

The King of the South in Daniel 11:40-45:  
A Third View  
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## Introduction

In this paper I will attempt to demonstrate that the identity of the King of the South at the time of the end, can be best understood in light of the history surrounding ancient Jerusalem, Babylon and Egypt. I explain this position in a concise manner, though the subject is a broad one.

## History of Ancient Jerusalem, Babylon and Egypt

Daniel 11:40 tells us of the final battle between the king of the North and the king of the South. In this final battle, the king of the South pushes against the king of the North at the time of the end. The response from the king of the North is overwhelming and devastating. The identities of the two powers is the subject of much debate. I believe however that in overlooking the literal history of conflict between these two powers, we miss the key that unlocks their identity with certainty. To do this, I suggest that we should go back to the historical battle between these two kings. The description of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon is strikingly similar, almost identical to that given of the king of the North in verse 40.

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” Daniel 11:40

“For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, *a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots*, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.” Ezekiel 26:7 (emphasis mine)

Nebuchadnezzar, is the first king to be identified with the “north.” This king of the north engages in a siege against Jerusalem in the year 587 BC. Zedekiah has revolted and joined forces unfortunately with Pharaoh Hophra, the king of Egypt. Speaking of Zedekiah, the Bible records these words:

“But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things?* or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?” Ezekiel 37:15.

Upon word of the king of the North attempting to take the *glorious holy land* Egypt comes to her aid.

“Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.” Jeremiah 37:5.

In this conflict between Egypt and Babylon, the king of the south, and the king of the north, Babylon comes out the victor. This was the Battle of Carchemish. It is only after this victory that the king of the north is able to enter into the glorious land, Jerusalem. Egypt had, for a time, occupied the attention of Babylon, but once removed nothing stood between it and the glorious land. It is then that the king of Babylon attempts to force the Israelites *to drink the wine of Babylon* (Daniel 1), and even sets up an image and commands all to worship the image or be killed (Daniel 3).

This literal history gives us insight into the prophetic future regarding Daniel 11:40-45. At the time of the end, the power that has dominated the attention of the king of the North (hence giving God's people more time to accomplish a mission) will ultimately be defeated. When this happens, the king of the North will focus his attention on the glorious land (41).

## Egypt

Egypt's identity as the king of the South helps us to understand the make-up of the final king of the South. We have typically understood Egypt to be a symbol of atheism. In Revelation the beast *rising* from the Abyss, (downward or southern location) is identified as atheism.<sup>1</sup> But Egypt was not only known for its denial of the true God. At the same time, it was known for its multiplicity of false gods.

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.” Exodus 12:12

But what do false gods and atheism have in common? Both are antagonistic toward the Scriptures. Both deny the authenticity and truthfulness of what Revelation 11 describes as the “two witnesses,” which we understand to be the Old and New Testaments.<sup>2</sup> So, Egypt is not only a symbol of atheism, it is also a symbol of the false gods of Egypt. This would identify the KOS at the time of the end as any and all powers that are openly anti-Scripture.

## History Repeated in the New Testament

In the early church we find a very similar pattern occurring. Paul gave warning to the rise of a certain power that would war against God and his church. But he assured us that this power would not appear until another power was taken out of the way.

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<sup>1</sup> “The great city” in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, is “spiritually” Egypt. Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God and resisted His commands. No monarch ever ventured upon more open and highhanded rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt. When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered: “Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go.” Exodus 5:2, A.R.V. This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance. White, *The Great Controversy*, 269.

<sup>2</sup> The two witnesses represent the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy. White, *Spirit of Prophecy* Volume 4, 188.

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.” 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7

It is commonly understood that the mystery of iniquity is a reference to the Papacy, which is in my view, connected with the king of the north. It is also commonly understood that the one restraining the rise of the papacy for some time was Rome. Rome was a pagan nation. Not only did Rome deny the true God, but it also had a pantheon of false gods. These gods were adopted from the Greeks who had adopted them from Egypt.<sup>3</sup> Once the Papacy rose in power and authority, and once they removed *paganism* they then turned their focus and assault on the spiritual holy land. This assault is described in Revelation 11:2, “and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months.”

Again, we see the same pattern. The Papacy as king of the north removing “anti-Christian” elements under a disguise of holiness, only to then turn and attack the people of God. In this case, the holy city in no longer literal, it is spiritual, symbolic of the church.

### The King of the South in Verse 25

To correctly understand the identity of the King of the South in verse 25, I believe that we must have a correct understanding of transition points in the book of Daniel. Daniel chapters 2,7,8, and 11 all contain these transition points. In Daniel two we have the gold, silver, brass and iron kingdoms. In Daniel 7, the same powers are symbolized as a lion, bear, leopard, and the great “iron” teeth, (corresponding with the “iron” legs of Daniel 2) and ten horns (corresponding with the ten toes of Daniel 2). In Daniel 8, Babylon drops off the scene, and we see the ram (Medo-Persia), and the he-goat (Greece). After the great horn is broken from the he-goat, four horns rise in its place (v8) toward the four winds of heaven.

This is the first time we catch a glimpse of horns (kings) over territory (north, south, east and west). Daniel 11 will focus in on only of two of these horns, the north and the south. This is why Daniel could write that the little horn rises out of one of these four directions. It is the king “of the north.” Hence, we find the description of this little horn in Daniel 8:8-10 to be identical to the king of the north in Daniel 11:31.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ancient.eu/Roman\\_Religion/](https://www.ancient.eu/Roman_Religion/), [http://realhistoryww.com/world\\_history/ancient/Egypt\\_4.htm](http://realhistoryww.com/world_history/ancient/Egypt_4.htm)

Daniel 11 contains these same transition points. Verse 1-2 cover the reign of Medo-Persia, while verse 3-13 covers the kingdom of Greece. Verse 14 introduces the “robbers” or “breakers of thy people,”<sup>4</sup> paralleling the work of the 4<sup>th</sup> beast who *breaks and bruises* in Daniel 2 and 7.

Uriah Smith takes verse 14 to 22 to relate to Rome right down to the crucifixion of Christ. However, instead of continuing forward from Rome, he inexplicably loops back to the rise of Rome again in verse 23.<sup>5</sup> I believe that verse 23 is in fact, transitioning us to a new power, that of the Papacy who is earlier described as a “little horn”. In other words, verse 23 does not take us back in time, but continues to move forward in time. The significance of Rome is no longer relevant. The language of verse 23 parallels the description of the “little” horn, a power that starts out *small* but eventually grows strong.

And after the league *made* with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. Daniel 11:23

The “league” is the joining of church and state, paganism and Christianity begun under Constantine and culminating in the Papacy as a persecuting power. In this view, the Papacy begins in verse 23, not in verse 31. If this is the case, then we have something quite interesting. Verses 1-22 (Medo-Persia to the Crucifixion) would appear to cover the 70-week prophecy. Verses 23-40a would generally cover the 1260-year prophecy culminating with the French Revolution/deadly wound in 1798, and from 40b to 12:2, the 2300-year prophecy culminating with the coming of Christ.

In light of this, there could be no question as to the identity of the king of the South in verse 25 who stirs his army up against the Papacy during the Dark Ages. It could be no other power than Islam, a religion-political power (like the Papacy) that was however, anti-Scripture and involves the worship of a false god in my opinion. The power rises from the same place that Atheism rises in Revelation 11, the abyss (southward or downward). It is interesting to note that France actually partnered with Muslim forces during the Dark Ages in what was called the Franco-Ottoman Alliance (1536 to ending in 1798 with Napoleonic Wars.)<sup>6</sup> This alliance was considered a scandal and was known as "the sacrilegious union of the Lily and the Crescent."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A new power is now introduced, - “the robbers of thy people;” literally, says Bishop Newton, “the breakers of thy people.” Far away on the banks of the Tiber, a kingdom had been nourishing itself with ambitious projects and dark designs. Small and weak at first, it grew with marvelous rapidity in strength and vigor, reaching out cautiously here and there to try its prowess, and test the vigor of its warlike arm, till, conscious of its power, it boldly reared its head among the nations of the earth, and seized with invincible hand the helm of their affairs. Henceforth the name of Rome stands upon the historic page, destined for long ages to control the affairs of the world, and exert a mighty influence among the nations even to the end of time. Smith, Daniel And Revelation, 256.

<sup>5</sup> Having taken us down through the secular events of the empire to the end of the seventy weeks, the prophet, in verse 23, takes us back to the time when the Romans became directly connected with the people of God by the Jewish league, B.C.161: from which point we are then taken down in a direct line of events to the final triumph of the church, and the setting up of God’s everlasting kingdom. The Jews, being grievously oppressed by the Syrian kings, sent an embassy to Rome, to solicit the aid of the Romans, and to join themselves in “a league of amity and confederacy with them.” 1 Mac.8; Prideaux, II, 234; Josephus’s Antiquities, book 12, chap.10, sec.6. The Romans listened to the request of the Jews, and granted them a decree, couched in these words.” Smith, Daniel And Revelation, 271.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/PiccirilloAnthonyThesis.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Mark Mazower, The Balkans: A Short History, p.xxxii

It is interesting that Islam would occupy the attention of the Papacy preventing it from stamping out the Protestant Reformation during the Dark Ages. Note the parallel:

\*Literal Egypt removed out of the way before Babylon turns its attention to literal Jerusalem.

\*Pagan Rome removed out of the way before Papal Rome turns its attention on spiritual Jerusalem during the Dark Ages.

\*KOS removed out of the way before KON turns its attention on the Remnant at the end of time.

## The Final King of the South

From 1798, the final king of the South is symbolized by Atheism. But I believe, based upon this study that it also includes Islam, Hinduism, New Age, Agnosticism, Secularism, Humanism, and every other anti-Scripture power. It is an openly anti-Bible coalition. The final king of the North will also be a coalition of powers, the Dragon, the beast and the false prophet. When this threefold union is complete, the events of Daniel 11:40b-45 will be rapid ones. The kings of the north and south will therefore encompass the *whole world* into two camps. One camp will consist of those who openly blaspheme against the truth, (king of the South) and those who do the same but under a disguise of genuine Christianity (king of the North.)

Finally then, something of overwhelming power must be described in Daniel 11:40b. If the armies of the king of the South are to yield to the king of the North, if radical Islam and mainstream Islam are to yield to their beliefs, if atheists, agnostics, Buddhists, and new Agers are to suddenly yield to the king of the north, something dramatic must occur to bring this about. Something so powerful, so overwhelming, that is when it occurs Atheism, Muslims, Buddhists, Agnostics, New Agers, Radical Islamists all *willingly submit*. This view would cause us to reconsider our understanding of the final king of the North.

I believe that understanding that the king of the North is the Papacy is to a degree correct but incomplete. I believe that understanding what the “whirlwind” represents in 11:40, and how this connects with the ships of the sea, and the chariots and horsemen, would help us to have a complete understanding of what Daniel 11 is conveying. The king of the North will be seen to include more than just the Papacy. After all, it not the king of the south who God’s people must face. The king of south, is vital and must be correctly understood so that we can have a right assessment of how brutal the assault will be led by the king of the north to overcome such a foe. In short, this understanding will help God’s people to see why it the Michael must stand up at this time. There will be a time of trouble such as never was.

## Conclusion

Daniel 11 rightly understood harmonizes with Revelation 11,12,13,14, and 17, as well as the Great Controversy, especially the closing chapters. This view, I believe, harmonizes instead of pits against many of the current views. In rightly understanding that these two end-time powers are coalitions, we also understanding the importance of God’s people coming together to form its own coalition of truth in order to be ready for the overwhelming onslaught of the king of the north.

I believe this view will help our people in the pews to have a better understanding of Daniel 11, and its significance regarding end time events.