

Hermeneutical Horses

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Introduction

“Shortly before the fall of Babylon, when Daniel was meditating on these prophecies [recorded in Jeremiah 29:10-13] and seeking God for an understanding of the times, a series of visions was given him concerning the rise and fall of kingdoms.”¹

The visions of Daniel, in chapters 7 through 12 of the Old Testament book that bears his name, concern “the rise and fall of kingdoms.” Through Daniel’s prophecies, we have a panoramic view of a succession of nations rising and falling, from his day to the setting up of the kingdom of God. The kingdoms represented in the dreams and visions of King Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel are those that have directly impacted the people of God throughout history, and that will directly impact them in its closing days. The book *Testimonies to Ministers* encourages us to read the book of Daniel and “call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented.”²

While there is largely consensus among us on the book of Daniel, the exception has been chapter 11, and especially the final six verses. How are Daniel 11 in general and verses 40-45 in particular to be understood? George McCready Price acknowledged this problem in his *The Greatest of the Prophets*. Price taught that the final six verses “must now be treated as symbols”³ though he conceded that some could be literal. He acknowledged that “one of the chief problems” was “to decide how much of the language is symbolic or figurative, and how much is

¹ White, Ellen G., *Prophets and Kings*, p. 553

² White, Ellen G., *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 112

³ Price, George McCready, *The Greatest of the Prophets*, p. 138. Taken from a pdf document found at <http://maranathamedia.com/download/file/179>

to be understood literally.”⁴ He realized that “the King James Version reads: ‘Between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,’ which literally would mean in the city of Jerusalem,”⁵ and that such had long been “the usual understanding.”⁶ But, he countered,

If we adopt the more figurative or symbolic interpretation, it would seem that we have here in these last verses of Daniel 11 a parallel to the many passages in the book of Revelation...⁷

This has been the battle since at least the 1940s. Is Daniel 11, with specific focus on the final six verses, literal or symbolic?

Format of the Book of Daniel

In order to know how to understand Daniel 11, we need first to look at how the previous dreams/visions of the book of Daniel are given and interpreted.

“The book of Daniel is ingeniously constructed, and requires recognition of its structure.”⁸

There are four symbolic dreams and visions in the book of Daniel. Two of them were given to King Nebuchadnezzar and are recorded in Chapters 2 and 4. The other two were given to Daniel and are recorded in Chapters 7 and 8. There is also the experience of Belshazzar in Daniel chapter 5 where an interpretation is given of the cryptic handwriting on the wall. These symbolic visions all follow the same format. First the dream or vision is given, and then the content of the dream or vision is interpreted by God, through Daniel in the case of Nebuchadnezzar’s visions and Belshazzar’s experience, and through the angel Gabriel in the case of Daniel’s visions.

In the second chapter, after telling King Nebuchadnezzar what he dreamed, Daniel gives the interpretation.

“This *is* the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.”
Daniel 2:36

⁴ Ibid., p. 139

⁵ Ibid., 140

⁶ Ibid., 140

⁷ Ibid., 140

⁸ LaRondelle, Hans K., *Interpretation of Prophetic and Apocalyptic Eschatology*, p. 242. Cited in *A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics* edited by Gordon M. Hyde.

The format is: first the symbolic vision, and then a clear break from the symbolic vision, followed by an interpretation of the vision's symbols. Daniel's interpretation simply explains the symbols already given in the dream. Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. Medo-Persia is the arms and chest of silver, and so on until the stone hitting the earth and becoming a great mountain is explained, "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." Daniel 2:44. In giving the king his interpretation, Daniel at times refers back to the dream's symbols and then tells what they mean.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided;..." Daniel 2:41.

"And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken." Daniel 2:42.

"And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men:..." Daniel 2:43.

As (or whereas) you saw such and such in the dream, Daniel says, here is what it means. The interpretation *is* the meaning. The interpretation does not introduce any new symbols that need to be further interpreted. This was made plain when Daniel informed Nebuchadnezzar that

"...the great God hath made known to the king *what shall come to pass hereafter*:" Daniel 2:45, emphasis supplied.

The dream's symbols were interpreted as "what shall come to pass hereafter," literal future events culminating in the setting up of God's kingdom. Daniel chapter 2 sets the standard for how to understand the rest of the dreams/visions of the book – symbolic dream followed by literal interpretation.

"...and the dream *is* certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Daniel 2:45.

In Daniel chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar has his second dream. As in Daniel chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar first summons his magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers to

ascertain from them the meaning of the vision. They are again unable to interpret the dream.

“Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.” Daniel 4:7.

Daniel is the last to come before the king. He is encouraged by Nebuchadnezzar to explain to him the dream and its meaning.

“O Belshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.” Daniel 4:9.

Once Daniel gets over the initial shock of hearing the contents of the dream and its implications for Nebuchadnezzar, he relates the meaning of the symbols. Daniel uses the same method in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in chapter 4 as he did in relating the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in chapter 2.

“The tree that thou sawest...It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong...” Daniel 4:20-22.

“And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven...This *is* the interpretation, O king...that they shall drive thee from men...” Daniel 4:23-25.

“And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee...” Daniel 4:26.

The symbol is referenced, and then the meaning is given. “This *is* the interpretation, O king.” Daniel 4:24. The interpretation is what the symbol means, and within the interpretation are no further symbols that need to be explained.

The night Babylon is overrun by the Medo-Persian kingdom, the Babylonian king Belshazzar receives a message from Heaven, given in a symbolic inscription written across his banquet room wall. It is not a dream or vision in the classic sense, as everyone in the hall sees the handwriting. As did his grandfather before him, Belshazzar summons the “astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers” to “shew me the interpretation thereof.” Daniel 5:7. As in the

case of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, the king's wise men came in "but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof." Daniel 5:8.

The queen mother attempts to calm the fears of Belshazzar and reasons with him that there "is a man in thy kingdom, in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods;" who can interpret for him the meaning of the handwriting.

"...now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation." Daniel 5:12.

When Daniel arrives, he is questioned by Belshazzar about his identity and capabilities. Belshazzar holds out inducements to Daniel if he can "make known to me the interpretation thereof." Daniel 5:16. Daniel politely declines the gifts, showing that he is not acting for reward in consenting to interpret the writing.

"Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." Daniel 5:17.

Daniel then remonstrates with the king for his folly, citing it as the reason for the writing on the wall. He references the writing and then explains its meaning.

"This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." Daniel 5:26.

"This is the interpretation" equates to "this is the meaning of the symbols." The interpretation is straightforward. There are no symbols in the interpretation that need further explanation. That very evening the interpretation is shown to be correct when the events foretold by Daniel take place.

In Daniel chapter 7, Daniel has a night vision which he subsequently writes down. After the symbolic vision is given, Daniel asks for the meaning.

"I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things." Daniel 7:16.

Daniel asks to know "the truth" of the symbolic vision and is shown "the interpretation of the things." The "truth" is the literal interpretation of the vision's symbols. The truth of the four

beasts is that they are four kings. Daniel 7:17. Daniel asks the angel to zero in on the symbols of the fourth beast, the ten horns and the little horn. He wants to know “the truth” of those symbols.

“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast...and of the ten horns...and of the other which came up...” Daniel 7:19,20.

The angel’s response is “the truth” of what the symbols mean.

“Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth...And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them...” Daniel 7:23,24.

The angel is clear. The fourth beast is literally “the fourth kingdom upon earth.” The ten horns literally “are ten kings” or kingdoms, and the little horn is literally “another” king/kingdom that “shall rise after them.” In addition, geography plays a part in the identification of the ten horns, for they come “out of this kingdom” and refer to the divisions of the Roman Empire. Daniel 7:24. The same is true of the little horn that “came up among them” referring to its geographic location in Europe. Daniel 7:8. These points are commonly used in evangelistic meetings to identify the ten horns and the little horn as arising in Europe. The usage of phrases like “shall be” “are” “shall arise” all indicate the literalness and certainty of the interpretation.

While there is some use of metaphor, such as “devour the whole earth” and “wear out the saints” in chapter 7, or “overflow” and “stretch forth his hand” in chapter 11, this does not change the overall literalness of the interpretation. Daniel 7:23,25; 11:40,42. Nor does the time correlation of a day for a year. It appears from chapter 8 that Daniel was already familiar with this principle. Ellen White seems to intimate this when she says Daniel,

“...could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years’ captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God's sanctuary.”⁹

⁹ White, Ellen G., *Prophets and Kings*, p. 554

Ellen White seems to indicate that when Daniel heard “two thousand and three hundred days” he understood two thousand and three hundred years without having Gabriel interpret the meaning of the days as years. This caused him to faint and be “sick *certain* days” when Gabriel announced that the vision of the evening and morning was true. Daniel 8:26,27. The cause of his perplexity was his inability to reconcile the 70 years he read about in Jeremiah and the 2300 years he heard the angel say in vision.

The little horn of Daniel 7 will literally rise to power in a certain geographic location, literally blaspheme God, literally attempt to change His law and literally rule for a certain time period. The angel relates the literal meaning of the symbols, introducing no new beast or horn symbols that need further interpretation. The “truth” *is* the meaning of the original symbols. In this context, “truth” is synonymous with “interpretation.”

In chapter 8, the same format is followed. Daniel has a daytime vision and seeks for the meaning after the vision is given.

“And it came to pass, when I, *even* I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks of* Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.” Daniel 8:15,16.

Daniel “sought for the meaning” of the symbols of the vision. Gabriel’s task is to make Daniel “understand” the meaning of those symbols. Gabriel then comes “near where I stood” and tells Daniel he “will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation.” Daniel 8:17,19. Gabriel immediately begins to interpret the symbols by explaining their meaning. The two-horned ram represents the kingdom of Medo-Persia. Daniel 8:20. The rough goat represents the kingdom of Greece. Daniel 8:21. Gabriel relates the meaning of the symbols as literal nations, kings and events.

Daniel is so impacted by the meaning of the symbols that he becomes “sick *certain days*” and is “astonished at the vision, but none understood it.” Daniel 8:27. Gabriel, therefore, discontinues explaining the meaning of the symbols to resume at a later date.

Chapter 9 begins with Daniel studying, fasting and earnestly praying for further understanding of the chapter 8 vision. When Gabriel returns, he tells Daniel he’s there to give him “skill and understanding.” Daniel 9:22.

“Therefore, understand the matter, and consider the vision.” Daniel 9:23.

The vision to “consider” is the vision of Daniel 8. There has been no new symbolic vision given since then, and Gabriel has not completed his task of making Daniel “understand the vision.” Daniel 8:16. After stating his purpose for returning, Gabriel immediately begins with the interpretation of the time portion of the prophecy, which Daniel had struggled to reconcile with Jeremiah’s seventy years. Gabriel relates literal future events giving the beginning point of the 2300-day time period, the restoration of Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah, His death, the second destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary, and the eventual pouring out of “that determined” “upon the desolate” or “desolator” (margin) of the sanctuary. Daniel 9:24-27. The focus of Daniel’s prayer since receiving the vision was the fate of Jerusalem and the sanctuary. Daniel 9:2,12,16,17. With the exception of the pouring out of “that determined” “upon the desolate,” all the events foretold by Gabriel have been fulfilled, and they have been literal, historic events.

The dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, the experience of Belshazzar, and the visions of Daniel were all interpreted by explaining the meaning of the symbols as literal nations, kings and future events. The symbolic dream/experience/vision was given first, followed by a literal explanation of the vision’s symbols. This format, where the dream or vision is followed by its literal interpretation, is simple, but it’s important to understand it clearly.

In addition, neither Daniel nor Gabriel introduces any major power in his interpretation that does not have a corresponding symbol in the dream or vision. What I mean by a major power is a power of the magnitude of those symbolized by beasts or horns. There are minor, ancillary powers that supplement the narrative of the main symbols, for example, the “host” given to the “little horn” “against the daily.” Daniel 8:12. The parallel verse in the interpretation in chapter 11 states that “arms shall stand on his part” and “take away the daily.” Daniel 11:31. Another example is the “ships of Chittim.” Daniel 11:30. These ancillary powers come along side of the major power to advance or hinder its course, but they never rise to the level of a new major power symbolized by a beast or horn.

In the visions of Daniel 2 and 7, each symbol introduces a new major power. With Daniel 2, the gold, silver, brass, iron and iron mixed with clay represent the nations of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the divisions of the Roman Empire. After the last symbol of iron mixed with clay, Daniel introduces no new earthly power in the interpretation, as each interpretation must have a corresponding symbol in the vision. In the case of Daniel 7, the lion, the bear, the four-headed leopard, and the nondescript beast with multiple horns are representations of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, the divisions of Greece, Rome, and the divisions of Rome. In that vision, another phase of Rome is introduced with the symbol of the little horn. In the interpretation, there is no new major earthly power introduced after the little horn is identified, since there is no corresponding symbol that follows the little horn in the vision. This holds true for Daniel 8 and 9. Gabriel interprets the ram, the goat, the notable horn, the four horns and the little horn as earthly kingdoms but introduces no new major power after the little horn, since there is no corresponding symbol to interpret. His work is confined to making Daniel “understand the vision.” Daniel 8:16. The task Gabriel was assigned by God is not to introduce new symbols but to interpret or explain the meaning of the symbols given.

Interpretive Rules

In summary, there are two major interpretive rules for understanding the prophecies of Daniel.

1. The format of the prophetic portions of the book of Daniel is: a symbolic dream/vision followed by the literal interpretation consisting of literal kings/kingdoms and events. The dream/vision is given by God, and the divine interpretation is given through Daniel or Gabriel.
2. By extension, since Daniel and Gabriel are confined to relating the God-given interpretation, they do not, indeed cannot, introduce any new major power that does not have a corresponding symbol in the dream/vision.

Daniel 11

How, then, should we understand Daniel 11, since the chapter contains no symbolic vision involving various metals, beasts, or horns? Is Daniel 11 related in any way to any previous vision? Yes, and while we have generally looked at chapters 10 through 12 as a unit, I believe we should look at chapters 8 through 12 as a unit. In other words, Daniel 11 is simply an extended interpretation of Daniel 8. Here's why.

The vision of chapter 8 is "for many days." When Gabriel returns in chapter 10, he refers to the vision that "is for many days," which must be the vision of chapter 8, since there is no other vision described as "for many days."

"And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days." Daniel 8:26.

"Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." Daniel 10:14.

When Gabriel had returned in chapter 9, his interpretation of the vision's timeframe narrowly focused on the first 490 years and contained the literal events to take place during those years. Yet nearly 80% of the 2300 years are not sufficiently addressed in chapter 9. Gabriel returns in chapter 10 to finish the interpretation and make Daniel "understand what shall befall thy people

in the latter days.” Daniel 10:14. He asks Daniel, “Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee?”

Daniel 10:20. Before Daniel answers, Gabriel explains.

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

Daniel 10:21

Gabriel has come to explain to Daniel a vision previously “noted” or recorded in the Scriptures. Yet the understanding of the particular scripture is only known to Gabriel and Michael for Daniel had been instructed in chapter 8 to “shut thou up the vision.” Daniel 8:26. Daniel recorded that “none understood *it*.” Daniel 8:27. Though later, Daniel had portions of the vision explained to him, he did not fully understand it. The vision was one that only Michael and Gabriel fully understood. At the end of the visit by Michael and Gabriel, Daniel is again told to “shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end.” Daniel 12:4. This clearly indicates that the vision Gabriel had been interpreting was the vision of chapter 8. It was the one that was to be “shut up.” It was the vision relating to “the latter days.” Daniel 10:14. It was “that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days.”¹⁰ In addition, the experience of Daniel as Gabriel comes near to him with the interpretation in Daniel 8 is the same as when Gabriel¹¹ draws near to him in chapter 10 with the interpretation found in Daniel 11, tying the chapters together.

Similarities in Setup for Interpretation of Vision in Chapters 8 & 10		
Fear	“So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid...” Daniel 8:17.	“And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.” Daniel 10:11.
Deep Sleep on Face	“...deep sleep on my face toward the ground...” Daniel 8:18.	“...then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.” Daniel 10:9.
Angel touches Daniel and raises him	“...he touched me, and set me upright.” Daniel 8:18.	“...an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and <i>upon</i> the palms of my hands.” Daniel 10:10.

¹⁰ White, Ellen G., *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 585

¹¹ White, Ellen G., *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 556, 571. Gabriel is described as the angel in Daniel chapter 10 and 11.

Tells Daniel he is there to make him understand the vision	"...make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end <i>shall be</i> ." Daniel 8:19.	"Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days:" Daniel 10:14.
The vision is for many days	"...for it <i>shall be</i> for many days." Daniel 8:26.	"...for yet the vision <i>is</i> for <i>many</i> days." Daniel 10:14
The vision was to be shut up	"...shut thou up the vision..." Daniel 8:26	"...shut up the words..." Daniel 12:4

We also see the clear connection between the succession of events in chapters 9 and 10. In both chapters, Daniel is found at the beginning of the chapter fasting and praying for the purpose of understanding the vision of chapter 8. In answer to his prayers, Gabriel is sent from heaven. He calls Daniel "greatly beloved" and informs him that he is there to give Daniel understanding of the vision. Gabriel then proceeds to explain symbols from the chapter 8 vision. In each case, Gabriel follows by delineating what are, in so far as they have been fulfilled, all literal historic events. The format of Daniel 9 is the same as the format of Daniel 10/11.

Similarities When Gabriel Appears in Chapters 9 & 10		
Prayer and Fasting	"And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:" Daniel 9:3.	"I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth...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." Daniel 10:3,11.
Gabriel calls Daniel "greatly beloved"	"...for thou <i>art</i> greatly beloved..." Daniel 9:23.	"...Daniel, a man greatly beloved..." Daniel 10:11.
Gabriel comes to give understanding	"...O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." Daniel 9:22.	"Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days:..." Daniel 10:14.
Gabriel interprets symbols of vision	Daniel 9:24-27	Daniel 11:2-45

Gabriel had been commissioned by God to “make this man to understand the vision.” Daniel 8:16. In both cases when Gabriel returns to fulfill his commission, he informs Daniel of this fact by using, for all intents and purposes, the identical language.

“I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.” Daniel 9:22.

“Now I am come to make thee understand...” Daniel 10:14.

We understand that chapter 9 is a partial interpretation of chapter 8 because (1) there is no symbolic vision in chapter 9, (2) Gabriel refers to the previous vision when he says “consider the vision,” (3) Gabriel says he is returning to give Daniel understanding in answer to his prayer, and (4) the other linguistic ties to chapter 8. We should do the same for chapter 11 for the same reasons. Chapter 11 contains (1) no new symbolic vision, (2) Gabriel refers to a previous vision, (3) acknowledges that he is there to make Daniel “understand” in answer to his prayer, and (4) for the other linguistic ties to chapter 8. The connections that knit chapters 8 through 12 together are clear and unmistakable. They demonstrate that Gabriel’s narration of chapter 11 is a literal interpretation of the last recorded symbolic vision of chapter 8.

Others who see Daniel 11 as interpretation of Daniel 8

Early in our history, James White and J. N. Andrews both saw the eleventh chapter of Daniel as a prophecy without symbols. Andrews, in his book *The Sanctuary and the 2300 Days*, sums it up this way.

“The four horns that arose when this horn was broken, denote the four kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander was divided after his death. The same was presented by the four heads and four wings of the leopard. Daniel 7:6. It is predicted without the use of symbols in Daniel 11:3, 4. These four kingdoms were Macedon, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. They originated B.C. 312.”¹²

James White, in his *Bible Adventism*, uses nearly identical language to come to the same conclusion.

¹² Andrews, John Nevin, *The Sanctuary and Twenty-three Hundred Days*, p. 10 published originally in 1853 and reprinted in 1872 (See also Andrews’ article in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 23, 1852)

“The four horns that arose when this horn was broken, denote the four kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander was divided after his death. The same is represented by the leopard with four heads and four wings, of chapter 7, and by the brazen sides of the metallic image of chapter 2. It is predicted without the use of symbols in Daniel 11:3, 4. These four kingdoms were Macedon, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. They originated about B.C. 312.”¹³

Years later with the printing of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, the consensus was still that the eleventh chapter of Daniel was literal rather than symbolic.

“The eleventh chapter of Daniel is a literal historical prophecy, the longest and most remarkable of its kind in all the Scriptures.”¹⁴

During the Millerite movement, there were those who saw Daniel 11 and 12 as an interpretation of Daniel 8. Joshua V. Himes noted,

“We therefore find in the 12th of Daniel, when the events of the vision of the 2300 days were more particularly given down to the resurrection of the dead, that he inquires in the earnestness of his soul, ‘O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?’”¹⁵

Uriah Smith in his classic work, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, understood Daniel 11 as a “comment and explanation of the vision of chapter 8.”

“We now enter upon a prophecy of future events, clothed not in figures and symbols, as in the visions of chapters 2, 7, and 8, but given mostly in plain language. Many of the signal events of the world's history, from the days of Daniel to the end of the world, are here brought to view. This prophecy, says Bishop Newton, may not improperly be said to be a comment and explanation of the vision of chapter 8, showing how clearly he perceived the connection between that vision and the remainder of the book.”¹⁶

W. W. Prescott, one of our leaders at the turn of the 20th century, said,

“The little horn of chapter 8, of which chapter, chapters 10 to 11 are fuller explanations, covers the whole field, both pagan and papal.”¹⁷

¹³ White, James *Bible Adventism*, p. 122

¹⁴ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p. 391 published by Review and Herald Publishing Company, 1889

¹⁵ Himes, Joshua V., *Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy*, Vol. 6, October 18, 1843

¹⁶ Smith Uriah, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical on the Books of Daniel and the Revelation*, 1884 edition, p. 227. Newton's quote is taken from his, *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, Vol. 1, p. 335. Later editions of *Daniel and the Revelation* say Thomas Newton.

¹⁷ Prescott, W. W., From a transcript of proceedings at the *1919 Bible Conference*, July 16, 1919, p. 45-e.

Adam Clarke (1762-1832), a noted Bible commentator who was at times quoted by our pioneers, also understood Daniel 11 to be an explanation of Daniel 8. He considered Daniel 11 to be a narration rather than a symbolic prophecy.

“The memorable events that were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and he-goat, are here [Daniel 11] more clearly revealed in this last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy may not improperly be said to be a comment on the former... The types, figures, and symbols of the things are not exhibited in this, as in most other visions, and then expounded by the angel; but the angel relates the whole: and, not by way of vision, but by narration, informs Daniel of that which is noted in the Scripture of truth.”¹⁸

The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown commentary published in 1871 considered chapter 11 of the book of Daniel to be “an enlargement of the eighth.”¹⁹ Here is a quote on Chapter 10.

“VER. 1-21. DANIEL COMFORTED BY AN ANGELIC VISION. Ch. 10.-12. more fully describe the vision in ch. 8. by a second vision on the same subject, just as the vision in the seventh chapter explains more fully that in the second. The tenth chapter is the prologue; the eleventh, the prophecy itself; and the twelfth, the epilogue.”²⁰

Dr. Leslie Hardinge, a more contemporary source known for his teaching on the sanctuary, also regarded Daniel 11 as an explanation of Daniel 8. The following is an excerpt from a transcription of a series of audio sermons he gave on the book of Daniel titled *Daniel Revisited*.

“Verse 14. ‘Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision *is* for *many* days.’ Now this vision is the vision of chapter 8 and 9 and 10. He gets no new vision. So he’s given explanation.... Chapter 11 is a continuation of chapter 10 and is an explanation of a vision Daniel did not understand. And he tells us that in verse 1, 2 and 3 of chapter 10. He didn’t understand the vision completely. And the vision that he didn’t understand goes back to chapter 8.”²¹

¹⁸ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 1810 edition, comments on Daniel 11:1

¹⁹ Jamieson, Robert – Fausset, A. R. – Brown, David, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*, Vol. 1, p. 643, published by S. S. Scranton and Company, 1873

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 642

²¹ Hardinge, Leslie, *Daniel Revisited*, a series of sermons on the book of Daniel. This quote is from a transcription of the sermon on the first half of Daniel 11.

This is also the view of Ellen White. Following the vision of chapter 8, Daniel earnestly seeks for an explanation of the time portion of the prophecy. However, Daniel receives more than just the instruction needed by him and his people when Gabriel returns in chapter 9.

“In answer to his petition, Daniel received not only the light and truth which he and his people most needed, but a view of the great events of the future, even to the advent of the world’s Redeemer.”²²

In his further explanation in Daniel chapter 9, Gabriel related “events of the future” all the way “to the advent of the world’s Redeemer.” Yet similar to his reaction at the end of chapter 8, Daniel could only receive so much at one time.

“Upon the occasion just described [Gabriel’s visit in Daniel 9 where Ellen White quotes Daniel 9:4-6,15-19], the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction which he was then able to receive.”²³

In Daniel 9, Gabriel related the 70-week portion of the prophecy and ended with, “that determined shall be poured upon the desolator.” Daniel 9:27, margin. According to Ellen White, it was “all the instruction which he was then able to receive.”

Daniel now understood that the “time appointed *was* long.” Daniel 10:1. Yet Gabriel had related events that Daniel still did not fully comprehend. Gabriel had not completed his task to make Daniel “understand the vision” by telling him what would be “in the last end of the indignation.” Daniel 8:16,19. Nor did Daniel understand what would happen to “the desolator” of the sanctuary. Daniel 9:27, margin. Daniel wanted to know more. Ellen White continues,

“A few years afterward, however, the prophet desired to learn more of subjects not yet fully explained, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God. (Daniel 10:2-6 quoted)... Our Lord comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days.”²⁴

“At the time of Gabriel's visit, the prophet Daniel was unable to receive further instruction; but a few years afterward, desiring to know more of subjects not yet fully explained, he again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God.”²⁵

²² Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, p. 48

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 49

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49

²⁵ White, Ellen G., *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 8, 1881, par. 26

Thus “a few years afterward,” Daniel once “again” prayed for “light and wisdom from God” regarding those “subjects not yet fully explained” by Gabriel during his chapter 9 visit. Chapter 9 had partially explained the vision of chapter 8 by covering the 70-week portion of the vision. But what about the last 1810 years leading to the cleansing of the sanctuary? What would happen at the “last end of the indignation?” Daniel 8:19. What would happen to “the desolator?” Daniel 9:27, margin. These “subjects” were “not yet fully explained,” and in answer to Daniel’s prayer, Gabriel and Christ return in chapter 10 to further explain the vision of Daniel 8 and inform Daniel “what would take place in the latter days” “in the last end of the indignation.” Daniel 10:14; 8:19. Daniel 11, then, is a more comprehensive interpretation of the symbols given in Daniel chapter 8.

The King of the South

From the vision/interpretation of Daniel 7, we understand that a horn represents a king or kingdom.

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise:...” Daniel 7:24.

The ten horns rise “out of this kingdom,” the fourth kingdom on the earth, Rome. Daniel 7:24. This interpretation confines the “ten horns” to the geographic location of Europe. They are Roman horns. In Daniel 8, Gabriel, in his interpretation of the notable horn on the head of the rough goat, informs us that “...the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king,” Alexander the Great. Daniel 8:21. Once the notable horn is broken, “for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.” Daniel 8:8. These four notable horns Gabriel tells us are “four kingdoms” that “shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.” Daniel 8:22. These horns are Greek. We do not have license to locate these horns just anywhere. They are confined to a specific geographic area of the globe, namely, the original Grecian Empire of Alexander the Great, since they come up “out of the nation.” Daniel 8:24. These same Greek horns are

interpreted in Daniel 11 by Gabriel as the divisions of Alexander's kingdom. It is "his kingdom" that is broken and divided.

"And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven..." Daniel 11:4.

Gabriel says they are "divided towards the four winds of heaven." Daniel 11:4. Most commenters, including Albert Barnes, Adam Clark, Jamieson-Faussett-Brown, along with our pioneers and most contemporary Seventh-day Adventist commentators, see the four divisions of Alexander's Grecian Empire fulfilled by Seleucus in the east, Cassander in the west, Ptolemy in the south, and Lysimachus in the north. That "the four winds of heaven" are the four directions of the compass (North, East, West, and South) is shown by Gabriel's words in the next verses when he refers to the Grecian divisions using directional labels. The "king of the south shall be strong..." Daniel 11:5. "...for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement..." Daniel 11:6. Few dispute that the King of the South and the King of the North, at least at this point in the prophecy, are literally two of the divisions of the Alexander's Grecian Empire. They are the literal, geographically-defined divisions of Alexander's Grecian Empire, labeled by direction so we can know which division Gabriel is referring to.

Gabriel then defines the King of the South, not only by direction, but by national distinction, as Egypt. The King of the South enters "...into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail:" Daniel 11:7. The victorious King of the South carries the spoils of war back to Egypt.

"...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." Daniel 11:8.

The victorious King of the South is also said to return to his own land.

"So the king of the south shall come into *his* kingdom, and shall return into his own land." Daniel 11:9

The King of the South carries the spoils back to his kingdom, Egypt, his own land. History bears out Gabriel's interpretation of Egypt under Ptolemy I Soter, the Alexandrian general who took over the southern portion of the Grecian Empire. There is no indication that Gabriel's definition of the King of the South changes over the course of Gabriel's outline of history. Kings come and go. Nations rise and fall. But the King of the South is always the southern division of Alexander's Grecian Empire. Gabriel said it was Egypt at the time Greece was divided. He said that was "the truth" which we have seen is "the interpretation of the things." Daniel 11:2; 7:16. By the time we get to verse 40 where, after a hiatus, the King of the South once again appears, there is no indication from Gabriel that he has changed his mind regarding who the King of the South is. Gabriel is confined to explaining the symbols of the vision and cannot introduce a new major power without linking it to a corresponding symbol in that vision. Therefore, we must conclude that Gabriel's initial definition of the King of the South as Egypt, a literal, geographically-defined, directionally-labeled division of the Alexandrian Grecian Empire, still stands in verse 40. We should not be changing our hermeneutical horse midstream.

History of the Interpretations

For a hundred years, from 1844 until the mid 1940's, Adventists interpreted Daniel 11 as literal, regardless of who they identified as the King of the North, the King of the South, or the willful King of verse 36. But two major events were instrumental in causing us to abandon our hermeneutical heritage.

The first was the failure of the collapsing Ottoman Empire to remove its seat from Constantinople to Jerusalem. Following the Great Disappointment, Adventists taught that the Papacy would move its seat to Jerusalem before coming to its end. This view began to change after the Papacy lost the papal states in 1870, when, in 1871, Uriah Smith published the result of Sabbath School studies seeing Turkey as the nation that would come to its end in Daniel 11:45.

Over the course of the next 60 years the majority of Adventists held this position, though it came under increasing pressure following the turn of the 20th century. Though the Ottoman Empire did collapse, and did come to its end, it failed to move its capital to Jerusalem as predicted. The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 with its capital in Ankara. Adventists continued, more tentatively, until the 1940s to teach that Turkey would move its capital to Jerusalem.

The second event was the establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948. The Zionist movement began to surge following the Balfour Declaration in 1917. This document was a declaration by the British government that they viewed “with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”²⁶ While some Protestant groups taught the re-establishment of Israel as a nation would be a fulfillment of Bible prophecy, most Adventist scholars did not agree. In 1944, Pacific Press published *Palestine In Prophecy*. It declared that Israel becoming a nation again was a “theological will-o’-the-wisp;”²⁷ something so unlikely, something so in the wrong direction, that it was not worth considering. In 1947, Roy F. Cottrell wrote a book entitled *The Jews and Palestine*. This book also presented the view that the Jews would “never be re-established” in Palestine as a nation.

"It is true that certain Christian leaders view the return of Israel to Palestine as a fulfillment of Scripture prophecy, a forerunner of the millennial age, and a herald of Christ's second coming. However, careful study of both the Old and the New Testament reveals that the literal descendants of Abraham, as a nation, will never be re-established in the Holy Land. Political Zionism is but an elusive dream, is wholly at variance with the blueprint of prophecy, and as a man-made scheme is never to be completely realized."²⁸

But in 1948, within a year of Cottrell's book being published, what we had preached for years would never happen, did happen. Church leaders and members alike were stunned. Evangelicals pointed to the establishment of Israel as a fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

²⁶ Balfour, Arthur, *Balfour Declaration*, November 2, 1917. Balfour was the British Foreign Secretary addressing Lord Rothschild, a leader in the British Jewish Community.

²⁷ Stevens, Jesse C., *Palestine in Prophecy*, paperback, p. 97, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1944.

²⁸ Roy F. Cottrell, *The Jews and Palestine*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1947, page 61.

Louis F. Were

It was against the background of these two major events that the late Australian evangelist, Louis Were, wrote several publications on Daniel 11. I've never met Brother Were and do not question his Christian experience or his commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. My comments reflect only on what he has written. Next to Uriah Smith, Were is perhaps the most influential person responsible for a change in views on Daniel 11:40-45. Were's contribution is not so much that he brought a new interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45, but that he *changed the hermeneutic* by which Daniel 11:40-45 should be interpreted. Instead of continuing to use the tools of interpretation that had guided us since the days of William Miller and calling into question our understanding of Daniel 11:40-45 after the predicted event failed to materialize, as we did after the Great Disappointment, Were brought a new set of tools to bear upon the subject.²⁹

By the 1990's, many had adopted Were's new rules of interpretation. Beatrice Neall, Professor of Religion at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1993 encouraged the church to understand the final verses of Daniel 11 in a symbolic manner.

“National entities that are literal in the Old Testament—Israel, Babylon, Egypt—become spiritual in the New Testament. *Israel* no longer means a literal nation in Palestine, but the people of God (Gal. 3:29; Rom. 2:28, 29). *Babylon* is no longer an empire, but a false religious system that persecutes God's people (Rev. 17:5, 6). The terms, in other words, are no longer local, but universal.”³⁰

Neall cited Louis Were for her hermeneutic.

“See Louis F. Were, *Bible Principles of Interpretation*, pp. 6-27.”³¹

²⁹ Were, Louis, *Bible Principles of Interpretation*. The copy I used is found at <http://www.hightime1311.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Bible-Principles-of-Interpretation.pdf>

³⁰ Neall, Beatrice, *Jesus at the Center*, Review and Herald, October 21, 1993, p. 7

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 7

Principle 9 of Were's hermeneutic contends that there is a "Deep Inner Meaning – Not Alone What is on the Surface."³² He cites several references from the Spirit of Prophecy to make his point, such as

"One may read the whole Bible through, and yet fail to see its beauty or comprehend its *deep and hidden meaning*."³³

One of the quotes Were does not include is from *The Great Controversy*.

"The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed."³⁴

We could look for a deeper meaning *if* there were symbols employed in Daniel 11:40-45. However, Daniel 11 is an interpretation, which in the prophecies of Daniel, is always literal. Therefore, the principles laid out in the *Great Controversy*, where the context of prophecy is recognized, apply to Daniel 11:40-45, where no symbols are employed, instead of the counsel found in *Steps to Christ*, a devotional, rather than a prophetic, volume.

Louis Were said the King of the North (interpreted by him as the Papacy) "spiritually invades"³⁵ the "glorious land" in verse 41. Were taught that this spiritual invasion of the church by the Papacy takes place at the national Sunday law and consequently the "majority forsake us."^{36,37} He determines that the "glorious land" in verse 41 is a symbol for "the territory of the church."³⁸ Were uses the words "territory" and "domain" to synonymously refer to "land" in verse 41 and then equates the "territory of the church" with the "domain of conscience."

"It is when the State enters the domain of conscience, the realm of the church 'the glorious land', Daniel 11:41 - and oppressive enactments are commencing to

³² Were, Louis, *Biblical Principles of Interpretation*, p. 18. Taken from a pdf document found at <http://www.hightime1311.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Bible-Principles-of-Interpretation.pdf>

³³ White, Ellen G., *Steps to Christ*, p. 95 (emphasis supplied by Were)

³⁴ White, Ellen G., *The Great Controversy*, p. 598

³⁵ Were, Louis F., *The King of the North at Jerusalem*, paperback, 1949, p. 20. The copy I used is found at <http://the2520.com/PDFs/KingOfTheNorth-Were.pdf>

³⁶ White, Ellen G., *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5.*, p. 136

³⁷ Were, Louis F., *The Battle for the Kingship of the World*, paperback, 1950, p. 25. The copy I used is found at <http://www.2520yearprophecy.com/PDF/Louis%20Were/BattleForTheKingshipOfTheWorld-Were.pdf>

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24

bring hardship, derision, and the threat of imprisonment, that ‘the majority forsake us.’”³⁹

“It is when the deadly wound is healed - when church and State combine to enforce religious dogmas – that all the world wonders after the beast (Revelation 13). It is then that the king of the north enters into ‘the glorious land’ (Daniel 11:41), the domain of conscience, the territory of the church.”⁴⁰

Were concludes that the enforcement of a Sunday law is the King of the North entering the “glorious land,” the domain of conscience, the territory of the church. Were doesn’t depict the Papacy actually conquering and taking over the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as the language of verse 41 suggests happens to “the glorious land,” but spiritualizes the invasion to be a matter of conscience. Once Were spiritualizes both the “glorious land” and the “invasion,” he then spiritualizes the “glorious holy mountain,” stating that it also refers to the Church.

“Thus ‘the glorious holy mountain’ (Daniel 12: 1) cannot possibly refer to literal Jerusalem, but to the church.”⁴¹

Were spiritualizes any geographic references in the final verses of the chapter. Once he spiritualizes the geographic references to the “glorious land” and the “glorious holy mountain” as referring spiritually to the conscience and the Church, Were uses this as a foundation to spiritualize “whatever else is mentioned in the prophecy” including any directional references.

“Having shown that ‘the glorious holy mountain’ refers to the church, it naturally follows that whatever else is mentioned in the prophecy must be interpreted in harmony with that fact. It is impossible to have a literal north, south and, east in the usual sense literally based upon a spiritual mount or city. As Jerusalem, the church, is world-wide so the geographical points of the compass must be interpreted accordingly. The literal points of the compass mentioned in the prophecies concerning Israel and her enemies are now spiritually applied in relation to spiritual Israel, ‘the holy city.’ See Isaiah 11:12, 13; 60:1-12; Ezekiel 38:12, 5, 6; 39:2, 7; 47:1-8; Joel 3:2, 9-14, 17, 21; Jeremiah 3:17; Isaiah 54:15, 17; Revelation 19:19; 17:13, 14; 16:14; Ephesians 2:21, 22; etc.”⁴²

³⁹ Ibid., p. 25

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 25

⁴¹ Were, Op. Cit., p. 28

⁴² Ibid., p. 29

Since, in Were's view, directional references can be spiritualized, they have no context in the final verses. Were is now free to spiritualize the King of the South.

“Egypt, the literal king of the south, in the early parts of Daniel 11, is mentioned in Revelation 11:8 in a spiritual sense... Commenting upon the power referred to as being ‘spiritually Egypt,’ and applying it to the French atheistic revolutionaries, the Spirit of Prophecy says: ‘This is atheism; and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God.’ Great Controversy, Page 269. The French Revolution was really a revolt against the authority of the Papal church, which suffered severely at the hands of the revolutionaries. Thus did ‘the king of the south push at him’ (the Papacy) ‘at the time of the end.’”⁴³

Were here attempts to use the Spirit of Prophecy to bolster his claims based on his assumption that the final verses must be spiritualized. However, his reference from Ellen White is a comment on Revelation 11 and not Daniel 11—a different text in a different book. I accept Ellen White's interpretation of Revelation 11, but not Were's application of it.

In Were's view, “south” has no meaning. The King of the *South* is interpreted as France, a nation *north* of the Papacy, and the King of the *North* is interpreted as the Papacy, a power headquartered *south* of France. In Were's view, south is north and north is south. This is further amplified when the Papacy responds to the attack from atheistic France.

“But, the prophecy declares, the deadly wound is to be healed (v. 40, compare Revelation 13:3-18), then the Papacy, with political power once again to enable her to make war upon the saints, immediately proceeds to subdue the atheistic forces of Communism, employing all the resources of the Christian nations chariots, horses, ships - in bringing this to pass.”⁴⁴

Today, Were's comments are interpreted by some to have been the fall of Communism in 1989 with which John Paul II is credited. According to this view, the King of the North (the Papacy), which is said to have whirlwind capabilities, took nearly 200 years to respond to the attack by the King of the South (France). By that time, however, the King of the South is no

⁴³ Ibid., p. 30

⁴⁴ Were, Louis F., *The Battle for the Kingship of the World*, paperback, 1950, p. 18. The copy I used is found at <http://www.2520yearprophecy.com/PDF/Louis%20Were/BattleForTheKingshipOfTheWorld-Were.pdf>

longer interpreted as atheistic France but as the atheistic Soviet Union. The King of the North, attacked by one nation, responds some 200 years later to an entirely different nation. The Papacy is not responding to the nation that attacked it. Thus, the Papacy is not really attacking a ‘king’ but an ideology, Atheism, as this is the perceived common denominator between 1798 France and the 1989 Soviet Union. The “symbol” of the King of the South is changed from being one nation to a completely different nation using the same “symbol” within the same verse. France, the King of the *South* in 1798, a nation *north* of the Papacy, becomes the Soviet Union in 1989, a nation even further to the *north* of the Papacy.

Were interprets the King of the South as France, which is one of the ten Roman horns of the fourth beast of Daniel 7, while Gabriel interprets the King of the South as one of the four Greek horns of Daniel 8. Accepting Gabriel’s interpretation, we should look for the King of the South among the nations that comprised the divisions of the Greek Empire, not among the nations of Western Europe.

These contradictions can only be rationalized if the plain language of the text is ignored. You can then have the text say *king* but really mean an *ideology*, *north* mean a power geographically *south*, and *south* mean a power geographically *north*. That’s confusing! Is that really what the angel Gabriel meant when he said he was going to relate to Daniel the “truth” noted in the “scripture of truth?” Daniel 11:2; 10:21. If so, instead of Gabriel interpreting the symbols of chapter 8 and making Daniel “understand the vision,” as he was tasked by God to do, Gabriel is doing the exact opposite by introducing new symbols that he then does not interpret!

Hans K. LaRondelle

Very similar to the ideas of Louis F. Were are those of Hans K. LaRondelle. As with Brother Were, I have never met Brother LaRondelle and do not question his Christian experience or his commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but I am simply responding to what he has written. LaRondelle places great emphasis on the death of

Jesus as “of crucial importance for the Christian expositor from a hermeneutical point of view.”⁴⁵ He maintains that the death of Christ is the pivotal point where the prophecies of Daniel change from literal to symbolic. He, like Louis Were, believes the final verses of Daniel 11 should be interpreted not literally, but rather “Christologically” or “ecclesiologically.”

“The NT teaches the consistent Christological application—including its ecclesiastical aspect—of the whole covenant terminology and imagery of the old dispensation as far as it applies to the time after the first advent of Christ. The hermeneutical consequences of the gospel of Christ for Daniel’s outline prophecies may now become evident. They would require that the theological meaning of such terms as Israel, Judah, holy land, Mount Zion, sanctuary, saints, little horn, king of the north, and king of the south would be applied Christologically and ecclesiologically from the point at which an outline series moves into the new era. When Christ thus becomes the hermeneutical key to unlock the mysteries of Daniel’s apocalyptic, its profound eschatological message can be unsealed for the Christian Church without arbitrary interpretations or unspiritual Middle-East speculations.”⁴⁶

“The critical issue, however, has to do with the interpretation of the final portion of Dan 11, verses 40-45; 12:1, 2; for this part is commonly recognized as still unfulfilled prophecy. Here everything depends on one’s Christocentric hermeneutical principles of apocalyptic interpretation and their consistent application. But at best, there is room for tentativeness when moving beyond inspired interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy.”⁴⁷

To apply Were’s and LaRondelle’s hermeneutic consistently, any literal, local terminology or literal directions that are referenced after the cross, must be understood spiritually or Christologically. LaRondelle suggests that from verse 31 onward we “enter the time after the cross of Christ.”

“The series of Dan 11 may be believed to enter the time after the cross of Christ, from verse 31 onward, because verse 31 speaks about the setting up of ‘the abomination that makes desolate’ (RSV), profanation of the temple, the taking away of the ‘continual’ (burnt offering) or ‘daily’ (mediation service). Here Dan

⁴⁵ LaRondelle, Hans K., *Interpretation of Prophetic and Apocalyptic Eschatology*, p. 242. Taken from *A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics* edited by Gordon M. Hyde.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 243

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 244

11 reveals its repetition and enlargement of chapter 8, as is often recognized. Dan 11, therefore, basically is an amplification of Dan 8.”⁴⁸

Entering “the time after the cross of Christ,” however, occurs from verse 23 onward since verse 22 is where the prince of the covenant is broken during the reign of Tiberius. Daniel 11:21,22. To apply this Christological hermeneutic consistently, we must spiritually interpret not just the last six verses of the chapter, or even from verse 31 onward, but from verse 23 onward. There are two reasons for this. One has already been stated, that we “enter the time after the cross of Christ” at verse 22. The other reason is that a hermeneutic, by definition, cannot be selectively applied. It is either a *principle* of interpretation or it is not.

Applying this hermeneutic creates a number of problems. Who or what is the King of the South in verse 25? Is it Atheism, as Were contends the King of the South is in verse 40? Is it Islam? Or is it not rather, a “king” or “kingdom” of the South, a geographic location already defined for us previously in the chapter? Daniel 11:8,9. How is the warfare between the armies of verse 25 global spiritual warfare? When he comes “toward the south” in verse 29, since directional wording has no literal meaning after the cross, where is he going? What about the “ships of Chittim?” Are they real ships or are they economics, as some define the ships of Daniel 11:40? If “Chittim” cannot be interpreted as a literal geographic location after we enter the “time after the cross,” how is “Chittim” interpreted spiritually and globally? What about the “arms” in verse 31? Literal or spiritual? Did people literally fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil as verses 33-35 suggest, or do those verses refer to spiritual sword, flame, captivity and spoil? Understanding the language as it reads is not “arbitrary interpretations or unspiritual Middle-East speculations”⁴⁹ as Brother LaRondelle would have us believe. If we are going to have our hermeneutic require that after the cross, direction and territory have no bearing, we

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 243

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 243

must apply it from verse 23 onward; otherwise it is not a *rule* of interpretation and we have slipped from exegesis to eisegesis.

Jesus and Daniel

In His only explicit reference to the prophecies of Daniel, Jesus speaks of literal future events. Jesus, in Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14 and Luke 21:20, refers to Gabriel's explanation of the literal destruction of "the city and the sanctuary" in Daniel 9:26. Jesus relates literal events, foretelling what will happen to literal Jerusalem, the literal temple and Jerusalem's literal inhabitants. Literal Roman armies surrounding literal Jerusalem would literally destroy it and the temple, while Christians were to literally flee the city prior to its destruction. And this, 40 years *after* the crucifixion. And what does Jesus say? "Whoso readeth, let him understand." Matthew 24:15. That's exactly what Jesus tells Gabriel to do for Daniel, "make this *man* to understand the vision." Daniel 8:16. Each time Gabriel seeks to carry out his God-given responsibility, he uses the word "understand." "Understand, O son of man:" Daniel 8:17. "I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding;" "therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." Daniel 9:22,23. "Now I am come to make thee understand." Daniel 10:14. Each time Gabriel says "understand," his explanations delineate literal future events. The same is the case with Jesus in Matthew 24:15.

Some may argue that Jesus goes on to talk about the persecution of the saints during the Dark Ages and that this is somehow a "spiritual fulfillment." Were does this by telling us that Jesus "follows the principle employed in the book of Daniel."

"He follows the principle employed in the book of Daniel. The 'breaking in pieces' (Daniel 12:7, RV) and the scattering of the Jewish nation, referred to by Jesus in Luke 21:24; Matthew-21:43, 44, etc., was the literal fulfillment: but in the Dark Ages occurred the spiritual fulfillment, when papal Rome attacked the spiritual city and temple-His church."⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Were, Louis F., *The King of the North at Jerusalem*, paperback, 1949, p. 33. The copy I used is found at <http://the2520.com/PDFs/KingOfTheNorth-Were.pdf>

First, there is no principle of literal/spiritual fulfillment in the prophecies of Daniel. That is a construct of Louis Were. The principle of Daniel's prophecies is: symbolic vision followed by literal interpretation. And second, the events that Jesus mentions regarding the great tribulation are literal events in Europe. They are not global, spiritual ones. These events are chronicled in Daniel 11:33-35, and nearly all agree that they are the literal persecution of the saints by sword, flame, captivity and spoil during Europe's Dark Ages. Just because the Papacy is the subject of a prophecy does not mean the fulfillment is a "spiritual fulfillment" and that it therefore needs to be symbolically understood. The events referring to the Papal Dark Ages in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21 and Daniel 11 are literal events.

The argument of Were and LaRondelle that though the language in Gabriel's explanation of the meaning of the symbols is literal, it must be understood "spiritually" or "Christologically" or "ecclesiologically" after the cross, is really a straw man argument. No one disputes that Israel in the New Testament refers to Christ's followers, both Jew and Gentile. Galatians 3:27-29; Ephesians 2:11-22. Uriah Smith understood it. It's in his book *Daniel and the Revelation*.⁵¹ William Miller, James White, Stephen Haskell, Uriah Smith, E. J. Waggoner, A. T. Jones and A. G. Daniels, regardless of who they understood the final power of verse 45 to be, all realized that New Testament Israel was the Church, yet they still saw Daniel 11:1-45 as literal.

Though Were⁵² and LaRondelle each recognize a connection between Daniel 8 and 11, and LaRondelle acknowledges that Daniel 11 "basically is an amplification of Daniel 8,"⁵³ neither appears to acknowledge that which is the core issue at the heart of the Daniel 11 conundrum, namely, that Daniel 11 is an interpretation of the vision in Daniel 8. The fact that it is an interpretation enjoins a literal understanding of Daniel 11, for it makes known the meaning of the

⁵¹ Smith, Uriah, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 441, 446, 1897 Edition

⁵² Were, Louis F., *The Battle for the Kingship of the World*, paperback, 1950, p. 7. The copy I used is found at <http://www.2520yearprophecy.com/PDF/Louis%20Were/BattleForTheKingshipOfTheWorld-Were.pdf>

⁵³ LaRondelle, Op. Cit., p. 243

symbols given in Daniel 8. Whether in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's visions and Belshazzar's experience, or in Gabriel's conversations with Daniel, the language of an interpretation is always literal.

The critics of William Miller and our pioneers, during and following the Great Disappointment, were spiritualizing the prophecies of Daniel, while Miller and our pioneers were advocating a literal-first hermeneutic. Critics opposed the explanation of Daniel 8:14 as a literal Sanctuary. They instead interpreted the Sanctuary spiritually as the church, a view that we as Seventh-day Adventists do not accept. It is ironic that many today, having embraced Wre's and LaRondelle's spiritualizing hermeneutic for the last six verses of Daniel 11, propose spiritual interpretations first rather than the literal, obvious meaning of the text. The use of the hermeneutic that describes everything in Daniel 11 after the cross as spiritually interpreted has been responsible for the myriad of speculative ideas concerning the final verses of this chapter.

If God's people can correctly, publicly and unitedly explain these verses now, before probation closes, and if world events subsequently confirm our explanation, many people who now sleep in complacent security might come to believe our entire, life-saving, prophetic message. This could convince many open-minded "thinking men and women" that God has given Seventh-day Adventists the last warning message for the world, the message that will prepare a people for the Second Coming of Christ.

“[Daniel 10:2-6 quoted]...No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. Our Lord comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days...In response to his [Daniel's] supplications, light from the heavenly courts was communicated for those who should live in the latter days. With what earnestness, then, should we seek God, that He may open our understanding to comprehend the truths brought to us from heaven.”⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, p. 50