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Artículo

Raw data and its implications in exegesis of Daniel 11,2b-12,3

Los datos sin procesar y sus implicaciones en la exégesis de Daniel 11,2b a 12,3

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Abstract

Three kinds of raw data in Daniel 11,2b-12,3 carry crucial implications for interpretation. First, these verses comprise one discourse unit beginning with literal language. Therefore, the entire unit is basically literal. Accordingly, 11,2b-12,3 is the third angelic explanation (with elaboration) of the symbolic vision in 8,3-14, following explanations in 8,17; 19-26 and 9,24-27. Second, these three parallel explanations share intratextual terminological points of contact. So contexts of words in chapters 8 and 9 reappearing in chapter 11 illuminate similar contexts in chapter 11. Third, matching language of literary profiles in Daniel 11 to historical events requires accurate identification of raw historical data. Thus, verse 40 does not predict the "mortal wound" of the church of Rome inflicted by atheistic France in A.D. 1798. In verses 40-43, the religious-political church, the "king of the north," defeats the religious-political "king of the south": Islamic power.

Keywords

Raw data – Discourse – Literal – Intratextuality – Historical events

Resumen

Hay tres tipos de datos sin procesar en Daniel 11,2b a 12,3, que tienen implicaciones cruciales para la interpretación. En primer lugar, estos versículos conforman una unidad de discurso que comienza con lenguaje literal. Por lo tanto, toda la unidad es básicamente literal. En consecuencia, los versículos 11,2b-12,3 son la tercera explicación angélica (con elaboración) de la visión simbólica de 8,3-14, tras las explicaciones de 8,17; 19-26 y 9,24-27. En segundo lugar, estas tres explicaciones paralelas comparten puntos de contacto terminológico intratextuales. Así, los contextos de palabras en los capítulos 8 y 9 que reaparecen en el capítulo 11 iluminan contextos similares en el capítulo 11. En tercer lugar, la correspondencia entre el lenguaje de los perfiles literarios de Daniel 11 y los acontecimientos históricos requiere una identificación precisa de los datos históricos sin procesar. Así, el versículo 40 no predice la "herida mortal" de la iglesia de Roma infligida

por la Francia atea en 1798 d. C. En los versículos 40-43, la iglesia religiosa-política, el "rey del norte", derrota al "rey del sur" religioso-político: el poder islámico.

Palabras claves

Datos sin procesar – Discurso – Literalidad – Intratextualidad – Acontecimientos históricos

Introduction

"Exegesis" derives out (ἐκ) of a text the ideas that the author(s) and editor(s) intended to communicate, even if they make the reader uncomfortable. This requires the exegete to recognize but bracket out his/her own biases and carefully listen to the text, beginning with raw data that is not subject to interpretation and logically building understanding on implications that naturally flow from the raw data within the context of the text itself. This process may result in more than one possible interpretation, but anytime an interpretation conflicts with raw data, it is mistaken and should be discarded along with any additional interpretation that depends on this mistake. Piling up arguments to support a conclusion on the basis of "weight of evidence" does not override raw data.

The present article builds on and reinforces my previous presentations and publications regarding Daniel 11[1] by identifying several kinds of raw data in Daniel 11 and assessing their implications. These raw data are of the following kinds: literary unit and genre, intratextuality, and historical events in relation to descriptions in this chapter.

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[1] Roy E. Gane, "The un-manifestation of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in Daniel 11:1-22" (paper presented at Current Issues in Eschatology Symposium, Berrien Springs, MI, 2007); Gane, "Methodology for interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27, nos 1-2 (2016): 294-343; Gane, "Religious-political Papacy and Islamic power in Daniel 11" (paper presented with PowerPoint at Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, October 20, 2018); Gane, *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*; Gane, "Religious-political Papacy and Islamic power in Daniel 11", *DavarLogos* 19, no 2 (2020): 37-70; Gane, "Review of: Jacques B. Doukhan, Daniel 11 decoded: An exegetical, historical, and theological study" (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019)", *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 58 (2020): 152-55. For these resources, except for the book *Understanding Daniel 11:2-12:3 in seven steps*, see http://www.daniel11prophecy.com.

Literary unit and genre

The prophecy of Daniel 11-12 is preceded by a narrative introduction in chapter 10, which begins with the words: "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood [Qal of the Hebrew root בִּ֣ין] the word and had understanding [בִּינָ֔ה] of the vision [מַרְאֶ֖ה]" (v. 1).[2] There is no symbolic vision in Daniel 11-12, so the revelation is a word, or message, regarding a previous vision, just as Gabriel came to Daniel in chapter 9 to help him understand (Hiphil of בִּ֣ין) the vision (מַרְאֶ֖ה; v. 23) that he had seen in the first part of chapter 8.

Continuing in Daniel 10, a heavenly being tells Daniel that he has come to make Daniel "understand [Hiphil of בִּ֣ין][3] what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision [חָזוֹן] is for days yet to come" (v. 14). This must be an explanation of the vision (חָזוֹן) in Daniel 8,4.

In Daniel 10,18, "Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me". This heavenly person dialogues with Daniel in verse 19, and in verse 20 he begins a speech that continues in 11,1-2a: "And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. And now I will show you the truth".

Following this narrative introduction, the content of the being's revelation to Daniel—the truth that he will show Daniel—commences with the Hebrew word הִנֵּה, "Behold" (v. 2b). This revelation continues without interruption by any narrative reference outside the revelation through 12,3 until 12,4, where the being commands Daniel: "But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end...". The next verse moves outside speech of the heavenly being with the words: "Then I, Daniel, looked..." (v. 5).

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2 ESV here and in subsequent biblical quotations in English translation, unless otherwise indicated, with words in brackets supplied.

3 *Cf.* this Hiphil verb in 10,11-12.

4 See the term חָזוֹן in 8,1-2.13.15.17.26, with the same vision referred to in 9,21.

Therefore, Daniel 10,20-12,4 records a single speech by a heavenly being to Daniel, in which 11,2b-12,3 comprises a single unit of revelation. This is raw data.

The beginning of the discourse unit in 11,2b establishes its genre: "Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece". The word "more" (Hebrew עוֹד) in "three more kings" means that these kings are in addition to a literal Persian king, namely, Cyrus, during whose reign Daniel received the revelation in chapters 10-12 (see 10,1). The connection between the narrative introduction in 10,1-11,2a and the revelation in 11,2b-12,3 constituted by "three more kings" shows that the revelation at least begins as a speech with literal referents. This is raw data on which interpretation should build.

Turning now to interpretation beyond raw data, subsequent identifications of future persons in the same unit of predictive revelation should also be understood as literal unless the text indicates otherwise. Continuation of literal communication is confirmed by historical records showing that a fourth Persian king, Xerxes, did "stir up all against the kingdom of Greece" (11,2b) with a massive invasion, but the Greeks ultimately defeated his forces.[5] Later "a mighty king," namely Alexander the Great, did gain a "great dominion", but soon his empire was "broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity" (vv. 3-4; *cf.* 8,8.22).[6] The "four winds of heaven" is a figure of speech for the four directions of the compass (*cf.* Zech 2,10 [Eng. v. 6]; 6,5-6); it is not a literal expression. However, it does not change the genre of the heavenly being's speech, which remains basically literal, speaking of "his", that is, Alexander's, literal "posterity".

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5 See, e.g., Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*, 2 vols. (London, GB: Routledge, 1995), 2:670-71; J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel, evangelical exegetical commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), 648.

6 See, e.g., Tanner, *Daniel*, 648-49. For detailed history of the period between the death of Alexander and the triumph of Rome over the Greek kingdoms, see Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The historical evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).

The basically literal speech continues by predicting conflict between two contiguous divisions of Alexander's empire that are identified with two of the four directions to which that empire split: the north and the south (Dan 11,5-19). Daniel 11,8 explicitly identifies the southern kingdom as "Egypt", which was ruled by the Ptolemies, so the northern kingdom must be Seleucid Syria, the only other branch of Alexander's empire that bordered on Ptolemaic Egypt. The competition between these two powers involved the land of Israel, which lay between their respective heartlands. History shows that the events predicted in this first part of Daniel 11 were literally fulfilled to such a degree of accuracy that scholars who do not believe in predictive prophecy have followed Porphyry (ca. A.D. 234-305) in attributing Daniel's accuracy to *vaticinium ex eventu*, "prophecy from the event", that is, past history presented as if it were a prediction.[7]

The continuation of subjects of verbs and pronouns with reference to successive rulers in Daniel 11,4-19 indicates continuation of literal address by the heavenly being.[8] For example, verse 15 explicitly predicts a victory of the king of the north over the forces of the south. With regard to the king of the south, "even his best troops" will not stand. By contrast in the next verse, "But he who comes against him," that is, the king of the north, "shall do as he wills, and none shall stand before him" (v. 16). This "he", the same king of the north, continues through verse 19.

Verse 20 introduces a new protagonist with the words "Then shall arise in his place...". Here the antecedent of "his" is the king of the north in the previous verses, showing further continuation of literal speech.

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7 E.g., John J. Collins, *Daniel: A commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993, 25-26; Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 6-7.

8 For identification of such anaphoric references in Daniel 11, see Tarsee Li, "A color-coded translation of Daniel 11:2b–12:3" (paper presented at the Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, March 9, 2023), http://www.daniel11prophecy.com/uploads/1/1/3/7/113721993/a_color-coded_translation_of_daniel_11_tarsee_li[2].pdf; Tarsee Li, "A few observations on the text of Daniel 11 and current Adventist interpretations" (paper presented at the Daniel 11 Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, March 9, 2023), http://www.daniel11prophecy.com/uploads/1/1/3/7/113721993/thetextofdaniel11andcurrentadventistinterpretations_tarsee_li[1].pdf.

The ruler in verse 20 is superseded by another literal ruler in verse 21, this time a "despicable" one (Niphal of ב-ז-ה),[9] introduced by the same expression, "In his place". Third person masculine singular subjects of verbs and pronouns—"he" or "him"—referring to this same ruler, continue in the following verses to control the prophetic speech through verse 32.[10]

Verses 33-35 shift the spotlight to the faithful people of God, who are the enemies and victims of the despicable ruler. Here this ruler is not explicitly referenced by subjects of verbs or pronouns, but his presence is implied by the persecution that God's people experience. Then verse 36 resumes the focus on that ruler, identifying him with the definite article as "the king", that is, the aforementioned king. He "shall do as he wills", an expression of his power on the basis of previous accomplishments, as in verse 16, where the same expression follows the victory of the king of the north over the king of the south (v. 15).

In verse 36, the identification of the main protagonist, the king of the north, as "the king" is necessary following the lapse in grammatical references to him in verses 33-35. It is syntactically possible that "the king" in verse 36 could be another king. However, the context, including the implication of persecution by him in verses 33-35, indicates that verse 36 resumes description of the activities of the same king, whose character is similarly portrayed as opposed to God. Furthermore, this king is not described or defined in any way, as we would expect if he were a new king. From verse 36, continuation of subjects of verbs and pronouns referring to him show that he is the actor through verse 39.

Thus far, the sequence of literal rulers continues from the beginning of the revelation in 11,2b through verse 39. Then verse 40 begins: "At the time of the end, the king of the south will lock horns with him…", quoting the NJPS version, which renders literally at this point. Here the antecedent of "him" is the same ruler as in the previous verses, namely,

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9 See Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (*HALOT*), translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson, 4 vols. (Leiden, NL: E. J. Brill, 1994-1999), 1:117.

10 Verse 27 parenthetically refers to "the two kings", i.e., the "despicable one" and the king of the south, whom he had attacked (v. 25).

the despicable king who was introduced back in verse 21 and whose career continued through verse 39. Therefore, if he was a literal ruler in verse 21 and throughout subsequent verses, he must also be literal in verse 40.

What happens when one king initiates hostilities against another? The latter retaliates, as repeatedly happens in the earlier part of this chapter concerning Ptolemaic Egypt versus Seleucid Syria (vv. 7-15) and later in verses 25-30. Thus, verse 40 continues: "but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind...".[11] Who is this king of the north? He is the one whom the king of the south attacked. Whom did the king of the south attack? It was "him", the despicable ruler whose actions were predicted in verses 21-39.

It makes sense that the despicable ruler is called the "king of the north" in verse 40 for two reasons. First, in verse 21 he superseded a ruler who superseded the Seleucid "king of the north" (vv. 19-20). Second, in verse 25 he attacked the "king of the south."

The literal despicable "king of the north" continues through subjects of verbs and pronouns from verse 40 through the end of Daniel 11 in verse 45. Therefore, the entirety of Daniel 11 predicts a succession of literal rulers. If the "king of the north" is literal through the whole chapter, the king of the south, his antagonist, must also be literal throughout and the descriptors "north" and "south" continue to describe the relative geographic locations of the two political powers.

The conclusion that the revelation in Daniel 11,2b-12,3 is basically literal is supported by its affinity of genre or speech form with parallel speech units of prophetic revelation in Daniel 8 and 9. In Daniel 8, following the symbolic חָזוֹן, "vision", of a "ram", a "he-goat", and a "horn from smallness" that Daniel "saw" (vv. 1-12) and a dialogue regarding that vision (vv. 13-14), which itself constitutes a מַרְאֶה, another word for "vision", Gabriel comes to Daniel to make him understand (Hiphil of ב-י-ן; *cf.* noun בִּינָה, "understanding" in v. 15) the חָזוֹן (vv. 15-17; *cf.* מַרְאֶה in v. 16).

11 Resuming ESV.

In Daniel 8, Gabriel's first words of explanation knock Daniel into a deep sleep, from which Gabriel raises him up (vv. 17-18). Then Gabriel continues his explanation in verses 19-25, beginning with the Hebrew word הִנֵּה,[12] the same word that signals the commencement of the revelation in 11:2b. Continuing in Daniel 8, Gabriel explains that the ram represents "the kings of Media and Persia" (8,20) and the goat represents "the king of Greece", with the great horn of the goat representing "the first king" of Greece (v. 21). Gabriel's language is obviously literal, which makes sense for an explanation of a symbolic vision, which would not be clear if he spoke in symbolic language. Gabriel goes on to speak of "four kingdoms (v. 22), "a king of bold face" (v. 23), "mighty men and the people who are the saints" (v. 24), and "the Prince of princes" (v. 25), which/who also must be literal, although "the Prince of princes" could be a literal heavenly person.

In Daniel 9,21-23, Gabriel again comes to Daniel to help him further understand (Hiphil of ב-י-ן; *cf.* noun בִּינָה from the same root, "understanding") the מַרְאֶה, "vision", which must be the מַרְאֶה, "vision" concerning the "2,300 evening(s) morning(s)" in Daniel 8,13-14,26 (called מַרְאָה in v. 26; *cf.* v. 27) because there is no vision in Daniel 9. In the revelatory unit comprised of verses 24-27, Gabriel speaks literally of things such as Daniel's people, the holy city of Jerusalem, sins, atonement, vision, prophet, anointing a most holy place, an anointed one, a covenant, sacrifice and offering, and a desolator.

Even the use of the term שָׁבוּעַ, "week", for weeks of years in Daniel 9,24-27 is literal when we understand that this meaning is part of the semantic range of this word in Hebrew, as determined by the context, which predicts events that could not fit into weeks of days.[13] The description of destruction coming "with a flood" (v. 26) is a metaphorical figure of speech, but it does not negate the basically literal nature of Gabriel's speech.

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12 In הִנְנִי with the first person singular pronominal suffix (v. 19).

13 *HALOT* 4:1384.

Use of the same terminology—the Hiphil of ב-י-ן, "cause to understand", and the related noun בִּינָה, "understanding"—in the narrative introductions to explanations by heavenly beings in Daniel 8, 9, and 10-12 reinforces the idea that the genre of these explanations is the same: basically literal interpretation of a symbolic vision. Symbolic vision and interpretation of such a vision constitute sub-genres of the genre "apocalypse". Although apocalyptic literature uses many symbols, the language of a text unit is not necessarily symbolic just because it belongs to an apocalyptic composition.

The vision that is interpreted in Daniel 8,17.19-25; 9,24-27; and 11,2b-12,3 is the חָזוֹן described in 8,1-12, supplemented by the מַרְאֶה concerning the "2,300 evening(s) morning(s)" in vv. 13-14. None of the three units of explanation in Daniel 8, 9, and 11-12 contains any indication of an internal shift from the basically literal interpretation genre.

We have found that the discourse unit consisting of 11,2b-12,3 is the third angelic explanation (with elaboration) of the symbolic vision in Daniel 8,3-14, following the explanations in 8,17.19-26 and 9,24-27. The language of these explanations is basically literal, containing some non-literal language, but not additional symbols that would fail to explain the original symbols. William H. Shea agrees: "Daniel 8 provides the symbols, and Daniel 11 provides their literal interpretation".[14] Bennie H. Reynolds III also agrees. He concludes:

> Descriptions used in ancient Jewish apocalypses are symbolic if they point beyond their basic, plain-sense meaning and require a visionary to seek interpretation. Revelations in which visionaries and heavenly beings carry on direct, explicit conversations are not symbolic.[15]

Based on detailed analysis, Reynolds observes regarding Daniel 10-12:

> Daniel 10-12 does not use symbolic ciphers to describe earthly or heavenly realities. Instead, the text employs explicit, realistic terminology. Some of the

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14 William H. Shea, *Daniel: A reader's guide* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 140; *cf.* 132.

15 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, DE: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 377-78.

> language might be described as esoteric, but opaque language is significantly different from symbolic, metaphorical, or allegorical language.[16]

The assessment that Daniel 11,2b-12,3 is basically literal throughout raises questions regarding our understanding of some features of this unit. We have already pointed out that a basically literal unit can contain figures of speech, such as metaphors, which can make a description or prediction more vivid without undoing its basically literal character. Another example is "like a whirlwind" in 11,40, which intensifies the prediction that the king of the north will storm out against the king of the south. Military terminology today similarly speaks of "storming" an enemy position.

However, there are other elements in Daniel 11 that could be taken to challenge the characterization of the latter part of the chapter as literal. These include an apparent unified reign of successive individuals in verses 21-45, the expression "for a time" in verse 24, archaic terminology in verses 40-43, the proper name "Egypt" in verses 42-43, "news from the east and the north" in verse 44, "the glorious holy mountain" in verse 45, and "your people" in 12,1. The following sections examine these elements.

Unified reign of successive individuals (Daniel 11,21-45)

Kings are individuals in the first part of Daniel 11, but the career of the despicable one who becomes a ruler (v. 21) and is later implicitly and then explicitly identified as the "king of the north" (vv. 25, 40; *cf*. v. 36—"the king") stretches from verse 21 through verse 45. This appears to be too long for the reign of an individual monarch. Even preterists who identify him as the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) from verses 21 to 39 are not able to fit verses 40-45 into his career.[17] However, an alternative is to see the despicable one as initiating a unified succession

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16 Reynolds III, "Between symbolism and realism", 225 (*cf*. 226-7).

17 Collins comments on "At the time of the end" in Dan 11,40: "Modern scholarship marks the transition from *ex eventu* prophecy to real (and erroneous) prediction at this point" (*Daniel*, 388; *cf*., e.g., Newsom, *Daniel*, 359; John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., WBC 30 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 545.

of individual rulers filling the same position, whose activities are viewed as perpetrated by the same subject, and a few individual representatives of this succession are literally called "king" at the historical points where they appear.

For a similar usage, compare the prediction in Jeremiah 25,11: "This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king [singular מֶלֶךְ] of Babylon seventy years". No individual king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire reigned seventy years. Nebuchadnezzar II reigned for 43 years (605-562 B.C.) and was succeeded by lesser kings with shorter reigns, ending with Nabonidus, whose son and co-regent was Belshazzar. The Bible, including the book of Daniel, refers to some individual kings of the Neo-Babylonian Empire as "king of Babylon".[18] However, Jeremiah 25,11, in a passage that Daniel was studying (Dan 9,2; *cf.* Jer 25,12), lumps them all together as "the king of Babylon", referring to the office and title that the succeeding rulers inherited. This is not symbolic; it is simply an extended literal usage.

"For a time" (Daniel 11,24)

Daniel 11,24 predicts that the despicable one (*cf.* v. 21) would "devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time [וְעַד־עֵת]". Is this a literal use of the word עֵת, "time", or is it a symbolic instance of the day/year pattern? There is a text-critical issue here because some ancient Greek translations attest variant readings that do not refer to time.[19] However, if we interpret the Hebrew Masoretic text as it is, we find that the English translation of עֵת as "time" in Daniel 11,24 is the same as the English rendering of the Aramaic word עִדָּן in Daniel 7,25 as "time" in the expression "a time, times, and half a time". In 7,25, עִדָּן means "year",[20] which in this

18 Nebuchadnezzar—e.g., 2 Kgs 24,1.10-11; Evil Merodach—2 Kgs 25,27; Jer 52,31; Belshazzar—Dan 7,1.

19 See, e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 366 footnote 87.

20 *HALOT* 5:1944.

context is a prophetic "year" that equals 360 literal years.[21] So does this mean that עֵת also refers to 360 literal years in 11,24?

There is a methodological fallacy in this reasoning. The fact that two original language terms can be translated by the same English term in some contexts does not mean that the original terms mean the same thing. A serious example of this is the mistaken view, which was held by William Miller,[22] that the Lord's repeated warning in the covenant curses of Leviticus 26 (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28) that He would inflict punishment on the unfaithful Israelites "seven times" (KJV, NKJV, NJB, NASB 1995; NIV 2011; NET Bible) more for their sins refers to seven prophetic times of 360 years each, for a total of 2,520 literal years. But "times" in this context, which explicitly refers to further punishment beyond what already has been inflicted,[23] refers to multiplication, accurately translated "sevenfold" by NJPS, NRSV, and ESV. Here the biblical text says nothing whatsoever about periods of time. There is no prophecy of 2,520 years in the Bible.[24] William Miller was a good man who was used of God and started a movement that led to the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist church. But not all of his biblical interpretations were accurate.

Returning to Daniel, the Hebrew word that is equivalent to Aramaic עִדָּן, which refers to a prophetic year of 360 literal years in Daniel 7,25, is מוֹעֵד in 12,7, which reiterates "a time, times, and half a time".[25] The term מוֹעֵד usually means an "appointed time" (8,19; 11,27.29.35), but in 12,7 it refers to a defined period of time that can be multiplied by a specific number, in this case, 3½. However, the Hebrew word עֵת which appears

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21 See, e.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 138-39. On the prophetic day-for-a-year pattern, see further William H. Shea, *Selected studies on prophetic interpretation*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series 1, rev. ed. (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 67-110; Roy Gane, *Who's afraid of the judgment? The good news about Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary* (Nampa, ID; Pacific Press, 2006), 68-72.

22 See his prophetic time charts.

23 See the Qal of י-ס-ף, "add", in Lev 26,18.21.

24 Also, the "seven periods of time" (plural of עִדָּן; rendered "times" by NKJV, NRSV, NJB, NIV 2011) in Dan 4,13.20.22.29 (Eng. vv. 16, 23, 25, 32) were seven literal years (*HALOT* 5:1944) during Nebuchadnezzar's lifetime, during which his hair and nails grew long.

25 *HALOT* 5:1944.

in 11,24, is never used in this way. In the book of Daniel, עֵת is just a time at or during which something happens: the "time of the evening sacrifice" (9,21; in narrative); the "time of the end" (8,17; 11,35.40; 12,4.9); the "time" of Michael rising (12,1); the "time of trouble" (12,1); and the "time" of removing the תָּמִיד, "that which is regular" (12,11).

If עֵת in a prophecy of Daniel (not including 9,21) must represent 360 years, the "time of the end," the time of Michael rising, the "time of trouble," and the time of removing the תָּמִיד must each take 360 years. Furthermore, there would be a problem with the plural of עֵת in 9,25 and 11,6.13-14. Even if the plural would only refer to 720 (2 x 360) years, how would so many years fit, for example, into the 62 weeks of years = 434 years in 9,25? Even more problematic, how would 720 or more years fit in part of the lifetime of "the daughter of the king of the south in 11,6?

There is no indication that עֵת in Daniel 11,24 is a day/year reference. Elsewhere, the word עֵת is in construct with a following word that specifies the time or something that happens at that time, such as "until the time of evening" (Josh 8,29; trans. by Roy E. Gane) or "until the time of the end" (Dan 11,35; 12,4.9).[26] But in Daniel 11,24, the expression עַד־עֵת, "until a time," is simply left hanging, without specifying an event that occurs at the end of this time. So the phrase seems to refer to an unspecified limited time, as Zdravko Stefanovic puts it: "some kind of time restriction or limitation".[27] We can conclude that in Daniel 11,24, the "despicable one" "shall devise plans against strongholds" for an unspecified limited time, not for 360 years. There is no evidence for an instance of a day/year pattern in this verse.[28] Even if עַד־עֵת in Daniel 11,24 were an instance of

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26 See also 2 Sam 24,15; Mic 5,2; Ps 105,19.

27 Zdravko Stefanovic, Daniel: Wisdom to the wise: Commentary on the Book of Daniel (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 406. *Cf. HALOT* 2:900.

28 I call this the "day/year pattern" rather than "day/year principle" because this kind of usage should be exegetically established on a case-by-case basis, rather than automatically applying it whenever a term for time appears in apocalyptic literature (in which case, for example, the "thousand years" in Rev 20,2-7 would be 360,000 years).

the day/year pattern, this would not be symbolism. Rather, it would be an extended usage of a term for time (see above regarding שָׁבוּעַ, "week").[29]

Archaic terminology (Daniel 11,40-43)

Some terms in Daniel 11 refer to things that are not used or do not exist in later times when the prophecy is likely to be fulfilled. If "the time of the end" in verse 40 is in the modern era, the king of the north would not deploy "chariots and horsemen" (v. 40). But these, along with "ships" in the same list, are simply archaic expressions for various kinds of military assets. Such an archaic term is not a symbol referring to something more abstract, which needs to be explained. Rather, an archaism refers to a later functional equivalent. We could not expect the ancient writer to refer to tanks, armored personnel carriers, Humvees, jet aircraft, or cruise missiles.

The words "Edom, Moab, and the chief part of the Ammonites" (NJPS) in verse 41 and "Cushites" in verse 43 identify nations that no longer exist. However, these proper names are not symbols; they are archaic (to us) references to later equivalents, namely, the peoples who dwell in the region that was inhabited in ancient times by the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Cushites. The terms "Egypt" and "Libyans" in verses 42-43 are not archaic because their ancient names have continued into modern times. There is no indication that "Egypt" and "Libyans" refer to anything other than literal "Egypt" and "Libyans". So there is no reason to suppose that the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Cushites, which appear in the same context, are symbolic either.

"Egypt" (Daniel 11,42-43)

The attempt of some Seventh-day Adventsits to support a spiritual meaning of the king of the south at the end of Daniel 11 by interpreting "Egypt" as atheism and/or ideologies related to it, such as secularism, in

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[29] *Cf.* עִדָּן, "year", for a prophetic year in Dan 7,25 (see above) in the basically literal interpretation of the vision in that chapter.

light of the usage of "Egypt" in Revelation 11,8[30] fails on two counts. First, the counter-attack of the king of the north against the king of the south at the end of Daniel 11 involves the former's invasion of "lands" or "countries" (plural of אֶרֶץ; vv. 40, 42), of which Egypt is only one land/country (singular אֶרֶץ; v. 42). Other components of the domain of the king of the south include the regions of the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, who escape destruction (v. 41), and the Libyans and Cushites (v. 43). So the end-time king of the south controls much more than Egypt (or greater Egypt), which was the territory of the Ptolemaic king of the south earlier in Daniel 11 (v. 8).

Second, Revelation 11,8 speaks of "the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (NKJV). The Greek text explicitly labels this characterization of the city as "spiritual" (πνευματικῶς). If the city is atheistic, this atheism includes characteristics of proud, immoral, selfish, and inhospitable Sodom (Gen 19; *cf*. Ezek 16,49-50), Egypt's opposition to the true God (Exod 7-15), and opposition to Christ at Jerusalem, where He was crucified. Importing this special "spiritual" usage of the name "Egypt", along with Sodom and Jerusalem, into Daniel 11, where there is no indication of such a meaning or reference to Sodom, is a common form of eisegesis. This invalid but unfortunately popular (including in Adventism) hermeneutical practice was exposed by James Barr, who wrote: "The error that arises, when the 'meaning' of a word (understood as the total series of relations in which it is used in the literature) is read into a particular case as its sense and implication there, may be called 'illegitimate totality transfer'".[31]

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30 E.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 264-6, 268; *cf*. Ángel M. Rodríguez, "Daniel 11 and the Islam interpretation" (pamphlet), *Biblical Research Institute Release* 13 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015), 17, 20-22, 25, 31.

31 James Barr, *The semantics of biblical language* (Oxford, GB: Oxford University Press, 1961), 218; *cf*. 222.

"News from the east and the north" (Daniel 11,44)

After the overwhelming victory by the king of the north over the king of the south (Dan 11,40-43), the king of the north is alarmed by "news from the east and the north". His reaction is to "go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction" (v. 44). Given that the terms "north" and "south" in this chapter have been literal up to this point, there is no reason to suppose that "east" and "north" here are symbolic. If such directions were symbolic, to what would they refer? Even if they refer to directions from which Christ is about to come again, they can be literal directions.[32]

Even if "east" and "north" are typological references that connect the coming of Christ to the directions from which Cyrus came to conquer Babylon (Isa 41,2.25; 45,1-3) and deliver the Jews (Isa 44,28; 45,13; 2 Chr 36,22-23; Ezra 1),[33] they still can be literal directions. It is true that historical types, including rituals at the Israelite sanctuary, prefigure antitypes.[34] However, even in the typological context of the sanctuary, locations of objects or movements of activities "north," "south," "east", and "west" literally refer to these directions.[35]

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32 *Cf.* Matt. 24,27: "For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man".

33 Cyrus came from Persia in the east via the north (Opis and Sippar) to conquer Babylon. See "The Babylonian chronicle," trans. by Alan Millard, *The context of Scripture*, ed. by William W. Hallo, 3 vols. (Leiden, NL: E. J. Brill, 1997-2002), 1.137:468, Chronicle 7 iii 12-18.

34 On such typology, see, e.g., Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A study of hermeneutical τύπος structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 398-402; Richard M. Davidson, "The eschatological hermeneutic of biblical typology", *TheoRhēma* 6, no. 2 (2011), esp. 11-12, 36, 41, 44-45.

35 E.g., north—Exod 26,20.35; Lev 1:11; south—Exod 26,18.35; east—Exod 27,13; Lev 1,16; 16,14; west—Exod 27,12.

"The glorious holy mountain" (Daniel 11,45)

The "glorious land" (אֶרֶץ־הַצְּבִי) in Daniel 11,16 is the land of Israel,[36] which in Ezekiel 20,6.15 is the promised land, described as "the most glorious [צְבִי] of all lands". Daniel 11,41 uses the exact same words for "glorious land" as in verse 16. There is no indication in verse 41 that this identical construct expression means anything other than the literal land of Israel, into which the forces of the king of the north come.

Daniel 11,45 predicts that the king of the north would pitch "the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious [צְבִי] holy mountain" (NKJV). Elsewhere in the Bible, the holy mountain is Mount Zion, the temple mount at Jerusalem in the land of Israel (*cf.* Ps 48,2-3 (Eng. vv. 1-2); Isa 27,13; 66,20; Ezek 43,12; Joel 2,1; 4,17 [Engl. 3,17]; Zech 8,3). There is no hint that the "glorious holy mountain" in Daniel 11,45 is the heavenly Mount Zion to which Revelation 14,1 refers.[37] This possibility is ruled out by the fact that the continuing "despicable one" is an earthly ruler and God's loyal people have not yet experienced ultimate deliverance at the Second Coming of Christ when the resurrection occurs (Dan 12,1-3).

It could be objected that conflict in the Middle East, including the literal land of Israel and its people, should not be in view in Daniel 11,40-45 because literal Israel has been superseded by the worldwide spiritual Israel within the "new covenant", against the claim of futurist dispensationalists.[38] However, this objection can be answered as follows.

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36 *Cf. HALOT*, 2:998.

37 Contra the view of Jacques B. Doukhan that the "beautiful holy mountain" of 11,45 is "the heavenly location of God's dwelling", *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and dreams of a Jewish prince in exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 177; *cf.* Doukhan, *Daniel: The vision of the end* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 92.

38 See, e.g., Hans K. LaRondelle, "Interpretation of prophetic and Apocalyptic eschatology", in *A symposium on biblical hermeneutics*, ed. by Gordon M. Hyde (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Committee, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1974), 229; *cf.* Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in prophecy: Principles of prophetic interpretation*,

First, the theology of a biblical passage should be allowed to arise from exegesis of the language of that passage. It is true that other passages can help to illuminate the meaning, but imposing theological constraints derived from interpretations of other passages that conflict with clear indications in the language of the passage in question, such as evidence of its literal genre, is a form of eisegesis.

Second, Daniel 11,40-45 does not give a covenant role to the land of Israel or to the temple mount in Jerusalem as the location where the Lord's covenant promises to His people are to be fulfilled. It is the king of the north who wants to control that territory for his own reasons, which are not God's reasons. The land and the temple mount are called "glorious", maintaining continuity with the use of this term for the land of Israel earlier in the chapter (v. 16), because they were glorious in the past. They were certainly glorious to Daniel, who prayed three times a day toward Jerusalem (Dan 6,10). Israel, Jerusalem, and the temple mount continue to be important to the king of the north and affect political movements. The so-called "Holy Land" carries great significance today for the three global monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

At the end of Daniel 11, the king of the north asserts and expands his global religious and political control by establishing his presence in the land of Israel. By this point, his influence is like that of the beast from the sea in Revelation 13, whose "mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast...and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?'" (vv. 3-4). The power of the king of the north would negatively affect God's loyal people everywhere, just as coercion and persecution follow religious-political domination in Revelation 13 (esp. vv. 12-17).

Third, Zechariah 14,4 predicts an eschatological event:

> On that day his [the Lord's] feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward (brackets supplied).

Andrews University Monographs, Studies in Religion 13 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983).

This is literal Jerusalem. So the verse indicates that Jerusalem continues to have significance to the Lord in some sense in eschatological time. Ellen G. White places the fulfillment of this prophecy after the millennium:

> Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, whence, after His resurrection, He ascended, and where angels repeated the promise of His return. Says the prophet: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives thall cleave in the midst thereof, . . . and there shall be a very great valley." "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." Zechariah 14:5, 4, 9. As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.[39]

By doing this, Christ links His second coming with His first coming and Jerusalem with the New Jerusalem that supersedes it as the place where He dwells among His people (*cf*. Rev 21,2-3). Christ, not the king of the north, will "be king over all the earth".

"Your people" (Daniel 12,1)

Daniel 12,1 predicts the end-time rise of "Michael", describing him as "the great prince who has charge of your people", and promises that "your people shall be delivered" from the great "time of trouble" just before the resurrection (*cf*. v. 2). Here the antecedent of "your" is Daniel, to whom the heavenly being continues to speak. Daniel's people are the Jewish people. But the book of Revelation (e.g., Rev 7) shows that it is the followers of Christ, that is, spiritual "Israelites", who will go through the final trials to deliverance at the Second Coming of Christ.

So is the expression "your people" symbolic in Daniel 12,1? It is true that biblical covenant promises to the "Israel" of God that are fulfilled during the Christian era, such as in Revelation 2,14; 7,4; 21,12, apply to spiritual "Israel", the worldwide Christian church, as Hans LaRondelle has demonstrated. LaRondelle states: "From this point of view, since the

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[39] Ellen G. White, *The great controversy between Christ and Satan: The conflict of the ages in the Christian dispensation* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1888, 1907, 1911), 662-663.

cross of Christ and Pentecost, there is theologically no longer a holy land, city, or mountain on earth (John 4,21; Matt 23,38)".[40] So it is tempting to argue that because "Israel" in the New Testament era is a more abstract entity consisting of believers belonging to many nations, "Israel" in such a context could be regarded as symbolic.

However, the community of "Israel" in the Old Testament already incorporated immigrants from various nations (e.g., Exod 12,38.48-49; Lev 16,29; 18,26; 19,33-34). In the New Testament, the expansion of a remnant of faithful Jewish Israelites to include many other peoples who are "grafted" into "Israel" (Rom 11,17-24) maintains continuity with greater "Israel" in the Old Testament, albeit to a radically greater degree of international expansion. The New Testament reforms and refocuses Israel as defined by its spiritual identity (Gal 3,28-29), an identity that Old Testament Israel also had in addition to its ethnic identity (heart circumcision—Deut 10,16; 30,6; Jer 4,4). Because there is organic continuity between "Israel" in the Old Testament and "Israel" in the New Testament, the latter usage is not symbolic.

Returning to "your people" in Daniel 12,1, Daniel's people were Jews in his day and also the faithful end-time followers of God who are literal people and who are literally Daniel's people in that they continue to serve as the Lord's chosen channel of revelation in the world. Peter emphasized this role of Christians when he applied God's message for the Israelites in Exodus 19,5-6 to Christians: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet 2,9).

Daniel 11 moves not only from faithful Jews to faithful Christians, but also from powers that are only political in the first half of the chapter to an evil "king of the north" power that is religious as well as political in

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[40] Hans K. LaRondelle, "Interpretation of prophetic and Apocalyptic eschatology," in *A symposium on biblical hermeneutics*, ed. by Gordon M. Hyde (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Committee, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1974), 229; *cf.* 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).

the second half of the chapter. Not only does this power engage in warfare (vv. 25-30), it is "against the holy covenant" (vv. 28, 30), removes regular worship and replaces it with an abomination (v. 31), persecutes God's loyal people (vv. 32-35), exalts itself above every god, and speaks amazing things against the true God (v. 36). However, the fact that Daniel 11 expands its focus to religious matters does not make it symbolic; these religious things are described with basically literal language, which includes some figures of speech, as earlier in the chapter.[41] Spiritual concern here does not call for or justify a spiritualizing interpretation.

It is crucial to recognize that the references to "the glorious land", i.e., the land of Israel, in Daniel 11,41, and to "the glorious holy mountain", i.e., the Temple Mount, in verse 45, have nothing to do with covenant promises in these contexts, so they do not refer to the "spiritual Israel" of the worldwide Christian church. Rather, these geographic locations are important for earthly religious-political powers that are opposed to the true God and that oppress His loyal people.

Intratextuality in Daniel

The vision of Daniel 8,1-14 receives three interpretations, with elaboration and expansion, in the latter part of chapter 8, in 9,24-27, and in 11,2-12,3. Since these interpretations parallel each other, it is not surprising that some Hebrew terminology in chapters 8 and 9 reappears in chapter 11. These points of contact are helpful because our understanding of the contexts of the words in chapters 8 and 9 can help to inform our understanding of what is going on in chapter 11 if the contexts of the same words are similar.

The following table shows where Hebrew terms in Daniel 11 are reiterated from Daniel 8 and 9.[42] The translation is ESV, except in a few places where I have given my own translation, at which points I quote the ESV renderings in footnotes.

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41 E.g., "and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white" (v. 35).

42 Abridged and adapted from Gane, "Methodology for Interpretation", 307-10.

Daniel 8-9	Daniel 11
8,20 As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and **Persia** [פָּרַס].	11,2 Behold, three more kings shall arise in **Persia** [פָּרַס]...
8,8 ...but when he was strong, the great horn was **broken [Niphal of** שׁ-ב-ר], and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns **toward the four winds of heaven** [לְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמָיִם].	11,4 And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be **broken [Niphal of** שׁ-ב-ר], and divided **toward the four winds of heaven** [לְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמָיִם], but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled...
9,25 ...from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince [נָגִיד], there shall be seven weeks... 9,27 And he shall confirm a covenant [בְּרִית][43] with many for one week...	11,22 Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, even the prince [נָגִיד] of the covenant [בְּרִית].
8,25 By his cunning he shall make deceit [מִרְמָה] prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great and in the midst of peace [בְּשַׁלְוָה] he shall destroy many.	11,23 And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall do **deceit** [מִרְמָה],[44] and he shall become strong with a small people 11,24 **in the midst of peace** [בְּשַׁלְוָה].[45] He shall come into the richest parts of the province... scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods.

[43] ESV—"make a strong covenant".

[44] ESV—"act deceitfully".

[45] Reading בְּשַׁלְוָה with the end of v. 23.

8,11 It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And that which is regular [הַתָּמִיד][46] was taken away from him, and the place of his temple [מִקְדָּשׁ][47] was overthrown. 8,12 And a host will be rebelliously given against that which is regular [הַתָּמִיד]...[48] 8,13 ..."For how long is the vision concerning that which is regular [הַתָּמִיד],[49] the transgression that makes desolate [Qal of שׁ-מ-מ]...?".	11,31 Forces from him shall appear and profane the **temple** [מִקְדָּשׁ], the fortress,[50] and shall take away **that which is regular** [הַתָּמִיד].[51] And they shall set up the abomination **that makes desolate** [**Poel of** שׁ-מ-מ].
8,19 "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the **indignation** [זַעַם], for it refers to the appointed time **of the end** [קֵץ].	v. 36 ...He shall prosper till the **indignation** [זַעַם] is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. v. 40 At the time **of the end** [קֵץ], the king of the south shall attack him...

These correspondences between identical Hebrew words or words with the same root constitute raw data. How we explain the correspondences goes beyond raw data into the area of interpretation, but we should stay as close to the raw data as possible.

Daniel 11,2-4 clearly refer to Medo-Persia, Alexander's empire, and its fourfold division, that is symbolized and then explained in Daniel 8,3-8.20-22.[52] Daniel 11 uses the language of literal interpretation that appears in the explanation of Daniel 8, such as "kings" and "kingdom"

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46 ESV—"the regular burnt offering". "Burnt offering" is not in the Hebrew.

47 ESV—"sanctuary".

48 ESV—"And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression".

49 ESV—"the regular burnt offering".

50 With NJPS because the two nouns are in apposition without the conjunction supplied by ESV—"the temple and fortress".

51 ESV—"the regular burnt offering".

52 Media is represented in 11,1 in the introduction that speaks of "Darius the Mede".

(8,20-23), not the language of the vision in Daniel 8, which depicts a ram, a he-goat, and a "little horn".

In 11,22, "the prince of the covenant" combines two words that appear earlier in 9,25.26: "a prince" who will "confirm a covenant". In Daniel 9, he is called a מָשִׁיחַ, "anointed one", in addition to being a "prince" (v. 25). He comes at the latter part of the "seventy weeks" = 490 years (vv. 24-26) that are for the Jewish people, when sins are atoned for, eternal righteousness is introduced, prophecy is fulfilled, and a most holy place is anointed (v. 24). He is "cut off" (v. 26), "confirms a covenant", and puts an end to sacrifices (v. 27). These factors provide overwhelming evidence (in light of the New Testament) that the anointed prince of the covenant in Daniel 9 is Jesus Christ.[53]

In Daniel 9, Christ's ministry and His death (included in "cut off")[54] is associated with the destruction of Jerusalem (vv. 26-27), which subsequently was carried out by the armies of Imperial Rome in A.D. 70. Similarly in Daniel 11, speaking of the "despicable one", who is introduced in verse 21, verse 22 says: "Armies shall be utterly swept away and broken before him, and the prince of the covenant as well". It is not clear that these military victories are limited to the Jewish war that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but they could at least include that. In any case, the context is similar to that in chapter 9.

The use of similar terminology in a similar context indicates that "the prince of the covenant" in 11,22 is Jesus Christ, which puts him at the center of Daniel 11. If so, the historical progress of this chapter has reached Imperial Rome by this point. Imperial Rome continues the career of the "despicable one", whether that is a person, an organization, or an organization that was initiated by and continues the characteristics of a despicable individual.

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53 *Cf*., e.g., Shea, *Selected studies*, 156-59.

54 "Cut off" in Dan 9,26 goes beyond the first death to a second death experience. See Roy E. Gane, *The Book of Isaiah: Thoughts as high as heaven* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2020), 94-96 on Isa 53,10.

The next verses in Daniel 11 (vv. 23-24) predict that an alliance will be made with the "despicable one", and then he will practice deceit and become strong with a few people in an environment of peace, which can involve prosperity, security, and tranquility.[55] The terms for "deceit" and "in the midst of peace" appear together in 8,25, which describes the Roman "little horn" power when it is deceitful and destroys many in a time of peace.[56] This cannot be Imperial Rome, which destroyed many during wartimes, not times of peace. Furthermore, this phase of Rome "shall be broken—but by no human hand" (8,25) indicating that it continues to the Second Coming of Christ (*cf.* 7,26; 11,45).

Therefore, Daniel 8,25 predicts the church phase of Rome, which destroyed many faithful people of God during peacetime by persecution (v. 24; *cf.* 7,25; later 11,33). This identification also fits 11,23-24. Imperial Rome, which killed Christ (v. 22), did not need to practice deceit to be strong, nor did it become strong with a small people in the midst of peace after Christ died. Therefore, verses 23-24 introduce the church of Rome, which was formed by a church-state alliance with Imperial Rome. This explains how the agency of the "despicable one" can continue to the end of the chapter: the church of Rome continues the role of Imperial Rome.

Daniel 8,11-13 clearly predicts the religious church phase of Rome, which asserts its greatness up to that of "the Prince of the host", who can be identified as Christ (*cf.* Josh 5,14). The church of Rome removes "that which is regular" (הַתָּמִיד), that is, regular worship of God by His people (*cf.*, e.g., Exod 29,38.42 at the Israelite sanctuary),[57] and rebelliously institutes abominable counterfeit worship. According to Daniel 8,11, the מָכוֹן of the temple of the "Prince of the host" is overthrown. This is not the temple itself, but the site on which it has been built (Isa 4,5;

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55 *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (*DCH*), ed. by David J. A. Clines, 9 vols. (Sheffield, GB: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993-2014), 8:365.

56 For the identification of the "little horn" power in Dan 7 and 8 as Rome, see, e.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 135-37, 177-81; Gane, *Who's afraid of the judgment?*, 32-34, 38, 44, 62-63.

57 Shea interprets הַתָּמִיד in Daniel 8 as "ministry that Jesus carries out in the heavenly sanctuary (see Hebrews 8,1) and which the little horn power attempted to counterfeit" (*Daniel*, 182). However, an earthly power, such as the church of Rome, cannot disrupt what Christ does in heaven.

Ezra 2,68), which would include the temple platform and the courtyard. Revelation 11 explains how the church of Rome could affect the site of God's temple, even though the Jerusalem temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 and the focus of Christian worship is directed to God's temple in heaven, where Christ is ministering (e.g., Heb 7-10; Rev 4-5):

> Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months" (Rev 11,1-2).[58]

Trampling "the holy city", including "the court", refers to persecution, which interferes with regular true worship of God by His loyal people. Compare Daniel 8,10.13.24, where the "little horn" tramples God's sanctuary and some of His host, representing His holy people.

Against this background, the prediction in Daniel 11,31 that forces from "him", i.e., the continuation of the "despicable" king of the north, will profane the temple, remove that which is regular (הַתָּמִיד) and set up the desolating abomination refers to the same religious-political activities of the same Roman church power that is predicted in chapter 8.

In Daniel 8,19, Gabriel says that he will make known to Daniel "what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end". In this context, the word זַעַם, "indignation," refers to something that causes anger to God, namely, the attacks against Him and His people by the "little horn" power, which will continue until the "time of the end".

In Daniel 11,36, the meaning is similar because the "despicable" "king of the north", which in the previous verses is clearly the church of Rome, will "prosper till the indignation is accomplished", which means that the indignation continues as long as the church that causes the indignation continues. Then verses 40-45 predict the end of the church of Rome and its indignation during the "time of the end". In this time, the church will rise to its height of power by militarily defeating its nemesis and competitor, the "king of the south" and thereby achieving unrivalled

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58 For 42 months referring to the church of Rome, see Rev 13,5.

domination, only to suddenly "come to his end, with none to help him" (v. 45). This end implies that indignant divine power terminates him and his indignation (*cf.* 7,26; 8,25; 2 Thess 2,8).

Match between language in Daniel 11 and historical events

"He shall give him the daughter of women" (Daniel 11,17)

ESV translates Daniel 11,17:

> He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of an agreement and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom, but it shall not stand or be to his advantage.

Seventh-day Adventists interpreters from Uriah Smith onward have identified "the daughter of women" here as Cleopatra VII Thea Philopator (lived about 69-30 B.C.),[59] the last Ptolemaic ruler of Egypt before it was annexed by Rome as a province. She is the most famous Cleopatra, who had love affairs (and children) with the Roman generals and statesmen Julius Caesar and Mark Antony.[60] This identification enables Seventh-day Adventists interpreters to introduce Rome into Daniel 11 in verse 14 or 16.

However, the biblical profile in Daniel 11,17 of a king giving his daughter, i.e., in a political marriage, to the ruler of a rival kingdom (raw data) does not fit Cleopatra VII at all. Her father, Ptolemy XII Auletes, never gave her in marriage to anyone before he died when she was 18 years old. At that point, she and her younger brother, Ptolemy XIII, inherited

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59 Uriah Smith, *The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, rev. ed. (Nashville, TN: 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), 251; The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, ed. by Francis D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1953-1957) 4:869-70; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God cares*, vol. 1, *The message of Daniel for you and your family* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1981), 293; Shea, Daniel, 247.

60 See, e.g., Joyce Tyldesley, "Cleopatra: Queen of Egypt", *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Cleopatra-queen-of-Egypt, last updated on September 4, 2023; accessed September 8, 2023.

the throne.[61] This is raw historical data, which is enough to eliminate Cleopatra VII as "the daughter of women" in Daniel 11,17. Moreover, in the flow of events and actors in verses 15-16, "the daughter of women" is given by the king of the north to the king of the south.[62] But Cleopatra VII was not from the north; she was a Ptolemy from Egypt in the south. This too is raw historical data.

Therefore, Cleopatra VII is not even an alternative possibility for "the daughter of women" in Daniel 11,17. This identification is simply a mistake and should be abandoned, along with any interpretation that builds on it or requires it. No argument from literary structure, grammar, or anything else that violates the raw data is valid. Literary structure can have raw data of its own in the form of patterns of appearance of particular words. However, what such structure means, including with regard to fulfillment of predictive prophecy, is a matter of interpretation that should take all exegetical factors into account, in harmony with all other raw data. If a conclusion based on structure violates raw data, the conclusion is wrong.

No woman during the period of domination by Rome matches the profile of "the daughter of women" in Daniel 11,17. There was no separation between domains of the north and south after Rome took over Egypt at the end of the reign of Cleopatra VII. So there could be no political marriage between rulers of competing northern and southern kingdoms during the Imperial Roman period.

The woman who does fit the description in Daniel 11,17 of a daughter of a king of the north who is given in marriage to a king of the south is Cleopatra I Syra (died 176 B.C.). She was the daughter of the Seleucid king Antiochus III the Great (lived 242-187 B.C., ruled 223-187 B.C.), a king of the north, who gave her in marriage to Ptolemy V of Egypt, a king

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61 See, e.g., Tyldesley, "Cleopatra". When Cleopatra and her brother came to share the throne, they may have ceremonially married each other in accordance with Egyptian custom.

62 *Cf.* Li, "A color-coded translation", 20.

of the south, in 193 B.C. when she was about 11 years old and Ptolemy was about 16.[63] This is raw historical data.

Daniel 11,17 says that "he" (the king of the north) was motivated to give his daughter to "him" (the king of the south) "to destroy the [Ptolemaic] kingdom, but it shall not stand or be to his advantage" (Dan 11,17). The ancient writer Porphyrius recounted the way in which this was fulfilled by the political marriage between Cleopatra I and Ptolemy V:

> Antiochus wanted not only to possess Syria, Cilicia, Lycia, and the other provinces which had belonged to Ptolemy, but also to extend his realm into Egypt. So through the influence of Eucles of Rhodes he betrothed his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy, in the seventh year of the boy's reign. In the thirteenth year, he handed over Cleopatra to be Ptolemy's wife, and gave Coele Syria and Judaea as her dowry...but he did not succeed in gaining control of Egypt, because Ptolemy Epiphanes and his ministers were wary of being tricked, and also Cleopatra supported her husband rather than her father.[64]

This political marriage also fits in the flow of events in the preceding and following verses, which match the career of Antiochus III in remarkable detail from verse 10 through verse 19.[65] Therefore, Rome does not take over as the primary protagonist in Daniel 11 before verse 20, although the "commander" who stops Antiochus III in verse 18 fits the profile of the Roman consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio, who led forces of

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63 See, e.g., Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Cleopatra I Syra," *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Cleopatra-I-Syra/additional-info#history, July 20, 1998, accessed September 8, 2023; *cf.* "Cleopatra I queen of Egypt", https://worldhistory.us/ancient-history/ancient-egypt/cleopatra-i-queen-of-egypt.php, June 28, 2017, accessed September 8, 2023; Hans Volkmann, "Antiochus III the Great: Seleucid king", Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Antiochus-III-the-Great, September 6, 2016, accessed September 8, 2023.

64 "Porphyrius: Comments on the Book of Daniel", from "Against the Christians", [47] [11'17-19], http://www.attalus.org/translate/daniel.html#47, accessed September 8, 2023. Such excerpts from Porphyrius survived in Jerome's commentary on Daniel. I am grateful to Jonatas Leal, my research assistant, for this reference.

65 See, e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 378-81; Gane, "Methodology for interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3", 304-5, 316-17.

the Roman Republic in decisively defeating the Seleucid king at the battle of Magnesia (190 or 189 B.C.).[66]

"A despicable person…on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred" (Daniel 11,21)

NASB 1995 translates Daniel 11,21 "In his place a despicable person [Niphal participle of ב-ז-ה] will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue". Seventh-day Adventists interpreters from Uriah Smith onward have identified this "despicable person" with the second Roman emperor, Tiberius (lived 42 B.C. to A.D. 37).[67] There is no question that he was morally despicable, as were plenty of other Roman emperors, some of whom, such as Caligula and Nero, were clearly worse than Tiberius.[68]

The key question is not whether Tiberius was morally evil, but whether he was a usurper, as explicitly indicated by the biblical description: "on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred…". Tiberius was the adopted step-son of Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, who designated Tiberius as his successor. After Augustus died on August 19 in A.D. 14, Tiberius officially assumed the office of sole emperor of Rome on September 17 when he was named as the next emperor by the Roman Senate. That is commonly known historical raw data.[69] He received the honor of kingship through legitimate succession, rather than "by intrigue [חֲלַקְלַקּוֹת]" (Dan 11,21). He was not a usurper in any sense of the word. Therefore, Tiberius cannot be the "despicable person" in Daniel 11,21.

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66 Regarding this battle, see Green, *Alexander to Actium*, 421.

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

68 See, e.g., H*istory Cooperative*, "The worst Roman emperors: The complete list of Rome's worst tyrants", pub. by Daniel Kershaw, February 3, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, https://historycooperative.org/worst-roman-emperors/.Tiberius does not appear in Kershaw's list.

69 See, e.g., Frederik Pohl, "Tiberius: Roman emperor", *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Tiberius, last updated September 5, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023.

The failure of identifying Tiberius as the despicable person in Daniel 11,21 calls into question the common Seventh-day Adventists interpretation that Augustus Caesar, the predecessor of Tiberius, is the "one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom" in the previous verse (v. 20).[70] The continuation of verse 20—"But within a few days he shall be broken..."—confirms that Augustus is not in view here because he had a long reign as emperor of 40 years from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14.[71] This raw data does not match the biblical description in Daniel 11,20.

Preterists attempt to make Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) the usurper in Daniel 11,21,[72] but he was not a usurper. He was a son of Antiochus III who succeeded to the throne after the murder of his brother, Seleucus IV.[73] Neither does Antiochus IV Epiphanes fit the parallel image of the "little horn" in Daniel 8 because he failed to make his Seleucid Empire grow "toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land" (Dan 8,9).[74]

We have found that the political marriage in Daniel 11,17 was fulfilled during the reign of Antiochus III, the continuation of whose reign

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70 Smith, *The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 252-53; Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, 4:870; Maxwell, *God cares*, 293; Shea, Daniel, 248; Stefanovic, *Daniel*, 419.

71 E.g., Joshua J. Mark, "Augustus", *World History Encyclopedia*, https://www.worldhistory.org/augustus/, May 4, 2018, accessed September 8, 2023.

72 E.g., André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans. by David Pellauer (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1979), 226; Collins, *Daniel*, 382; Newsom, *Daniel*, 346-7; *cf.* Goldingay, *Daniel*, 536-37; Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 278.

73 Following the assassination of Seleucus IV in 175 B.C., his successor should have been his eldest son, Demetrius. However, Demetrius was a hostage in Rome. Therefore, his younger brother, a boy named Antiochus, was made king, with his mother Laodice as regent. Antiochus IV married Laodice and ruled as guardian to and co-regent with the boy Antiochus, his nephew and step-son. After five years (170 B.C.), the boy was murdered, so Antiochus IV became the sole ruler (Newsom, *Daniel*, 346-7). Newsom insinuates that Antiochus IV instigated his murder (347; *cf.* Collins, *Daniel*, 382). Even if that could be proven, Antiochus IV was already co-regent when the murder occurred, and Goldingay points out that he had taken the position of co-regent as "a safeguard against usurpers from outside the dynasty", especially Heliodorus (*Daniel*, 537).

74 For factors that rule out Antiochus IV Epiphanes as the fulfillment of the "little horn" in Daniel, see Shea, *Selected Studies*, 31-66; Gane, *Who's afraid of the judgment?*, 78-86.

occupies verses 18-19. We also saw that verse 22 predicts the death of Christ, "the prince of the covenant", under the Roman emperor Tiberius (see above). Therefore, the despicable usurper in verse 21 should appear in history after the reign of Antiochus III, a Seleucid king, and by the time of Tiberius, a Roman emperor. The transition from Hellenistic to Roman rule comes in verse 20 or verse 21.

The beginning of Daniel 11 transitions from Persia under Xerxes (v. 2) to Greece under Alexander the Great (v. 3) after Xerxes attacks Greece (v. 2), an attempt that failed (see above). Thus, the chapter skips over all of the remaining Persian rulers after Xerxes and moves directly to the power that defeated him: Greece.[75] Given this precedent, it makes sense that Daniel 11 similarly would skip over the remaining Seleucid kings after the defeat of Antiochus III by a "commander" (v. 18) and Antiochus's final demise (v. 19) and proceed to make predictions regarding the power, represented by the commander, that was victorious over him. This was Rome (see above). If so, the dominance of Rome enters Daniel 11 at verse 20 and the usurper in verse 21 would be Roman.

The text allows for such major transitions at verses 20 and 21. Both of these verses begin with the words וְעָמַד עַל־כַּנּוֹ: "Then shall arise in [or "upon"] his place". This expression means that the leader who enters history at each of these points takes over the כֵּן, "position, place, status, office"[76] of one who has gone before, with no indication that he is the natural heir within a dynasty. In fact, verse 21 explicitly denies that the "despicable person" is the natural heir. The expression וְעָמַד עַל־כַּנּוֹ is unnecessary for an intra-dynastic succession. In the contexts of several such successions in Daniel 11,5-19, the combination of the verb עָמַד,

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75 "The purpose of the prophecy was not to give a thorough survey of Persian history, but to trace it to the point at which the next power was introduced on the scene of action. Since Xerxes was the one who eventually brought the Greeks into the realm of Near Eastern politics, there was no need for the prophecy to recite more of Persian history after that point. The prophecy then shifted to the new power on the scene of action in order to trace the rise and fall of these kings and their kingdoms". Shea, *Daniel*, 240; *cf.* 25.

76 *DCH* 4:434; *cf. HALOT* 2:483. In Gen 40,13; 41,13, כֵּן refers to the position/role of the pharaoh's chief cupbearer, which he had lost, but to which he was restored.

"arise", followed by בֵּן appears only once (v. 7), but without the preposition עַל, "upon/in".

If the usurper in verse 21 is Roman, how would a Roman usurp Roman power? This is how the Roman Republic, ruled by the Senate, became Imperial Rome that was ruled by emperors. Michael Grant describes Augustus Caesar (63 B.C.–A.D. 14) as the "first Roman emperor, following the republic, which had been finally destroyed by the dictatorship of Julius Caesar, his great-uncle and adoptive father".[77] Julius Caesar (100? B.C.–44 B.C.) "substituted for the Roman oligarchy an autocracy that could never afterward be abolished".[78] However, his dictatorship was cut short when he was assassinated in 44 B.C.

Octavian, the heir of Julius Caesar who became Augustus, solidified the transition to autocractic rule through clever and effective deceit:

> 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.[79]

This sounds like the fulfillment of Daniel 11,21: "...but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue" (NASB 1995).

The rest of the history of Rome through the period of Imperial Rome and later that of the church of Rome carries on the autocratic legacy of the usurper in Daniel 11,21. This correlates with the continuity of anaphoric references to the "despicable" one through the end of Daniel 11.[80] It is

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77 Michael Grant, "Augustus: Roman emperor", *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Augustus-Roman-emperor, last updated August 15, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023.

78 Arnold Joseph Toynbee, "Julius Caesar: Roman ruler", Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Julius-Caesar-Roman-ruler, last updated August 25, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023.

79 Grant, "Augustus".

80 Li, "A color-coded translation", 21-25.

clear that within this large span of history, the "despicable" one cannot be a single individual, but represents a role prepared by Julius Caesar, fully implemented by Augustus Caesar, and maintained by Tiberius (during whose reign Christ died; verse 22) and a succession of many other rulers. This helps to explain why the usurper in verse 21 can be described as "despicable". Augustus Caesar is widely admired for his remarkable successes and reforms, which brought peace and prosperity to the Roman world.[81] But by deceitfully instituting imperial rule, he paved the way for oppressive and destructive despotism.

"The king of the South will engage him in battle" (Daniel 11,40)

The NIV 2011 translates Daniel 11,40 as follows:

> At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood.

The Hebrew expression rendered "will engage him in battle" is the Hitpael of the verb נ-ג-ח followed by the preposition עִם, "with". In the Qal stem with a direct object, the verb refers to the goring action of an ox that thrusts with its horns (Exod 21,28,31-32). In the Piel with a direct object, the word symbolically or metaphorically uses the image of thrusting with horns to describe aggressive human action, which can be military action, against other people (Deut 33,17; 1 Kgs 22,11; Ezek 34,21; Ps 44,6 [Engl. v. 5]; Dan 8,4; 2 Chron 18,10). The Piel in Daniel 8,4 describes a ram thrusting or "butting" (NJPS, NJB, NASB 1995; NET Bible) in several directions, representing the expansion of the Medo-Persian empire (v. 20), in a symbolic vision. However, the Hitpael in 11,40 is not symbolic; it is a metaphorical usage characterizing human action in a basically literal prediction that otherwise refers to literal directions, ships, and countries (see above).

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81 E.g., Grant, "Augustus".

Daniel 11,40 contains the only instance in the Hebrew Bible of the Hitpael stem of נ-ג-ח followed by the preposition עִם, "with". This is raw data. The valence of this verb + preposition "with" carries the reciprocal meaning of one human power metaphorically "locking horns with" another. The usage in this context is recognized by a number of translations, including NJPS—"will lock horns with him", a footnote in ESV—"Hebrew *thrust at*", a translator's note in the NET Bible—"*Heb* 'engage in thrusting'", and the rendering in *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*—"to join in combat with (עִם), to wage war",[82] which is paralleled in The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.[83] The unique Hitpael with עִם does not refer to a unilateral knockout blow by one entity against another so that the latter does not recover or takes a long time to recover, as in the Qal and Piel (see above).[84]

Therefore, the Hebrew prediction in Daniel 11,40 cannot match the event of the unilateral infliction of the "mortal wound" (Rev 13,3) on the church of Rome in A.D. 1798 by military forces of atheistic France.[85] Unless we adopt the approach of preterists who adjust the text of Daniel to fit their interpretation or simply say that Daniel was wrong,[86] we are forced to abandon the 1798 interpretation of Daniel 11,40 and look for another fulfillment when a southern power provokes the northern religious-political church of Rome, which swiftly retaliates.

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82 *HALOT* 2:667.

83 *DCH* 5:606.

84 Semantic domain/field analysis supports this interpretation. The equivalent Niphal of עִם+ל-ח-מ means "fight with" (24 instances, including Exod 17,8; Josh 9,2; 10,29, etc.). This indicates engagement of two forces. It does not signify a knockout victory. For example, "Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim" (Exod 17,8), but Amalek lost the battle (v. 13). Even if the verb in Dan 11,40 was Piel, this would not necessarily indicate a completely destructive blow. Compare 1 Kgs 22,11 and 2 Chron 18,10: "With these [horns] you shall push [Piel of נ-ג-ח] the Syrians until they are destroyed." If the Piel of נ-ג-ח alone referred to a knockout blow, the subsequent words "until they are destroyed" would be superfluous.

85 Contra Rodriguez, "Daniel 11 and the Islam interpretation", 20 footnote 53, 22, 27, 31.

86 E.g., James A. Montgomery, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh, GB: T & T Clark, 1979; 1st ed. 1927), 393; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel: A new translation with introduction and commentary,* AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 222, 226; Collins, *Daniel*, 336, 388; Newsom, *Daniel*, 267, 359; Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 545.

If Daniel 11,40 was not fulfilled in 1798, that scenario cannot be used as support for the idea that atheism is the king of the south.[87] This does not mean that 1798 is not important. It is simply not the event predicted in Daniel 11,40, which must be during (preposition ב, "in/at/during" in וּבְעֵת קֵץ, "At the time of the end" at the beginning of the verse)[88] the period of the "time of the end", not at the very beginning of this time.

Use of the preposition ב meaning "during" with an expression of time is common in biblical Hebrew. For example, see in Daniel "in [ב] the first year of Darius the Mede" (11,1), i.e., during his first year, and "in [ב] those times" (in בָּעִתִּים, literally "in/during the times"; vv. 6, 14). Outside Daniel, see 1 Kings 11,29—"During [ב] that time [עֵת] Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem..." (NJPS).[89] Here the wording is the preposition ב + עֵת, "time", as in Dan 11,40.

Without 1798 as support, the atheism view of the king of the south at the end of Daniel 11 would need to rely on other support and answer the question: what is the atheistic southern political power that engages in literal warfare with the church of Rome? Related to this question is the relationship between the king of the south in verses 40-43 and the earlier king of the south that fought a major series of battles or wars with the king of the north in verses 25-30. These were conflicts between two separate powers; they are not presented as civil wars within one power, such as the Roman Empire. Who is the king of the south in verses 25-30? Is this also atheism?

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87 For the view that the "king of the south" at the "time of the end" in Dan 11,40 is atheism or secular, rationalistic humanism, see, e.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 264-6, 268; Rodriguez, "Daniel 11 and the Islam interpretation", 17, 20-22, 25, 31.

88 *Cf. DCH* 2:82.

89 This was during the time described in the previous verse: "This Jeroboam was an able man, and when Solomon saw that the young man was a capable worker, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the House of Joseph" (1 Kgs 11,28).

Conclusion

This article has identified three kinds of raw data in Daniel 11,2b-12,3 and has discussed their implications within the context of this unit of revelation. These raw data concern the literary unit and genre of the chapter, intratextual links with previous chapters, and text descriptions in relation to historical events that have transpired since the time of Daniel.

Raw data expose several interpretations regarding aspects or portions of Daniel 11 as mistakes. The literary genre of the chapter is not symbolic at any point; it begins and remains basically literal. Cleopatra VII is not "the daughter of women" in verse 17. Tiberius is not the "despicable one" in verse 21. Verse 40 does not refer to the "mortal wound" of the church of Rome inflicted by atheistic France in A.D. 1798. In the name of progress, we need to move on and leave these mistakes behind.

Several Hebrew terms in the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9 reappear in Daniel 11 in similar contexts. These links constitute raw data indicating that there are close relationships between the meaning of Daniel 11 and that of the earlier chapters at these points, which assist with identification of protagonists and events in Daniel 11.

We have found that the church of Rome is the "despicable" "king of the north" at the end of Daniel 11 and it defeats its archenemy, the "king of the south", through military means, no doubt supplied by its political allies in an end-time alliance (*cf.* "Babylon" in Rev 17-18). If so, who could the "king of the south" be? To truly compete against the religious-political church of Rome, the king of the south should be a religious-political power. It should also have a vested interest in the Middle East, where the land of Israel, Jerusalem, and its temple mount are located, which the church of Rome would want to control (see esp. Dan 11,41, 45).

The church of Roman has always wanted access to this territory, which is why it fought the Crusades against forces of Islam. Only the Crusades fit the context of Daniel 11,25-30, in which the northern power, the church of Rome, initiates a series of massive conflicts with a southern enemy. Islam is the great monotheistic religious-political power that

still competes with the church of Rome, also numbering over a billion adherents. The countries named in Daniel 11,41-43 (except "the glorious land" = Israel) remain Islamic to this day.

If the "king of the south" is atheism or some other ideological -ism, where is atheism in Daniel 11,25-30 and what is the military power that represents atheism in 11,40-43 after the time of revolutionary France? How would atheism control the Middle East until it initiates conflict with and is quickly defeated by the church of Rome?

Personally, I do not like the conclusion that the "king of the south" is Islamic power, just as I do not like the conclusion that the "little horn" and the despicable "king of the north" represent the church of Rome. I have friends in both of those groups and know that many of Christ's "sheep" in other "folds" (John 10,16) presently adhere to those faith traditions. But I am exegetically forced to the conclusion that the king of the south is Islamic power and see no other viable option that accounts for all of the elements in the biblical text of Daniel 11.

It would be safest for us not to say anything about the part of Daniel 11 that predicts the future (vv. 40-45), waiting to see how it will be fulfilled. Some would have us do this. But this was not what Ellen G. White counseled. She said:

> Are we to wait until the fulfillment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God's judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we will believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing us that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, "even at the doors". Let us read and understand before it is too late.[90]

[90] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the church* (Mountain View, CA: 1948), 9:20.