

**Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates**  
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Panelist Biographical Information

Ever since joining the SDA Church through baptism in Lake City, FL (1996), I have served in several ministry assignments within the denomination. These include conference evangelist (Florida Conference, 1999-2007), pastor (Florida Conference, 2003-2007; Carolina Conference, 2007-2014), and senior pastor (Chesapeake Conference, 2015-2017; Georgia-Cumberland Conference, 2017-present). I was ordained by the Florida Conference in August 2006, and I currently serve as the senior pastor of the Knoxville First church in Knoxville, TN. I have also conducted 49 evangelistic meetings in 20 years of ministry. I am married to my wife Sarah of nearly 19 years, and God has blessed us with three energetic children.

Regarding Daniel 11, I have been reflecting on this chapter for the past 15 years, and have published a book on this subject, *Tidings Out of the Northeast* (Remnant, 2006). Since the time of that publication, however, I have grown in my understanding of Daniel 11, and have revised or changed some of my personal views on this apocalypse, especially in reference to vs. 40-43. A general summary of my view on Daniel 11 is as follows:

Dan. 11:1-4	Persia, Greece, 4 Greek Empires
Dan. 11:5-15	Seleucid Syria (KON) vs. Ptolemaic Egypt (KOS)
Dan. 11:16-30a	Imperial Rome (KON) vs. Ptolemaic Egypt (KOS)
Dan. 11:30b-39	Dark-Age Papal Rome (KON) – AD 538-1798
Dan. 11:40-45	End-Time Papal Rome (KON) – 1798-Christ's Return

Although several hermeneutical principles are important in the study of Daniel 11, there are three principles that are especially important. First, the Bible must be its own interpreter. This requires that passages with similar words, phrases, and subject matter are to be compared with each other to formulate interpretations. An application of this principle will confirm the empire sequence of Daniel 11, as well as the specific identity of the “king” in vs. 36.

Second, Daniel’s four apocalyptic visions (Daniel 2, 7, 8-9, and 10-12) reveal an interpretive consistency with each other in terms of their historical empire sequences. These empires are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, four Greek empires, Pagan-Imperial Rome, Papal Rome, and the heavenly kingdom. These visions each generally follow this sequence, with few exceptions, and because Papal Rome is the final earthly empire in the first three apocalypses, we should expect that this empire is the final earthly power in Daniel 10-12. The identification of Papal Rome as the final earthly empire in Daniel 11 constitutes the original Adventist pioneer view.

Third, the principle of typology is crucial to understanding apocalyptic prophecy. This principle is based on an understanding of the transfer of God’s covenant promises from OT Israel to the NT Church as spiritual Israel (*SDA Bible Commentary*, 4:25-38; *Prophets and Kings*, page 22). In fact, the history of OT Israel is also to be largely repeated by the remnant church in a spiritual sense (*Review & Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890; *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:283; 5:160). Overall, the

typological approach to apocalyptic prophecy recommends that prophetic symbols relating to end-time agents that are described in geographic language are generally to be interpreted in a global, symbolic sense and not in a literal, geographic sense.

For example, Babylon, Israel, the temple, Jerusalem (the holy city), and Zion on earth were geographic agents during OT times. However, applying the principle of typology, these terms as apocalyptic symbols now represent global, spiritual agents on earth, and are to be interpreted based on the disposition and temperament that they displayed toward God and His covenant people in Bible times. Babylon was once an OT city and geographic empire, but now refers to a global, spiritual system of religious confusion that seeks to control and persecute the faithful. Israel, the temple, Jerusalem (the holy city), and Zion were also once geographic agents in OT times, but now serve as symbols that represent God's covenant people in a spiritual sense.

The principle of typology is not a "phantomizing" approach (*Great Controversy*, page 360), as some have wrongly suggested. In fact, Ellen White referred to the holy city (Jerusalem) in Rev. 11:2 (cf. Luke 21:24) as a symbol of the church (*Spirit of Prophecy*, 4:188; *Great Controversy*, page 226). She also referred to Babylon and Israel as spiritual agents (*Great Controversy*, page 381; *Prophets and Kings*, page 74), and thus clearly used a typological approach to apocalyptic prophecy. Mrs. White seemed to imply that "phantomizing" involves spiritualizing prophetic symbols to the point where they find no literal, identifiable, historical fulfillments. Therefore, although the principle of typology interprets geographic apocalyptic terms in a global, spiritual sense, these terms still find their fulfillment in literal, historical, identifiable events.

Revelation draws heavily from OT imagery in its description of apocalyptic events. Major OT themes reflected in Revelation include the Exodus, the sanctuary, the fall of Jericho, the battle of Megiddo, the fall of Babylon, and Cyrus' deliverance of Israel from captivity. These historical events from the OT clearly have last-day parallels involving God's end-time remnant church on a global, spiritual scale. Because there is an interpretive consistency between Daniel and Revelation (Daniel is the partner book to Revelation), Daniel 11 also reveals important OT imagery. The history of ancient Judah's conquest by ancient Babylon (which, incidentally, took place in Daniel's lifetime), is nuanced in vs. 40-45. The OT conflict between ancient Babylon and ancient Judah is a typological model pointing to a global, spiritual conflict between apocalyptic Babylon (the "king of the north") and apocalyptic Israel (the "glorious holy mountain," God's remnant church) at the very end of human history.

For these important reasons, the typological approach is my chosen approach to the study of apocalyptic prophecy. The writings of the exilic and post-exilic OT prophets (from Isaiah to Malachi) reveal several prophecies that, because of OT Israel's inability to fulfill God's covenant promises, will find a future, universal fulfillment in the experience of the spiritual Israel of the Christian church on a global scale during the end-time conflict between remnant believers and a worldwide antichristian confederacy. I will elaborate further on the principles surveyed above (as well as several other hermeneutical principles that are also important in the study of Daniel 11) when we meet together in Las Vegas. I am very thankful for the opportunity to share and dialogue with fellow Daniel 11 colleagues at this symposium.