CLASH OF KINGDOMS
A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel chapter 11:2-35
(Sermon from Sunday 22 October, Richard van Lieshout)

1. <u>Information</u>

a) Read the passage, perhaps twice using two different versions

- Actually, in this instance, you may not need to read in two versions, as it may get a bit laborious with all the details of North vs South! Just read it once through in the NIV or NET.

b) Fill in any info that didn't make it into the sermon.

- **Note**: You could spend a lot of time in your study correlating all the details of this vision with the actual events of the Seleucid vs Ptolemaic wars. If you want to do that, go ahead! **I would highly recommend** & suggest you use the **additional hand-out** I gave at the intensive that very helpfully places the historical events side-by-side with the reading. **It has been uploaded to the CG resources page**.

c) Answer any questions the group might have

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- For my sermon I chose to include only selective details of the historical fulfilment of this passage, just to show how accurately they were fulfilled.

- I then made two major points of application, which are repeats of the application from chapter 8 (a very similar chapter) but go deeper:
  1. **Gods word is elastic**
  2. **Gods plan is perfect**

- There were two further points of application I wanted to make, but due to time had to leave out. These will form the basis of my suggested 'Activation' segment for this week.

2. **Activation**

a) On the kind of things God is against

- A common question with a chapter like this (similar to chapter 8) is 'why do we have such detailed predictions of historical (for us) events?'. The big answers to this question are addressed in my two application points above, but there is another reason we in particular have the details of chapter 11: *To reveal the true nature of human evil and rebellion.*

- In these verses there is a clear emphasis on the treachery, strife, greed, hatred, destructiveness, vindictiveness etc of all these 'kings of the north and kings of the south', which then all come to characterise Antiochus Epiphanes, who himself is a 'prototype' of the antichrist himself.
- Thus, we should take away from chapter 11 the aspects of humanity that God is against.
- The teachers, strife etc are all things that characterise the 'anti-God' or 'anti-Christ' mentality, and yet we find some of these characteristics in ourselves in the world today.

- **Therefore, I would suggest spending some time reflecting on the characteristics exemplified by these rulers, and think through how we do similar things in our lives today**. This could be a very profitable exercise for the group, if done carefully!

b) On the role of the 'maskilim'

- A second point of 'activation' could be to reflect on the role of 'the wise' in v33-35:
  - "***These who are wise among the people*** *will teach the masses. However, they will fall by the sword and by the flame, and they will be imprisoned and plundered for some time. When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully.* ***Even some of the wise will stumble***, *resulting in their refinement, purification, and cleansing until the time of the end, for it is still for the appointed time*" (Daniel 11:33-35 NET)

- These are the 'maskilim' (Hebrew) I referred to in our intensive. They acted as beacons of light in these tough times, helping the people interpret the difficult events and teaching them to remain loyal to God. They were thus wise in their knowledge of the scriptures.

- I think it's very helpful to connect the role of the 'maskilim' then with the role of key Christians today to perform a similar role of interpreting current events and teaching Christians to remain loyal to God.
- However, it won't be easy! In the time of Antiochus 'some of the wise will stumble', ie face difficulty, which is something Christians should be prepared to face!

- **Talk with your group about how we can act as 'maskilim' today**.

3. **Implementation**

- Recall, Implementation is the third step in interpretation:
  i. What?
  ii. So what?
  iii. **Now what?**

- **The two points of activation above could (and should) result in some firm points of implementation for the group.**