

sometimes it is a combination of the two. Always the primary purpose must be kept in mind.

An interesting example of a perspective that is logical rather than chronological is found in 1 Kings 19:15-16 where God comforts His despondent prophet by giving future predictions in the form of commands, saying: "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet."

The commands in these two verses were beyond Elijah's natural power to execute. He could not order that a new dynasty be placed in control of Israel. It was far beyond his ability to reach out to the powerful nation of Aram (KJV Syria) and establish a new king there. The apparent commands were really predictions that God would bring about a change of dynasty in each of these nations, so that in each case a man with no legitimate claim would become king. Although it is not equally apparent, the third command was also beyond Elijah's power. Only God could say who would be given prophetic power similar to that exercised by Elijah himself. Here God reassured Elijah of His divine control by telling him the names of those who would assume leadership in the next generation.

The third of these predictions was fulfilled first. After a time of doing menial services for Elijah, Elisha succeeded him as God's spokesman (1 Ki. 19:19; 2 Ki. 2:9-15). Some years later, long after Elijah's departure, a man named Hazael, whom the Assyrian annals call "son of a nobody,"² murdered the king of Aram and seized his throne (2 Ki. 8:7-15). Still later, a man named Jehu, who, so far as we know, had no claim to the throne of Israel, killed all the descendants of Ahab and established a new dynasty (2 Ki. 9-10). Thus these three predictions were not arranged in chronological but in logical order. First, God gave Elijah assurance of His power over the strong nation that was Israel's enemy by declaring that a change of dynasty would occur there and naming the man who would seize the kingship. Then he declared that in Elijah's own country a