

**GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 10-12  
APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

**Carlos Elías Mora**

GC, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

**Abstract:** Understanding and interpreting the last three chapters of the book of Daniel have always been a challenge to scholars and readers of the Bible. The central prophetic content of Daniel 11:2b-12:3 that refers to the mysterious kings of the north and the south has been particularly obscure. Though this section has been either studied superficially or totally ignored in Adventist literature, during the last twenty years there has been a change toward this prophecy. This presentation also evaluates new approaches to Daniel 11 facing Adventism. This study recognizes the basic importance of grammatical and syntactical work in the exegetical enterprise. Furthermore, it demonstrates that structural analysis provides better comprehension of the passage and the flow of thoughts contained in it. It also deals with the parallelism of the Danielic prophecies and hints the chapter itself provides for its interpretation. These guidelines offer a structure for understanding Daniel 10-12.

---

**Introduction**

The understanding and interpretation of the last three chapters of the book of Daniel have always been a challenge for scholars and readers of the Bible. Particularly, the interpretation of the central prophetic content of Daniel 11:2b-12:3, referring to the mysterious kings of the north and the south, has been obscure.<sup>1</sup> This section either has

---

<sup>1</sup>Stefanovic proposes three approaches to the prophecy in chapter 11: (1) One can consider the chapter too difficult to interpret. (2) On the other extreme, the temptation of claiming that he or she can figure out the precise meaning of every single minute detail. Finally, he suggests a (3) "more balanced approach": "one may keep in mind the obvious fact that the details of the text are vague and even obscure and consequently maintain a relative vagueness even at the level of interpretation". Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel. Wisdom to the Wise* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2007), 395, 396. It is not a well-balanced approach. This paper works with the principle that this section, chapters 10 to 12, is a divine revelation and contains the Word of God. Therefore, the clear meaning of this prophecy can be interpreted through good exegesis. This research gives guidelines for responding to the challenge presented by Leatherman: "I only urge that such an interpretation be sought [the comprehension of Daniel 10 to 12]. By collaboration, by diligent study and by sincere prayer, we may hope eventually to find such an interpretation. And it is to this task that I would exhort the ministry and the academicians of the Seventh-day Adventist Church". Don W. Leatherman, "Adventist Interpretation of Daniel 10-12: A Diagnosis and Prescription", *JATS* 7, no. 1 (primavera 1996): 137-138.

been studied superficially or totally ignored in Adventist literature. However, during the last twenty years there has been a change of approach in understanding this prophecy.<sup>2</sup>

The present study recognizes the basic importance of grammatical and syntactical work in the exegetical enterprise. Furthermore, it demonstrates that structural analysis provides a better comprehension of the passage and the flow of thoughts contained in it. These guidelines give a structure for understanding Daniel 10-12.<sup>3</sup>

### **Guideline 1: Model of repetition and enlargement<sup>4</sup>**

There are evident similarities in the four prophetic lines in the book of Daniel.<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that in Daniel chapters 10 to 12 also has a similar structure consisting of a prologue, the prophecy, an explanation, and the epilogue. Therefore, one can find the same interpretation for the four prophetic lines in Daniel.

SECTION	CHAP 2	CHAP 7	CHAP 8, 9		CHAPS 10-12
Prologue	v.1-30	v.1	8:1,2	9:1-20	10:1-11:2a
Prophecy	v.31-35	v. 2-14	8:13-14	9:24	11:2b-12:3
Explanation	v.36-45	v.15-27	8:15-26	9:25-27	12:4-12
Epilogue	v.46-49	v. 28	8:27	-----	12:13

Chart 1: The basic outline for the four prophetic lines in Daniel

In order to attain a better understanding of chapters 10 – 12, it is necessary to use one of the most basic interpretive principles for Bible prophecy taught by Adventist

<sup>2</sup>Samuel Nunez, *Las Profecias Apocalipticas de Daniel* (Mexico DF: Datacolor Impresiones, 2006); Humberto Raul Treiyer, *Enigmas Descifrados: Conozca los fascinantes misterios de Daniel Capítulos 11 y 12* (Mayaguez, Puerto Rico: Antillian College Press, 2006); Carlos Elias Mora, *Dios Defiende a su Pueblo. Comentario Exegetico de Daniel 10 al 12* (Montemorelos: Adventus, 2012); Roy Gane, "Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:13", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 27/1-2: (2016): 294-343; Koot van Wyk and Sook Young Kim, "The Qvo Vadis Problem and Solution in Historicism in Daniel 11", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 5, No. 9, Sept 2015: 99-135.

<sup>3</sup>Hans LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies of the Bible* (Sarasota: First Impressions, 1997), 11, 12.

<sup>4</sup>See Desmond Ford, *Daniel* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1978), 252-253.

<sup>5</sup>We assume that chapter 9 is an explanation of the time question, which was not resolved in the previous chapter.

Chapter 11 is not a vision, but a prophetic discourse (11:2b-12:3). The verses 4 to 12 of chapter 12 are the commentaries of the heavenly beings about the end time.

pioneers, namely, “parallelism.”<sup>6</sup> Daniel chapters 2, 7 and 8 show the same period in history and add new elements to the message of the book. There is a switch from a secular power in chapter 2, to a religio-political power in chapter 7, and then to the sanctuary and its cleansing in chapter 8.<sup>7</sup> Each chapter helps to interpret the others. With this idea, we can see the following chart that shows the basic sections in each prophecy:

Here are the symbols and the interpretation of the first three prophetic lines of the book.<sup>8</sup> Afterward, we will add the fourth line.

EVENT	CHAP 2	CHAP 7	CHAP 8
<b>Babylon</b>	Head of gold	Lion with Eagle’s wings	-----
<b>Media and Persia</b>	Chest and arms of silver	Bear with three ribs in its mouth	A ram
<b>Greece</b>	Belly and thighs of bronze	Leopard with four wings of a bird	A male goat
<b>Greek kingdoms</b>	-----	Four heads	Four horns
<b>Pagan Rome</b>	Legs of iron	A dreadful and terrible beast	Little horn
<b>Papal Rome</b>	-----	Little horn	Little horn
<b>Europe</b>	Feet partly of iron and partly of clay	Ten horns	-----
<b>Judgement</b>	-----	Judgement scene	2,300 days
<b>Second Coming</b>	A stone cut out without hands	The kingdom given to the saints of the most High	-----

Chart 2: Comparison of the interpretation of Daniel 2, 7, 8 and 9

This Chart (No. 2) guides us to some conclusions. It shows four universal empires,<sup>9</sup> which form the structure of the prophecy. The starting point, which is fundamental to interpret all the prophetic tables of the book of Daniel, is the definition of the four universal

<sup>6</sup>Víctor Casali, *Historia de las Doctrinas Adventistas* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones SALT, 1991), 93.

<sup>7</sup>Id., 94.

<sup>8</sup>Shea presents the direct relationship that exists between Daniel chapters 2 and 7, Shea, “Unity of Daniel”, in *Symposium on Daniel*, ed. F. B. Holbrook, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 2 (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1986), 170-175. He does the same with chapters 8 and 9 (Shea, *Ibid.*, 185-192, 201-203, 208-219, 234-239). Finally, he does the same work of comparison and establishes connections between chapters 8, 9 and 11 (Shea, *ibid.*, 220-222, 245-247).

<sup>9</sup> In chapter 8 Babylon is excluded, because it was at its end when the prophecy was written. A very similar situation is given in chapter 11, when the Babylonian Empire did no longer exist.

empires which are found in the Danielic oracles.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, one can appreciate the fact that each succeeding prophecy adds elements and gives more details to the preceding ones. For example, chapter 7 adds the new power of the little horn and the heavenly judgment, while chapters 8 and 9 add the date of its beginning, besides the new details concerning the three last universal empires and the new political-religious power (the little horn) of the seventh chapter. It is therefore expected that the prophecy of 11:2b-12:12 will retain the same scheme, amplify the previous elements and also add new concepts to the prophetic panorama.

Determining the parallelism of the last prophetic line of Daniel should not be done superficially; instead, the internal elements of the passage, as well as their connections with the details of the preceding visions, must allow the elaboration of this correspondence. It is important to establish this parallelism in order to interpret the prophecy in an appropriate way.

Before proposing an interpretation of Daniel 11, it will be useful to appreciate the connections between the three last prophetic lines of the book. Some scholars have shown the parallelism between chapters 7, 8 and 11,<sup>11</sup> and this parallelism will be useful in portraying the intimate correspondence between these sections of the book of Daniel.

DANIEL 7	DANIEL 8	DANIEL 11
Mede and Persia The bear (v. 5) it raised up itself on one side	Mede and Persia The ram (8:3, 4, 20) One horn was higher than the other And became great	Mede and Persia Four kings They were rich and the fourth one shall be far richer
Greece A leopard four wings of a fowl	Greece A male goat a big horn the horn was broken touched not the ground	Greece a mighty king shall stand up his kingdom shall be broken

<sup>10</sup> The critical approach suggests that the four universal kingdoms in Daniel are Babylon-Mede-Persia-Greece. See for instance, C. Caragounis, "History and Supra-History", in *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings*, Adam van der Woude, ed., (Leuven-Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1993), 387-397. Shea shows why the critical approach about the four kingdoms is wrong. See Shea, "Unity of Daniel", 173, 174; Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vols. 1 (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1982), 53.

<sup>11</sup>Ford, 265; C. , *God cares*, vol. 1 (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1981), 295; J. Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End* (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1987), 154-155; Gerhard Pfandl, "The Time of the End in the Book of Daniel," diss, *Adventist Theological Society Dissertation Series* 1 (1992): 87 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University), 227-228.

Greek kingdoms Four heads (v. 6)	Greek kingdoms Four horns (8:8)	Seleucides and Tolemaics “and shall be divided towards the four winds” 11:4
Pagan Rome A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible	Pagan Rome A horn (8:9-12) Toward the glorious land	Pagan Rome In the glorious land
Papal Rome the little horn  He thinks to change times and laws, v. 25  He shall wear out the saints of the most High, 7:25 “until a time and times and the dividing of time, v. 25  His look was more stout than his fellows, 7:25 “He shall speak great words against most High”, 7:25 “they shall take away his dominion”, 7:26	Papal Rome the horn take away the daily the place of his sanctuary was cast down (8:11) “and it cast down the truth” 8:12  He prospered, 8:12  the transgression of desolation, 8:13 for at the time of the end, 8:17  the transgressors are come to the full, 8:23 shall be in the last end of the indignation, 8:19 but not by his own power, 8:24  He shall destroy the mighty and the holy people, 8:24  “he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand”, 8:25 He shall magnify himself in his heart, 8:25 “he shall stand against the Prince of princes”, 8:25 “he shall be broken without hand”, 8:25	Papal Rome take away the daily (11:31) Shall place the abomination that maketh desolate (v. 31)  He shall work deceitfully, 11:23  He shall do according to his will and prosper, 11:36 the abomination, 11:31  at the time appointed, 11:27, 29, 35; at the time of the end, 11:40 the wicked shall do wickedly, 12:10  He shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished, 11:36 He shall become strong with a small people, 11:23 they shall fall by the sword, by flame, by captivity, 11:33 “for a time, times and a half”, 12:7  “he corrupt by flatteries”, 11:32  He shall exalt himself, 11:36, and magnify himself above all, 11:37 “he shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods”, 11:36 “he shall come to his end... none shall help him”, 11:45

<p>“my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me”, 7:28</p>	<p>The vision is true, 8:26 Shut up the vision, 8:26 For many days He didn’t understand it, 8:27</p>	<p>The vision is true, 10:1 “shut up the words, 12:4, 9 “for many days”, 10:14 He didn’t understand it, 12:6, 8</p>
--	--	---

Chart 3: Similarities between Daniel 7, 8 and 11

We can see the parallelism of these prophetic lines in Daniel. Each empire has its correspondence in the other chapters. And we can also notice that each kingdom and the main events are in the same order. Therefore, we observe that there are connections between the four prophetic lines and there is a clear parallelism between them.<sup>12</sup>

**Guideline 2: Historical-Prophetical Flow in Daniel 11:2b-12:3**

Tarigan, in his Ph.D. Dissertation, brilliantly summarized the historical flow that is evident in the prophecy of Daniel 11.<sup>13</sup> These markers in the text provide a structure where we can build a solid interpretation. These markers are signs on the road of interpretation that do not allow anyone to go in a direction other than which the text leads. Tarigan’s summary is presented in the following chart,<sup>14</sup> that I have slightly modified.

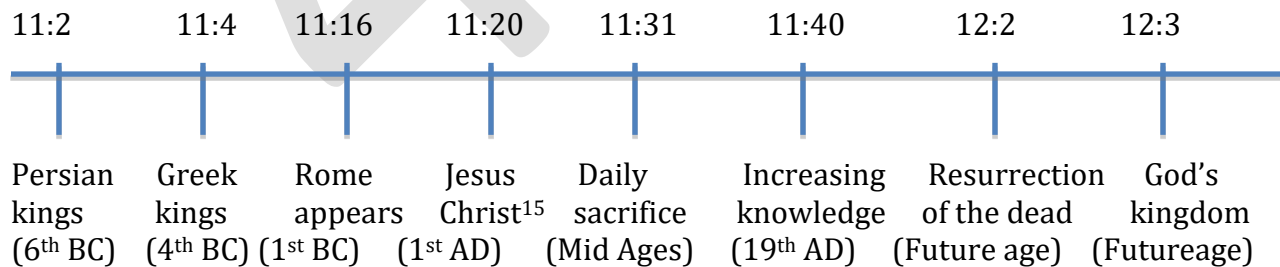


Chart 4. Historical-Prophetical Flow in Daniel 11:2-12:3

<sup>12</sup>“This literary form lends further support to the idea that the later prophetic chapters of Daniel explain the earlier ones.” Shea, *Selected Studies*, 45.

<sup>13</sup>Alonso Tarigan, “Eschatological Time of Trouble of Daniel 12:1: An Intertextual Analysis and Theological Implications”, *AIAS Ph Dissertation*, Philippines, 2014. 53-66.

<sup>14</sup>Tarigan, 65.

<sup>15</sup>The “prince of the covenant” (11:22) cannot be Jesus. See Doukahn’s interpretation on this point rather than Shea’s interpretation (Shea, *Selected Studies*, 48; Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 145, 146). 11:20 would be the indirect reference to Jesus in his human condition. During the tax collection decree issued by Cesar Augustus, Jesus Christ was born. If that the case, it is interesting every prophetic line in Daniel alludes to Jesus in different situation. His birth in 11:20; his death in 9:24-26; his ministry in Heavenly Sanctuary in 8:11; his intervention in antitypical Atonement day in 7:13-14; his intervention in the eschatological days in 12:1 and his second coming in 2:44-45.

It is evident that there is a linear development in History as well as in Prophecy. The highlighted events are obvious in the interpretation and there is a general agreement among Adventist scholars. There can be disagreement in details but the general lines are well accepted.

**Guideline 3: There are words that are signs in the interpretation of the prophecy**

We can divide the prophecy into two great sections. Remember, we have mentioned that verse 20 is very important. It alludes indirectly to the birth of Jesus because it points to Caesar Augustus and his census and tax decree (Luke 2:1). Therefore, the first 20 verses refer to the pre-Christian era, and the following verses present the Christian era.<sup>16</sup>

This division of the prophecy- verses 2-20 and verses 21 to 12:3- is also supported by arguments within the text. First of all, it can be seen that the use of some Hebrew expressions appear which support the splitting of this prophecy in two sections.

<b>Expressions found only in the first section, 11:1-20</b>		
Daughters given in marriage	11:6, 17	-----
“multitude”	11:10-13	
<b>Expressions found in both sections</b>		
“your people”	11:14	12:1
“the king of the south”	11:5 ,6 , 9, 11, 14, 15	11:25,40
“the king of the north”	11:6, 7, 8, 11, 13	11:40
“fortress”	11:10	11:24, 31, 38, 39
Precious treasures of Egypt	11:8	11:43
The glorious land	11:16	11:41
“do according to his will”	11:3 16	11:28, 30, 32
<b>Expressions found only in the second section, 11:21-45</b>		
A vile, contemptible	-----	11:21
“the prince of the covenant”	-----	11:22

<sup>16</sup>Joyce G. Baldwin, “Daniel: Theology of.”, in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 4:503. Maxwell, 293-4; Ford, 266. Towner put the section since verse 20 and he apply to Anthiocus IV Epiphanes. W. Sibley Towner, *Daniel*, J. L. Mays, ed., *Interpretation. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Vol. 20 (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973), 157-164; Louis F. Hartman, *Daniel*, in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown et al., (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 287, 294-295.

“holy covenant”	-----	11:28 ,30, 32
“the abomination”	-----	11:31
a time appointed, at the time	-----	11:27, 29, 35, 40
His fathers	-----	11:24, 37, 38
“by flatteries”	-----	11:21, 32, 34
“God”, “gods”	-----	11:36-39
“the east”	-----	11:44

*Chart 5: Distribution of the main expressions of Daniel 11*

We can note that there are specific expressions that are exclusively in one of the halves of the chapter.

Secondly, there is a term that marks the beginning of a particular character in the prophetic discourse (i.e., “a vile”, “a despicable” in 11:21, Heb. *nibžeh*).<sup>17</sup> This new character points out the beginning of a second part. This expression is the key of the chapter for it introduces a different monarch with the special qualifying of “the wicked” (cf. Psalm 15:4; Isa 53:3; Jer 22:28; Mal 1:7, 12), which is understood to be the king of the north in a different phase (he appears in opposition to the king of the south, 11: 25). In connection with this characteristic, it shows that the title “king of the north” does not appear again until “the end of the time” in 11: 40.

There are very particular actions that are only applicable to this king. He shows no respect to the customs and traditions of his ancestors (11: 24, 37, 38), which suggests that he breaks all the rules of the former kings, especially all that had a relationship with the God of his fathers (11:36-39). One can get the same conclusion about his profane attitude when they read the second section of the chapter and find the connection with the term “covenant.” His attack is against the very “holy covenant” (11:28, 30). He seduces those who violate the covenant (11:32), with whom he clearly agrees (11:32). He corrupts by “flatteries” (11:21, 32, 34), something that his predecessors did not do in their battles and conquests, and which shows his cunning character.

---

<sup>17</sup>The word “person” is not in the Hebrew text. This is a biased translation based on the critical presuppositions that interpret this character as Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Greek petty monarch of the Seleucid branch who reigned from 175 to 164 BC.



Third, to this “vile” person is attributed the expression “he will do according to his will,” literally “he will do,” 11:23, 28, 30; “and they will do”, 11:32.<sup>18</sup> The use of this phrase in this prophecy introduces a new power (11:3, 16). Note that in verses 28 and 30, the phrase “he will do” is used in connection with the attacks against the holy covenant, which suggests that this is a new rule, but in a different realm: the religious and spiritual one. It is not only military and political. With this thought in mind, we can understand verse 32 in a better way, where a particular “power”—God’s people—is presented as those who “shall be strong and do exploits.” It is the church under persecution, the “holy ones” of chapter 7, who is oppressed (7:25); but they will receive the kingdom at the end of the judgment (7:25, 26).

The apparition of the “abomination that causes desolation” in connection with this vile person in the last prophecy of Daniel is relevant. This allocation connects this oracle directly with Daniel 8 and confirms the parallelism between these two prophetic lines in this crucial description of the antichrist. Moreover, it suggests that at this level of the prophetic narrative, this “vile” character should be related to the little horn of Daniel 8 and an extension to that of chapter 7.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, there are expressions that are found in both sections of the chapter in a proportionate manner. The first of them is “behold” which is located in the three sections of the prophecy. In the introduction of the vision the “shining man” (10: 5) is mentioned; in 11: 2, it begins the prophetic discourse of the angel; and, in 12: 5, it establishes the final section of the vision.

The phrase “your people” is a clue (10:14; 11:14; 12:1). As indicated before, this prophecy covers a period of the Jewish people, the people of Daniel, which is not contemplated in the previous visions, in other words, the intertestamental period. Daniel 11:2-15 alludes to this period and these people. The exception would be in 12:1, where the context is clearly eschatological and would refer to the people of God of the last days. Moreover, there are other expressions about the valuable treasures of Egypt (11:8, 43) and “the glorious land” (11:16, 41) which are also found in both divisions of the chapter.

---

<sup>18</sup>The two mentioning in the first section (11:2-20) are “He shall do according his will”, 11:3; “and he that comes against him shall do according to his will”, 11:16.

<sup>19</sup>See Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, 49-53.

**Guideline 4: There are temporal expressions and allocutions related with defeats that are signs for the interpretation of the prophecy**

Another detail is the use of expressions related to temporal events. We find eight different expressions that appear 13 times in the prophecy (11:2-12:3). These phrases play an important role in the structure of the prophecy. They help to build the outline of the chapter and find the beginning or end of the paragraphs.

1. "in those times", 11:6 [2x], 14<sup>20</sup>
2. "years", 11:8
3. "at the end of some years", 11:13<sup>21</sup>
4. "a few days", 11:20
5. "but only for a time", 11:24<sup>22</sup>
6. "at the appointed time", 11:29
7. "at that time", 12:1 (2x) <sup>23</sup>
8. The use of the term *qetz* (11:27, 35, 40). <sup>24</sup>

In the same way, there are fourteen statements of failures and disasters in chapter 11 with different words, as we can see below. This prophecy talks about wars and confrontations and it is unavoidable that we should find defeats.

1. 11:4 "shall be broken", "shall be divided", "shall be uprooted"
2. 11:6 "she shall not retain", "neither shall he stand"
3. 11:12 "he will not prevail"
4. 11:14 "they shall fall"
5. 11:15 "shall not withstand", "neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand"
6. 11:17 "but she shall not stand on his side"

---

<sup>20</sup>See, Pfandl, 220.

<sup>21</sup>It is an obscure textual phrase. It leads towards a temporal age. Id., 221.

<sup>22</sup>"The phrase *uhed-eth* seems to indicate that a limit has been set by God to the time the contemptible person can act." Id., 230. In this way, we can understand the expression in verse 27.

<sup>23</sup>It is an allusion of the time of verse 40. See Pfandl, 230-233.

<sup>24</sup>"Theologically, the word often appears in the context of divine judgment. . . . Elsewhere, Daniel uses *qetz* to signify the eschaton, the end time of human history". A.E. Hill/G. H. Matties, "*qetz*", in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 3:955. See Pfandl, 250-251.

7. 11:19 “but he shall stumble”, “and fall, “and not be found”
8. 11:20 “but within few days he shall be destroyed”

It is very interesting that there are only three mentions of failure in the second part of the prophecy.

1. 11:25,26 The king of the south in a triple fall before the vile person (11:21)
2. 11:33-35 The people of God, again in triple fall before the contemptible person
3. 11:45 The final failure of the terrible king of the north.

Let me show three examples in order to validate that these expressions are used as guidelines to interpretation. They are reliable markers so we can be sure where a paragraph starts and finishes, and what the main ideas are. Below is the structure of the paragraph of Daniel 11:6-8 (time expressions are bold and the failures are underlined).

**A1 After some years** they shall make an alliance,

B1 and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to ratify the agreement.

C1 But she shall not retain her power,

C2 and his offspring shall not endure.

B2 She shall be given up, she and her attendants and her child and the one who supported her.

**A2 In those times**

The two “time phrases” mark the beginning and the end of this section, while the “defeat expressions” are in the core of this section. It is very interesting that the section of Daniel 11:32b-35 talks about the people of God under persecution.

A1 But the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action. (*AN ACTIVE GOD'S PEOPLE*)

B1 The wise among the people shall give understanding to many; (*THE WISE*)

C1 for some days, however, they shall fall by sword and flame, and suffer captivity and plunder.

C2 When they fall victim, they shall receive a little help,

B2 and many shall join them insincerely. Some of the wise shall fall, (*THE WISE*)  
A2 so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed, (*AN PASSIVE GOD'S PEOPLE*)  
**until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed.**

The structure of 11:25-27 enlightens the interpretation of the prophecy. Note in the core of the passage (B1, C, and B2) the expressions connected with failure. In both extremes (A1 and A2) we find both kings fighting for the power. The paragraph ends with a singular expression "the time appointed".

**A1** He shall stir up his power and determination against the king of the south with a great army, and the king of the south shall wage war with a much greater and stronger army.  
(THE VILE AND KING OF THE SOUTH)

**B1** But he shall not succeed, for plots shall be devised against him

**C** by those who eat of the royal rations. They shall break him,

**B2** his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall slain.

**A1** The two kings, their minds bent on evil, shall sit at one table and exchange lies. But it shall not succeed, (THE VILE AND KING OF THE SOUTH)  
*for there remains an end at the time appointed.*

This last temporal allocution- "time appointed"- is very important for the understanding of the prophecy. It gives us a sequence of events in this section (11:21-40) that it will be very helpful for the interpretation of this section. 11:25 says that this time is still in the future and later 11:29 announces that a strong power will return in the time appointed. 11:35 suggests the time appointed is still going on. Finally 11:40 announces the time of the end, the end of the appointed time.

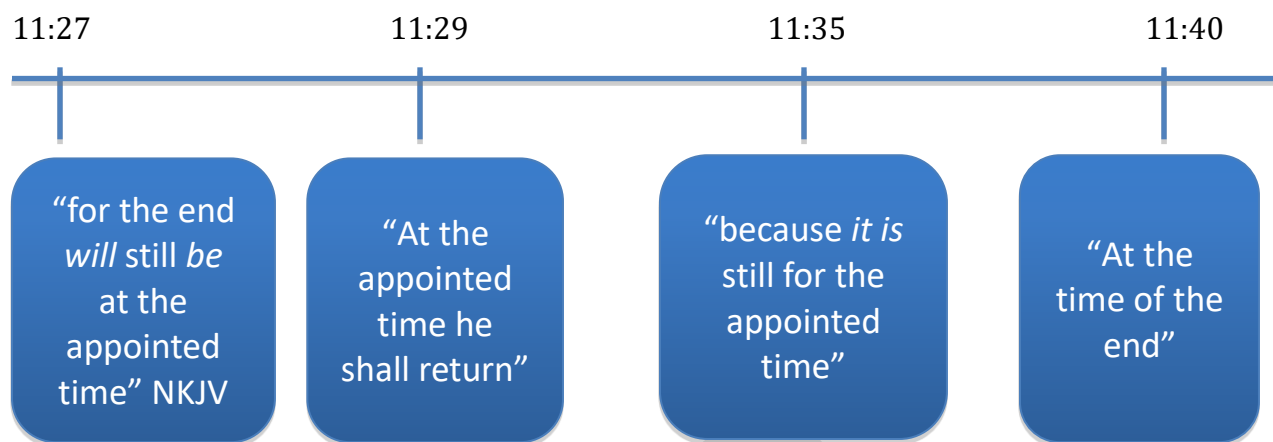


Chart 6. The temporal sequence of "the time appointed"

Both expressions—temporals and those that are related to defeats and failures—mark important events of the prophecy and in the structure of the writing. For instance, the eschatological section (11:40-45) starts with a significant expression of time ("at the time of the end") and it concludes with the most important fall of the oracle of Daniel 11, the defeat and failure of the false king of the North ("yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him").

**Guideline 5: There are some Hebrew verbs that are markers for the interpretation of the prophecy**

Finally, there are some Hebrew verbs that were repeated many times and their meanings are important in the interpretation.

*āmad* - It appears 28 times and 20 of them are in the prophetic section. In the prologue and in the last section (11:4,-12), *āmad* means "stand up". But its use in the prophetic section is equivalent to "to reign, to dominate". Sometimes it means "to resist" (11:8, 11, 13, 14). But its main meaning is "to reign" over the Persians (11:2); the Greeks, 11:3, 4; the king of the south, 11:7; the king of the north (11:20), and the contemptible

(11:21). The last mention refers to Michael, “who stands over the sons of your people”, in order to establish His eternal kingdom and reign forever.<sup>25</sup>

*bô'* - It appears 25 times in the last 3 chapters and 19 times in the prophetic discourse. Its main meaning is “to conquer” (11:6, 7, 10, 13, 15-17).

*šûb* - It appears 9 times in the prophetic section. It means to return victoriously from the war to his home (11:9, 28) or to repeat an attack to the enemy (11:10, 13, 30).<sup>26</sup>

*ḥāzaq* - It appears 13 times in the last three chapters of the book. Eight of them appear in chapter 11. It has the connotation of strengthening economically and politically (11:2, 5, 7, 21).<sup>27</sup> It also refers to the people who know their God (11:32).<sup>28</sup>

A brief example of the importance of some verbs in Daniel 11 is used in connection with “the vile.” 11:21-23 describes the irruption of this terrible character in the oracle. This is the only place in Daniel 11 where you can find these 3 verbs (*āmad*, *bô'* and *ḥāzaq*) in the same verse. It means this power is relevant in the prophecy, and is more than a simple emperor or king.<sup>29</sup> Verse 41 is also a good example. It mentions that “he shall enter the glorious land”. H. R. Treiyer interprets this act of entering the glorious land as the peaceful friendship between papal power and the United States in the last days.<sup>30</sup> But we have studied that the king of the north comes to conquer “the glorious land” in an impositive way, not peaceful, according to the meaning of the verb *bô'*.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>Literally “stand up.” “A more technical, somewhat idiomatic use of the verb ‘*md*’ relates to government, especially royalty, before whom persons ‘stands’ as messengers or ministers, prepared to take directives (Dan 1:4). Elmer A. Martens, “*āmad*,” en *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 3:434.

<sup>26</sup>A theological sense is “to return to God” “repent”, but in this biblical section is not the case. J. A. Thompson y Elmer A. Martens, “*bô'*”, en *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 4:56-57.

<sup>27</sup>One more time, we can notice the importance of 11:21 as a turning point in the prophetic discourse and in the introduction of the “contemptible”. This verse uses three of the verbal roots that we have studied: *āmad*, *bô'* and *ḥāzaq*. This the only occasion we find in chapter 11. In 11:6, we discover the same verbs, but they do not apply to the same subject and some of them (*āmad* and *ḥāzaq*) are in negative sentences.

<sup>28</sup>This verbal root has four great uses. Three of them appear in Daniel 11. They are (1) “to strengthen”, 11:5; (2) to receive strength, 10:18,19; and (3) to strength or resolution as in 11:32. Robin Wakely, “*ḥāzaq*”, en *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 2:64, 68, 72.

<sup>29</sup>Many interpreters have considered Tiberius, the Roman Emperor (14-37 AD), as the Vile or Despicable of 11:21. Uriah Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*. Daniel, vol. 1 (Washington D. C.; Review and Herald, 1944), 255-256. Merling Alomia, *Daniel El Profeta Mesianico*, vol. 2 (Lima, Peru: Ediciones Theologika, 2008), 412-413; Shea, *Daniel. A Readers's Guide*, (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2005), 248. Nunez declara: “we confirm that the contemptible man of Daniel 11:21 refers to the Roman Empire, because they crucified the Lord Jesus in the 31 year of our era”, Nunez, 133.

<sup>30</sup>Treiyer, 163.

<sup>31</sup>“In Conquest passages, *bô'* becomes a technical term por land inheritance”. For example, in the conquest of Canan (Dt 1:8; 4:1; 6:18; 8:1; Jos 1:11). This is the main meaning in Daniel 11. Bill T. Arnold, “*bô'*”, en *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. W.A. Van Gemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 1:615-6.

The root *ʾāśāh* (“to do, to make”) is connected in this oracle with the emergence of a new power in the history. Be aware of these cases:

11:3 Alexander the Great and his Empire

11:16 The irruption of the Roman Empire in the prophecy

11:23 The emergence of the Papal Rome (here it also appears *āmad*, *bôʾ*, and *ḥāzaq*, 11:21)

11:28 Papal Rome in the Middle Ages

11:30 The attack against the Sanctuary

11:32 The people of God in the midst the troubles and persecutions

The next chart presents a summary of the different Hebrew verbs and their emergence in the different paragraphs of the prophecy. Note that the verbs are more common in 11:2-20 because are connected with different kings while in 11:21-12:3 the occurrences are diminishing and focusing more on the “vile” and the new “king of the North.”

<b>SECTION OF THE PROPHECY</b>	<i>āmad</i>	<i>bôʾ</i>	<i>šûb</i>	<i>ḥāzaq</i>
<b>A1</b> <i>Two great kingdoms opposing each other (11:2b-4)</i>	11:2,3,4			11:2
<b>B1</b> <i>Preeminence of the king of the south (11:5-9)</i>	11:6,7,8	11:6,7,8,9	11:9	11:5,7
<b>C1</b> <i>Wars between the south and the north (11:10-15)</i>	11:11,13,14,15	11:10,13,15	11:10,13	
<b>B2</b> <i>Preeminence of the king of the north (11:16-19)</i>	11:16	11:16,17	11:18,19	
<b>A2</b> <i>Thematic shift (11:20)</i>	11:20			
<b>A3</b> <i>Singularity of the new king of the north (11:21-28)</i>	11:21,25	11:21	11:28 [2x]	11:21
<b>B3</b> <i>A profane attack (11:29-32<sup>a</sup>)</i>	11:31	11:29	11:30 [2x]	
<b>C2</b> <i>The people of God facing hardship (11.32b-35)</i>				11:32
<b>B4</b> <i>A blasphemous attack (11:36-39)</i>				
<b>A4</b> <i>Last effort of the king of the north to dominate (11:40-45)</i>		11:40,41,45		
<b>D1</b> <i>The deliverance of God's people (12:1,2)</i>	12:1			
<b>D2</b> <i>A happy end (12:3)</i>				

Chart 7 Appearances of key Hebrew words in Daniel 11:b-12:3

## Guideline 6: Structure in Daniel 10 to 12

We can now propose a structure<sup>32</sup> of the passage based in the previous guidelines, especially 3 to 5. As with any literary text, Daniel 11 has harmony of thought and a logical sequence in the development of its ideas. This work is important because it reveals the different sections of a writing, based on the grammatical and syntactical work. The following structure shows the main paragraphs of the vision: <sup>33</sup>

<p><b>A1</b> <i>Two great kingdoms in contraposition (11:2b-4)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>B1</b> <i>Preeminence of the King of the south (11:5-9)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>C1</b> <i>Wars between the north and the south (11:10-15)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>B2</b> <i>Preeminence of the King of the north (11:16-19)</i></p> <p><b>A2</b> <i>Thematic whirl (11:20)</i></p> <p><b>A3</b> <i>Singularity of the new King of the north (11:21-28)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>B3</b> <i>A desecrate attack (11:29-32<sup>a</sup>)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>C2</b> <i>The people of God in tightness (11.32b-35)</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>B4</b> <i>A blasphemous attack (11:36-39)</i></p> <p><b>A4</b> <i>Last intent to rule of the King of the north (11:40-45)</i></p> <p><b>D1</b> <i>Deliverance of the people of God (12:1,2)</i></p> <p><b>D2</b> <i>A happy end (12:3)</i></p>
---

*Chart 8: Structure of Daniel 11:2b-12:3*

Many commentators agree with this outline<sup>34</sup> although they do not present their outline in the same way as Chart 8. We can see a double chiasm with paragraphs that show important elements for the interpretation of the prophecy. Consequently, based on these two elements—parallelism and structuralism—a proposal of interpretation of the Daniel 11:2:b-12:3 would be in this way:

SECTIONS OF THE VISION	HISTORICIST INTERPRETATION
Two great kingdoms in contraposition (11:2b-4)	Persia and Greece

<sup>32</sup>For the benefits of the structural work, see David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 42-44.

<sup>33</sup>For a detailed study of the structure, see Carlos Elías Mora, “Uma análise gramático-estrutural” de Daniel 10-12”, en *O Futuro. A visão adventista dos últimos acontecimentos*, eds. Alberto Timm y otros (Sao Paulo: Unapress, 2004), 57-74.

<sup>34</sup>John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, Word Biblical Commentary, D. A. Hubbard and W. Barker, eds. (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 286-287; Ernest Lucas, *Daniel*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary, D. W. Baker and G. J. Wenham, eds. (Leicester: Apollos; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 264-265. For a special study, see F. W. Hardy, “An Historicist Perspective on Daniel 11” (Tesis en M. A., Andrews University, Berrien Springs, 1983), 105-22.



Wars between south and north (11:5-14)	Seleucides y Ptolomaics.
Preeminence of the King of the north (11:16-20)	Rome Empire
Singularity of the new King of the north: the Vile or Comptemtible (11:21-39)	Papal Rome in history
Last intent to rule of the King of the north (11:40-45)	Escathological events
Deliverance of the people of God (12:1-3)	Tribulation time and the Second Coming of Christ

Chart 9: Proposal of interpretation of Daniel 11

At this point, it is suitable to have a panorama of the prophecies of Daniel. We can see their unity and we can appreciate the message more because of the new elements that chapter 11 brings to the prophecy.

EVENT	CHAP 2	CHAP 7	CHAP 8	CHAPS 11,12
Babylon	Head of gold	Lion with eagle's wings	-----	-----
Media-Persia	Chest and arms of silver	Bear with three ribs in its mouth	A ram	Four persians kings
Greece	Belly and thighs of bronze	Leopard with four wings of a bird	A male goat	A valiant king
Greek kingdoms	-----	Four heads	Four horns	Kings of the north and the south
Pagan Rome	Legs of iron	A dreadful and terrible beast	Little horn	King of the north
Papal Rome	-----	Little horn	Little horn	The vile person
Europe	Feet partly iron and partly clay	Ten horns	-----	-----
Judgement	-----	Judgement scene	2300 days	-----
Final events	-----	-----	-----	11:40-45 <sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup>There is an agreement between the different schools of interpretation that this is an eschatological section. Maxwell, 297-298; Ford, 274-277; William Shea, *Daniel 7-12*, The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, G. R. Knight, ed. (Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1996), 212-213; M.R. DeHaan, *Daniel the Prophet. 35 Simples Studies in the Book of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1947), 300-305; John F. Walvoord, *Daniel. The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), 270-280; Elvis L. Carballosa, *Daniel y el Reino Mesíasico* (Barcelona: Publicaciones Portavoz Evangélico, 1979), 263-268; Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 307-314; Towner, 164-169; Hartman, 303-305; Paul A. Lederach, *Daniel. Believers Church Bible Commentary* (Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1994), 249-252.

Second coming	A stone cuts out without hands	Kingdom is given to the saints	-----	Michael delivers the people of God
---------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------	------------------------------------

Chart 10: Comparison of the interpretation of the four prophetic lines of Daniel

**Guideline 7: From the cross on, the geographic and local features take on a symbolic interpretation<sup>36</sup>**

This principle is crucial in the interpretation of the prophecy, especially in Daniel chapter 11. Because of these guidelines, we don't go on the erroneous path of the dispensationalists or literalism. The latter days have begun with Jesus (Heb 1:1,2; Act 2:15).<sup>37</sup>

From this point, the cardinal references (north, 11:40, 44; south, 11:25, 40; east, 11:44), the geographic places (Quitim, 11:30; the glorious land, Edom, Moab, Ammon, 11:41; Egypt, Lybia and Ethiopia, 11:42, 43); the ethnical allusions ("the sons of your people", 12:1) should be understood in a symbolic spiritual meaning, not literal.<sup>38</sup>

**Guideline 8: The Scriptures are their own interpreter<sup>39</sup>**

This is the most important principle that we should adhere to in our days when we try to find the meaning of the symbols in 11:21-12:13. It cannot be done either capriciously or with the newspapers in our hands. The meaning of the different symbols of the prophecy cannot be attached to the headline current events of our day.<sup>40</sup> We should go to the Bible itself in order to find the meaning of these symbols.

<sup>36</sup>LaRondelle, 29-31; *Comentario Bíblico Adventista (CBA)* Francis D. Nichol, ed. gen. Trad. V.E. Ampuero Matta. (Boise: Publicaciones Interamericanas, 1978-1990), 4:38-40.

<sup>37</sup>See Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983), 37-47. LaRondelle call this principle "the typological interpretation". In his own words, "Jesus' typology, just as Israel's prophecy, is characterized by its climatic fulfilment in eschatological time, in the 'last days' (Heb 1:1-2)", 38.

<sup>38</sup>Uriah Smith, 294-298, represents very well this kind of literal interpretation. He understood that the king of the North was the Ottoman Empire of his days because Turkey it's at the north of Palestine.

<sup>39</sup>Véase Gerhard Hasel, *Interpretación de la Biblia* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones SALT, 1986), 115-6.

<sup>40</sup>A good example on this is the work of Koot van Wyk and Sook Young Kim. In their article, after proposing some principles of interpretation of Daniel 11, they conclude: "Finally, the methodology is clear: vv. 36-45 deals with an empire described as the second beast of Revelation 13 operating as a strong political power with attacks like 911 in 2001 in verse 40 to the taking of Saddam Hussein in 2003 (last part of verse 40) to befriending of Jordan, Egypt (1974ff.), Libya (March 2004 with Tony Blair and ally of the USA) and Ethiopia as friends (vv. 42-43), Iran as enemy and another power (ISIS or Russia?) in verse 44 and finally ending events in Israel near the temple-mount with a temple mount struggle between Jews and Arabs (as signal of the

For instance, the main two characters of the prophecy- King of the north and King of the south- should be understood accordingly. From verses 5 to 20 the interpretation of the these two cardinal points should be understood in relation to Palestine, the land of God's people. From verse 21 on, they should be interpreted at the light of theological meaning of these cardinal points. North as the cardinal point of the Creator (Psa 48:1-3; Isa 14:13,14) and the attempt of the Vile (11:21) who pretend to be like God Himself (11:36-39). On the other hand, the meaning of the "south" should also be found in the Bible. We realized that the south was Egypt, an entity that opposed the Almighty and asserted that he did not know about Him (Exo 5:1, 2). This identification helps us to understand that Egypt represents the powers and philosophies that are secular and atheistic.

Another good example is the meaning of Moab<sup>41</sup>, Edom and Ammon in 11:41. The OT gives clear clues about these peoples. They were blood relatives with Israel, God's people, they were their neighbors but they were always enemies of God's people. It is logical to understand these powers in the time of the end as entities closely related with the Remnant of these days but in opposition of the message and work of the Remnant.

## Conclusion

In light of the study of this second section, we can conclude that Daniel 11 presents the three last universal empires—Persia, Greece, and Rome—including the papal power of history, represented by the "vile" of 11: 21, that continues until the end of the prophecy (11: 45). The last section points out the eschatological events (11:40–12:3), and presents the unique and detailed explanation that was given to Daniel in his later years.

---

End) and coming to his own paradigm end inaugurating the Time of Trouble during which the resurrection takes place when Christ comes. A dragonic dictator-like New Order Power will take seemingly over from the USA or will the USA become dragonic socialistic and do religion the socialistic political way or manipulation, control, suppression, forceful submission, taking away the freedom of religion from the world." (p 120). The writers apply every section to events of the first years of 2000. The time is passing by, the political leaders are changing and interpretations like this create confusion and unbelief in many people, even those who are Christians.

<sup>41</sup>Moab and Ammon were Isaac cousins (Gen 19:30-38) and Edom was the brother of Jacob (Gen 25:19-36; 36:1-43). It means they were close connected with God's people. Despise of that, they always opposed Israel along their history: [a] Edom (Nm 20:14-21; 1 S 14:47; 2 K 14:27; 2 S 8:14; 1 K 11:15, 16; 2 K 8:20, 22; Psal 137:7; Ez 25:12-14; Am 1:11; Obd 10-13); [b] Moab (Nm 22-24; 31:24; 25:1-9; Jud 3:12-14; 2 K 3:4); and, [c] Ammon (Dt 23:3, 4; Jud 11:13; 1 S 11; 2 S 10:1; Neh 2:10-19; Jer 49:1-6). Therefore these powers should institutions or peoples closely related with the Remnant of the last days but in opposition to it. To try to find a geographical connection today is to go beyond the prudent biblical interpretation.

The guidelines presented in this study can help us understand and interpret Daniel 11 and 12 more accurately and help us avoid erroneous interpretations. It is true that interpreters may have differences in regard to specific details, but the foundational structure of the text is very clear. When we apply the principles that we have studied, it is without a doubt that this passage can be understood. However, It is necessary to carefully follow these guidelines, to compare the results with the history of God's people, and above all, to have the guidance of the Holy Spirit leading us into all truth.

