

# The Case for Three Powers in Daniel 11:40

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for the 2023 Daniel 11 Conference

Whether two or three powers are represented in Daniel 11:40 has been a subject of discussion for decades. While most, if not all, of those in the Millerite and early Advent movements saw three powers in verse 40, there were also others not involved in those movements who concurred. In his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*<sup>1</sup> first published around 1754, Anglican minister, biblical scholar and author Thomas Newton understood Daniel 11:40 to consist of three powers: the Romans, which had been the subject of the previous verses, the Saracens as King of the South, and the Turks as King of the North. James White, in *An Exposition of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII & IX*, quotes Alexander Keith who, White acknowledges, “truthfully says” the King of the South and the King of the North are respectively the Saracens and the Turks.<sup>2</sup> White also understood Rome to be the power that would come to its end in verse 45,<sup>3</sup> hence in verse 40, Rome was not the King of the North but a third king.

Currently, however, it's more common for expositors from both inside and outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church to see only two kings in verse 40. Most of today's expositors predicate their understanding of two powers on the assumption that the King of the North has been the dominant figure for much of the chapter. Many outside the

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<sup>1</sup> Newton, Bishop Thomas, *Dissertation on the Prophecies*, Vol. 2, p. 170. Published in London in 1758. <https://archive.org/details/dissertationsonp02newt/page/170/mode/2up>

<sup>2</sup> White, James, *An Exposition of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII & IX*, p. 26,27. Revised 1866 edition. [https://adventistdigitallibrary.org/adl-422314/exposition-seven-trumpets-revelation-viii-and-ix?solr\\_nav%5Bid%5D=ffc5b76b3a0368cbb32b&solr\\_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr\\_nav%5Boffset%5D=3](https://adventistdigitallibrary.org/adl-422314/exposition-seven-trumpets-revelation-viii-and-ix?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=ffc5b76b3a0368cbb32b&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=3)

<sup>3</sup> White, James, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 3, 1878, p. 116. <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH18781003-V52-15.pdf>

church see Antiochus III stretching as far as verse 19 or 20, or with his eldest son at the time, Seleucus Philopator. In verse 20, they see Philopator as raising taxes to pay off his father's debt to the Romans, followed by his younger brother Antiochus IV Epiphanes as the vile person. In their view, Antiochus Epiphanes continues with the final King of the North moniker until at least vs. 36, where the Antichrist is seen for the rest of the chapter, coming to his end in verse 45. Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Seleucid kings are replaced by Rome, Pagan and Papal, but continue to use the King of the North moniker until the end of verse 45. As the reasoning goes, Rome, rather than Antiochus IV Epiphanes, has been the principal subject in the verses previous to verse 40, corresponding to the 'him' in verse 40 at whom the King of the South pushes. The king of verse 36 is assumed to be the King of the North, who is attacked by the King of the South in verse 40, and therefore no third participant is plausible. However, if it can be shown that the King of the North is not the king of verse 36, then a third participant is demanded.

Dr. Tarsee Li in his 2021 paper used de Regt's rules in an attempt to identify anaphoric references within the text of Daniel 11. While he concluded that the rules were "consistent and useful in clarifying at least some of the anaphoric ambiguities in the text,"<sup>4</sup> they were insufficient for solving the anaphoric references "that span longer stretches of text."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Li, Dr. Tarsee, *Who Did What to Whom? Anaphoric Subjects and Objects in Daniel 11:2b-12:3*. Paper presented at the Daniel 11 Conference, in Berrien Springs, MI, October 22, 2021.

Yet some give the King of the North, mentioned in verse 15, such prophetic significance that the King of the North remains the major player from verse 15 onward. This is an assumption that greatly influences the identification of the King of the North in verse 40. However, de Regt's rules appear at this time to be insufficient for solving the anaphoric ambiguities that span the 24 verses between the final reference to the King of the North in verse 40 and the previously mentioned King of the North in verse 15. A different method of ascertaining the identity of the antecedent of the "him" in verse 40, and thereby whether there are two or three powers involved in that verse, seems appropriate.

From the first mention of the interaction between the King of the South and the King of the North in the ten verses from verse 6 through verse 15, either one or both kings are explicitly cited eight times. Only verses 10 and 12 have no direct reference to the titles of either king. This back-and-forth engagement between the King of the North and the King of the South in verses 6 through 15 is closely monitored by Gabriel, who mentions them by name in 80% of the verses. Gabriel's interpretive narration found in this section is an expansion of the interpretative narration of the four horns found in verses 22 and 23 of the chapter 8 vision. However, following chapter 11 verse 15 and prior to verse 40, the King of the South is mentioned only twice, in verse 25, while the King of the North is not mentioned at all. Gabriel's references to these kings crash from 80% to 8% of verses. Gabriel has ceased any discussion of them as dominant kings. Why? Who is the king that Gabriel references after verse 15 for the next 24 verses? The interpretive narration of Daniel 8:23 tells us that the four directionally labeled Greek horns are

coming to their end. While these Greek horns are waning in power another distinct horn, not given a directional label, rises to power in Daniel 8:24. We should expect Gabriel's narration of chapter 11 to follow his same outline interpretation of chapter 8, albeit in a more detailed narrative.

To ascertain, then, whether or not Rome is the King of the North, we must necessarily return to verses 13 and 14. The study of these verses will help us determine if the King of the North moniker is being transferred from one power to another, and whether the king of verse 16 is the same, or at least of similar roots, as the King of the North mentioned in verse 40.

Daniel 11:13, 14

13) For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. 14) And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.

Most of us agree that Daniel 11:13 is discussing the return of Antiochus III to retake the territory he lost to Ptolemy (Coele-Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine) approximately 14 years earlier. Ptolemy IV Philopator has just died (205/204BC) and left his 5-year-old son Ptolemy V Epiphanes as the new ruler. Antiochus III sees the take-over opportunity and enters into an alliance with Phillip, King of Macedon<sup>6</sup> to divide the spoils between them in a war with Ptolemy V Epiphanes.

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<sup>6</sup> Polybius, *The General History of Polybius*, Vol. IV, p. 167. Translated from the Greek by James Hampton and published in 1773. <https://archive.org/details/generalhistoryof04poly/page/166/mode/2up>

Verse 14 is somewhat parenthetical to the narration of the upcoming war between the King of the North and the King of the South. “In those times,” or during the preparations by Antiochus and Philip to attack Ptolemy, there will be “many” who stand up “against the king of the south.” These included Agathocles, Agathoclea, and Sosibius who plotted to plunder the treasury and place Agathocles on the throne, or at least make him the regent for Ptolemy. The Aetolian general, Scopas, similarly plotted to seize the kingdom for himself.

The next phrase in the verse begins with “also.” In addition to the various plots against Ptolemy V Epiphanes, “also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.” “Also” indicates “in addition to,” that is, someone or some group other than the “many” seeking the overthrow of the King of the South. This phrase is pivotal to the discussion of who the King of the North is. The NASB, the NIV, the ESV and Dr. Li translate “robbers of thy people” as “violent (ones) among your people” or a variation of the same, while the KJV, YLT and Wycliffe’s translation use “robbers of thy people.” The renderings, respectively, suggest a faction *of* Daniel’s people or a power *against* Daniel’s people. What is the best way to decide how to interpret this phrase, as it appears it can be translated in more than one way? Should the phrase be translated as “robbers of thy people” or “violent ones among your people?”

The words used in conjunction with this phrase will help us in determining the best way to translate it. Either the “robbers” or “violent ones” seek to “establish” or “fulfill” the

vision. The question then arises, what vision? The word “châzôn,” translated “vision” in verse 14, appears only once in chapter 11. What vision is Gabriel referring to, since no symbolic vision is shown to Daniel in chapter 11? The identity of the vision is important because the events connected with the “robbers” or “violent ones” will “establish the vision.” If Gabriel is referencing a vision unknown to Daniel, if Daniel has never seen the vision Gabriel is referring to, it makes no sense for Gabriel to make the point that the “robbers” or “violent ones” are going to “establish the vision.” Daniel would be confused by not knowing what vision Gabriel is referring to, and we would never be able to confirm Gabriel’s critical point that the “robbers” or “violent ones” would establish the vision. Yet we are not given enough information in verse 14 to identify the vision to which Gabriel refers. To understand what vision Gabriel is referring to, we must look at his previous mentions of a vision, found in chapter 10. In chapter 10 verse 14, Gabriel refers to the “châzôn.”

Daniel 10:14

14) Now I have come to make you understand what shall happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision (châzôn) is yet for *many* days.

The appearance of Gabriel and Christ in chapter 10 comes in answer to the fasting and prayer of Daniel. He understands the vision is long, but continues to pray for further light. This is the only usage of “châzôn” in Daniel 10. Gabriel informs Daniel of the purpose for his visit. It is to “make” Daniel “understand” the “châzôn” which concerns the fate of Daniel’s people in the latter days. Gabriel’s explanation of the vision is his chapter 11 narration. The language of Daniel 10:14 tells us that Daniel is already familiar with the “châzôn,” yet does not fully understand it. Again, the question is asked, what vision is Gabriel coming to make Daniel understand, when there’s no symbolic

vision given Daniel in either chapter 10 or 11? The vision is further described as “for many days.” This brings us back to the last vision given to Daniel, the one in chapter 8. The vision of chapter 8 is the only vision referred to as “châzôn.” It’s also the vision that was “for many days” (Daniel 8:26). In chapter 9, Gabriel, whom Daniel “had seen in the vision (“châzôn”) at the beginning” (referring to chapter 8), appears to Daniel in answer to his prayer. He is there to give him “skill and understanding” about the chapter 8 vision. But Gabriel only gives Daniel a partial explanation. Ellen White states this in *Sanctified Life*, page 49.

“Upon the occasion just described, the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction which he was then able to receive.” *Sanctified Life*, p. 49

The “occasion just described” was the appearance of Gabriel in Daniel 9. Ellen White had quoted Daniel 9:2-4 and Daniel 9:15-19 when describing Gabriel’s visit. In that visit, Gabriel imparted to Daniel “all the instruction which he was then able to receive.” Gabriel was only able to describe the events that would take place under the 70-week portion of the prophecy. In answer to Daniel’s further inquiries, Gabriel and Christ return in chapter 10 to reveal further light concerning what would happen “in the latter days.”

“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...And in response to his supplications, light from the heavenly courts was communicated for those who should live in the latter days.” *Sanctified Life*, p. 49,50

Gabriel’s use of the word “châzôn” in chapters 10 and 11 refers back to the “châzôn” of chapter 8. It can be no other. It’s the only vision in the entire book of Daniel referred to with the use of “châzôn.” Thus the “châzôn” of Daniel 10:14 and of 11:14 is the vision of

chapter 8. Consequently, either the “robbers of thy people” or the “violent ones among thy people” are going to “exalt themselves to establish” the chapter 8 vision.

As we look back at the chapter 8 vision, where do we find the “violent ones among thy people” mentioned? They have a decisive role in Gabriel’s interpretation, that is, to “establish” or “fulfill” the vision. Surely, then, they’d be mentioned somewhere in the vision itself. If we find no reference to the “violent ones among thy people” within the vision proper, how would we know when or how they exalted themselves to establish or fulfill the vision? Gabriel would be sending us into a prophetic dead end by mentioning a fulfillment that could never be substantiated. I find nowhere in the vision proper where the “violent ones among thy people” are mentioned, much less the mention of them exalting themselves. In fact, nowhere in any of the prophetic portions of the book of Daniel can any group be labeled “violent ones among thy people.” Rather than finding violence committed *by* the violent among Daniel’s people, we find violence committed *against* Daniel’s people in chapter 8.

Indeed, throughout the book of Daniel, both by precept (Daniel 7:7,21,25; 8:10,24; 9:26) and example (Daniel 1:1,2; 2:13; 3:19,20; 6:16,17), violence is committed *against* rather than *by* Daniel’s people. The translation “violent ones among thy people” doesn’t fit well with the overall context of the primary reason for mentioning them, the fulfillment of the vision.

We turn now to the “robbers of thy people.” According to the Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, the word translated “robber” in Daniel 11:14 means “prop. breaking, rending abroad; used of wild beasts, Isa. 35:9; hence a violent (man), Ps. 17:4; Eze. 7:22; 18:10; Jer. 7:11; Dan.11:14.”<sup>7</sup> Are the robbers/breakers of Daniel’s people mentioned anywhere within the vision proper that would allow us to understand their actions as fulfilling the interpretation of Gabriel?

Daniel 8:10

10) And it waxed great, *even* to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and **stamped upon them**.

Daniel 8:24

24) And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall **destroy the mighty and the holy people**.

It is the little horn that brings violence to Daniel’s people. The little horn casts them down, stamps upon them and destroys them. From chapter 7 we see the same.

Daniel 7:7

7) After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and **brake in pieces**, and **stamped the residue** with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; and it had ten horns.

Daniel 7:19

19) Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were of* iron, and his nails *of* brass; *which* devoured, **brake in pieces**, and **stamped the residue** with his feet;

Daniel 7:25

25) ...and they shall be **given into his hand** until a time and times and the dividing of time.

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<sup>7</sup> Gesenius, Wilhelm, *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament Scriptures*, p. 690. Published 1857 by Samuel Bagster & Sons, Limited, London  
<https://archive.org/details/hebrewchaldeelex00geseuoft/page/690/mode/2up>

It is the little horn in both Daniel 7 and 8 that does violence to Daniel's people. The little horn is also a robber of Daniel's people. The word translated "robbers" in Daniel 11:14 is translated the same way in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 7:22

22) My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret *place*: for the **robbers shall enter into it**, and defile it.

The passage in Ezekiel 7 refers to the coming of Babylon to Jerusalem to destroy it.

They entered the temple at Jerusalem and robbed it.

Daniel 1:1,2

1) In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2) And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with **part of the vessels of the house of God**: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he **brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god**.

The little horn did the same in 70AD. He entered the temple and defiled it. The Arch of Titus in Rome depicts the temple furniture taken by the Romans as the spoils of the destruction of Jerusalem. To this day, Israel continues to ask Rome to return the stolen goods. In the vision the little horn, Rome, rises to power at the time when the four divisions of Greece are coming to their end. This is how the "robbers of thy people" exalt themselves to establish the vision.

Daniel 8:8,9

8) Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. 9) And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant *land*.

Daniel 8:22,23

22) Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. 23) And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

It is at the time when the Greek horns are filling up their cup, at the latter end of their kingdom, that another power is introduced. It is not one of the directionally-labeled Greek horns, for those horns are coming to their end. It is a fifth horn, rising in a new location – a new power altogether. Seventh-day Adventists see this fifth horn as Rome, simply referred to as “a king of fierce countenance” without any assigned directional label. It is significant to note that when the reigning kingdom’s transgressions come to the full, another kingdom generally stands up. When the cup of Babylon became full on the night of Belshazzar’s feast, the next kingdom in the prophecy, the Medes and Persians, began to rule. Gabriel mentioned that he had stood by Darius the Mede to “confirm and to strengthen him” (Daniel 11:1). But when Gabriel left the side of the kings of the Medo-Persian empire, “the prince of Grecia” would come (Daniel 10:20) and by conquering them become the focus of the prophecy. When the transgressors of the divisions of the Greek kingdom had come to the full, Rome was next on the scene.

From the point when another kingdom is introduced, any further events in the previous kingdom are generally glossed over or not mentioned. We see this in the transition from the Medo-Persian to the Grecian kingdom in Daniel 11:2,3. Once Alexander’s Grecian kingdom is introduced, the remaining kings of the Persian empire are not discussed. Thus, when Rome the “king of fierce countenance” is introduced, events focus on him as the principal player in the narrative. As a result of Rome’s rise when the four Greek

horns are coming to their end, we see no indications in chapter 8 or 11 that Rome assumes the mantle of the King of the North.

Building on the introduction of Rome at the latter time of the divisions of the Alexandrian kingdom in chapter 8, Gabriel in chapter 11 relates in more detail the events surrounding the rise of “a king of fierce countenance,” the very events that will fulfill the vision. At the time Phillip of Macedon and Antiochus III are plotting to overthrow Egypt, when many are standing up against the King of the South, Rome, the robbers and breakers of Daniel’s people, would stand up. The word translated “establish” in Daniel 11:14 is the same root word as “stand up” used previously in the same verse. The term “stand up” is used throughout Daniel to refer to a king/kingdom assuming/gaining ruling power, or losing power if they fail to “stand.” This is seen in

- Daniel 8:3,4,6,7,22,23,25 *stand up*, showing their beginning to reign or their failure to remain.
- Daniel 11:2 referring to Medo-Persian kings *standing up* or ruling.
- Daniel 11:3,4 referring to Alexander.
- Daniel 11:6 referring to not *standing* or staying in power.
- Daniel 11:7 referring to *standing up* or beginning to rule.
- Daniel 11:14 referring to many *standing up* against the king of the south.
- Daniel 11:20,21 referring to new kings *standing up* and beginning to rule.
- Daniel 11:25 referring to not being able to *stand* or stay in power.
- Daniel 11:31 referring to military power *standing* on his behalf.
- Daniel 12:1 Michael stands up or begins to exercise his kingly power.

The “robbers of thy people” would lift themselves up, would stand up, and by doing so would fulfill the vision. Rome is the final power to rise in the vision of chapter 8. Rome then becomes the focus of chapter 8 until it is broken without hand. Its rise, says Gabriel in chapter 11, establishes the vision. These identifying characteristics cannot successfully be applied to “violent ones among your people,” who are mentioned

nowhere in the vision of chapter 8. They did not “stand up” to begin any kind of rule, nor can it be shown that they exalted themselves to fulfill the chapter 8 vision. William Miller understood the veracity of Rome being the “robbers of thy people.”

“That it cannot mean Antiochus, or any king of Syria, it is plain; for the angel had been talking about that nation for a number of verses previous, and now says, ‘also the robbers of thy people,’ etc., evidently implying some other nation. I will admit that Antiochus did perhaps rob the Jews; but how could this ‘establish the vision,’ as Antiochus is not spoken of any where in the vision as performing any act of that kind; for he belonged to what is called the Grecian kingdom in *the vision*. Again, ‘to establish the vision,’ must mean to make sure, complete, or fulfill the same. And if it cannot be shown that the Grecian kingdom was to rob the people of God, I think it must mean some other nation which would do these acts, to which every word will apply. And to this we need not be at a loss; for at this very time of which the angel is speaking, Rome, the least kingdom in Daniel’s vision, did exalt itself, and this kingdom did have the very marks in the *vision*, and in the events following.” Miller, William, *Miller’s Works, Vol. 2, Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year 1843*, p. 88.1

Historically, “in those times” (Daniel 11:14), Rome is rising in power. They are fresh off the victory over Hannibal and have decisively defeated Phillip V in the Second Macedonian War. While Rome was involved with Phillip V, Antiochus III sees his opportunity to strike Egypt. After describing the “many” that stand up against the King of the South in verse 14 along with the introduction of Rome, Gabriel continues with the outcome of the struggle between the North and the South.

Daniel 11:15

15) So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand.

“So the king of the north shall come.” “So” indicates the continuation of the anticipated war described in verse 13, the King of the North coming against the King of the South.

Verse 13 announces the event, while verse 15 relates the outcome. Antiochus III is victorious and takes Coele-Syria and Palestine back from Egypt. He “casts up a mount” by laying siege to Scopas at Sidon where Scopas is holed up with 10,000 men. Several Egyptian generals try to free Scopas but are unable to do so. Scopas is forced by famine to surrender. Antiochus takes several other “fenced cities” including Batanaea, Samaria, Abila, and Gadara. Ptolemy is defeated. For all their attempts the “arms of the south” are unable to “withstand.” A peace ensues, Antiochus III betroths his daughter Cleopatra I to Ptolemy V in 195BC, and they are then married in 194/193BC.<sup>8</sup>

Daniel 11:16

16) But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

In Dr. Li’s translation, he notes that the “he,” or “the one” as he translates it, is an anaphoric reference to the King of the North or his successor/descendant, and the “him” reflects an anaphoric reference to the King of the South. It appears that he does not cite any of de Regt’s rules for his conclusion. This is a pivotal position that carries his conclusions through the rest of the chapter, noting each new king that stands up as the King of the North. However, verse 16 begins with “but.” The American Standard Version, the English Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible, and the Revised Standard Version, among others, all begin verse 16 with “but,” as does the King James. Even though Antiochus III defeats Egypt in verse 15 and takes back the territories that have been disputed for about 100 years, his victory is short-lived. “But he” will come “against him.” “Him” cannot be referring to the King of the South, for the

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<sup>8</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, Article *Cleopatra I Syra*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Cleopatra-I-Syra>

King of the South was already defeated in verse 15 and hasn't "any strength to withstand." There's no point in coming against a strengthless, defeated foe a second time, especially one you've already made a peace treaty with. Once you've knocked out your opponent, there's no need to hit him again.

The use of the word "but" at the beginning of the verse denotes a change or reversal rather than a continuation. We would not say, the "King of the North defeats the King of the South, but the King of the North defeats the King of the South." It's a pointless redundancy. We would say, the "King of the North defeats the King of the South, but "he" (another power) defeats the King of the North." The "him" of verse 16 refers back to the King of the North, Antiochus III, the principal, victorious party in verse 15.

Notwithstanding his recent victory, someone will come "against him." Now we have three parties: the King of the South just defeated, the King of the North just victorious, and someone who will come "against him," against the one left standing, against the victor of the verse 15 conflict.

Who is this third party that becomes involved in the affairs of the Kings of the North and South? Who came against Antiochus III shortly after his victory over Ptolemy V? Historically, it's the same power introduced in verse 14 as the robbers of Daniel's people. "He," Rome, comes against "him," Antiochus III, and defeats him decisively in the final battle of the Roman-Seleucid war at Magnesia in 190BC. According to Polybius, God raised up the Romans to punish Phillip and Antiochus for their attempt to

overthrow the young Ptolemy V Epiphanes.<sup>9</sup> In less than a decade Rome has defeated Macedonia and the Seleucid Empire. Rome is now the superpower in the Middle East. It takes some years, but Rome annexes Egypt and take over much of the area the Seleucids once occupied. Being the superpower, Rome does “according to his own will, and none shall stand before him.” Only the major powers spoken of in Daniel are described as doing according to their own will. The Medo-Persian ram “did according to his own will” (Daniel 8:4). Alexander’s Greece would “do according to his will” (Daniel 11:3). But his successors, including the King of the North, would not reach his level of power (Daniel 8:22; 11:4). Thus, Daniel cannot be referring to Antiochus III in verse 16. Antiochus did not do according to his own will, he was subject to Rome; neither could he defeat all comers, for Rome stood against him and prevailed. The terms of peace after Magnesia forced Antiochus III to pay

“15,000 talents over a period of 12 years, surrender his elephants and his fleet, and furnish hostages, including his son Antiochus IV. His kingdom was now reduced to Syria, Mesopotamia, and western Iran. In 187 Antiochus was murdered in a Baal temple near Susa, where he was exacting tribute in order to obtain much needed revenue.”<sup>10</sup>

After the death of Antiochus III, his sons, Seleucus IV Philopater and Antiochus IV Epiphanes, continued to pay off the debt. It is the conquered who pays tribute to the conqueror. And though Antiochus III did stand in Israel, Gabriel states that the one who stands in the glorious land “consumes it” by his own hand. This Antiochus III did not do, but rather, he benefited the Jews.

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<sup>9</sup> Polybius, *The General History of Polybius*, Vol. IV, p. 168,169. Translated from the Greek by James Hampton and published in 1773. <https://archive.org/details/generalhistoryof04poly/page/168/mode/2up>

<sup>10</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, Article *Antiochus III the Great*, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Antiochus-III-the-Great>

“Now these testimonials which I [Josephus] have produced, are sufficient to declare the friendship that Antiochus the Great bare to the Jews.”<sup>11</sup>

“By 198 B.C.E. the Jews of Palestine had become disenchanted with Ptolemaic rule, and they opened the gates of Jerusalem to Antiochus, and assisted in the expulsion of its Egyptian garrison. Antiochus rewarded the Jews for their ‘splendid reception’ by restoring those parts of Jerusalem destroyed by the war, freeing its citizens from taxes for three years and supplying funds for the Temple, and in general by permitting ‘members of the nation to have a form of government in accordance with the laws of their country.’”<sup>12</sup>

This is not the description of a consuming ruler. Rome on the other hand did do “according to his own will.” No one could stand against him. In the vision, the little horn [Rome] exceeds the power of the ram [Medo-Persia] and the goat [Greece]. The little horn [Rome] expands toward the south [Egypt, the King of the South]; toward the east [the Seleucid empire, the King of the North] and toward the pleasant land [Israel]. (Daniel 8:9) These are the very nations Rome conquered described in historical, chronological order by Gabriel’s Daniel 11 interpretation. The interpretation in Daniel 11 dovetails precisely with the vision of chapter 8.

Here's a paraphrase of what's happening in these few verses...

Daniel 11:14-16

14) And in those times [when Philip and Antiochus are conspiring against Ptolemy] there shall many [Agathocles, Scopas and others] stand up against the king of the south [Ptolemy V Epiphanes]: also the robbers of thy people [Rome] shall exalt themselves

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<sup>11</sup> Josephus, Flavius, *Complete Works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews*, Volume II, Book XII, Chapter IV, p. 231 <https://archive.org/details/completeworksofj02jose/page/230/mode/2up>

<sup>12</sup> Jewish Virtual Library, Article *Antiochus*, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/antiochus>

[Daniel 8:10 “waxed great” same word as “magnified” in Daniel 8:11. Both pagan and papal Rome exalted themselves] to establish the vision [of chapter 8]; but they shall fall [Daniel 8:25; 11:45]. 15) So the king of the north [Antiochus III] shall come, and cast up a mount [siege of Sidon], and take the most fenced cities [Batanaea, Samaria, Abila, and Gadara]: and the arms of the south [Ptolemy V] shall not withstand, neither his chosen people [Scopas, the Aetolian general, was chosen to be the general of the Egyptian armies], neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand. 16) But he [Rome] that cometh against him [the winner of the verse 15 conflict, the king of the north, Antiochus III] shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

Rome is introduced by Gabriel in verse 14, as the “robbers of thy people,” and in verse 16, Gabriel's words foretell the robbers consuming the land of Daniel's people. Rome becomes the dominant power in the chapter after conquering Antiochus III, the King of the North, but Rome is not the King of the North. Rome conquers the King of the North. No power can stand against Rome.

Some might argue that since Rome did conquer the King of the North, by that very act, it takes the title of King of the North. Should it be considered an interpretive principle that when a nation conquers another nation it assumes its title? If it's an interpretive principle, did Rome also assume the title King of Israel for consuming that nation? Did Rome assume the title King of the South when it conquered Egypt? And what happened when the Ottoman Turks conquered the area once occupied by the Seleucids? Did the

Ottoman Turks, as conquerors, assume the title of King of the North? If the Seleucids lost the title King of the North when conquered, would not Rome lose its claim to the same title when it was conquered?

If it's an interpretive principle, then it must be applied consistently, not arbitrarily. There is, of course, no intimation in the chapter 8 vision that when the four Alexandrian horns, one of which is the King of the North, come to their end, that Rome, designated by Gabriel as the King of fierce countenance, assumes the title King of the North. Nor is there any intimation by Gabriel in chapter 11 that Rome assumes the title of King of the North.

Rome has conquered the King of the North but is simply referred to from verse 16 forward as "he" or "him." Gabriel had informed Daniel that he would declare the "truth" of the vision's symbols (Daniel 11:2; 7:16). He defined for Daniel who the King of the North was, a ruler of part of Alexander's Grecian world empire. Following the defeat of Antiochus III, the King of the North is not mentioned again for the next 24 verses until verse 40, with no indication that there's been any transference of the title. It is conspicuously absent. Gabriel, in his narrative from this point until verse 40, relates events in the history of both pagan and papal Rome, yet when referring to Rome never once uses the phrase King of the North.

The end of verse 16 now places us at least as late as 63BC, when the Roman general Pompey stands in the glorious land. We must, then, find fulfillments from 17 onward

from that historical time frame rather than the history of Antiochus III who is long since dead.

Daniel 11:17

17) He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, neither be for him.

“He,” Rome, the victor of verse 16, the one who does according to his own will and stands in the glorious land, will “also” set his face to enter by force, the whole kingdom. “Also” here denotes a continuation of the exploits of the one before whom no one can stand. Bishop Thomas Newton in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies* suggests “He shall also set his face to enter by force the whole kingdom:”<sup>13</sup> Rome, having conquered the Seleucids and stood in the glorious land, for the next few verses engages Egypt, the remainder of the “whole kingdom” once held by Alexander the Great.

With the death of Ptolemy Auletes (51BC), Rome accepts the guardianship of two of his children, Ptolemy XIII and Cleopatra VII, initially under the jurisdiction of Pompey. Cleopatra and her brother rule jointly for a time, but a falling out between them leads to civil war. Julius Caesar arrives in Egypt in pursuit of Pompey but finds Pompey assassinated by the courtiers of Ptolemy XIII. Caesar summons Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII and commands them to disband their armies and rule together. This incenses the Egyptians, who declare war on Caesar. Caesar summons all his allies in the neighboring countries to come to his assistance. Antipater, with an army of Jewish

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<sup>13</sup> Newton, Bishop Thomas, *Dissertations On The Prophecies*, Volume 1, p. 322  
<https://archive.org/details/dissertationson01newt/page/322/mode/2up>

soldiers, the upright ones in the verse, are instrumental in saving Caesar from certain defeat. Shortly after the arrival of reinforcements, Ptolemy XIII drowns in battle and Caesar declares Cleopatra and her 12-year-old brother Ptolemy XIV co-rulers while carrying on an affair with Cleopatra. Caesar in effect sets up Cleopatra as the sole ruler of Egypt, and that Cleopatra was morally corrupt, history attests.

Yet it is suggested by some within and without the church that Cleopatra VII could not be the “daughter of women” because she was a southern Ptolemaic princess, and therefore could not have been given by the King of the North in political marriage to the King of the South. The suggestion is offered that the “daughter of women” was Cleopatra I, the daughter of the King of the North Antiochus III, given in a political marriage to Ptolemy V. This assumes that Antiochus III, King of the North is still very much in control, when in actuality the Seleucid Empire has been subjugated by Rome in the previous verse. Antiochus III did not make any meaningful political alliances after being conquered by Rome but was desperately trying to pay off the tremendous debt imposed on him by the Romans, nor did the political marriage of Cleopatra I to Ptolemy V morally corrupt her.

In addition, we are well down the historical timeline. Antiochus III has been dead for over 100 years by the time Rome stands in the glorious land. Nor does the word translated “give” in verse 17, require a political marriage. “Give” has a wide variety of meanings including “to grant, permit, appoint, set or set over, to put, to place,” and is used in Daniel some 17 times. In Daniel 1:2; 8:12,13; 11:11, it’s used to mean “placed in

one's control;" in Daniel 11:6, given up," likely referring to the death of Berenice at the hands of Laodice; in Daniel 11:31; 12:11, "set up or placed." There is nothing in "he shall give him the daughter of women" that demands it be understood as a "political marriage." Rather, upon the death of Ptolemy XIII, Caesar in effect gives or sets up Cleopatra VII as the Queen of Egypt. With this the historian concurs. According to Plutarch, after the death of Ptolemy XIII,

"Thereupon Caesar made Cleopatra his sister, Queen of Egypt."<sup>14</sup>

Likewise Edwyn Bevan writes in his *A History of Egypt Under The Ptolemaic Dynasty*,

"Caesar returned to Alexandria, master of the situation (January 47 B.C.). Although Cleopatra was now hated by her subjects — at any rate, by the Greeks and Macedonians of Egypt — because she had given herself to the Roman, they had to see her established as queen by the invincible Caesar."<sup>15</sup>

After Caesar is assassinated, Cleopatra VII has her brother Ptolemy XIV assassinated, and her sovereignty is no longer contested. Cleopatra, though indebted to Rome for her position as Queen of Egypt, turns on and wars against Rome: she does not stand on Rome's side nor is she for them. Cleopatra VII had a tremendous effect on the policy of Rome, influencing the formation of the Roman Empire.<sup>16</sup> She was the ruler that presided over the fall of the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt that brought an end to the Hellenistic period. Verse 16 and 17 are actions initiated by Rome, not Antiochus III the King of the

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<sup>14</sup> North, Thomas, *Plutarch's Life of Julius Caesar*, p. 52

<https://archive.org/details/northstranslatio00plutuoft/page/52/mode/2up>

<sup>15</sup> Bevan, Edwyn, *A History Of Egypt Under The Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 366

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.279352/page/n385/mode/2up>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Cleopatra-queen-of-Egypt>

North, who has, again, been dead for over 100 years. There are no indications from the text itself that the King of the North is now the title of Rome.

Verses 18 and 19 outline the conquest of Caesar as he returns to Rome and is there assassinated by the Senators in the Theater of Pompey. Historians conclude that the death of Caesar brings the Roman Republic to an end.

Verse 20 outlines the beginning of the Roman Empire.

Daniel 11:20

20) There shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom:...

Octavian, known as Caesar Augustus, is the adopted son of Julius Caesar, and stands up in his estate. He brings Rome to the pinnacle of power and establishes the Pax Romana that lasts for roughly 200 years. Augustus was the ruler that presided over the fall of Egypt and brought an end to the divisions of the Grecian empire. He was a raiser of taxes that sent Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. This taxing, according to the gospel of Luke, was a decree from Caesar Augustus that the world should be taxed. It was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria rather than at the beginning of his reign. This places the taxation at the time of Christ's birth, well into the reign of Augustus. He has at most 17 years left in his life after this decree. These 17 years are a few days when compared to the vision's "many days" of 2,300 years. Augustus died a natural death, neither in anger nor in battle, which can't be said of his predecessors Caesar and Pompey, or of Antiochus or his sons.

Daniel 8:9 where the little horn waxes exceeding great towards the south, the east and the pleasant land, and verse 23 where the king of fierce countenance stands up as the Alexandrian horns are coming to their end, are now fulfilled. The vision has been established. Rome stands up at the “latter time of their kingdom” and now rules the Hellenistic territory “according to his own will, and none” are able to “stand before him.” Gabriel has introduced us to three main players, the King of the North, the King of the South, and Rome, along with the ramifications for Daniel’s people. These are the three main players that will resurface in Daniel 11:40.

With the death of Augustus, Tiberius, his adoptive son, stands up in his estate.

Daniel 11:21

21) And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

Tiberius did not obtain the kingdom by conquest. He came in peaceably. He was flattered into taking the role of leader. According to the Annals of Tacitus,

“...the senators, whose sole fear was to seem to understand him, burst into tears, complaints, and vows: with extended arms they supplicated the gods, invoked the image of Augustus, and embraced the knees of Tiberius... the senate stooping to the most humiliating importunity...”<sup>17</sup>

Tiberius finally acquiesced. Yet Tiberius, a vile, morally corrupt person, was very unpopular with the people. While other rulers were accorded great honors in their death,

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<sup>17</sup> Annals of Tacitus, Book 1, p. 24  
<https://archive.org/details/annalsbooksivi0106taciuoft/page/24/mode/2up>

even to the point of deification, the death of Tiberius filled the streets with jubilation.

Seutonius writes,

“The first news of his death caused such joy at Rome that people ran about yelling: ‘To the Tiber with Tiberius!’ and other offered prayers to Mother Earth and the Infernal Gods to give him no home below except among the damned. There were [sic] also loud threats to drag his body off with a hook and fling it on the Stairs of Mourning [Gemonian Stairs]; for popular resentment against his savage behaviour was now increased by a fresh outrage... Thus the hatred of Tiberius grew hotter than ever - his cruelty, it was said, continued even after his death - and when the funeral procession left Misenum, the cry went up: ‘Take him to the amphitheatre at Atella! Give him only a half-burning.’ (For Atella was the home of popular farces, and half-burning in an amphitheatre would have been a farcical ignominy.)”<sup>18</sup>

Tiberius was not given the honor of the kingdom as Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus were.

This brings us to the death of Christ in the next verse. Gabriel has cited the kings in power at the birth, ministry and death of Jesus Christ. However, Gabriel has not intimated in the least that Rome is the King of the North. Rome has simply been referred to as “he” since verse 16 and continues to be thus referred to for the next several verses. Verse 35 brings us to the time of the end, with verse 40 beginning to relate the events that will take place during the time of the end. In verse 36, Gabriel identifies the king that will play a major role in those events sandwiched between verses 35 and 40. He spends four verses, nine percent of the chapter, describing this king so we can accurately know who is going to play such an outsized role in the final events leading down to the close of probation and the second coming. Yet there’s no attempt to

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<sup>18</sup> Seutonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, p. 130  
<https://archive.org/details/in.gov.ignca.12432/page/n141/mode/2up>

give this king any directional label for a title. He is simply referred to as “the king.” This king would “do according to his will,” a phrase reserved only for the dominant powers in the vision. The descriptive phrases of this king are the same as found referring to the little horn of Daniel 7 and 8. Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2 appears to quote directly from Daniel 11:36 and 37 when he refers to the “man of sin.” If Rome is the king referred to in verse 36 through verse 39 and if Rome is the King of the North, why not mention it in those verses? There’s been an unusually long interlude since the last mention of the title, King of the North; Gabriel uses extensive detail in delineating his identifying characteristics, and given the prominent role he will play in the final events of the chapter, why is there no definite declaration that the king of verses 36 to 39 is *indeed* the King of the North? Not declaring that this powerful king is the King of the North reinforces the idea that he is not the King of the North. The king of verse 36 is the first “him” mentioned in verse 40 that is attacked by the King of the South and in turn by the King of the North. Unless it can be conclusively demonstrated that from verse 16 forward the designation of King of the North has passed to Rome, that Rome can never lose the King of the North moniker, and that the king of verse 36 is the King of the North, then the first “him” of verse 40, not having been designated as the King of the North, is a third power distinct from the King of the South and the King of the North. Finally, I’d like to cite Dr. Richard L. Litke, from his unpublished, *The Other Side of Daniel*, where he argues for three powers in verse 40. For those who may not be familiar with Dr. Litke, he taught Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic at Walla Walla University as a full-time, part-time, and contract professor for 60 years. He earned his PhD in

ancient languages from Yale University and was fluent in seven languages including Mandarin Chinese and three separate Greek dialects. Dr. Litke writes,

“In Daniel 11:40, there exist *two significant but parallel clauses*, which are rendered in the NKJV as, (1) ‘the king of the South shall attack him,’ and (2) ‘the king of the North shall come against him.’ The construction, in the Hebrew Bible here portrays two distinctly separate powers (represented in typical Hebrew syntactical style in a parallel construction) as struggling in hostile action *with the same singular object of their fury*. In each clause, an action verb is followed by an antagonistic preposition to which a pronominal suffix is attached (literally, ‘*immo* ‘with *him*’ and ‘*alayw* ‘against *him*’). In this syntactical arrangement, a person who is familiar with Hebrew syntax would immediately perceive here the existence of such an obviously parallel idea and construction that it would tend to eliminate *any idea of a reciprocal action* as being pictured in these two verbs, against supposed plural prepositional objects (hence here, *there is only one single object*, in spite of the two verbs!) The prepositional *object* of all this verbal activity is clearly to be found in the topical *subject* introduced much earlier (in 11:36, ‘the King’)—the one who is the focus of all the activity in 11:36-39. One just cannot here obtain the idea in 11:40 that the King of the South and the King of the North are somehow attacking each other; they are here represented instead as both attacking a common enemy *who is simply represented as ‘him’* in each of the two clauses! Thus, the first clause itself pictures an attack against some previously mentioned antecedent (‘with him’); *and it is thus anaphoric in its general sense rather than reciprocal or cataphoric in force; and the clause should therefore not be construed (either syntactically or exegetically!) as representing a reciprocal attack against each other or against someone who is to be mentioned in the following part of the verse...*

In brief, then, the pronominal suffix at the end of each of the two prepositional phrases in 11:40 must refer to one single entity that is utterly separate from both the King of the North and the King of the South. In other words, *a third power is clearly involved here*—and that reference is certainly to the king who was introduced at the beginning of 11:36!”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Litke, Richard L., *The Other Side of Daniel*, excerpt of chapter 15, *Abbreviated Notes for Daniel 11:1-45*. Unpublished manuscript, 2013.