

## The Identity of the King of the South in Dan. 11:40

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### Introduction

Recent discussions among Adventist interpreters on Dan. 11 reveal three main views on the identity of the “king of the south” in vs. 40. Adventist interpreters who advocate the Turkey view of the “king of the north” (the later pioneer view) identify this power as the geographic nation of Egypt and its involvement in historical events that took place during the Napoleonic era.<sup>1</sup> Adventist interpreters who advocate the papal view of the “king of the north” (the early pioneer view) identify this power as either atheism<sup>2</sup> or Islam.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The later pioneer view proposed that Turkey is the final manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11. See Roy Allan Anderson, *Unfolding Daniel’s Prophecies* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1975), 152-159; Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet* (Brushton, NY: Teach Services, 1999), 240-245; Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, 1949), 289-299; “Thoughts on the Book of Daniel,” *Review & Herald* (March 21, 1871): 108-109; “Thoughts on the Book of Daniel,” *Review & Herald* (March 28, 1871): 116-117; John C. Witcombe, “A Literal View of the King of the South: Avoiding Phantomized Interpretations,” Unpublished Paper, 2018; Robert J. Wieland, *Daniel Reveals the Future* (Grantham, Lincolnshire, England: The Stanborough Press, 2014), 158-160. Uriah Smith initially believed in the papal position (see footnote below); yet, sometime between 1866 and 1871 he changed his view from the papacy to Turkey.

<sup>2</sup>See Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates, “Hermeneutical Considerations in Daniel 11,” Unpublished Paper, 2018; Russell Burrill, *Hope When the World Falls Apart* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2003); Angel M. Rodriguez, *Daniel 11 and the Islam Interpretation*, Biblical Research Institute Releases 13 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015). The early SDA pioneer view proposed that the papal power is the final manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11. See Uriah Smith, “Italy and the Papacy,” *Review & Herald* (Jan. 9, 1866): 45; “The Papacy,” *Review & Herald* (Sept. 11, 1866): 116; “Waning of the Pope’s Power,” *Review & Herald* (April 18, 1865): 157; “Will the Pope Remove the Papal Seat to Jerusalem,” *Review & Herald* (May 13, 1862): 192; James White, “The Time of the End,” *Signs of the Times* (July 22, 1880): 330; “Unfulfilled Prophecy,” *Review & Herald* (Nov. 29, 1877): 172; “Where Are We?,” *Review & Herald* (Oct. 3, 1878): 116; Milton C. Wilcox, *The King of the North: A Suggestive Outline Study of Daniel 11* (Mountain View, CA: M.C. Wilcox, 1910).

<sup>3</sup>See Roy E. Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” *Journal of Adventist Theological Society*, 27/1-2 (2016): 294-343; Tim Roosenberg, *Islam & Christianity in Prophecy* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2011). Myers advocates that the “king of the south” involves a coalition consisting of many falsehoods, including atheism and Islam. See Ivor Myers, “The King of the South in Daniel 11:40-45: A Third View,” Unpublished Paper, 2018.

In order to rightly identify the “king of the south” in Dan. 11:40, we must, (1) discover the identity of the “king of the south” in vs. 5-15; (2) have an understanding of vs. 16-22, which provides a basis for understanding vs. 23-29; (3) discover the identity of the “king of the south” in vs. 25-29; (4) have an understanding of vs. 30-31, which is to be viewed as a transitional text that outlines a shift from national, geographic powers to symbolic, worldwide powers for the remainder of Dan. 11; (5) have an understanding of vs. 30-35 and vs. 36-39, which will have a direct influence on how vs. 40 is to be interpreted; (6) discover the identity of the “king of the south” as a symbolic entity “at the time of the end” in vs. 40; (7) address the atheism dilemma in vs. 40b; and (8) discuss the overall spiritual significance of the “north” and “south.”

### **The “King of the South” in Daniel 11:5-15**

Dan. 11 reveals three distinct north/south conflicts – vs. 5-15, vs. 25-29, and vs. 40. To identify the “king of the south” in vs. 25-29 and vs. 40, we must first identify this power in vs. 5-15. Dan. 11:1-4 discusses the rise of four Persian kings after Cyrus (cf. Dan. 10:1), and these are Cambyses (reign, 530-522 BC), False Smerdis (reign, 522 BC), Darius I (reign, 522-486 BC), and Xerxes (reign, 486-465 BC). A “mighty” Greek king emerges sometime after these four kings, one that does “according to his will,” which represents Alexander the Great (reign, 336-323 BC). After Alexander’s death, his kingdom would be divided into four smaller empires by four of his generals (his empire was “divided toward the four winds of heaven”), each of which would be eventually conquered by another empire altogether outside of these Greek kingdoms (“plucked up, even for others beside those”), which proved to be Imperial Rome.

The “king of the south” is first mentioned in Dan. 11:5, and constitutes a reference to the southern division of Alexander’s former empire, which consisted of Ptolemaic Egypt, an empire that was located to the geographic south of ancient Judah, where God’s covenant people were

located at that point in history. This verse also mentions that one of Alexander's "princes" would grow strong and later become more powerful than the "king of the south." This is a reference to the "king of the north," which consisted of Seleucid-Antiochean Syria, a kingdom that occupied the northeastern division of Alexander's former empire. This kingdom was also specifically situated to the geographic north and east of ancient Judah.

Because these two Greek empires are also represented by the personal pronouns "he," "him," and "his," the kings of the "north" and "south" also point to individual rulers within the Seleucid-Antiochean and Ptolemaic kingdoms. The discussion of these two specific empires is unique to Daniel's visions. However, this discussion presents a reasonable expansion of prophetic details because, (1) these two empires fall within the historical period of the four Greek empires, which are generally discussed in three of Daniel's four apocalyptic visions; and (2) God's covenant people were often controlled by these two powers at various times during the Hellenistic Era because they were geographically located between them.

Overall, vs. 5-15 describe how the "king of the north" eventually became stronger than its southern counterpart, which is a reoccurring theme in each of the three north/south conflicts in Dan. 11. The following rulers and events are discussed in vs. 5-15: (1) vs. 5 – Seleucus I Nicator (reign, 301-281 BC) grew stronger than Ptolemy I Soter (reign, 323-282 BC); (2) vs. 6 – a marriage alliance between Antiochus II Theos (reign, 261-246 BC) and Ptolemy II Philadelphus (reign, 282-245 BC); (3) vs. 7-9 – the military conquests of Ptolemy III Euergetes (reign, 245-221 BC) against Seleucus II Callinicus (reign, 256-225 BC); (4) vs. 10-13 – the military victory of Ptolemy IV Philopater (reign, 221-203 BC) over Antiochus III Magnus (reign, 225-187 BC) in the Battle of Raphia (217 BC), and Antiochus' later victory over Ptolemy V Epiphanes (reign, 203-181 BC) in the Battle of Panium (200 BC); and (5) vs. 14-15 – the military activities of

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reign, 175-164 BC) against Ptolemy IV Philometor (reign, 181-145 BC) and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes (reign, 169-116 BC).<sup>4</sup>

### Understanding Daniel 11:16-22

Forming an accurate interpretation of Dan. 11:16-22 is critical to understanding both Dan. 11:23-24 and Dan. 11:25-29, the latter text of which discusses the “king of the south” in the second north/south conflict in Dan. 11. We saw in the last section that vs. 15 concludes the first north/south conflict in Dan. 11 by asserting that the Seleucid-Antiochean “king of the north” grew more powerful than the Ptolemaic “king of the south.” This writer proposes that Dan. 11:16 discusses the entrance of a new historical power that would conquer the Seleucid-Antiochean “king of the north,” which consists of Imperial Rome.

Dan. 11:16 can be paraphrased in the following manner: “But he [Imperial Rome] that cometh against him [Seleucid-Antiochean Syria] shall do according to his own will [Rome had conquered Syria], and none shall stand before him [Rome had conquered all rivals to its power]; and he [Imperial Rome] shall stand in the glorious land [ancient Judea], which by his [Rome’s]

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<sup>4</sup>Adventist sources that discuss the Ptolemaic and Seleucid-Antiochean conflicts during the Hellenistic era include: Anderson, 131-135; Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates, “Hermeneutical Considerations,” 5-6; *Tidings Out of the Northeast* (Coldwater, MI: Remnant Publications, 2006), 103-114; Robert D. Brinsmead, *The Vision by the Hiddekel: A Verse By Verse Commentary on Daniel Eleven* (Denver, CO: International Health Institute, 1970), 25-37; Kenneth Cox, *Daniel: Pure and Simple* (Loma Linda, CA: Kenneth Cox Ministries, 2013), 148-152; Henry Feyerabend, *Daniel Verse By Verse*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Ontario, Canada: Maracle Press, 2004), 162-167; Leslie Hardinge, *Jesus is My Judge: Meditations on the Book of Daniel* (Harrisburg, PA: American Cassette Ministries, 1996), 204-208; Frank W. Hardy, “An Historicist Perspective of Daniel 11,” M.A. Thesis (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Theological Seminary, 1983), 14, 217; Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet* (Brushton, NY: Teach Services, 1999), 188, 193-199; Ernest W. Marter, *Daniel’s Philosophy of History* (Bracknell, Berkshire, England: Newbold College, 1973), 99-101; C. Mervyn Maxell, *God Cares*, Vol. 1 (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1981), 284-292; Norman McNulty, “Daniel 11,” Unpublished Paper, 2010, 1-4; Francis D. Nichol, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4 (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1977), 866-869; George McCready Price, *Greatest of the Prophets: A New Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1955), 277-286; Roosenberg, 23-26, 203-206; William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 241-245; Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, 235-245; Wieland, 138-143.

hand shall be consumed [conquered].” In essence, a new power altogether would come against the Seleucid-Antiochean “king of the north,” conquer this power, and then conquer the “glorious land” of ancient Judea, where God’s covenant people were located at that point in history. These events were historically fulfilled when Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) ended the Seleucid dynasty in 64 BC and conquered Judea in 63 BC. The personal pronouns (“he,” “him,” and “his”), therefore, apply to both Imperial Rome as a power and Pompey the Great as a leader acting in behalf of Rome. Given that this power conquered Seleucid-Antiochean Syria and took control of God’s covenant people from the geographic direction of the north, Imperial Rome is also the next manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11.

Overall, Dan. 11:16-22 discusses the following leaders and events in Roman history: (1) vs. 16 – Pompey’s conquest of Syria and Judea (vs. 16); (2) vs. 17-19 – Caesar’s conquests, his affair with Cleopatra (the “daughter of women”), and his assassination (“stumble,” “fall,” “not be found”); (3) vs. 20 – Caesar Augustus (Octavian), the “raiser of taxes” who emerged in Caesar’s “estate” (Luke 2:1); (4) vs. 21 – Tiberius Caesar, the “vile” emperor who succeeded Augustus (Luke 3:1); and (5) vs. 22 – Christ’s crucifixion during the reign of Tiberius (the “prince of the covenant” is “broken”). Most Adventist interpreters are in agreement that these points in Roman history are in fact represented by the textual details of Dan. 11:16-22.

### **The “King of the South” in Daniel 11:25-29**

Dan. 11:25-29 discusses the next manifestation of the “king of the south.” Given that Dan. 11:16-22 discusses specific activities in the career of Imperial Rome, we must now seek to understand Dan. 11:23-24, which will provide a foundation for understanding vs. 25-29. The traditional Adventist interpretation recommends that vs. 23-29 provides a continued discussion of Imperial Roman history, and specifically describes events in the careers of Titus, Augustus

(Octavian), Antony, and Constantine.<sup>5</sup> An alternate interpretation views this text as a transition into the history of the medieval papacy as the next manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11. This interpretation also claims that the “king of the south” in vs. 25-29 is Islam, with the understanding that the textual details describe the medieval crusades.<sup>6</sup>

This writer suggests that the traditional interpretation mentioned above is best supported by the details of the text. There is no evidence in vs. 21-23 to indicate a shift from Imperial Rome to Papal Rome. Vs. 23 indicates that, “And after the league [alliance] made with him he [Imperial Rome] shall work deceitfully; for he [Imperial Rome] shall become strong [eventually conquer] with a small people [the Jewish people].” This passage refers to a Jewish alliance (“league”) with Imperial Rome, which was initiated during the Maccabean era by the Jewish leadership to enlist Rome’s help in resisting Syrian military aggression against Judea.

However, this “league” was gradually exploited by Imperial Rome for the purpose of conquering Judea. Vs. 24 states that this power would “enter peaceably” into the “fattest places of the province” (it would use the Jewish alliance to occupy Jerusalem) and eventually “do that which his fathers have not done, nor his father’s fathers” (it would destroy Jerusalem and the temple, unlike earlier Roman leaders). This text is a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, a signal historical event that took place in AD 70 under the generalship of Titus, a future Roman emperor. Much “prey,” “spoil,” and “riches” were taken to the city of Rome and other regions of the empire (“richest places”), including thousands of Jewish captives and temple fixtures.

Dan. 11:24 also states that the Imperial Roman “king of the north” would also “forecast his devices against the strongholds,” which means that would plot the conquest of all rival

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<sup>5</sup>Anderson, 142-148; Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, 258-266.

<sup>6</sup>Gane, 320-321; Maxwell, 293-294; Roosenberg, 47-50, 206-208; Shea, 250-259. Some have even suggested that Papal Rome might enter the prophetic narrative in Dan. 11:21-22, prior to vs. 23.

kingdoms in the Mediterranean region from the city of Rome as an imperial center. This policy of conquest from the imperial center of Rome would take place “for a time,” which is a reference to a 360-year prophetic period.<sup>7</sup> It will be demonstrated below that this 360-year time prophecy would find its starting and ending points in Dan. 11:25-29, which is an important passage that discusses the second north/south conflict in Daniel 11.

Given that vs. 23-24 discusses Imperial Rome (the “king of the north” at this stage of Dan. 11), vs. 25-29 must also describe the same power. Since there has also been no clear transference to another power, the “king of the south” must also still be Ptolemaic Egypt, the last Hellenistic empire left from Alexander’s former kingdom that was conquered by Imperial Rome. This conquest took place during the career of Octavian Caesar (i.e. Caesar Augustus, the “raiser of taxes” in Dan. 11:20), when he faced off against Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony), the latter of which had aligned himself with the Egyptian-Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra. This confrontation is described in vs. 25-28, with Octavian acting as the Imperial Roman “king of the north” and Antony acting as the Ptolemaic “king of the south,” given his alliance with Egypt. Both of these “kings” mustered up “great” and “mighty” armies to fight each other (Dan. 11:25). Yet, Antony would “not stand” because “they that feed a portion of his meat shall destroy him,” meaning that he would lose the support of Cleopatra’s forces, and thus his “army” would “overflow” (wash away) and “many” would “fall down slain” (Dan. 11:25-26).

After forming an alliance to hunt down Caesar’s murderers, Octavian and Antony later had a falling out once this purpose was accomplished. Both attempted to reconcile at various

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<sup>7</sup>Anderson, 142-145, 147-148; Brinsmead, 46-49, 51-53; Cox, 155-156; Feyerabend, 172-174; Hardinge, 211-214; Hardy, 190, 217; Haskell, 227-228; Marter, 103-104; McNulty, 8-10; William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year 1843* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 93-94; Nichol, 4: 871-872; Price, 296-300; Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, 260-266; Louis F. Were, *The King of the North at Jerusalem: God’s People Delivered* (Berrien Springs, MI: First Impressions, 1949), 42-43; Wieland, 150-152.

times during their conflict with each other, but they would “speak lies at one table” in order to “do mischief” (Dan. 11:27), because both secretly coveted sole control of the empire. Octavian would eventually rout Antony in a decisive naval battle near Actium off the coast of western Greece in 31 BC, which led to the Imperial Roman conquest of Ptolemaic Egypt and the suicides of both Antony and Cleopatra. Following his conquest of Egypt, Octavian would “return into his land with great riches” (Dan. 11:28), which describes how, after defeating Antony and capturing the Ptolemaic treasure, he returned to Rome in 30 BC as the richest person in the world, and later became Caesar Augustus, the first official Roman emperor (27 BC). Dan. 11:28 also describes how the Imperial Roman “king of the north” would “turn his heart against the holy covenant” through the persecution of Christians, and “do exploits” by conquering many lands to expand this empire, which are historical trends that took place under several Roman emperors.

Given this victory by the Octavian-led Imperial Roman “king of the north” over the Antony-led Ptolemaic “king of the south” in the Battle of Actium, the year 31 BC can be viewed as the starting point for the 360-year prophecy, given that this was the actual year that the last remaining kingdom from Alexander’s former empire was conquered by Imperial Rome. This passage also shows that, similar to the first north/south conflict in Dan. 11 (vs. 5-15), the “king of the north” emerges victorious over the “king of the south” in this second north/south conflict. The prophetic narrative also reveals that the “king of the south” remains dormant until the “time of the end” (vs. 40), after which a third north/south conflict will take place.

Dan. 11:29 is also a significant text, for two important reasons. First, it provides an ending point for the 360-year prophecy (the “time” of Dan. 11:24). Second, it lays the foundation for understanding Dan. 11:30-31. Vs. 29 states that “at the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.” At an “appointed time”



(at the end of the 360-year time prophecy of vs. 24), the Imperial Roman “king of the north” would “return” by coming “toward” Egypt (“toward the south”), but not “to” Egypt. This actual move “toward” Egypt would be a peaceful move, and not be for purposes of military conquest, as it was in the “former” time (i.e. during the first and second north/south conflicts described in Dan. 11:5-15 and Dan. 11:25-28), or as it will be in the “latter” time (i.e. during the third and final north/south conflict described in Dan. 11:40).

Given these details, we must now, (1) discover an event in Imperial Roman history sometime after Egypt’s conquest by Octavian in 31 BC when Rome moved “toward” Egypt (but not “to” Egypt for purposes of conquest, as it had already conquered this power in 31 BC), and (2) identify how this move “toward” Egypt would provide an ending point for the 360-year prophecy. If we begin this time prophecy in 31 BC with the victory of Imperial Rome (“the king of the north,” Octavian) over Egypt (“the king of the south,” Antony), then the ending date of this prophecy would take place in the year AD 330. What signal event in Imperial Roman history took place in this year involved a move “toward” the “south” to Egypt in a geographic sense? In AD 330 Constantine dedicated the city of Constantinople in this year as the “New Rome.” As far as land travel, this event can be viewed as a geographic move “toward” Egypt.

The dedication of Constantinople in AD 330 is extremely significant for three reasons: (1) this new capital would gradually eclipse old Rome in power and prestige, and become the new imperial center of the empire; (2) the Western Roman Empire grew increasingly unstable after this dedication, especially the city of Rome itself, and the western imperial structure eventually collapsed in AD 476 after several decades of being stressed by Germanic invasions over the Rhine and Danube border regions; and (3) the resultant power vacuum in the city of Rome and Western Europe after this collapse created an opportunity for the papal power to

emerge as the eventual religio-political leader of Western Europe, a point that is discussed in Dan. 11:30-31. This proposed interpretation of Dan. 11:23-29 helps to explain the prophetic “time” of 360 years (31 BC to AD 330), and forms a foundation for understanding Dan. 11:30-31, which discusses the rise of the medieval papal power.

In summary, the text of Dan. 11:16-29 surveys major events in the history of Imperial Rome as the “king of the north” at this stage in the prophetic narrative of Dan. 11. These events include: (1) Pompey’s conquest of Syria and Judea (vs.16), which identifies Imperial Rome as the next manifestation of the “king of the north;” (2) Caesar’s activities and assassination (vs. 17-19); (3) Caesar Augustus as the “raiser of taxes” (vs. 20); (4) Tiberius as the “vile” emperor, during whose rule Christ was crucified (vs. 21-22); (5) the “league” between Imperial Rome and the Jewish nation, which would eventually result in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70 (vs. 23-24); and (6) the prophetic “time” of 360 years (vs. 24), which began with Octavian’s victory over Antony in 31 BC (vs. 25-28) and extended to Rome’s move “toward” the “south” of Egypt through Constantine’s dedication of Constantinople in AD 330 (vs. 29).

Overall, this writer proposes that, (1) the above interpretation is viable because each of the events in these verses falls within the scope of Imperial Roman history with respect to its dealings with God’s covenant people, and thus fits within the overall historical framework of the prophetic narrative of Dan. 11; and (2) it is quite fitting that Dan. 11:29 ends with a discussion of Constantine, as he was the first Christian emperor (at least in name) whose prolific career, advocacy of the Nicene (Catholic) faith, and dedication of Constantinople paved the way for the eventual rise and development of the medieval papal power, which, once again, will be the next historical empire to enter the prophetic narrative of Dan. 11. For purposes of this paper, the above evidence demonstrates that the “king of the south” in vs. 25-29 is still Ptolemaic Egypt (a

kingdom conquered by the Imperial Roman “king of the north” in 31 BC), and thus does not represent Islam or the medieval crusades. This conclusion will provide much-needed assistance in identifying the “king of the south” in Dan. 11:40.

### **Daniel 11:30-31 – An Important Transitional Text in Daniel 11**

We have demonstrated above that Dan. 11:1-29 contains two manifestations of the “king of the north” – Seleucid-Antiochean Syria (vs. 5-15) and Imperial Rome (vs. 16-29). We have also shown that these verses reveal one manifestation of the “king of the south” – Ptolemaic Egypt. Also, we have seen that, in the first two north/south conflicts (vs. 5-15 and vs. 25-29), the “king of the north” emerged victorious in its conflicts with the “king of the south.” Dan. 11 also reveals that the “king of the south” remains dormant until vs. 40. In order to understand this third and final manifestation of the “king of the south,” we must understand Dan. 11:30-31 as a crucial transitional passage that provides a basis for understanding vs. 30-39 and vs. 40-45. This section will provide a discussion of vs. 30-39, which presents a commentary on the history of medieval Papal Rome as the next manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11.

Dan.11:30 states that the “ships of Chittim [Cyprus]” will come “against him,” the Imperial Roman “king of the north.” Given that vs. 29 describes Constantine’s move “toward the south” of Egypt through the dedication of the city of Constantinople” as the “New Rome” in AD 330, vs. 30 states that sometime after this historical event, Imperial Rome would be attacked by the “ships of Chittim.” The *SDA Bible Commentary* suggests that this phrase could describe “invaders and destroyers from any quarter,” observing that, “Some see in the ‘ships of Chittim’ a reference to the barbarian hordes who invaded and broke up the Western Roman Empire.”<sup>8</sup> Given

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<sup>8</sup>Nichol, 4:873.

these observations, this writer proposes that this phrase does in fact describe how Imperial Rome experienced a series of fatal military attacks from numerous Germanic invaders in the fourth and fifth centuries, especially the Vandal naval empire (the “ships of Chittim”), a rival Mediterranean power that viciously sacked the city of Rome in AD 455.

This verse goes on to say that “he shall be grieved” and “return.” The term “grieved” describes how this power would be seriously weakened to the point of collapse. Due to a series of regular Germanic migrations and periodic military attacks in the fourth and fifth centuries, the entire Western Roman imperial structure became stressed to the point of collapse in AD 476, when the last western emperor was deposed. Yet, though the Imperial Roman “king of the north” would collapse (“be grieved”) in its imperial form by AD 476, it would “return” to power in its papal form by AD 538. In essence, the Imperial Roman “king of the north” would “be grieved” through a loss of power in AD 476, and then “return” to power by AD 538 in the form of the Papal Roman “king of the north,” which is the next manifestation of the “king of the north” in Dan. 11. Vs. 30 also states that this power would “have indignation against the holy covenant” by persecuting Christians who would not recognize its authority. It would also “have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant” by gaining information from recanting Christians in order to persecute alleged heretics. These activities took place during the medieval career of the papal power, which extended from AD 538 to 1798.

Dan. 11:31 also describes how this medieval career would be successful – because “arms” would “stand on his part.” Various European states loyal to the papacy would provide their military power, the most notable of which were the armies of the French king Clovis I (reign, AD 486-511) and the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I (reign, AD 527-565). Clovis’ victory against the non-Trinitarian Visigoths (AD 507) earned him the key titles of consul and

patrician by the eastern emperor Anastasius, and his Catholic baptism on Christmas day of AD 508 made him the first ever non-Roman ruler in post-Roman Europe to convert to Catholicism. Justinian's forces also supported the papal power by destroying the Vandals (AD 534) and the Ostrogoths (AD 553), two rival non-Trinitarian kingdoms in North Africa and Italy.

Vs. 31 also discusses the terms "pollute the sanctuary of strength," "take away the daily sacrifice," and "place the abomination that maketh desolate." Given the fact that Dan. 8:9-14 uses these terms to describe the medieval papal power, Adventist interpreters generally agree that these three phrases relate to the papacy, a power that injected many "spiritually desolating" religious practices into the Christian faith during the dark ages, including Sunday worship and the Mass. Some interpreters suggest that the "sanctuary" is the city of Rome and that the "daily" is paganism, while others suggest that the "sanctuary" is the heavenly sanctuary and the "daily" refers to the "continual," high priestly, intercessory ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, which the papacy has sought to obscure. Regardless, these terms undoubtedly refer to the rise of the Papal Roman "king of the north" during the medieval period.

Dan. 11:32-35 provides a general discussion of medieval papal persecuting activities. This power would use "flattery" to entice recanters to "do wickedly" against the Christian "covenant," while the "people that do know their God," the faithful, would remain "strong" and "do exploits" by winning converts to Christ (vs. 32). Thus, the faithful "that understand among the people" would "instruct many" by sharing the biblical faith during those difficult times, and some would even "fall by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil, many days" (vs. 33). God's true followers would only receive a "little help" during this period of persecution, and would resist any "flatteries" that might lead them to renounce their faith (vs. 34). Even so, "some of them of understanding," the faithful, would be "tried," "purged," and "made white"

(persecuted and martyred) during this period, until the arrival of the “time of the end,” which, according Dan. 12:4-9, came in the year 1798.<sup>9</sup>

We can make two important observations from vs. 30-35. First, unlike vs. 1-29 (which discusses the specific activities of geographic empires and selected rulers), vs. 30-35 shifts its focus by offering only a general survey of the persecuting activities of the papal “king of the north” during the dark ages (AD 538-1798), without discussing the activities of specific rulers. Second, because the papal “king of the north” is a spiritual kingdom and not a geographic one, we can identify vs. 30-35 as a transitional passage that shifts its focus from spatial, geographic, literal powers to global, symbolic, worldwide powers. This transition suggests that all prophetic terms from this point forward in the narrative of Dan. 11 should be understood as being global and symbolic in scope, rather than spatial and geographic in scope. This important observation must form a basis for understanding and interpreting vs. 36-45.

Concerning vs. 36-39, Adventist interpreters have a difference of opinion as to the specific identity of the “king” mentioned in this passage, which has resulted in the promotion of two main views. One view, which forms a part of the later pioneer view and minority view to date, interprets this passage as introducing a new prophetic power in the form of atheistic, revolutionary France.<sup>10</sup> The second view, which forms a part of the early pioneer view and majority view to date, sees this passage as a continued discussion of the same prophetic power described in vs. 30-35, which, as discussed above, is the Papal Roman “king of the north,” in its

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<sup>9</sup>Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1911), 356. In this reference, Mrs. White clearly proposed that the period of human history labeled as the “Time of the End” began in the year 1798, at which point the visions and prophecies of Daniel were to be “unsealed,” per Dan. 12:4-9. This time period constitutes the last phase of human history, which, once again, began in the year 1798 and extends to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

<sup>10</sup>Examples include Anderson, 152-159; Haskell, 240-245; Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, 280-289; Wieland, 158-160.

medieval, dark-age phase of rule.<sup>11</sup> These two views lead to completely different conclusions on the identity of the “king of the south” in vs. 40.

Dan. 11:36 begins with the phrase, “And the king,” which suggests a continued discussion of the power discussed in the previous verses (vs. 30-35), and does not reveal a transference to another power altogether. The word “king” can also be associated with the “king of the north,” and points to the papacy as this specific power, per our interpretation of vs. 30-35. This point is further confirmed by clear textual parallels between this “king” and the “little horn” of both Dan. 7 and Dan. 8, which clearly suggests that these symbols describe the same historical empire, which is identified as the medieval papal power. Both symbols speak against the God of heaven (cf. Dan. 7:8, 20, 25; 11:36), exalt themselves above God (cf. Dan. 8:11, 25; 11:36-37), and prosper in their agenda of persecution against God’s covenant people during the dark ages (cf. Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:11, 24-25; 11:36). The phrase, “do according to his will” is also one that is attributed to each of the four principal kingdoms in Dan. 8 and Dan. 11, which consist of Medo-Persia (Dan. 8:4), Greece (Dan. 11:3), Imperial Rome (Dan. 11:16), and Papal Rome (Dan. 11:36). These points confirm that the “king” of vs. 36 is the Papal Roman “king of the north,” and thus vs. 36-39 describe a continued discussion of the medieval papacy, and clearly do not suggest an alleged transference to atheistic, revolutionary France.

Adventist interpreters who embrace the view of atheistic France in vs. 36 have also suggested that the phrase, “nor regard any god” (Dan. 11:37) describes atheism. However, this phrase should be regarded as synonymous with the other phrases in vs. 36-37 that show how this “king” would exalt itself above God, and thus does not “regard any god” but itself. This power would also not “regard” the “desire of women,” which could refer to the Catholic requirement of

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<sup>11</sup>Burrill, 293-294; Roosenberg, 208; Shea, 261-262; Were, *King of the North at Jerusalem*, 42; Wilcox, 21-33.

celibacy and how this power would see itself as the only true church (Dan. 11:37; cf. 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22-32; Rev. 12:17; 19:6-9). The papacy would also “honor the God of forces” (Dan. 11:38), which means that it would use military force to control the conscience of those under its charge during the medieval period. It would also promote a “god whom his fathers knew not” (Dan. 11:38), which represents the worship of the Virgin Mary, a “strange god” that has been “increased with glory,” one that the apostles and early church “fathers” (from whom the papacy claims apostolic succession) did not recognize as worthy of adoration or worship.

This “king” would also “cause” these “gods” (the “God of forces” and the “strange god”) to “rule over many” and “divide the land for gain” by exercising dominion over the masses in its territorial dioceses (Dan. 11:39). These details reveal that the phrase, “nor regard any god” does not point to an atheistic power, but rather to a professed Christian power that would attempt to, (1) exalt itself as being equal to and above the God of heaven, and (2) exalt both the “God of forces” (i.e. use military force) and a “strange god” (i.e. the Virgin Mary). Therefore, this “king” is clearly the Papal Roman “king of the north,” which is a conclusion confirmed by Adventist leaders in a March 1954 *Ministry* magazine article.<sup>12</sup> This conclusion is also inferred through an insightful statement from Ellen White on Dan. 11:30-36:

The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.’ [Verses 31-36, quoted].<sup>13</sup>

In this statement above, White included vs. 36 with vs. 30-35, thus implying that the entire passage of vs. 30-36 discusses the same historical power. She also implied that these texts

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<sup>12</sup>“A Report on the Eleventh Chapter of Daniel.” *The Ministry* (March 1954): 26.

<sup>13</sup>Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13 (Silver Spring, MD: White Estate, 1993), 394.



had already been fulfilled in a historical sense by the time she produced this statement in 1904. In essence, she mentioned the rise of a specific power in vs. 30, and then described the actual activities of this power by quoting vs. 31-36, which means that vs. 30 and vs. 31-36 go together and discuss the same historical power. Since vs. 30-35 clearly discuss the medieval papacy, it is clear that the “king” in vs. 36 is also the papal power, given that vs. 30-36 is a single textual unit. Overall, we can conclude that, (1) vs. 30-36 describes the history of the medieval papacy; (2) this history has already been fulfilled in the past; (3) much of this history will be repeated at the end of time; (4) the end-time repetition of this history is described in vs. 40-45; and (5) the overall passage of vs. 30-39 discusses the arrogant character and persecuting activities of Papal Rome, which is represented as the “king of the north” at this stage in Dan. 11.

#### **The Time of the End and the King of the South in Daniel 11:40**

Dan. 11:40 introduces the third and final north/south conflict in Dan. 11, and begins by using the specific phrase, “At the time of the end.” The expression “time of the end” is a purely Danielic one, and is found five times in the book of Daniel (Dan. 8:17; 11:35; 11:40; 12:4; 12:9). As mentioned in the last section above, an analysis of Dan. 12:4-9 reveals that the “time of the end” began at the conclusion of the 1260-year medieval rule of the Papal Roman “king of the north,” which extended from AD 538 to 1798. This means that the “time of the end” arrived in the year 1798, and constitutes the last period of human history, extending from this specific year (1798) to the return of Christ. The major English translations of Scripture also use the specific preposition “at” in context with the “time of the end” in vs. 40. The use of this preposition seems to identify a specific point in time, i.e. the year 1798, and thus suggests that vs. 40-45 discuss prophetic events that occur in this specific year and progress toward the end of human history and the return of Christ, as described in in Dan. 12:1-3.

Vs. 40 also states that “at the time of the end” (i.e. in 1798), the “king of the south” would “push at him,” the “king” of Dan. 11:36, which, once again is the Papal Roman “king of the north.” The word “push” (Hebrew – *nagach*) is defined as, “to gore,” “to butt with horns,” and “to war against,”<sup>14</sup> and thus conveys the idea that the papacy would be attacked by the “king of the south” and lose power in the year 1798.<sup>15</sup> However, it would also respond to this “push” from the “king of the south” 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.” These details suggest that the Papal Roman “king of the north” would regain dominance again and eventually defeat the “king of the south,” as it did in the two earlier north/south conflicts in Dan. 11. In this process, the papacy will enter into many countries, and thus regain the power it once exercised for 1260 years during the medieval period by securing the use of the military and police strength of compliant nations to extend its control over the entire world.

Concerning the identity of the “king of the south,” this power consisted of Ptolemaic Egypt in the two earlier north/south conflicts in Dan. 11. There is no clear transference to another power as the “king of the south,” so we must conclude that it still refers to Egypt, which can be confirmed through an alternate reading of vs. 40 in the LXX (ο βασιλευς Αιγυπτου).<sup>16</sup> Because the Imperial Roman “king of the north” conquered Ptolemaic Egypt in 31 BC, how should we understand the Egyptian “king of the south” in vs. 40? Given that vs. 30-31 is a transitional passage from geographic, national, spatial powers to global, symbolic powers (the entrance of

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<sup>14</sup>James Strong, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997), “push” (H5055). See 1 Ki. 22:11; 2 Chr. 18:10; Dan. 8:4 for textual examples on the use of this word.

<sup>15</sup>Rodriguez, 4 (see the comments in footnote 4 of this source).

<sup>16</sup>Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, Germany: Württembergische Bibelanstalt Stuttgart, 1935), 2:933.

the Papal Roman “king of the north” into the prophetic narrative as a symbolic kingdom not bound by geography signifies this important transition), we must be consistent in identifying the “king of the south” in vs. 40 as being a symbolic, global kingdom, and not a geographic one. The question now becomes, what global, symbolic kingdom is represented by “Egypt” in vs. 40?

It is very important to understand that potential modern-day, global, spiritual parallels of apocalyptic symbols described in national, geographic terms are to be determined through an investigation of the disposition and activities of these entities as far as how they acted toward God and His covenant people in Bible times. As far as Egypt specifically, the leadership of this ancient nation, as reflected by Pharaoh during Israel’s Exodus, revealed the specific disposition of refusing to acknowledge God’s existence, sovereignty, and prerogatives (Exo. 5:1-2),<sup>17</sup> even aligning itself as an enemy of God and His followers (Eze. 29:1-6). These details suggest that “Egypt” is an apocalyptic symbol of atheism, a conclusion confirmed by Ellen White.<sup>18</sup>

We must now ask, what atheistic power attacked the Papal Roman “king of the north” in 1798? History shows that the nation of France was an avowed atheistic power from November 1793 to June 1797 during the French Revolution. Atheism as an ideology was unleashed during this history-altering revolution, and although this atheistic identification lasted only 3½ years in a legal sense, the lasting effects of this ideology were felt long-after this period, and are also well-established today. Adventists are unanimous in agreeing that Napoleon-led French military forces ended the civil power of the papacy in February 1798, and thus “pushed” against this

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<sup>17</sup>Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 173; Rodriguez, 15-17.

<sup>18</sup>Ellen White also viewed “Egypt” as a symbol of atheism in Rev. 11:7-8 with respect to the French Revolution, which is represented by the “beast” from the “bottomless pit.” See White, *Great Controversy*, 269. If antitypical Egypt is a symbol of atheism in Revelation, then, to be consistent, it must also have the same meaning in Daniel, as the two books go together. See Ellen White, *Acts of the Apostles* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1911), 585.

spiritual kingdom to end its dark-age supremacy. For these reasons, we might still consider France to be an atheistic power when this “push” took place in 1798, which occurred within a calendar year of France’s official atheistic identification.

Moreover, because Napoleon Bonaparte manifested the same stolid resistance to God’s authority and sovereignty as did Pharaoh, through his imperialistic military activities, we can consider Napoleonic France to be a reflection of this rebellious, atheistic attitude well after June 1797. Given the secular and atheistic orientation of modern France, we can label revolutionary, Napoleonic France as a manifestation of the atheistic “king of the south” in vs. 40, a power that clearly “pushed” against the Papal Roman “king of the north” in the specific year of 1798. This view proves consistent with, (1) the Adventist understanding of Rev. 11:7-8, a text that identifies revolutionary France as “spiritual Egypt” (as complementary books, Daniel and Revelation must be consistent with one another); and (2) the Adventist understanding that revolutionary France (as led by Napoleon) dealt a “deadly wound” (“push”) to the papacy in 1798.

### **Addressing the Interpretive Challenge of Daniel 11:40b**

Dan. 11:40b presents an interpretive challenge as far as identifying the response of the Papal Roman “king of the north” to the deadly “push” of the atheistic “king of the south.” No doubt, atheism has fought an ideological battle against the Christian faith ever since it emerged during the French Revolution. The rise of atheistic communism in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America are modern-day manifestations of this particular ideology. Burrill has suggested that the collapse of Soviet atheistic communism (1990-1991) through the collaborative Cold War efforts of Papal Rome and the United States constitutes a specific fulfillment of vs. 40b.<sup>19</sup> This

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<sup>19</sup>Burrill, 302-306.

writer suggests that this historical development could at least be a possible partial fulfillment of this passage. However, given that, (1) Soviet communism is not mentioned in the book of Revelation (in contrast to the fact that the French Revolution is mentioned in Rev. 11, as Daniel and Revelation are complementary books); (2) there are still atheistic communist states in the world; and (3) atheistic ideology is the dominant worldview in western academia, this writer suggests that the fall of Soviet communism has not resulted in the conquest of atheism, and thus does not fully satisfy the textual claims of Dan. 11:40b.

Moreover, this writer also suggests that there are two main variations of the atheistic worldview to consider. The first variation is the obvious one that most people in our modern era are aware of, namely that atheism is a basic outright denial of the existence of “God,” i.e. that no supernatural, supreme Being or beings exist. Akin to naturalism, this variation is what a majority of people tend to think of when they consider atheism in a modern sense. A second variation of atheism stems from the claim of Pharaoh in Exo. 5:2: “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” It should be emphasized that the Pharaohs of Egypt were not strict atheists in the modern, naturalistic sense, as they engaged in the celestial, polytheistic worship of the sun, moon, stars, and nature. Pharaoh’s brand of atheism was simply a denial of God’s claims and prerogatives. This denial consisted of a defiant, rebellious resistance of God’s requirements, an attitude that was also brazenly expressed by Napoleon during his leadership over France.

Therefore, atheism in this second sense is expressed by an outright denial of, rebellion against, and resistance to God’s clear requirements, and does not necessarily require a disbelief in the existence of supernatural beings or a supreme power (i.e. “God”) that has created and controls the natural world. This writer suggests that this is the brand of atheism expressed by

both revolutionary France and Napoleon Bonaparte, and thus identifies France as an atheistic power well after its legal atheistic identification from Nov. 1793 to June 1797. This observation supports that idea that France was still atheistic in attitude and orientation through its defiance and rebellion against God's claims and requirements well after 1797, and thus constitutes being an atheistic power in 1798 when it "pushed" (administered a "deadly wound") against Papal Rome by removing the political and secular power of this antichristian institution. From the view of this writer, revolutionary France clearly satisfies the textual claims of Dan. 11:40a.

Even so, regardless of which variation of atheism one chooses to attach to revolutionary France in the year 1798, the present question that we must answer in this section is: if we concur that atheism is the "king of the south" in Dan. 11:40a, then how do we understand and interpret the papal response to the atheistic "push" in Dan. 11:40b? It is quite clear that the Papal Roman "king of the north" has not conquered France in a military sense in the post-1798 world, so how are we to find a suitable interpretation for vs. 40b? In an attempt to provide a satisfactory answer, this writer suggests that the "healing" of the papal "deadly wound" did not take place with the Lateran Treaty of 1929 (as some Adventist interpreters have suggested), but rather it will take place when Sunday Legislation is enacted in the future as the mark of the beast. When the mark of the beast is enforced, at that point the papal "deadly wound" will be fully "healed."<sup>20</sup>

Given this future reality, it seems more reasonable to suggest that atheism as a symbolic kingdom will be conquered by the Papal Roman "king of the north" through a submission to Sunday Legislation. This will be a spiritual and ideological conquest, one that will be enforced globally through the military strength of various compliant nations, which is discussed in vs. 40b through details such as "chariots," "horsemen," and "ships." In essence, the papal power will

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<sup>20</sup>Louis F. Were, *Battle for the Kingship of the World* (Berrien Springs, MI: First Impressions), 59-60.

secure the use of the military strength of submissive countries to enforce its principles at the end of human history, just as it did when it exercised dominion during the dark ages, as indicated by the terms “arms” and “God of forces” (Dan. 11:31, 38). Every nation will eventually align with the papacy through international compliance with Sunday legislation, as also evidenced in vs. 40b with the phrase, “he shall enter into the countries, and pass over.” This detail suggests that atheistic nations and individuals will not be immune to this end-time development, because every nation and individual will be forced to choose a side in this global conflict.

We should also remember that the conquest of the papacy in 1798 did not result in the complete eradication of this power. Although it lost the ability to control civil governments, this symbolic kingdom still continued to exist and function as an institution after receiving its “push.” We should view the future conquest of atheism in a similar fashion. While the papacy might never be fully successful in eradicating atheism (at least not until Satan appears as Christ, after which there undoubtedly will not be an atheist left on earth because of the overmastering power of this deception<sup>21</sup>), prophecy does foretell that the whole world will worship the beast through a submission to its mark of Sunday legislation (Rev. 13:3, 16-17), and this submission will include both atheistic nations and adherents. Simply put, the papal conquest of atheism will take place when atheistic adherents submit to the authority of Sunday legislation.

This writer suggests, therefore, that the first half of vs. 40 describes the deadly “push” against the papal “king of the north” in the year 1798 by atheism as manifested in the historical experience of revolutionary France, while the second half of vs. 40 describes the eventual ideological conquest of the symbolic “kingdom” of atheism in the near future through the enforcement of the mark of the beast. When this takes place, the symbolic “king of the south” in

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<sup>21</sup>White, *Great Controversy*, 624-625.

the form of atheistic nations and individuals will be conquered in a spiritual and ideological sense by the papal “king of the north” through its compliance with and submission to Sunday legislation as the mark of the beast on a global scale.

Some Adventist interpreters propose that the modern phenomenon of Islam is a specific manifestation of the “king of the south” in vs. 23-29 and vs. 40,<sup>22</sup> as the region of Egypt has professed an Islamic spiritual orientation since the Muslim conquest of this territory from the Byzantine Empire in AD 641. This conclusion is primarily based upon geography and ignores the transition from geographic, national entities to global, symbolic entities, which, as outlined above, takes place in vs. 30-31. Whereas some Adventist interpreters see vs. 23-29 as a depiction of the Medieval Crusades, this writer proposes that there are two insurmountable problems with this interpretation. First, it is highly questionable that the historical details of the various crusades fit the actual textual data described in vs. 23-29. Second, bringing the papacy into the prophetic narrative by vs. 23 does not fit the overall sequential arrangement of the chapter in a historical sense. We have demonstrated above that vs. 16-29 describes events in Imperial Roman history, and there is no clear transference to the medieval papal power until vs. 30-31, which is a parallel passage with Dan. 8:9-14, as evidenced by the terms “daily” and “abomination of desolation,” both of which describe the character and activities of the medieval papacy.

Furthermore, modern Islam also does not fit the textual details of Dan. 11:40. No Islamic power “pushed” against the Papal Roman “king of the north” in 1798 (“at the time of the end”) to give this power a “deadly wound.” Once again, to conclude that Islam is the “king of the south” in vs. 40 is to depend solely upon geography, which is an interpretive assumption that

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<sup>22</sup>For an excellent critique of the Islam view, see Rodriguez, 30-31. Rodriguez presents a compelling argument for atheism in Dan. 11:40, and discusses how seeing the medieval crusades in vs. 23-29 leads to an Islamic King of the South view in vs. 40. As stated above, vs. 23-29 describe events in Imperial Roman history.



violates the global, symbolic scope of apocalyptic prophecy in a typological sense. As stated above, since the Papal Roman “king of the north” enters the prophetic narrative in vs. 30-31 as a global and symbolic power that is not limited to a geographic area (and remains as such for the rest of Dan. 11), it is both appropriate and consistent to also identify the “king of the south” as a global and symbolic power as well (atheism), one that is not limited by geography. For these convincing reasons, it seems more plausible that the “king of the south” is better represented by the symbolic ideology of atheism, and not the modern religious ideology of Islam.

### **The Significance of the Directions of the “North” and “South”**

Because some interpreters might suggest that Islam, like atheism, is also a global and symbolic religious power/entity (and is therefore not necessarily dependent upon geography), it will prove useful to examine the directions of the “north” and “south” in a spiritual, symbolic sense from Scripture. An examination of these two symbolic directions will confirm the “south” as representative of atheistic ideology. To begin with, the direction of the “north” in Scripture is symbolic of the highest spiritual place and position where God dwells (Eze. 1:26-28; Psa. 48:2). Using a compass analogy, the “north” is the highest direction and position, which, in a spiritual sense, is where God rightly deserves to dwell, given that He deserves the highest position in the universe and in a person’s individual life. Any empire, person, or concept that seeks to eclipse or occupy God’s position and assume His prerogatives is a counterfeit “king of the north.” Scripture shows that Satan is the first counterfeit “king of the north” (Isa. 14:12-15), and any historical empire that has attempted to conquer and control God’s covenant people and assume His claims and prerogatives is also a counterfeit “king of the north.” Dan. 11 reveals three such historical powers that have reflected these specific qualities – Seleucid-Antiochean Syria (vs. 5-15), Imperial Rome (vs. 16-30a), and Papal Rome (vs. 30b-45).

Given this understanding of symbolic “north,” we should regard the “south” as the complete and total opposite of the “north.” If the “north” is symbolic of the highest position where God is exalted and deserves to dwell, it seems quite logical to conclude that the “south” is the opposite of this idea, namely that it is a position/direction where God is completely denied altogether, and thus finds no dwelling place. Simply put, the “north” points to the highest place where God is exalted and magnified, while the “south” points to the lowest place where God is completely denied and rejected. Applying this symbolic understanding of the “south,” atheism fits the specific quality of denying and rejecting God, while Islam does not. This writer suggests that any attempt to find Islam in Dan. 11 seems to be based upon the sensationalist desire to fit a contemporary newspaper into the prophetic narrative. Even so, there might be an indirect role for Islam in end-time prophecy. Ellen White observed that the Ottoman-Islamic attacks on Eastern and Western Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century kept the papacy and its political allies distracted so that Protestantism could expand into wider circles of influence.<sup>23</sup> Modern Islam could have a similar purpose in these last days by serving as a significant distraction for the Papal Roman “king of the north” so that God’s end-time remnant message can be given on a global scale.

The fact that these two powers from the “north” and “south” are referred to as “kings” is also an important. The key question is, does the term “king” suggest that these two powers point to political powers with specific rulers as heads of state? Given that the Papal Roman “king of the north” is a specific political power, should the “king of the south” also point to a specific political power? The papal power is clearly a political and spiritual entity that exerts a global influence in the world. This power is represented by a visible political and spiritual leader, the pope, who might also be considered a “king.”

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<sup>23</sup>White, *Great Controversy*, 197.

However, given that Dan 11:30-31 reveals a transition from geographic, national empires to global, symbolic empires, we should view the papacy in this light, simply because Roman Catholicism is a spiritual, symbolic kingdom that teaches a specific ideology that assumes God's claims and prerogatives, and thus qualifies as a counterfeit "king of the north." The emphasis here is not necessarily on the term "king," but on the term "north," which identifies this power as an ideological force. We can apply this same line of reasoning to the "king of the south." Like the "north," this term identifies a symbolic kingdom that teaches a specific ideology in denial of God's claims and prerogatives, i.e. atheism, and thus qualifies as the "king of the south."

Moreover, because "kings" and "kingdoms" are synonymous in Daniel (Dan. 7:17, 23), the terms "king of the north" and "king of the south" might be rephrased as the "kingdom of the north" and the "kingdom of the south." As such, these two apocalyptic terms point to symbolic, ideological kingdoms, and don't necessarily require or focus on a visible leader to represent them. This is especially true when comparing vs. 1-29 (which discusses specific rulers within specific empires) with vs. 30-45 (which discusses more general historical trends and does not necessarily outline the activities of specific leaders).

Therefore, we can conclude that these two "kings" of the "north" and "south" represent the ruling ideologies of global, symbolic kingdoms that resist God's claims and prerogatives, whether through usurpation ("north") or outright rejection and denial ("south"). Starting in the year 1798 and continuing through to the return of Christ, these two powers have been involved in an ideological, spiritual conflict for the loyalty of human beings, one that will culminate with the eventual ideological, spiritual conquest of the atheistic "king of the south" by the Papal Roman "king of the north" through compliance with Sunday legislation as the mark of the beast. This conquest will be confirmed when Satan appears as Christ to give an alleged credibility to the

mark of Sunday worship. For these compelling reasons, an atheistic “king of the south” in Dan. 11:40 aligns with the textual evidence of Dan. 11 and specific end-time eschatological events involving the “beast” and its “mark” as described in the book of Revelation.

### **Conclusions on the King of the South in Daniel 11**

This paper has attempted to identify the three manifestations of the “king of the south” in Dan. 11. In the first manifestation (vs. 5-15) the “king of the south” consists of Ptolemaic Egypt, a kingdom that warred against the “king of the north,” Seleucid-Antiochean Syria (the first manifestation of the “king of the north”), during the Hellenistic Era. In the second manifestation (vs. 25-29), this power still consists of Ptolemaic Egypt, which was conquered by the next manifestation of the “king of the north,” Imperial Rome, when Octavian defeated Mark Antony at Actium in 31 BC. This second north/south conflict forms the starting point for the 360-year prophecy (referred to as a “time”) in Dan. 11:24. Because the papacy does not enter the narrative until vs. 30-31, this second north/south conflict discusses Imperial Roman history and not Papal Roman history, and thus does not describe the medieval crusades. The battle between Rome (Octavian) and Egypt (Antony and Cleopatra) in 31 BC fits the historical flow of the prophetic narrative, and forms the starting point for the 360-year prophecy.

In the first two north/south conflicts in Dan. 11, we can see that the “king of the north” eventually defeats the “king of the south.” This is also the case in the third north/south conflict discussed in vs. 40. Since vs. 30-31 discusses a transference from the Imperial Roman “king of the north” to the Papal Roman “king of the north,” a shift in prophetic orientation takes place from national powers to symbolic powers not confined by geography. To be consistent, this shift requires that apocalyptic terms described in national, geographic language are to be interpreted in a symbolic, typological fashion in vs. 30-45. To discover modern-day parallels of apocalyptic

symbols described in national, geographic language, we must identify the ancient disposition of these symbols as to how they related to God and the faithful during Bible times.

Moreover, given that, (1) the “king of the south” in vs. 5-15 and vs. 25-28 is Egypt, and (2) there is no transfer to another power for this symbol, the “king of the south” is still Egypt in vs. 40. However, since vs. 30-31 reveals a typological transference to global, symbolic entities from national, geographic entities, the term “Egypt” must have a symbolic meaning in vs. 40. Because, (1) vs. 40 discusses an event “at” the “time of the end,” in the year 1798, and (2) Egypt revealed an atheistic disposition in Bible times, the “king of the south” represents atheism, with a specific historical manifestation in the experience of revolutionary, Napoleonic France, which removed the Papal Roman “king of the north” from power in 1798. An analysis of the symbolism of the terms “north” and “south” confirms this identity. Identifying symbolic “Egypt” as atheism is a conclusion also confirmed by Ellen White, and is consistent with the Adventist understanding of Rev. 11:7-8. This collective evidence demonstrates that the “king of the south” in vs. 40 clearly points to atheism, and not to either Islam or the literal nation of Egypt.

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