

Statement No. 2
Spirit of Prophecy on Daniel 11:40-45
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Statement: Ellen White’s statement that Daniel 11 “has nearly reached its complete fulfilment” implies that there is only one verse left to be fulfilled. This, in turn, implies support for the Eastern Question.

Good arguments for the various positions on Daniel 11:40-45 have been published. How is the layman supposed to figure out where the truth lies? Yes, we are to go to the Bible. We are all going to the Bible but we are coming away with differing outcomes. God has promised to help us out and if He doesn’t, we are helplessly locked in disunity of message. Here’s the help:

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘last days’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.” {Early Writings, p. 78}

We have been trying to come into unity of message for many years and over these many years, most of us have only become more convinced of the correctness of our positions. If the visions in the last days cannot correct those who err from Bible truth, then we will continue giving to the world a divided message on this important prophecy for the end times. So I am going to be looking carefully into the visions to see if we can’t get some help.

In a 1904 personal letter to Hiram A. Crow, Ellen White solicited a loan for “one or two thousand dollars” at a low interest rate to invest in the work (\$28,000 to \$57,000). In this letter she mentions the eleventh chapter of Daniel. I believe that what she says about Daniel 11 confirms the correctness of the interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 that was being taught in the lecture on the Eastern Question in Bible Prophecy.

Let’s take a close look at this appeal to Hiram Crow: “We have no time to lose. Troublous times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. **The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfilment.**” Lt103-1904

Ellen White wanted Hiram Crow to have a sense of the shortness of time and so she says, “We have no time to lose.” And the prophecy that she knew that best revealed where we were in the stream of time was the prophecy of Daniel 11.

If Ellen White was absolutely clueless as to the identity of the kings of the north and south in the final verses of Daniel 11, if she believed that there was only confusion in the church regarding these last verses, and that nobody understood this prophecy correctly, I seriously doubt if she would have used these verses as prime evidence that time was short.

Let me repeat myself. If she had any reservations or doubts as to what our church was teaching on Daniel 11, I don’t believe that she would have used this prophecy as her key witness that time was short.

Ellen White did not comment upon Bible truth of which she had no knowledge.

She knew that our church was teaching that those last six verses of Daniel 11 were all about earthly civil warfare as were the previous 39 verses.

Perhaps that is why she said that “The world is stirred with the spirit of war” just before she refers to the final verses of Daniel 11.

I believe that she knew that these verses were about civil warfare and not about the loud cry, Sunday laws, the papacy or God’s church.

Here is the context of this statement:

This letter was written to Hiram A. Crow on February 24, 1904. The Adult Sabbath School Lesson for the first quarter of 1904 was on “The Prophecies of Daniel” (tinyurl.com/yby2vqyj). These lessons covered Daniel 11:1-45 from the perspective of Uriah Smith’s book, *Daniel and the Revelation* and *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. In the months of February and March Ellen White, along with the world church, would have been studying the Eastern Question in lessons 9 through 11. In this context it would have been obvious to church members what Ellen White meant by the phrase: “The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfilment.” By studying his Sabbath School Lesson, Brother Crow would have believed that Ellen White was confirming that 44 verses of Daniel 11 had already been fulfilled in history and that only verse 45 was left to be fulfilled in order for the eleventh chapter of Daniel to reach its complete fulfilment. By making this statement in the context of what was believed, taught and published in the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, Ellen White appears to be supporting the biblical interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 as found in the official publications of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the November, 1904 issue of the Review and Herald, Ellen White published this statement that she had sent in a personal letter to Hiram A. Crow regarding the shortness of time:

“The judgments of God are in the land. The wars and rumors of wars, the destruction by fire and flood, say clearly that the time of trouble, which is to increase until the end, is very near at hand. We have no time to lose. **The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecies of the eleventh of Daniel have almost reached their final fulfilment.**”
{RH November 24, 1904, Art. B, par. 8}

Again, the fact that there is only one verse left to be fulfilled in the eleventh chapter of Daniel and the prophecies of that last verse are directly connected with the close of human probation, this final waymark fact is the prime evidence that God is using to tell us that the end is very near at hand. Because of the Sabbath School Lesson earlier that year supporting the interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 as taught in the Eastern Question in Bible Prophecy lecture that was being presented to the public across this nation, Ellen White would have been aware that this statement would have been taken by the readers of her article as her endorsement of the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist view of Daniel 11:40-45.

In 1910 she again repeats this statement, once again affirming the denomination’s view of Daniel 11:40-45:

“The truth is to go to all parts of the world. It is no time now for us to lay off our burden. The message must be kept before our churches: “Present the truth in its high, holy, sanctified character to the people.” Read pages thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen in

Testimony, Vol. 9. The last crisis is close upon us. **The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh of Daniel has almost reached its complete fulfillment.** Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place.” {Lt80-1910.3}

Here is the complete statement in volume 9 of the *Testimonies*:

“But who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians "knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away." Matthew 24:39. They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin. **The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment.** Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place.” {9T 14}

Does that statement provide any clue as to the correct interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45? What does she mean by the word “complete”? Here’s the dictionary definition:

Webster’s 1828 dictionary:

COMPLETE, v.t.

1. To finish; to end; to perfect; as, to complete a bridge, or an edifice; to complete an education.
2. To fill to accomplish; as, to complete hopes or desires.
3. To fulfil; to accomplish; to perform; as, the prophecy of Daniel is completed.

The question is, does the word “complete” in the above statement mean “to finish; to end; to perfect; as, to complete a bridge”?

The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its **complete fulfillment**. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. {9T 14.2}

Or does complete indicate a fuller or second and primary application as the word “complete” implies in the following statement:

“This prophecy, fulfilled in part in the time of the judges, met **a more complete and literal fulfillment** in the captivity of Israel in Assyria and of Judah in Babylon.” {PK 296.1}

The word complete can fit either one of these definitions. So how was the word “complete” in the statement on page 14 of 9T understood by Ellen White’s contemporaries?

Is Daniel 11’s nearly reaching its complete fulfillment mean that the prophecies of the chapter have nearly all been fulfilled? Or does it mean that past fulfillment of prophecy will find a future fulfillment?

How might Willie White have answered this question?

“I do not know of any utterance of mother’s that tells us about the King of the North. The two things that most nearly approach to it, are the statement in Testimonies, v. 9, p. 14 and Testimonies, v. 4, p. 279. Here, in reporting the Danvers campmeeting, she wrote: “Eld. Smith

spoke in the morning on the Eastern Question. The subject was of special interest, and the people listened with the most earnest attention.” (1877) These things are not proofs, but they seem to me to be very interesting indications.”—Letter from Willie White to Elder John Vuilleumier, March 6, 1919.

If the phrase “complete fulfillment” meant that a past fulfillment of prophecies in Daniel 11 will find a future fulfillment then this statement in 9T would not help to answer the question regarding the identity of the king of the north in verses 40-45. However, Willie White believes that the statement on page 14 of 9T provides “very interesting indications” on the identity of the king of the north. The only way this statement could possibly provide an indication for the identity of the king of the north is for this statement to be confirming what was being taught in our publications—that 44 verses of Daniel 11 have already been fulfilled. Thus “We have no time to lose” as Ellen White penned in 1904 in that private letter to Hiram Crow in the first time she wrote this statement which is noted above. Only one verse is left until Daniel 11 is completely fulfilled. In other words, time is short!

Because Willie White used the statement from 9T to support the belief that the king of the north was Turkey, I believe that he understood “complete fulfillment” to indicate that there was only one more verse left as was being taught by the church at that time and I believe that that is exactly how Ellen White intended this statement to be understood.

When these statements about the eleventh chapter of Daniel are coupled with Ellen White’s three statements on the Eastern Question, it becomes evident that the prophet of God endorsed the interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 as taught by our church for nearly 80 years.