so many trials still needed encouragement when he was imprisoned, 2 Timothy 4:16-18.
 - c. No matter what you have gone through up to this point in your life, your need for help will still be out there in the future.
 4. *Studied and trusted the Scriptures.*
 - a. While much of the Old Testament was yet to be written, Daniel made good use of what was written, Daniel 9:1-2. He had studied the writings of the prophet Jeremiah and knew that the time of Israel's captivity was ending. But he still needed strength.
 - b. There is a myth that says people who are well-versed in the scriptures never get discouraged and never feel the pains of disappointment and letdown. In truth, they may feel greater pain because of their understanding. I think the most discouraging thing that can happen is to see others abandon the faith. When people who know the scriptures see that happen, they understand the consequences and feel pain.
 - c. Study the Bible; learn and apply God's will to your life. But don't think you will come to a point where you will need no encouragement. And don't be hard on yourself when you do need it!

II. Daniel received encouragement.

- A. An angel came to him and strengthened him by his words, Daniel 10:18-19.
1. Please note that Daniel said, "So when he spoke to me I was strengthened." Whatever else may have been involved here, the words given him were a source of strength.
 2. Words have power, Proverbs 25:11; 18:21. Words communicate thoughts and ideas. The thoughts given to Daniel made him stronger and fortified him.
 3. It is good that God sent an angel to give Daniel these words. But, the truth is, these things were true whether the angel uttered these words or not. I say that, because an angel is not going to come to you and give you these words—yet these things can be just as true of you as of Daniel!
- B. *The words of encouragement were these:*
1. *"O man greatly beloved."*
 - a. It must have been a comfort to Daniel to know that he was greatly beloved by God!
 - b. "But isn't it true that God loves everyone." Yes, God loves everyone, but not everyone the same! That's why the angel said "greatly beloved." The NASB translates this "O man of high esteem," meaning that he was highly esteemed by God. This indicates God's special care upon Daniel, His approval and appreciation for all that Daniel was in His kingdom. God does not have that kind of regard or love for all mankind.
 - c. Daniel was loved by God, and so are you. God's children are His beloved. They are His special people, 1 Peter 2:9-10. You are the beloved of God in this generation, Romans 1:7. The word used for "beloved" in Romans 1:7 is the same root word that is used in Ephesians 1:6 to describe the Father's love for Jesus.
 - d. You need to see yourself as the recipient of God's love, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17. God's love gives us consolation, hope, comfort and stability.
 - e. The next time you feel discouragement or disappointment, remember that you are beloved by the Lord. Take courage in that.
 2. *"Fear not!"*
 - a. God was with Daniel. When the Lord is with someone, there is nothing to fear.
 - b. While it is true that Daniel was greatly distressed over what was happening, none of this was done to Daniel's harm. Everything was going to turn out OK. And it did!
 - c. Daniel had nothing to fear, and neither do you. In the midst of any crisis we need to remember that God is still in control. We don't have to be afraid of anything, Hebrews 13:5-6; Matthew 10:28. Fear and discouragement often go together. When the Lord is with us, we don't have to be afraid of anything, Matthew 14:26-27.
 3. *"Peace be to you."*
 - a. God wanted Daniel to be at peace. That's why He told him not to be afraid. You can't have peace if you live in fear. God wants you to be at peace also.
 - b. The word for "peace" in the New Testament means to have quietness or rest. You cannot have both peace and fear in the same heart at the same time, John 14:27. There is a peace that can come only from Jesus, Philippians 4:6-7. If you have God's peace, then you don't have to be afraid or discouraged.
 4. *"Be strong, yes, be strong."*
 - a. It seems remarkable that the angel would repeat his words here. It is as if Daniel is thinking "I am weak. You want me to be strong? I can't do it!" Yes you can! You can do it Daniel. And he did. And so can you.
 - b. Sometimes when we feel so weak and incapable, it is then that God is able to do His greatest work in our lives. It is when we feel completely helpless and empty inside that God is able to come in and give us the strength we need, 2 Corinthians 12:10.
- C. Strength and encouragement by these words! What Daniel needed is what God gave him.

Conclusion:

1. It is what God will give to you. You don't need an angel to come and remind you of these things. God has already spoken them in His word.
2. The next time you are discouraged remember the words spoken to Daniel. These words are for all of God's faithful children. They are for you. If you are not among God's faithful, why not?