

Statement No. 4
Unity on Daniel 11 is Required
Statement Sponsor
John Witcombe

Scenario: if a Literature Evangelist sold the two books that “above all others” are to be given to the people, *Daniel and the Revelation* and *The Great Controversy*, and then advertised a lecture on Daniel 11:40-45, if those who purchased his books read what Uriah Smith had to say on these verses and if the Literature Evangelist, instead of teaching what was in *Daniel and the Revelation*, taught a figurative view of these verses, would this undermine confidence in Uriah Smith’s book? When they read his commentary on chapters seven and eight, will they believe that he is wrong on these chapters also? Undermining the prophetic interpretation of chapter 11 undermines confidence in the reliability of all the rest of the prophecies. It will cause *Daniel and the Revelation* to be little valued. This is where we are today. We are witnessing the fruit of Louis Were’s work in discrediting the interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 by Uriah Smith.

Statement: God not only wants, but He *requires* His church to publicly *speak* with one voice on the major prophecies of the Bible, of which Daniel 11:40-45 is an important part, seeing that it is a prophecy that is fulfilled at the time of the end and is connected with the close of probation.

The prophecies of Daniel 11:40-45 were used in presenting the Eastern Question in Bible Prophecy lecture. And because of our extensive public use of these verses, it is necessary for us to speak with one voice regarding their interpretation.

Revelation 10:11 “And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

It is reasonable to believe that God’s church should be united on what they must prophesy again to the world. God wants us to give the same message when we present prophetic lectures to the world:

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **ye all *speak* the same thing**, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10

“Although possessing different temperaments and dispositions, they will see eye to eye in all matters of religious belief. They will ***speak* the same things**; they will have the same judgment; they will be one in Christ Jesus.” Historical Sketches, p. 124

God does not require all of us to *believe alike*; He only requires us to *speak alike*. Let me support this statement:

“I wrote immediately protesting against their doing contrary to the light which God had given us in regard to all differences of opinion. . . . Even if you are fully convinced that your ideas of doctrines are sound, you do not show wisdom that that difference should be made apparent.” {CW 75.1}

“No one has the right to start out on his own responsibility, and advance ideas in our papers on Bible doctrines, when it is known that others among us hold different opinions on the subject, and that it will create controversy.” {CW 74.2}

“You have departed from the positive directions God has given upon this matter, and only harm will be the result. This is not in God's order. You have now set the example for others to do as you have done, to feel at liberty to put in their various ideas and theories and bring them before the public, because you have done this. This will bring in a state of things that you have not dreamed of. . . . It is no small matter for you to come out in the Signs as you have done, and God has plainly revealed that such things should not be done. We must keep before the world a united front. Satan will triumph to see differences among Seventh-day Adventists.” {CW 75, 76}

“My husband had some ideas on some points differing from the views taken by his brethren. I was shown that however true his views were, God did not call for him to put them in front before his brethren and create differences of ideas. While he might hold these views subordinate himself, once they are made public, minds would seize [upon them], and just because others believed differently would make these differences the whole burden of the message, and get up contention and variance.” {15MR 21.1}

James White had a view on Daniel 11:45 differing from his brethren, but neither the world nor the church was to have perceived this difference, because he was to have kept his conflicting views to himself. And when James White violated this principle of action, God gave to Ellen White a message of rebuke to give to her husband. James White accepted that rebuke.

Why did James White have to keep his view to himself and yet Uriah Smith was given freedom to present his view far and wide? This is a very important question. The answer will be extremely instructive to us today.

The reason why was because Uriah Smith's view was the published view and was being “*taught by us as a people*” across this land. It was the understanding that had been developed by a group of “able Bible students” who, Ellen White says, thoroughly examined this and other prophecies of the Bible and they were told by her to publish the results of these investigations to the world:

“**By a thorough investigation of the prophecies** we understand where we are in this world's history; and we know for a certainty that the second coming of Christ is near. The result of these investigations must be brought before the world through the press. . . . The evidences of our position have been increasing with every year. We have been receiving fresh assurance that we have the truth as revealed in the word of God, that in accepting the third angel's message we have not given heed to fables, but to the ‘sure word of prophecy.’ We are now living in the **full blaze of the light of Bible truth.**” 1881 {4T 592.2}

And this book, that put into print these investigations, was to continue presenting these specific prophetic views, for “*as long as probationary time shall last.*”

“The interest in *Daniel and the Revelation* is to continue **as long as probationary time shall last.** **God used the author of this book as a channel** through which to communicate *light* to direct minds to the *truth*. Shall we not appreciate this *light*, which points us to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our King?” {1MR 63}

“The books *Daniel and the Revelation* and *The Great Controversy* are the books which above all others should be in circulation now. Give them to the people. *Light* and *truth* they must have.” {Ms29-1890.28; 21MR 452.3}

Ellen White knew that even her book, *The Great Controversy*, could not take the place of or do the work of Uriah Smith's book. His book contained **invaluable** information that was not found in her book:

“Everything that can be done should be done to circulate *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*. **I know of no other book that can take the place of this one. It is God's helping hand.**” {MS 76, 1901 }

Because Daniel and the Revelation is God’s helping hand and is to be widely circulated, James White was rebuked when he publically presented prophetic views that were contrary to what was in Uriah Smith’s book.

“Those who are preparing to enter the ministry, who desire to become successful students of the prophecies, will find *Daniel and the Revelation* an **invaluable** help. They need to understand this book. It speaks of past, present, and future, laying out the path so plainly that none need err therein. Those who will diligently study this book will have no relish for the cheap sentiments presented by those who have a burning desire to get out something new and strange to present to the flock of God. **The rebuke of God is upon all such teachers.** They need that one teach them what is meant by godliness and truth. The great, essential **questions** which God would have presented to the people are found in *Daniel and the Revelation*. There is found solid, eternal truth for this time. Everyone needs the light and information it contains.” (Eastern **Question?**) {1MR 61 }

Can you see just how easy God has made it for us to all speak with one voice on the prophecies of the Bible? God does not want us to be presenting conflicting views. We are required to *speak* with one voice and what we are to *speak* to the church or to the public is the prophetic “**truth as it has been taught by us as a people**”.

Someday we shall see eye to eye. But in the meantime we are to present a united prophetic view, otherwise great harm will result:

“We shall see eye to eye ere long, but to become firm and consider it your duty to present your views in decided opposition to the faith or *truth as it has been taught by us as a people*, is a mistake, and will result in harm, and only harm, as in the days of Martin Luther. Begin to draw apart and feel at liberty to express your ideas without reference to the views of your brethren, and a state of things will be introduced that you do not dream of.” {15MR 20.2 }

“Now when everything is dissension and strife, there must be decided efforts to handle, [to] **publish with pen and voice these things that will reveal only harmony.**” {15MR 21.4 }

Ellen White said that in this book “there may be found matters of minor importance that call for careful study and correction.” When something is found to be in error it ought to be corrected.

For example, Uriah Smith taught that the heavenly being in Daniel 10 was the angel Gabriel when in fact it was Christ Himself according to Ellen White. This was corrected in the 1944 edition. Uriah Smith’s book teaches that the power of Daniel 11:36 was a different power from the power brought to view in Daniel 11:30-35. One year after Uriah Smith’s death Ellen White penned a statement that indicates that the power spoken of in verses 30-35 is the same power mentioned in verse 36:

“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."** [Verses 31-36, quoted.]” Lt103-1904 }

These are matters that ought to be corrected. Making these necessary corrections to *Daniel and the Revelation* to make it harmonize with any light provided by the writings of Ellen White are appropriate corrections to make.

In summary:

1. God requires His church to present a united message to the world on Bible doctrines and prophecies.
2. On account of the rebuke James White received from God when he presented a view contrary to Uriah Smith's view on Daniel 11, we are thereby instructed as to the view God wants His church to present to the world.
3. Because interest in Uriah Smith's book is to remain until the close of probation, and because we are prohibited from presenting contradictory views to the public, prophetic views that conflict with the prophetic interpretations published in *Daniel and the Revelation* are not to be presented by voice or pen.
4. God desires to reveal advanced light on the prophecies, "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.**"—Manuscript 32, 1896

One more thought:

James White was rebuked for speaking and writing views contrary to the publically taught views of the church on Daniel 11:45. He was told that he could believe what he wanted to believe but he would have to keep those views to himself. Elder Haskell had some views on eating unclean meat. These views were contrary to the views of the church and he too was rebuked for creating confusion:

"I saw that your views concerning swine's flesh would prove no injury if you have them to yourselves; but in your judgment and opinion you have made this question a test, and your actions have plainly shown your faith in this matter. If God requires His people to abstain from swine's flesh, He will convict them on the matter. He is just as willing to show His honest children their duty, as to show their duty to individuals upon whom He has not laid the burden of His work. If it is the duty of the church to abstain from swine's flesh, God will discover it to more than two or three. He will teach His church their duty. God is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead. I saw that the angels of God would lead His people no faster than they could receive and act upon the important truths that are communicated to them. But some restless spirits do not more than half do up their work. As the angel leads them, they get in haste for something new, and rush on without divine guidance, and thus bring confusion and discord into the ranks. They do not speak or act in harmony with the body. I saw that you both must speedily be brought where you are willing to be led, instead of desiring to lead, or Satan will step in and lead you in his way, to follow his counsel. Some look at your set notions, and consider them an evidence of humility. They are deceived. You both are making work for repentance." {1T 206, 207}

Just as God led His church into an understanding of clean and unclean meat, so likewise He led this church into an understanding of the great lines of prophetic truth. Before the thorough investigation of prophecy took place in 1862-1872 many of our brethren believed that the king of the north was the papacy. That was the understanding that they brought in from the churches of which they once belonged. No one was rebuked because they taught that. But once the church came together and made that thorough investigation and then published the results as instructed and began teaching it far and wide, now if someone, even if it was James White himself, taught what was believed before the investigation was made by our church, the rebuke of God would be warranted. If someone today began to teach that swine's flesh was okay to eat, they too would warrant a rebuke. God requires His church to speak with one voice.