

## #5 – DANIEL 11 PRESENTS A CONTINUOUS, FORWARD, CHRONOLOGICAL FLOW OF TIME

An uninterrupted flow of chronological history is the first and most obvious path to interpreting Daniel 11, especially considering that each of the preceding major visions (Dan 2, 7, 8 and 9) have each followed such a flow both in their symbolic (the vision itself) and interpretive phases (the explanation). The angel's language right from the beginning of chapter 11 leads us to this conclusion when he states: "Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all..." (Dan 11:2). This shows clearly that the angel is giving a flow of chronological events connected with the future of the people of God beginning in Daniel's day moving forward.

Yet, many interpretations have been put forth that break this simple hermeneutic. The result is that many interpretations have been proposed that have tried to 'shoehorn' a particular view into these verses, yet many have damaged the chronological flow of the prophecy and the history associated with it to accomplish it. Some examples follow.

**Smith** After v. 22 and the breaking of the "Prince of the Covenant" in 31 AD, Uriah Smith proposed to roll back the clock to 161 BC to a "league of friendship" between the Romans and the Jews.

**Shea** After v. 22, Shea rejects Smith's proposal on the grounds that "it is not very likely that such a repetition would occur in a *consecutive, historically prophetic narrative* text such as we have here in Daniel 11" (W. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader's Guide* p. 251). Oddly enough he proposes (after acknowledging 5 different possible interpretations for v. 23-30) to jump forward 1,000-1,200 years to the crusades of the Papal power beginning in v. 23. He then returns to highlight the spiritual conquests of the Papacy in v. 31 beginning in 508 AD and 538 AD. Yet He acknowledges that these items are not presented "in chronologically consecutive order" (p. 252).

**Roosenberg** Tim Roosenberg, after stating that "this chapter of Daniel is chronological" and "moves in a straightforward way through human history" (T. Roosenberg, *Islam and Christianity in Prophecy*, p. 13) he interprets Daniel 11:25-39 as "the first two of three conflicts between Islam and Christianity" (p. 101). Yet v. 31 is anchored to time by the time prophecy of Daniel 12:11-12 which speaks of the rise of Papal supremacy in 508 AD and 538 AD. Therefore the mention of the 'king of the South' in vs. 25 must be well before 508 AD. The battle referred to in verse 25 Roosenberg asserts to be a battle between Islam and Christianity, yet it's chronologically is out of place because Muhammad wasn't yet born in 508 AD (v. 31), much less 6 verses before that (v. 25).

The author highlights these cases not to demean any of these men. I have learned much from their published works and in conversation with those I have had the privilege to meet. Nor do I doubt their sincerity or fervor for Christ and His cause. My purpose is simply to highlight the importance of the simple hermeneutic of a continuing chronological flow in this important prophecy as others (even some who have proposed chronologies not in harmony with their own statements) have also noted. If a straight forward delineation of history had been found that fit the prophecy as

understood by these men and others, then no doubt they never would have sought for alternative explanations that attempted to explain the prophecy of Daniel 11 by stepping forward or backward in time to explain it. It is significant that these leaps in chronology are proposed beginning in v. 23 through 30, which is no surprise, as these verses have been historically the least understood and most difficult to interpret.

The principles of historicism (a forward progression through time beginning in the day of the prophet and ending at the second coming) are vital to this chapter's correct understanding. As Dr. Pfandl rightly states after sharing a few anchor points within the chapter, "All the other historical events mentioned in the chapter must fit into this chronological framework" (G. Pfandl, *Daniel: The Seer of Babylon*, p. 108) and I agree with his conclusions and hermeneutic.