

# IDENTIFYING THE KING OF THE SOUTH THROUGH A NATURAL READING OF DANIEL 11

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This paper represents the view that the king of the South plays no role at all in last day events. The final prophecy of the king of the South was fulfilled in 1798, and he is never afterwards mentioned in prophetic history.

## **Hermeneutical Approach**

The book of Daniel contains three major symbolic visions. These are found in Chapters 2, 7, and 8. Each of these symbolic visions is immediately followed by an explanation of those symbols in plain, everyday language. Chapter 11, however, contains no symbolic vision, just pure explanation in straightforward language.

	Symbolic Vision	Explanation
Chapter 2	√	√
Chapter 7	√	√
Chapter 8	√	√
Chapter 11		√

Because of this, we can best understand this chapter through a simple and natural reading of the text. The words mean just what they do naturally. “King” means king. “North” means north. “South” means south. “Ships” means ships. “The king of the South” is simply the king of the South.

In context, the designations “the North” and “the South” have to do with how the territory of Alexander’s empire was divided up after he died. Daniel 11:4 envisions the four kingdoms that resulted from the Battle of Ipsus in 301 BC. Then after Seleucus killed Lysimachus and acquired

most of his territory, only three remained: the Seleucid Empire, Egypt, and Macedonia. Daniel 11 basically ignores Macedonia and focuses only on the territories of the North and the South.

It appears that in order to be designated as the king of the South, the king must have the South as his headquarters from which he rules. Thus, when a Greek gains control of the southern territory of Alexander's empire, making it his headquarters from which he rules (Daniel 11:5), he becomes the king of the South. When a Roman later gains control of the southern territory of Alexander's empire, making it his headquarters from which he rules (Daniel 11:25), he becomes the king of the South. When a Mamluk gains control of the southern territory of Alexander's original empire, making it his headquarters from which he rules, he becomes the king of the South (Daniel 11:40). But notice that when a Roman conquers the northern territory of Alexander's empire (Daniel 11:16), but does *not* make it his headquarters from which he rules, he is not called the king of the North. Instead, he is designated as "he that cometh against him." Yet, when a Turk later conquers the northern territory of Alexander's empire, and *does* make it his headquarters from which he rules, he is then called the king of the North (Daniel 11:40).

How do we know whether we are talking about a Greek or a Roman or a Turk? We base it on the time designation supplied in the text. For example, Daniel 11:40 says, "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him." The generally accepted view among Seventh-day Adventists is that the time of the end began in 1798.<sup>1</sup> So we simply allow history to tell us what ruler was headquartered in that territory at that time, and how he precisely fulfilled the prophecy.

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<sup>1</sup> *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4 (Washington, D. C.: Review & Herald, 1955), 875.

<sup>2</sup> *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 19<sup>th</sup> Edition, Revised 2015, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> We will notice her comments on verses 30-36 in a later section of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> *Review and Herald*, September 6, 1877.

<sup>5</sup> E. G. White, Letter 55, 1884, par. 6.

<sup>6</sup> E. G. White, Letter 55, 1884, par. 7.

<sup>7</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 189, 1898, par. 9 (December 25, 1898).

<sup>8</sup> "Eastern Question." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Dec. 15, 2011. Accessed March 5, 2018.

[www.britannica.com/event/Eastern-Question](http://www.britannica.com/event/Eastern-Question).

<sup>9</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 95, 1898, par .6.

## The Prophetic Authority of Ellen White

Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #18 affirms that the writings of Ellen G. White “speak with prophetic authority.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, any light her writings can shed on the application of Daniel 11 is extremely valuable. I would like to point out just a few Ellen White comments that have a bearing on Daniel 11:40-45, the verses that are of specific interest in our current discussion.<sup>3</sup> Here are those statements:

[1877] “Sunday morning the weather was still cloudy, but before it was time for the people to assemble the sun shone forth. Boats and trains poured their living freight upon the ground, as was the case last year. Elder Smith spoke in the morning upon the Eastern question. The subject was of special interest, and the people listened with the most earnest attention. It seemed to be just what they wanted to hear.”<sup>4</sup>

[August 24, 1884] “Elder Smith spoke on the Sabbath question to a large congregation this morning, and this evening he speaks on the Eastern question. I feel so grateful that Brother Smith is not lost to the cause. He seems fully and thoroughly united with us; seems like Brother Smith of old. Oh, thank the Lord! Praise His Holy Name, that His love, His wondrous love has been exercised toward the children of men. It is so dark, I must stop. Will write you tomorrow.”<sup>5</sup>

“Aug. 25, 11:00 a.m. The first two pages were written Sunday after I had spoken to the crowd. The evening meeting was largely attended. Elder Smith spoke with great clearness, and many listened with open eyes, ears, and mouths. The outsiders seemed to be intensely interested in the Eastern question. He closed with a very solemn address to those who had not been preparing for these great events in the near future.”<sup>6</sup>

[1898] “Elder Daniells speaks this evening upon the Eastern Question. May the Lord give His Holy Spirit to inspire the hearts to make the truth plain.”<sup>7</sup>

The first thing we want to notice is the subject upon which these ministers were lecturing.

Their subject in each case was the Eastern Question. Let’s get a summary of what the Eastern Question was.

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<sup>2</sup> *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 19<sup>th</sup> Edition, Revised 2015, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> We will notice her comments on verses 30-36 in a later section of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> *Review and Herald*, September 6, 1877.

<sup>5</sup> E. G. White, Letter 55, 1884, par. 6.

<sup>6</sup> E. G. White, Letter 55, 1884, par. 7.

<sup>7</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 189, 1898, par. 9 (December 25, 1898).

“Eastern Question, diplomatic problem posed in the 19th and early 20th centuries by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, centring on the contest for control of former Ottoman territories. Any internal change in the Turkish domains caused tension among the European powers, each of which feared that one of the others might take advantage of the political disarray to increase its own influence.”<sup>8</sup>

So these ministers were preaching entire sermons about this.

Aside from the question of whether or not Ellen White agreed with the presenters’ *position* on the subject, we must acknowledge from her positive comments that she at least considered the *subject itself*—the Eastern Question—to be worthy of a preacher’s attention. This is remarkable in light of other comments such as:

"The work of keeping before the people the common things transpiring around us, the news of the day, is not the work of present truth."<sup>9</sup>

"The long accounts of the war can be obtained in any political or daily paper. It is not the business of the householder, whom God has appointed, to bring before the people subjects that may be found in the publications of the world."<sup>10</sup>

"The Lord has given to every man his work, and to those whom He has placed in positions of responsibility, either in writing or in speaking, He says, 'Your work is to preach the Word.'"<sup>11</sup>

That counsel was given four months before her comment about Elder Daniells’ public message. Yet we see no concern expressed that he had become sidetracked from present truth.

On another occasion she was inspired to write,

“Let us confine our public efforts to the presentation of the important lines of truth on which we are united, and on which we have clear light.”<sup>12</sup>

Here are laid out three criteria for determining if a subject is appropriate for the pulpit. First, it must be an “important line of truth.” Second, it must be something “on which we are united.”

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<sup>8</sup> “Eastern Question.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Dec. 15, 2011. Accessed March 5, 2018. [www.britannica.com/event/Eastern-Question](http://www.britannica.com/event/Eastern-Question).

<sup>9</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 95, 1898, par .6.

<sup>10</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 95, 1898, par. 4.

<sup>11</sup> E. G. White, Manuscript 95, 1898, par. 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 167.

And third, it must be a matter “on which we have clear light.” If the Eastern Question did not meet those criteria, it should have been left out of the evangelistic series altogether.

“There are many questions treated upon that are not necessary for the perfection of the faith. We have no time for their study.”<sup>13</sup>

“Matters of vital importance have been plainly revealed in the Word of God. These subjects are worthy of our deepest thought. But we are not to search into matters on which God has been silent.”<sup>14</sup>

So, the most important test to apply to a potential evangelistic topic is, Is this subject plainly revealed in the Word of God, or is it a matter on which God has been silent?

If the Eastern Question were to be found in the Bible, where in the Bible would it be? The ministers mentioned above were convinced that the Eastern Question was the very subject described in Daniel 11:44, 45. So if it is not there, they had no business preaching about it. Yet Ellen White speaks highly of the presentations. Elder Smith, in presenting the subject, was “fully and thoroughly united with us.” That was one of the mentioned criteria. Ellen White characterizes the world developments that he presented in his sermon as “these great events in the near future.” And as Elder Daniells discussed the Eastern Question, he was, in her words, presenting “the truth.”

The only justification for preaching about the news of the day would be if that news actually was a part of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. For the prophet wrote:

“Let all have more to teach, to write, to publish, in regard to those things that are now to be fulfilled.”<sup>15</sup>

“Let no time be lost in dwelling on those things that are not essential, and that have no bearing upon the present necessities of the people. . . . They need to know that the signs of the times are fulfilling.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 163.

<sup>14</sup> *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 173.

<sup>15</sup> *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

“I saw that the last-day signs should be brought out clearly.”<sup>17</sup>

“By pen and voice we are to sound the proclamation, showing their [the three angels’ messages] order, and the application of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel’s message. . . . These messages we are to give to the world in publications, in discourses, showing in the line of prophetic history the things that have been, and the things that will be.”<sup>18</sup>

The reason the brethren were preaching about the Eastern Question was not because it was interesting news of the day, but because they saw those events within the line of prophetic history. And Ellen White’s evident approval of the Eastern Question as a topic appropriate for public evangelism indicates that she herself saw those events to be within the line of prophetic history. Since we as a church believe that her writings speak with prophetic authority, what she has written in support of the Eastern Question as an approved subject within the realm of Bible prophecy should cause us to consider the possibility that in fact it was.

### **Problems With a Figurative Interpretation of Daniel 11**

As mentioned in the section on our hermeneutical approach, Daniel Chapter 11 is not a symbolic vision such as we find in Chapters 2, 7, and 8. It is more like the explanatory verses that *follow* the symbolic vision in each of those earlier chapters. We will now see why all the competing figurative interpretations of Daniel 11:40-45 are so hard to defend with anything more than assumption and speculation. I will list fourteen reasons why various figurative interpretations of this passage don’t work. Some of these points are discussed elsewhere in this paper, but for a handy reference, they are summarized here.

*1. Symbolism and figurative language are not consistent with the nature of the chapter.*

Daniel 11 is not an encoded prophecy but an explanation in plain language.

Someone might counter this statement by saying that there are some figurative terms in the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

chapter, such as the *tamid* in verse 31. I would respond to the contrary, and point out that there is no reason why this term, translated “daily” or “continual,” must be denied its natural meaning. It is talking about the continual *something*, although it does not specify what that something is. But a missing word does not require us to interpret the existing word to mean something other than it naturally does.

2. *We have the inspired endorsement of William Miller’s rules of prophetic interpretation.*

Notice what Ellen White had to say about the methods used by our ministers in 1884:

“Those who are engaged in proclaiming the third angel’s message are searching the Scriptures upon the same plan that Father Miller adopted. In the little book entitled ‘Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology,’ Father Miller gives the following simple but intelligent and important rules for Bible study and interpretation:

‘1. Every word must have its proper bearing on the subject presented in the Bible; 2. All Scripture is necessary, and may be understood by diligent application and study; 3. Nothing revealed in Scripture can or will be hid from those who ask in faith, not wavering; 4. To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know, then let every word have its proper influence; and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in error; 5. Scripture must be its own expositor, since it is a rule of itself. If I depend on a teacher to expound to me, and he should guess at its meaning, or desire to have it so on account of his sectarian creed, or to be thought wise, then his guessing, desire, creed, or wisdom is my rule, and not the Bible.’

The above is a portion of these rules; and in our study of the Bible we shall all do well to heed the principles set forth.”<sup>19</sup>

According to Ellen White in 1884, those who were at that time engaged in proclaiming the third angel’s message were using William Miller’s rules of prophetic interpretation. That was the methodology behind their application of the prophecies. This statement was made just three months after she had described Uriah Smith’s public presentation on the Eastern Question as being delivered “with great clearness,” on “these great events in the near future.”<sup>20</sup> Ellen White’s positive comments about Uriah Smith’s lectures on Daniel 11:44, 45 are consistent with her

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<sup>19</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884.

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White, Letter 55, August 25, 1884, par. 7.

endorsement of the methodology that he and our other ministers employed—the rules set forth by William Miller. One of those rules states:

“XI. How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it must be understood literally; if not, figuratively.”<sup>21</sup>

With that rule, Uriah Smith and his colleagues who were proclaiming the third angel’s message could see no justification for applying a figurative interpretation to Daniel 11. Since a literal interpretation of the passage does in fact work, we have no legitimate reason to interpret it figuratively without doing injustice to this divinely endorsed rule.

3. *The assumption that pagan Rome was the king of the North requires reading into the text something it doesn’t say, since it was never given that title in Scripture.* Rome is presented, not as the king of the North, but as “he that cometh against him” (verse 16).

4. *The lack of evidence that words such as “king,” “north,” and “ships” are figurative, and the lack of Biblical keys for interpreting them figuratively, suggest that these words are to be taken literally.* Every major prophetic symbol in the book of Daniel is accompanied by an inspired interpretation of that symbol. The lack of any similar treatment of any expression in Chapter 11 should bring caution to the interpreter who wishes to treat its clear explanations symbolically or figuratively.

5. *We have no inspired statement that a philosophy or an ideology was ever “the king of the South.”* Without a solid reference to support such an interpretation, it is mere speculation to deny the expression its natural meaning and apply the phrase to some religious or civil organization or movement not identified in the text.

Revolutionary France was “spiritually called Egypt” in Revelation 11 because the nation at

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<sup>21</sup> Joshua V. Himes, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology Selected From Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 22.

that time demonstrated certain characteristics of Egypt. But Daniel 11 says nothing about anything being spiritually called Egypt.

6. *The papacy in 1798 was wounded by neither literal nor spiritual Egypt.* The prophetic period assigned to the beast from the bottomless pit in Revelation 11 was three and a half years.

“It was in 1793 that the decrees which abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body.”<sup>22</sup>

According to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, the characteristics of France that qualified it to spiritually be called “Egypt” ceased to characterize it at the end of the three and a half years. Otherwise, the prophecy would have failed. To believe that spiritual Egypt controlled France beyond those three and a half years, even into 1798, is to deny the accuracy of the time prophecy in Revelation 11.

7. *Babylon is never called the king of the North in Daniel 11 or elsewhere.* Babylon is not even mentioned in Daniel 11, so there is no hook on which to hang a spiritual interpretation of Babylon in the chapter.

8. *The attempt to identify the king of the North with Babylon lacks textual support.* Babylon as a capital had been abandoned by the Seleucids before the first labeled king of the North appears in Daniel 11:6. Seleucus I, the only ruler of the dynasty ever to rule from Babylon, is interestingly not referred to as “the king of the North” in Daniel 11, which leaves us without that linguistic tie.

9. *Neither God nor Jesus nor Satan is ever referred to in Scripture as the “king of the North.”*

10. *Neither Medo-Persia nor Greece is ever called the king of the North in Daniel 11 or*

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<sup>22</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 287.

*elsewhere.*

11. According to Daniel 12:1, probation closes at the time that the king of the North comes to his end. But from other prophecies we know that *neither the papacy nor its image in the western world will come to an end until well after probation closes.* That pretty much disqualifies them from being the power described in Daniel 11:45.

12. Obviously, Jesus cannot return until all of Daniel 11 is fulfilled. But the Lord clearly told us as early as 1883 that,

“Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and *Christ could have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.*”<sup>23</sup>

Any interpretation of Daniel 11 that requires a 20<sup>th</sup> Century world development (such as the rise and fall of the Soviet Union), or a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world development (such as Al-Qaeda or ISIS), must be rejected. *Every specification in the entire chapter needs to have had the possibility of being fulfilled before 1883.* Only with a literal reading of Daniel 11 would that have been possible.

13. *Once you reject a solid, natural reading of the text, the spiritual and/or metaphorical options for interpretation are limitless.* The resulting uncontainable universe of opinions makes it impossible for the church to establish a consensus position on the one prophetic marker that the Bible specifically attaches to the close of human probation.

14. *Ellen White warned against the introduction of new interpretations.*

“There are persons ready to catch up every new idea. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation are misinterpreted. These persons do not consider that the truth has been set forth at the appointed time by the very men whom God was leading to do this special work. These men followed on step by step in the very

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<sup>23</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 695, emphasis added.

fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work are to take the Word of God and believe on 'their word' who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages."<sup>24</sup>

"It is true that there are prophecies yet to be fulfilled. But very erroneous work has been done again and again, and will continue to be done by those who seek to find new light in the prophecies, and who begin by turning away from the light that God has already given. . . . But the Lord does not lay upon those who have not had an experience in His work the burden of making a new exposition of those prophecies which He has, by His Holy Spirit, moved upon His chosen servants to explain."<sup>25</sup>

"You and other of our brethren must accept the truth as God has given it to His students of prophecy, as they have been led by genuine, living experience, advancing point by point, tested, proved, and tried, until the truth is to them a reality. From their voices and pens the truth in bright, warm rays has gone to all parts of the world, and that which was to them testing truth, as brought by the Lord's delegated messengers, is testing truth to all to whom this message is proclaimed."<sup>26</sup>

"There must be no long discussions, no presenting of new theories in regard to prophecies that God has already made plain."<sup>27</sup>

### **Consistency of Chapter 11 with Daniel's Earlier Prophecies**

One of the most commonly voiced objections to the classical Adventist view of Daniel 11:40-45 is the claim that it ends up focusing on a different entity from what we find in the book's earlier prophecies. Thus, they say, it violates the principle of "repeat and enlarge" in which each of Daniel's prophecies covers the same territory as the vision before it, and expands or enlarges on what was presented earlier. James White raised this objection in 1877:

"Let us take a brief view of the line of prophecy four times spanned in the book of Daniel. It will be admitted that the same ground is passed over in chapters two, seven, eight, and eleven, with this exception that Babylon is left out of chapters eight and eleven. We first pass down the great image of chapter 2, where Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome are represented by the gold, the silver, the brass and the iron. All agree that these feet are not Turkish but Roman. And as we pass down, the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the beast with ten horns,

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<sup>24</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 17, p. 14, par. 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 17, p. 15, par. 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 17, p. 3, par. 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1900, par. 13.

representing the same as the great image, again all will agree that it is not Turkey that is cast into the burning flame, but the Roman beast. So of chapter 8, all agree that the little horn that stood up against the Prince of princes is not Turkey but Rome. In all these three lines thus far Rome is the last form of government mentioned.

“Now comes the point in the argument upon which very much depends. Does the eleventh chapter of the prophecy of Daniel cover the ground measured by chapters two, seven, and eight? If so, then the last power mentioned in that chapter is Rome.”<sup>28</sup>

Chapter 11 should line up with Daniel’s earlier prophecies. We believe a careful comparison will show that to be the case. Let’s line them up in parallel columns.

	Chapter 2	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 11
<b>Babylon</b>	Gold	Lion		
<b>Medo-Persia</b>	Silver	Bear	Ram	11:2
<b>Greece</b>	Brass	Leopard	Goat	11:3-19
<b>Rome</b>	Iron	4 <sup>th</sup> Beast	Little Horn	11:20-29
<b>The Middle Ages</b>	Iron & Clay	Horns	Little Horn	11:30-39
<b>The Time of the End</b>	Stone	Judgment	Cleansing	11:40 – 12:3

It will be noticed that the last kingdom in each of the four prophecies is not Rome, but the kingdom of God. The stone that becomes a mountain, the investigative judgment, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and Michael standing up, are all about the formation of the last great kingdom of Bible prophecy, the eternal kingdom of God. When we line up all the elements of Daniel’s prophecies into their proper historical periods, we find that the papacy belongs to the Middle Ages period, not to the Time of the End period. The passage we are presently interested in, Daniel 11:40-45, falls within the Time of the End period, from 1798 onward, in which none of Daniel’s earlier chapters highlight the papacy. To insert the papacy into the Time of the End section of Chapter 11 is to violate the pattern established in the earlier chapters.

Even in the book of Revelation the papacy moves off the center stage of prophecy in 1798.

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<sup>28</sup> James White, “Unfulfilled Prophecy,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 29, 1877. Vol. 50, No. 22, p. 172. For an explanation of James White’s opposition to the prevailing view, see *W. C. White Letter Regarding the Eastern Question*, St. Helena, California, March 6, 1919.

It is the United States, the second beast of Revelation 13 as it forms an image of the beast, which plays the larger role in Revelation's end time events, causing all to receive the mark of the beast, and enforcing it with a death penalty.

"There is need of a much closer study of the Word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the Papacy, but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God."<sup>29</sup>

To switch the hermeneutical approach in the middle of Daniel Chapter 11 in order to unnaturally insert the papacy into the Time of the End scenario, when none of Daniel's other prophecies do so, is an artificial manipulation of the text to achieve a pre-supposed outcome.

But the objection is really about the insertion of Turkey into Chapter 11 when that power does not appear at all in the earlier chapters. What about that?

We simply need to remember that Daniel 11 is not about kingdoms. It is about the standing kings and rulers of defined territories. The territories are those specified in Daniel's earlier prophecies. *None* of the kings of the North and South are mentioned in the earlier chapters.

### **Application of Daniel 11:30-36**

The Roman emperor was to forecast his devices from the strongholds of Rome for exactly 360 years ("even for a time," which is one prophetic year of 360 prophetic days, Daniel 11:24). Dating the imperial phase of Rome from the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, this prophecy takes us to AD 330, when Constantine moved the capital from Rome to Constantinople "at the time appointed" (verse 29). Thus closes the Roman period of the prophecy.

Next to appear are the ships of Chittim (verse 30). Not only did the Vandals employ ships in their attacks on the Roman Empire, but so did the Goths as early as the mid third century.

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<sup>29</sup> Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 577.

Gabriel singles out these ships to represent the barbarian invasions as a whole. The first major military victory of the barbarians over the Romans was at the Battle of Adrianople in AD 378, in which the emperor Valens was slain. Following that, under the administration of his successor, Theodosius, thousands of Goths poured into the empire.

The western civil ruler is then said to “have indignation against the holy covenant” and to “have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant” (verse 30). “Them that forsake the holy covenant” can be none other than the Roman Catholic clergy, who during this period led the church into great apostasy. The civil ruler, still the subject of the passage, forms relations with these apostate churchmen. This was certainly the case with Theodosius. He not only defined Catholic orthodoxy, but did more than any other emperor to establish it throughout the empire. His intelligence with them that forsook the holy covenant is well illustrated when on one occasion he publicly humbled himself in sackcloth and ashes before Bishop Ambrose of Milan.

But now that the *barbarians* had overrun the empire, the prophetic focus must turn to one of *them*. The last Roman emperor in the West was deposed in 476, and with the Roman government went the influence of Catholicism. By the end of that century the territory of the former Roman Empire in the West was dominated by three major kingdoms. The Ostrogoths held Italy, the Visigoths controlled Spain and Gaul, and the Vandals occupied North Africa. All were Christian nations; none of them Catholic. And so, as prophecy had dictated, none of those three nations would inherit the storyline of Daniel 11. Their kingdoms would be subdued.

Ellen White, in her only major comment on Daniel 11, writes,

“The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of

strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.

“ ‘And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

“ ‘And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.’ ”<sup>30</sup>

The specific verses that she quotes here are 30-36. Her treatment of those verses as a block suggests that it is a single power spoken of throughout the entirety of the quoted passage. But what power would that be? She doesn't say. Yet, if we maintain the same hermeneutical approach to this passage that we have been employing since the beginning of the chapter, we will allow history to tell us what power it was that precisely fulfilled the specifications of this prophecy.

“It was the Franks alone of all the German tribes who became a wide power in the general history of the middle ages. It is to them that the political inheritance of the Roman Empire passed; to them came the honor of taking up and carrying on, roughly, to be sure, and far less extensively and effectively, but nevertheless of actually carrying on the political work which Rome had been doing.”<sup>31</sup>

When the Roman Empire in the West collapsed, the storyline of Western civil rulers in Daniel 11 continues on with Western Rome's political heirs, the kings of France. We will notice how history precisely fulfills the very words of the prophecy.

After 476, there was not one Catholic civil ruler in the entire West. Of the ten horns in Daniel 7, all but two were Arian. The two exceptions were the Anglo-Saxons and the Franks, both of whom were pagan. Under such circumstances, the chances of Catholicism ever

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<sup>30</sup> E. G. White, Letter 103, 1904.

<sup>31</sup> George Burton Adams, *Civilization During the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 137.

dominating Europe appeared to be nil. But in 496 Clovis, the king of the Franks, was baptized<sup>32</sup> into the Catholic Church by Remigius, the Bishop of Reims.

“But with the conversion of Clovis, there was at least one barbarian leader with whom the Bishop of Rome could negotiate as with a faithful son of the Church. It is from the orthodox Gregory of Tours that most of our knowledge of Clovis and his successors is derived. In Gregory’s famous *History of the Franks*, the cruel and unscrupulous king appears as God’s chosen instrument for the extension of the Catholic faith. Certainly Clovis quickly learned to combine his own interests with those of the Church, and the alliance between the pope and the Frankish kings was destined to have a great influence upon the history of western Europe.”<sup>33</sup>

Let’s apply Daniel 11:30 to Clovis and see how accurately the text describes him. The alliance formed between Clovis and the Church certainly fulfills the specification that he would have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. But notice that the scripture also says that he “shall be *grieved*, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant.” In 507, Clovis launched a military campaign against the Visigoths who occupied Gaul to the south of him. In announcing this mission before leaving Paris, he spoke the very word used in the text, saying,

“It *grieves* me to see that the Arians still possess the fairest portion of Gaul. Let us march against them with the aid of God; and, having vanquished the heretics, we will possess and divide their fertile provinces.”<sup>34</sup>

Verse 31 says, “And arms shall stand on his part.” The NIV translates it, “armed forces.” Daniel 8:12, referring to the same event, says, “And an host [“army,” NKJV] was given him against the daily.” So, both Chapter 8 and Chapter 11 describe a military action undertaken by Clovis’ army. Since the result of this invasion would be the taking away of the daily and the placing of the abomination that maketh desolate (11:31), we are able, using Daniel 12:11, to

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<sup>32</sup> The traditional date.

<sup>33</sup> James Harvey Robinson, *An Introduction to the History of Western Europe* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1903), 35, 36.

<sup>34</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. H. H. Milman, vol. III, (New York: John W. Lovell Company, 1845), 582.

accurately assign this war to the year 508.<sup>35</sup> Many historians focus only on the year 507 in which Alaric II was slain, but Clovis wintered over in Bordeaux and continued his campaign in the spring, taking possession of the royal treasure at Toulouse and concluding his conquest in 508.<sup>36</sup>

What was the significance of this battle?

“It is evident, from the language of Gregory of Tours, that this conflict between the Franks and the Visigoths was regarded by the orthodox party of his own and preceding ages as a religious war, on which, humanly speaking, the prevalence of the Catholic or the Arian creed in Western Europe depended. Clovis did everything in his power to deepen this impression.”<sup>37</sup>

“Nor was his a temporary conquest. The kingdom of the West Goths and the Burgundians had become the kingdom of the Franks. The invaders had at length arrived, who were to remain. It was decided that the Franks, and not the Goths, were to direct the future destinies of Gaul and Germany, and that the Catholic faith, and not Arianism, was to be the religion of these great realms.”<sup>38</sup>

The “daily” must relate to the truth that was suppressed as the result of Clovis’ victory; and “the abomination that maketh desolate” would be the false theology that gained the ascendancy by that action.

Verse 32 says, “And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries.” The subject of this sentence, the pronoun “he,” continues to denote the successive French monarchs, Pepin, Charlemagne, and their successors, who corrupted the popes (“such as do wickedly against the covenant”) by flatteries.

Verses 33-35 describe the people of God who suffered through those long centuries. So far in the chapter we have not found the papacy to be the subject of any sentence. We have found instances when the civil ruler had intelligence with the ecclesiastical authorities. We have found

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<sup>35</sup> Daniel 12:11 tells us that this would take place 1290 years before “the end of these wonders” (12:6), which was also the end of the 1260 years (“time, times, and an half,” verse 7), which we know to be 1798. That gives us the date of 508 for the taking away of the daily and the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate.

<sup>36</sup> Walter C. Perry, *The Franks, From Their First Appearance in History to the Death of King Pepin* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857), 87, 88.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>38</sup> Richard W. Church, *The Beginning of the Middle Ages* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1877), 36, 37.

kings who corrupted the Roman pontiffs by flatteries. But the “he” that performs the action in each verse is a civil ruler.

From Ellen White’s inclusion of verse 36 in the segment she quotes, prefaced by “a power is spoken of,” we must conclude that verse 36 is talking about the same power that was introduced in verse 30. The French monarchy attained to the height of its splendor in Louis XIV. In him the words of Daniel 11:36 find a striking application:

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.” Daniel 11:36.

“The morning after the death of Mazarine, the King assembled his council, and at once silenced their anxieties and expectations with a short speech: ‘I have called you together to say that, though hitherto I have been well satisfied that my government should be conducted by the late Cardinal, I intend henceforth to govern it in my own person. You will assist me with your advice when I demand it.’ The council was dismissed. Mazarine had educated him to be a despot. His contemporaries complained of the Cardinal that he had never taught the young King to govern himself and his kingdom by religious or moral principle, or motives of national policy and statesmanship. He had left him to grow up a handsome, fascinating prince, in a lascivious court. His intercourse with the assembled ladies polished his manners, and gave him that air and presence so charming to all that approached him. He knew how to allure and how to repel by his attitudes and countenance. His will and pleasure governed the court.”<sup>39</sup>

“Louis had never been taught gratitude to man or God. Born king, he was taught his importance to the welfare of the State. When Mazarine was dead he felt himself delivered from all obstructions to his will; and, declaring he would govern according to his own wishes, he took the position which he maintained through life—‘*I am the State.*’”<sup>40</sup>

“Louis XIV resolved there should be unity in the Church of France, and the church of his choice should embrace all France. It was his will. How could it be resisted. His means and efforts to bring the Reformed to coalesce with the Catholic Church, ending in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and dispersing in a short time half a million of Frenchmen to the different Protestant nations, in addition to the many thousands already forced to leave their native soil, are

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<sup>39</sup> William Henry Foote, D.D. *The Huguenots, or the Reformed French Church* (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 2002), 336.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 337, 338.

worthy of a condensed detail.”<sup>41</sup>

We cannot go into those details, but in the end, the eradication of Protestantism from France under Louis XIV resulted in the conditions that bred the Reign of Terror, which is aptly described in the next few verses.

Let us notice again what Ellen White had to say about Daniel 11.

“The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that . . . [verses 30-36 quoted]. Scenes similar to those described in these words will take place.”<sup>42</sup>

We who understand the end-time issues in the book of Revelation are naturally inclined to try to fit those issues into Daniel 11. But notice carefully. The connection that Ellen White makes between Daniel 11 and Revelation’s end-time scenario is not to be found in verses 40-45, but rather in the repetition of the scenes that were fulfilled in the history of verses 30-36. Just as France gave power to the papacy, so the United States will give life to the image of the beast. Nor is the pope the subject even of verses 30-36. Instead, as we have clearly demonstrated, those verses are about the civil rulers of France who were responsible for propping up the pope. The papacy by itself is powerless. It is only when the state establishes and enforces religion that persecution happens. This is the lesson for the last days that is to be learned from Daniel 11:30-36.

### **Application of Daniel 11:40-45**

When we arrive at verse 40, we find ourselves in the Time of the End. The 1260 years of papal supremacy have ended, and the prophetic spotlight now returns to the East, where we once again meet the kings of the North and South.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 339.

<sup>42</sup> E. G. White, Letter 103, 1904.

At this point we need to establish who's who. When the Time of the End began in 1798, Sultan Selim III was the king of the North. The Ottoman Empire, headquartered in the northern territory of Alexander's former empire, had ruled the East for nearly 350 years. Egypt, for the moment, was autonomously governed by a duumvirate of Mamluk chieftains, Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey, who had revolted against Ottoman control.

Then there is one other player that we need to identify, designated in the text as "him." In context, this person would need to represent the French government, the subject of the previous ten verses. The most prominent figure in France at the time was Napoleon Bonaparte. So, let's plug these people into Daniel 11:40 and see what happens.

“And at the time of the end [1798] shall the king of the south [Murad Bey] push at him [Napoleon Bonaparte]: and the king of the north [Sultan Selim III] shall come against him [Napoleon Bonaparte] like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.”

Napoleon had led an army of some 30,000 men to seize Egypt from the Mamluks and gain control of the passage to India. They landed near Alexandria on July 1, 1798 and soon had possession of the city. On July 7 they headed south toward Cairo. On July 21, near the town of Embabeh, the French encountered the Mamluk forces in the so-called Battle of the Pyramids.

The text calls for the king of the South to take the offense, and the French to take the defense, in this battle. Napoleon formed his troops into five hollow rectangles, with six ranks of armed soldiers facing outward in each direction. Each of these divisional squares could move as a unit as necessary, but for the most part all they needed to do was to stand stationary. Murad Bey commanded a cavalry 6,000 strong, each rider armed with a rifle, several pistols, a javelin, and a short, curved sword. At Murad's order, wave after wave of mounted Mamluks charged at full gallop against the impenetrable French defense. The onslaught was steadily repulsed; each wave of cavalry being cut down by the French until the Mamluks finally abandoned the field.

After that, Murad Bey engaged in ongoing guerilla attacks against the French for over a year until he finally allied himself with them against the approaching Turkish army. He died of the plague on April 7, 1801, and the king of the South is never again mentioned in Bible prophecy.

The second specification of our text calls for the king of the North to come against the French leader. On September 2, 1798, in fulfillment of the prophecy, the Ottoman Sultan declared war on France. Bonaparte had come to Egypt as a professed ally of the Sultan. But obviously the Sultan did not see things that way. He mobilized two armies to attack Napoleon from different directions. The first army was a land force of 12,000 soldiers who would later be reinforced with 18,000 additional recruits. The second army, with 50,000 soldiers commanded by Mustafa Pasha, began to assemble in Rhodes for an attack by sea.

Knowing he could not fight off both Ottoman armies at once, Bonaparte decided that his best hope would be to first meet the land army in Syria before the second army arrived by sea. Marching north, he fared well until he encountered the Ottoman troops at the heavily-fortified coastal city of Acre. British battleships and Turkish gunboats patrolling the harbor provided essential support to Jezzar Pasha who commanded the army within the city. During the two-month standoff at Acre, tens of thousands of Turkish relief troops stormed in from Damascus and elsewhere, whom the French encountered at Mount Tabor and throughout Galilee.<sup>43</sup> Ottoman reinforcements continued to arrive by sea. Finally, Bonaparte ordered a withdrawal under the cover of night, and, with what was left of his army, he retreated to Egypt. He hadn't been in Cairo very long when, on a mission to Giza, he learned that there were 100 Ottoman ships off Aboukir, threatening Alexandria. By swift action, Napoleon was able to defeat that 18,000-man force; but that was his last victory in Egypt. As soon as an opportunity presented itself, he

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<sup>43</sup> Herb Feinberg, "North to Palestine: Napoleon Marches Against the Turks." *Napoleonic Scholarship: The Journal of the International Napoleonic Society*. Vol. 1, Number 2, December 1998. [http://www.napoleonicsociety.com/english/scholarship98/c\\_palestine.html](http://www.napoleonicsociety.com/english/scholarship98/c_palestine.html) (Accessed April 12, 2018).

returned to France, leaving his troops under the command of General Kleber. With his departure, the West exits from the prophecies of Daniel. Of the three rulers mentioned at the beginning of verse 40, only the Turkish king remains at the end of the verse. It is he who will now “overflow and pass over.”

When Bonaparte retreated from Acre, he abandoned all his conquests in Judea, permitting the Turks to “enter also into the glorious land” (verse 41). But Edom and Moab and Ammon were out of the way and untouched. The prediction in verse 42 was that “the land of Egypt shall not escape.” In 1801 the French occupation of Egypt was overthrown, and Egypt was formally awarded to the Ottoman Empire at the Treaty of Paris on June 25, 1802. Egypt was again placed under tribute to the Porte (verse 43), to which the Libyans and the Ethiopians also gave their blessing.

We are now ready to examine verse 44.

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

We are still talking about the Ottoman Sultan; no one else has entered the discussion. He must now be troubled by tidings out of the east and out of the north. These compass directions would be in relation to his own geographical position. It is at this stage that we must consider the world developments that confronted the Ottoman Empire as the nineteenth century progressed.

The Industrial Revolution in the West, and the conquest and rapid growth of the New World, shifted power away from the Ottoman-controlled East. At the same time, a new rival to the Turks was gaining strength in the East. Russia was creating a land empire that was threatening to swallow up Asia.

“Imagine Russia as a great bear with its tongue lapping the waters of the Black Sea, while its right paw reaches for the Mediterranean over the dying Ottoman Empire and its left paw reaches south toward the mountain passes of

Afghanistan.”<sup>44</sup>

“The right paw of the bear represents Potemkin’s project to push south into the former Greek empire of the Byzantines. This ‘Greek Project,’ as it was called, represents an eastern *Reconquista*. The ostensible goal was to regain lost Christian territory in the Balkans. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this project was repackaged as Pan-Slavism, which, according to Engels, was ‘nothing more’ than a pretext for taking Constantinople and opening the Straits for Russia’s Black Sea Fleet. The left paw, or ‘Eastern Project,’ represents the push south into the weakening emirates of the old Silk Road, what are today collectively called the ‘stans.’”<sup>45</sup>

In the meantime, Mohammad Ali, pasha of Egypt, had rebelled against the Ottoman Sultan. The Turkish forces were no match for Egypt’s modernized military. Russia stood to benefit from the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire more than any other power. Fearful of those implications, should Egypt destroy the Ottoman Empire, the European powers signed a treaty with the Sultan by which they pledged him their support in order to maintain the Ottoman Empire as a necessary bulwark against the ambitions of Russia to dominate the Eastern Mediterranean. These are the circumstances behind the prophecy of Revelation 9:15, which correctly foretold the end of the Sultan’s sovereign independence on August 11, 1840.

While Russia’s aspirations for control of the Black Sea and the Straits formed the crisis directly from the north, tidings out of the East also troubled the Sultan. We will let the Foreign Office of the Russian government explain the rumors coming out of Central Asia:

“Public report connected with it the false rumor of an expedition undertaken by us against the Khivans; and English opinion, ever ready to suspect our ambitious views in Asia, was confirming itself in the conviction that the object of our policy was to disturb the whole Eastern world in order to bring about the downfall of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>46</sup>

The Sultan had good reason to be troubled. In spite of any downplaying by the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, this rumor turned out to be accurate. Russia did in fact move into

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<sup>44</sup> Ted Danforth, *The Eastern Question: A Geopolitical History* (Townshend, VT: Anekdotia, 2015), 150.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Russian Official Publication, *Diplomatic Study on the Crimean War (1852-1856)* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1882), 90.

Central Asia. But so did Britain, whose primary objective was to protect their access to India. As the Russians advanced farther and farther south, the buffer between them and British India narrowed, producing the historic struggle known as the Great Game. The expansion of these ascendant states meant a corresponding diminishing of Ottoman power and influence.

With the Russian occupation of the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia in May of 1853, the pressure on Turkey had become intense. This brings us to the second half of Daniel 11:44. On October 4, 1853, Sultan Abdülmecid I declared war on Russia and proceeded to attack the Russian forces on the north bank of the Danube. Taking town after town, the Turkish troops had, by July of 1854, completely driven the Russians from the Principalities.

In the Caucasus, the Turks attacked and captured the border fort of Saint Nicholas on October 27, 1853, pouring 20,000 troops across the border and pushing the Russians back. The prophecy of Daniel 11:44 was accurately fulfilled.

In September of 1854 the British and French became actively engaged in the war when they attacked the Russian naval base at Sevastopol on the Crimean peninsula, the ensuing conflicts of which explain why we now call it the Crimean War, 1853-1856.

In 1904 Ellen White wrote, “The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment.”<sup>47</sup> All that remains to take place is verse 45.

It nearly reached its complete fulfillment in 1878. That’s why Adventist preachers were talking about the Eastern Question in their evangelistic meetings. The prophecy says,

“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up. . . .”

The same power is in view that has occupied the passage since verse 40. The chapter has twice already mentioned “the glorious land” (verses 16 and 41). And the “holy mountain” is

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<sup>47</sup> Ellen G. White, Letter 103, 1904.

unmistakably identified in Daniel 9:16 as Jerusalem. We don't need to wonder what any of this means. Gabriel, in plain language, is clearly explaining what is going to happen. This is not cryptic symbolism. The power that has been the subject of the passage will plant the tabernacles of his palace in Jerusalem, and then he will come to his end. And at that time, human probation will close. Throughout Daniel 11, one king after another has stood up. But now Jesus Himself will stand up, "having received the kingdom" (Luke 19:15) prior to His return (Luke 19:12).

The cause of the Adventist excitement in 1877 and 1878 was the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. The Turkish Empire was facing the very real probability of losing all its European possessions, including Constantinople. The loss of its capital, and the need to plant it somewhere else, would set the stage for the fulfillment of Daniel 11:45 and herald Turkey's imminent collapse.

Because of atrocities committed by Turkish authorities in the Balkans, all Europe in 1876 was aroused against the Turks. Russia saw this as its opportunity to gain possession of the Turkish Straits. On April 24, 1877, the Tsar declared war on Turkey, and, negotiating passage through Romania, soon had troops on the march toward Constantinople. They encountered resistance at Plevna, a Turkish stronghold in Bulgaria, which fell after a five-month siege.

"The war continued, and after the fall of Plevna in December, 1877, the way to Constantinople was open. The passes across the Balkans were now open, and Russian armies poured into Turkey. In January, 1878, they captured Adrianople and prepared to march on Constantinople. Her victorious army was advancing on Constantinople, and it was evident at the end of 1877 that the Turks would not be able to save the city."<sup>48</sup>

The prophetic waymark in Daniel 11:45, the world event appointed to signal the time for human probation to close, was ready to happen. This is what Seventh-day Adventist ministers were presenting everywhere as the Eastern Question. But there was one problem. God's work on

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<sup>48</sup> "Russo-Turkish War 1877-1878." GlobalSecurity.org. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/russo-turkish.htm> (accessed March 16, 2018).

earth was not yet finished. Jesus could not come until the church had completed its mission. The angels of Revelation 7 had been commanded to hold back the four winds until the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads. The fulfillment of Daniel 11:45 had to be held off.

With the Russians nearly at the gates of Constantinople, England and other European powers scrambled to intervene. A British fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles. Austria prepared to send troops. European ambassadors told the Russian government that any settlement between Russia and Turkey affecting the treaty of 1856 must be a European treaty in order to be valid. At the Congress of Berlin, June 13 to July 13, 1878, graced by Europe's most prestigious diplomats, a treaty was drafted to ensure that Constantinople would remain in Ottoman hands.

When the Ottoman Empire was eventually dismantled after World War I, Adventists who based their interpretation of prophecy on the newspaper finally lost faith in the natural reading of Daniel 11 and began to interpret its closing verses figuratively. The result has been a myriad of interpretations for which we have no standard rules of study. But those who still read and understand these verses according to our firmly established principles of Bible study—these students maintain a confidence that, regardless of present geopolitical appearances, the natural reading of Daniel 11 will soon reach its complete fulfillment in verse 45.

### **“Thy people”**

Twice in Daniel 12:1 the angel refers to “thy people” (addressing Daniel) in an eschatological context. And because this envisions all the saved, “thy people in the latter days”<sup>49</sup> must have no ethnic restrictions. Does this give evidence of a hermeneutical shift somewhere along the way from literal to spiritual? In Daniel 9:24 and 11:14 it seems clear that Gabriel is talking about the Jewish nation when he mentions “thy people.” If the meaning of this expression

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<sup>49</sup> Daniel 10:14

changes, why can't other terms evolve as well, such as the kings of the North and South?

Before we jump to conclusions, we need to ask, How exactly do Gentiles become heirs of God's promises to Israel? One common approach to this question is known as *Supersessionism* or *Replacement Theology*. This view teaches that the Christian Church is the replacement of the Jewish nation, so that the promises originally made to Abraham and his descendants now apply to the Christian Church.

The danger with this theology is the potential assumption that class membership is the qualifying factor, whether for the Jews before Christ or for church members since. But even before the cross it was a fact that "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."<sup>50</sup> That's why Jesus identified Nathanael as "an Israelite indeed."<sup>51</sup> We are reminded that Jacob was given the name Israel only upon his gaining of a significant spiritual victory.<sup>52</sup> Ethnic Jews in Old Testament times who "rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers"<sup>53</sup> would have nothing to claim above a Gentile.

Nor was God's covenant with ancient Israel designed to exclude Gentiles who joined themselves to the Lord.

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."<sup>54</sup>

This grafting in (to use Paul's language<sup>55</sup>) of the Gentiles was possible even before the death of Christ, as Isaiah 56 points out, while God's people were still offering sacrifices and burnt

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<sup>50</sup> Romans 9:6

<sup>51</sup> John 1:47

<sup>52</sup> Genesis 32:28

<sup>53</sup> 2 Kings 17:15

<sup>54</sup> Isaiah 56:6, 7

<sup>55</sup> Romans 10:17ff

offerings.

Who, then, are Daniel's people? Was it limited to those of a particular ethnic ancestry? We can understand the concept of "thy people" in the book of Daniel, and how even in Old Testament times Gentiles could be included among them, by remembering a famous line spoken by a Moabite girl to her Hebrew mother-in-law: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."<sup>56</sup> When this foreigner joined herself unto the Lord, she became one with the children of Israel, and "thy people" now embraced her.

So, yes, the designation "thy people" in the book of Daniel does refer to Israel. But the Israel of God has never excluded God-fearing Gentiles who joined themselves unto the Lord. That was as true in Daniel 9:24 as in Daniel 12:1. No change of hermeneutics is necessary between those verses. We may be among Daniel's people on the same basis as could Ruth, through the worship of the true and living God.

Echoing Jacob's change of name to Israel when he "prevailed,"<sup>57</sup> one of Revelation's twenty-four elders announces, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath *prevailed* to open the book."<sup>58</sup> Why in the New Testament apocalypse is the victorious Christ described in relation to the tribe of Judah and to David? What we begin to learn here is that Jesus' victory was in fact a victory for the tribe of Judah and the house of David.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."<sup>59</sup>

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for

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<sup>56</sup> Ruth 1:16

<sup>57</sup> Genesis 32:28

<sup>58</sup> Revelation 5:5

<sup>59</sup> Genesis 49:10

ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.”<sup>60</sup>

From Solomon to Zedekiah, David’s seed occupied the throne of Judah. But addressing Zedekiah, the prophet Ezekiel wrote,

“And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.”<sup>61</sup>

Notice Ellen White’s explanation:

“ ‘Remove the diadem,’ the Lord decreed, ‘and take off the crown.’ Not until Christ Himself should set up His kingdom was Judah again to be permitted to have a king. ‘I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it,’ was the divine edict concerning the throne of the house of David.”<sup>62</sup>

Judah would again “be permitted to have a king.” The Lion of the tribe of Judah would win back the crown of the kingdom of Judah and the throne of the house of David forfeited by Zedekiah. When Michael stands up,<sup>63</sup> and receives the kingdom,<sup>64</sup> He will do so in fact as “the King of Israel,”<sup>65</sup> “the King of the Jews.”<sup>66</sup> Being the rightful heir to their throne, and having prevailed on their behalf, He will stand for the children of Daniel’s people.

## Conclusion

We find no rule requiring Daniel 11:40-45 to be treated any differently than the earlier verses in the chapter. Taking Gabriel’s words at face value, we may discover in the historical record an accurate fulfillment of every passage up through verse 44. To every mention of “the king of the North” or “the king of the South” we may unhesitatingly attach the name of a specific

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<sup>60</sup> Psalm 89:34-37

<sup>61</sup> Ezekiel 21:25-27

<sup>62</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 451.

<sup>63</sup> Daniel 12:1

<sup>64</sup> Daniel 7:14

<sup>65</sup> John 1:49

<sup>66</sup> Luke 23:3

ruler of that territory.<sup>67</sup> To dismiss these kings as general metaphors representing some movement or philosophy, or a religious or civil organization, is to disregard the detail Gabriel has provided. Based on the context of Daniel 11:40, the king of the South made his final prophetic appearance more than two hundred years ago, and he therefore plays no predicted role in earth's final spiritual conflict.

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<sup>67</sup> I have found just three verses in Daniel 11 where the pronoun "he" apparently denotes a kingdom as a whole rather than an individual king: (1) Verse 16 spans Roman achievements from the conquest of Syria to the destruction of Jerusalem. (2) In verse 23 the Jews did not make a league with an individual ruler, but with Rome as a whole. (3) In verse 37 the French Revolution was a popular uprising without a single leader. But to every other instance of the word "he," and more importantly, to every single usage of the word "king" in the chapter, we may attach a specific ruler's name.