

Implications of Tarsee Li's Identification of Anaphoric Referents in Daniel 11

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Introduction

This paper discusses some implications of Tarsee Li's careful work in clarifying the protagonists represented in Daniel 11 through analysis of anaphora in the Hebrew text. He has incorporated the results of his analysis in an excellent translation of the chapter, with color-coding to indicate participants, that is presented in his paper titled, "A Color-Coded Translation of Daniel 11:2b-12:3."¹ Also very helpful is his subsequent paper titled, "A Few Observations on the Text of Daniel 11 and Current Adventist Interpretations."²

Li has laid a solid foundation for further exploration of this challenging chapter by applying rules of biblical Hebrew anaphora formulated by Lénart J. de Regt on the basis of patterns that de Regt has observed.³ In this way, Li has resolved apparent anaphoric ambiguities for modern readers of Dan 11, which would not have been a problem for ancient Hebrew speakers,

Just to be sure that the hearers and readers of my paper know what we are talking about, "anaphora" is the avoidance of repetition by using a word or phrase, such as a pronoun, that refers to or replaces another expression used earlier in the text that

¹ Paper presented at the fifth Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, March 9, 2023. For Daniel 11 conference papers and other resources, see daniel11prophecy.com.

² Also presented at the Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, March 9, 2023.

³ Lénart J. de Regt, "Anaphoric Accessibility in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: Global and Local Participant Tracking across Clause Boundaries," in *Ancient Texts and Modern Readers: Studies in Ancient Hebrew Linguistics and Bible Translation*, ed. Gideon R. Kotzé, Christian S. Locatell, and John A. Messarra, *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 63-78.

identifies the anaphoric reference. For example, the beginning of Dan 11:36 can be translated: “The king will do according to his will. He will exalt himself...”⁴ Here the use of “his,” translating a Hebrew pronoun, and “He,” translating the subject contained in a Hebrew verb, refer to “the king” and avoid the repetition: “The king will do according to the king’s will. The king will exalt himself...”

That is a clear case, but what happens when it appears that an anaphoric reference could refer to more than one previous expression in an earlier clause? For example, the most crucial verse in the current Seventh-day Adventist debate over Dan 11 is verse 40, which Li correctly translates: “At the time of the end the king of the south will join in combat with him. But the king of the north will storm against him with chariots, horsemen, and many ships.”⁵ To whom does each instance of “him” (translating Hebrew pronouns) in each of these sentences refer? Do they refer to another king, so that there is a three-way conflict between the kings of the south and the north and the other king? Or does the first “him” refer to the king of the north, as identified in earlier verses, and the second “him” to the king of the south, against whom the king of the north retaliates, so that there is a two-way conflict between them? These are the kinds of questions that Li’s analysis answers.

Li also makes some important overall observations, such as: “...one does not expect a participant to be mentioned anaphorically unless he or she has been previously introduced in the context. Likewise, one does not expect the narrative to repeat a participant’s name or designation unless the context makes it necessary.”⁶ Therefore, the

⁴ Translated by Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 23-24.

⁵ Translated by Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 24.

⁶ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 4

fact that the designation “the king of the north” does not appear between verses 16 and 40 by no means indicates that this globally active participant drops out of the prophetic narrative.

The present paper assesses the impact of Li’s analysis and translation on the exegetical approach developed by myself and some others,⁷ who have concluded that the end-time “king of the south” in Dan 11:40-43 refers to Islamic power. Before going to verse 40, however, I will discuss implications of Li’s work for textual and historical issues in some earlier parts of the chapter, which lay crucial groundwork for interpretation of the end of the chapter and where fault lines emerge between various views, including my own.⁸ Thus, this paper will focus on the following verses of the chapter in Tarsee Li’s translation: 4, 14, 16-23, 31, 36, 40.⁹

Daniel 11:4

Tarsee Li renders verse 4 without color-coding because he regards this and verses 2b-3 to be less ambiguous than verses 5-45.¹⁰ His translation of verse 4 is as follows:

When he has risen, his kingdom will be broken.
It will be divided to the four winds of heaven,

⁷ Others include (but are not limited to) Randall and Michael Younker, as well as Tim Roosenberg, who has published *Islam and Christianity in Prophecy*, of which the latest edition is subtitled *Parallels in Left vs. Right Politics* (Teach Services, Inc., 2021). For papers by these individuals, see daniel11prophecy.com.

⁸ My own publications and papers on Dan 11, most of which are online at daniel11prophecy.com, include “The Un-Manifestation of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in Daniel 11:1-22,” paper presented at Current Issues in Eschatology: A Symposium, Berrien Springs, MI, March 2, 2007; *Understanding Daniel 11:2-12:3 in Seven Steps* (Doral, FL: Inter-American Division Publishing Association, 2018; also translated into Spanish as *Cómo entender Daniel 11:2-12:3 en siete pasos*), earlier published as “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27/1-2 (2016): 294-343; “Religious-Political Papacy and Islamic Power in Daniel 11,” *DavarLogos* 19/2 (2020): 37-70, earlier presented at the first Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, October 20, 2018; “Review of: Jacques B. Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019)” in *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 58 (2020):152-155; “Raw Data and Its Implications in Real Exegesis of Daniel 11,” paper presented at the fourth Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, October 21, 2021.

⁹ Li’s translation is in “A Color-Coded Translation,” 17-25.

¹⁰ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 17.

and it will not belong to his posterity,
nor be like his dominion that he ruled.
For his kingdom will be uprooted,
and it will belong to others besides these.

This verse refers to the “mighty king” in verse 3, whom historicist, preterist, and futurist interpreters agree is Alexander the Great. Verse 4 states that Alexander’s kingdom “will not belong to his posterity.” Rather “it will belong to others besides these.” The possessive preposition ל, rendered “belong,” forms a parallel, indicating that not belonging to his posterity has the same meaning as belonging to others besides these, i.e., his posterity. Thus, Tarsee Li points out that the referent of the plural anaphor “these” (אֵלֶּה), a demonstrative pronoun, is the singular word for “posterity” (אַחֲרֵיתָהּ). Usually a Hebrew pronoun should agree with its referent in number, but that is no problem here because the word for “posterity” is collective when it refers to multiple descendants.¹¹ Compare, Jer 31:17, for example, where the anaphoric plural subject of the verb יָשׁוּבוּ, “they will come” is the singular collective אַחֲרֵיתֶךָ, “your posterity,” i.e., your children.

As Tarsee Li mentions,¹² Jacques Doukhan in his book titled *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study* interprets אַחֲרֵיתוֹ in verse 4 as “what comes after him,” rather than “his posterity,” i.e., his direct descendants. On this basis, Doukhan argues that “The demonstrative ‘these’ refers to the kingdoms implied in the word ‘*akharito*, which are the kingdoms succeeding Alexander.” Thus, “others besides these” refers to the power following these Hellenistic kingdoms, that is, Rome.¹³ Thus,

¹¹ Li, “A Few Observations,” 6.

¹² Li, “A Few Observations,” 7.

¹³ Jacques Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019), 80; cf. 79, 233. Interestingly, Doukhan decodes Dan 11 while Tarsee Li color-codes it!

Doukhan skips all of the Ptolemies and Seleucids in the following verses, which has the advantage for SDAs of staying as far away from Antiochus IV Epiphanes as possible. This interpretation, which is unique to Doukhan, is by far the most radical of all approaches to the first part of Dan 11 that claims to be historicist, so it should be addressed.

Li responds regarding Doukhan's interpretation of the word אַחֲרֵית in verse 4:

However, while it is true that the other 4 instances of the word in Daniel denote the "future" or "end" (8:19, 23; 10:14; 12:8), the use of the word in other contexts does not determine its meaning in this context. Further, in the other 4 instances the "future"/"end" is the focus of the prophecy, not something skipped over to focus on what happens after that "future." On the other hand, Doukhan admits that the "demonstrative 'these' refers to the kingdoms implied in the word" אַחֲרֵית, resulting in an implied anaphoric relationship between אַחֲרֵית and אֵלֶּה.¹⁴

Additionally, as I pointed out in my review of Doukhan's book in *Andrews University Seminary Studies*,¹⁵ the possessive pronoun translated "his" in אַחֲרֵיתוֹ, "his posterity," signifies that the אַחֲרֵית belongs to Alexander. So this word most naturally denotes his own direct descendants, as in Jer 31:17 and Ps 109:13, where possessive pronominal suffixes on the word אַחֲרֵית refer to a person's posterity/children. Therefore, the words "others besides these," i.e., other than Alexander's descendants, refer to the rulers of the Hellenistic kingdoms who succeeded Alexander instead of his own children. As is well known, this was historically fulfilled.

That Dan 11:4 does not refer to Rome at all is confirmed by the relationship between the division of Alexander's kingdom into four parts (cf. 7:6; 8:8, 22) "to the four winds of heaven" in 11:4 and "The king of the south" in verse 5. Clearly, this king rules a

¹⁴ Li, "A Few Observations," 7.

¹⁵ Gane, "Review of: Jacques B. Doukhan," 153-54.

southern territory that comprises one of the four divisions of Alexander's empire. Tarsee Li's tracing of anaphoric references shows that there is referential continuity from "The king of the south" in verse 5 through verse 8, where "he" (the king of the south, i.e., a dynastic heir) will bring booty from the north "into captivity to Egypt."¹⁶ So the territory of the king of the south is Egypt, which definitively identifies his realm as the Ptolemaic kingdom. Then "the king of the north" introduced in verse 6 must rule another division of Alexander's empire that borders on Egypt to the north, so that the two kingdoms compete over territory that is between them in subsequent verses. This "king of the north" can only be the ruler of Seleucid Syria.

Correspondence between the literal text profiles in Dan 11:5-19 and their historical fulfillment by the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynastic rulers, with continuity between them marked by successions of coreferential anaphors labelled as such by Tarsee Li, is remarkable.¹⁷ This portion of Daniel is the most extensively detailed prophecy in all of Scripture and confirms God's supreme ability to foretell and reveal the future, thereby confirming our faith in other prophecies. Unfortunately, Doukhan misses this by misinterpreting "his posterity" and "others besides these" in verse 4, resulting in his unsuccessful attempt to artificially force the wrong history into the text in a significant chunk of his commentary, covering verses 5-19.¹⁸

Correct interpretation of verses 5-19, as described above, affects interpretation of the rest of the chapter by affirming that the genre of the angelic discourse unit of 11:2b-

¹⁶ Li, "A Color-Coded Translation," 18-19.

¹⁷ See, e.g., John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 378-81; cf. Gane, "The Un-Manifestation of Antiochus IV Epiphanes."

¹⁸ Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 81-132.

12:3 continues to be literal,¹⁹ following the explicit literal language at the beginning of the unit in verses 2b-3, where “kings” are literal kings of Persia, “the kingdom of Greece”²⁰ is literally Greece, and “a mighty king” is the literal Greek king Alexander the Great. In Dan 11, a “king” is a king, “south” is south, and “north” is north.²¹

Doukhan, however, takes verses 5 and following to depict the rise of papal Rome, “the king of the north,” which opposes pagan Rome, “the king of the south.”²² For Rome to be both north and south is a geographic contradiction, but Doukhan understands them as symbolic to designate “spiritual entities involved in a spiritual conflict” rather than “explicitly identified political regimes.”²³ Thus, he takes the lack of explicit naming of kingdoms, such as Greece and Persia, to signal a shift of literary genre from literal to symbolic.

On the other hand, in verses 5-19 there is no need to explicitly name the kingdoms of the south and north because they are both parts of the divisions of Alexander’s Greek empire. The king of the south is the Greek king of the south and the king of the north is the Greek king of the north. Furthermore, verse 8 explicitly names “Egypt” as the territory of the king of the south. Here “Egypt” means literal Egypt, just as Persia and Greece mean Persia and Greece in verse 2. There is no change of genre at all between

¹⁹ As in interpretations of symbolic revelations in Dan 2, 7, 8, 9 (with 9:24-27 continuing to explain the symbolic vision in chapter 8).

²⁰ Not the “king of Greece.” The abstract noun מְלָכּוּת means “kingdom” or “kingship.”

²¹ “Daniel 10-12 does not use symbolic ciphers to describe earthly or heavenly realities. Instead, the text employs explicit, realistic terminology. Some of the language might be described as esoteric, but opaque language is significantly different from symbolic, metaphorical, or allegorical language” (Bennie H. Reynolds III, *Between Symbolism and Realism: The Use of Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Language in Ancient Jewish Apocalypses 333-63 B.C.E.*, *Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements* 8 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011], 225).

²² Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 81-94.

²³ Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 81.

verses 4 and 5, so there is no justification for introducing a symbolic/spiritual interpretation that continues for the rest of the chapter, as Doukhan does.

Daniel 11:14

Tarsee Li renders verse 14 as follows:

In those times many will stand up against the king of the south.
The violent ones of your people will rise up to confirm the vision.
But they will stumble.

This verse is like a parenthesis in the narrative flow of the prophecy, beginning with a disjunctive clause in Hebrew. The verse describes circumstances that negatively impact the southern kingdom on the internal national level at about the same time as the king of the north has prepared and is coming on (יבוא בוא)²⁴ “with a great army and much equipment” (v. 13). Verse 15 resumes the narrative flow, with resumptive repetition of the verb “will come” (יבוא), to predict the successful onslaught of the king of the north against the south.

In verse 14, Li identifies “they” (underlined in green) as an anaphoric reference to “the violent ones” (highlighted in green) who “will stumble.” Here the violent ones belong to Daniel’s people, so they are Jews who exalt themselves (ינשאו)²⁵ in order to confirm or fulfill (להעמיד)²⁶ “a/the vision” (תזון, with no definite article), apparently a God-given vision of restoration for the Jewish people. The word for vision here—תזון—is

²⁴ On infinitives absolute with main verbs of motion, see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns), 589-90.

²⁵ For the meaning of the Hithpael of נשא, see *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (= *DCH*), ed. David J. A. Clines; 9 vols. (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014), 5:770 “lift oneself up, exalt oneself, be exalted.”

²⁶ For the Hiphil of עמד here in Dan 11:14, see *DCH* 6:474—“confirm, fulfil.”

used elsewhere in the book of Daniel for visions from the true God (1:17; 8:1-2, 13, 15, 17; 26; 9:21, 24; 10:14).²⁷

There is a parallel between the first two sentences of 11:14: Many will stand up against the king of the south, i.e., rebelling against King Ptolemy, and some of the Jewish people will also rise up, apparently also against the king of the south, who controlled the land of Israel at that time. Their motivation in doing this is distinctly Jewish.

Li's translation of the Hebrew construct expression פְּרִי־צִי עֲמֹק as "The violent ones of your people," takes עֲמֹק, "of your people," to be a partitive genitive, meaning that the violent ones are among "your people," i.e., Daniel's Jewish people. As Li recognizes,²⁸ this disagrees with Uriah Smith's objective genitive reading of עֲמֹק that "your people" are the object of actions inflicted on them by violent ones or robbers (KJV "the robbers of thy people"), identified as the Romans.²⁹ Li points out that "the Hebrew text allows for both types of genitive interpretations, and in either case it is the same group that will 'stumble' in the next sentence."³⁰

However, other factors invalidate Smith's interpretation. First, no Romans exalted themselves for the purpose of (preposition ל in לְהַעֲמִיד) confirming or fulfilling a vision of the true God. Second, whatever the Romans did, they did not "stumble," i.e., fail, until much later. Third, and decisive, the flow of history in Dan 11 does not allow for a shift to focus on the Romans in verse 14 because verse 17 is still in the time of the Seleucids and Ptolemies (see below).

²⁷ Implicitly from the true God in 1:17.

²⁸ Li, "A Few Observations," 15-16.

²⁹ Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1944; orig. publ. as *Thoughts, Critical and Practical on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation: Being an Exposition, Text By Text, of These Important Portions of the Holy Scriptures*; Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1882), 243.

³⁰ Li, "A Few Observations," 16.

Daniel 11:16-23

Tarsee Li translates Dan 11:16 as follows, with red lettering indicating the king of the north or a successor or descendant with another name, red underlining to tag an anaphoric reference to the king of the north or a successor, and blue underlining for an anaphoric reference to the king of the south or a successor:³¹

The one who comes to him will do according to his will,
without anyone standing before him.
He will stand in the beautiful land,
With annihilation in his hand.³²

According to this translation, the king of the north comes to the king of the south and accomplishes his (the king of the north's) will, that is, by defeating the king of the south. Moreover, the king of the north stands in the "beautiful land" (אַרְצֵי-הַיָּפֵן), i.e., the land of Israel (Ezekiel 20:6, 15), which means that he has conquered it. For Daniel, who was concerned about his people and their future in the land of Israel, this would be a crucial point in the chapter.

Tarsee Li's identification of the anaphoric references in verse 16 makes good sense in this context. Verse 15 explicitly identifies "The king of the north," who will come and engage in military activities, and the forces "of the south will not stand." So verse 16 summarizes the result: The victor, i.e., the king of the north, can do what he wants "without anyone standing before him," but "He will stand in the beautiful land." Notice the repetition of the verb עמד, "stand," first referring to the enemies of the king of the north not standing and then to himself standing.

³¹ Li, "A Color-Coded Translation," 17.

³² There is an alternative reading of קָלָה, which Li renders "annihilation." Collins translates: "*and it will be all in his hand*" and comments: "From this point on, Palestine remained under Seleucid control" (*Daniel*, 381). But see Li's comment in "A Few Observations," 17-18.

Verse 16 provides a distinctive and rare event profile that can be matched to a historical fulfillment: A northern king defeats a southern king and takes from him the land of Israel. Most SDA interpreters have taken this to be the takeover of Palestine by Pompey for Rome in 63 BC.³³ However, Rome did not gain Palestine by defeating a southern kingdom, namely Egypt. The king who did that was the Seleucid ruler Antiochus III the Great (ruled 222-187 BC) in 200 BC.

That the victor in Dan 11:16 is Antiochus III is confirmed by another unique event profile in verse 17, which Tarsee Li translates as follows:

He will set his face to come with the strength of his entire kingdom.
He will form alliances with him, [textual variant]
and give him the daughter of women to destroy him. [textual variant]
But she will not stand
Nor be for him.

The primary protagonist here is the king of the north, continuing from the previous verse (v. 16), as indicated by underlining of anaphoric references to him. At the beginning of verse 15, “The king of the north will come.” Now, having defeated the king of the south and taken over the land of Israel (v. 16), the king of the north sets his face, referring to a resolute decision, to come again to the south. This time he is in a much stronger position and comes “with the strength of his entire kingdom,” not to wage war, but to make a peace treaty with the king of the south (“him” underlined in blue), sealed by the marriage of his daughter to the king of the south. However, the intention of the

³³ Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 246; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1953-1957), 4:869; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 1: The Message of Daniel For You and Your Family* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1981), 293; Frank W. Hardy, “An Historicist Perspective on Daniel 11” (MA thesis, Andrews University, 1983), 133-4; William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 246.

king of the north is to use his daughter to destroy the king of the south,³⁴ presumably to take over his kingdom without having to conquer it militarily. The plan doesn't work because she doesn't do what he hoped she would: "But she will not stand nor be for him," that is, for her father, the king of the north. He had succeeded in making the forces of the king of the south not stand (v. 15) and he had succeeded in standing in the "beautiful land" (v. 16), but now he suffers a setback because his daughter does not stand (v. 17). The continuity of the narrative in terms of actions indicates that the king of the north in verse 17 is the same individual as the king of the north in verse 15 and 16. He is not a dynastic successor.

SDA interpreters since Uriah Smith have identified "the daughter of women" in v. 17 as Cleopatra VII (69-30 BC), the last queen of the Ptolemaic dynasty of Egypt, who lost her kingdom to the Romans in spite of her famous affairs with the great Roman generals Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. This is mistaken, however, for the simple and obvious reason that Cleopatra VII was from the south, not the north, and her father did not give her in marriage because he died while she was young. As many scholars have found, however, the text profile in verse 17 perfectly fits in the career of Antiochus III the Great, the Seleucid king of the north. After he conquered Palestine, he sealed a peace treaty with Ptolemy V of Egypt by giving his daughter, Cleopatra I, in marriage to Ptolemy. Cleopatra was loyal to her Egyptian husband, so Antiochus did not gain a political advantage from the arrangement. Therefore, the focus of Dan 11 on the Seleucids and the Ptolemies continues at least to verse 17, invalidating interpretations that move to the Romans in verse 14 or verse 16.

³⁴ See Li's justification for his choice of the textual variant "to destroy him" ("A Color-Coded Translation," 33; "A Few Observations," 19-20).

Tarsee Li renders verse 18 as follows:

He will set his face to the coastlands [Kativ: He will turn back his face] and capture many.

But a **commander** will put a stop to his taunt.

Rather, he will turn back his taunt on him.

Verses 18-19 continue to predict the actions of the king of the north, who has been the main actor since the beginning of verse 15, with anaphoric references to him marked by red underlining. Again, these verses appear to continue the career of the same individual king of the north who has been in view since verse 15.

The king of the north has been successful in defeating and thereby weakening the king of the south so that he could take over Palestine (vv. 15-16), but he has not managed to absorb the southern kingdom into his own by using his daughter as the queen of Egypt (v. 17). As a determined empire builder, the king of the north turns to the coastlands that he does not already possess (he already has the coasts of Syria and Israel), which are to the northwest in what is now Turkey and Greece (v. 18). His campaign is successful, so that he will “capture many” (v. 18), until “a commander will put a stop to his taunt.”³⁵

Significantly, the one who stops the king of the north is not a king, which suggests that the power represented by the commander may not be a usual monarchy. In view of the identification of the king of the north as Antiochus III the Great, this makes perfect sense because his northwestern campaign was stopped by Roman armies that defeated him at Thermopylae in Greece (191 BC) and decisively crushed his forces at Magnesia in Asia Minor (190 BC). The Romans at Magnesia were commanded by the consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio (subsequently called “Asiaticus”), who would fit the description of a “commander.”

³⁵ The Hebrew word הַרְפִּיָּה means “reproach, taunt” (*DCH* 3:321).

Daniel 11:19, continuing the account of the king of the north, as shown by Li's red underlining of anaphoric references,³⁶ also fits Antiochus III:

He will then turn his face back to the fortresses of his own land.
But he will stumble
and fall
and not be found.

After his defeat by the Romans, Antiochus returned to "his own land," i.e., his home territory. Then the text says, "he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found." In telling the future story of the "king of the north," this is a way of saying: "The End." Antiochus was assassinated in 187 BC, bringing an end to his eventful and dramatic reign.

One may ask why Dan 11 devotes so much attention to the competition between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kings of the north and south, respectively, in verses 5-19.

Here are some possible reasons:

1. As mentioned above, the detailed fulfillments of the predictions in Dan 11 concerning these rulers and their activities confirm the accuracy of Daniel's prophecy, inspiring and confirming faith in God's ability to foretell the future.
2. By setting such a solid foundation for discerning historical fulfillment in Dan 11:5-19, the chapter prepares the reader to identify the time when the Messiah would come, as mentioned in verse 22b by the words: "also the prince of the covenant."
3. The north-south conflict between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies introduces a recurring pattern of north-south conflict that is repeated later in the chapter in verses 25-30 and verses 40-43.

³⁶ Justified by Li in "A Few Observations," 23.

4. The first part of Dan 11 predicts that the Seleucid king of the north would defeat the Ptolemaic king of the south and take over “the beautiful land,” i.e., the land of Israel (vv. 15-16). The chapter similarly ends with conflict between the kings of the south and the north, with the north decisively winning (vv. 40-43) and then turning to establish his domination over “the beautiful land,” where “the holy beautiful mountain” is located (v. 45; cf. v. 41). This parallel, with history repeating itself in a modified form, is an important factor in the dramatic literary structure of Dan 11, which builds to one climax that is fulfilled during the reign of Antiochus III the Great and then another, final climax in the end-time.

Following the end of the important career of Antiochus III the Great in Da 11:19, we expect some kind of transition to another ruler. Sure enough, verse 20 begins with terminology for a transition. Tarsee Li translates the verse as follows:

In his place will arise **one who sends out an exactor**
for the splendor of the kingdom.
But in a few days he will be broken, but not in anger or in battle.

Li labels the anaphoric reference “his” with red underlining. This indicates a kind of continuity, which is supported by the fact that the verse begins with a verb. The pronoun “his” refers to the primary and last protagonist in the previous verse, namely, the king of the north, who has been identified as Antiochus III the Great. However, introduction of a new participant and the expression עָמַד עַל-כְּנֹו, “In his place will arise/stand,” which also appears at the beginning of the next verse (v. 21), signals supersession, with one person or party taking the position (כְּנֹו) of another, in this case the place of Antiochus III. So there is continuity with discontinuity. Therefore, “although the

participants are new, they are successors of the king of the north, and therefore inherit the position and title of ‘the king of the north.’”³⁷

The word *קַן* denotes one’s “position, place, status, office,”³⁸ such as the position of the Pharaoh’s cup-bearer, who was restored to that role as Joseph foretold (Gen 40:13; 41:13). The phrase *עַל־כַּנּוֹ*, “in his/its place,” also appears in Dan 11:38, where the king of the north “will honor the god of fortresses” in place of any other god.

Earlier in Dan 11, the word *כַּנּוֹ*, “his place,” appears in verse 7 without the preposition *עַל* but following *וְצֶמַח* in the sentence, “A sprout of her roots will arise [*וְצֶמַח*] in his place [*כַּנּוֹ*].”³⁹ Here Li’s color-coding indicates that “her” refers to “The daughter of the king of the south” in verse 6, who “will come to the king of the north” to make an agreement. That is, a Ptolemaic princess is given in marriage to a Seleucid king to seal a treaty between the two kingdoms. But what is “his place”? The last sentence of the previous verse (v. 6) reads: “And she will be given up, along with the ones who brought her and the one who fathered her and the one who supported her in those times” (trans. Li). So when verse 7 says, “A sprout of her roots will arise in his place,” the pronoun “his” must refer to “the one who fathered her,” i.e., her father, the Ptolemaic king. So verse 7 is saying that a new Ptolemaic king will take the throne and that he comes from the same family line as the princess. So this is an intradynastic succession. As Li recognizes, *כַּנּוֹ*, “his place,” by itself “simply indicates succession and does not necessarily require the succession to be from one empire to another.”⁴⁰

³⁷ Li, “A Few Observations,” 25.

³⁸ *DCH* 4:434.

³⁹ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 18.

⁴⁰ Li, “A Few Observations,” 24.

In verse 7, the qualification “A sprout of her roots” is needed to specify that the successor belongs to the same family line as the princess and her father, the previous king. By referring to the southern princess in the phrase “of her roots,” verse 7 suggests that the following military onslaught against the king of the north by the successor to the king of the south is in revenge for the way his female relative was treated in the northern kingdom (v. 6).

Returning to verse 20, the one who arises “In his place” is not specified as belonging to the family of the preceding king, namely, Antiochus III. Therefore, the successor could be anyone. The question is, who?

Preterists interpret verse 20 as referring to an intradynastic succession from Antiochus III in the previous verse (v. 19) to his son, Seleucus IV Philopater (reigned 187-175 BC). According to 2 Maccabees 3, Seleucus sent his treasurer, named Heliodorus, to collect a large amount of money from the temple in Jerusalem to put in the king’s treasury. This was likely because the Seleucids were forced to pay a huge indemnity of 15,000 talents over twelve years to the Romans after Antiochus III was defeated at Magnesia. So preterists take Heliodorus to be the שֹׁגֵר, “exactor” commissioned by the king of the north in Dan 11:20.⁴¹

However, while verse 7 uses בְּנֵי, “his place,” for one intradynastic succession for a particular reason, namely, to connect the Ptolemaic princess with her brother, this designation is otherwise unnecessary in Dan 5-19 for intradynastic successions. So its appearance without qualification in verses 20-21 raises the question of whether this succession may supersede the Seleucid dynasty. The description in verse 20 does not

⁴¹ E.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 381-82.

really fit Seleucus IV because he was not seeking wealth from the temple in Jerusalem “for the splendor of the kingdom,” but to pay off the Romans.⁴²

The second sentence in verse 20 reads: “But in a few days he will be broken, but not in anger or in battle.” Tarsee Li cites de Regt’s Rule 2 here to identify the “he” who “will be broken” as “the one who sends out an exactor (king of the north).”⁴³ It is true that just a few years after Seleucus IV sent Heliodorus to get wealth from the temple in Jerusalem in 178 B.C., Seleucus was assassinated by his chief minister, the ambitious Heliodorus, in 175 B.C. So in this sense it could be said of Seleucus that “in a few days he will be broken, but not in anger or in battle.” The expression אֶתְּמִיּוֹם, “a few days,” refers to a relatively short indefinite period of time (Gen 27:44).⁴⁴

However, if “In his place” at the beginning of verse 20 referred to an intradynastic succession, we could expect the same expression at the beginning of verse 21 to indicate a similar transition to the next Seleucid ruler after Seleucus IV, whom preterists confidently identify as Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 175-164 BC), the “contemptible person” whose career occupies much or all of the rest of the chapter, according to them. But Antiochus IV does not fit the description in verse 21.

Tarsee Li’s color-coded translation of verse 21 is as follows:

In his place will arise a contemptible person.
Royal dignity was not conferred on him.
He will come in quietly,
and will seize the kingdom by smoothness.

⁴² “His reign was dominated by financial exigency, because of the tribute to Rome” (Collins, *Daniel*, 381).

⁴³ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 21; cf. “A Few Observations,” 24.

⁴⁴ Alternatively, “a few days” could refer to the full length of the reign of the king of the north. If so, the expression would not seem to fit Seleucus because his reign of twelve years was not notably short by comparison with reigns of other rulers. Collins attempts to get around this by saying of this king that “his reign is dismissed as short and inconsequential” (*Daniel*, 382).

Again, the expression “In his place” signifies supersession. A new participant pejoratively described as “a contemptible person,” literally, “a contemptible one” (Niphal participle נִבְזֵי), usurps the position of power formerly occupied by “one who sends out an exactor” in the previous verse (v. 20), who replaced the earlier king of the north (v. 19).

As mentioned above, preterists maintain that the “contemptible person” in verses 21 and following is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, but the words “Royal dignity was not conferred on him” and “He will come in quietly, and will seize the kingdom by smoothness” in verse 21 do not apply to this Seleucid king. Li observes: “the fact that in v. 21 the usurper is not conferred royal dignity allows for (but does not require) the possible interpretation of the participant as a separate empire.”⁴⁵

All preterists recognize that anaphora links the new participant in verse 21, “a contemptible person,” with the same participant in verse 22. But verse 22 does not fit Antiochus IV Epiphanes at all.

Tarsee Li translates verse 22 as follows:

The sweeping arms will be swept away before him,
and will be broken, also **the prince of the covenant**.

Li underlines “him” in red, indicating continuity with the previous northern ruler. The first part of the verse metaphorically depicts this ruler as rapidly achieving overwhelming military domination. Antiochus IV did have a powerful army and enjoyed some military successes, but they were temporary and do not match the description in Dan 11:22. In fact, he was always under the shadow of Rome, which had defeated his father, Antiochus III the Great.

⁴⁵ “A Few Observations,” 24.

The short latter part of the verse, “also the prince [נָגִיד] of the covenant [בְּרִית],” is an important intratextual allusion to the “anointed one,” i.e., Messiah, in Dan 9:25, which predicts the coming of מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד, “an anointed one, a prince” (ESV), who would confirm a covenant [בְּרִית] with many (v. 27). In this light, the breaking of the prince in 11:22 is the same event predicted in 9:26: “an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing” (ESV). This “cutting off” of the Messiah comes after sixty-two weeks of years following the promulgation of a decree “to restore and build Jerusalem” (v. 25; ESV).

After “an anointed one shall be cut off,” 9:26 continues: “the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (ESV; cf. v. 27b). Antiochus IV caused major problems to Jerusalem and its temple worship, as vividly described in the books of Maccabees, but he never destroyed the city and the temple. After the Babylonians, who were in the past from Daniel’s perspective, the only power that ever did this was Imperial Rome, which did achieve military domination, and under which Jesus Christ, the Messiah, ministered and died during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius (cf. Luke 3:1).

However, if the last part of verse 22 refers to the reign of Tiberius, why does the first part predict overwhelming military victory with the words “The sweeping arms will be swept away before him, and will be broken”? It is true that Tiberius was a capable general who enjoyed some notable military successes, but the most significant military expansions of Rome preceded him. So we get the impression that the text refers to the institution of Roman rule, of which Tiberius was one emperor.

The prophetic narrative of Dan 11 has reached the time of Imperial Rome at least by verse 22, which continues to predict activities of the northern “contemptible” ruler

introduced in the previous verse (v. 21). It is impossible to find in verse 20 all of the remaining Seleucid rulers after Antiochus III the Great, whose career ends in v. 19. So there must be some kind of break in the historical coverage. Does verse 20 refer to Seleucus IV and Heliodorus, followed by a jump to the rise of Imperial Rome in verse 21? However, as discussed above, Seleucus IV does not fit well in verse 20.

There is a more satisfactory explanation. After the Romans of the Roman Republic defeat Antiochus III, who attempts to expand his empire in their direction in verse 18, the chapter skips the remaining Seleucid rulers, including Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and moves to the Roman Republic in verse 20. This can explain the need for the transition “In his place,” referring to the Roman Republic as the successor of the northern Seleucid kingdom. Indeed, the Roman Republic completed its conquest of the Seleucid empire of the king of the north in 64 BC. The Roman Republic took the place of the king of the north because it was located in the north and it conquered the Seleucid kingdom before it took over Egypt later in 30 BC.

The historical gap between Antiochus III and rule by the Roman Republic parallels a historical gap at the beginning of the chapter: The fourth king of Persia attempted to invade Greece (v. 2b). But the next words in verse 3, “Then a mighty king,” clearly refer to Alexander the Great of Macedonia/Greece, as scholars of all persuasions agree. The fact that the Persian king would only “stir up all against the kingdom of Greece” (v. 2b ESV) implies that his huge invasion would be unsuccessful, and so it was in history when Xerxes failed to conquer Greece. When Persia loses to Greece in Dan 11, the prophetic narrative immediately switches its attention to Greece, skipping all of the remaining Persian kings after Xerxes.

Uriah Smith and some later SDA interpreters have regarded the “one who sends out an exactor” in verse 20 as the Roman Emperor Augustus, who decreed that all inhabitants of his empire should be registered to pay taxes, as recorded in Luke 2:1.⁴⁶ No doubt this taxation was “for the splendor of the kingdom,” but Augustus does not fit the description in verse 20 at all because (1) he did not send out one particularly prominent exactor, (2) he had a very long reign of more than forty years from 27 BC to AD 14, so it could not be described as ending “in a few days,” and (3) he died a natural death; he was not “broken, but not in anger or in battle.”

If the Roman Republic is the king of the north in Dan 11:20 who sends out “an exactor for the splendor of the kingdom” (v. 20), who is that exactor? In my article titled “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” I suggested Pompey:

In 66 B.C. the senate appointed the general and statesman Pompey to bring the whole area at the east of the Roman empire under Roman organizational control, which he did within the next few years. During this process, he made Judaea, which Antiochus III had taken (v. 16) but Antiochus IV Epiphanes had lost to the Jews (books of Maccabees), a dependent tributary of Rome.⁴⁷

Pompey consolidated Roman domination over a large area, including the the land of Israel, so that Rome could collect tribute from countries in that area, no doubt “for the splendor of the kingdom.” The fact that his activity resulted in the firm Roman takeover of the land of Israel in 63 BC can explain why it is singled out in one verse that refers to the period of the Roman Republic. Similarly, the earlier conquest of the land of Israel by Antiochus III the Great (v. 16) was a climactic point in his reign and in Dan 11. This

⁴⁶ Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 253; *Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 4:870; Maxwell, *God Cares*, 293; Shea, *Daniel*, 248; Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 419.

⁴⁷ Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” 318.

would be important for Daniel, who was especially concerned about the fate of his people and their land (see, e.g., 9:1-20).

The second part of 11:20 reads: “But in a few days he will be broken, but not in anger or in battle.” As mentioned above, “a few days” refers to a relatively short period of time. Previously I suggested that the one broken here could be Pompey, whom the Egyptians killed in a cold-blooded political calculation, “not in anger or in battle,” because they saw that his antagonist, Julius Caesar, would prevail.⁴⁸

However, I stand corrected by Tarsee Li. As mentioned above, he cites de Regt’s Rule 2 to identify the anaphoric reference “he” in “But in a few days he will be broken” as referring to the subject in the first part of the verse, namely, “the one who sends out an exactor (king of the north).”⁴⁹ If it is the Roman Republic that sends out the exactor, then the Roman Republic would end after a short time. The Roman Republic lasted for centuries from 509 until 27 BC, when Octavian, who became Augustus, took over as the first emperor. Perhaps “in a few days” refers to the fact that the Republic continued for only a relatively short time after Pompey’s mission in the 60s BC.

Following Uriah Smith’s mistaken identification of Augustus in verse 20, he and some other SDA commentators have identified the “contemptible person” (referring to KJV “a vile person”) in verse 21 as the next Roman emperor: Tiberius.⁵⁰ Indeed, the character and actions of Tiberius could be regarded as contemptible, although no more than some other imperial monsters of depravity and cruelty, such as Caligula and Nero. However, the words “Royal dignity was not conferred on him” in this verse rule out

⁴⁸ Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” 318-19.

⁴⁹ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 21.

⁵⁰ Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 255-56; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 4:870; Shea, *Daniel*, 248-49.

Tiberius because he was not a usurper; he was the designated successor of Augustus and was officially named as the emperor by the Roman senate. He did not “come in quietly” and “seize the kingdom by smoothness.”

The most likely candidate for the individual “contemptible person” in verse 21, the usurper who founds an institution that continues, is Augustus. He quietly, deceptively, and effectively took power away from the Roman senate to initiate his imperial rule.⁵¹

Tarsee Li translates verse 23 as follows:

After the making of an alliance with him he will practice deception.
He will go up
and become mighty with a small people.

Li identifies the “contemptible person” of verse 21 as the subject of the verbs in verse 23.⁵² The continuation of this protagonist from verse 21 through verse 23, as indicated by anaphoric references to him, is undoubtedly correct in terms of the text. But the latter part of verse 23 cannot refer to Tiberius because he did not “become mighty with a small people.” Imperial Rome was already mighty with vast numbers of people by the time of his reign, and this state of affairs continued through the reigns of the subsequent Roman emperors. Therefore, verse 23 must refer to the emergence of a new post-imperial power with continuity from Rome. This is confirmed by verse 25, where the same king of the north, as indicated by Li’s labelling of the anaphoric “He” at the

⁵¹ “Remembering, however, that Caesar had been assassinated because of his resort to naked power, Octavian realized that the governing class would welcome him as the terminator of civil war only if he concealed his autocracy beneath provisions avowedly harking back to republican traditions. From 31 until 23 BCE the constitutional basis of his power remained a continuous succession of consulships, but in January 27 BCE he ostensibly ‘transferred the State to the free disposal of the Senate and people,’ earning the misleading, though outwardly plausible, tribute that he had restored the republic” (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Augustus-Roman-emperor/Military-successes>, accessed March 8, 2023). Earlier I suggested that the “contemptible person” was Julius Caesar (“Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” 318), but now I have changed my mind.

⁵² Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 21.

beginning of the verse with red underlining,⁵³ attacks the king of the south. There was no separate king of the south during the Roman Empire period because Rome at that time owned Egypt. This at least partly explains why we have not heard of the king of the south for several verses.

Intratextual comparison with Dan 8, of which Dan 11 is expanded commentary, provides a key for explaining 11:23 and 24. The words מְרָמָה, which Li translates as “deception” in verse 23a, and בְּשֵׁלֵנָה, “quietly,”⁵⁴ at the beginning of verse 24 both appear in close proximity to one another in Dan 8:25a, which ESV renders: “By his cunning he shall make deceit [מְרָמָה] prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning [בְּשֵׁלֵנָה] he shall destroy many.” These words in Gabriel’s explanation of the vision that Daniel experienced in 8:1-14 describe the religious and persecuting phase of the “little horn” power (vv. 10-12).

In Dan 7, the same power is depicted by a “little horn” (vv. 8, 20-22, 24-26) that comes from the fourth successive empire that would rule over the area including the land of Israel, which was Daniel’s concern. Comparison with Dan 2 shows that the first kingdom is the Neo-Babylonian Empire (v. 38), so the second is Medo Persia and the third is Greece, both of which Dan 8 explicitly identifies (vv. 20-21). So the fourth kingdom must be Imperial Rome and the religious-political “little horn” comes from it. Therefore, the “little horn” in Dan 7 and this phase of the “little horn” in Dan 8 must be the Church of Rome, which superseded the Roman Empire. Consequently, the descriptors מְרָמָה, “deception,” and בְּשֵׁלֵנָה, “quietly” or “without warning” apply to papal Rome.

⁵³ Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 22.

⁵⁴ Or “in a time of peace/security/prosperity” (cf. *DCH* 8:365).

If this is so in Dan 8, it makes sense that it is also true of the church-state papacy in Dan 11:23-24. This power is formed when an alliance is made “with him,” i.e., the “contemptible person,”⁵⁵ referring to one or more Roman emperor. Then “he will practice deception,” will “become mighty with a small people,” and “will come quietly.” The fact that *בְּשֵׁלֶיָהּ* at the beginning of verse 24 is syntactically isolated because it is followed by a conjunctive *waw* suggests that this word should be understood to come at the end of verse 23: “and become mighty with a small people quietly,” or “quietly become mighty with a small people.”⁵⁶ These verses accurately depict the rise of the papacy, by which the Christian church moved from political weakness to strength by allying with the Roman emperors.

Transition to the papacy in Dan 11:23-24 explains verse 25, where the king of the north successor to the “contemptible person” launches a major military campaign against the king of the south. This was never fulfilled during the era of Imperial Rome, as mentioned above, so it refers to a later time when the papacy attacked the south. We have not seen even an anaphoric reference to the king of the south since verse 17, which predicts a marriage alliance between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. The Ptolemaic kingdom ended in 30 BC when the Romans took it. So the “king of the south” in verse 25 cannot refer to the same political entity as in verses 5-17, but it is a southern power in terms of the geographical direction where its territory is located, which would at least include Egypt.

Indeed, the papacy did initiate a massive attack by “Christian” countries of Europe on a southern power in AD 1095 at the beginning of the Crusades. The southern

⁵⁵ See marginal note in Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 21.

⁵⁶ Frank W. Hardy, personal communication.

power was the Islamic empire, which had conquered the southern portion of the former Roman Empire. Tarsee Li's color-coding shows continuity between anaphoric references to the warring kings of the north and south in verses 25-30, whose major conflict lasted for several centuries. Identification of the protracted conflict between "Christendom" and the similarly religious-political Muslim world will assist in identifying the "king of the south" at the end of Dan 11 in verses 40-43.

Daniel 11:31

After the prediction of north-south conflict in verses 25-30, verse 31 reads as follows, according to Tarsee Li's translation, into which I have inserted key Hebrew words in brackets:

Arms will arise from **him**
And will profane the sanctuary [שְׁמִינִי] fortress.
They will remove the continual worship [תְּמִידָה] **And**
set up the desolating [מְשֹׁמֵם] abomination.

These words closely parallel the prophecy in Dan 8:11-13, where the religious phase of the "little horn," i.e., the papacy, will remove תְּמִידָה, "the continual worship," of the prince of the heavenly host, whose שְׁמִינִי, "sanctuary," is overthrown and a מְשֹׁמֵם, "desolating," rebellion will be set up.⁵⁷ This parallel indicates that Dan 8 and 11 refer here to the same cluster of events perpetrated by the papacy.

However, Dan 12:11 raises a chronological problem: From the time when "the continual worship" is taken away and the "desolating abomination" is set up, i.e., the same time as in 8:11-13 and 11:31, there will be 1,290 days, with יָמִים, "days," referring to years.⁵⁸ In the context of Dan 12, it seems clear that the 1,290 years in verse 11 overlap

⁵⁷ Cf. 9:27—"And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate [מְשֹׁמֵם]" (ESV).

⁵⁸ For this usage of the plural of the Hebrew word יָמִים, "day," for a period of time amounting to a "year," see *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (= *HALOT*), by Ludwig Koehler, Walter

and extend the 3½ “times” in verse 7, which refer to the duration of papal supremacy in 7:25. The book of Revelation equates the 3½ “times” (12:14) with 42 months (11:2; 13:5) and 1,260 days (11:3, 12:6), which refer to a long period of time and therefore must also represent years. So the removal of “the continual worship” and the setting up of “the desolating abomination” at the beginning of the 1,290 years go back centuries earlier than the Crusades in Dan 11:25-30 to the time when papal domination began in the sixth century AD.

Therefore, between Dan 11:30 and 31, there is a massive jump back in history, whereas earlier in the chapter, protagonists and events move along in a progressive chronological order. Identification of the events in verses 25-30 and verse 31 is too clear to avoid the historical flashback. Attempts to make verses 25-30 fit into the time before the rise of papal domination in the sixth century AD do not work.

Lack of chronological order in part of Dan 11:21-45, the long section that concerns “the contemptible one” and his successors, points to some topical arrangement. There is clearly topical progression in verses 23-45, regarding the papacy, from a prophetic account of its political and military activities against human powers in verses 23-30, as in the earlier part of the chapter regarding conflicts between other powers, to prediction of its religious activities against God and his people in verses 31-39.⁵⁹ Verse 31 begins with disjunctive syntax (noun rather than verb first), indicating that there may not be a chronological progression from verse 30 to verse 31, although verse 30b introduces the religious element of paying “attention to those who forsake the holy covenant” after the prediction of the Crusades in verses 25-30a.

Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm, trans. and ed. under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson; 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill: 1994-1999), 2:400-401; *DCH* 4:167; with biblical references in both lexicons.

⁵⁹ Compare the same order from political to religious activities of the “little horn” power in 7:24-25.

It is true that the removal of “the continual worship,” etc., happen at the beginning of the era of papal supremacy, but the results of these events and other papal religious activities continue throughout the papal period up until “the time of the end” in verse 40, long after the Crusades. Verses 31-39, predicting religious activities of the king of the north, who we now know is the papacy, move from focus on this ruler himself in verse 31 to focus in verses 32b-35 on the loyal people of God, the spiritual heirs of Daniel, whom he oppresses. Thus, Tarsee Li underlines “He” in red at the beginning of verse 32 to indicate that it is the king of the north who “will corrupt those who act wickedly towards the covenant with smooth words.” Then by contrast, “the people who know their God will be strong and take action.” In verse 33a, the “wise among the (same) people” (highlighted in gray by Li) “will give understanding to the many.” But verses 33b-35 predict persecution and its purifying results for God’s true people, reiterating the predictions of persecution during the period of papal supremacy in 7:25 and 8:24.

Daniel 11:36

Verse 36 begins, according to Tarsee Li’s translation:

The king will do according to his will.
He will exalt himself,
and will magnify himself against every god,
and will speak amazing things against the God of gods.

Li puts “The king” in red lettering, indicating that the text resumes focus on actions carried out by the king of the north, i.e., the papacy, after the interlude in verses 32b-35 concerning God’s loyal people. At this point, the specification “The king,” rather than an anaphoric reference, “He,” removes any ambiguity by letting the reader know

that the protagonist is again the king of the north.⁶⁰ It does not indicate the introduction of another, separate power, as Uriah Smith maintained. Smith viewed this king as revolutionary France near the end of the eighteenth century.⁶¹ But confirmation that verses 36-39 refer to the colossal hubris and blasphemy of the papacy is found in intratextual comparisons with 7:25 (“He shall speak words against the Most High”; ESV) and 8:25 (“and in his own mind he shall become great...And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes”; ESV; cf. 2 Thess 2:3-4).

Daniel 11:40

Tarsee Li renders verse 40:

At the time of the end **the king of the south** will join in combat with him.
But **the king of the north** will storm against him with chariots, horsemen,
and many ships.
He will enter countries,
and overflow,
and cross over.

This is the most important verse for the debate between the three main views regarding identification of the end-time king of the south in Dan 11:40-43, according to SDA interpreters. These three are Uriah Smith’s explanation and the more recent ideas that the king of the south represents atheism or Islamic power. Li’s correct translation and identification of anaphoric references rules out two of these interpretations.

Uriah Smith argued for a three-way conflict, beginning in 1798 at “the time of the end,” involving literal Egypt as the king of the south (as earlier in Dan 11), France (as in his mistaken interpretation of “The king” in v. 36) as “him,” with whom the king of the

⁶⁰ Cf. Li, “A Color-Coded Translation,” 4, regarding the use and non-use of anaphors.

⁶¹ Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 280-83.

south joins in combat (KJV—“shall the king of the south push at him”), and “the king of the north” as Turkey, which ruled the territory of the earlier Seleucids.⁶²

However, Tarsee Li underlines in red the anaphoric “him” at the end of the first sentence in verse 40 because it refers to the same king of the north as in the previous verses, namely, the papacy. The Hebrew text only has a two-way conflict between the king of the north and the king of the south, as in earlier parts of Dan 11 (verses 5-17 and 25-30)

Some SDA interpreters have maintained that the beginning of verse 40 predicts a major defeat inflicted on the king of the north, which they correctly identify as the papacy, by the king of the south. They identify this defeat as the “mortal wound” of the sea beast, representing the papacy, in Rev 13:3. This wound was inflicted by atheistic France in 1798, so it is thought that the king of the south here must be atheism, secular humanism, and/or some related kind of philosophy that is opposed to the papacy.⁶³

Supposed support for this view is found in Rev 11:8, where “Egypt” in the context of “the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified,” refers to atheistic France that was immoral, atheistic, and rejected Christ. This reference to Egypt is plucked from its context and eisegeted by “illegitimate totality transfer” into interpretation of Dan 11.⁶⁴

⁶² Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 289-95.

⁶³ For the view that the end-time king of the south represents atheism or secular, rationalistic humanism that leads to atheism and agnosticism, see, e.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 264-6, 268; Ángel M. Rodríguez, *Daniel 11 and the Islam Interpretation*, Biblical Research Institute Release 13 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015), 17, 20-22, 25, 31; Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 420; Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 175-79

⁶⁴ On “illegitimate totality transfer,” see James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961; repr. London: SCM, 1983), 218; cf. 222.

However, as I have previously pointed out, the Hitpa'el of the verb הִתְבַּרַּח does not allow for that interpretation because it means “join in combat with,” as confirmed by the fact that it is followed by the prepositional phrase עִמּוֹ , “with him.”⁶⁵ Therefore, Tarsee Li’s translation, “At the time of the end the king of the south will join in combat with him” means that the southern power provokes a conflict, initiating hostilities. The Hithpa'el of הִתְבַּרַּח does not indicate a knockout punch, which would be expressed by the Piel form of the verb, as in Dan 8:4. The next words, “But the king of the north will storm against him...” predict swift retaliation. This is not after a delay of centuries since the French general Berthier captured Pope Pius VI in 1798.

Thus far, we have not seen fulfillment of Dan 11:40 and the following verses. A southern power has not yet precipitated a conflict with the papacy to the point that the papacy and its allies, as during the Crusades, launch a major and successful attack that eliminates the southern threat (vv. 40-43).

Another attempted support for the atheism view of the king of the south is the theological assumption that everything in Dan 11 following the appearance of Christ must be spiritual. It is true that the “Israel” of God in the Christian era consists of Christians, who have a church rather than a state.⁶⁶ However, the spiritual approach to the last half of Dan 11 does not account for all the details in verses 23-45, which are expressed with the same kind of language as in the first part of the chapter. If we should take language literally unless that doesn’t make sense, as in much of the book of Revelation, and if there are keys to understanding symbols by comparing Scripture with

⁶⁵ *DCH* 5:606.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*, Andrews University Monographs, Studies in Religion 13 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983).

Scripture, how can we make any sense of this language in Dan 11? For example, do the words in verse 33b—“They will stumble by sword, flame, captivity, and plunder for some days”—refer to some kind of symbolic sword, flame, etc., or did persecuted Christians physically suffer and die from literal swords and flames, etc.? History confirms the latter.

It is strangely inconsistent that the atheism view makes military conflicts symbolic in Dan 11:23-45 and at the same time argues for atheism as the king of the south on the basis of the “mortal wound” inflicted by atheistic France on the papacy in 1798. That wound was inflicted by a literal army, not a symbolic one.

The remainder of Dan 11 in verses 41-45 continue to predict the actions of the end-time king of the north, which is the revived papacy after it has healed from its “mortal wound.” So there are plenty of anaphoric references to this power, as indicated by Tarsee Li with red underlining. But there is no question regarding their referent, which was established earlier in the chapter. After the king of the south initiates the conflict at the beginning of verse 40, this power, which has controlled several Middle Eastern countries in addition to Egypt, is just the recipient of the fury of the king of the north (vv. 40-43). No more verbs referring to the king of the south have him as their subject. Just as there is no indication that the king of the north has changed from the papacy since verse 23, there is no indication that the king of the south has changed since that designation represented Islamic power in verses 25-30 and that power continues to control the territories referred to in verses 41-43.

Conclusion

The main topic of this paper is the issue of anaphoric references involving participant continuity or discontinuity, so it will not further pursue other matters, which I have explored in previous papers and articles. I will conclude by saying that Tarsee Li's color-coded translation with explanations has provided a solid basis for analyzing the crucial identification of anaphoric references in Dan 11.

An important implication of Li's tracing of anaphora concerns the alleged transition from literal to symbolic language in Dan 11 that some SDA interpreters maintain. If there were such a transition, it should occur where the text moves into prediction of the Christian era. But Li shows that anaphoric references to the "contemptible person" begin in verse 21, before Christ, and continue through verse 22, referring to Christ's death, and then continue into the verses predicting the papacy (verses 23 and following). The "contemptible person" refers to a literal political person, so how could subsequent anaphoric references to the same person become symbolic/spiritual? There is no textual evidence for a switch to symbolic language in Dan 11.

I find that although I did not have access to de Regt's rules concerning anaphoric references, I correctly identified their referents on the basis of contextual factors in the Hebrew text. Therefore, my previous exegetical identification of historical referents in the angelic discourse unit of Dan 11:2b-12:3, including Islamic power as the end-time king of the south, is unchanged. This identification, from my paper at the first Daniel 11 Conference in 2018 titled "Religious-Political Papacy and Islamic Power in Daniel 11,"⁶⁷ is as follows:

⁶⁷ Published as "Religious-Political Papacy and Islamic Power in Daniel 11," *DavarLogos* 19/2 (2020): 37-70.

Reference	Kingdom/Dynasty
11:2	Persia
11:3-19	Greece: Alexander the Great and four divisions of his empire
11:5-19	Ptolemaic Egypt and Seleucid Syria, including wars between them
11:20	Republican Rome (replacing king of north)
11:21-22	Imperial Rome (taking king of north position from ruler in v. 20)
11:23-45	Papal Rome = king of north
11:25-30a	wars against Islamic power
11:30b-39	religious activities: worship replacement, persecution, self-exaltation
11:40-43	war against Islamic power
11:44-45	religious activities: persecution, attempt at self-exaltation, but meets his demise
12:1-3	Transition to God's kingdom, with resurrection