

DANIEL'S FINAL APPEARANCE  
A GREAT CONFLICT

*PART 1: DANIEL 10:1–11:22*

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## 1. DANIEL 10: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Both content and context of Daniel 10 are significantly different from that of Daniel 11 and 12. Chapters 11 and 12 relate a prophecy describing events that were to affect God's people in the distant future; and this information, of course, is especially relevant to us living at the end of time. But what was related in chapter 10 was directed to the prophet Daniel personally. And because comments were made addressing questions in Daniel's personal life, what Daniel would have understood immediately is not so readily discernible to us who are so far removed from his day and circumstances. Therefore, in order to understand Daniel's experience in Daniel 10 it is essential to determine (1) the sequence of associated events preceding this experience, and (2) Daniel's perspective of these events. We will attempt to do this in the course of this chapter's commentary. We will also endeavor to show that Daniel was a man of great integrity and convictions, a man who loved God supremely and was intensely jealous of God's honor, and a man who modeled the character God's remnant people are called to attain.

### The Scene Is Set

Daniel establishes the setting of his last vision in the first four verses of Daniel 10:<sup>1</sup>

**IN the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing *was* true, but the time appointed *was* long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.**

**2 In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.**

**3 I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.**

**4 And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which *is* Hiddekel;**

The time was the third year of Cyrus' reign over Babylonia as king of the Medo-Persian Empire — 536/535 B.C. when Daniel was probably 88 or 89 years old. The place was not far from the ancient city of Babylon, on a bank of what we know today as the Tigris River in present-day Iraq.

While the King James Version is our translation of choice, the KJV has its own flaws, and we believe the very first verse of our study provides an example of this. The Hebrew word *tzahvah* (or *tsaba*), translated "time appointed" in v. 1, appears mistranslated. Of the some 470 times this word is found in the Old Testament, the KJV (in either the main text or margin) always translates it something similar to "war," "army," or "host" (as in a military army/host) save for a mere three times — Job 7:1; 14:14 ("appointed time") and Daniel 10:1 ("time appointed"). But even in Job 7:1 the margin renders it "a warfare," and *warfare* easily fits the context of Job 14:14. Now let's compare several versions of Daniel 10:1.

... and the thing *was* true, but the time appointed *was* long . . . . King James Version

... And the thing (was) true, and a great conflict. . . . King James II Version

... and the message was true and *one of* great conflict . . . . New American Standard

... And the word was true and it *referred to* great tribulation . . . . Authorized Bible

... Its message was true and it concerned a great war. . . . New International Version

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<sup>1</sup> All Scripture texts are in the KJV unless otherwise indicated. Also, throughout our study all emphasis in quoted material (indicated by italics) is in the original unless otherwise indicated. Emphasis in Scripture is indicated by underlining, and supplied comments within quoted material are in italics within brackets.

There can be no mistake that the “great conflict,” “great tribulation,” and “great war” spoken of here is none other than the great spiritual conflict — the *great controversy* — between Christ and Satan. Thus, there can be no mistake that the events about to be described are, like in every other apocalyptic prophecy, only those that constitute a direct and significant part of the great spiritual warfare as it plays out on earth throughout the course of human history. However, when we compare Daniel’s visions there is, in our view, a unique aspect of this last vision that caused Daniel to describe it as a “great conflict.”

Daniel’s vision of chapter 7 pictured four beasts, each depicting one of the major political powers that were to rule the Old World from Daniel’s day to the second coming of Christ — *i.e.* Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. His vision of chapter 8 pictured two beasts and a “little horn,” representing Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The primary focus of these visions is on the major Old-World political powers of world history and the principal accomplishments of these powers. And as we shall explain shortly, Daniel’s vision of chapter 9 is but an expansion on the last two verses of the parent vision of chapter 8, and these portions of Daniel’s visions deal with important time elements identifying how long God prescribed for certain things to happen regarding His people. In each chapter God’s people are mentioned only as passive recipients of whatever is said to befall them; they are not themselves active participants in the prophetic events. In contrast and as we shall establish early in our study of chapter 11, Daniel’s last vision describes God’s people as being actively engaged in the spiritual warfare between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. It describes the *play and counterplay* of the conflict; thus Daniel appropriately described his last vision as one that concerned “a great conflict,” and this is where we have derived the title of our own commentary.

It is important to understand the reason Daniel was mourning to the point of semi-fasting for three weeks as this reveals the great burden weighing on Daniel’s heart that precipitated this vision itself. Many commentators point out that when we look at the circumstances Daniel’s people were in at the time, we find that they had just come out of Jeremiah’s prophesied 70 years of captivity in Babylon.<sup>2</sup> Two and one-half years prior to this vision the Babylonian kingdom was overthrown; the Medo-Persian kingdom came into the preeminence and Darius the Mede was given the throne.<sup>3</sup> But Darius died after only one year and then the Persian king Cyrus assumed the throne. And it was in the first year of Cyrus (538/537 B.C.) that God moved upon the new king to issue a decree declaring the Jews free to return to Palestine to rebuild their Temple.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, in respect to Cyrus as a “deliverer” of Israel, Cyrus was a type of Christ.<sup>5</sup> And because Daniel was just a teenager when he himself was taken a captive to Babylon some 70 years earlier, we can be sure that this deliverance was the realization of Daniel’s lifelong hope. This hope he eloquently expressed in the year of Darius (just before the “deliverance”), and Daniel’s earnest prayer at that time (Dan. 9:4–19) was what precipitated his third vision (Dan. 9:20–27).

But when we get to Daniel’s *fourth* vision we are now in the *third* year of Cyrus, some two years after the “deliverance” decree issued in the *first* year of Cyrus. By this time the first group of exiles had returned to the site of Jerusalem and preparations for rebuilding the Temple had begun. We can assume Daniel himself had not accompanied this group because of his age. But the excitement and enthusiasm that no doubt went with those who did return has now waned. Aside from the fact that the number of Jews choosing to return were relatively few, providing few workman for the task of rebuilding, opposition from the Samaritans now occupying the land was becoming a real factor.<sup>6</sup> This created political opposition [to the reconstruction project] back in Babylon to the extent there was

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the story in Dan. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ezra 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 4BC 250.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Ezra 4:4–5.

now real danger that Cyrus' decree would be rescinded and that the actual rebuilding would not even begin. Thus, it has been suggested that Daniel was now mourning the fact that the Temple's reconstruction was in jeopardy.<sup>7</sup> He may have been particularly concerned as he realized his own time remaining in this world was short and that he had little time left to learn the fate of his people. Therefore, just as he did two years earlier in Daniel 9, Daniel now seeks an audience with his God; and, just as before, God responds.

### The Appearance of Christ

**5 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man (Christ) clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz:**

**6 His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.**

Daniel saw Christ overhead, whom he described in a way similar to the description of Christ by John the Revelator over 600 years later in Revelation 1:13–16. He continues:

**7 And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.**

**8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.**

**9 Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.**

Daniel also reacted to the appearance of Christ as did John, who “fell at his feet as dead” (Rev. 1:17).<sup>8</sup>

### The Appearance of Gabriel

**10 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.**

**11 And he (Gabriel) said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.**

Daniel does not tell us that the heavenly visitant here introduced and who, for the remainder of the vision, converses with Daniel is in fact the angel Gabriel, but we can reasonably assume this given the two previous occasions when it was Gabriel whom Christ sent as His communicant to Daniel.<sup>9</sup>

**12 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.**

“Ask, and ye shall receive” (John 16:24) certainly proved true in Daniel's case here. But what exactly was it that Daniel asked for? We are told that Daniel “set” his “heart to understand,” and as Gabriel told Daniel, “I am come for thy words,” it is apparent that the specific purpose of this vision was to satisfy Daniel's urgent desire to understand that which he had been mourning about for the previous three weeks. It is now important to determine precisely what it was that Daniel was mourning about and trying to understand. And while we have already noted the commonly held view that Daniel was mourning the political opposition threatening to cancel the rebuilding of the Temple in

<sup>7</sup> Cf. 4BC 857–858.

<sup>8</sup> Also compare Ezekiel's experience in Eze. 1:26–2:2, and John's description of Christ in Rev. 10:1.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Dan. 8:16; 9:21; PK 556, 572; DA 99; SL 51.

Jerusalem, we will now suggest that, though the reconstruction project was part of it, there was an even more pressing concern troubling Daniel; and this is where understanding Daniel's perspective of these things becomes important.

Because Daniel does not tell us directly just what it was that he was trying to understand, we believe he is assuming we would know without being told. If this is the case, we should expect to find comments in Daniel's previous historical record that would give us the information Daniel now assumes we already know. Furthermore, since Daniel relates no immediate cause for his perplexity in the opening verses of Daniel 10, it is evident that the source of his perplexity came from a prior experience; and when we look back at Daniel's prior experience we find his frank admission regarding his vision of Daniel 8: "I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it" (8:27). Thus, going strictly from Daniel's own historical record, we suspect that what initiated Daniel's last vision was his own desire to more fully understand his previous vision of chapter 8.

### The Interrelationship Between Daniel's Visions

Understanding the relationship between Daniel's visions and how they interrelate will now be helpful. Comments by Harold Metcalf in his verse-by-verse study of the book of Daniel entitled *Insight*:

The last vision of Daniel covers the three closing chapters of his book. *While it is spoken of as a vision, it was not really a vision in the same sense as those recorded in chapters seven and eight, but rather a further interpretation of the latter.* Daniel had but two prophetic visions and both were interpreted by Gabriel. The two visions were closely related, the second being a further explanation of the first in which "not all was made clear to the prophet." — White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 554 [sic; should read 553]. "Through another vision further light was thrown upon the events of the future." — *Ibid.* [554]. *It required three visits of the angel of prophecy to complete the interpretation of the second vision. This vision and its threefold interpretation is the subject of the last five chapters of the book.* Chapter ten is the prologue and chapter twelve the epilogue of the angel's last interpretation which is embraced in chapter eleven. *Insight: The Book of Daniel*, 291 (emphasis supplied).

Daniel had but two true prophetic visions — the first described in Daniel 7:1–14 and the second in 8:1–14. The first vision received an immediate explanation, presumably by the angel Gabriel, in 7:16–27. The second vision also received an immediate explanation, this time we know by Gabriel, in 8:16–26. However, Gabriel gave the second vision a later second explanation in 9:20–27 and still later a third explanation which is essentially embraced in chapter 11. As we shall see, the three explanations of the true vision of chapter 8 are referred to in the original language by a Hebrew word better rendered "appearance." What we have in Daniel 8–12, then, is Daniel's second true "vision" (Dan. 8:1–14) and its three subsequent explanations that came in the form of "appearances." Thus, since the subject of our present study is the third explanation, we have entitled our study, in part, *Daniel's Final Appearance*.

The *SDA Bible Commentary* comments on Daniel 10:1:

**A thing.** A unique expression used by Daniel to describe his fourth great prophetic outline (chs. 10–12), which was apparently revealed without a preceding symbolic representation and without any allusion to symbols (cf. chs. 7:16–24; 8:20–26). The word *marah*, "vision," of vs. 7, 8, 16 refers simply to the *appearance* of Daniel's two celestial visitants, mentioned in vs. 5, 6 and 10–21 respectively. Accordingly, some have considered the fourth prophetic outline a further, more detailed explanation of events pictured symbolically in the "vision" of ch. 8:1–14. *On this basis chs. 10–12 would be interpreted in terms of the vision of chs. 8, 9.* However, the relationship between chs. 10–12 and 8, 9 is by no means so clear or certain as that between ch. 8 and ch. 9. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:857 (emphasis supplied).

Though we concur with the Commentary that “the relationship between chs. 10–12 and 8, 9 is by no means so clear or certain as that between ch. 8 and ch. 9,” we concur with Metcalf that there is in fact a direct relationship between all of chapters 8–12 and that these chapters should be considered a unit. The Adventist pioneer Uriah Smith recognized this in his statement: “Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12 are clearly a continuation and explanation of the vision of Daniel 8” (*DR* 332). Metcalf further notes:

That the last three chapters of the book [*of Daniel*] contain a further explanation of Daniel’s second vision is the opinion of the best Bible commentators. Bishop Newton is quoted by Dr. Adam Clarke as saying: “It is the usual method of the Holy Spirit to make the latter prophecies explanatory of the former; and thus revelation ‘is a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.’ The four great empires shown to Nebuchadnezzar, under the symbol of a great image [*in Dan. 2*], were again more particularly represented to Daniel under the forms of four great wild beasts [*in Dan. 7*]. In like manner, the memorable events that were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and he-goat [*in Dan. 8*], are here more clearly revealed in this last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy [*of Dan. 10–12*] may not improperly be said to be a comment on the former [*of Dan. 8*].” — *Notes on Chap. XI*. This is both reasonable and logical and should guide us in our interpretations of these last three chapters of the book. *Insight: The Book of Daniel*, 291–292.

Metcalf next quotes two of the foremost Bible commentators of their day:

“Gabriel, after giving the history of the seventy weeks [*in Dan. 9*], dwells not in detail on the remainder of the vision, but reserves a more detailed account for the next visit, which is given us in the tenth to the twelfth chapters of Daniel inclusive.” — *William Miller’s Lectures*, 1842 Edition, pp. 70, 71. “In like manner, the memorable events, which were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and he-goat are here again more clearly and explicitly revealed in his last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy may not improperly be said to be a comment and explanation of the former.” — Josiah Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, Vol. 3, p. 4. *Ibid.*, 292.

It appears that Josiah Litch borrowed his comments here from Bishop Newton. Now one more paragraph from Metcalf:

We must not forget that *Daniel’s prayer and fast* [*of Dan. 10*] was for the purpose of understanding more fully his previous vision of the little horn and the 2300 days [*of Dan. 8*]. Gabriel was sent to answer his prayer and give him “understanding of the vision,” and to show him the truth as to what would befall his people “in the latter days.” All of the prophecies of Daniel cover the same ground and describe the same earthly powers, the repetition being for the purpose of giving additional detail for the special benefit of God’s people who live in “the latter days” or “the time of the end” when the prophecies would be unsealed and understood. Chapter 11 is the most marvelous literal and detailed prophecy of the Scriptures. “*This chapter gives a more particular explanation of those events which were predicted in the eighth chapter.*” — Dr. Adam Clarke. *This fact must not be lost sight of or we will become lost as many others have in their comments on the interpretation of the angel of prophecy.* *Ibid.*, 293 (emphasis supplied).

Clearly, Bishop Newton, William Miller, Josiah Litch, Adam Clarke, Uriah Smith, and Harold Metcalf were all in agreement in their understanding of the interrelationship between Daniel’s visions. And we have belabored this point for the simple reason that the truthfulness of the last sentence quoted cannot be overstated, and because this point, in addition to being relevant now as we attempt to identify why Daniel was mourning and fasting in Daniel 10, will become particularly relevant later in our study.

Because the prophetic information provided in Daniel 11–12 is God’s response to Daniel’s desire to understand something, and recognizing a basis for interpreting the vision of Daniel 10–12

“in terms of the vision of chs. 8, 9” (*ABC* 857 quote above) adds support to our belief that what Daniel had set his heart to understand at the beginning of chapter 10 was in fact a more comprehensive understanding of his previous vision that, as we shall soon verify, embraced *both* chapters 8 and 9. Identifying now exactly what it was that Daniel did not understand about his previous vision will help us determine what it was he was still trying to understand at the beginning of chapter 10 and why Daniel, some twelve years past his vision and its first explanation of chapter 8 and two years past its second explanation of chapter 9, was now all of a sudden so troubled by it all that he mourned and fasted for three full weeks. So with this purpose in mind, we will discontinue our study of Daniel 10 for the time being and go back and take a look at Daniel 8 and 9.

### *Daniel 8*

We have noted that the first half of Daniel 8 is the account of Daniel’s second true vision (vs. 1–14), and while Daniel was trying to understand this vision Gabriel appeared (v. 15) and gave an immediate explanation (vs. 16–26). The first part of this explanation was so clear no one could have misunderstood. Though the Babylonian kingdom was firmly in power at the time, Gabriel explains in clear language that the ram of the vision depicts the fact that Babylon would be overthrown by Medo-Persia (v. 20), then a “he goat” Greek empire would overthrow Medo-Persia (v. 21), then the Greek empire would be divided four ways (v. 22), and finally an unnamed power would be established (vs. 23–25). Is there anything about this by itself that would be difficult for Daniel to understand? No. It is apparent, then, that the part Daniel still did *not* understand following Gabriel’s initial explanation was the part regarding the question and answer in vs. 13–14. A word study of the word “vision” will help greatly in verifying this.

There is one Aramaic word and two Hebrew words translated “vision” in the KJV of Daniel. The Aramaic word is used in the Aramaic portion of Daniel (Dan. 2:4–7:28) and is not relevant to our discussion here. Of the two Hebrew words, one is *hazon*. This word is used in reference to the symbolic vision of Daniel 8 and is found in Daniel 8:1, 2 (twice), 13, 15, 17, 26; 9:21, 24; 10:14; 11:14. The other Hebrew word translated “vision” is *mareh* along with its feminine form *marah*. This is the word that has the more common meaning of *appearance*, and it is indeed translated “appearance” in Daniel 8:15; 10:6, 18 and “vision” in 8:16, 26–27; 9:23; 10:1, 7 (twice), 8, 16.<sup>10</sup>

As noted in the Commentary quote above, the use of *marah* when it is translated “vision” in Daniel 10 suggests that we should view Daniel 10–12 as “a further, more detailed explanation of events pictured symbolically in the ‘vision’ of ch. 8:1–14” in that “the word *marah*, ‘vision,’ of vs. 7, 8, 16 refers simply to the appearance of Daniel’s two celestial visitants.” We have already identified these two celestial visitants as Christ and Gabriel. But the vision of chapter 8 also had two celestial visitants appearing before Daniel, though they didn’t appear until the end of the vision in vs. 13–14. In v. 13 one of these unnamed visitants asked the other, “How long shall be the vision [*hazon*]” that just ended in v. 12? Therefore, it would seem that when referring to the vision of chapter 8, any later reference to “the vision [*hazon*]” would be in reference to the symbolic *vision* given Daniel in Daniel 8:3–12, and any reference to “the vision [*mareh/marah*]” would be in reference to the *appearance* of Daniel’s two celestial visitants of Daniel 8:13–14. However, in Daniel 9:21 Daniel tells us that the angel Gabriel “whom I had seen in the vision [*hazon*] at the beginning” (*i.e.* in the *hazon* of Dan. 8) came to him. But Gabriel had no role in the purely symbolic portion of the vision of Daniel 8 (*i.e.* vs. 3–12); Gabriel was only involved in the *mareh* of vs. 15–26. Therefore, we believe the Hebrew word *hazon* is more encompassing than the words *mareh* and *marah*. It appears *hazon* can be used in reference to the symbolic pictorial portions of a vision *and* the mere appearance of a vision’s celestial

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<sup>10</sup> *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* incorrectly identifies the Hebrew word for “vision” in Dan. 8:17 as *mareh* and in 9:23 as *hazon*. See *The Interlinear Bible*, Wigram’s *The Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*, and *The New Brown–Driver–Briggs–Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*.



visitants, while *mareh* and *marah* are words restricted to referring *only* to the appearance of the celestial visitants. This inclusive usage of *hazon* is also its clear meaning in Daniel 8:15, 26.

We will now note that as the vision of Daniel 8:3–14 progresses in chronological sequence, so does Gabriel’s first explanation in vs. 20–26. Putting the two side-by-side and underlining key words will best show the parallel.

#### Daniel 8:3–14

3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the *two horns were high*; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.

4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.

5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.

6 And he came to the ram that had *two horns*, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant *land*.

10 And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

11 Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

12 And an host was given him against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered.

13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision (*hazon*; that just ended in v. 12) *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

#### Daniel 8:20–26

20 The ram which thou sawest having two horns *are* the kings of Media and Persia.

21 And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes *is* the first king.

22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

26 And the vision (*mareh*) of the [2300] evening and the morning which was told *is* true: wherefore shut thou up the vision (*hazon*); for it *shall be* for many days.

**14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evening morning [margin]; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.**

It is self-evident that v. 20 explains vs. 3–4; v. 21 explains vs. 5–7; v. 22 explains v. 8; vs. 23–25 explain vs. 9–12; and (note carefully) while v. 26 does not explain any previous prophetic symbol, it corresponds with vs. 13–14. Thus, as vs. 13–14 follow after the symbolic vision of vs. 3–12, so v. 26 follows after the immediate explanation [of the symbolic vision] of vs. 20–25; and thus the first part of v. 26 regarding the *mareh* refers specifically to the *appearance* of Daniel’s two heavenly visitants of vs. 13–14. But frustrating as it must have been to Daniel, though Gabriel states that the 2300-day *mareh* is true, he does not offer to explain it as he did the symbolic vision *hazon*. Now substituting the word “appearance” for the word *mareh*, vs. 26–27 read:

**26 And the appearance<sup>4758</sup> of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision<sup>2377</sup>; for it shall be for many days.**

**27 And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the appearance<sup>4758</sup>, but none understood it.<sup>11</sup>**

So, it wasn’t the symbolic vision of vs. 3–12 and its clear language explanation of vs. 20–25 that Daniel was astonished at and professed not to understand in v. 27, it was the “appearance” referred to [in vs. 26–27] of the two heavenly visitants of vs. 13–14. Of course, the specific part of this “appearance” that Daniel did not understand was the time period of the 2300 days as no starting point for this period was given. This conclusion, then, narrows our focus considerably in identifying exactly what it was that Daniel was still seeking to understand at the beginning of chapter 10. But though Daniel indicated in v. 27 that it was the “appearance” of vs. 13–14 that no one understood, it was specifically the “appearance” that Christ instructed Gabriel to make Daniel understand according to v. 16:

**16 And I heard a man’s (Christ’s) voice between *the banks* of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the appearance<sup>4758</sup>.**

Therefore, it is apparent that at least one more explanation is required if Gabriel is to fulfill his commission to make Daniel understand the “appearance” of the 2300 days; and this now leads us to Daniel 9.

### *Daniel 9*

When we go to Daniel 9, it is ten years later: Babylon has just fallen and we are now in the first year of the “ram” kingdom of Medo-Persia when Darius the Mede was king. Now we find Daniel seeking the Lord in a very passionate way. But unlike his experience two years later in chapter 10, here Daniel tells us precisely what his motivation was: Daniel had just discovered that God had predetermined that the Jews would be held in their Babylonian captivity for 70 years. Daniel 9:2:

**2 In the first year of his (Darius’) reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

Daniel derived this understanding from reading the letter Jeremiah had written to the Jewish captives in Babylon and that is recorded in Jeremiah 29.<sup>12</sup> Part of this letter stated:

**10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.**

<sup>11</sup> The superscript numbers here and in subsequent Scripture texts designate the identifying numbers for the corresponding Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek words in *Strong’s Concordance*. In this case, the number 4758 is Strong’s number for the Hebrew word *mareh* while 2377 is Strong’s number for *hazon*, both of which are translated “vision” in the KJV.

<sup>12</sup> Also see Jer. 25:11–12; 2 Chron. 36:21.

**11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.**

What a revelation it must have been when Daniel suddenly realized that the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah was just then on the verge of expiration. But seeing the spiritual backslidings of his people (that he described in Dan. 9:5–15), and especially recognizing that, despite the captivity God had brought upon them because of their previous apostasy (v. 7), God’s people had *still* not humbled themselves before Him (v. 13), Daniel could only cry out to God for mercy (vs. 16–19) that for His own name’s sake God should “defer not” (v. 19) His appointed time for the deliverance of His people. That is, Daniel was aware of the conditional nature of God’s promises and that, also according to Jeremiah, God in His sovereignty is free, based on the human response to Him, to alter His expressed intentions toward His people.<sup>13</sup> But not only was Daniel familiar with this principle of God’s dealing with His people, we can be sure that as he read Jeremiah 29:10–11 regarding the 70 years of captivity he also read what immediately followed. Jeremiah 29:12–14:

**12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.**

**13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.**

**14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again (*shuwb*) into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.**

Therefore, because Daniel and his people were still captives in Babylonia (though now subjects of the Medo-Persian kingdom), Daniel obediently called upon God and prayed with all his heart that God would indeed turn away their captivity and *not postpone* His appointed time for their deliverance. Gabriel then came to Daniel with very reassuring news: “Seventy weeks” (Dan. 9:24) were still given to the Jews to make things right, near the end of which the promised Messiah would come; and these 70 weeks would begin with the coming proclamation that the Jewish captives were free to go “to restore [*shuwb*] and to build Jerusalem” (v. 25).

While Daniel’s specific purpose in praying to God in Daniel 9 was to ask Him to “defer not” the end-point of Jeremiah’s prophesied 70 years of Jewish captivity in Babylon, in response Gabriel was sent to tell Daniel to “consider the *mareh*” (v. 23) of his previous vision. So while the Lord reassures Daniel that the 70 years will not be prolonged, He takes this occasion to explain much of what Daniel still did not understand about the 2300-day *mareh* of chapter 8 — primarily, He gives the starting point for these days (we will explain this soon); secondarily, He adds yet another time period (the 70 weeks) along with details of events associated with this additional period.

We have explained how the distinction between the Hebrew words *hazon* and *mareh* identify the source of Daniel’s perplexity at the end of Daniel 8 as being the 2300-day *mareh* of vs. 13–14. Now Dr. William Shea will explain how these words connect the visions of Daniel 8 and 9:

When Gabriel came to Daniel (9:23), he instructed him to “consider the word [which I bring to you now] and understand the vision [which you saw previously]” (own tr.). Here Gabriel referred Daniel back to the vision of chapter 8 in a very specific way. The word translated “vision” here is *mar’eh*, a term that refers more specifically to the “appearance” of personal beings. *Mar’eh* is used in contrast to the word *hazon*, the commonly used term for the symbolic visions in Daniel. For one example of this contrast, see their occurrences in 10:7–8 (*mar’eh*), 14 (*hazon*).

The same distinction is maintained in 8:26 where Gabriel assured Daniel that “the . . . [*mare’eh*] of the evenings and the mornings which has been told is true.” But he was instruct-

<sup>13</sup> Cf. God’s illustration of the conditional nature of His promises in Jer. 18:1–11. Also cf. “The Nature and Purpose of Conditional Prophecy” in *ABC* 34.

ed to “seal up the vision (*hazon*).” The first reference is to the appearance of the personal (angelic) beings who discuss the 2300 days (8:13–14). The second reference is to the symbolic vision he had seen up to that point (vss. 2–12).

When we come to 9:23, we find that Gabriel did not refer Daniel back to the symbolic vision of chapter 8 in general by using *hazon*. Instead, the angel refers him back specifically to the *mare’eh* of the two angelic beings in verses 13–14 and their discussion of the time period of 2300 days. Since the next statement Gabriel makes is about the 70 weeks, it is obvious that those 70 weeks are connected directly to the 2300 days. Thus the technical word for “vision” (*mar’eh*) clearly ties together these two time periods. DRCS, 3:105–106 (*Weeks, Leviticus, Nature of Prophecy*).<sup>14</sup>

With this connection clearly established, and given the inadequacy of Gabriel’s first explanation to explain the 2300 days of chapter 8, we find Gabriel’s comments in Daniel 9:24–27 to be the follow-up explanation one would anticipate was coming. That is, these comments shed prophetic light on the very part of Daniel’s second vision that Daniel admittedly did not understand — the *mareh* “appearance” of Daniel 8:13–14.

Having determined that Gabriel’s comments in Daniel 9 are but an expansion on the “appearance” of 8:13–14, we should now *not* expect the emphasis of chapter 9 to be on the ram, goat, or little horn of the *hazon* of 8:3–12. The information in chapter 9 should primarily relate to the 2300-day *mareh*; and this is indeed the case. Nevertheless, having made this observation, while there is a great deal of new information given in Daniel 9 dealing with the new time period of the 70 weeks, Daniel 9 still contains words that could be construed to connect with and amplify the information regarding the little horn in chapter 8; and we believe this is precisely what Daniel and his friends, anxious to understand the “parent” vision in a way that fulfilled their cherished hopes, did. And while we know, with the advantage of hindsight, that the prophetic events of Daniel 8’s little horn were for the most part fulfilled during the Roman Empire far into New Testament times, and we know that the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 were *prophetic* weeks that took God’s people up to the time of Christ over 500 years future from Daniel’s day, let’s try to look at these verses from Daniel’s perspective.

#### *Daniel’s Interpretation*

First, let’s compare the relevant verses:

##### Daniel 8:9–14

9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant *land*.

10 And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

11 Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

12 And an host was given

##### Daniel 8:23–26

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

##### Daniel 9:23–27

23 I am come to shew *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the [appearance]<sup>4758</sup> [of 8:13–14].

24 Seventy weeks are determined [“cut off”] upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision<sup>2377</sup> and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks (69 weeks): the street

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Shea correctly notes that Gabriel uses the word *mareh* in Dan. 9:23 as opposed to the word *hazon* (cf. fn. 10).

him against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised, and prospered.

13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long shall be the vision<sup>2377</sup> concerning the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evening morning [margin]; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

26 And the [appearance]<sup>4758</sup> [of vs. 13–14] of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true: wherefore shut thou up the vision<sup>2377</sup>; for it *shall be* for many days.

shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after [the] threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (the 70<sup>th</sup>): and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it desolate*, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Before addressing the *apparent* parallels here, it is necessary to show how the word “determined” in Daniel 9:24 means “cut off” as this explains how the 70-week prophecy provided the starting point of the 2300-day prophecy. The *SDA Bible Commentary* on Daniel 9:24:

**Are determined.** Heb. *chathak*, a word occurring only here in the Bible. It occurs in post-Biblical Hebrew with the meaning “to cut,” “to cut off,” “to determine,” “to decree.” . . . The exact shade of meaning here intended must be determined from the context. In view of the fact that ch. 9 is an exposition of the unexplained portion of the vision of ch. 8 . . . , and inasmuch as the unexplained portion had to do with the 2300 days, it is logical to conclude that the 70 weeks, or 490 years, were to be “cut off” from that longer period. Furthermore, in the absence of contrary evidence, it may be assumed that the 70 weeks would be cut off from the beginning of that period. Viewed in the light of these observations, the translation of *chathak* as “to cut” seems singularly appropriate. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:851.

Since it can be deduced that the two time periods of Daniel 8 and 9 begin together, then the beginning event of the 70 weeks given in Daniel 9:25 is also the beginning event of the 2300 days. No doubt, Daniel understood it this very way. Now let’s consider how Daniel *could* have understood Daniel 9:24–27 to parallel the *hazon* of Daniel 8:3–12 and its first explanation of 8:20–25.

Chapter 8 speaks of the coming enemy of God and His people as a “little horn” “king” (vs. 9, 23); chapter 9 speaks of him as “the prince that shall come” (v. 26). Chapter 8 speaks of the Messiah as “the prince of the host” and “the Prince of princes” (vs. 11, 25); chapter 9 speaks of Him as “the Messiah the Prince” and gives the time of His first coming (v. 25). Chapter 8 tells us the little horn king “magnified himself even to the prince of the host” and would “stand up against the Prince of princes” (vs. 11, 25); chapter 9 tells us the Messiah would be “cut off” (v. 26)—an event Daniel and his friends could have understood to be the result of the little horn “standing up against” the Messiah. Chapter 8 tells us the enemy of God would “cast down” and “destroy” God’s people and His “sanctuary” (vs. 10, 11, 24); chapter 9 tells us he would “destroy the city [*Jerusalem*] and the sanctuary” (v. 26). Chapter 8 tells us that, because of “transgression,” a significant segment of God’s people would be “given over to the little horn” (v. 12; NKJV); chapter 9 specified that there would be 70 weeks “determined upon thy [*Daniel’s*] people . . . to finish the transgression” (v. 24).

These related terms and expressions could have led Daniel and his friends to believe that the prophecy of Daniel 9 directly paralleled the prophesy of the little horn of Daniel 8. But we know, from our vantage point in history, that it did not. We know that the primary purpose of Daniel 9 was

to establish the beginning point of the 2300 days and to shed entirely new light on the subject of future events. Having said this, however, we believe there is indeed a true parallel here. This parallel is between the last part of Daniel 8:25 and the last part of 9:27; but because 9:27 is difficult in the KJV we will also parallel this as it reads in the NAS:

**Daniel 8:25**  
25 . . . and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

**Daniel 9:27 (KJV)**  
27 . . . and for the over-spreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

**Daniel 9:27 (NAS)**  
27 . . . and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

The *SDA Bible Commentary* comments on the last word of Daniel 9:27:

**Desolate.** Better, “desolater.” The desolater himself would eventually be destroyed. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:855.

It is clear that the “one who makes desolate” of Daniel 9:27 is the power behind the “transgression of desolation” of 8:13 who in the end, according to 8:25, would himself be “broken.” Thus, we believe the “complete destruction” of the desolater in 9:27 parallels the breaking of the desolating power of chapter 8, and the great enemy of God and His people—the “little horn” desolating king/prince of 8:25 and 9:27—will in the end be desolated and “broken” himself. And recognizing the clear parallel between vs. 26 and 27 of chapter 9 also supports our understanding that “the prince that shall come” of v. 26 is indeed the little horn Roman power—the “one who makes desolate” of v. 27—and he is not, as some suppose, the “Messiah the Prince” of v. 25.<sup>15</sup> We will refer to the last part of Daniel 9:27 again when we get to the parallel verses in Daniel 11 that also prophesy the final end of the world’s great abomination-of-desolation political power.

Looking at all of this from Daniel’s perspective at the end of Daniel 9, with Gabriel’s assurance that God was not going to “defer” the end-point of Israel’s 70 years of Babylonian captivity, the next significant future event would, of course, be the fast-approaching conclusion of Jeremiah’s 70-year prophecy. But what event would mark this? Obviously, it would be the political decision/proclamation releasing the Jews from their captivity. But Gabriel had just told Daniel:

**25 . . . that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks . . . .**

Therefore, the natural conclusion for Daniel to draw from the currently available information was that the event marking the *end* of the 70 years would *also* be the event marking the *beginning* of the 70 weeks and 2300 days.

Looking back from our vantage point, we can see that the proclamation allowing the Jews to restore and rebuild Jerusalem that fully satisfied its description in Daniel 9:25 actually came some 80 years after Gabriel’s announcement of it. This was the *third* of three decrees,<sup>16</sup> given by Artaxerxes I to Ezra in 457 B.C. and as recorded in Ezra 7:13–26, and it was *not* the *first* of these decrees that was given by Cyrus in 538 B.C. and as recorded in Ezra 1:2–4.<sup>17</sup> But from Daniel’s perspective, not knowing that additional decrees were coming or even necessary, the decree Gabriel foretold in Daniel 9:25 would naturally have been the forthcoming one by Cyrus that would mark the end of Jeremiah’s 70 years and that was, at the time of Gabriel’s announcement, now less than one year

<sup>15</sup> C. Mervyn Maxwell explains this well in *God Cares*, 1:209–212, 224, 239–240.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Ezra 6:14.

<sup>17</sup> The second decree was by Darius I (not to be confused with Darius the Mede of Dan. 5:31–6:28; 9:1) about 520 B.C. as recorded in Ezra 6:8–12. Cf. *4BC* 853.

away. And if this was indeed Daniel's thinking, was it *also* his thinking that Gabriel's 70 weeks were *literal* weeks?—since Jeremiah's 70 years had been *literal* years?

Though the year-day principle of Bible prophecy had already been suggested in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6, these texts can hardly be considered as providing Daniel with a clear reason to apply this principle to his time periods.<sup>18</sup> This is particularly evident given the fact that no precedence had been established confirming that this principle should be applied to prophetic time periods. The fact is, the 70-week period was the very first *apocalyptic* time period to transpire, and thus it was the first prophetic period to employ the year-day rule. Without a precedence, then, and because Daniel had no hard evidence that the year-day principle should be applied to his time periods, Daniel would have most naturally interpreted his time periods literally. The year-day application could well have not even been a consideration at this point. Therefore, if Daniel was as familiar with the writings of Isaiah as he now was with those of Jeremiah, at the conclusion of Daniel 9 it would have appeared that the time prophecies God had given His people pointed to three soon coming events. (1) Sometime within the next year or so Cyrus would succeed to the throne replacing Darius and, according to Isaiah 44:28, issue an emancipation proclamation declaring the Jews free to return to Judea to rebuild both their city and their Temple. To Daniel, this would not only fulfill Isaiah 44:28 but also Jeremiah 29:10 and the first part of Daniel 9:25. We have already looked at Jeremiah 29:10<sup>19</sup> and Daniel 9:25; now let's look at what the Lord had previously said regarding Cyrus in Isaiah 44:28:

**28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.***

This is a remarkable prophecy in that it calls Cyrus by name over 100 years before Cyrus was even born.<sup>20</sup> But while Cyrus' proclamation would appropriately mark the *end* of Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy, it would also naturally seem to Daniel to mark the *beginning* of his own 70-week and 2300-day prophecies. Therefore, supposedly, (2) 69 literal weeks following the first event the Messiah would appear and, in one way or another, "confirm the covenant . . . for one week" (Dan. 9:27). Sometime during the following five years, then, a "little horn" power would arise and "cast down" (Dan. 8:11) what was rebuilt of the sanctuary; indeed, this power would "destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. 9:26). But ultimately, (3) the Temple sanctuary would be "cleansed" (Dan. 8:14) of this Gentile pollution at the end of 2300 literal days.

We can only imagine the excitement that thrilled the hearts of prophecy students in Daniel's day when the first of these "present truth" events came to pass right on schedule. Though Cyrus' decree, according to Ezra 1:2–4, said nothing in respect to rebuilding the city, but spoke only of "the house of the Lord" — the Temple — to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy above, Cyrus' decree must also have included an imperative to rebuild Jerusalem, else how and when was Isaiah 44:28 fulfilled? Furthermore, the Lord specifically said that Cyrus would build Jerusalem. Isaiah 45:13:

**13 I have raised him (Cyrus; v. 1) up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.**

Based on the certainty of God's word, Cyrus not only called for the building of Jerusalem but Jerusalem was actually rebuilt as a result. And there is no reason to doubt that Cyrus' call for the rebuilding of Jerusalem came at the same time as his call for the rebuilding of the Temple. Also, the fact that the subsequent account (in Ezra 6:3–5) of Cyrus' decree relates more details indicates that the initial account in Ezra 1:2–4 was not a complete quote of the decree; and we need not suppose the account in Ezra 6 was either. Therefore, we believe Cyrus fulfilled all of Isaiah 44:28 in his decree of

<sup>18</sup> The year-day principle counts each day in a prophetic period as representing one literal year. Cf. 4BC 833.

<sup>19</sup> P. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Also cf. Isa. 45:1–6; PK 557.

538 B.C. If we are correct here, Daniel would have had no reason to *not* believe that Cyrus' decree fulfilled the immensely significant prophetic event of Daniel 9:25: "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks."<sup>21</sup>

With Cyrus' decree accomplished, from Daniel's viewpoint God was now going to do very much for His people in a very short time. With the fulfillment of the first "event," in only sixteen months, according to Daniel 9, Messiah the Prince would come; and it appeared He would come in conjunction with the commencement of the actual reconstruction of the Temple. And at this highly significant time in the history of the Jews when they were given a new start as God's people-elect, the Messiah would come and bring a halt to the Gentile transgressions against His people. Furthermore, He would make an end of sins, bring in everlasting righteousness, and anoint the most Holy, etc. (Dan. 9:24); the former two no doubt taken to mean that the Messiah, fulfilling Jeremiah 33:7–8, would turn away the apostasy of God's people once and for all, and the latter possibly believed to occur at an anointing service for the Messiah, or perhaps a dedication (ground-breaking) service for the new Temple. Sometime during all of this a Greek kingdom would overthrow Medo-Persia, then be divided four ways (Dan. 8:5–8, 21–22). And though the little horn antichrist "king" would finally arise, persecute God's people (8:10, 24) and even stand up against the Messiah (8:25) and the Messiah would be "cut off" (9:26), and though what was later rebuilt of the sanctuary would be destroyed and polluted by the Gentiles (8:11; 9:26), at the end of the 2300 days the Temple sanctuary would finally be restored and "cleansed" (8:14) from this Gentile pollution once and for all and the little horn antichrist desolating king would be finally "broken" (8:25) as the desolater would be desolated (9:27). Thus, it could well have seemed to Daniel that in a little over just six years the enemies of Israel would be destroyed and in the end Jerusalem would be "established as the mighty metropolis of the earth" and become "the world's diadem of glory" (cf. *DA* 577). Daniel could well have had reason to hope to actually see with his own eyes the fulfillment of Jeremiah 3:17–18:

**17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.**

**18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north (*i.e.* the land of their captivity — Assyria for Israel; Babylon for Judah) to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.**

Unfortunately for Daniel and his friends, the 70<sup>th</sup> literal week from Cyrus' decree passed and there was no evidence that the Messiah had come. On top of this, as we noted on p. 4, progress on just rebuilding the Temple was being held up for no apparent reason than nagging opposition from the local Samaritans. With such high hopes for the future of Israel, what a disappointment this must have been. And noting that this was just the time when the vision of Daniel 10–12 was given (*i.e.* in the second year following Cyrus' decree),<sup>22</sup> we believe that to find an answer to this heartbreaking situation Daniel followed the counsel of Jeremiah 29:12–14<sup>23</sup> yet again and set his heart to understand the time element of his previous visions and to pray and fast that God would, this time, give him the true and *complete* interpretation of the 2300-day *mareh*.

We can be sure that Daniel was not alone throughout this experience as evidenced by Daniel 10:7. According to our hypothesis, when it came to Daniel 10 there must have been many Israelites sharing Daniel's hope in the soon coming of the Messiah; and when this hope was dashed, it would

<sup>21</sup> If Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. actually did call for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, then why would Daniel have been wrong to begin the 70 weeks at that time? And why do we begin the 70 weeks with Artaxerxes' decree in 457 B.C.? We will dedicate an entire chapter to the 70 weeks of Dan. 9 later and we will answer these questions then.

<sup>22</sup> Cyrus' decree was issued in his *first* year as king of Babylon (Ezra 1:1) while the vision of Dan. 10–12 was given in his *third* year as king (Dan. 1:1).

<sup>23</sup> Quoted on p. 11.



only be expected that a small group of Daniel’s friends-in-the-faith would gather with him at some remote location [away from the Gentile political maneuverings going on at Cyrus’ palace] to collectively seek comfort and guidance from the Lord. And this would explain why Daniel, who was held in such high esteem by both Darius and Cyrus and who no doubt continued to hold the highest political office in the land next to the king himself,<sup>24</sup> chose to remove himself from the crucial political debate that would determine whether or not the Temple in Jerusalem would indeed be rebuilt. And as we shall soon see, this debate was so crucial to the future of Israel that it occupied Gabriel himself, and this preoccupation was the very reason for Gabriel’s three-week delay in responding to Daniel’s petitions.

### *The Evidence of Chronology*

While we have noted that Daniel’s last vision came, according to Daniel, in “the third year of Cyrus king of Persia” (Dan. 10:1) and that this harmonizes with a 70 literal-week period extending from Cyrus’ decree which came, according to Ezra, in “the first year of Cyrus king of Persia” (Ezra 1:1), let’s see if we can’t be more precise in measuring the period between this decree and Daniel’s experience in Daniel 10. After all, if we are correct that what Daniel was mourning about at the beginning of Daniel 10 was the fact that the Messiah had not come in fulfillment of the misunderstood Messianic prophecy of Daniel 9, we would expect there to be almost *exactly* 70 literal weeks from Cyrus’ decree freeing the Jews to Daniel’s time of intense mourning.

Attempting first to establish a date for Cyrus’ decree, Cyrus’ first year would have been his first year as king following the overthrow of Babylon. And according to the *SDA Bible Commentary*, the city of Babylon fell on October 12, 539 B.C.<sup>25</sup> While one might expect this date to mark the beginning of Cyrus’ first year, it did not. The reason for this has to do with how the regnal years of kings were reckoned. Dr. Gerhard Hasel explains:

A world-renowned authority on Hebrew chronology, Edwin R. Thiele, informs us that “two systems of reckoning were employed for the Hebrew kings: accession-year reckoning (post-dating) and nonaccession-year reckoning (antedating). In the accession year (post-dating) system the portion of the year that remained was designated the accession year of the newly enthroned king. It was not counted. The king’s first regnal year began with the first month of the next new year. The nonaccession-year reckoning, or antedating, was a method of counting the years of a king’s reign by starting with his accession year and moving to his second year at the next new year. . . .

In 1956 D. J. Wiseman published the famous Babylonian Chronicle of Chaldean Kings which indicates that *in Babylon the accession-year method was employed*. . . .  
 . . . *Daniel, who resided in Babylon, employed the Babylonian system of dating* . . . .  
 DRCS, 2:119–120 (*Symposium on Daniel*; emphasis supplied).<sup>26</sup>

Just as the Babylonians employed the accession-year method, so did the Jews;<sup>27</sup> but to add another confusion factor, the Babylonians employed a spring-to-spring calendar, whereas the Jews, for civil purposes such as numbering the regnal years of kings, employed a fall-to-fall calendar.<sup>28</sup> We will also point out that the Persians adopted the Babylonian calendar when Cyrus conquered Baby-

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Dan. 6:1–3, 28.

<sup>25</sup> *3BC* 325. According to Dr. Gerhard Hasel it was Oct. 13 (DRCS, 2:108). Regarding this date and all other disputed dates in our study, we will follow the dates and dating table of Richard Parker and Waldo Dubberstein in *Babylonian Chronology: 626 B.C.–A.D. 75* (2007; first published 1956). Parker and Dubberstein date the fall of Babylon Oct. 12, 539 B.C. (p. 14).

<sup>26</sup> DRCS (Daniel and Revelation Committee Series) is a seven-volume investigation of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, written by 30 leading SDA theologians and published in the period 1982–1992 by the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

<sup>27</sup> *2BC* 147–148.

<sup>28</sup> *SDABD* 1194–1195.

lon, and thus the Babylonian and Persian calendars became one and the same.<sup>29</sup> Now comments from the *SDA Bible Commentary* on Ezra 1:1 regarding the first year of Cyrus:

**1. The first year.** The city of Babylon fell to the Persian arms on Tishri 16 (Oct. 12), 539 B.C., and Cyrus himself entered the city on Marcheshvan 3 (Oct. 29) of the same year. However, it was not until *the next New Year's Day, Nisan 1 (March 24), 538 B.C., that the first Babylonian regnal year began.* All documents previous to this day were dated in his “accession year.” *The Jews*, on the other hand, *counted the regnal years of Persian rulers according to their own calendar.* By the *Jewish civil calendar* the first full year from the fall of Babylon extended from *the autumn of 538 to the autumn of 537 B.C.* *SDA Bible Commentary*, 3:325 (emphasis supplied).

Though the Jews “counted the regnal years of Persian rulers according to their own calendar,” the Bible writers who lived in Babylon during or following the exile tended to employ the Babylonian calendar they were accustomed to. Besides Daniel, these included Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and the writer of Esther.<sup>30</sup> But though Ezra and Nehemiah, on their parts, lived in Babylon two generations after Daniel, they both returned to Jerusalem. We know Nehemiah employed the Jewish calendar when he referred to “the twentieth year of Artaxerxes” (Neh. 2:1),<sup>31</sup> and it is evident that Ezra employed the Jewish calendar when he referred to “the seventh year of Artaxerxes” (Ezra 7:7);<sup>32</sup> therefore, it is only consistent (particularly given the evidence that it was actually Ezra who authored the book of Nehemiah)<sup>33</sup> to recognize that Ezra employed the Jewish calendar when he referred to “the first year of Cyrus” in Ezra 1:1.

Now, under the Babylonian system of dating, October 12, 539 B.C. to the *spring* of 538 was Cyrus’ “accession year” while the spring of 538 to the spring of 537 was Cyrus’ “first year.” But under the Jewish system, October 12, 539 B.C. to the *fall* of 538 was Cyrus’ “accession year” while the fall of 538 to the fall of 537 was Cyrus’ “first year.”<sup>34</sup> And though we have surmised that Ezra employed the Jewish calendar in Ezra 1:1, Ezra goes on to tell us that eighteen years after Cyrus’ decree a newly appointed Persian governor of Judea challenged the legitimacy of the Jews’ rebuilding program in Jerusalem, and to verify the Jews’ claim that they had prior authority from King Cyrus to rebuild the Temple he sent a letter to the new Persian king Darius back in Babylon requesting that a search be made for a record of the decree in the Persian archives.<sup>35</sup> Upon search, record of the decree was indeed found, though it was necessary to go to Ecbatana to find it.<sup>36</sup> This record not only confirmed that Cyrus had authorized the Temple’s reconstruction but that the decree was issued in “the first year of Cyrus the king” (Ezra 6:3). This is a direct quote from the record of the decree in the Persian archives, and can there be any doubt that the Persians recorded the year of Cyrus’ decree in accordance with their own calendar? Not hardly. Therefore, regardless of which calendar Ezra employed in Ezra 1:1, we can at least be certain that Cyrus’ decree came sometime in the Babylonian calendar year of 538–537 B.C. spring to spring; and if we are correct that Ezra employed the Jewish calendar in Ezra 1:1 then Cyrus’ decree came in the six-month overlap of the two calendars — from the fall of 538 to the spring of 537 B.C.

But now we must ask: What about the previous Darius — the “Darius the Mede” Daniel knew and served under in Daniel 6 and 9? According to Daniel’s own account, when Babylon fell “Darius

<sup>29</sup> 2BC 117–118.

<sup>30</sup> 2BC 117.

<sup>31</sup> 2BC 148–149; 3BC 394.

<sup>32</sup> 3BC 365.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. 3BC 115–117, 319–320.

<sup>34</sup> Also cf. 3BC 96.

<sup>35</sup> Ezra 5:6–17. This was Darius I (cf. fn. 17).

<sup>36</sup> Ecbatana was the biblical Achmetha and the former Median capital where Cyrus had issued his decree (Ezra 6:2, margin; 3BC 97; *SDABD* 300–301).

the Median took the kingdom” (Dan. 5:31); but Isaiah had prophesied over 150 years earlier that it would be *Cyrus* whom God would open the gates of Babylon to. While we have seen that Isaiah 44:28 and 45:13 foretold that Cyrus would be the one to release the Jews and have Jerusalem and the Temple rebuilt, let’s now look at Isaiah 45:1:

**THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates [of Babylon]; and the gates shall not be shut;**

This clearly foretold that it would be Cyrus, not Darius, who would conquer Babylon.<sup>37</sup> But Daniel also described his experience in chapter 9 as having come in “the first year of Darius . . . which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans” (v. 1). And here we have two clues that help resolve the “Darius” problem: (1) Darius was “made” king, indicating a higher authority had placed him on the throne; and (2) he was made king “over the realm of the Chaldeans.” The “realm of the Chaldeans” was the newly conquered territory of Babylonia which was now being added to the much larger territory of the Medo-Persian Empire. A quick look at Cyrus’ background will help us here.

Cyrus initially rose to power by uniting various Persian tribes into one nation. By 550 B.C. he had conquered the Median Empire that extended all the way east to the border of India; he conquered the Lydian Empire in 547 B.C. extending his empire all the way west to the Aegean Sea; and in 539 B.C. he conquered the Babylonian (Chaldean) Empire to his south that ran from the Persian Gulf on the east, up the Euphrates valley northwest, over the top of the Fertile Crescent and down through Palestine, extending his kingdom southwest right up to the border of Egypt. And it was to this Babylonian “realm” of his vast empire that Cyrus, apparently, chose to place Darius as a vassal king.

Darius was evidently recognized as a ruler in Babylon by courtesy of Cyrus, while it was Cyrus who actually held the power (see Is 45:1). It was natural that Daniel, in direct contact with Darius, should speak of him as the “king” and mention his “first year” (Dan 9:1). It seems evident that we are to consider the accession year and 1st year of Darius the Mede as coinciding with the same years of Cyrus. *SDA Bible Dictionary*, 270.

Having noted that the accession year and first year of Darius coincided with the same years of Cyrus, we will now note that there is never mention of a year *two* of Darius.<sup>38</sup> This is because Darius died “in the month Arahshamnu, on the night of the 11th day” only “a year and three weeks” (4BC 816) after the fall of Babylon.<sup>30</sup> The 11<sup>th</sup> of Arahshamnu in the year following the fall of Babylon was October 26, 538 B.C. But since “the Babylonian day began in each case with the preceding sunset,”<sup>31</sup> “the night of the 11th day” would have been the night of sunset on October 25 to sunrise on October 26. In other words, Darius died in what we would call the night of October 25, 538 B.C. Now let’s note the following regarding Darius’ death:

<sup>37</sup> Cf. 4BC 266.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. 3BC 95–96.

<sup>30</sup> The Commentary’s statement regarding “a year and three weeks” appears incorrect. The 11<sup>th</sup> day of Arahshamnu in 538 B.C. was Oct. 26, and this date was precisely a year and *two* weeks after Babylon fell on Oct. 12, 539 B.C. In the past, some scholars believed that Darius died in the same year that Babylon fell, and the 11<sup>th</sup> day of Arahshamnu in 539 B.C. was Nov. 6—three weeks and four days after Oct. 12. On its part, the *SDA Bible Commentary* is noncommittal by saying Darius died “either in the year of Babylon’s fall or in the next” (4BC 816). But following the publication of the Commentary, Dr. William Shea persuasively argued that Darius died in *the year following* the fall of Babylon. See his article “Darius the Mede: An Update” (Andrews University Seminary Studies, Autumn 1982, Vol. 20, No. 3, 229–247) at <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1563&context=auss> (relevant pp. 240–243). But after arguing the *year* in which Darius died, Shea then states that Darius died “*a year and three weeks after the fall of Babylon*, rather than just three weeks after that event” (p. 243; emphasis original). It seems Dr. Shea failed to note that the month of Arahshamnu [of the lunar calendar] in 538 B.C. came eleven days earlier [in the solar calendar] than it did in 539. Thus, Darius actually died a year and precisely *two* weeks after the fall of Babylon.

<sup>31</sup> Parker and Dubberstein, 26.

Upon his death, within about two years of the fall of Babylon, Cyrus succeeded to the throne, and *the beginning of his reign marked the completion of the seventy years* since the first company of Hebrews had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar from their Judean home to Babylon. *Prophets and Kings*, 556–557 (emphasis supplied).

As the clearer picture of the historical record now indicates, Cyrus did not succeed to the throne in the sense of *ascending*; he merely chose not to replace Darius with another vassal king but instead incorporated Babylonia into the larger area of his own kingship. And having done this, Cyrus could now officially assume the title “King of Babylon.” Dr. William Shea writes:

The title “King of Babylon” was not used for Cyrus in the contract tablets dated to him during the first year after Babylon’s conquest in October 539 B.C. Only the title “King of Lands” was used for him, and this referred to him in his capacity as king of the Persian empire. Late in 538 B.C., however, the scribes added the title “King of Babylon” to his titulary, and it continued to be in use through the rest of his reign and those of his successors down to the time of Xerxes.

There are only two possibilities here. Either there was an interregnum and the throne of Babylon went unoccupied for a year, or somebody else besides Cyrus occupied the throne for that period of time. In my opinion, the prime candidate for this other king of Babylon is Ugbaru, the general whose troops conquered Babylon for Cyrus. According to the Nabonidus Chronicle, he appointed governors in Babylonia (cf Dan 6:1) and he resided in Babylon until he died there a year later, one month before the title “King of Babylon” was added to Cyrus’ titulary.

. . . Darius could have been Ugbaru’s throne name, as the use of throne names is known both in Babylon and Persia. DRCS, 1:28–29 (*Selected Studies in Prophetic Interpretation*).

Now we are finally getting closer to establishing a more specific time for Cyrus’ decree freeing the Jews. We have noted [from the PK statement above] that “the beginning of his [Cyrus’ *Babylonian*] reign marked the completion of the seventy years [of Jewish captivity in Babylon].” Since the completion of the 70 years of captivity must, by definition, be marked by the release from captivity, we can reasonably conclude that Cyrus’ decree freeing the Jews came very shortly after the death of Darius in the night of October 25, 538 B.C. And if our hypothesis that Daniel understood his time periods in literal time beginning with Cyrus’ decree is correct, we would now expect Daniel’s experience in Daniel 10 to have come very shortly after the conclusion of 70 literal weeks following October 25, 538—*i.e.* shortly after February 28, 536 B.C.<sup>32</sup>

Attempting now to establish a definite date for Daniel’s three weeks of mourning in Cyrus’ third year, Daniel informs us that it was “the four and twentieth day of the first month” (Dan. 10:4) that Christ and Gabriel made their appearance to Daniel. Since Daniel employed the Babylonian system of dating, the “first month” here refers to the first month of the Babylonian calendar, which we have noted began each year in the spring. Going now to Edwin Thiele’s commentary on Daniel we find:

The 24th day of the first month of the third year of Cyrus was April 23, 536 B. C. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 120.

But Daniel began his mourning three weeks before the appearance of Christ and Gabriel; thus, Daniel began to mourn on April 2, 536 B.C. And it is our view that this is the date when Daniel was forced to accept the bitter fact that his 70-week prophecy, according to the accepted literal interpretation at the time, had failed, and that it had failed miserably. Now going back precisely 70 weeks from this date takes us to November 29, 538 B.C., and this can be considered the *latest* possible date for Cyrus’ decree that would harmonize with our view of Daniel’s literal view of his prophetic periods. And because the death of Darius and Cyrus’ simultaneous assumption of the Babylonian throne would have been the *earliest* possible date for his decree, we conclude that Cyrus’ decree freeing the

<sup>32</sup> According to Parker and Dubberstein, the year 537 B.C. was a leap year.

Jews must have come sometime in the period of October 26–November 29, 538 B.C. But perhaps we can be even more precise.

During the accession and first year of their Babylonian co-regency, Darius reigned in Babylon while Cyrus reigned in the former Median capital of Ecbatana. When Darius died, then, Cyrus would not have learned of Darius' death until a messenger arrived with the news from Babylon. Considering how long this would take, Ecbatana was 290 miles (as the crow flies) northeast of Babylon and we estimate the ground distance would have been 385 miles.<sup>33</sup> Since the last half of the trip would have been in the mountains of what is now western Iran with Ecbatana at an elevation of 6,000 feet, we estimate a courier would average 35 miles a day and would be eleven days enroute. Thus, because we have already learned that Darius died in the night of October 25, 538 B.C., and presuming a messenger was dispatched the next morning taking eleven days enroute, the news that Darius died probably did not reach Cyrus until November 5. We now believe that the earliest Cyrus would have assumed the title and authority of King of Babylon, and thus the earliest he could have issued his decree, was November 5, 538 B.C.

But looking at the historical record even closer, after giving the month and day of Darius' death, the Nabonidus Chronicle<sup>34</sup> also mentions "an official mourning held throughout the country for seven days" (4BC 816). Applying this mourning period to our chronology of events makes these seven days the week of November 6–12, 538 B.C., and if Cyrus respected this period himself by deferring any royal decrees under his newly assumed title "King of Babylon"<sup>35</sup> to when it was over, we would now expect that the earliest he would have issued his decree was November 13, 538 B.C.

Now, going again to the end of 70 literal weeks from Cyrus' decree, because the Messiah would have been expected to appear in Jerusalem, just as Cyrus in Ecbatana would have had to await word from Babylon regarding the death of Darius, so Daniel in Babylon would have had to await word from Jerusalem regarding the failure of the Messiah to appear. Considering how long it would take to get this disappointing news to Babylon, when Nebuchadnezzar was at Jerusalem in 605 B.C. on the military campaign in which Daniel himself was probably taken as a teenage captive, he learned of his father's death and returned to Babylon as fast as possible to secure the vacant throne for himself. Cutting across the desert he cut over 300 miles off the 1,000-mile trip. And according to C. Mervyn Maxwell, Nebuchadnezzar and some bodyguards averaged over 50 miles a day and made the journey in an impressive thirteen days.<sup>36</sup> Because we can be sure that in 536 B.C. this would still have been the quickest a messenger could travel from Jerusalem to Babylon, and because we have already determined that April 2, 536 B.C. was when Daniel learned of the apparent failure of his 70-week prophecy, then the messenger must have left Jerusalem some thirteen days prior to this, which would have been March 20. Of course, we would expect the messenger to have left Jerusalem immediately at the conclusion of the 70 weeks. Now backing up 70 weeks from March 20, 536 B.C. takes us to thirteen days before our November 29, 538 B.C. date noted above; and thus we would now expect that Cyrus issued his decree on or very close to November 16, 538 B.C. And this, obviously, harmonizes nearly perfectly with the November 13, 538 B.C. date that is our estimate of the earliest Cyrus could have issued his decree after learning of Darius' death and after assuming the title and authority of King of Babylon and after respecting the seven-day period of official mourning of the death of Darius. We conclude, then, that Cyrus issued his decree sometime in the four-day window of November 13–16, 538 B.C. But now we will also note that November 15 was the first day of a new month, and the first day of a new month would have been an appropriate time for Cyrus to issue a

<sup>33</sup> 400 miles on present-day roads. Ancient Babylon was about one mile north of what is now Hillah, Iraq, and Ecbatana was what is now Hamadan, Iran.

<sup>34</sup> The Nabonidus Chronicle is an ancient clay tablet that is part of the Babylonian Chronicles. The *SDA Bible Commentary* describes it as "an important cuneiform document describing the fall of Babylon" (4BC 816).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. the DRCS, 1:28–29 quote above.

<sup>36</sup> *God Cares*, 1:15–16.

royal decree. Taking all things into consideration, then, we will merely say that we believe Cyrus issued his decree on November 15, 538 B.C. give or take a day or two.

Given this scenario's extremely narrow focus on the time of Cyrus' decree, we suspect that, in addition to being impressed with the news of Daniel's recent deliverance from the lions' den and with the sobering realization that God had identified Cyrus by name in the Hebrew Scriptures over 150 years earlier,<sup>37</sup> the news of Darius' untimely death impressed upon Cyrus that now was the time "to fulfill his divinely appointed mission" (*PK 557*) to free the Jews and to command that Jerusalem and the Temple be rebuilt; it certainly appears that he wasted no time in fulfilling his God-ordained role described in Isaiah 44:28; 45:13.<sup>38</sup> And while we can be sure that Cyrus indeed issued his decree from Ecbatana,<sup>39</sup> without archeological or other solid evidence identifying the exact date for his decree we must leave it to other Bible chronologists, or perhaps future discoveries, to either validate or discredit this hypothesis. Nevertheless, for now at least, we find the circumstantial evidence persuasive. That is, the established date for Darius' death (Oct. 25/26, 538 B.C.), and the fact that Cyrus assumed the Babylonian throne upon Darius' death, and our understanding that the beginning of Cyrus' reign as King of Babylon "marked the completion of the seventy years" (*PK 557*)<sup>40</sup> of captivity and that this, by definition, would have been marked by Cyrus' decree that formally released the Jews from their captivity, and the established date for Daniel 10 (April 23, 536 B.C.) all concur perfectly with our suggestion as to why Daniel mourned when he did.<sup>41</sup>

The following chart depicts our suggested date for Cyrus' decree and this decree's relationship to Daniel's misinterpretation (prior to Dan. 10) of his 70 weeks of Daniel 9:

regnal years of Cyrus / chronology of Daniel's misinterpretation<sup>42</sup>

	fall of Babylon Oct. 12, 539		Cyrus' decree Nov. 15, 538		Daniel 10 April 23, 536	
	⋮		⋮		⋮	
Roman calendar years	539	:	538	:	537	: 536   535 BC
Babylonian reckoning of regnal years	: ← a →	1 <sup>st</sup> year:	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year	
Jewish reckoning of regnal years	: ← acsn. yr. →	: 1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	: 3 <sup>rd</sup> year		
		⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	
		↑	↑	↑	↑	
		death of Darius Oct. 26, 538	Daniel's 3 weeks of mourning April 2–23, 536			

For matter of clarification, we will point out again that as far as the Chaldeans and Daniel were concerned, Darius and Cyrus *both* began to reign over Babylonia when the Babylonian Empire fell to the Medo-Persians on October 12, 539 B.C. — Cyrus reigning in Ecbatana and Darius reigning in Babylon itself. Thus their "accession year" that went to the spring of 538 and their "first year" that began at that point coincided. Nevertheless, it seems, only Darius in Babylon was accorded the

<sup>37</sup> Isa. 44:28 (quoted on p. 15); 45:1 (quoted on p. 19); *PK 557–558*.

<sup>38</sup> Both texts quoted on p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> See again fn. 36.

<sup>40</sup> Larger quote on p. 20. If our chronology is correct, note the accuracy of this statement.

<sup>41</sup> If we are correct in our Nov. 538 B.C. date for Cyrus' decree, and if this event indeed marked the end of Jeremiah's 70 years, then we can calculate that the 70 years of Jewish Babylonian captivity began around Nov. 608 B.C. Unfortunately, we have seen neither biblical record, historical record, nor archeological evidence sufficient to positively establish the beginning and ending dates of the 70 years and we are therefore left with relying, again, merely on circumstantial evidence. See *3BC 96–97* for a discussion of the problems regarding the dating of the 70 years.

<sup>42</sup> It will be seen that the established date of Dan. 10 came in the third year of Cyrus only according to the Babylonian calendar (which we know Daniel employed), whereas our suggested date for Cyrus' decree came in the first year of Cyrus according to both the Babylonian and Jewish calendars. Thus, even if our date for Cyrus' decree is eventually validated, this would still not validate our belief that Ezra employed the Jewish calendar in Ezra 1:1.

specific title “King of Babylon.” But when Darius died the next November and Cyrus incorporated Babylonia into his own realm of authority, Cyrus *began* at that point to assume the *title* “King of Babylon” even though he was actually already beyond a full year from his initial accession and over seven months through his “first year.” Thus, regarding Cyrus it could be that from “the beginning of his reign” (*PK* 557)<sup>43</sup> [as “King of Babylon” in Nov. 538 B.C.] to the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of his *third year*<sup>44</sup> [in April 536 B.C. *but measured from the fall of Babylon* in Oct. 539 B.C.] was only just over 70 literal weeks.

#### *An Established Context*

Understanding the chronology of these events as we do, it is now apparent why Daniel was mourning and fasting in the opening verses of Daniel 10, and why it was the first month of the third year of Cyrus that was the time Daniel chose to seek the Lord by setting his heart to understand: it was the occasion of the *first* Great Disappointment. This bitter experience in March/April of 536 B.C. clearly parallels the experience God’s people were suffered to endure at the true end of the 2300 days in October of A.D. 1844,<sup>45</sup> and it is in recalling the more recent bitter experience of the *second* Great Disappointment (that of the Millerites)<sup>46</sup> that we can appreciate Daniel’s experience in Daniel 10.

It seems God allowed the “Danielites” to experience a disappointment in respect to their anticipation of the *first* coming of Christ, just as He allowed the Millerites to experience a disappointment in respect to their anticipation of the *second* coming of Christ. Though the experiences were similar, the problems were different: the Danielites were correct in their anticipated *event* coming at the end of the 70 weeks, but wrong in their *date*; the Millerites were ultimately correct in their *date* for the end of the 2300 days, but wrong in their anticipated *event*.<sup>47</sup> It is also interesting to note that, while the vision of Daniel 9 came in response to Daniel’s concern and petitions regarding Jeremiah’s 70-year prophecy,<sup>48</sup> the vision of Daniel 10–12 came, in our view, in response to Daniel’s concern and petitions regarding his own 70-week prophecy. And we should keep in mind that while the vision of Daniel 9 was Gabriel’s *second* installment of explaining the 2300-day prophecy, the vision of Daniel 10–12 was Gabriel’s *third* installment of explaining the 2300-day prophecy.<sup>49</sup> Thus, it was by virtue of Daniel finally understanding the 70-week prophecy that he finally understood the 2300-day prophecy, and therefore what Daniel states that he understands in Daniel 10:1 is directly related to what he admitted at the conclusion of his vision of chapter 8 that he did *not* understand—the timing of the 2300 days.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Larger quote on p. 20.

<sup>44</sup> Dan. 10:1, 4.

<sup>45</sup> We will elaborate on the beginning and ending dates of the 2300 days in a later chapter.

<sup>46</sup> The term “Millerites” refers to the followers of William Miller who, primarily in the years 1840–44, believed Christ would return at the end of the 2300 prophetic days sometime in 1843 or 1844. They finally settled on Oct. 22, 1844, and when this highly anticipated event did not occur the experience was subsequently called the Great Disappointment. Arthur White describes it:

“With bated breath the Adventists, no less than fifty thousand and probably nearer one hundred thousand scattered largely across the northeastern portion of North America, arose to greet the eventful day, Tuesday, October 22, 1844.

“. . . At last the hour came, but Jesus did not come. The disappointment was almost beyond description. In later years some wrote of the experience. Hiram Edson gave a vivid account of how they looked for the coming of the Lord ‘until the clock tolled twelve at midnight. Then our disappointment became a certainty.’ Of his experience in the depths of sorrow he wrote: ‘Our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted, and such a spirit of weeping came over us as I never experienced before. It seemed that the loss of all earthly friends could have been no comparison. We wept and wept, till the day dawn.’” *1BIO* 53 (also cf. *GC* ch. 22).

This bitter experience fulfilled the “bitter” experience of Rev. 10:8–11 (cf. *7BC* 798–799).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *GC* 424. We will also elaborate on this in a later chapter.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Dan. 9:2 and our comments on p. 11.

<sup>49</sup> See again pp. 6–7.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. our comments on Dan. 8:26–27 on p. 10.

Finally regarding Daniel’s visions of Daniel 8 and 9, our evidence that Daniel initially understood the time periods of these visions in *literal* time should further explain why he fainted and was astonished at the 2300-day “appearance” of chapter 8.<sup>51</sup> Since the starting point for the 2300 days was not given, if at the end of chapter 8 Daniel was to take the only option available at the time—to assume the starting point to be the time of the vision itself—this would have put the fulfillment of the entire vision only a little over six years away. But given the fact that Daniel’s people were securely in captivity in Babylon with no end to their captivity in sight, and given the fact that the prophecy called for Medo-Persia to overthrow Babylon, then for Greece to overthrow Medo-Persia, then for Greece to divide four ways, then a “king of fierce countenance” to “stand up” (Dan. 8:23) and destroy God’s people and then be destroyed himself,<sup>52</sup> it is no wonder that Daniel would be astonished at a vision he had every reason to believe would be impossible to be fulfilled in the allotted time.

Because of this impossibility, it seems certain that Daniel understood Gabriel’s words in Daniel 8:26, “shut thou up the vision,” to mean that the starting point of the 2300 days was still future and that it was not then intended for Daniel or anyone else to know when this starting point was to come; thus Daniel could only confess, “but none understood it” (v. 27). But this did not preclude his believing that the 2300 days were still to be measured in literal time. Then after ten years passed, Daniel’s experience of chapter 9 occurred and, with the Babylonian kingdom now having fallen to Medo-Persia and the end of Jeremiah’s newly discovered 70-year prophecy now imminent and the starting point of the 2300 days now supposedly established by virtue of the 70-week prophecy, Daniel now had valid reasons to believe *both* time periods of chapters 8 and 9 would soon find their fulfillment in literal time. Of course, as we have seen, once Cyrus issued his decree and then the Messiah did not come after another 70 weeks, Daniel’s hopes were dashed; and this is where the story is picked up in Daniel 10. And having identified the cause of Daniel’s intense mourning for three weeks we have established what precipitated the vision of our present study; and now we can go back and pick up where we left off in our commentary of Daniel 10.

### Return to Daniel 10

In the case of Daniel’s supplications in Daniel 10, Daniel was obliged to wait three weeks for an answer. This is in contrast to the rapid response he received to his petitions in Daniel 9. In that case Gabriel was “caused to fly swiftly” and inform Daniel that “at the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved” (Dan. 9:21, 23). But in Daniel 10, while Daniel’s prayer was heard from the beginning, and while God’s response was initiated at the beginning, from Daniel’s perspective God’s response was delayed three weeks. And it seems Daniel was so intent in his resolve that he would have continued to chasten himself for however long it would take to get an answer. No doubt, that Daniel was a man of great faith and not given to discouragement by delay was a principal reason why he was “greatly beloved” (Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19) of God. And this stands as both example and rebuke to us when we are easily disheartened when our prayers are not immediately answered. After all, God and His angels *always* have good reasons for doing *what* they do *when* they do it. Case in point:

**13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia (Satan) withstood me (Gabriel) one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael (Christ), the first [margin] of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia [to influence them for good toward God’s people].**

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Dan. 8:27.

<sup>52</sup> See Dan. 8:20–25.



Gabriel here describes a conflict in which he himself is engaged with “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.” Given the fact that no mere man is a match for any angel, let alone the highest-ranking heavenly angel—Gabriel—we can understand the “prince . . . of Persia” here to refer to Satan.

The term “prince” is often biblically employed in reference to supernatural beings. Paul referred to Satan as “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), and Jesus repeatedly referred to Satan as “the prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Jesus referred to the “world” here only in the context of the ungodly elements of this world. Thus, it would be appropriate to refer to Satan as he focuses his ungodly influence on the Persian Empire as “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.” But the side of God also has its “prince”—Michael—whom Gabriel referred to above as “the first of the chief princes.” This is but a rephrasing of Gabriel’s previous reference to Christ twelve years earlier as “the Prince of princes” (Dan. 8:25). Gabriel also speaks of Michael as “your prince” in Daniel 10:21, and who would Gabriel acknowledge as Daniel’s “prince”? Certainly not himself or any other created angel, for when the apostle John later fell at an angel’s feet to worship (presumably Gabriel’s), the angel said, “See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant” (Rev. 19:10). Because someone’s “prince” is not his “fellowservant,” Daniel’s “prince” can be none other than Christ Himself.

Yet again Gabriel referred to Michael/Christ in Daniel 12:1 as “the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.” It is certainly nice to know that we have none other than the Son of God to stand in our defense in this spiritual warfare. And though Satan can be called “the prince of this world,” because this world is Christ’s by virtue of Creation, everything in this world, including the principalities and political powers that be, are all ultimately subject to Him alone. Thus, in this much larger and more encompassing context it is Christ who is “the prince of the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5). Here is the situation in Daniel 10:

*While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God’s people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel’s aid. “The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days,” Gabriel declares; “but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Daniel 10:13. All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained; the forces of the enemy were held in check all the days of Cyrus, and all the days of his son Cambyses, who reigned about seven and a half years. *Prophets and Kings*, 571–572 (emphasis supplied).*

Here we are told that “Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia.” Of course, the “highest powers” of Medo-Persia at this time were Cyrus and his inner circle of advisors. We are also told that the evil influence Satan was striving to impose was directed specifically on “the mind of Cyrus” and that his specific objective was to cause Cyrus “to show disfavor to God’s people.”

While Daniel and his friends have been struggling with the theological issue regarding the interpretation of prophetic time periods, let us not forget the civil confrontation between the Samaritans and the Jewish exiles who have returned to Jerusalem to rebuild their Temple. It is possible the Samaritans filed their complaint [opposing the proposed Temple reconstruction] through “hired counsellors” with the king, just as they did a short time later after the foundation of the Temple was laid.<sup>53</sup> And we can be sure that Satan took full advantage of this situation to, as much as possible, resist what God was doing through Cyrus to show *favor* to His people. This he did, no doubt, by legitimizing as much as possible the Samaritan complaint through the ungodly advice of Cyrus’

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Ezra 4:4–5.

political counselors. It seems possible that the political pressure and evil influences working on Cyrus' mind at this time were of such an extent that even his own decree that the Temple be rebuilt was in danger of being rescinded. What a turn-about this would have been given the fact that Cyrus had earlier recognized "his divinely appointed mission" (PK 557) in freeing the Jews. And this demonstrates the degree to which Satan can counter the work of God. But the fact that Cyrus did *not* rescind his decree demonstrates the degree to which heavenly angels, albeit sometimes with the help of Christ, can counter the work of Satan. C. Mervyn Maxwell concurs with this scenario of Daniel 10:

Behind the visible realm, for three weeks day and night, an angel of God has been wrestling with a determined and powerful demon in an attempt to countervail his influence and to prevent Cyrus from rescinding his all-important decree. At last Michael — who defeated the entire army of demons on another occasion (Revelation 12:7) — reinforces Gabriel. The demon is routed, and the king of Persia makes the right decision. Cyrus refuses to acquiesce in the Samaritan scheme to shut down the temple reconstruction. And he will never waver on this matter again. *God Cares*, 1:261.

This scenario shows that the struggle engaged between the spiritual forces of good and evil is not one where the combatants square off head-to-head; it is one where each side merely directs its respective *influence* on human subjects. This is reflected in Gabriel's comment in v. 13 that in response to the *prince* of Persia (Satan) withstanding him, he remained with the *kings* of Persia (Cyrus and his policy-makers). This scenario also shows the decisive role the human will plays in the mighty struggle between the unseen forces of good and evil, and that the battleground where the spiritual battles are won or lost is actually that of the human mind. Regarding these spiritual battles Paul counsels that, like it or not, we ourselves must be personally involved. Ephesians 6:11–13:

**11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

**12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

**13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

As Paul goes on to say, the Christian "armour" essentially consists of having our minds fortified with the truth, that we may not only *resist* the tempter's ungodly suggestions but indeed *attack* them with the knowledge of the word of God! Such is the spiritual nature of the great controversy between Christ and Satan as it plays out on planet earth. Now Daniel 10:14:

**14 Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision<sup>2377</sup> is for many days.**

Here Gabriel gives the bottom line of what Daniel was really seeking to understand. In v. 12 Gabriel informed Daniel, "I am come for thy words." Now Gabriel states, "I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days." This clearly indicates that Daniel's "words" of the previous three weeks were in specific regard to the long-term future of God's people, and they were *not* in respect to the immediate concern regarding the reconstruction of the Temple. And it seems the fact that the entire prophetic revelation of Daniel 11–12 was given in direct response to Daniel's petitions should be evidence enough that the great burden of Daniel's petitions was regarding the revelation of *future events* — *i.e.* he was seeking a further explanation of his previous visions. Though the great panorama of world political history had been revealed to Daniel through Nebuchadnezzar's dream of Daniel 2 and his own visions of Daniel 7 and 8/9, we can be sure that Daniel's personal primary concern was regarding the fate of his own people. And it seems the last part of v. 14 — "for yet the vision is for many days" — was intended to alleviate Daniel's

renewed fear, now because of the apparent failure of the 70-week prophecy, that God had altered His expressed intentions of blessing His people.<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, it is clear that Gabriel equates “the vision” of v. 14 with “what shall befall thy people in the latter days.” And because it is just as clear that Gabriel’s account of “what shall befall thy people in the latter days” is his response to Daniel’s “words” expressing his desire to understand, it can be inferred that Daniel had desired to understand “the vision.” But it is obvious that the vision Daniel was desiring to understand was not the present vision of chapters 10–12 as this vision had not yet occurred at the time Daniel was trying to understand. It is again evident, therefore, that it was a *previous* vision that Daniel was trying to understand and to which Gabriel referred in 10:14. All of this merely reinforces our earlier conclusion that what Daniel was trying to understand at the beginning of chapter 10 was the true meaning of his previous vision embracing chapters 8 and 9. And it would seem that the common description of “the vision [*hazon*]” being “for many days” (8:26; 10:14) almost seals this conclusion beyond dispute. This can be said despite the fact that the word “many” in 10:14 is supplied, as the preceding phrase “in the latter days” precludes the necessity [in the original Hebrew text] of the word “many” in the following phrase.

Furthermore, it is a settled point that “the vision” Daniel refers to in Daniel 9:21 is a direct reference to the previous vision of chapter 8 and that the prophetic information Gabriel provides following 9:21 is supplementary information to that of chapter 8.<sup>55</sup> This attaches Daniel’s third vision regarding the 70 weeks in chapter 9 to his second vision of the 2300 days in chapter 8 to the extent that in the future these two visions can be spoken of as but one vision. Therefore, Gabriel’s reference to “the vision” (10:14) in Daniel’s fourth vision should be understood to be a direct reference to Daniel’s two previous visions of chapters 8 and 9 inclusively.<sup>56</sup>

If Daniel understood it this way, then Gabriel’s comment in Daniel 10:14, coming just over 70 weeks after Cyrus’ decree, would have alleviated Daniel’s new fear that the 70-week prophecy had failed. That is, just after 70 literal weeks had expired from Cyrus’ decree that the Jews were free to return to their homeland to rebuild their Temple, Gabriel was sent, in response to Daniel’s pleadings, to reassure Daniel that all was still going to plan. Let’s look at v. 14 again:

**14 Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet (*owl*) the vision (*hazon*; now embracing both Dan. 8 and 9) is for many days.**

Now let’s compare this verse with Daniel 8:26:

**26 And the vision (*mareh*) of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision (*hazon*); for it shall be for many days.**

In our view, “the vision [*hazon*]” in both verses is in reference to the true vision of Daniel 8:3–14. But notice that the Hebrew word *owl* (“for yet”) is only in 10:14. In Daniel 10:14, then, Gabriel brought Daniel both good news and bad news. The good news: God had indeed *not* altered His expressed intentions for His people. The bad news: the prophetic time periods of Daniel 8 and 9 were *still* future. And this pointed to the fact that these time periods were to be measured *symbolically*. And though this meant that the promised Messiah and the cleansing of the sanctuary would come far

<sup>54</sup> We can recall that what precipitated the vision of Daniel 9 was Daniel’s fear that God would defer the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s 70-year prophecy. Cf. our comments on p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. 4BC 851 and Dr. Shea’s comments on p. 11.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. again our comments on the relationship between Daniel’s visions on pp. 6–7. We will add here a comment by Martin Proebstle in his Ph.D. dissertation *Truth and Terror: A Text-Oriented Analysis of Daniel 8:9–14* (Andrews University, 2006): “To conclude, [*hazon*] in 10:14 is quite likely a reference to the vision in chap. 8. Hence, apart from the clear indicators of lexical and thematic links in the angelic discourse itself, there already is in the setting of the prophecy a signal that Dan 10–12 helps in understanding the vision in chap. 8” (p. 707). As noted, we believe the *hazon* of 10:14 refers to more than just the vision of chapter 8: it refers to the vision of chapter 8 as it has been expanded upon by the *mareh* of chapter 9.

into the future from Daniel's day, Daniel was now, no doubt, entirely reassured that God still intended to make good His promises to Israel. Perhaps this understanding of Daniel's perspective of the circumstances explains Daniel's opening remarks in Daniel 10:1:

**. . . and the thing *was* true . . . and he (Daniel) understood the thing, and had understanding of the appearance.**

Given the fact that Daniel later admitted he did *not* understand certain elements of this vision,<sup>57</sup> it seems what Daniel *did* understand and made reference to in Daniel 10:1 was the *time element* of the prophetic periods that this "appearance" shed light on and that Daniel previously had at first *not* understood and then, after the "appearance" of chapter 9, had *misunderstood*. Daniel's statement that he "had understanding of the appearance" is in direct contrast to his previous statement regarding the "appearance" of Daniel 8:13–14 that "none understood it" (8:27);<sup>58</sup> and after the second explanation of chapter 9 Daniel did not profess to understand it even though, we believe, he thought he did at the time. Now let's consider a comment by Uriah Smith on Daniel 10:14:

The expression, "yet the vision is for many days," reaching far into the future, and embracing what should befall the people of God even in the latter days, shows conclusively that the 2300 days given in that vision cannot mean literal days, but must be days of years. *Daniel and the Revelation*, 229–230.

We believe Daniel came to the same conclusion. Therefore, it seems that with Daniel's last vision Daniel finally understands the time element of the 2300 days which for the first ten years had been a source of great consternation for him and for the past two years had given him a false hope. But for what it's worth, even though Daniel now correctly interprets the 70 weeks and 2300 days symbolically he still has no reason to doubt that they began with Cyrus' decree freeing the Jews. It is quite possible that Daniel still does not know that these prophetic periods were not even to *begin* until *Artaxerxes'* decree freeing the Jews coming in 457 B.C. still 79 years future.<sup>59</sup> But from Daniel's perspective, this additional time added to the 490 and 2300 years would be of no consequence, and thus we suspect Daniel was not shown this particular detail.

Before leaving v. 14, we will note again that Gabriel states that he has come to explain "the vision [*hazon*]." This is in contrast to his statement in Daniel 9:23 where he told Daniel to consider "the appearance [*mareh*]" of the vision of chapter 8. We noted the distinction between the Hebrew words *hazon* and *mareh* on p. 9. *Hazon* is the proper word to use when referring to the entire symbolic vision of chapter 8 that began in v. 3, whereas *mareh* is the word to use when referring specifically to the final part of this vision — the "appearance" of the two heavenly visitants of 8:13–14. Thus, when Gabriel states in 10:14 that he has come to give a further explanation of the *hazon*, we would expect this explanation, in contrast to the explanation of chapter 9, to include an elaboration on the ram, the goat, and the little horn of the original vision. And when we get to Gabriel's actual explanation in Daniel 11 we will find that this is indeed the case. Now going on to vs. 15–17:

**15 And when he (Gabriel) had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb.**

**16 And, behold, *one* like the similitude of the sons of men (Gabriel) touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by [reason of] the appearance my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.**

**17 For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.**

<sup>57</sup> Dan. 12:8.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. our comments on p. 10.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *4BC* 853 and our comments on p. 14.

When Daniel realizes he is about to be given the answer to the question that has so consumed him of late, he loses both his breath and his strength. And it should be of little wonder that Daniel was overwhelmed. Daniel and his people had spent a long three score and ten in captivity, and their high hopes following their recent release have just been dashed by the failure of the Messiah to appear. In the past, God had revealed the future of Israel only in bits and pieces, and now, at last, as the glorious form of Christ is over him, the angel Gabriel stands before him and states plainly that he is going to reveal to Daniel “what shall befall thy people in the latter days.” Moreover, Daniel is no doubt overwhelmed at the prospect of understanding the true time element of the perplexing vision of the 2300 days and 70 weeks.

Uriah Smith made this interesting observation on Daniel 11:16: “The vision of verse 16 doubtless refers to the former vision of Daniel 8” (*DR* 230). That is, Smith suggests that Daniel is expressing his distress over his lack of understanding the *former* “appearance” associated with the 2300 days. But if Smith is correct, we would include in his observation the “appearance” of chapter 9. That is, Daniel has not only been greatly troubled by his lack of understanding the 2300-day prophecy but primarily by his lack of understanding the 70-week prophecy. Thus, the “sorrow” and mental anguish of which Daniel speaks in v. 16 is in reference to the three weeks of intense mourning he has just experienced over the fact that the promised Messiah in the 70-week prophecy had not come. This view of v. 16 harmonizes with our view that Gabriel’s reference to “the vision” in v. 14 is also in reference to the vision of chapters 8 and 9 inclusively. Thus, since Gabriel spoke in v. 14 of the 2300-day/70-week vision in general by referring to “the *hazon*,” Daniel is now responding to him on the same subject in v. 16 but he refers to the specific part of the *hazon* that has caused him much sorrow—“the *mareh*.”

Because the vision of Daniel 9 is connected to that of Daniel 8, and because in the first month of the third year of Cyrus the time was right (in Daniel’s mind) but nothing seemed to be happening in fulfillment of the 70-week prophecy, a possible scenario we have in Daniel 10 is that Daniel has been struggling for three weeks with the question of why the Messiah had not come in fulfillment of the 70-week prophecy (vs. 2–3), the angel Gabriel supernaturally appears before him saying the fulfillment of the prophetic periods is still future (v. 14), and Daniel can only respond by saying that this question has caused him much grief (v. 16) and that the prospect of it all being made plain to him now is causing him to faint (v. 17).

On the other hand, let’s look more closely at what Daniel said in v. 16 after Gabriel restored his speech: “by the vision [*marah*; “appearance”] my sorrows are turned upon me”; or, “because of the *marah* I am anguished.” It seems only natural that Daniel is here referring to his distress over the *current* “appearance” of Christ and Gabriel. This is supported by the fact that in vs. 7 and 8 Daniel also employed the Hebrew word *marah* (the feminine form of the usually employed *mareh*). And since vs. 7 and 8 are obviously in reference to the immediate “appearance” Daniel is relating, it is consistent to understand that when Daniel says in v. 16 “because of the *marah* I am anguished” he is referring to the *current* “appearance” and he is *not* referring to the previous “appearance” of Daniel 8:13–14 that Gabriel and Daniel have previously referred to with the word *mareh*.<sup>60</sup> We will also compare the last parts of vs. 8 and 16: “I retained no strength” (v. 8) and “I have retained no strength” (v. 16). This similarity further indicates that the “vision/appearance/*marah*” of v. 16 refers to the current “vision/appearance/*marah*” Daniel speaks of in v. 8. But whether we accept Smith’s view of Daniel’s reference to the “appearance” in v. 16 or we believe, as we tend to, that Daniel is merely referring to his current “appearance” experience is not a matter of particular importance. Let’s move on.

**18 Then there came again and touched me *one* (Gabriel) like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,**

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Dan. 8:16, 26, 27; 9:23.

**19 And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.**

Daniel describes Gabriel's appearance to him three different times (vs. 10, 16, 18). The reason for this, it seems, is that, for Daniel's sake, Gabriel kept altering his appearance. The Spirit of Prophecy<sup>61</sup> confirms that this was true at least in the second case:

So great was the divine glory revealed to Daniel that he could not endure the sight. Then the messenger of heaven veiled the brightness of his presence and appeared to the prophet as "one like the similitude of the sons of men" (verse 16). *The Sanctified Life*, 52.

Verse 18 describes the third "touch" (Heb. *naga*) by Gabriel in this heavenly visit. It seems a "touch" was necessary to prepare Daniel to receive Gabriel's message, as was the case in Gabriel's two previous visits.<sup>62</sup> In the case of his third visit, when Daniel first saw the manifestation of Christ he lost his strength and fell prostrate to the ground, and Gabriel touched him and set him on his hands and knees (v. 10). When Gabriel informed Daniel of the purpose of his visit, Daniel lost his voice and again his strength, and Gabriel touched his lips so he could speak (v. 16). But though he could now speak, he still had no strength, so Gabriel touched him the third time (v. 18) and Daniel was now strengthened and sufficiently composed enough to receive Gabriel's message.

We will note that in v. 19, as in v. 11, Gabriel addresses Daniel as a man "greatly beloved." This repeats the holy endearment Gabriel expressed for Daniel in the previous "appearance" of Daniel 9.<sup>63</sup> But we will also note that the disciple of whom it was expressly said that "Jesus loved" (John 13:23) was John (later known as John the Revelator). And since the books of Daniel and Revelation are the two principal apocalyptic books of the Bible, it might be concluded that those qualities of a man that win God's special affection are the same qualities for which God entrusts one to receive and record apocalyptic visions. Certainly, both Daniel and John were "greatly beloved" of God, and both Daniel and John were uniquely employed by God to bring apocalyptic prophecy to His people.

**20 Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.**

After Gabriel helped Daniel regain his composure after he lost it when he learned what this "appearance" was all about, it seems Gabriel now readdresses his previous comments to ensure that Daniel is mentally keeping up with him. First, he covers the ground of v. 14 by asking Daniel if he knows the reason for this "appearance," then he reminds Daniel of his comments in v. 13 by stating that he must return to his fight with the "prince of Persia." But Gabriel's comments here go further in that now he reveals that angelic "fights" will continue throughout the course of world history as after his renewed contention with the "prince of Persia" he must then contend with the "prince of Grecia." And as Satan and his angels attempt to employ to their advantage each new political empire as it comes on the world stage, so we can be confident that Gabriel and his fellow angels will be right there to hold the evil influence in check. And we can be sure that this is just as much the case today as it was in the days of the Persian and Greek empires. The great extent to which national and international politics is influenced by spiritual powers, and so much the more as the great controversy culminates in final events, seems to be little appreciated by God's people today.<sup>64</sup> If we could only see with the spiritual vision of Elisha<sup>65</sup> we would see the spiritual forces engaged in battle for and

<sup>61</sup> We use the term "Spirit of Prophecy" in reference to the writings of Ellen G. White [1829–1914], whom Seventh-day Adventists believe wrote under the special inspiration of God.

<sup>62</sup> Dan. 8:18; 9:21.

<sup>63</sup> Dan. 9:23.

<sup>64</sup> For reference to heavenly angelic influences being exerted in the politics of earth's final events, cf. *GC* 610–611, 631–632. For satanic influences, *2SM* 383.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. 2 Kgs. 6:17.

against the eternal destinies of the children of Adam. We would then better appreciate the fact that heaven is truly doing all it can in behalf of the people of God.

Aside from this, however, Gabriel's comments about the princes of Persia and Grecia must have been significant to Daniel. As we have explained, we believe that prior to his vision of Daniel 10–12 Daniel believed his prophetic periods were to be fulfilled in literal time and that they had in fact already begun with Cyrus' decree in November 538 B.C. Thus, when we get to Daniel 10 in April 536 B.C. Daniel had been expecting that the Messiah would have already arrived in fulfillment of the 70-week prophecy. There would then have been some five years remaining to fulfill the 2300-day prophecy. But within these five years a *lot* must happen: the Greeks must overthrow Medo-Persia, then divide four ways; a "little horn" power must then overthrow the Greeks, "stand up against" (8:25) and "cut off" (9:26) the Messiah and destroy what had been rebuilt of the Temple sanctuary (9:26). All of this would then culminate at the end of the five years with the cleansing of the sanctuary (8:13–14) and the destruction of the little horn (9:27). Thus, aside from the fact that the Messiah had failed to appear at the expected time, because there was also no sign that even the first of the remaining events (the Greeks overthrowing Medo-Persia) was going to happen anytime soon, Daniel had ample reason to doubt the validity of his visions of chapters 8 and 9. But Gabriel's comment in Daniel 10:20 that "the prince of Grecia shall come" reaffirmed to Daniel that the integrity of his original vision was still intact and that it would still unfold in the sequence in which it was given; and it established their present location in the original vision as still being in Daniel 8:3–4.

Also, that it was important for Gabriel to "return to fight with the prince of Persia" can be seen when we realize how critical the present time was in respect to the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Let's note the sequence of events: Cyrus' decree freeing the Jews came, we believe, on November 15, 538 B.C.<sup>66</sup> Zerubbabel then prepared to lead nearly 50,000 returning exiles, along with over 8,000 head of livestock, to Jerusalem.<sup>67</sup> But because it would take some time to liquidate assets and mobilize this sizable assemblage, and because it would be imprudent to travel in winter, it seems safe to believe that early spring of 537 B.C. was the actual time of the exodus; that is, it no doubt followed the same exodus schedule that came as a result of Artaxerxes' decree some 80 years later of which Ezra was a part.<sup>68</sup> And if Zerubbabel's exodus pace was like Ezra's they would have been four months enroute,<sup>69</sup> arriving at the site of Jerusalem in July or August. Upon arriving, the first order of business would have been constructing shelter and just settling in. This accomplished, they could then turn their attention to the Temple and its services. Of course, reinstating the sacrificial system was far easier than rebuilding the Temple. Ezra described the sequence of Zerubbabel's exodus events. Ezra 3:6:

**6 From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.**

The first day of the seventh month was October 5, 537 B.C. And though construction of the Temple did not begin at this time, preparations for construction did begin as indicated by the next verse:

**7 They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.**

Apparently, the plan was to accumulate material for the Temple over the winter and then begin construction the next spring. Verse 8 confirms this:

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. p. 22.

<sup>67</sup> Ezra 2:64–67.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Ezra 8:31.

<sup>69</sup> Ezra 7:8–9.

**8 Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel . . . and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem . . . to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.**

Edwin Thiele comments on this verse: “The second month began on April 29, 536.”<sup>70</sup> This date, we will now note, was only *six days after* Christ and Gabriel made their appearance to Daniel in Daniel 10.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, we can understand that the reason Satan was so intent at this particular time in influencing Cyrus to show disfavor to the returned exiles was because the exiles were just now at the crucial point of beginning to actually lay the foundation of the Temple. Satan’s intense efforts to cause Cyrus to rescind his command for the Temple to be rebuilt, then, necessitated Gabriel, and then even Christ, to counteract the evil influence. And because the construction had not yet started and there was still time for Cyrus to change his mind, when Gabriel finally appeared to Daniel in response to Daniel’s prayer the spiritual struggle was still engaged and Gabriel still had a fight to win with respect to countering the prince of Persia. Thus, Gabriel informed Daniel that he must now “return to fight with the prince of Persia”; but first he would accomplish what he came for in the first place.

**21 But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and *there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.***

The principal future events, according to God’s foreknowledge, had already been written in God’s book foretelling the great spiritual conflict involving mankind. Now it was time to make these events known to Daniel and his people. Regarding the last part of v. 21, some versions make it parenthetical, such as in the NKJV:

**21 . . . (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. . . .)**

The pronoun “these” here is in reference to the evil forces Gabriel spoke of in v. 20 — the “prince of Persia” and the “prince of Grecia” — against whom Gabriel received only Michael’s assistance.

The probable meaning of the passage is that Christ and Gabriel assumed the special work of contending with the hosts of Satan who attempted to secure control of the empires of this earth. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:862.

Now going to chapter 11:

**ALSO I in the first year of Darius the Mede (two years earlier), *even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.***

The chapter break here is unfortunate; it should follow this verse. We also concur with the NKJV and NIV which include this verse within the parenthetical comments of the last part of 11:21; thus, the chapter division actually breaks up a parenthetical comment.

The “first year” of Darius the Mede would have been from March 24, 538 B.C. to the time of Darius’ death on October 26 of the same year. This was the time in which Daniel’s third vision of Daniel 9 was given, and it was probably also the time when the events of Daniel 6 occurred concerning Daniel and the lions’ den. Gabriel here seems to be reinforcing in Daniel’s mind the fact that heavenly forces have always been with him taking an active role in the conflict, not only to “shut the lions’ mouths” (Dan. 6:22) but also to touch the king’s heart that he have thoughts of peace toward Daniel and his people.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps the pressure by the governors and satraps to have Daniel killed was so great that it necessitated Gabriel coming “to confirm and to strengthen” Darius to resist the move. In any event, Gabriel has now informed Daniel that he has not only been laboring on Daniel’s behalf

<sup>70</sup> *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 120.

<sup>71</sup> Compare Thiele’s quote on p. 20.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Dan. 6:1–3, 25–27.



with King Cyrus in recent weeks but he did the same with King Darius previously. And this explained how Daniel had been able to testify, “So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (Dan. 6:28).

Indeed, God caused Daniel to prosper *all* the days of his life. From when he was but a teenage captive in Babylon and God brought him “into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs” (Dan. 1:9) to when he was nearing 90 and God satisfied his passionate desire to understand prophetic truth. From slave to First President in the world’s greatest political empire, each step Daniel took, it seems, was a step God could bless. And if Daniel had a secret to success, we suggest it can be found in the very first statement that describes him: “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . .” (Dan. 1:8). This is certainly a simple enough principle to live by, but it is one that leaves us standing in awe of the man who lives by it in every particular of his life; and it is one, apparently, that even causes God to bestow special affection.<sup>73</sup> But an immensely more relevant point will become abundantly clear as we come to understand Daniel’s last prophetic revelation: it is God’s divine purpose that His people at the end of time, as a whole, manifest the same spirit and character as did Daniel. And as we might expect, this purpose of God is alluded to later in Daniel’s “final appearance” and we will consider it closely when we reach that point in our study.

This concludes our comments on the prologue of Daniel’s last vision. Now we are ready to tackle Gabriel’s detailed prophetic discourse of Daniel 11 that delineated to Daniel “what shall befall thy people in the latter days” and that constitutes his third and final explanation of the vision of Daniel 8. Gabriel’s words leading in to this explanation are quite matter-of-fact:

**2 And now will I shew thee the truth. . . .**

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. again Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19.

## 2. PERSIA AND GRECIA

**2 . . . Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth (King Ahasuerus) shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.**

Like v. 14 of Daniel 10, the very first verse of Gabriel’s prophetic narration is enough to have caused Daniel to view his previous time periods in prophetic year-day time. Up to this point, according to our view, Daniel had mistakenly believed that by this time the Messiah [of ch. 9] would have appeared and that the Medo-Persian Empire must very soon fall to a Greek empire which in turn would fall to the little horn power [of ch. 8]. But Gabriel begins his discourse in a way similar to his comments of 10:14 with the words, “there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia.” Thus, because 70 literal weeks have already passed since Cyrus’ decree freeing the Jews from their Babylonian captivity, and because Daniel was now being told that there would still be at least four more kings to sit on the *Persian* throne, it had to be abundantly clear that the time schedule for the fulfillment of the vision of chapter 8 was not moving along nearly as fast as Daniel had been anticipating.

C. Mervyn Maxwell provides a clear account of the historical fulfillment of Daniel 11:2:

After the death of King Cyrus, who was reigning at the time of the vision, the next three kings of Persia were Cambyses (530–522), a usurper called the False Smerdis or Bardiya (522), and Darius I (522–486). Cyrus and Darius I both issued decrees to rebuild the temple.

The fourth king was Xerxes (486–465), known in the Bible as Ahasuerus and the husband of Queen Esther. He spent four full years stockpiling supplies and assembling manpower for a military expedition against Greece, just as the angel had predicted. He truly stirred up “**all**.” His army teemed with contingents from forty nations—Persians sporting turbans, Assyrians wearing brass helmets, Colchians with wooden hats, Thracians with fox-skin caps, Ethiopians draped in leopard skins, and so on and on. Together they marched, perhaps 300,000 of them, mostly on foot, all the way from their homelands to the battles of Salamis (480) and Plataea (479) in Greece—and to complete defeat. *God Cares*, 1:274.

Despite what the KJV of v. 2 implies, Ahasuerus was not the last of the Persian kings; there were nine following him. The first of these was Artaxerxes I (reigned 465–423 B.C.) who, like Cyrus (c. 553–530), played a significant role in prophetic events. We will recall that it was Artaxerxes’ decree in 457 B.C. that marked the true starting point of the 70 weeks and 2300 days.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *SDA Bible Commentary*, the part of v. 2 that reads “he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia” could be translated “he shall rouse all the realm of Greece.” This conveys the idea that, by attacking the Greeks, King Ahasuerus actually aroused the Greek challenge to Persian world dominance. History shows that this was indeed the case, and in 479 B.C. “the Greeks decisively defeated the troops of Persia at Plataea and drove them forever from Greek soil” (4BC 865). But though the Greek rise to world dominance began in the days of the Persian king Ahasuerus, it was not fully achieved until some 150 years later. Nevertheless, this understanding of v. 2 explains why Gabriel ignored the nine Persian kings who followed Ahasuerus and it provides a natural flow to v. 3.

**3 And a mighty king (Alexander the Great [336–323]) shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.**

Here Gabriel describes the fully mature Greek Empire—the “he goat” of Daniel 8—that Daniel was perhaps beginning to believe would never come on the world scene.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. our comments on p. 14.

**4 And when he (Alexander) shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.**

Again we have prophecy depicting the four-way division of the Greek Empire. Now we will show the new parallels as we have them thus far in our study of Daniel 11.<sup>2</sup> In doing this, however, we should remember that the prophecy of Daniel 9 is an elaboration on the “appearance” of Daniel 8:13-14,<sup>3</sup> and the events referred to in this “appearance” are limited to those that occurred during the time of the little horn. Therefore, there is nothing in Daniel 9 that parallels the verses of the parent vision of Daniel 8 that deal with the ram and the goat.

#### Daniel 8:3-8

**3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the *two horns were high*; but one *was higher than the other*, and the higher came up last.**

**4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.**

**5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat *had a notable horn between his eyes*.**

**6 And he came to the ram that had *two horns*, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.**

**7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.**

**8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up for notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.**

#### Daniel 8:20-22

**20 The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.**

**21 And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.**

**22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.**

#### Daniel 11:2-4

**2 And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.**

**3 And a mighty king [of Greece] shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.**

**4 And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.**

<sup>2</sup> Compare our previous parallels on pp. 9-10 and 12.

<sup>3</sup> See again Dr. Shea's comments on p. 12.

Now let's note Maxwell's description of the circumstances surrounding the four-way division of the Greek Empire:

Alexander was just settling into the task of building the capital of his new empire at the site of old Babylon, when swamp fever overtook him. He died in June 323 B.C. at the age of 32 and was survived by a brain-damaged half brother, Philip, and by an infant son, born actually after Alexander's death. His leading generals fought with each other, eliminated the brother and the son, and in 301 sliced up the empire four ways. The far west went to Cassander, the north to Lysimachus, the east to Seleucus, and the south went to Ptolemy. *God Cares*, 1:275.

In Daniel 11, what immediately follows the north-south-east-west break-up of Alexander's Greek Empire is a detailed historical account of the eastern and southern divisions; the northern and western divisions are totally ignored. The eastern division — the Seleucid — is now called the "king of the North" (understood to be due to its geographic relation with Palestine) while the southern division — the Ptolemaic — is called the "king of the South" (same reason). And at this point we have a significant paragraph break in the prophetic narrative. And at this point we take a significant diversion from the parent prophecy of chapter 8; enough so, in fact, that we will devote the next two chapters to it.

### 3. THE HISTORICAL KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH

In Daniel 11:5–15 Gabriel describes in unique detail the interplay between the Greek kings of the “North” and “South.” Most Bible commentators are in general agreement in their understanding of the historic application of these kings up through v. 13; the problems here, as well as with the entire prophecy, begin with v. 14. Nevertheless, as we shall see later and as inconsequential as it may seem now, it is essential to establish the historical fulfillment of all of vs. 5–15. But because the account of the kings of the North and South is as detailed as it is, we will rely on C. Mervyn Maxwell to explain those verses regarding these kings (vs. 5–13) that most commentators are in general agreement on:<sup>1</sup>

**5. The king of the south [Ptolemy] shall be strong,  
but one of his princes shall be stronger than he  
and his dominion shall be a great dominion.**

The terms “**king of the north**” and “**king of the south**” appear frequently in Daniel 11. They designate, at first, the persons who controlled Syria and Egypt, countries lying *north* and *south* of Jerusalem. The actual areas controlled by these kings varied from time to time. Sometimes the northern (Seleucid) kingdom reached from the Aegean Sea to India, and sometimes it consisted of only a few city-states. The king of (Ptolemaic) Egypt annexed Libya and also certain areas on the coast of Asia Minor. During much of the early period covered by Daniel 11, Egypt also controlled Lebanon, Cyprus, and Judea.

The capital of Egypt under the Ptolemies was not Cairo but Alexandria, a flourishing community founded by Alexander. The principal capital of the Seleucid kingdom was Antioch, in Syria, near to the Mediterranean.

All the kings of Egypt carried the name Ptolemy (TOL-uh-mee), and all the kings of Syria who are referred to in Daniel 11 were called either Antiochus or Seleucus. Because so many had the same names, each was distinguished in ancient times by a second name chosen by the king himself or given to him by his people. Today we give them numbers as well. The result is admittedly a series of “jawbreakers”!

In verse 5 the angel said that the “**king of the south**” would be “**strong.**” Ptolemy I Soter (323–280) was, in fact, strong right from the start. Egypt was immensely wealthy and rather easy to protect. The “**prince**” who became “**stronger than he**” was Seleucus I Nicator, the general who originally won the eastern part of Alexander’s empire. Seleucus was driven out of the east by yet another one of Alexander’s generals and fled to Egypt for safety. Ptolemy gave him special status and helped him outfit a new army.

Quickly successful in driving his rival out of the east, Seleucus followed through by pushing Lysimachus out of Syria and Asia Minor, thus making himself “**king of the north**” — and the master of most of Alexander’s former empire, from the Aegean to India. He would have liked to control Judea too, taking it away from Egypt; but Ptolemy reminded Seleucus that without his help in the first place, he could never have staged a comeback.

**6. After some years they [Antiochus II and Ptolemy II] shall make an alliance,  
and the daughter of the king of the south  
shall come to the king of the north to make peace;  
but she shall not retain the strength of her arm,  
and he and her offspring shall not endure;  
but she shall be given up,  
and her attendants,  
her child,  
and he who got possession of her.**

We looked at this verse on page 268. *God Cares*, 1:275–277.

Going back to Maxwell’s comments on his p. 268 we find this:

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<sup>1</sup> Maxwell uses the RSV.

We shall see on page 277 that around 250 B.C., King Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt and King Antiochus Theos of Syria attempted to guarantee peace between their countries by having King Antiochus marry King Ptolemy's daughter, Berenice.

Antiochus already had a wife, called Laodice. It was part of the deal that he divorce her.

So the divorce was arranged, the new marriage was celebrated, and in due course a baby boy arrived who could someday be the next king. Unfortunately Antiochus soon found that he didn't like Berenice very well. He kept making comparisons between her and his first wife. And when Berenice's father, the king of Egypt, died, Antiochus divorced her and took Laodice back again.

But Laodice had become bitter. She was afraid, too, of what her husband might do next. So using her royal powers in a manner all too common in those days, she had Antiochus, Berenice, and Berenice's attendants and little son all murdered. *Ibid.*, 268.

Now returning to p. 277 where we left off in Maxwell's discussion of Daniel 11:6:

. . . We have to remind ourselves that all these details were revealed by God almost three hundred years in advance. The "**they**" at the beginning of the verse refers to Antiochus II Theos (261–246) and Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246). Antiochus II, you recall, divorced Laodice in order to marry Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II. When Ptolemy II died, Antiochus took Laodice back, but she had Antiochus and Berenice and Berenice's baby and attendants all killed.

Breaking his relationship with his wife was a strange basis for a king to adopt for building a new relationship with a foreign king.

7. **In those times a branch from her roots [Ptolemy III]  
shall arise in his place;  
he shall come against the army and enter the fortress  
of the king of the north [Antiochus II],  
and he shall deal with them and shall prevail.**

By his divorce and remarriage Antiochus II lost far more than he could have hoped to gain. For the next king of Egypt, Ptolemy III (246–221), a brother of Berenice's, determined to avenge Berenice's death by invading Syria. He took his army all the way to Babylon and beyond before voluntarily pulling back! His navy occupied Seleucia, the port that served Antioch, the capital of Syria, and for some time Egyptian shipping dominated the eastern Mediterranean.

8. **He [Ptolemy III] shall also carry off to Egypt  
their gods with their molten images  
and with their precious vessels of silver and gold;  
and for some years he shall refrain  
from attacking the king of the north.**

In the process of his triumphant Syrian campaign, Ptolemy III captured 2500 gold and silver images, many of them being Egyptian gods that had been stolen by a succession of conquerors over the centuries. Watching him carry these lifeless idols south through Palestine on his way home to Egypt, the Jews must have smiled in contempt. But the Egyptians were delighted at what their Greek king had achieved for them, and they hailed him as their benefactor. In Greek "benefactor" is "*euergetes*"; hence Ptolemy III *Euergetes*.

Ptolemy III *Euergetes* was quite satisfied with himself after his profitable foray, and he didn't attack the Syrians again as long as he lived.

9. **Then the latter [a new king of the north, Seleucus II]  
shall come into the realm of the king of the south  
but shall return into his own land.**

The Ptolemies and Seleucids resumed their quarrel, like feuding Hatfields and McCoys. For well over a century the Jews apprehensively observed their armies marching north and

south through Palestine, knowing that victory or defeat could change their overlords and their liberties and taxes too.

In the year 242 Seleucus II Callinicus attempted to avenge himself for Egypt's deep penetration of his ancestral lands, but his army was vanquished and his navy blown away. He returned to Antioch badly bloodied and empty-handed.

10. **His sons** [*the two sons of Seleucus II, namely Seleucus III, who was assassinated after a short reign (225–223) and Antiochus III the Great (223–187)*]  
**shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces,  
which shall come and overflow and pass through,  
and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress.**
11. **Then the king of the south** [*Ptolemy IV*],  
**moved with anger,  
shall come out and fight with the king of the north** [*Antiochus III*];  
**and he** [*Antiochus III*]  
**shall raise a great multitude,  
but it shall be given into his** [*Ptolemy's*]  
**hand.**
12. **But when the multitude is taken** [*that is, the army defeated*]  
**his heart** [*Ptolemy's*]  
**shall be exalted,  
and he shall cast down tens of thousands,  
but he shall not prevail.**

These three verses deal principally with the battle of Raphia, June 22, 217 B.C., as if God chose to pay special attention to this particular battle as an evidence of His interest in every battle.

But why should God be concerned about a battle?

At Raphia in 217 B.C. approximately 70,000 foot soldiers and 5000 cavalry were committed on each side. The body count next day showed that Antiochus III had lost 10,000 killed and 4000 taken prisoner. Ptolemy's losses were lighter but still significant. When hostility is so rampant and so many men suffer and die should not God care? . . .

Yet victory gained Ptolemy little in the long run. He was a notorious debauchee. He failed to follow up the success his generals had handed him—and Antiochus III was eager for a rematch.

13. **For the king of the north** [*Antiochus III*]  
**shall again raise a multitude, greater than the former;  
and after some years  
he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies.**

Resilient as a tennis ball, Antiochus III bounced high after his defeat at Raphia. He led his army to India in the east and to the Aegean in the west, making the “**king of the north**” once more nominal master of most of Alexander's former empire. Hoping to be master of it all, he prepared for a second attack on Egypt.

The timing seemed propitious, for the new king of the south was Ptolemy V Epiphanes, a boy of six. Besides, there was unrest along the Nile, Egyptians defying and even rioting against their Greek overlords. It is of interest to know that the famous Rosetta Stone, now housed in the British Museum, records concessions made to the restless Egyptian people by the regents of the boy king, Ptolemy V, in an effort to prevent further trouble. *Ibid.*, 277–279.

Thus ends Maxwell's commentary on Daniel 11:5–13; and now we will continue with our own commentary, picking up at v. 14.

### “The Robbers of Thy People” and “The Vision”

**14 And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south (the Ptolemies): also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision<sup>2377</sup>; but they shall fall.**

It is generally agreed that v. 14 is parenthetically inserted between vs. 13 and 15. In our view, the “many” who “stand up against the king of the south” consist of three groups: (1) the king of the North—the Seleucids who would soon drive the Ptolemies from Palestine for the last time; (2) the now rising power of Rome who would eventually dethrone the Ptolemies from Egypt; and (3) the Egyptian nationals who were revolting against their Greek overlords and who, as Maxwell indicated in his comments on v. 13 above, weakened the Ptolemy defenses against both the Seleucids and the Romans. Turning now to the *SDA Bible Commentary* on this verse:

**14. In those times.** Beginning with this verse, interpretations of the remainder of the chapter differ widely. One group of commentators considers that vs. 14–45 continue to narrate the subsequent history of the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kings. Others hold the view that with v. 14 the next great world empire, Rome, enters the scene, and that vs. 14–35 sketch the course of that empire and of the Christian church. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:868.

Our view is close to the second view described here, and we will explain our view by first identifying “the robbers of thy people” and “the vision.” The *SDA Bible Commentary*:

**The robbers of thy people.** Literally, “the sons of the breakers of thy people.” This expression may be understood *subjectively*, “the children of the violent among thy people” (ASV; cf, RSV). Thus understood, it probably applies to *those among the Jews who saw in the international strife of their times an opportunity to further their own national interests, and were willing to go beyond the bounds of law to accomplish them.* On the other hand, if understood *objectively*, the passage would mean, “those who act violently against thy people.” In this sense it has been taken as referring to the Romans, who eventually (63 B.C.) robbed the Jews of their independence, and later (in A.D. 70 and 135) destroyed the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. *Ibid.*, 869 (emphasis supplied).

As we will see later, the phrase “robbers of thy people” is a significant phrase and must be understood in its true context. Among Seventh-day Adventist commentators, Maxwell, Edwin Thiele in his *Outline Studies in Daniel*, and Uriah Smith in his *Daniel and the Revelation* all take the objective view mentioned above—that the term “robbers” refers to the Romans. However, in our view there are two problems with this interpretation. First, none of these commentators adequately explain the phrase, “to establish the vision.” It would seem that “to establish the vision” is the motive which leads “the robbers” to “exalt themselves.” Accepting this, how could the Romans be understood to have this motive? And while it is possible to understand v. 14 to mean that the “robbers” were ignorant of the fact they were fulfilling prophecy (*i.e.* the “vision”), we believe it more naturally means that the “robbers” were consciously attempting to “establish the vision” by “exalting” themselves. Second, the last phrase of the verse reads, “but they shall fall.” The Romans definitely did *not* fall or fail in robbing the Jews of their political independence or in destroying the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. The only way one can explain this phrase in this context is to project its fulfillment all the way down to the end of time when the Roman power (now papal Rome) is finally broken in conjunction with the second coming of Christ. But, despite the parenthetical nature of v. 14, it seems to us more reasonable to understand that the “falling” of the “robbers” occurs as a result of their aborted attempt to “exalt themselves,” all of which occurs in the same time period as the events of vs. 13 and 15.

In our view, the key to understanding v. 14 is understanding what the “vision” is. Identifying “the vision” will determine what is meant by “to establish the vision”; determining what is meant by “to establish the vision” will determine what is meant by “exalt[ing] themselves to establish the vision”; and determining what is meant by “exalt[ing] themselves to establish the vision” will identify who the “robbers” of Daniel’s people are who “exalt themselves to establish the vision.”

The Hebrew word for “vision” here is *hazon* and, as noted on pp. 8–9, is the word used to refer to either of the two true symbolic visions of Daniel 7 and 8. In the first explanation of Daniel’s second vision, Daniel [in 8:15] and Gabriel [in 8:17, 26b] both apply the term “the *hazon*” specifical-



ly to Daniel's second true vision of Daniel 8:1–14. But in the second explanation, Daniel [in 9:21] refers to the vision of 8:1–14 *and* its immediate explanation by Gabriel in 8:16–26 also as “the *hazon*.” This is reasonable considering that any heaven-sent explanation of a prophetic vision, whether it comes in immediate conjunction with the vision or whether it comes later, is by nature an integral part of the vision itself. Therefore, we understand any reference to “the *hazon*” following chapter 8 to include the vision of 8:1–14 itself *and* any subsequent explanation of the vision. This idea led us to understand that Gabriel's reference to “the *hazon*” in 10:14 included the vision and first explanation of chapter 8 *and* the second explanation of chapter 9.<sup>2</sup> And since we understand that chapter 11 constitutes Gabriel's *third* explanation of the vision of chapter 8, we should now fully expect the term “the *hazon*” in 11:14 to also be in specific reference to Daniel's second vision as well as its first two explanations of chapters 8 and 9.

Having identified the general context of the term “the vision” in Daniel 11:14 we will look again at the *SDA Bible Commentary's* subjective identity of “the robbers of thy people” who were to “exalt themselves to establish” this “vision”:

. . . it probably applies to those among the Jews who saw in the international strife of their times an opportunity to further their own national interest, and were willing to go beyond the bounds of law to accomplish them. *Ibid.*

Though this is close, it seems the fundamental motive of “establishing the vision” is still overlooked. Edwin Thiele speaks on v. 14:

The Hebrew term here employed is “ben parits,” meaning “sons of robbers,” or bandits, children of violence. It could refer either to children of violence from among the Jews, or men of violence against the Jews. The *American Translation* renders it, “violent men among your own people.” *The New American Bible* has, “outlaws of your people,” and the *New English Bible*, “some hotheads among your own people.” The picture is one of men of violence and aggression, of bandits and robbers, men who will take by force that which is not theirs. The term is employed in Jer 7:11, “Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers?” and in Eze 7:22, “My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret place: for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.” It is not used in Dan 11:14 as a term of praise or commendation, but rather of condemnation, and would apply perfectly to the character of the Romans as they went everywhere taking by violence that which did not belong to them. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 133–134.

With all due respect to Thiele, using his own quotes the term “robbers” in v. 14 applies *more* perfectly to the hotheads among the Jews who had fallen from grace with God and were attempting in their own strength to “establish [*bring about the fulfillment of*] the vision.” The aspect of “the vision” which the Jews primarily desired to be fulfilled being, of course, that part of Daniel 9 regarding the advent of the Messiah who they presumed would deliver them from their long-time national political oppression which they were experiencing throughout the history of the Seleucid–Ptolemy wars. Thus, in our view the specific meaning of the term “the vision” in Daniel 11:14 is identical with that of Daniel 9:24:

**24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city . . . to seal up the vision (*hazon*) and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.**

While the genuine advent of the Messiah in the final week of the 70 weeks would truly “seal up [*ratify, confirm the integrity of, establish*] the vision,” Daniel 11:14 foretold that certain of Daniel's people would not wait on God's schedule. They would take matters into their own hands and “exalt themselves,” and that they would attempt in this way to “establish [*seal up*] the vision.” Using terms relevant to our present discussion, Stephen Haskell wrote regarding the first coming of Christ and the

<sup>2</sup> See p. 27.

beginning and ending dates for the 70 weeks and 2300 days: “The crucifixion of Christ in the midst of the seventieth week ‘sealed the vision,’ and established the other dates.”<sup>3</sup> It seems consistent, then, to conclude that the “robbers” attempt in Daniel 11:14 “to establish the vision” was merely man’s attempt “to seal up the vision” which only God was to do as per Daniel 9:24.

That the Jews were impatient in their waiting for the advent of the Messiah is an accepted fact. The natural result of this impatience showed itself in the appearance of false [political] messiahs in Palestine during the two centuries prior to the time of Christ when Israel’s national hopes for political independence were at their highest. Believing the Messianic aspect of “the vision” to be long overdue, the “robbers” of Daniel’s people exalted themselves in the form of political revolt in an overt attempt to force the vision’s presumed fulfillment. We can note that the Jews at this time generally had a totally erroneous understanding of what “the vision” was saying to begin with. They believed the Messiah was coming to vindicate *them* and was going to exalt *them* as the world’s great *political* power. This condition existed when Syria ruled Palestine and continued when Rome ruled it.

While the Jews desired the advent of the Messiah, they had no true conception of His mission. They did not seek redemption from sin, but deliverance from the Romans. They looked for the Messiah to come as a conqueror, to break the oppressor’s power, and exalt Israel to universal dominion. Thus the way was prepared for them to reject the Saviour. *The Desire of Ages*, 29–30.

Specifically, in our view the historical fulfillment of “the robbers of thy people” in Daniel 11:14 can be found in the Jewish Maccabean revolt. Beginning in 168 B.C. when the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes purposed to totally destroy the Jewish faith and practice, the Maccabean brothers inspired and led their nation to complete independence from Syria by the year 142 B.C. However, a decline of moral leadership in the years following led to a weakened nation and the independence the Jews had gained by great sacrifice from the Seleucids they then lost to the Romans in 65 B.C. Dr. B. J. Fernie describes the fall:

The country was stripped of the territory it had conquered and became an insignificant Roman province. Thus ended the kingdom established with so valiant and heroic a struggle by the Maccabees. It was *an inglorious fall*, but in the minds of the people the hope lived that when the Messiah of whom their prophets had written, appeared, he, like Judas Maccabaeus, would challenge the power of the oppressor and would restore the kingdom to Israel. The hope was most vivid when Jesus was born, and if he would have consented to become a military chief, thousands would have flocked to his standard. His refusal exasperated the people, who would have “taken him by force and made him a king.” *The Bible Readers’ Aids*, 9 (emphasis supplied).

The Jews during this period, then, generally liked to believe that the primary purpose of the Messianic visit foretold in the prophecy of Daniel 9 was to restore their nation to political glory. Thus the Maccabean movement was their vain attempt “to establish the vision” by running ahead of God in their own strength. That is, the Maccabean freedom fighters were the “robbers” (men of violence among the Jews) who “exalted themselves” (ran ahead of the Lord in their own strength) “to establish the vision” (to fulfill the Jewish preconceived idea of the Messianic vision of Dan. 9) but who “fell” (to the Romans after a brief period of apparent success with the Seleucids). As always, whenever God’s people set out to do for themselves that which only God can do for them it is doomed to fail in the end.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *The Cross and Its Shadow*, 196 (emphasis supplied).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Frank Hardy has come to the same conclusion regarding the identity of the “robbers” of Dan. 11:14; however, his application is different. (See <http://www.historicism.org> paper No. 11, pp. 11–12, July, 1987.) Hardy concurs that the “robbers” were the Maccabees, but he holds that the Maccabees believed they were fulfilling “the vision” of Dan. 8:14

Understanding “the vision” of Daniel 11:14 to be in specific reference to Daniel’s vision of chapter 8 and its first two explanations in chapters 8 and 9, we can now understand that it could *only* be the Jews, *not* the Romans, who had sufficient knowledge of this vision or a logical motive to attempt to force its fulfillment. Coupling the identity of the “robbers” in v. 14 as apostate Jews supporting the Maccabean independence movement with the context of “the vision” as being in reference to Daniel’s second vision and its first two explanations, the two problems associated with the Romans being the “robbers” vanish.<sup>5</sup> That is, the Jews had the logical motive to attempt “to establish the vision” relating to the first advent of the Messiah, and in their vain and presumptuous attempt they ultimately failed miserably. The translators of the Amplified Bible understood Daniel 11:14 in this very context:

**14 In those times many shall rise up against the king of the south [Egypt]; also the men of violence<sup>6530</sup> among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the visions [of chapters eight and nine] but they shall fail and fall.**

That the Amplified Bible translators have the context of v. 14 correct is further supported by other biblical employments of the Hebrew word translated “robbers,” or “men of violence,” in this verse. This word (*p<sup>e</sup>riyts*; #6530) is found six times in the Old Testament,<sup>6</sup> and one of these is in Jeremiah 7:11:

**11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers<sup>6530</sup> in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD.**

Jesus used similar language in Matthew 21:13:

**13 . . . It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.**

It was not the Gentiles who made God’s house a den of thieves, it was the Jews themselves. In the same way we believe the “robbers of thy people” of Daniel 11:14 were the violent faction of the Jews themselves who attempted to usurp the providence of God in fulfilling the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9 in the time and manner He sees fit.

### The End of the Kings of the North and South

**15 So the king of the north (the Seleucids) shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities (more accurately, “a fortified city” [NKJV, NIV]; namely, the city of Tyre) and the arms of the south (the Ptolemies) shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength [among the Ptolemies] to withstand [the king of the North].**

Comments on this verse by the *SDA Bible Commentary*:

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(regarding “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed”) when, once their revolt was adequately successful, they cleansed and rededicated the Temple sanctuary following its pollution by Antiochus Epiphanes. A problem with this view, which Dr. Hardy does not address, is the fact that the pollution of the sanctuary lasted precisely three years, not the 2300 days (6 years 3½ months) specified in Dan. 8:14. If the Maccabees believed they were fulfilling Dan. 8:14 when they ritually cleansed the sanctuary, they would also have had to believe the 2300 days were literal days. Because of the obvious discrepancy between three years and 2300 days, it is not at all likely that the Maccabees believed their cleansing of the sanctuary was the fulfillment of Dan. 8:14. Alternatively and in our view, what the Maccabees sought to see accomplished [in ignorant fulfillment of the “robbers” of Dan. 11:14] was not the cleansing of the sanctuary of Dan. 8 but the national deliverance from Gentile oppression that they read in to Dan. 9. This is not to say they actually believed they were fulfilling Dan. 9 but that they attempted to achieve the presumed objective of Dan. 9 by their own power.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 17:4 “destroyer”; Isa. 35:9 “ravenous”; Ezek. 18:10 “robber”; Jer. 7:11, Ezek. 7:22, Dan. 11:14 “robbers.”

**15. King of the north.** Following the parenthetical remarks of v. 14, this verse continues the narrative begun in v. 13 concerning Antiochus' second campaign in Palestine. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:869.

And Maxwell's comments on v. 15:

Antiochus trounced a well-trained army led by Scopas, a skilled and experienced general in the service of Egypt. The defeated troops retired to Tyre, but Antiochus followed them and laid siege. When the fighting was over, the king of the north had a firm grip on the Jewish homeland of Judea, and Ptolemaic Egypt never owned it again. *God Cares*, 1:281.

This last battle between the Seleucids and Ptolemies occurred in the year 198 B.C. While this was 23 years prior to the rise of the Maccabean revolt (which we understand was referred to in v. 14), we explain the events being out of sequence by again noting the fact that v. 14 is parenthetical and, therefore, what is referred to in v. 14 is not necessarily in chronological sequence with the historical events of vs. 13 and 15. We understand the part in v. 14 regarding the "robbers" to point forward in time. Also, in our view Gabriel preferred to close his account of the Seleucid-Ptolemy conflicts with a description of its last battle as found in v. 15 as opposed to the forward-looking parenthetical comments of v. 14. By doing so, as we will now see, his narrative flow to v. 16 is smoother.

Though many commentators place the entrance of the Roman power in this prophecy as "the robbers of thy people" in v. 14, with our understanding that the "robbers" were actually Maccabean Jews we must now look for another verse for the introduction of Rome. We find it easily in v. 16:

**16 But he (Rome) that cometh against him (the king of the North) shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land (Palestine), which by his hand shall be consumed.**

The king of the North eliminates the king of the South in v. 15, and Rome eliminates the king of the North in v. 16. We should now be able to see that the subject of vs. 5-15 has been exclusively the battles between the king of the North and the king of the South. This is why v. 14 is considered parenthetical in that the information provided in v. 14 is indirectly related to the ongoing conflict between the two kings of the North and South. The significance of this parenthetical information will be seen later in our study; and we will also see as our study progresses that Rome is now the primary subject from v. 16 onward until "he" is also eliminated in v. 45.

### Present Relevance of These Historical Events

With the removal of the Ptolemies as the king of the South, and with the removal of the Seleucids as the king of the North, and with the introduction of the new world political power of Rome, we can readily see another major paragraph break between vs. 15 and 16. We will also note that it is v. 16 that picks up the parallel with the parent prophecy of Daniel 8. While vs. 5-15 parallel nothing in that this portion of the prophecy conveys the entirely new information regarding the kings of the North and South, v. 4 left off describing the divided Greek Empire (and thus parallels Dan. 8:8) and v. 16 picks up with the introduction of Rome (and thus parallels Dan. 8:9). Let's now exclude those verses dealing with the kings of the North and South and parallel only those dealing with the transition between the Greek and Roman empires:

#### Daniel 8:8-9

**8 Therefore the he goat (the Greek kingdom) waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.**

**9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn (Rome), which waxed exceeding**

#### Daniel 11:4, 16

**4 And when he (the Greek kingdom) shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.**

**16 But he (Rome) that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before**

**great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant (*tsebi*) land.**

**him: and he shall stand in the glorious (*tsebi*) land, which by his hand shall be consumed.**

Again, Daniel 11:16 introduces the power of Rome and parallels Daniel 8:9 where the power of Rome — the “little horn” — is also introduced and the land of Palestine — the “pleasant land” — is also referred to with the same Hebrew word *tsebi*. That the “glorious land” in Daniel 11:16 and the “pleasant land” in 8:9 refer to Palestine is almost unanimously agreed among theologians. And in our view, this parallel provides further evidence that, in Daniel’s last vision, Rome is indeed introduced in v. 16 as opposed to v. 14.

In recognizing the above parallels, we find that vs. 5–15 of Daniel 11 set themselves apart from the other verses of this prophecy in that they provide an extended account of historical characters and events that have no corresponding figure or symbol in the parent prophecy of chapter 8. And in our view, this uniqueness is highly significant and indicates that there is a special prophetic purpose for the mention of the kings of the North and South in Daniel 11; and identifying this purpose is our next order of business.

Let us consider these fundamental questions: What significant information have we learned thus far in our study of Daniel 11? What relevance does the extended historical conflict between the Seleucids and Ptolemies have to the gospel of Christ that it would merit inclusion in Bible prophecy? What relevance did these historical events have to ancient Israel? More importantly, what relevance does this historical information have to us as spiritual Israel at the end of time?

To begin to answer these questions we will ask yet another: Considering the fact that both the kings of the North and South are mentioned again in Daniel 11 in conjunction with the “time of the end” in v. 40, how do we relate the historical Seleucid/Ptolemy kings of the North/South with the “time of the end” kings of the North/South of our day? Obviously, there is no denying that there has to be a basic connection between the kings of the North and South in v. 40 with the kings of the North and South in vs. 5–15 given the fact these kings share the same titles. But since it is also evident that the account of the historical conflict between the Seleucids and Ptolemies ended in v. 15 at the point in history 200 years before Christ, and since v. 40 describes events all the way down at the “time of the end,” the specific identities of the kings of the North and South in v. 40 are most definitely *not* what they were in vs. 5–15. Yet there *is* an application of the kings of the North and South in the “time of the end” that most assuredly has relevance to those of us living *in* the time of the end and, therefore, this application *must* be some kind of a *spiritual/symbolic* application. And given the fact that no mention was made of these two kings in the parent prophecy of chapter 8 or either of its first two explanations, it is self-evident that this spiritual end-time application is, like the Seleucid/Ptolemy historical account of vs. 5–15 itself, *unique* to the prophecy of chapter 11.

In attempting to identify the end-time spiritual application of the kings of the North/South in Daniel 11:40, it is only logical to look at the history of the literal application of these kings in vs. 5–15 for clues as to the identity of their spiritual counterparts. And looking again at the historical application of vs. 5–15, it is clear that these verses describe what *was* an ongoing conflict between what *were* the two principal political powers surrounding Palestine. While these two powers were given titles reflecting their geographic directions relative to Palestine, it is significant to note again that the conflicts described in these verses were limited *exclusively* between these two powers. That is, outside the parenthetical v. 14 that itself describes no specific head-to-head battle, the conflicts described in vs. 5–15 involving the Seleucids and Ptolemies did *not* involve Israel. This prophetic account focuses exclusively on the kings of the North and South and describes the battles these two kings had with *each other*. This fact is reminiscent of the fact that there is yet another conflict raging between two diabolically opposing forces, and *this* conflict is indeed a *spiritual* one. In fact, as we noted in our comments on Daniel 10:1 on pp. 3–4, it is this spiritual “great conflict” that is the stated subject of the prophecy of Daniel 11–12. Regarding this conflict it has been said:

The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 119.

The Spirit of Prophecy describes these spiritual battles, and their conclusion, like this:

In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God. An angel flying in the midst of heaven put the standard of Immanuel into many hands, while a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: "Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters. Let all who will come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. Now the soldiers of the cross gave way, "as when a standard-bearer fainteth." Isaiah 10:18. But their apparent retreat was but to gain a more advantageous position. Shouts of joy were heard. A song of praise to God went up, and angel voices united in the song, as Christ's soldiers planted His banner on the walls of fortresses till then held by the enemy. The Captain of our salvation was ordering the battle and sending support to His soldiers. His power was mightily displayed, encouraging them to press the battle to the gates. He taught them terrible things in righteousness as He led them on step by step, conquering and to conquer.

At last the victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, "The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus," was gloriously triumphant. The soldiers of Christ were close beside the gates of the city, and with joy the city received her King. The kingdom of peace and joy and everlasting righteousness was established. *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:41–42.

Having made this observation, comments from Russell Burrill will now be relevant. Burrill writes in his book *The New World Order* under the heading "The Original King of the North":

While the king of the north in Daniel 11 primarily refers to powers that were against the covenant people, this symbolism is used elsewhere in Scripture to indicate that *God Himself is the original King of the North*. In fact, *God is the only true King of the North*. Any others who claim this title are usurpers. Throughout the Old Testament, north was the point of the compass assigned to God. It was the place from which God ruled. In Leviticus 1:11 the sacrifice was said to be killed on the north side of the altar and that the north side was before the Lord. Perhaps the most significant text on this point is Psalm 48:1, 2:

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the side of the north, the city of the great King.

Mount Zion, the city of God, the place which God ruled ancient Israel, was said to be on the side of the north. Ancient Jerusalem contained two hills; the northernmost one was Zion. It is the place where Solomon later built the temple. In the temple was the Shekinah glory, the literal presence of God on earth. Ezekiel the prophet was taken to the north gate of the temple, where the rebellious Israelites had erected an image of jealousy. There Ezekiel saw the glory of God at the north gate (Ezekiel 8:3, 4). Thus, it would be logical for ancient Jews to look to the north as the place where God's presence was—the place from which He ruled.

Perhaps Daniel was familiar with Isaiah's statement that God would raise up a deliverer for His people from the Babylonian captivity. That deliverer, Isaiah declared, would come from the north and from the east (Isaiah 41:25). While this primarily referred to Cyrus, who rescued God's people from Babylon, yet other Scriptures seem to employ it as a type of the

final deliverance of God’s people. There may be a reference to this in Daniel 11:44: “Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him.” The Old Testament seems to indicate north as the direction from which God will deliver His people. *The New World Order*, 72–73 (emphasis supplied).

While Burrill understands the spiritual application of the king of the North in Daniel 11 to be a satanic power usurping the position of Christ as the true King of the North, we find it more logical and consistent to understand the spiritual application of Daniel 11’s king of the North to actually be the true King of the North Himself—Christ—as He manifests His power and authority through His loyal forces on earth. We also answer our above posed questions by suggesting that the relatively insignificant historical events of Daniel 11:5–15 were actually an earthly dramatization of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Let’s go again to Burrill:

*In Daniel 11, the great controversy between Christ and Satan is being played out in a pictorial drama.* Satan has attempted to usurp God’s throne. This struggle has been going on since sin first entered the universe. Lucifer, the highest of God’s created beings, rebelled against God. Pride arose in his heart, and he determined that he could rule better than God could. Lucifer wanted to take over God’s position as king of the North. So he accused God of being unjust and claimed that nobody could keep God’s law. He insisted that God was asking an impossibility of His created beings.

As a result of Lucifer’s rebellion, one third of the heavenly host sided with him in the conflict, and they were all cast out of heaven. The warfare that began in heaven now continued on the earth. Soon Lucifer, who became Satan, seduced Adam and Eve to sin. Satan then claimed to be the prince of this world—the king of the north, ruler of planet earth. After all, Adam and Eve had agreed to his rulership. That which God had ruled so perfectly, Satan had now stolen, and he laid claim to the title “king of the north.”

God describes this battle for the control of the north in Isaiah 14:13:

For thou has said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

So Lucifer, or Satan, originally desired to sit upon, or control, Mount Zion from the sides of the north. Scripture declares that God is the original ruler of Planet Earth, but Satan has usurped God’s authority and now claims that he is the rightful king of the north. *The battle for the control of this earth is the battle of the great controversy. This is the primary issue in last-day events. Ibid.*, 73–74 (emphasis supplied).

Recognizing that the great controversy between Christ and Satan is the primary issue in last-day events, and recognizing that this issue is *always* the single burden of apocalyptic prophecy, and noting again that the literal battles between the Seleucids and Ptolemies described in Daniel 11:5–15 did not directly involve the Jews but instead involved only the kings of the North and South as they contested with each other, and adding a twist to Burrill’s observation that “In Daniel 11, the great controversy between Christ and Satan is being played out in a pictorial drama,” we repeat our view that the historical events described in Daniel 11:5–15 were an earthly dramatization of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

Applying such a hermeneutic to Bible prophecy is not new. Dr. William Shea applied a very similar hermeneutic in his interpretation of the final verses of Daniel 11:

It appears that Daniel 11:40–45 utilizes an actual historical incident in Persian history as a model, or type, for the spiritual battle between good and evil that will take place in the time of the end. The example comes from the Egyptian campaign of the Persian king Cambyses in 525 B.C. *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, 266.

Dr. Shea goes on to describe how the events of Cambyses' Egyptian campaign fit the description of the conflict described in Daniel 11:40–45 between the end-time kings of the North and South. He then makes the spiritual application to the end-time conflict:

Thus all the events described in Daniel 11:40–45 took place in a literal way in the life and death of Cambyses the Persian king. But at this point in the course of the prophecy, we are not dealing any longer with ancient times. We are dealing here with “the time of the end” (11:40). The powers involved are no longer a literal Persian king and a literal king of Egypt. They have become symbols for the powers at the time of the end. *Ibid.*, 267–268.

Like Burrill, Dr. Shea sees the end-time spiritual king of the North as the papal antichrist usurper of the title. But while we accept the typological principle Dr. Shea employs as a valid hermeneutic, we do not concur with Dr. Shea's specific application of it. We expand the application to embrace virtually the entire chapter, with the literal historical and typological model described in the Seleucid/Ptolemaic battles of vs. 5–15 and the spiritual antitypological reality depicted in the remainder of the chapter when the kings of the North and South are mentioned.

In the dramatization of Daniel 11:5–15, we picture the Seleucids in Syria, even though they themselves were a heathen people, to represent the side of *Christ* in the spiritual controversy; we picture the Ptolemies in Egypt to represent the side of *Satan*; and we picture the land of Palestine, the land caught in the middle and over which many of the literal battles were fought, to represent *this world* as, in the words of Burrill above, “The battle for the control of this earth is the battle of the great controversy.” In this scenario and context, then, we find the “great conflict” referred to in Daniel 10:1. And having taken this position, it will now be necessary to look closely at Daniel 11:5–15 again, this time noting particularly how the major events of the historical political conflicts between the historical kings of the North and South paralleled and dramatized the major events of the great spiritual controversy between Christ and Satan. This is the subject of the next chapter.



## 4. THE DRAMATIZATION OF DANIEL 11:5–15

Having commented in the preceding chapter on the Seleucid/Ptolemaic historical model of the “great controversy” between Christ and Satan, we now proceed with a commentary on the spiritual application of this model.

### The Controversy Begins

**5 And the king of the south shall be strong, and *one* of his princes; and he (the prince) shall be strong above him (the king of the South), and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.**

With this verse we are introduced to the king of the South and, by implication, the king of the North. And from this verse to v. 15 we have, according to our hypothesis, the dramatization of the great controversy between good and evil as it is waged on planet earth. The two principal characters in this controversy are, of course, the king of the North (representing Christ and His forces) and the king of the South (representing Satan and his forces). That is, just as “Cyrus was a type of Christ” (4BC 250) as the deliverer of God’s people from Babylon,<sup>1</sup> so we believe the “king of the North” is a type of Christ in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. And like it or not, every member of the human family is in one or the other of the two military camps of the great controversy. And it would seem, because we are the children of the fallen Adam, that by nature we are in Satan’s camp, but, by virtue of Christ’s contention with Satan over us, we can be redeemed into Christ’s camp.

Maxwell’s comments on the literal fulfillment of v. 5 are on p. 37. The “one of his princes” of this verse historically was Seleucus I Nicator (312–281 B.C.); spiritually He is, in our view, Christ. Let’s note again Maxwell’s comments pertaining to this “prince”:

In verse 5 the angel said that the “**king of the south**” would be “**strong.**” Ptolemy I Soter (323–280) was, in fact, strong right from the start. Egypt was immensely wealthy and rather easy to protect. The “**prince**” who became “**stronger than he**” was Seleucus I Nicator, the general who originally won the eastern part of Alexander’s empire. Seleucus was driven out of the east by yet another one of Alexander’s generals and fled to Egypt for safety. Ptolemy gave him special status and helped him outfit a new army.

Quickly successful in driving his rival out of the east, Seleucus followed through by pushing Lysimachus out of Syria and Asia Minor, thus making himself “**king of the north**” — and the master of most of Alexander’s former empire, from the Aegean to India. He would have liked to control Judea too, taking it away from Egypt; but Ptolemy reminded Seleucus that without his help in the first place, he could never have staged a comeback. *God Cares*, 1:275–276.

That the very first verse of the king of the North/king of the South account depicts the king of the North as having his origins in the South is significant. It is significant in that it depicts a significant spiritual truth: in order to effectively defeat Satan (the “king of the South”) here on earth, Christ came Himself (to the so-called “kingdom of the South”) to liberate the captives.<sup>2</sup> But in order to satisfy the legal ramifications of the spiritual controversy, it was necessary for Christ to identify Himself with the “captives” in spiritual Egypt by actually becoming one with them in body and nature. The king of the North in type (Seleucus I Nicator) significantly had his beginnings in the South as “one of his [*the king of the South’s*] princes” in order to depict this spiritual truth.

We have proposed that the king of the North vs. king of the South military conflicts as described in Daniel 11:5–15 dramatized the Christ vs. Satan spiritual conflicts as they are waged in contention

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the quotes of Isa. 44:28 and 45:13 on p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18.

for *this world*. Verse 5 introduces the two combatants and the controversy begins; v. 15 depicts the decisive and final contest (the battle of Armageddon and the second coming of Christ) and the controversy ends; and vs. 6–14 depict the most significant developments in the 6,000-year controversy that come between. Though Christ did not physically become one with the human race until His incarnation, He nevertheless identified Himself with the human race as the Lamb of God from “the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). Thus, while the dramatization in v. 5 introduces Christ as One identified with the human race in that His origins were in Egypt, in the chronological sequence of the dramatization the incarnation itself is not depicted until several verses later where the first coming of Christ is portrayed.

The significance of Christ becoming one in body and nature with His people held spiritually captive on earth is further evidenced by the fact that, in the providence of God, Christ literally lived the first few years of His life as the “Son of man” in the literal land of the historic king of the South; and Jesus was kept there “until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son” (Matt. 2:15).<sup>3</sup> And that Moses, who was also a type of Christ as Deliverer of God’s people, was reared in the household of Pharaoh also seems to represent this truth.<sup>4</sup> These facts highlight the fact that the description “one of his princes” in Daniel 11:5 in no way describes Christ as a prince of Satan, but merely that Christ the Lamb arose from the very domain Satan claimed his own—this world. Certainly, Moses “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (Heb. 11:24) or, we can be sure, a “prince of Pharaoh,” though he spent virtually his first 40 years in Pharaoh’s house; and Seleucus I Nicator, as his name indicates, was never a Ptolemy, but would have always considered himself the true king of the North despite his temporary stay in Egypt.

Beyond this, let’s remember that Seleucus I Nicator was the general who, in 321 B.C. (two years after Alexander’s death), originally won the eastern part of Alexander’s empire; but he then lost his kingdom in 316 B.C. to a rival general and fled to Egypt, only to regain his kingdom in 312 B.C. Given this series of events, why would Gabriel begin his prophetic account of Seleucus I Nicator with the time Seleucus was being harbored by Ptolemy during his brief stay in Egypt? The historically significant part of Seleucus’ story began when he initially won the eastern portion of Alexander’s kingdom; but Gabriel’s prophetic description of Seleucus begins with his ignominious four-year exile in Egypt. This delayed introduction of Seleucus in Gabriel’s prophecy of the Seleucids and Ptolemies is best explained, we believe, by recognizing the dramatization of these verses as we have described.

Having identified the spiritual application of the “one of his princes” in v. 5 as Christ, it is not surprising to find how historians have noted the historical greatness of Seleucus I Nicator:

. . . Seleucus, who at one time could be considered one of Ptolemy’s “princes,” later became stronger than the Egyptian king. When Seleucus died in 281 B.C., his realm extended from the Hellespont to northern India. Arrian, the leading ancient historian for this period, states that Seleucus was “the greatest king of those who succeeded Alexander, and the most royal mind, and ruled over the greatest extent of territory, next to Alexander” (*Anabasis of Alexander* vii. 22). *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:866.

Now v. 6:

**6 And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he (the king of the North) stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and whom she brought forth [margin], and he that strengthened her in *these* times.**

<sup>3</sup> The prophecy this fulfilled was Hos. 11:1.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ex. 2:10.

Maxwell’s commentary on the historical fulfillment of this verse is on p. 38. This is a rather bizarre account of divorce and marriage and murder. We would now expect to find a significant spiritual counterpart to this story in the early years of earth’s history—one that somehow “joins” the kings of the North and South together and yet in the end results in the destruction of both parties. Let’s go to Genesis 6:1–7:

**AND it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,**

**2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.**

**3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.**

**4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.**

**5 And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.**

**6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.**

**7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.**

The account of the Flood immediately follows this text during which everyone but Noah and his family perished. Commenting on Genesis 6:2 the *SDA Bible Dictionary* notes:

The context (chs 5; 6) deals exclusively with human beings, and clearly implies that the “sons of God” were simply the God-fearing descendants of Adam, whose genealogy is given in Gen 5, and the “daughters of men” were worldly young women from families where God was not honored. *SDA Bible Dictionary*, 1059.

While our suggested dramatization identifies the spiritual kings of the North and South as, principally, Christ and Satan respectively, in more general terms these titles naturally include the earthly forces of Christ and Satan, through whom the great controversy is principally carried out. Therefore, we suggest that in v. 6 the spiritual king of the North is the dramatization’s depiction of the “sons of God” of Genesis 6:2 and the spiritual daughter of the king of the South is its depiction of the “daughters of men.”

We now also suggest that the divorce of the king of the North from his first wife and his marriage to the daughter of the king of the South in Daniel 11 depicts the spiritual divorce of the sons of God from Christ and their marriage to Satan in the form of the daughters of men in Genesis 6. This compromise with evil, though considered by some to be an “agreement” of mutual benefit (as in the case of the later compromise between Christianity and paganism during the early centuries of the Christian church), has always resulted in the downfall of Christ’s spiritual force on earth—His church. It also results ultimately in the total destruction of the wicked, as it is through the witness of the church that God seeks to bring salvation to the wicked. Therefore, if the corruption of the church by the wicked is universal, the destruction of both the corrupted church *and* the wicked is imminent. That the corruption of the church was universal in Noah’s day is evident by the fact that, after 120 years of warning, none but Noah and his family chose to enter the ark. The virtual universal corruption of the “sons of God,” therefore, justified the Flood.

As the adulterous relationship between the sons of God and the daughters of men in Genesis 6 led to the destruction of both groups, so the adulterous relationship between the king of the North and the daughter of the king of the South in Daniel 11 led to the destruction of both. It is our view that in the spiritual application of Daniel 11:6 the murder of the king of the North along with his

second wife and their entire household dramatizes the destruction of the corrupted sons of God along with the rest of Satan’s earthly forces in the Flood.

**7 But out of a branch of her** (the daughter of the king of the South’s) **roots shall one stand up in his** (the king of the South’s) **estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress<sup>4581</sup> of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail:**

Though the Lord destroyed the wicked in the Flood, it was not long before the human family was again divided as the descendants of Noah took their sides in the great controversy. Thus, Satan (the *root* of evil) once again raised up loyal followers (*branches*)<sup>5</sup> and amassed an *army* to war against the king of the North; consequently, the Lord provided His people with a *fortress* of shelter—the nation of Israel. We will see more clearly as our study progresses that in the spiritual warfare between Christ and Satan, God’s church is likened to a fortress for God’s people; and to represent God’s church in this way is not a new idea. Regarding true spiritual Israel, the Spirit of Prophecy comments:

*The church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. The Acts of the Apostles, 11 (emphasis supplied).*

It seems evident that the “fortress” of the historic king of the North was the homeland of the Seleucids—Syria with her capital city Antioch. And inasmuch as we have concluded that the Seleucids as a political and military force represented the side of Christ in the spiritual North–South controversy of Daniel 11, and in harmony with the quote above, we now identify the *spiritual* fortress of the *true* King of the North as the corporate organization of Christ’s forces—the *organization of God’s people*—first the literal nation of Israel with her capital city Jerusalem, then the Christian church. As for Daniel 11:7, the fortress in type was the Seleucid homeland of Syria and the fortress in antitype was, at this point in the dramatization, the nation of Israel. Satan’s objective in having his forces “enter into the fortress of the king of the north” is then given in v. 8:

**8 And shall carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the north.**

This verse reveals just how the spiritual king of the South prevailed against God’s chosen people in the spiritual fortress of the King of the North. It depicts ancient Israel’s spiritual captivity to idolatry, paganism, and, in short, their slavery to sin.

It was when the Israelites were in a condition of outward ease and security that they were led into sin. They failed to keep God ever before them, they neglected prayer and cherished a spirit of self-confidence. Ease and self-indulgence left the citadel of the soul unguarded, and debasing thoughts found entrance. It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 459.

Christ referred to this spiritual captivity in John 8:31–36:

<sup>5</sup> “Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch (Mal. 4:1), — Satan the root, and his followers the branches” (*DA* 763).

**31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;**

**32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

**33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**

**34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**

**35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.**

**36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

But not only is the sinner the servant of sin, the Jews as a people *had* been in bondage to men many times — most significantly to the *Egyptians*. And their former captivity in Egypt, just like the king of the South's literal typical captivity of the king of the North's "gods," "princes," and "precious vessels" in Daniel 11:8, graphically demonstrated Satan's success in leading God's chosen people into spiritual captivity to sin. That is, the Israelite bondage in Egypt, like Ptolemy III's later capture of Syrian spoil, was a type of how God's people — His church — have been held in spiritual bondage to the satanic attractions of this world. The exodus "deliverance" from Egypt, then, typified the deliverance of God's people from sin — the antitypical fulfillment of which being a requirement for entrance into the antitypical Canaan.

Regarding the last part of Daniel 11:8 the *SDA Bible Commentary* notes:

**He shall continue.** Literally, "he shall stand," that is, "he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north" (RSV). Although it is possible to translate the Hebrew as does the KJV, the fact that Ptolemy III died in 221 B.C., only two years after Seleucus III, would seem to make such a rendering not very meaningful. On the other hand, since in his latter years Ptolemy was not engaged in warfare of any importance, the alternative translation of the Hebrew seems more reasonable. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:867.

Before Christ actually came as the Messiah, Satan had accomplished his purpose in spiritually enslaving God's people, principally by deceiving them concerning Christ's mission.<sup>6</sup> Thus, being spiritually blind, God's people were sure to reject the Messiah when He came and Satan, in the years immediately preceding the first coming of Christ, could "stand" and "refrain from attacking the king of the north" as he waited himself for the appointed coming of Christ as foretold in the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9.

**9 So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.**

Though the KJV usually offers an accurate translation, again we have substantial evidence of a KJV mistranslation.<sup>7</sup> The *SDA Bible Commentary* on v. 9:

**9. King of the south.** The Hebrew here may be understood either as in the KJV, where "king of the south" is taken as the subject of the sentence (so also Vulgate, Syriac), or as in the LXX, Theodotion, ASV, and RSV, where "king of the south" is attached to "kingdom." The later versions support the reading, "*He will come into the kingdom of the king of the south.*" *This translation seems preferable* because it follows more naturally the Hebrew word order; it does not necessitate the insertion of the word "his" before kingdom, and it makes the verse more meaningful and less redundant. If this translation is accepted, the verse is doubtless to be interpreted as a reference to the fact that after Ptolemy III had returned to Egypt, Seleucus re-established his authority and marched against that country, hoping to retrieve his riches and regain his prestige.

**Return into his own land.** Seleucus was defeated and forced to return to Syria empty-handed (about 240 B.C.). *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:867 (emphasis supplied).

<sup>6</sup> See again the *DA* 29–30 quote on p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> The first KJV mistranslation we noted was in Dan. 10:1 (see p. 3).

Edwin Thiele comments on v. 9:

The literal translation of this passage is, “And he shall come into the kingdom of king south, and he shall return into his land.” Practically all modern translations give this meaning.

New American Bible. “Then the latter shall invade the land of the king of the south, and return to his own country.”

Revised Standard Version. “Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land.”

Jerusalem Bible. “But the latter will invade the kingdom of the South, then return to his own country.”

Seleucus II marched into Egypt hoping to retrieve the riches taken by Ptolemy III, but he was defeated and returned to his own country. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 131–132.

The New King James Version corrects the rendering in the “old” KJV:

**9 “Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land.”**

It is difficult to defend the KJV translation of this verse. The historical fulfillment described by Maxwell on p. 38 also agrees with Thiele’s comments and the interpretation offered by the newer versions. Accepting the translations of the newer versions to be correct, what we see in the spiritual application of vs. 7–9 is: After the king of the South (Satan) enters the fortress (the OT church—ancient Israel) of the king of the North (Christ; v. 7) and carries captive into spiritual Egypt (Satan’s dominion in this world) their gods and their princes (their religious devotion; v. 8), the king of the North (Christ) invades the kingdom of the South (this world) in order to take back that which was His originally; the king of the North (Christ) is defeated and returns to His own land (heaven; v. 9). The dramatization in v. 9, then, depicts the first coming of Christ.

That Christ’s mission to earth the first time was not entirely as an Ambassador of peace is evident from His own statement in Matthew 10:34:

**34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.**

The dramatization of Daniel 11:5–15 should impress upon God’s people in a most graphic way that the spiritual controversy in which Christ and Satan are engaged is a very real and literal one; one in which there are real winners and losers. And if our understanding of the spiritual fulfillment of v. 9 is correct, one would logically ask: How could Christ be depicted as being defeated at His first coming when, according to Jesus’ own account, the Cross was the hour of His great victory in His controversy with Satan? John 12:31:

**31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world (Satan) be cast out.**

We need to remember that the dramatization we are watching transpire depicts an ongoing war between Christ and Satan. This war is continuing even today and will not be over for all practical purposes until the *second* advent of Christ in glory. It is *then* that Christ will have achieved His ultimate victory. And it is because Christ as the true King of the North was defeated in one major sense [in His attack on the kingdom of the king of the South as dramatized in Dan. 11:9] that this spiritual war has continued as long as it has. Let’s note carefully the nature of Christ’s defeat in v. 9.

### **The Role of the Church In the Controversy**

Though Christ was not personally responsible for the defeat of the king of the North depicted in Daniel 11:9, we need to remember that Christ and Satan are not the only characters in this drama. Indeed, the church of Christ plays a *major* determining role in the outcome of the great controversy;

and the defeat in v. 9 was actually one whose responsibility lies not with the Commanding General, but with the Commanding General's rank and file soldiers—the *church!*

In the first place, Satan was so successful in attacking the fortress of the king of the North in vs. 7–8 that, when the Messiah did come, it was the *church* of ancient Israel which followed Satan's bidding in actually putting her own Commander to death!<sup>8</sup> In the second place, it was the *church* of ancient Israel which, when her probation ended in A.D. 34 at the end of her 70<sup>th</sup> probationary week, stoned Stephen and persecuted the followers of Christ.<sup>9</sup> This being the same church that was supposed to have vindicated the character of God by allowing Him to reveal Himself to the world through her own Christlike character. Though Christ Himself triumphed in *His* part of the warfare and fulfilled *His* obligations at His first coming, at the same time the all-important role of the *church* in this warfare miserably *failed!* And this merely reinforces our belief that it is Christ *and* His church who constitute the spiritual king of the North in Daniel 11. And thus Christ at His first coming, without the all-important cooperation of His “army” — *i.e.* His church<sup>10</sup> — was unsuccessful in His bid to reclaim that which had been stolen from Him and He was obliged to return to His heavenly homeland — to the fortress “church in heaven”<sup>11</sup> — virtually empty-handed. Of course, the cause of this failure on the part of God's people was their apostasy represented in vs. 7–8.

Despite the ultimate failure of the Old Testament church, we can be confident that the New Testament church will ultimately succeed. “That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today” (*PK* 713).<sup>12</sup> Had the church fulfilled her part in the controversy in Old Testament times, and had she gratefully received her Messiah when He appeared as the Lamb of God, the immediate result of Christ's sacrificial death would no doubt have been dramatically different. Rather than relatively few believers being raised from the dead and later ascending with Christ,<sup>13</sup> it seems possible the general resurrection of the Old Testament saints would have occurred and Christ would have returned to His heavenly homeland with thousands, if not millions, of the redeemed. But, to repeat, it was through no fault of His own that this did not occur as Christ fulfilled His responsibilities perfectly. It is very unfortunate that the closing words of Maxwell's commentary on the historical fulfillment of v. 9 are strikingly appropriate: “He [*the king of the North*] returned to Antioch badly bloodied and empty-handed.”<sup>14</sup>

### The Controversy In New Testament Times

**10 But his** (the king of the North's) **sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he** (the king of the North) **return, and be stirred up, even to his** (the king of the South's) **fortress**<sup>4581</sup>.

The *SDA Bible Commentary* comments on the historical fulfillment of this verse:

**10. His sons.** That is, the two sons of Seleucus II, Seleucus III Ceraunus Soter (226/225–223/222 B.C.), who was murdered after a short reign, and Antiochus III, the Great (223/222–188/187 B.C.).

**Overflow, and pass through.** In 219 B.C., Antiochus III initiated his campaign for southern Syria and Palestine by retaking Seleucia, the port of Antioch. Thereafter he set out

<sup>8</sup> Cf. John 11:47–53.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Dan. 9:24; Acts 6:8–7:60; *GC* 328.

<sup>10</sup> See again the *8T* 41–42 quote on p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> Which is spiritually united with the “church on earth” (see the *AA* 11 quote on p. 52).

<sup>12</sup> We will elaborate later on just how and when God accomplishes this. Also, regarding the transition between the OT church and the NT church, cf. “Spiritual Israel Replaces Literal Israel” in *4BC* 35–36.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Matt. 27:52–53; Eph. 4:8.

<sup>14</sup> *God Cares*, 1:278 (larger quote on p. 39).

upon a systematic campaign to conquer Palestine from his rival, Ptolemy IV Philopator (222–204 B.C.), during which he penetrated Transjordan. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:867.

We will note that the word “one” in v. 10 is in italics, indicating it was supplied by the translators; perhaps supplying no word at all would be better. This fits the historical fulfillment of this verse in that it was the northern *forces*, as opposed to one or both of the two sons themselves, that is said to press the battle right to the fortress of the king of the South. Other versions of v. 10 clarify the meaning:

**10 But his sons shall be stirred up *and* shall prepare for war, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overflow and pass through, and again shall make war even to the fortress [of the southern king]. Amplified Bible**

**10 His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.** New International Version

In our view, the “multitude of great forces,” or “great army,” of v. 10 spiritually depicts the multitude of Christian converts in early Christianity. And just as the historic “fortress” of v. 7 was the homeland of the Seleucids — Syria — the historic “fortress” of v. 10 was the homeland of the Ptolemies — Egypt. Maxwell informed us on p. 39 that the specific historic battle v. 10 begins to describe is the battle of Raphia of June 22, 217 B.C. We will now note that ancient Raphia is the present-day Palestinian city of Rafah — a city of 130,000, mostly Palestinian refugees. What is most interesting about Rafah is that it now serves as the only border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. Thus we see that even after over 2200 years the city of Raphia/Rafah remains the northern gateway of the “fortress” of literal Egypt.

Our suggested spiritual fulfillment of v. 10 is this: The sons of the king of the North represent Christ’s disciples immediately following His ascension; the “multitude of great forces” which they assembled represents the multitude of Christian converts throughout the world in the first several centuries of the Christian church, and that the multitude would “make war even to the fortress” of the king of the South represents their success in spreading Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, even taking it to the Empire’s capital city of Rome herself.

Whereas we have seen that the spiritual king of the North has a fortress and that this fortress is the earthly organization of God’s people,<sup>15</sup> it naturally follows that the spiritual king of the South *also* has a fortress and that this fortress is the earthly organization of *Satan’s* people. And whereas the organization of God’s people is God’s church, we believe the organization of Satan’s people is the world political power spoken of in scripture as the “abomination of desolation,” or the “abomination that makes desolate.”<sup>16</sup> We will recall from chapter 1 that Gabriel referred to Satan as the “prince of Persia” and the “prince of Grecia” (Dan. 10:20),<sup>17</sup> and we do not think it improper to say that Gabriel could have added to v. 20, “and then the prince of Rome shall come.” Satan has indeed been the prince of Persia, the prince of Grecia, *and* the prince of Rome; he merely changes titles as the principal world political powers he employs in his efforts to desolate God’s people come and go. And following Daniel 11’s continuing chronological sequence of the spiritual controversy, we identify the spiritual fortress of the antitypical king of the *South* in v. 10 as the abomination-of-desolation power of imperial Rome.<sup>18</sup> What we have in v. 10, then, is Christ’s Northern forces taking the “great controversy” war to Satan’s Southern forces. Indeed, we have Christianity threatening to undermine the integrity of Satan’s pagan fortress by infiltrating the very seat of government of the Roman Empire. Verse 11 then gives Satan’s response to this encroachment coming on his own fortress:

<sup>15</sup> See p. 52.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. our comments on pp. 25, 30.

<sup>18</sup> We will elaborate on all of this in a later chapter.



**11 And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him even with the king of the north: and he (the king of the North) shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his (the king of the South's) hand.**

The *SDA Bible Commentary* verifies this selection of pronoun antecedents:

**He.** The antecedents of the various pronouns in this verse become clearer when it is recognized that the passage is in the form of a Hebrew inverted parallelism in which the first and fourth elements, and the second and third, are in parallel. Thus in this verse the references are as follows: King of the south, king of the north, he (king of the north), his (king of the south). *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:868.

The spiritual fulfillment of v. 11 is apparent: Satan is angry at the success of Christ in spreading His gospel throughout Satan's own fortress organization and he goes forth to fight with Him; Christ, trusting the faithfulness of His people, sets forth His great multitude of believers and they are given into Satan's hand. The terminology "the multitude shall be given into his hand" should sound familiar. Compare Daniel 7:25:

**25 And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they (the saints) shall be given into his hand until a time (one "time") and times (two "times") and the dividing of time (half a "time").**

The reason for the similarity of terms here is simple enough: both verses (one directly and one indirectly through the Seleucid/Ptolemy dramatization) refer to the same experience of God's people — the 3½ prophetic "times" (3½ prophetic years, or 1260 literal years) of papal supremacy and persecution of A.D. 538–1798.<sup>19</sup>

**12 And when he (the king of the South — Satan) hath taken away the multitude [of the king of the North], his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down *many* ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened *by it*.**

Spiritually, this verse depicts the martyrdom of the multitude of saints (numbering in the millions) during the 1260 years and how Satan and his followers rejoiced because of it; but it also shows that, despite the slaughter, Satan's hand in the great controversy would not be strengthened. This would be true for two reasons: (1) as Tertullian declared in A.D. 197, "The blood of Christians is seed"; and (2) Christ was soon to respond with yet another "multitude."

**13 For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of times, even years [margin] with a great army and with much riches.**

At this point in the drama we should begin to take more notice as we are now entering the scene in which we are among the participants. The words "a multitude greater than the former" in v. 13 indicate that Christ has both a former and a latter "multitude"; and we can be sure that in Satan's counterplay he implements both former and latter attacks on these multitudes. Specific reference to these two attacks is made in v. 29 and we will discuss this in detail when we get to that point in our study. Spiritually, "the end of times, even years" refers, in our view, to the end of the 3½ "times" of Daniel 7:25 (during which God's *former* multitude was given into the hand of the spiritual king of the South) and takes us to the year 1798. With the unsealing of the sealed portion of Daniel in 1798 (at the beginning of the "time of the end" of Dan. 12:4)<sup>20</sup> it was not long before God's "army" — His church — was "rich" in the knowledge of prophetic truth. This "army" constitutes God's *latter*

<sup>19</sup> We will elaborate on this period later.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *GC* 356.

“multitude” — a *remnant* church<sup>21</sup> — that *has* played and *will* play an increasingly significant role in bringing the spiritual warfare on earth to its ultimate conclusion. In fact, as we have already noted, God will accomplish through this latter multitude what He desired [but was unable] to accomplish through ancient Israel.<sup>22</sup>

### “The [Spiritual] Robbers of Thy People” and “The Vision”

**14 And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.**

We have now come to the crucial parenthetical v. 14 in which, in the spiritual fulfillment of the dramatization, we believe we are now living. We have understood that, historically, “the robbers of thy people” refers to those among the Jews in the first and second centuries B.C. who attempted to achieve deliverance from their *political* captivity by presumptuously forcing the fulfillment of “the vision” (of Dan. 9) by their own works (they “shall exalt themselves”).<sup>23</sup> Now we understand the spiritual fulfillment of this to be when those among God’s people will, in the last days, attempt to achieve deliverance from their *spiritual* captivity by also presumptuously forcing the fulfillment of “the vision” (also of Dan. 9) by their own works (they also “shall exalt themselves”).

At the end of time there will be a sense of “spiritual captivity” in the Christian community brought on by the evangelical futurists’ imagined fears of a coming political antichrist as well as the very real fears that the judgments of God are falling on our sinful world. There will again be a gross misunderstanding, this time on the part of certain “hotheads” in the Christian world,<sup>24</sup> of just what “the vision” is saying. While the misunderstanding on the part of misdirected Jews in the historical fulfillment of v. 14 was particularly in respect to their misapplication of Daniel 9 and to circumstances surrounding the *first* coming of Christ, the misunderstanding on the part of misdirected Christians in the spiritual fulfillment will be particularly in respect to their misapplication of Daniel 9 and to circumstances surrounding the *second* coming of Christ. This misunderstanding results in an attempt to politically force the Christianizing of the world which is expected to restore divine favor and usher in the long-awaited millennium of peace. Of course, the form of Christianity the apostate Christians attempt to impose on the world in the last days is the form of their own apostasy.

While the specific circumstances surrounding the historical and spiritual fulfillments of “the robbers of thy people” exalting themselves in v. 14 are separate and distinct, the theological error characterizing both groups is the same. This error is a fundamental misinterpretation of prophecy. Louis Were identified this misinterpretation in his book *The Certainty of the Third Angel’s Message*:

History repeats itself. As Satan blinded the eyes of the Jews to the true understanding of the prophecies (see P.K. 686, 687) “in order to prepare the way for the rejection of Christ at His [first] coming,” so, to-day, the evil one causes people to reject the Third Angel’s Message by misinterpreting the same prophecies in the same way as the Jews.

In “The Desire of Ages,” p. 509, we read: —

“But to-day in the religious world there are multitudes who, as they believe, are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and temporal dominion. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdom of this world . . . They expect Him to rule through legal enactments, endorsed by human authority . . . The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ. They would have received Jesus, had He been willing to establish a temporal dominion, to enforce what they regarded as the laws

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Rev. 12:17.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the *PK* 713 quote on p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> See “‘The Robbers of Thy People’ and ‘The Vision’” on pp. 39–43.

<sup>24</sup> See Thiele’s quote on p. 41.

of God, and to make them expositors of His will, and the agents of His authority. But He said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’ He would not accept the earthly throne.”

The Jews looked for “an earthly and temporal dominion.” The people of to-day, also, look for “an earthly and temporal dominion.” The Jews claimed the literal fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Israel, refusing to see that they forfeited their right to them because of their failure to meet the conditions. Because of their false interpretations of the prophecies concerning the kingdom promised to Israel, the Jews rejected Christ and His spiritual kingdom. Similarly, to-day, many professing Christians fall into the same error of interpreting the prophecies concerning Israel in a literal Palestinian sense, failing to see that the Jews, by their rejection and crucifixion of Christ, forfeited all right to them. As the literal, Palestinian-centred system of interpretation was the means of the Jews’ rejection of Christ and His spiritual kingdom, so, to-day, literal, Palestinian-centred system of interpretation causes people to reject Christ’s last-day Message concerning the spiritual kingdom of Israel. *The Certainty of the Third Angel’s Message*, 80.

As the apostate Jews took matters into their own hands and attempted to gain by force the blessings associated with the promised first Messianic visit, so apostate Christians at the end of time will do the same in impatient anticipation of the promised second Messianic visit. The way the two groups take matters into their own hands is reflective of their mutual misunderstanding of the Messianic prophecies. The Jews hoped for a political Messiah who would establish a temporal kingdom, and they attempted to help God through political *revolt*. The Christians hope for the same, but they attempt to help God through political *legislation*. The Jews wanted to insulate and isolate themselves *from* the world; the Christians want to impose themselves *on* the world. Both groups believe they are doing God’s work, and both believe God will thank them for attempting to help Him establish an earthly and temporal kingdom.<sup>25</sup> But little did the historical “robbers of thy people” know, and little are the spiritual “robbers” willing to admit, that Christ’s kingdom is “not of this world” (John 18:36) and that He needs no such political maneuverings to “establish” His kingdom — *i.e.* “to establish the vision.”

The exact manner in which the “robbers” go about “exalting themselves” in the spiritual fulfillment of v. 14 at the very end of time is described in the last part of Daniel 11 and we will discuss this, as well as Christ’s “last-day Message” We refer to above, when we get there in our study. But now we will come out of the parenthetical comments of v. 14 and go to the final scene of the drama.

## The Controversy Ends

**15 So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities** (rather, “a fortified city”): **and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his** (the king of the South’s) **chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand.**

Maxwell’s comments on the historical fulfillment of this verse were referred to in part on p. 44, but we will include more here:

Heedless of Rome’s admonition to stay out of Egypt, Antiochus III went ahead with his aggression. North of the sea of Galilee, near the site of the later city called Caesarea Philippi, where Peter recognized Jesus as the Son of God (Matthew 16:13–20), Antiochus trounced a well-trained army led by Scopas, a skilled and experienced general in the service of Egypt. The defeated troops retired to *Tyre*, but Antiochus followed them and laid siege. When the fighting was over, the king of the north had a firm grip on the *Jewish homeland of Judea*, and Ptolemaic Egypt never owned it again. *God Cares*, 1:281 (emphasis supplied).

Translations of v. 15 from two newer versions:

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<sup>25</sup> For the Christians, this culminates in the ultimate conversion of the state of Israel to Christianity followed by the establishment of a millennial reign of Christ over the earth from Jerusalem.

**15 Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege mound, and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand *their ground*, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand.** New American Standard

**15 Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand.** New International Version

It is evident that when the king of the North comes in the spiritual fulfillment of this verse there will be no one who will withstand His power; and it is evident that this verse depicts the second coming of Christ and the destruction of the wicked — *i.e.* the battle of Armageddon. We will note again that in the dramatization the “Jewish homeland of Judea” represents this world;<sup>26</sup> thus, this final spiritual contest between the king of the North and the king of the South determines once and for all that it is the true King of the North who will ultimately be King and Lord over this world.

We noted on p. 52 that the fortress of the king of the North in Daniel 11:7 was, in its historical application, the nation of Syria and, in its spiritual application, the church organization of God’s people. We then noted on p. 56 that the fortress of the king of the South in v. 10 was, in its historical application, the nation of Egypt and, in its spiritual application, the political organization of the abomination-of-desolation power of imperial Rome. We now note that in the final verse of the Seleucid–Ptolemy account the king of the South has a “fortified city” (distinct from his “fortress”) which the king of the North captures in the final battle between these two kings. We would now expect this city to have a spiritual application consistent with the dramatization of vs. 5–15.

Recognizing the antitypical application of Daniel 11:15 as being the second coming of Christ and the destruction of the wicked, we ask: What city might be called Satan’s end-time “fortress city”? Maxwell informs us in his quote above that the literal city the Seleucids captured from the Ptolemies was Tyre, and the city of Tyre (or Tyrus) should ring a bell with Bible students when it comes to spiritual applications. Ezekiel 28:11–19:

**11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,**

**12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.**

**13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of the pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou was created.**

**14 Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou was upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.**

**15 Though *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.**

**16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.**

**17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou has corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.**

**18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.**

**19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never *shalt* thou *be* any more.**

Comments of the *SDA Bible Commentary* on these verses:

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. p. 48.

It seems that as Ezekiel beheld the character and activities of the literal king of Tyre in vision, Inspiration lifted the veil between the seen and the unseen and the prophet was permitted to see the invisible yet powerful being whom the king of Tyre served. . . .

It thus appears simpler to consider the passage as digressing from the prophecy upon the prince of Tyre to present a history of him who was indeed the real king of Tyrus, Satan himself. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:675.

The literal historical battle described in Daniel 11:15 was the battle of Panium. And we believe this battle and the subsequent literal capture of Tyre typified the defeat and, in essence, “capture” of the spiritual king of Tyre—Satan—at the battle of Armageddon.<sup>27</sup> Satan is then dispossessed of that country that has always rightfully belonged to God and he is “bound” for “a thousand years” in “the bottomless pit” (Rev. 20:2–3) to await his arraignment before the bar of divine justice at the end of the millennium.<sup>28</sup> We will also note that the last part of v. 15 states that even the “best troops” of the king of the South “will not have the strength to stand” (NIV) against the king of the North. This is reminiscent of how Satan’s earthly forces will be powerless at the battle of Armageddon and the second coming of Christ. Revelation 6:15–17:

**15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;**

**16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:**

**17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?**

Who shall be able to stand in the great day of God’s wrath? Certainly not Satan and his followers. Not even his “best troops.” The troops of the Victor, however, *will* be able to stand; and these, in answer to the question posed in v. 17 above, are described in Revelation 7 as the 144,000 who stand tall and firm on the side of Christ through earth’s decisive and final battle.

### A Change In Context

In its historical context Daniel 11:5–15 describes the history of the divided Greek Empire as it affected the land of Palestine, and v. 16 marks the introduction of the new world political power of Rome. Therefore, according to our view, v. 15 is the conclusion of the dramatization of the great controversy between Christ and Satan as it was enacted on the world stage by the two predominate parties of the divided Greek kingdom: a dramatization that transpired over a period of nearly 300 years. Surely from this we can see that God is in full control of the spiritual controversy as it is waged on earth and as it comes down to its crucial final contest at the end of time. And also from this we can make spiritual relevance of the historical events described in the opening verses of Daniel 11. No longer need we relegate the historical account of the Seleucids and Ptolemies as inconsequential

<sup>27</sup> In its note on Dan. 11:15, the Andrews Study Bible concurs with Maxwell that the specific historical “fortified city” of v. 15 is Tyre; however, other sources say it was Sidon. But Tyre and Sidon (or Zidon) were sister coastal cities that had much in common, including their wickedness and status as enemies of Israel. Indeed, they are frequently mentioned in Scripture together concerning God’s judgments against them (*e.g.* Isa. 23:1–5; Jer. 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Eze. 27:8; Joel 3:4; Zech. 9:2). Moreover, immediately following the lamentation for the king of Tyre in Eze. 28:11–19 quoted above, there is a proclamation against Sidon in vs. 20–24. Jesus also acknowledged the close relationship between these cities in Matt. 11:20–22: “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. [21] Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. [22] But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.” Biblically, then, Tyre and Sidon seem to be joined at the hip.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Rev. 20:7–10.

and irrelevant to the people of God at the end of time. In it we see an outline of the history of the great controversy that we can fully expect to culminate in our very own day.

In the prophecy of Daniel 11, with the conclusion of the dramatization in v. 15, from v. 16 onward we must now put away the dual historical/spiritual fulfillment concept that characterizes vs. 5–15. In v. 16 and onward we will find *only* a historical fulfillment *without* a spiritual. However, it is important to note a significant change in the nature of the historical fulfillment beginning with v. 16.

While the historical fulfillment of vs. 2–4 is significant in that it depicts the transfer of political power from the Medo-Persian Empire to the Greek Empire and then describes the four-way division of the Greek Empire, the historical fulfillment of vs. 5–15 has been the relatively insignificant historical battles between two of the four Greek divisions — the Seleucids and Ptolemies. These battles by themselves have little relevance to the great issues involved in the great controversy and have consequently been given little notice by many prophecy students. However, as we have noted, it is the dramatization in these verses that gives relevance to their historical events; and with the conclusion of the dramatization in v. 15 we would now no longer expect the historical fulfillment of v. 16 and onward to continue with what, on their surface, are spiritually irrelevant historical events. And it is the failure to note this significant point that leads most commentators down the wrong path of continuing to seek the historical fulfillment of v. 16 and onward in the same context of inconsequential historical political events as vs. 5–15 regarding the kings of the North and South have seemingly set the precedent for.

That there is a major shift in Gabriel’s prophetic narration beginning with v. 16 is evidenced by the fact that the frequent mention of the kings of the North and South abruptly ends with v. 15. From the introduction of these kings in v. 5 to v. 15, only two verses (10 and 12) do *not* mention at least one of these kings by name, but from v. 16 to v. 45 only two verses (25 and 40) *do* mention at least one of these kings by name. Nevertheless, that both of these kings are mentioned following the conclusion of the Seleucid/Ptolemy historical account indicates that these two kings remain major players in the spiritual struggles that would befall Daniel’s people in the latter days — even right up to the “time of the end” in v. 40. The infrequent mention of their names following v. 15, however, indicates a major contextual shift in Gabriel’s narrative.

We should remember that it is the view of many commentators, ourselves included, that this prophecy constitutes the third explanation of its parent prophecy of Daniel 8.<sup>29</sup> As such, the introduction of the kings of the North and South came as somewhat of an unexpected surprise as these kings were not part of the parent prophecy. This observation led us to recognize a unique spiritual application in these kings which places vs. 5–15 in their own unique context.<sup>30</sup> Moving from v. 15 to 16, then, returns us to the original context of the parent prophecy; therefore, beginning with v. 16 we must recognize a major contextual shift. From v. 16 onward we understand Gabriel’s prophetic narration to be a significant expansion on the activities of the little horn of Daniel 8. Moreover, from v. 16 onward we understand Gabriel’s narration to be describing events in the history of the great controversy between Christ and Satan that would be the antitype of what the historical political events of the dramatization were in type. In other words, the events described in v. 16 and onward are the literal historical fulfillment (of course described in greater detail) of the applicable (vs. 10–15) spiritual fulfillment of the dramatization as they are picked up at the conclusion of Seleucid–Ptolemy history and at the rise of the Roman Empire and commencement of New Testament Christian church history.

We have noted that the historical events of the dramatization were the literal military battles between the Seleucids and Ptolemies. However, the actual events which the dramatization dramatized are the spiritual battles, just as real and literal, between Christ and Satan as they are fought on the

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<sup>29</sup> See pp. 6–7.

<sup>30</sup> See p. 45.

battlefield of earth by Christ and His army and Satan and his army.<sup>31</sup> With the conclusion of the dramatization in v. 15, the historical events described by Gabriel now shift from the dramatization to the real, from the typical to the antitypical, from the political arena to the religious arena. Therefore, we can be sure that the historical events described in v. 16 and onward will be, on their very surface, very spiritually relevant. They will constitute only the most significant events in the history of the church as the great controversy continues through the course of what the prophecies of Daniel depict as the Old World's final great political empire—the empire of Rome.

That the prophecy of Daniel 11–12 foretells only the most significant events in the great controversy should come as no surprise given Daniel's own description of this vision in his opening statement.<sup>32</sup> And while this prophecy deals exclusively with the issues involved in the spiritual controversy, let us note again Gabriel's stated purpose for relating these things: "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days" (Dan. 10:14). With the purpose of Gabriel's visit stated so plainly, there should be no question as to what context to place Gabriel's remarks—the affect the spiritual great controversy has on God's people in "the latter days"—the "latter days" here merely referring to the future, just as did Daniel's reference to "the latter days" (Dan. 2:28) when he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream of future events.<sup>33</sup>

Because the dramatization in Daniel 11:5–15 was acted out by the two principal political powers existing during the divided Greek Empire, the events of the dramatization were not described in the prophecy as affecting God's people living at the time. That is, it was not the *purpose* of the prophecy to describe the affect the *dramatization* had on God's people; but following the dramatization the purpose of the prophecy most definitely is to describe the affect the *great controversy itself* has on God's people. And with the conclusion of the dramatization in v. 15, in v. 16 the context of the prophecy dramatically shifts as it now turns from describing the world's *political* power struggles to the *spiritual* power struggles between the forces of good and evil (the spiritual kings of the North and South) and how these struggles affect the special object of God's supreme regard—His *church!* Thus, in our view the description of the political power struggles of vs. 5–15 is relevant to "what shall befall thy people in the latter days" only in the sense that it dramatizes the great controversy between Christ and Satan, while the remaining verses of the prophecy are relevant in that they describe the specific spiritual struggles of the great controversy themselves that "shall befall thy people" in the remaining days (those of the little horn power of Dan. 8) that lead all the way up to the deliverance and special resurrection of God's remnant people at the end of time as described in Daniel 12:1f–3.

Having noted the significant change in context beginning with v. 16, it is now important to keep in mind that though the dual-fulfillment aspect of this prophecy is unique to vs. 5–15, the remainder of the prophecy continues to employ the characteristic symbolism found in all apocalyptic prophecies.

### **Rome and the New King of the North**

With the conclusion of the Seleucid/Ptolemy history, many commentators make Rome the new king of the North. However, the title "king of the North" is not specifically mentioned again until all the way down to v. 40. We ask: If Rome is now the new king of the North, why didn't Gabriel refer to this new world political power as such regularly just as he did when he applied this title to the Seleucids in vs. 5–15? Of this we can be sure, the king of the North in v. 40 is *not* the Seleucids and the king of the South in vs. 25 and 40 is *not* the Ptolemies. In order to best understand the proper way

<sup>31</sup> See again the description of these battles in the 8T 41–42 quote on p. 46.

<sup>32</sup> See our translation comparisons of Dan. 10:1 on p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Also cf. Dan. 2:45.

to make the transition of who is represented by these titles following v. 15 we will review the representations employed by these titles thus far in the vision.

As Maxwell noted in the *God Cares* quote on p. 36, the four divisions of the Greek Empire were: “The far west went to Cassander, the north to Lysimachus, the east to Seleucus, and the south to Ptolemy.” We have seen that the two divisions that went to Seleucus and Ptolemy became the principal characters of Daniel’s dramatization — the kings of the North and South respectively. The other two divisions are entirely ignored in Gabriel’s prophetic narrative. Since we have seen the history of Seleucus and Ptolemy, let’s take a look at Cassander and Lysimachus.

About 20 years after the division [*of the Greek Empire*] the four were reduced to three, for Lysimachus was eliminated. Much of his territory was taken by the Seleucid Empire, but part was overrun by the Gauls, or fell apart into small independent states, the most important of which was Pergamum. But Macedonia, Egypt, and the Seleucid Empire (sometimes known as Syria, for the eastern part was soon lost) continued on as the three major divisions of the eastern Mediterranean until they were absorbed, one by one, into the Roman Empire. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:822.

Lysimachus was eliminated in 281 B.C., twenty years after the division of Alexander’s empire,<sup>34</sup> and ultimately Cassander was absorbed into the Roman Empire. Though Cassander’s portion of Alexander’s empire was the western part, it entailed only Macedonia, or essentially what we know today as Greece. The power of Rome, however, came out of Italy. Therefore, the power of Rome in its rise to world power came geographically from an area totally outside the lands occupied by the divided Greek Empire. The geographical direction from whence Rome came on the scene of action was given in the parent prophecy of Daniel 8. Daniel 8:8–9:

**8 Therefore the he goat (the Greek Empire) waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn (Alexander the Great) was broken; and for it came up four notable ones (Alexander’s four generals) toward the four winds of [the] heaven[s].**

**9 And out of one of them (out of one of the four winds) came forth a little horn (Rome), which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.<sup>35</sup>**

With the “little horn” here representing Rome,<sup>36</sup> and with Rome being geographically north of Egypt and west of Syria, when it rose to power it moved to the *south* and occupied the land of the king of the South (Ptolemy’s Egypt), it moved to the *east* and occupied the land of the king of the North (Seleucid’s Syria), and in the process of it all it occupied the middle ground referred to in v. 9 above as the *pleasant land* (Israel’s Palestine).

<sup>34</sup> The four-way division of Alexander’s empire was sealed in 301 B.C. with the Battle of Ipsus, which occurred 22 years after Alexander’s death in 323 B.C.

<sup>35</sup> Dan. 8:8–9 is not explicit regarding whether the little horn comes out of one of the four *horns* of the he goat or one of the four *winds* of the heavens. Some interpreters maintain that it is not reasonable to view a horn coming out of the “thin air” of the four winds. However, it is also unnatural for a horn to come out of another horn. Given the context and parallelism with Dan. 7, most Adventist commentators understand that the little horn comes out of one of the four winds, merely signifying that it came out of one of the four directions of the compass. Of course, this fits the rise of the Roman Empire. Perhaps the reason the little horn is not described as coming out of an animal is because no sanctuary animal (like the ram and goat of Dan. 8) is an appropriate symbol for the abominable power of Rome whose single prophetic purpose, it seems, is to desolate God’s people. We will note that the “ram” kingdom of Cyrus’ Medo-Persian Empire was used of God to restore God’s people to their promised land (cf. the quote of Isa. 44:28 and our related comments on p. 15), while the “he goat” kingdom of Alexander’s Greek Empire was used of God to bring due judgment on the Persians. No positive outcome, however, can be attributed to the Roman Empire. The unique status of the “little horn” kingdom in Dan. 8 parallels the unique status of the “dragon” beast (Rome) of Dan. 7. That is, each of the other “beasts” of Dan. 7 had the characteristics of natural animals as opposed to a fictitious dragon.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *ABC* 841.



As we did on p. 44, a comparison of Daniel 8:8 and the first half of 11:4 reveals that these two verses refer to the same historical time period of the four-way dividing of the Greek Empire. And as we also noted, in the prophecy of chapter 11 Rome rises to power in v. 16 immediately following the Seleucid/Ptolemy historical account of vs. 5–15; and in the prophecy of chapter 8, since the Seleucid/Ptolemy history was ignored, Rome rises to power in v. 9 immediately following the dividing of the Greek Empire in v. 8.

We understand that Syria and Egypt have been referred to thus far in this prophecy as the kings of the North and South respectively because (1) they were geographically north and south of Palestine, and (2) in the dramatization Syria spiritually represented the forces of Christ while Egypt represented the forces of Satan. We justified this view in that Psalm 48:1–2 and other passages of Scripture associate the geographical direction of North with Christ, identifying *Christ* as the *true/spiritual King of the North*.<sup>37</sup> And as Syria and Egypt are the geographical antithesis of each other in relation to Palestine, so Christ and Satan are the spiritual antithesis of each other in relation to our world; and therefore *Satan* can be considered the *true/spiritual king of the South*. As noted in Russell Burrell's quote on p. 47, it was Satan's jealousy of Christ and his desire to exalt himself above God that led to his expulsion from heaven.<sup>38</sup> Though Burrill quoted Isaiah 14:13, let's look at the larger passage. Isaiah 14:12–15:

**12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!**

**13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:**

**14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.**

**15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.**

We can note that Satan determined to reside in “the sides of the north,” but the place he ultimately resides is “the sides of the pit.” This “pit” of Satan's residence is referred to as the “bottomless pit” in Revelation and we will elaborate on this later in our study.

It is evident that now that imperial Rome has come on the scene in Daniel 11:16, *neither* of the two above mentioned characteristics that made Syria and Egypt the kings of the North and South apply to this new world power. *Geographically*, as Daniel 8:9 indicates, *Rome is neither north nor south of Palestine*; and *with the conclusion of the spiritual dramatization* in v. 15 there is *no reason to apply Rome as the spiritual king of either the North or South*. Though seemingly valid reasons can be given for making Rome the new king of the North spiritually, we will defer addressing these reasons to later and will merely state now that it is our view that in the prophecy of Daniel 11 the little horn power of Rome is referred to as *neither* the king of the North *nor* the king of the South. For the entire remainder of the prophecy, Rome [in both its imperial and papal forms] is simply referred to with the pronouns “he,” “him,” or “his”; the antecedent of these pronouns being in the first phrase of v. 16 — “he that cometh against him.” That is, we understand this phrase to say, “he [*Rome*] that cometh against him [*the historic king of the North*],” and we understand that the personal pronouns following this phrase almost always refer to Rome.

Accepting this conclusion, now instead of playing an antecedent guessing game with every pronoun in the remainder of the prophecy we can employ a rule of interpretation that can be applied consistently throughout — this rule being that because Rome is the principal subject from v. 16 onward, then the personal pronouns from v. 16 onward refer to Rome. The only exceptions to this rule will be the few verses that have at least two pronouns with obviously different antecedents. Usually, however, since this rule provides the general context of the prophecy as it progresses it is not too difficult to identify which pronouns refer to someone other than Rome.

<sup>37</sup> See again Burrill's quote on p. 46.

<sup>38</sup> Also cf. SR 13–14.

Having eliminated the power of Rome as being the new identity of the king of the North following the demise of the Seleucids, we must still determine the real-world identity of the king of the North in post-Seleucid history, as well as that of the king of the South in post-Ptolemy history. However, the appropriate time to do this is when we have more specific information about these kings and the context in which they re-enter the prophecy; thus, we will hold off on this until we get to vs. 25 and 40. But now, having discussed Daniel 11:5–15 which takes us up to the end of the divided Greek Empire, and having discussed the unique dramatization of vs. 5–15, we will proceed in our commentary with v. 16 and the introduction of the new world political power of Rome.

## 5. IMPERIAL ROME, THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, AND THE JEWS

First we should remember that Daniel 11:16 not only introduces the power of Rome into the prophecy but also picks up the prophetic context that was dropped at the conclusion of v. 4.<sup>1</sup> While the restored context is that of being the third explanation of the parent prophecy of Daniel 8, in the prologue to this explanation Gabriel informed Daniel that this final explanation will focus primarily on how the coming events would involve “thy people in the latter days” (Dan. 10:14). And as noted on p. 63, with the conclusion of the dramatization of vs. 5–15 involving the political battles between the two principal divisions of the divided Greek Empire, v. 16 begins the prophetic description of the spiritual battles between the forces of good and evil as they are picked up with the rise of the Roman Empire. Thus, we would expect v. 16 to begin an entirely new prophetic focus: the time is essentially the time of Christ and the first generation of the Christian church; the place is the land of Palestine where Christianity had its beginning; and the subject is the history of God’s New Testament church.

### The Consumption of Palestine: Type and Antitype

**16 But he (imperial Rome) that cometh against him (the historic king of the North of v. 15—the Seleucids) shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land (Palestine), which by his hand shall be consumed<sup>3617</sup>.**

That imperial Rome “stood in,” or “occupied,” Palestine is a historical fact; that Rome “consumed” Palestine with her persecuting “hand,” initially in the form of economic taxation and ultimately in the form of the military siege and destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70, is also a historical fact. Let’s note the prior warning of this ultimate destruction which Christ gave His disciples in Matthew 24:15–16:

**15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)**

**16 Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains:**

That the “abomination of desolation” here refers to imperial Rome in the form of its armies is evident from the wording of this same warning in Luke 21:20–21:

**20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.**

**21 Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains . . . .**

The Spirit of Prophecy makes it clear:

When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. *The Great Controversy*, 26.

It is understood that the words “whoso readeth” in Matthew 24:15 mean “whoever reads the book of Daniel.”<sup>2</sup> But exactly which text in Daniel was Christ referring to? In the KJV the specific term “abomination of desolation” is found only twice in Daniel — in 11:31 and 12:11. However, according to the *SDA Bible Dictionary*, in the Hebrew text this term is also found “with insignificant grammatical differences” (*SDABD* 7) in 8:13 and 9:27. Since Daniel 8:13, 11:31 and 12:11 cannot be associated with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, it is generally agreed that 9:27 is the specific

<sup>1</sup> Cf. our comments regarding this on p. 44 and “A Change In Context” on pp. 61–63.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *DA* 234.

text in Daniel to which Christ referred in Matthew 24:15.<sup>3</sup> However, we should not overlook the similarity of terms in Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:16.

In Matthew 24:15 Christ warned that the abomination of desolation would “stand in the holy place.” Understanding Daniel 11:16 as we do, this verse tells us that imperial Rome would “stand in the glorious land.” As the subject of both verses is imperial Rome, and since Christ was referring His listeners in Matthew 24:15 to Daniel 9:27, it is evident that all three of these verses refer to essentially the same historical time period—Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15 referring specifically to Rome’s destruction of Jerusalem (described in Matt. 24:15 as Rome standing “in the holy place”), and Daniel 11:16 referring generally to Rome’s occupation and consumption of Palestine (described as Rome standing “in the glorious land”).

Additional evidence that Daniel 11:16 refers to the total submission of Palestine to the Romans which was especially marked by the destruction of Jerusalem is found in the Hebrew word translated “consumed” in this verse. Strong’s definition:

3617. **kalah**, *kaw-law*’; from 3615; a *completion*; adv. *completely*; also *destruction*:—altogether, (be, utterly) consume (-d), consummation (-ption), was determined, (full, utter) end, riddance.

Understanding the context and timeframe of v. 16 as we do, we can be sure that the Hebrew word *kalah* found in this verse is in reference to the utter submission of Palestine to the Romans—the ultimate consummation of which being the destruction of Jerusalem. But the destruction of Jerusalem typified the end-time destruction of the world.

The ruin of Jerusalem was a symbol of the final ruin that shall overwhelm the world. The prophecies that received a partial fulfillment in the overthrow of Jerusalem have a more direct application to the last days. We are now standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. A crisis is before us, such as the world has never witnessed. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 120–121.

This being the case, it should not be surprising to find that Scripture uses the word *kalah* in reference to the end-time destruction of the world. We find this reference in Isaiah 28:21–22:

**21 For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.**

**22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption<sup>3617</sup>, even determined upon the whole earth.**

It seems reasonable to understand that the seven last plagues will constitute a significant part of what the ruin of Old Jerusalem symbolized, and God’s judgments of the seven last plagues will consummate the consumption (*kalah*) referred to in Isaiah 28:21–22,<sup>4</sup> and it is the general consumption of Palestine (of which the ruin of Jerusalem was the last act) that is referred to in Daniel 11:16.

The last phrase of Daniel 11:16—“shall be consumed (*kalah*)”—could be understood to point forward in time. Therefore, though this verse refers to the destruction of Jerusalem indirectly by speaking of the coming ultimate consumption of the “glorious land,” it is our view that in the chronological flow of Daniel 11 it is actually v. 20 that refers directly to the destruction of *Jerusalem* (the

<sup>3</sup> This view is supported by the fact that Dan. 9:26 parallels 9:27, and v. 26 plainly foretells the destruction of Jerusalem (“and the people of the [Roman] prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”), while Luke 21:20 parallels Matt. 24:15, and Luke 21:20 plainly speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem (“when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh”). This being the case, the reference in Matt. 24:15 to “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet” naturally refers to the abomination of the Roman prince causing the desolation of Jerusalem in Dan. 9:27.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *GC* 627.

ultimate *kalah* in type) and it is v. 36 that refers directly to the end-time destruction of the *world* (the ultimate *kalah* in antitype).

Jumping ahead for a moment to v. 36, here we find the word *kalah* in the form whose identifying number in *Strong's Concordance* is 3615 and translated “accomplished”; this is the primitive root of 3617. The part of v. 36 that we are concerned with now reads:

**36 And the king** (the Roman power) . . . **shall prosper till the indignation<sup>2195</sup> be accomplished<sup>3615</sup>: for that that is determined shall be done.**

It would appear that the “indignation” that is “determined” here is identified in Zephaniah 3:8:

**8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation<sup>2195</sup>, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.**

This “indignation” is also referred to in Isaiah 26:20 and even more specifically identified in v. 21. Isaiah 26:19–21:

**19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.**

**20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation<sup>2195</sup> be overpast<sup>5674</sup>.**

**21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.**

Comments from the Spirit of Prophecy apply vs. 20–21 here to the time of the seven last plagues which fall between the close of human probation<sup>5</sup> and the second coming of Christ:

If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist: “In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall He hide me.” Psalm 27:5. Christ has spoken: “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” Isaiah 26:20–21. *The Great Controversy*, 634.<sup>6</sup>

That the destruction of Jerusalem as foretold by Christ in Matthew 24 was a type of the destruction to befall the world at the end of time is, in Adventism, an accepted fact; and that Matthew 24 has dual applications throughout is also an accepted fact. Referring to the prophecy of Matthew 24/Mark 13/Luke 21, Inspiration states:

The prophecy which He uttered was twofold in its meaning; while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, it prefigured also the terrors of the last great day. *Ibid.*, 25.<sup>7</sup>

It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that while the consumption of the “glorious land” in Daniel 11:16 pointed immediately forward to the destruction of Jerusalem in v. 20 (which we will discuss shortly), it pointed ultimately forward to the final accomplishment of the “indignation” referred to in v. 36. It also seems reasonable, given the twofold meaning of Christ’s prophecy in Matthew 24, that we might expect an end-time fulfillment of Christ’s sign of warning for Christians

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the close of human probation, from the time of Adam’s fall the human race has been in a grace period of “probation” in which God offers redemption and salvation to the fallen race. The act of God finally withdrawing the offer of His grace, then, marks the “close of probation” for the human race.

<sup>6</sup> Also cf. 4BC 204–205.

<sup>7</sup> Also cf. DA 628–629.

to flee from the impending “terrors of the last great day.”<sup>8</sup> And we believe there will indeed be a second fulfillment of the abomination of desolation standing in the “holy place” and that this will occur right at the end of time. We also believe that this second fulfillment is alluded to later in the prophecy of Daniel 11 and we will discuss it when we get to that point.

### In the Face of the Serpent

Now we will consider the significant historical events of the great controversy that occurred under the rule of imperial Rome (prior to the destruction of Jerusalem) as they are described in vs. 17–19:

**17 He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, to corrupt [margin] her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, neither be for him.**

**18 After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause *it* to turn upon him.**

**19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.**

These verses should be studied together as they share a common denominator — the common denominator being “set his face” or “turn his face.” Employing our pronoun rule,<sup>9</sup> we understand the “he” who turns his face toward something to be imperial Rome. But what is being referred to by Rome turning her face toward something? Perhaps the Apocalypse provides a clue. Revelation 12:14:

**14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half time, from the face of the serpent.**

It is understood that the woman here represents the Christian church and the serpent represents Satan employing, at this time in history, his surrogate *papal* Rome.<sup>10</sup> That the wilderness in this verse is a place of refuge for the true church to flee from the persecution of the serpent is evident; and that the church during this time is considered to be away from “the face of the serpent” would imply that the church *is* persecuted when she *is* in “the face of the serpent.” We can note, however, that the form this serpent took in the time of Christ and in the time of Daniel 11:17–19 was that of *imperial* Rome. And, we know, it was Satan’s intent to employ imperial Rome in his effort to “devour” the Christ child when He came.<sup>11</sup> Thus, to be “in the face” of any abomination-of-desolation political power Satan controls assumes one will be bitten with satanic persecution. Applying this context to Daniel 11:17–19, we see that these verses describe the three progressive phases of persecution of the apostolic Christian church when she was confronted with the persecuting face of imperial Rome.

#### *Phase One: In Jerusalem*

**17 He (imperial Rome) shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole [Roman] kingdom, and upright ones<sup>3477</sup> with him; thus shall he (imperial Rome) do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, to corrupt [margin] her: but she shall not stand *on his* (imperial Rome’s) *side*, neither be for him.**

Our first question here is: Into what does imperial Rome seek to enter? Since this verse does not freely provide the answer, we must dig for it. First, we have noted that the new but unnamed character in v. 16 — the “he” of imperial Rome — came to “stand in the glorious land” of Palestine. Since Palestine is where the prophecy has focused our attention, it is reasonable to infer that this is where

<sup>8</sup> See again Christ’s warning in Matt. 24:15–16/Luke 21:20–21 (quoted on p. 67).

<sup>9</sup> See p. 65.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *GC* 54–55.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Matt. 2:12–22; Rev. 12:4.

“he” would next “set his face to enter.” But the question remains: What does imperial Rome attempt to enter, with all the resources of the Empire, now that she occupies Palestine?

We believe our next clue is found in the word “enter.” There was a previous reference in this prophecy to “entering”; this was in v. 7 where the king of the South entered the “fortress” of the king of the North, and we identified this fortress as, in its spiritual application, the church organization of God’s people.<sup>12</sup> In the time-frame and, since we are no longer in the dramatization of vs. 5–15, now exclusively religious context of v. 17,<sup>13</sup> and because we would expect the historical events following the dramatization to parallel those of the dramatization’s spiritual application, we understand that what imperial Rome seeks to enter in v. 17 is the new fortress of Christ’s earthly kingdom—*i.e.* the new church organization of God’s people, the Christian church. But there are other difficulties with this verse; namely, who are the “upright ones”? The *SDA Bible Commentary* on v. 17:

**17. Upright ones.** Heb. *yesharim*. The meaning of the Hebrew of this passage is obscure. The phrase reads literally, “and upright [ones] with him and he shall make.” One attempt at the meaning is that which appears in the KJV. Other versions take *yesharim* as equivalent to *meshtarim*, “uprightnesses,” or “equities.” *Meshtarim* is used in v. 6 of an equitable agreement between the king of the north and the king of the south. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:869.

Let’s look at Strong’s definition of the Hebrew word translated “upright ones” in v. 17:

3477. **yashar**, *yaw-shawr*’; from 3474; *straight* (lit. or fig.): — convenient, equity, Jasher, just, meet (-est), + pleased well right (-eous), straight, (most) upright (-ly, -ness).

Note the proper name “Jasher” here. *Yashar* is translated “Jasher” twice in Scripture in the phrase “the [*song*] book of Jasher” (Joshua 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18). The *SDA Bible Commentary* comments on Joshua 10:13:

**13. Book of Jasher.** Literally, “book of the upright.” . . . The book, as a whole, seems to have been made up of ballads accompanied by prose introductions, dealing with historical heroes — upright men — showing how they lived and what they achieved. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 2:226.

There is another Hebrew word derived from the same primitive root Strong designated 3474:

3484. **Y<sup>e</sup>shuruwn**, *yesh-oo-roon*’; from 3474; *upright*; Jeshurun, a symbol. name for Israel: —Jeshurun.

The *SDA Bible Dictionary* comments on Jeshurun:

**Jeshurun** . . . [Heb. *Yeshurun*, “the upright one.”] A poetical name designating the ideal character of Israel (Deut 32:15; 33:5, 26; Is 44:2). *SDA Bible Dictionary*, 584.

Deuteronomy 32 records the Song of Moses; in v. 15 Moses laments:

**15 But Jeshurun<sup>3484</sup> waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.**

The *SDA Bible Commentary* on this verse:

**15. Jeshurun.** A poetical name for Israel (see Deut. 33:5, 26; Isa. 44:2). It is derived from the verb “to be straight,” “to be upright,” and is applied to Israel as “the upright one.” It is probably used here in reproach, of an apostate Israel that would fall far short of God’s ideal for His people. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 1:1069.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 52.

<sup>13</sup> See again “A Change In Context” on pp. 61–63.

In its comments on Daniel 11:17, the *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary* connects the words Jasher and Jeshurun:

**upright one** — *Jasher*, or *Jeshurun* (De 32:15; Isa 44:2); the epithet applied by the Hebrews to their nation. It is here used not in praise; for in Da 11:14 they are called “robbers,” or “men of violence, factious”: it is the general designation of Israel, as *having God for their God*. Probably it is used to rebuke those who ought to have been God’s “upright ones” for confederating with godless heathen in acts of *violence* (the contrast to the term in Da 11:14 favors this). *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*.<sup>14</sup>

Uriah Smith seemed to make the same connection. Smith’s identification of the “upright ones” in Daniel 11:17:

By the “upright ones” of the text are doubtless meant the Jews, who gave Cæsar the assistance already mentioned. *Daniel and the Revelation*, 251.

We concur that the “upright ones” are the Jews, who confederated with Caesar and the Romans in persecuting the infant Christian church. And because prophecy likens the church to a woman,<sup>15</sup> we also identify the “daughter of women” of Daniel 11:17 as the apostolic Christian church and her assumed “mother” as ancient Israel. Indeed, the Christian church was “born” out of Judaism in the midst of Israel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week (of Dan. 9) and was even three and one-half years old when the Christian church turned to the Gentiles at the end of the 70 weeks; thus, the Christian church can be seen as the daughter of the Jewish church. Also, it seems that the Lord’s repeated references in the Old Testament to the current generation of His people as the “daughter of Zion,” the “daughter of Jerusalem,” and the “daughter of my people” harmonizes with our understanding that the “daughter of women” in Daniel 11:17 refers to the apostolic church while her mother refers to ancient Israel.

Another problem in v. 17 is identifying the antecedents for the phrase “he shall give him”; that is, “*who shall give whom*”? We had this problem in v. 16 in the phrase “he that cometh against him” and we determined that this meant “he [*imperial Rome*] that cometh against him [*the historic king of the North*].” But by v. 17 the historic king of the North (the Seleucids) no longer exists, and therefore the king of the North cannot be an antecedent for a pronoun in v. 17. In our view, because the only new character introduced in the narrative is the “upright ones”—spiritual Jasher—we understand v. 17 to say, “he [*Jasher*] shall give him [*imperial Rome*].” All things considered, we understand v. 17 to say:

**17 He** (imperial Rome) **shall also set his face to enter** (the new fortress of Christ’s earthly kingdom—the Christian church) **with the strength of his whole kingdom** (with the political authority of Rome), **and upright ones** (spiritual Jasher—the Jews) **with him; thus shall he** (imperial Rome) **do: and he** (Jasher) **shall give him** (imperial Rome) **the daughter of women** (the infant Christian church), **to corrupt**<sup>7843</sup> [margin] **her: but she** (the infant Christian church) **shall not stand on his** (imperial Rome’s) **side, neither be for him.**

We can be sure that the Jews during the last half of their 70<sup>th</sup> prophetic week of probation (A.D. 31–34) made repeated appeals to Caesar to rid Palestine of this new religious sect known as the followers of Christ. As the Jews cooperated with the dragon of Revelation 12 in handing Christ over to the Romans in the midst of the week, so they cooperated in “giving” Christ’s followers over to Rome’s persecuting face in the last half of the week in an attempt to destroy this “threat” growing within their own organization.<sup>16</sup> And herein we find the “confederating with godless heathen”

<sup>14</sup> Though the Hebrew word translated “robbers” (*p<sup>er</sup>iyts*; 6530) in Dan. 11:14 is neither Jasher (3477) nor Jeshurun (3484), the *JFBC* identifies these “robbers” as “factious men of the Jews,” and this concurs with our own conclusion regarding the “robbers” (see “‘The Robbers of Thy People’ and ‘The Vision’” on pp. 39–43). Also, this *JFBC* quote is taken from computer software in which no page number or bibliographical information is provided.

<sup>15</sup> E.g. Rev. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Acts 8:1–3; 22:4–5.



suggested in the *JFBC* quote above, and what we would call the satanically inspired conspiracy between the Jews and Romans for the purpose of destroying Christianity at its inception. And since the Jews were still within their probationary period of the 70 weeks, this was an equivalent betrayal of God as was the “sons of God” taking wives of the “daughters of men” in Genesis 6.<sup>17</sup>

It might be thought inconsistent for prophecy to refer to the Jews [as they conspired against the infant Christian church] in an apparently complimentary way as “upright ones.” But we have seen in the *1BC* 1069 and *JFBC* quotes above that, for reasons not explained, the terms “Jeshurun” and “upright ones” were terms the Jews themselves employed in “reproach” and “rebuke” toward their own nation. Aside from this, however, we will also note that even as they were taking to themselves “the daughters of men,” the “God-fearing descendants of Adam, whose genealogy is given in Gen 5” (*SDABD* 1059)<sup>18</sup> were still referred to by Inspiration as “the sons of God” in Genesis 6:2. This indicates that God is not quick to disclaim His people as His people. In the case of the Jews, God no doubt continued to claim them as His people all the way up to their close of probation at the end of the 70 weeks in A.D. 34; and we understand Daniel 11:17 to describe events in the last three and one-half years of this period. We will also note that it was none other than the future apostle to the Gentiles — the apostle Paul — who was a leading instigator of Jewish persecution of the infant Christian church,<sup>19</sup> yet God bypassed the body of believers and selected Saul (Paul), himself a devout Jew, as His “chosen vessel” (Acts 9:15) to take the gospel to the Gentiles. Clearly, God considered the persecutor Saul in some sense qualified and “upright” enough to extend this highest call to service.

We understand the last part of v. 17 to mean: “he [*the Jews*] shall give him [*imperial Rome*] the daughter of women [*the infant Christian church*] to corrupt her: but,” and here is the good news, “she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.” That is, the infant Christian church in Jerusalem would not allow herself to be corrupted by denying her faith, nor would she be bullied into compromising with the false teachings and practices of Rome, or, for that matter, corrupted Judaism. Thus, while the king of the South indeed “entered” the fortress of the king of the North in the spiritual application of v. 7, in v. 17 imperial Rome, as the principal political agent of Satan in the first century, could only “set his face to enter” the new fortress of Christ’s earthly kingdom. That is, he “set his face” to enter, but he did not enter.

That the apostolic church was not corrupted by the collusion between the Jews and imperial Rome is more than can be said for the Christian church several centuries later which Rome did indeed “corrupt.” This unfortunate later development was spoken of in the parent prophecy of Daniel 8. Daniel 8:24–25:

**24 . . . and he (papal Rome) shall destroy<sup>7843</sup> wonderfully . . . and shall destroy<sup>7843</sup> the mighty and the holy people.**

**25 . . . and he . . . by peace shall destroy<sup>7843</sup> many: . . .**

The words “shall destroy” here are, in each case, translated from the same Hebrew word translated “to corrupt” in the margin of Daniel 11:17. So while the “black horse” Christian church by the fourth century A.D. was “destroyed” or “corrupted” by the Roman power according to Daniel 8:24–25 (*black* signifying defeat and corruption),<sup>20</sup> the pure “white horse” church of the first century, according to Daniel 11:17, was not (*white* signifying victory and purity).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See again the *4BC* 869 quote on p. 71 and our comments on Dan. 11:6 on pp. 51–52.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted on p. 51.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Acts 7:58; 8:1.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *7BC* on Rev. 6:5.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *7BC* on Rev. 6:2.

*Phase Two: In the Isles*

**18 After this shall he** (imperial Rome) **turn his face unto the isles, and shall take** (capture and presumably imprison) **many** [of God's people]: **but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the** [persecuting] **reproach offered by him** (imperial Rome) **to cease; without his own reproach he** (the prince) **shall cause it** (Rome's reproach) **to turn upon him** (imperial Rome).

Imperial Rome learned in the early years of the Christian church what papal Rome learned later: to physically persecute the people of God only meant their numbers would grow all the more.<sup>22</sup> After Rome's persecution of Christ's followers in Palestine in phase one during the last half of ancient Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, the Lord closed the door on the organization of ancient Israel and gave His new church organization the commission to take the gospel to the Gentiles and the community of believers spread rapidly throughout the world. But we should note that not only did the Lord commission the believers at this time to take the gospel to the Gentiles, He actually allowed *persecution* to be a catalyst to accomplish this purpose. Acts 8:1–4 describes the transition from phase one (persecution against the church at Jerusalem) to phase two (persecution against the church throughout Judea, Samaria, and abroad):

**AND Saul was consenting unto his** (Stephen's) **death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles.**

**2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.**

**3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.**

**4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.**

The Spirit of Prophecy comments on this development:

After the death of Stephen there arose against the believers in Jerusalem a persecution so relentless that "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria." . . .

The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel. Success had attended the ministry of the word in that place, and there was danger that the disciples would linger there too long, unmindful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. . . . To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them. Driven from Jerusalem, the believers "went everywhere preaching the word." . . .

When they were scattered by persecution they went forth filled with missionary zeal. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 103–106.

This "scattering" of the believers to the world necessitated Rome, still largely at the instigation of the Jews, turning her persecuting face "unto the isles." Now let's attempt to identify the "prince" of v. 18.

**A prince.** Heb. *qasin*, a man in authority generally, as in Isa. 1:10, or more specifically a military commander, as in Joshua 10:24. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:870.

In the context of the spiritual war between Christ and Satan that this prophecy describes, we view the "prince" of v. 18 as "a man in authority" or "military commander" whom God set forth to challenge the persecution of the apostolic church coming from Satan's abomination-of-desolation power of imperial Rome. But because the Hebrew word for "prince" here (*qasin*) is not one of the words translated "prince" in the prophecies of Daniel that refer to Christ,<sup>23</sup> this "prince" is not Christ Himself. So who might this "prince" of God in the spiritual controversy be? In our view, he is none

<sup>22</sup> Cf. again Tertullian's famous statement quoted on p. 57.

<sup>23</sup> Dan. 8:11, 25; 10:21; 12:1 (*sar*); Dan. 9:25, 26; 11:22 (*nagid*).

other than the very man who had been Satan’s primary instrument in persecuting God’s people — none other than the now miraculously converted Saul. Let’s consider Saul’s “Damascus road” experience. Acts 9:1–18:

**And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,**

**2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way (i.e. Christians), whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.**

**3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:**

**4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?**

**5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks* (i.e. it is hard for you to resist your conscience being pricked).**

**6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.**

**7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.**

**8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.**

**9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.**

**10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am *here*, Lord.**

**11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,**

**12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight.**

**13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:**

**14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.**

**15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:**

**16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.**

**17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.**

**18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.**

To say the least, Saul’s conversion and calling to the gospel ministry was special and unique. He was “miraculously converted of God to do a special work” (1T 447). In a moment’s time, “Saul the persecutor” was called to become the greatest apostle of Christ. But Paul described himself as “one born out of due time” (1 Cor. 15:8). That is, in contrast to the esteem he held for the other apostles, Paul believed he did not merit the calling to such a high office in that he never received the training and preparation normally required for such a position. And much to his chagrin, the undeniable fact was that God had called Paul to the apostleship while he was in the very act of warring against Christ; and thus Paul went on to say:

**9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.**

**10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: . . .**

Paul could take no credit for his place among the apostles. All credit went to God and His grace. And by Paul’s conversion, God transferred “a champion from the side of the enemy to the side of

Christ” (AA 124). Paul, the “champion of the faith” (AA 463), the “champion of Christianity” (AA 485), was God’s “chosen vessel” to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. And true to his calling, Paul became “the greatest of human teachers” (Ed 66). In spiritual battle, no one was more bold or courageous. “Paul had no fear of man” (AA 423). Concerning soul winning, “There never lived a more self-denying, persevering worker” (AA 367). Indeed, Paul continued his self-description by saying:

**10 . . . and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**

The significance of Paul’s unique calling and service as God’s “chosen vessel” in the crucial early years of the Christian church should be recognized for all that it was. Actually, Paul’s ministry directly impacts the church even to this day in that he wrote over half the books of the New Testament. Moreover, Paul, in all humility, claimed that “in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles” (2 Cor. 12:11). In fact, he, apparently uniquely, received “visions and revelations of the Lord” and was even “caught up to the third heaven. . . . caught up into paradise” (2 Cor. 12:1–2, 4). Without question, Paul’s life of service as an apostle truly had unique power and authority behind it. “God had placed special honor upon Paul” and “had given him his credentials” (6BC 1062). “Not from men, but from the highest Authority in heaven, had he received his commission” (AA 387).<sup>24</sup> Thus, the apostle Paul was indeed “a man in authority” — a “prince” on the side of Christ in the great controversy.

A general slain in battle is lost to his army, but his death gives no additional strength to the enemy. But when a man of prominence joins the opposing force, not only are his services lost, but those to whom he joins himself gain a decided advantage. Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus, might easily have been struck dead by the Lord, and much strength would have been withdrawn from the persecuting power. But God in His providence not only spared Saul’s life, but converted him, thus transferring a champion from the side of the enemy to the side of Christ. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 124.

Of course, Paul, after transitioning from the leading persecutor of Christians to the leading proponent of Christianity, became himself the principal focus of Rome’s “reproach.” This is evident throughout the remainder of the book of Acts; and this, then, brought a certain amount of relief for the church.

The departure of Paul [from Jerusalem] suspended for a time the violent opposition of the Jews, and the church had a period of rest, in which many were added to the number of believers. *Ibid.*, 130.

In our view, it was in this way that:

**18 . . . a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him (imperial Rome) to cease; . . .**

Verse 18 continues:

**18 . . . without his own reproach he (the prince) shall cause it (Rome’s reproach) to turn upon him (imperial Rome).**

Certainly, neither Paul nor any of the other persecuted believers retaliated to the persecution of the church with the same “reproach” as was directed toward them. Paul, like every faithful messenger of God, bore the burden of the “great things he must suffer” (Acts 9:16) with the patience and dignity of a true representative of God.

In all ages God’s appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to *reproach and persecution* for the truth’s sake. *Joseph* was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Gal. 1:1.

and integrity. *David*, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies. *Daniel* was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven. *Job* was deprived of his worldly possessions, and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends; yet he maintained his integrity. *Jeremiah* could not be deterred from speaking the words that God had given him to speak; and his testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. *Stephen* was stoned because he preached Christ and Him crucified. *Paul* was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger for God to the Gentiles. And *John* was banished to the Isle of Patmos “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 575 (emphasis supplied).

Now comments from the *SDA Bible Commentary* on the last part of Daniel 11:18:

**Without.** The Hebrew of the last sentence of this verse is obscure. The following translation probably reflects the sense of this passage. “Indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him” (RSV).

God employed Rome’s persecution of Christians as a means of spreading Christianity to Rome herself and even to Caesar’s own household. Specifically, this was accomplished through Paul who appealed in his own defense to Caesar and thereby took the message of the gospel right into the presence of Caesar himself. Acts 25:9–12:

**9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?**

**10 Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.**

**11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.**

**12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.**

To a significant extent it was by means of Paul appealing to Caesar that the gospel spread to Rome. Thus it could be said that Satan’s strategy of persecuting the apostolic church “in the isles” backfired, and his use of imperial Rome to persecute God’s people was compelled to take yet another twist. Enter: phase three.

#### *Phase Three: In Rome*

**19 Then he (imperial Rome) shall turn his face toward the fort<sup>4581</sup> (*ma'oz*; the city of Rome) of his own land (the pagan Roman Empire): **but he shall stumble**<sup>3782</sup> **and fall**<sup>5307</sup>, **and not be found.****

Here we find the persecuting face of Rome — his “reproach” — turning on the “fort of his own land.” Since we have identified the “he” of this verse as imperial Rome, we understand his “land” to be the domain of the Roman Empire, and this leads us to identify the “fort” of his land as the city of Rome herself. This is consistent with our view that what imperial Rome “set his face to enter” in v. 17 was indeed the spiritual fortress of Christ’s earthly kingdom — the Christian church.<sup>25</sup> That is, each side of the “great conflict” has its own “fort/fortress” in which its earthly forces are headquartered, and into which the “other side” seeks to enter, or infiltrate. In the case of Satan’s forces, their fortress is the political organization of the world’s principal earthly kingdom. In the case of Christ’s forces, their fortress is, since Christ’s kingdom is “not of this world” (John 18:36), the ecclesiastical organization of the Christian church. In the case of Daniel 11:19, since Christ’s forces have infiltrated the capital city of Satan’s fortress, Satan’s forces must direct their persecution of Christ’s forces to

<sup>25</sup> Cf. p. 71.

within the capital of their own land. Of course, reference to the *fort* of the city of Rome in v. 19 is also consistent with our conclusion that the spiritual *fortress* of the king of the South in v. 10 was the Roman Empire.<sup>26</sup> It is noteworthy that the Hebrew word translated “fort” in v. 19 (*ma'oz*) is the same word translated “fortress” in vs. 7, 10.

According to our view, the specific individual responsible for Rome’s persecution of Christians in the time of v. 19 was the emperor of Rome — Nero. After Rome burned and Nero blamed the conflagration on the Christians he soon lost his political support and committed suicide. We believe this was in fulfillment of the prophecy, “he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.” The Hebrew word for “stumble” in v. 19 is *kashal* (3782) and the word for “fall” is *naphal* (5307). Jeremiah used both *kashal* and *naphal* in Jeremiah 50:32. This text suggests that even the burning of Rome was predictable:

**32 And the most proud shall stumble<sup>3782</sup> and fall<sup>5307</sup>, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.**

That Nero was no common persecutor of Christians is evident from the following:

Paul could hope for little justice from the Caesar to whom he had appealed. Nero was more debased in morals, more frivolous in character, and at the same time capable of more atrocious cruelty, than any ruler who had preceded him. The reins of government could not have been entrusted to a more despotic ruler. The first year of his reign had been marked by the poisoning of his young stepbrother, the rightful heir to the throne. From one depth of vice and crime to another, Nero had descended, until he had murdered his own mother, and then his wife. There was no atrocity which he would not perpetrate, no vile act to which he would not stoop. In every noble mind he inspired only abhorrence and contempt.

The details of the iniquity practiced in his court are too degrading, too horrible, for description. His abandoned wickedness created disgust and loathing, even in many who were forced to share his crimes. They were in constant fear as to what enormities he would suggest next. Yet even such crimes as Nero’s did not shake the allegiance of his subjects. He was acknowledged as the absolute ruler of the whole civilized world. More than this, he was made the recipient of divine honors and was worshiped as a god. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 485–486.

Nero’s sin against God and God’s people during the early years of the Christian church was of an unusual character; and as his sin was unusually great, so, in harmony with Scripture,<sup>27</sup> was his punishment. The last phrase of Daniel 11:19, “and not be found,” refers, we believe, to the final end of imperial Rome’s most notorious persecuting emperor. Note the similar context and wording of Psalm 37:35–36:

**35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.  
36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.**

Appropriate indeed that Daniel 11:19 should note the demise of such an instrument of Satan as Nero.

### Two Tactics of Spiritual Warfare In Contrast

In the spiritual warfare carried out during the first few decades of the Christian church, Satan, through the Daniel 8:9 “little horn” power of imperial Rome, used persecuting “reproach” in his attempt to force the submission and destruction of God’s people. In response, however, Christ, foremost through the “prince . . . without his own reproach” of Daniel 11:18, used nothing of the kind in His battle plan as Christ’s kingdom is founded on the principles of truth and righteousness.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. p. 56. We will elaborate on the contextual distinction between the “fort” and “fortress” of these verses soon.

<sup>27</sup> Jer. 21:14.

The Spirit of Prophecy notes this fundamental difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world:

God could employ only such means as were consistent with truth and righteousness. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 42.

“Whereunto,” asked Christ, “shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?” Mark 4:30. He could not employ the kingdoms of the world as a similitude. In society He found nothing with which to compare it. Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; but from Christ’s kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished. This kingdom is to uplift and ennoble humanity. God’s church is the court of holy life, filled with varied gifts and endowed with the Holy Spirit. The members are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom they help and bless. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 12.

In the crucial spiritual warfare in the early years of the Christian church as it is described in Daniel 11:17–19, and with the Lord using the only strategy consistent with the character of God, “a great victory was won for the gospel” (AA 462). But because the principles of heaven are so radically different from the principles of the world, this victory was not readily apparent even to the people of God living at the time. The Spirit of Prophecy describes the situation:

Nowhere could there exist an atmosphere more uncongenial to Christianity than in the Roman court. Nero seemed to have obliterated from his soul the last trace of the divine, and even of the human, and to bear the impress of Satan. His attendants and courtiers were in general of the same character as himself—fierce, debased, and corrupt. To all appearance it would be impossible for Christianity to gain a foothold in the court and palace of Nero.

Yet in this case, as in so many others, was proved the truth of Paul’s assertion that the weapons of his warfare were “mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4. Even in Nero’s household, trophies of the cross were won. From the vile attendants of a viler king were gained converts who became sons of God. These were not Christians secretly, but openly. They were not ashamed of their faith.

And by what means was an entrance achieved and a firm footing gained for Christianity where even its admission seemed impossible? In his epistle to the Philippians, *Paul ascribed to his own imprisonment his success in winning converts to the faith from Nero’s household*. Fearful lest it might be thought that his afflictions had impeded the progress of the gospel, he assured them: “I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.” Philippians 1:12.

When the Christian churches first learned that Paul was to visit Rome, they looked forward to a signal triumph of the gospel in that city. Paul had borne the truth to many lands; he had proclaimed it in great cities. Might not this *champion of the faith* succeed in winning souls to Christ even in the metropolis of the world? But their hopes were crushed by the tidings that Paul had gone to Rome as a prisoner. They had confidently hoped to see the gospel, once established at this great center, extend rapidly to all nations and become a prevailing power in the earth. How great their disappointment! Human expectations had failed, but not the purpose of God.

*Not by Paul’s sermons, but by his bonds, was the attention of the court attracted to Christianity. It was as a captive that he broke from so many souls the bonds that held them in the slavery of sin.* Nor was this all. He declared: “Many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the words without fear.” Philippians 1:14. *Ibid.*, 462–464 (emphasis supplied).

And so it was that:

**18 . . . a prince (the apostle Paul) for his own behalf shall cause the [persecuting] reproach offered by him (imperial Rome) to cease; without his (Paul’s) own reproach he shall cause it (Rome’s reproach) to turn upon him (imperial Rome).**

The “turning” of Rome’s reproach referred to by Gabriel here was specifically referred to by Christ later. After telling His disciples of the signs that would occur in the last days (Luke 21:8–11), Jesus, in answer to the specific question that arose regarding future events (vs. 5–7), described the difficult experience of the apostolic church which the disciples themselves would have to endure (vs. 12–24). In v. 12 Jesus described the persecuting reproach of Rome (in collusion with spiritual Jasher — the Jews) toward the apostolic church, then in v. 13 He noted how this reproach would be “turned.” Luke 21:12–13:

**12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake.**

**13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.**

In our view, Daniel 11:17–19 depicts the historical fulfillment of the spiritual application of v. 10 as we discussed it on p. 56. Certainly, when the spiritual “sons” of Christ received the promised power of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they were spiritually “stirred up.” And as history has revealed, Christ placed the apostle Paul as a “prince,” or “captain,” of the “multitude of great forces” when they assaulted the earthly fortress (Rome) of the spiritual king of the South (Satan). As we have noted,<sup>28</sup> the word “fort” in v. 19 is translated from the same Hebrew word (*ma’oz*) translated “fortress” in v. 10. Both terms, we believe, refer to Satan’s paganistic seat of authority, though we do recognize a distinction in context between the two passages. In the broad context of the great controversy dramatization of vs. 5–15 we understand the spiritual “fortress” of v. 10 to be the Roman Empire, while in the specific context of the real-life prophetic events of vs. 16–45 we understand the “fort of his own land” of v. 19 to be the fort city of Rome as the capital of the Roman Empire.

We have noted that the progressive phases of Roman persecution directed toward the apostolic church began in Jerusalem and then spread, according to Acts 8:1–4, throughout Judea and Samaria and then beyond. Now let’s note Jesus’ parting words to His disciples immediately before His ascension. Acts 1:8:

**8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the ut-  
termost part of the earth.**

It is understandable why Satan’s persecuting face was turned toward the apostolic church in the three phases it did, for it naturally corresponded with the progressive phases of early Christian church growth. And given that the purpose for the baptism of the Holy Ghost is to instill (“stir up”) power in believers to bear witness unto Christ, we can understand that the degree of persecution toward believers is generally in proportion to the degree the believers faithfully bear witness unto Christ. Witness the experience of Peter and John who were repeatedly threatened that they should not speak or teach in the name of Jesus.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, though God used persecution as an initial catalyst to get the believers out of Jerusalem, the intense persecution that followed the Christians through each phase of their church growth bears testimony itself that the early church did indeed fulfill Christ’s great commission to “preach the gospel” into “all the world” (Mark 16:15).

### **Retribution Comes on the Jews**

As we have noted, the persecution of the apostolic church by Rome was carried out at the urging of the Jews — spiritual Jasher, the “upright ones” of v. 17. And as the Roman emperor during this time received just retribution for the fruit of his doings, now it was time for the Jews to receive theirs. We have come to the place in the chronological flow of events where the nation of Israel is brought to

<sup>28</sup> P. 77.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Acts 4:17–18; 5:28, 40.



account for rejecting (1) the personal testimony of Christ her Messiah in the first half of her 70<sup>th</sup> week of probation, and (2) the testimony of the apostolic church in the last half of her 70<sup>th</sup> week and for nearly a full generation beyond.

**20 Then shall stand up in his** (the Roman emperor — Nero’s) **estate one that causeth an exacter**<sup>5065</sup> **to pass over**<sup>5674</sup> [margin] **in the glory**<sup>1925</sup> **of the kingdom: but within few days he** (the one that causes an exacter to pass over) **shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.**

Before verifying the antecedents of the pronouns in this verse, let us first verify the suggested event—the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.

As noted in the quote of Isaiah 26:19–21 on p. 69, the Hebrew word *abar*, rendered “be overpast” in v. 20, is given the identifying number 5674 in *Strong’s Concordance*. Though this Hebrew word is used in a wide variety of ways, when it comes to its use in Daniel 11:20 Wigram’s *The Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament* harmonizes with the margin of the KJV and translates it as “that causeth . . . to pass over.” This is the word the main text renders “raiser.” While the marginal wording is, in our view, the preferred translation, whichever translation is accepted it still remains that it is the same Hebrew word that is found in both Daniel 11:20 and Isaiah 26:20.

As also noted previously, Isaiah 26:20 is an invitation to God’s people, because probation for the Gentiles has now closed, to completely disassociate themselves from the wicked and to “hide” themselves until the “indignation” (the punishment of the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity [v. 21] in the form of the seven last plagues) “be overpast” (*abar*).<sup>30</sup> Now we see that there is also something in Daniel 11:20 that is caused “to pass over” (*abar*). We have already supposed that this “something” is the destruction of Jerusalem as this is the next major event in the great controversy immediately following the threefold phases of persecution of the apostolic church described in the preceding three verses. Since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 “prefigured . . . the terrors of the last great day” (*GC* 25), and because the “indignation” spoken of in Isaiah 26:20 refers to the seven last plagues, the fact that the word *abar* is found in both Daniel 11:20 and Isaiah 26:20 harmonizes with our supposition that Daniel 11:20 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem. Though it does not confirm it, it at least concurs with it. Now let’s try to determine exactly what this “something” is that is caused “to pass over” in Daniel 11:20.

This “something” is described in the KJV margin as “an exacter” and in the main text as “a raiser of taxes.” Let’s look at Strong’s definition of the Hebrew word itself:

5065. **nagas**, *naw-gas’*; a prim. root; to *drive* (an animal, a workman, a debtor, an army); by impl. to *tax*, *harass*, *tyrannize*:—distress, driver, exact (-or), oppress (-or), X raiser of taxes, taskmaster.

The “X” sign preceding the words “raiser of taxes,” according to *Strong’s Concordance*, “denotes a rendering in the A. V. that results from an idiom peculiar to the Heb.” Though not knowing exactly what the idiom is in this particular case, we *can* note that the idea “to tax” in this definition is “by implication” only; it could just as well imply “to harass” or “to tyrannize.” But it appears that the primary definition is “to drive” (as in “to drive a debtor”). It also seems that this Hebrew word as used in the context of Daniel 11:20 refers to someone who is “an exacter” (the words chosen in the margin) or “an oppressor.” Therefore, a logical rendering of the idea expressed in v. 20 would be: A debt collecting exacter (*nagas*) who passes over (*abar*).

Understanding Daniel 11:17–19 as we do, we can logically conclude that the debt collecting exacter of v. 20 is the continuation of the Roman power after the death of Nero. Now the next logical question is: Who is the debtor? or, Who does this debt collector pass over? The phrase in v. 20 that answers this question is “the glory of the kingdom.”

<sup>30</sup> Cf. the *GC* 634 quote on p. 69.

The term “the kingdom” here is from the same Hebrew word rendered “kingdom” in every other instance where the word “kingdom” is found in this vision — Daniel 10:13; 11:4, 9, 17, 21. These instances refer to the kingdoms of Persia, Greece, Egypt, and Rome. Therefore, by itself the term “the kingdom” in v. 20 cannot be used to identify a specific kingdom as it is a generic term used as a general reference to any kingdom. Nevertheless, the precedence has been set that the word “kingdom” in this prophecy refers to the domains of the dominate world political power reigning at the time. Following this precedence, then, the “kingdom” in v. 20, since the time is the first century A.D., would be the kingdom of imperial Rome. Given this deduction, the term we must use to identify the specific object this debt exacter passes over is “the glory of the kingdom [of imperial Rome].”

The Hebrew word from which the words “the glory of” are translated in Daniel 11:20 is used only this once in the entire Old Testament. Strong’s definition:

1925. **heder**, *heh'-der*; from 1921; *honour*; used (fig.) for the *Capital* city (Jerusalem):—glory.

Here we have specific identification of what is referred to by the term “glory” in Daniel 11:20—the city Jerusalem. But though Jerusalem was considered “the glory of” the kingdom of Israel, considering the considerable investment the Romans made in replenishing the Temple during their occupation of Palestine there is also a real sense in which the Romans considered Jerusalem and the Temple the “glory” of their *own* kingdom. Perhaps this Spirit of Prophecy statement is relevant here:

The temple had long been the pride and glory of the Jewish nation. The Romans also prided themselves in its magnificence. A king appointed by the Romans had united with the Jews to rebuild and embellish it, and the emperor of Rome had enriched it with his gifts. Its strength, richness, and magnificence had made it one of the wonders of the world. *The Desire of Ages*, 575.

It seems the New American Standard offers a good translation of Daniel 11:20. In the following quote of this verse the footnote in the NAS is included:

**20 Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the ‘Jewel of his kingdom . . . .**

°Lit., *adornment*; i.e., probably Jerusalem and its temple

Here we have “Jerusalem and its temple” suggested as what was probably being referred to by the Hebrew word *heder*, here translated “Jewel.” But though this translation comes close, in our view the best translation is offered by *The New Brown–Driver–Briggs–Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*. The *B–D–B Lexicon* is coded to *Strong’s Concordance*; note how its discussion of *heder* renders Daniel 11:20:

**1925 . . . n. [m.] ornament, adornment, splendour**, only cstr. . . . Dn 11:20 *splendour of (the) kingdom*, cf. AV RV, i.e. Judaea, or perh. Jerusalem acc. to Leng Hi Meinh; but rather *royal splendour* . . . i.e. *an exacter who shall cause the royal splendour to pass away*.

This rendering states: “an exacter who shall cause the royal splendour to pass away.” But even better, we would render it: *an exacter who shall cause the ornament of the kingdom to pass away*. The *B–D–B Lexicon*, like *Strong’s Concordance* and the NAS, also offers Jerusalem as a possible identity of the “ornament” or “royal splendour” of the kingdom. Thus, given the context and timeframe of v. 20 that our study has led us to, we believe the city of Jerusalem and its temple was in fact what is specifically referred to by the word *heder* (meaning “ornament, adornment, splendour” and rendered “royal splendour” in the *B–D–B*, “Jewel” or “adornment” in the NAS, and “glory” in the KJV) in this verse, and that the “kingdom” Jerusalem and its temple were the “ornament,” “Jewel,” or “glory” of was in fact the kingdom of the Roman Empire, just as the “kingdom” of v. 17 refers to the kingdom of imperial Rome.

This view harmonizes with the way the Roman general Titus viewed the Jewish Temple. The historian Josephus recorded the discussion Titus had with his advisors regarding the Temple's fate when they brought Jerusalem under siege in A.D. 70. Some thought it should be destroyed outright, since it was a rallying point of Jewish nationalism. Others thought it should be preserved; but if the Jews employed it as a military fortress, then it should be destroyed and the Jews would bear the responsibility.

But Titus said, that “although the Jews should get upon that holy house, and fight us thence, yet ought we not to revenge ourselves on things that are inanimate, instead of the men themselves;” and that he was not in any case for burning down so vast a work as that was, because this would be a mischief to the Romans themselves, as it would be *an ornament to their government* while it continued. *The Works of Josephus*, book 6, ch. 4, par. 3 (emphasis supplied).

Of course, as we know and as Josephus goes on to relate, some of Titus' soldiers, in the passion of the moment and in direct violation of orders, totally destroyed the Temple. But as noble as Titus appeared to be in his desire to preserve the Temple, he was attempting to prevent what was divinely decreed would happen. Jesus Himself prophesied this in Luke 21:5–6.<sup>31</sup>

**5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,**

**6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**

Moreover, we believe Titus was attempting, albeit unknowingly, to prevent the ultimate fulfillment of Daniel 11:20.

We will note that neither the NAS nor the *B–D–B Lexicon* apply the context of monetary taxation to v. 20 as many commentators do who prefer the main text of the KJV (which reads, “a raiser of taxes”) over the rendering of the margin which we prefer (“one that causeth an exacter to pass over”). These commentators see in v. 20 the Roman taxation of Palestine in 4 B.C. which took Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem at the time of Christ's birth. But, again, according to Strong's definition of the Hebrew word here (*nagas*), the meaning of taxation is *by implication only*; and in our view a mere implication is by itself a weak basis for applying the context of economic taxation to this verse. Exacting a debt, which is all we see v. 20 to be saying, can come in forms other than economic taxation. And to be sure, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 was the ultimate “exacting” on the national “debt” of Israel for rejecting God's repeated appeals to accept the gift of His Son. In what more forceful language could God convey to both the nation of Israel and the world the fact that Israel had forever forfeited her status as God's elect?

The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are trifling with the offers of divine grace and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy. Never was there given a more decisive testimony to God's hatred of sin and to the certain punishment that will fall upon the guilty. *The Great Controversy*, 36.

Given the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 fulfilled the destruction of “the city and the sanctuary” prophesied in Daniel 9:26, and given the fact that Jesus specifically identified the circumstances surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem as being prophetically significant,<sup>32</sup> it certainly seems that the significance of this event is such that we would expect its inclusion in the prophetic account of “what shall befall thy people in the latter days” (Dan. 10:14) much more than the mere event of Caesar Augustus' decree to economically tax his empire in 4 B.C.

We have already identified the specific Roman emperor being replaced in v. 20 as Nero, and it is evident from the NAS translation as well as the margin of the KJV that Nero's successor would

<sup>31</sup> Also Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2. Also cf. 1 Kgs. 9:6–9; Luke 19:41–44.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. again our comments regarding Matt. 24:15–16 and Luke 21:20–21 at the beginning of this chapter.

actually send someone *else* to Jerusalem to be its “oppressor” or “exacter.” The following provides a clear account of events in Palestine during this period.

#### THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM<sup>33</sup>

In A.D. 66, the Roman procurator, Florus, made some mistakes, but when the Jews appealed to Agrippa (the one who earlier had listened to Paul — Acts 26:28), they were told to forget it. Stones were thrown at him as he left town. It was August, 66. For the next four years Jerusalem was to know no peace as Jew fought Jew or Roman within and without its walls.

Some of the Jews immediately seized parts of Jerusalem, and fighting broke out among them. The Roman garrison in the fortress Antonia was slaughtered. Ananias the high priest and his brother, descendants of the Annas who condemned Christ, were slain by Jewish factions, who then turned on one another. In retaliation, Florus slew 20,000 Jews in Caesarea. Jews, then attacked cities throughout Judea, and dilatory Cestius Gallus, legate of Syria, decided to do something. Heading south with 30,000 troops, he burnt Joppa, and then surrounded Jerusalem. Just as the Jewish moderates were about to hand over the city, he unexpectedly withdrew. Encouraged, the Jews set off in pursuit, and Cestius lost much equipment, all his siege engines, and nearly 6,000 soldiers. “Running and singing,” the Jews returned to Jerusalem and to a terrible fate. It was the end of October, 67.

February 68, Nero appointed his best general, Vespasian, to command the Roman armies. This was a wise decision, for Vespasian quickly took Jotapata, Joppa again, and all of Galilee. At that point, 30,000 Jews were sold into slavery.

Heading south toward Jerusalem, 15,000 Jews were slain at the Jordan, — but then on June 9, Vespasian learned that Nero had committed suicide. Hurrying to Rome, he became enmeshed in battles for the emperorship, which he won 18 months later, in October 69.

By that time, all Judea, except Jerusalem, was under the control of his thirty-year old son, Titus. On May 10, A.D. 70 with 65,000 men, Titus arrived at Jerusalem. Fanatical Jews within and determined Romans without, hastened its destruction. Every type of horror and savagery was experienced within its walls before Titus gained control of it, 139 days later.

Yet thirty-nine years before, Christ had foretold this destruction, and warned His followers to keep the Sabbath faithfully (Matthew 24:20) and flee when the Roman armies had arrived (verse 16). This they did, when Cestius unaccountably withdrew from the city in October, A.D. 67.

Jerusalem, itself, had been divided into three sectors, each under its own rebel force, and each fighting the other. With the help of battering rams, banks, 75-foot towers, and hurling machines, the Romans took the Antonia by the end of July, and the Temple in August. Three more weeks, and all Jerusalem was burned to the ground. 1,100,000 Jews died during the siege.

Now let’s read Daniel 11:20 again, this time inserting all specific identifications:

**20 Then shall stand up in his** (the former Roman emperor — Nero’s) **estate**<sup>3653</sup> **one** (Vespasian) **that causeth an exacter** (Titus) **to pass over** [margin] **in the glory** (Jerusalem) **of the kingdom** [of Rome]: **but within few days he** (the new Roman emperor) **shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.**

The Hebrew word translated “few” here is found over 800 times in the Old Testament; however, it is translated “few” in the KJV only three times. This suggests that the translation “few” conveys an idea not intended by Gabriel, and we suggest a better translation for this word in this verse would be “a certain number of.” This conveys the idea that the time period referred to is not limited to just a few days; instead, it designates a period of unspecified duration that could, therefore, be many days.

<sup>33</sup> This is taken from the unnumbered page preceding p. 18 of the second edition (1985) of Pilgrims’ Books publication of *The Great Controversy* and was included in this edition by the publishers.

We understand that the “he” who, within a certain number of days, is “destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle” is not in specific reference to Vespasian. Rather, it is in reference to the *office* of imperial Rome’s emperorship as the caesars were superseded by the popes who rise to power in the next verse. The Hebrew word translated “estate” in v. 20 (as well as the one in the next verse) carries the meaning of “office.” Strong’s definition:

3653. **ken**, *kane*; the same as 3651, used as a noun; a *stand*, i.e. pedestal or station: — base, estate, foot, office, place, well.

Thus, we understand v. 20 to say that Nero’s office was acquired by Vespasian, then, after an unspecified number of days, this office was acquired by the “vile person” of v. 21. “[N]either in anger, nor in battle” accurately describes the way political authority was transferred within the Roman Empire from the caesars and the state of Rome to the popes and the church of Rome. That the prophecy jumps from the first century emperors in v. 20 to the fourth century popes in v. 21 follows the way it jumped from the Persian king Ahasuerus in v. 2 to the Greek king Alexander in v. 3 with no allusion to the nine intervening Persian kings whatsoever.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, prophecy only speaks of the principal characters engaged in the spiritual warfare.

It is apparent that the abomination of desolation in its first phase was, in fact, imperial Rome, and its “standing” in the “holy place” was imperial Rome’s armies surrounding “the glory of the kingdom” — Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> It is also apparent that, while v. 20 marks the end of Daniel 11’s account regarding the abomination of desolation in its *first* phase, v. 21 marks the beginning of the account regarding the abomination of desolation in its *second* phase. And it is to this significant second phase of the Roman abomination-of-desolation power that we now turn our attention.

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. our commentary on vs. 2–3 on pp. 34–34.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. again Matt. 24:15 and our comments on p. 67.

## 6. THE RISE OF PAPAL ROME

Edwin Thiele's introductory remarks to his commentary on Daniel 11:21–45 bear repeating:

To assist in understanding Dan 11:21–45 a comparison of the points in Daniel 8 with those in Daniel 11 might be of value. Concerning the identification of the first powers in these two chapters there is no question, because Gabriel expressly mentions Medo-Persia and Grecia as being the powers involved. That being the case, the third great power in each chapter could only be Rome.

In Dan 7 the great and terrible beast is imperial Rome and the little horn that springs from it speaking great things against the most High and striking down the saints of the most High is papal Rome. The fact that papal Rome is here set forth as an appendage springing forth from imperial Rome and constituting an integral part of that power shows that God looks upon the second power as being only an outgrowth of the first. This is again revealed in Dan 8 where the little horn represents both pagan and papal Rome. In God's sight both constituted the anti-christ which made war on Him and on His people.

In Dan 7 only a few details are given of the little horn, — it was diverse from the other horns that sprang from the great and terrible beast, it had a mouth that spoke great words against the Most High, it would think to change times and laws, and the saints would be given into his hand for 1260 years. Ultimately it would be destroyed unto the end.

In Dan 8 more details are given. The little horn waxed great to the host of heaven, it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and trampled on them, he magnified himself against the Prince of the host, he took away the daily, cast down the place of the sanctuary, cast truth to the ground, practised and prospered, destroyed the mighty and holy people, caused craft to prosper in his hand, and finally would be broken without hand.

In Dan 11 many of these details are repeated and many more details are added. From verse 21 to verse 45 numerous new items are revealed concerning the activities of this power, from the time when it would first stand up to the time of the end, and the ultimate hour when he would come to his end and none would help him.

Since Gabriel explicitly pointed out that the vision of Dan 8 was for many days, for the time of the end, "in the last end of the indignation" (Dan 8:17, 19, 26), the major thrust of this vision can hardly be Antiochus Epiphanes whose activities covered only a few years in the second century before Christ.

The same is true with Dan 11. Concerning the things there revealed Gabriel had said that they would pertain to what would befall Daniel's people "in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days." That being true the main content of this vision is for the benefit of the world today.

A comparison of the specific details of Dan 8 and Dan 11 reveals the fact that these two chapters are covering the same ground and are dealing with the same powers. The parallels with the little horn are striking. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 136.

### A Vile Person

**21 And in his (the emperor of Rome's) estate shall stand up a vile person<sup>0959</sup> (the bishop of Rome), to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.**

Thiele's commentary on v. 21 is also worth repeating:

In his estate shall stand up a vile person v 21

Jerusalem Bible. “In his place there will rise a wretch: he will not be given royal honours, but will insinuate himself into them in his own time and gain possession of the kingdom by intrigue.”

Moffatt. “In place of him a despicable creature shall arise, one on whom the royal honour is not conferred but who comes when men are off their guard and gains the kingdom by crafty promises.”

New English Bible. “A contemptible creature will succeed but will not be given recognition as king; yet he will seize the kingdom by dissimulation and intrigue in time of peace.”

In these words a good description is given of a new power that would arise in Rome to take the place of the emperor. *This is the papal power*. The Hebrew term here employed is “*basah*” which denotes a despicable creature who is to be looked upon with loathing and contempt. Thus it was with *the antichrist* who set himself up in the name of Christ but who is actually the enemy, engaged in his contemptible activities of subversion against the true Christ and His people.

Not given the honour of the kingdom v 21

The picture is of a new power that would differ from the previous power in that it was not originally of a kingly nature but it would attain to royal prerogatives by its activities of craft, guile and dissimulation. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 138 (emphasis supplied).

While non-Adventist commentators typically identify the “vile person” here as Antiochus Epiphanes, and while most Adventist commentators identify him as Tiberius Caesar, C. Mervyn Maxwell concurs with Thiele in identifying him as the pope and that v. 21 begins a new paragraph in the prophetic narrative:

There being no punctuation or paragraph divisions anywhere in the Hebrew of this chapter, we can assume a major paragraph break between verses 20 and 21.

Augustus founded not only the Roman Empire but also the *position of Roman emperor*. Because of this, the word “augustus” quickly became a synonym for “emperor,” and every emperor was known as an augustus. . . . in the fifth and sixth centuries after Christ, the head of the Roman state was succeeded by the head of the Roman Church; that is, the “augustus” was succeeded by the “Holy Father.” The “**contemptible person**,” then, who was to arise in the place of Augustus, was the medieval pope—viewed, like all other leaders in Daniel 11, from the angle only of his hostilities. *God Cares*, 1:283.

More recently, another Adventist theologian concurs with this application of the “vile person” of v. 21. In a paper presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Bible Conference,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Carlos Mora states:

. . . 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. “Guidelines for the Interpretation of Daniel 10–12: Applications and Implications,” p. 19.<sup>2</sup>

Now let’s seek biblical support for identifying the “vile person” as the papal power. First, the Hebrew word translated “vile person” is *bazah* (0959), a verb meaning *to despise, disdain, or hold in contempt*.<sup>3</sup> This word is found 43 times in the Old Testament, and though principally a verb (a few times a predicate adjective), in Daniel 11 it is uniquely employed as a noun, usually translated “vile

<sup>1</sup> This conference was sponsored by the SDA Biblical Research Institute and was held in Rome, Italy in June 2018. The conference papers are posted at <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/content/fourth-international-bible-conference-0>.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Mora recognizes the intrusion of imperial Rome in v. 16 (p. 6).

<sup>3</sup> Strong’s definition: “**bazah**, *baw-zaw*’; a prim. root; to *disesteem*:—despise, disdain, contemn(-ptible), + think to scorn, vile person.” Dr. Mora points out that it is only the word “vile” that is the literal translation from *bazah*; the word “person” is supplied by the translators (p. 8).

person” or “contemptible person.” But does this unique noun in Daniel’s prophecy appropriately depict the medieval pope?

In our view, Malachi provides the answer. After the Lord initially rebukes the “priests, that despise<sup>0959</sup> my name” (Mal. 1:6) and who in essence say, “The table of the LORD *is* contemptible<sup>0959</sup>” (v. 7) by offering blind, lame and sick sacrificial offerings (v. 8), He completes His rebuke in Malachi 2:7-9:

**7 For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.**

**8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.**

**9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible<sup>0959</sup> and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.**

If the Lord *makes* a person contemptible/vile (*bazah*), then it can truly be said that that person is a contemptible/vile person in a noun sense. Of course, it would be particularly egregious if the person God makes *bazah* was a “messenger of the LORD of hosts” serving in a priestly capacity.

Merging this noun context of *bazah* with the view that the “vile person” of Daniel 11:21 is the medieval pope, we have a perfect fit. In like manner as the priests of Malachi’s day, the medieval pope “departed out of the way” by presumptuously standing before God’s people as their intercessory High Priest and causing “many to stumble at the law” by even presuming to change God’s “times and law” (Dan. 7:25). It certainly seems, then, that Malachi provides textual support for the view that the “vile person” of Daniel 11:21 is the medieval pope. Indeed, we equate this “vile person” with the “man of sin” of 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

### A Change In Tactics

The following Spirit of Prophecy quote is an excellent commentary on Satan’s change in tactics that began, in our view, in Daniel 11:21:

In vain were Satan’s efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. The great controversy in which the disciples of Jesus yielded up their lives did not cease when these faithful standard-bearers fell at their post. By defeat they conquered. God’s workmen were slain, but His work went steadily forward. The gospel continued to spread and the number of its adherents to increase. It penetrated into regions that were inaccessible even to the eagles of Rome. Said a Christian, expostulating with the heathen rulers who were urging forward the persecution: You may “kill us, torture us, condemn us . . . . Your injustice is the proof that we are innocent . . . . Nor does your cruelty . . . avail you.” It was but a stronger invitation to bring others to their persuasion. “The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed.”—Tertullian, *Apology*, paragraph 50.

Thousands were imprisoned and slain, but others sprang up to fill their places. And those who were martyred for their faith were secured to Christ and accounted of Him as conquerors. They had fought the good fight, and they were to receive the crown of glory when Christ should come. The sufferings which they endured brought Christians nearer to one another and to their Redeemer. Their living example and dying testimony were a constant witness for the truth; and where least expected, the subjects of Satan were leaving his service and enlisting under the banner of Christ.

Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God by planting his banner in the Christian church. If the followers of Christ could be deceived and led to displease God, then their strength, fortitude, and firmness would fail, and they would fall an easy prey.

The great adversary now endeavored to gain by artifice what he had failed to secure by force. Persecution ceased, and in its stead were substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. Idolaters were led to receive a part of the Christian faith,



while they rejected other essential truths. They professed to accept Jesus as the Son of God and to believe in His death and resurrection, but they had no conviction of sin and felt no need of repentance or of a change of heart. With some concessions on their part they proposed that Christians should make concessions, that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.

Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this. Some of the Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no compromise. Others were in favor of yielding or modifying some features of their faith and uniting with those who had accepted a part of Christianity, urging that this might be the means of their full conversion. *That was a time of deep anguish to the faithful followers of Christ.* Under a cloak of pretended Christianity, Satan was insinuating himself into the church, to corrupt their faith and turn their minds from the word of truth.

Most of the Christians at last consented to lower their standard, and *a union was formed between Christianity and paganism.* Although *the worshipers of idols* professed to be converted, and united with the church, they *still clung to their idolatry*, only changing the objects of their worship to *images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints.* The foul leaven of idolatry, thus brought into the church, continued its baleful work. *Unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies* were incorporated into her faith and worship. As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost her purity and power. There were some, however, who were not misled by these delusions. They still maintained their fidelity to the Author of truth and worshiped God alone. *The Great Controversy*, 41–43 (emphasis supplied).

Satan's change of tactics against God's people was effected through changing the nature of his anti-Christian pagan power. That is, Satan changed Rome from a purely pagan power to a compromised pagan/Christian power; and it is Daniel 11:21 that depicts this change as the allegiance of the masses is transferred *within* the Roman Empire from *imperial* Rome [and her many pagan gods] to *papal* Rome [and her paganized view of the Christian God]. The effectiveness of Satan's strategy has been described thus:

Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased and gained control of the minds of men, "the mystery of iniquity" carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. *Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror.* Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

This *compromise between paganism and Christianity* resulted in the development of "the man of sin" foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will.

Satan once endeavored to form a compromise with Christ. He came to the Son of God in the wilderness of temptation, and showing Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, offered to give all into His hands if He would but acknowledge the supremacy of the prince of darkness. Christ rebuked the presumptuous tempter and forced him to depart. But Satan meets with greater success in presenting the same temptations to man. To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth; and having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance to the representative of Satan—the bishop of Rome. *Ibid.*, 49–50 (emphasis supplied).

Here we see how Satan managed to set his own representative — “the man of sin” — at the head of the Christian church. But not only was Satan’s representative the head of the Christian church, because of the compromise between paganism and Christianity he was at the same time the head of the Roman pagan kingdom. This covertly dual role makes Satan’s agent the quintessential “anti-christ.”

### Paganism’s New Face

(We now ask the reader to read again the second paragraph of Thiele’s quote on p. 86.) We ask: What is the common root of the little horn of Daniel 8 that imperial and papal Rome share? Without doubt, it is paganism. With this thought in mind, let’s look at Daniel 11:21 again:

**21 And in his estate** (in the emperor of Rome’s place as the head of pagan Rome) **shall stand up a vile person** (the pope), **to whom they** (the pagans) **shall not give the honour** (shall not openly recognize as a civil king) **of the kingdom** [of pagan Rome]: **but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the** [headship of the] **kingdom** [of pagan Rome] **by flatteries.**

The emperor of Rome’s “estate” the pope stands up in is, we believe, the principal position of leadership in the pagan world. Whereas we have understood the “kingdom” of vs. 17 and 20 to refer to the political kingdom of the Roman Empire, the Roman Empire, like that of the preceding empires of Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon, can be characterized as a *pagan* empire; and thus we understand the “kingdom” of these verses to include the sphere of paganism. And thus we understand Daniel 11:21 to describe the period in history when the face of paganism changed from that of imperial Rome to that of papal Rome. This period, in our view, equates with the Pergamos period of church history described in Revelation 2:12–17.

The Pergamos period of church history may be thought of as beginning about the time the emperor Constantine espoused the cause of the church, in A.D. 313 — or his own professed conversion in 323 — and ending in 538 . . . . It was during this period of time that the papacy consolidated its position as the religious and political leader of Western Europe . . . , and that Satan established his “seat” within the Christian church. The papacy was a skillful blend of paganism with Christianity. This period may well be termed the Age of Popularity. *SDA Bible Commentary*, 7:749.

We believe this period began when the pope, thanks to Constantine, emerged as the religious leader of Western Europe, and it ended when the pope, thanks to Justinian, emerged as the co-political leader of Western Europe.<sup>4</sup> Also, the term “Age of Popularity” can be attributed to the fact that Constantine made orthodox Christianity the “politically correct” religion. This political favoritism then led the church to commit two sins that, according to Revelation 2:14, characterized the Pergamos church: (1) Balaam’s inducement to commit “whoredom with the daughters of Moab” (Num. 25:1); and (2) eating meat sacrificed to Moabite gods. In the context of Christian church history, these two sins reflect the embracing of pagan idolatry.

These two sins led to a mixture of paganism with true religion. . . . This emperor [*Constantine*] pursued a policy of blending paganism and Christianity at as many points as possible, in a studied attempt to unite the diverse elements within the empire and thus strengthen it. The favorable, even dominant, position he accorded the church made it a prey to the temptations that always accompany prosperity and popularity. Under Constantine and his successors, almost all of whom continued his favorable policy, the church rapidly became a politico-ecclesiastical institution and lost much of its former spirituality. *Ibid.*

If there was a specific event that marked when the papacy “obtain[ed] the kingdom [of *pagan Rome*]” in Daniel 11:21, we suggest it was the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. This imperial council,

<sup>4</sup> We will get to emperor Justinian and his role in the rise and reign of papal Rome in the next chapter.

the first ever convened by a Roman emperor, simultaneously renounced Arianism and formulated the Nicene Creed, which then became a law of the Empire. Friedrich Gontard describes this development:

Constantine asserted his power in the Church during the early summer of 325, when he issued invitations to attend the first general council of the Empire at Nicea, a prosperous trading town by the Lake of Ascanius. He presided here over an assembly of 318 bishops, as well as representatives of politics and learning. A striking impression was made by the occupants of the three ancient archiepiscopal sees: Makarius of Jerusalem, Eustachius of Antioch, and Alexander of Alexandria. The bishop of Rome, Silvester I, was represented by two presbyters.

. . . The emperor in his purple stood out from among all the participants. . . . Much of his speech . . . expressed quite clearly what he thought about the disunity among the Christian Fathers. He was concerned with the unity of Church and State, without which the pursuit of a successful policy in the East and West would not be possible. . . .

“All heretics at first attain the virtue of the faith, and later deviate from the rule of faith” —so the learned Origen had said a hundred years before. The emperor or his theological advisers had therefore come to see what the Church lacked: a creed and an administration. It was only unity of faith that could restore unity in the Church, and consequently in the State. This was the purpose of Nicea and this was what Constantine was fighting for. The Caesar of heathendom and Christendom wished to create an armour for the Church which would protect it from within and from without. This armour was the unity of orthodoxy. . . .

The heretical teaching of Arius, at one time a presbyter at Alexandria, occupied a prominent position on the agenda at Nicea. Arius taught that Christ was a being intermediate between God and man. The deposition of Arius was confirmed and his teaching definitively rejected. . . .

The feelings and needs of the bishops at Nicea were formulated by the emperor as convoker and president of the world council. It was no time for conflicts between personalities and groups among the bishops or between schools of theology. The object of the council was not to settle disputes but to find unity; it was concerned not with schism but with doctrine and church organization. In agreement with Bishop Hosius of Cordova, . . . Constantine saw to it that the confession of faith should speak of the Son as having the same divine nature as the Father. The text ran as follows:

“Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all was made.”

The Nicene Creed concerning the divinity of Christ, deriving from Constantine, who was personally responsible for the expression “of one substance with”, was unanimously accepted on 19<sup>th</sup> June 325. The doctrine of the Church was then adopted as a law of the Empire. The general council of the Empire became a regular institution, held time after time for the next five centuries. . . .

Is it to be wondered at if Constantine, in view of this alliance, sometimes called himself the “Man of God”? When visited by a group of Fathers he greeted them with: “You are appointed by God to be bishops over everything that lies within the sphere of the Church, but I have likewise been appointed to be the bishop of external affairs.” Thus the statesman took upon himself the historic, worldwide mission of Christianity. *The Chair of Peter*, 105–108.<sup>5</sup>

While Constantine designed to use the papal church to advance his own political power, little did he know he was flirting with the power Paul called the “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thess. 2:7) which,

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps we should clarify the difference between Arianism and Catholicism. Both are Christian, but Arianism holds the erroneous belief that Christ was created and thus of inferior substance to the Father. In His connection with humanity, Arianism overemphasizes the humanity of Christ. Catholicism correctly holds that Christ is of the same substance as the Father; however, in His connection with humanity, Catholicism overemphasizes the divinity of Christ.

when this church–state relationship matured to the point of legal marriage, would take the state’s political power to herself.

Perhaps we should ask: When the compromise between paganism and Christianity occurred, were the pagans Christianized? Or were the Christians paganized? Our answer: On the surface the pagans appeared to be Christianized, but because true Christianity cannot compromise and still remain true, in actuality the Christians were paganized; that is, papal Rome was Christian on the surface and pagan at heart. Thus it could be said that “Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror” (*GC 50*).<sup>6</sup> The pagans were not converted to Christianity, but merely to a type of “Christianized” or “baptized” paganism. “Generally speaking, medieval Christianity was more pagan in form and in spirit than it was Christian” (*7BC 751*). Thus, with the compromise between paganism and Christianity, not only did the compromising *Christians* look to the bishop of Rome as their leader, the compromising *pagans* looked to him as *their* leader as well. And thus, we view imperial Rome as being merely the first form of what is called pagan Rome, while papal Rome is the second; and thus both forms constitute what Inspiration terms the “abomination of desolation.”

On p. 77 we noted the success of the apostolic church in infiltrating Satan’s pagan fort city of Rome; and now we note how the table has turned, and how quickly in the prophecy it has turned—only two verses. Now the very Christian church the apostle Paul established in Rome on his fourth missionary journey has become covertly infiltrated by pagan forces and has actually become Satan’s most effective instrument in warring against the gospel of Christ. And herein we have a prime example of how the “great conflict” (*Dan. 10:1*) has played out in the world.

### The Strategy of Flattery: Act One

Let’s note the last part of v. 21 one more time:

**21 . . . he (the pope) shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom [of pagan Rome] by flatteries.**

Like the last part of v. 20, the words “come in peaceably” in v. 21 well describe the unique means by which the papacy ascended from within the Roman Empire to depose the emperors as Satan’s leaders of his abomination-of-desolation pagan kingdom. Obviously, the ecclesiastical nature of the papacy precluded the “normal” method of “obtaining the kingdom”—by military strength. And that this unique influence the papacy enjoyed remains to this day a force in the world to be reckoned with is perhaps best illustrated by the following 20<sup>th</sup> century story related by Malachi Martin:

Britain’s Prime Minister Churchill, the story went, was urging on Stalin the importance of that very policy that Litvinov and so many others did in fact take up: As allies, Churchill reportedly argued, the British and Soviets ought to try somehow to co-opt Pope Pius into the war effort. In caustic contempt, Stalin is supposed to have replied, “How many divisions can the Pope supply us?”

As the story continued, after the war Churchill recounted the exchange to Pius XII. Rather than insist upon the obvious—on the fact that, despite his open contempt, Stalin had mustered world pressure in an effort to gain Vatican support—Pius is said to have replied, “Tell my son Joseph that he will meet my divisions in eternity.”

Whether that story is accurate in all or any of its details, it points up a great deal about the power that was later placed in John Paul’s hands when he accepted the papacy. Any world leader who discounts the eternal revelations on which papal power claims to be based flirts with problems. But, at the same time, any world leader who takes the Roman Pontiff as possessing only the spiritual weapons of the unseen world and the afterlife with which to deal in

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<sup>6</sup> Larger quote on p. 89.

practical, this-worldly matters is making a strategic error of great proportions. *The Keys of This Blood*, 131–132.

So how did the papacy come to depose the Roman emperors as leaders of the Roman world if it was not by the employment of divisions like those Stalin asked about? Gabriel described it: “by flatteries.” That is, by subtle and crafty deceit: by compromising and melding Christian principles with those of paganism so that Christianity and paganism were no longer at *odds* with one another but were in fact in *harmony* with one another; by *winning* the allegiance of the pagans by giving them precisely what they wanted — idols to worship — and by *retaining* the allegiance of the Christians by making the idols “Christian” ones. The strategy of flattery: incorporate unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies into the faith and worship of the church, all the while clothing it in the sanctimonious garb of a pretended Christianity. Teach the people that salvation comes through the “pay off” system of indulgences. Teach them it is the Church, not the Bible, that is the ultimate ecclesiastical authority. Teach them that the pope is virtually God on earth who holds in his mortal hands “the power of the keys” of heaven and hell. Bring the pagan masses to a point of total submission to the papacy through fears stemming from their own ignorance, and you have effectively positioned yourself into the place of their supreme authority; and you have thus snatched control of the pagan world from the emperors of Rome by the subtle deceit of “flatteries.” We will go into more detail as to what the word “flatteries” entails when we come to it again in vs. 32 and 34.

### Two Mysteries In Contention

In his book *The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, Adventist pioneer Stephen Haskell notes how the devices of Satan were thwarted by the methods of Christ. And as Haskell points out, for God’s people to also be victorious they must also employ the methods of Christ.

The enemy of truth had sought by every means to blind the eyes of the Jews to the love of God; he had worked through every government for their destruction, and when their nation was at its lowest point, when spiritual vitality was almost exhausted, Christ came in person to revive their fainting hope. Then Satan used every device to deceive the Son of Man. He tempted Him in all points where human nature can be tempted; he sought to ensnare Him with petty trials; he sought to induce Him to accept high worldly honors; but he failed in all, and when he thought he had gained the victory by His crucifixion, he found it was only the physical form which could be thus bound, and that only for a time. An eternal spirit dwelt in mortal clay, and the bands of death were broken by His resurrection. Now from the midst of that down-trodden people, that despised race, from the very foot of the ignominious cross, God chose a people and sent them forth to conquer the world. “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I can not attain unto it.” What wonder that the world awoke with a start, and that Satan sought new devices for the overthrow of truth.

Outward pressure, though tried again and again, had proved unavailing in stamping out the truth. In the fiery furnace was seen the form of a Fourth; from the lions’ den came forth a prime minister; from Joseph’s new sepulcher arose a conqueror. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome had attempted the overthrow of truth, but there had been a constantly increasing grandeur in place of defeat. A new plan was devised by Satan. *If paganism could be placed in the heart, while Christian principles were acknowledged outwardly, the overthrow would be certain; for destruction worketh from within, outward. It was a repetition of Balaam’s plan.*

Paul, the great teacher of righteousness, as he visited from place to place among the saints, wrote thus to the Thessalonians: “The mystery of iniquity doth already work.” “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 worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” This is Paul’s description of the mystery of iniquity, the fourth beast of the vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel.

Then it was that *into that church*, noted for its purity, *crept the life of paganism*. Sheltered in the folds of the Christian garb lay the serpent, the old dragon. As the birth of Christ, the incarnation of God, was a mystery, and is today a mystery which none can fathom, it was met by another mystery, a mystery of iniquity whose machinations are too strong for the human mind to understand. It will deceive if possible the very elect. *Only he whose eye is lightened by truth, whose heart is the abiding place of the Son of God; in other words, only he who has within his own being the mystery of Godliness, will stand against the mystery of iniquity.* *The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, 220–222 (emphasis supplied).

Of a truth, the only defense for the people of God against the mystery of iniquity is the mystery of Godliness. And as we have noted and must never forget, the battleground for this life and death conflict lies within our very own hearts and minds.<sup>7</sup>

### The Arms of a Flood

**22 And with the arms of a flood shall they** (God’s covenant people) **be overflown from before him** (papal Rome), **and shall be broken**<sup>7665</sup>; **yea, also the prince of the covenant** (Christ).

Edwin Thiele comments:

With the arms of a flood v 22

New English Bible. “He will sweep away all forces of opposition as he advances, and even the Prince of the Covenant will be broken.”

Moffatt. “The opposing forces shall be swept before him and shattered, and so shall God’s high-priest.”

The power that was ultimately to develop into the imposing papal structure began with an artful show of innocence in the church of Christ, but in the days when it was first beginning to manifest itself it was already detected as a force of evil. To the leaders of Ephesus Paul said, “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). To the Thessalonians he wrote, “the mystery of iniquity doth already work” (2 Thess 2:7). And John wrote that “the spirit of anti-christ” which they had heard should come was even then already in the world (1 John 4:4). From its small, seemingly saintly beginnings this rising force was to grow into an overwhelming flood sweeping everything before it. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 138.

Regarding the “arms of a flood” by which God’s people were “overflown” and ultimately “broken,” we have, in our view, this account:

What was the origin of the great apostasy? How did the church first depart from the simplicity of the gospel? By conforming to the practices of paganism, to facilitate the acceptance of Christianity by the heathen. The apostle Paul declared, even in his day, “The mystery of iniquity doth already work.” 2 Thessalonians 2:7. During the lives of the apostles the church remained comparatively pure. But “toward the latter end of the second century most of the churches assumed a new form; the first simplicity disappeared, and insensibly, as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children, along with new converts . . . came forward and new-modeled the cause.”—Robert Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, ch. 6, par. 17, p. 51. To secure converts, the exalted standard of the Christian faith was lowered, and as the result “a pagan flood, flowing into the church, carried with it its customs, practices, and idols.”—Gavazzi, *Lectures*, page 278. *The Great Controversy*, 384–385 (emphasis supplied).

While God’s church was “overflown” and even “broken” by the pagan flood of Daniel 11:22, God did provide His church with a place of refuge from this same flood as it continued to flow many centuries later and as prophesied in Revelation 12:15–16:

<sup>7</sup> Cf. our comments on p. 26.

**15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.**

**16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.<sup>8</sup>**

We will discuss the earth's sanctuary to which the Reformationist church fled when we come to its later reference in the prophecy of Daniel 11.

### The Prince of the Covenant and His “Breaking”

Most Adventist commentators maintain that the “breaking” of the “prince of the covenant” in v. 22 refers to Christ's crucifixion. It is true that the Hebrew word for “prince” here is the same word found in the phrase “Messiah the Prince” of Daniel 9:25, and Daniel 9:25–27 describes the Messiah's work in the 70<sup>th</sup> week [of Daniel's 70-week prophecy] in which He would be “cut off,” or crucified. However, we do not believe we need limit references to Christ as the “Prince of the covenant” to the time of His covenant work in Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, papal Rome has always taken a keen interest, always negatively, in God's holy covenant. This negative interest is seen in Daniel 11:28 where “his heart shall be against the holy covenant” and in v. 30 where Rome has “indignation against the holy covenant” and even conspires with “them that forsake the holy covenant.” This being the case, if we are correct that papal Rome rises to power in vs. 21–22, it would not be surprising if in this initial rise to power she, in some way, attacked God's holy covenant. While we will identify later just how papal Rome did indeed do this, for now we will merely point out that, in our view, v. 22 describes the result of the papacy's earliest frontal attack on God's holy covenant. And thus this verse, even though its historical period is some three centuries into New Testament times, naturally speaks of the *figurative* “breaking” of God's people — the beneficiaries of God's covenant — as well as of the “Prince of the covenant” Himself. Now more of Thiele's comments on Daniel 11:22:

Christ is the Prince of the covenant. In Dan 9:25–27 He is the Messiah the Prince who was to confirm the covenant and was to be cut off. It was under imperial Rome during the reign of Tiberius Caesar that Christ was crucified, but it was under papal Rome that the opprobrious measures against the Prince of the covenant would be taken. *Outline Studies in Daniel*, 138.

Despite the popular Adventist view of placing the time of Daniel 11:22 in the time of Christ, as we have already indicated we concur with Thiele and Maxwell in placing this verse in the time of papal Rome;<sup>9</sup> a word study of the Hebrew word translated “broken” in v. 22 further explains why. Strong's definition (underlined emphasis supplied):

7665. **shabar**, *shaw-bar'*; a prim. root; to *burst* (lit. or fig.); — break (down, off, in pieces, up), broken ([hearted]), bring to the birth, crush, destroy, hurt, quench, X quite, tear, view [*by mistake for 7663*].

There is no mention here of “to die” or “to be put to death”; on the contrary, included in this definition is “bring to the birth” (as in the single case of Isa. 66:9).<sup>10</sup> And of the 149 times *shabar* is found in the Old Testament it is not once employed in direct reference to death. In the great preponderance of cases it simply means precisely what the English translation says—*break* (*brake*; KJV) or *broken*. Moreover, in Exodus 22:10 *shabar* (translated “hurt”) is employed *in contrast with* the word

<sup>8</sup> Cf. 7BC 812.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. again Maxwell's quote on p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Isa. 66:9: “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb*? saith thy God.”

“die” in the same verse.<sup>11</sup> But in harmony with Strong’s definition and other scriptural texts,<sup>12</sup> Thiele and Maxwell apply *shabar* in Daniel 11:22 in the *figurative* sense of being *brokenhearted*. One example of *shabar* being translated in this context is in David’s classic prayer of repentance—Psalm 51. In v. 17 of this psalm David employs *shabar* twice:

**17 The sacrifices of God are a broken<sup>7665</sup> spirit: a broken<sup>7665</sup> and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.**

Scripture not only uses the word *shabar* in reference to a humble spirit and heart, but to a heart broken with grief. Jeremiah experienced this in Jeremiah 23:9:

**9 Mine heart within me is broken<sup>7665</sup> because of the prophets . . . .**

The reason the false prophets broke Jeremiah’s heart was because they broke God’s people. Jeremiah 14:15–17:

**15 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.**

**16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.**

**17 Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken<sup>7665</sup> with a great breach<sup>7667</sup>, with a very grievous blow.**

The Hebrew word translated “breach” here is *sheber* (7667) which is taken from its primitive root *shabar* (7665). These words are very similar in meaning and appear to be used interchangeably. They are used together again, this time each translated “hurt” (KJV) in Jeremiah 8:21. Here Jeremiah describes himself as being *shabar* because his people are *sheber*. Jeremiah 8:21–22:

**21 For the hurt<sup>7667</sup> of the daughter of my people am I hurt<sup>7665</sup>, I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.**

**22 Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?**

Jeremiah goes on to describe in the next three verses his feelings in his “hurt” as well as the condition of his people in their “hurt.” Jeremiah 9:1–3:

**OH that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!**

**2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they *be* all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.**

**3 And they bend their tongues *like* their bow *for* lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.**

Speaking on behalf of his nation in apostasy, Jeremiah also laments in Jeremiah 10:19–22:

**19 Woe is me for my hurt<sup>7667</sup>! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this *is* a grief, and I must bear it.**

**20 My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is* none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.**

**21 For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.**

<sup>11</sup> Ex. 22:10: “If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt [*shabar*], or driven away, no man seeing *it*.”

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Ps. 34:18; 51:17; 61:1; 69:20; 147:3; Jer.23:9.



**22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the north country** (*i.e.* ancient Babylon, which typified spiritual Babylon, of which the Church of Rome is the mother church),<sup>13</sup> **to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.**

Like the experience of Jeremiah and the heart-cry of his nation, we can be sure that the heart of Christ was also “broken” over the condition of Jerusalem and His chosen people. In Ezekiel 6:9 the Lord Himself cries:

**9 . . . I am broken<sup>7665</sup> with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.**

Of course, Christ’s heart has been broken by the apostasy of His church in every age. Witness His experience on the original Palm Sunday. Luke 19:41–44:

**41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,  
42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.  
43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,  
44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.**

Commenting on this, Inspiration has noted:

Prophets had wept over the apostasy of Israel and the terrible desolations by which their sins were visited. Jeremiah wished that his eyes were a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people, for the Lord’s flock that was carried away captive. Jeremiah 9:1; 13:17. What, then, was the grief of Him whose prophetic glance took in, not years, but ages! *The Great Controversy*, 21.

As the heart of our Lord and as the heart of Jeremiah was broken by the apostasy of God’s people, so should the hearts of God’s true people today be “broken” as they discern the successful workings of the great enemy of Christ and His church.

In our view, the Hebrew word *shabar* is used in Daniel 11:22 to describe the condition of both the people of God and the Prince of the covenant Himself. The people of God in general were “overflowed” by the “arms of a flood” of false doctrines and idolatrous ceremonies imposed on them by papal Rome, and God’s true and discerning people who were not misled by these delusions were figuratively *shabar* (“broken”) as a result. “That was a time of deep anguish to the faithful followers of Christ” (*GC* 43).<sup>14</sup> Christ Himself would also have been heartbroken by this apostasy on the part of His beloved church. As the papacy set up a false sanctuary and the New Testament false prophets led God’s church back into the abyss of spiritual darkness, we can be sure that the heart of our Lord was grieved more deeply than we can know. Thus, we believe Daniel 11:22 depicts (1) the great apostasy of the New Testament church as she repeats the history of the apostasy of the Old Testament church and departs from her holy-covenant relationship with God by accepting the idolatry and practices of paganism — “with the arms of a [*pagan*] flood shall they be overflowed” — and (2) what this apostasy does to the hearts of God’s faithful people — “and [*they*] shall be broken.” But God’s faithful people were not the only ones grief stricken and figuratively heart “broken” by this apostasy. As we might expect and as v. 22 concludes, “yea, also the prince of the covenant.”

<sup>13</sup> That the Church of Rome constitutes the mother church of spiritual Babylon, cf. Rev. 17:3–6.

<sup>14</sup> See the context of this statement in the larger quote on p. 89.