

#3 – DANIEL 11 IS PREFACED BY A VISION OF CHRIST IN HIS SANCTUARY

It has at times been said that the message of Daniel 11 was given without an introductory vision as often appears before an interpretation is given (See Dan 2, 7 and 8). It is true that Daniel 11 is simply the further explanation of the vision of Daniel 8 as we have already seen and as is noted in Daniel 10:1 and 14. But to say there is no vision that precedes the message of Daniel 11 is to ignore the vision of the Man clothed in linen given in Daniel 10:5-6. God gives this vision to Daniel for numerous reasons which may not all be elaborated upon here, but some of the reasons given here have important implications for how Daniel 11 should be interpreted. Below are a few.

1. **The vision is of the glorified Christ serving in His sanctuary.** When one compares the vision received by Daniel with the vision received by John in Revelation 1:12-16 we find many amazing similarities. Both are wearing a garment girded with gold (Daniel tells us it was linen), both have a face shining as lightening or the sun, both have eyes like torches of fire and feet like burnished bronze and both have a voice as a multitude or many waters. The fact that Daniel sees this man clothed in linen is an indication that He is serving as a priest (Lev 16:4; Eze 44:17-18), just as the man that John sees is serving as priest among the lampstands. The fact that His face shines as the sun or as lightening (two heavenly phenomena) highlights His divinity, while His feet being of burnished brass (the color of earth) refined as in a furnace highlights His humanity and His suffering.
2. **The importance of this vision for Daniel.** The last time Daniel heard the angel speak of the coming Messiah (Daniel 9:25-26), he heard the angel say that Messiah the Prince would be ‘cut off’ and the city and the sanctuary would be destroyed. For Daniel as well as for us, the vision that precedes the message of Daniel 11 is vital to reassure us that although Christ was cut off, yet His sacrifice would ‘anoint the holy of holies’ (Dan 9:24) and inaugurate a ‘new and living way’ in ‘the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands’ (Heb 9:11). The vision of Christ clothed in linen serving in the heavenly sanctuary speaks of His victory, and ultimately of the surety of our salvation.
3. **The emphasis given to the message of Daniel 11.** Not only does this vision reassure Daniel of Messiah’s victory of death and of His work as mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, it also gives much needed context and emphasis to the message that follows. Just as Daniel 10:14 highlights that the main thrust of the message of Daniel 11 is ‘what will happen to your people *in the latter days*’, so also this vision of Christ ministering in the sanctuary also implies the emphasis of Daniel 11 is given for *the latter days*. Christ was not the high priest of the heavenly temple prior to His sacrifice, nor prior to His inauguration on the day of Pentecost. Hence, the emphasis of the history outlined in Daniel 11 highlights the church era, and thus the sanctuary that is defiled in v. 31 is not an earthly sanctuary, but the heavenly. It is a proper understanding of type (the earthly sanctuary) and antitype (the heavenly sanctuary) that enables Adventist expositors to recognize that the sanctuary defiled in v. 31 is not a Maccabean temple supporting a preterist reading of the text, nor a rebuilt Israeli temple supporting a futurist reading of the text, but the heavenly sanctuary after the crucifixion of Christ supporting a historicist understanding of the text. A proper understanding of salvation, Christ’s sacrifice and priesthood, the close of the 2,300 days and the judgment require an understanding of typology and the sanctuary.