



2. Religious-Political Papacy and Islamic Power in Daniel 11

El papado religioso-político y el poder islámico en Daniel 11

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Abstract

Close reading of Daniel 11,2-12 within its context in the Book of Daniel reveals that this discourse unit predicts a succession of human political powers that affect the lives of God's loyal people from the time of Daniel to the commencement of God's eternal kingdom. If Daniel 11,25-30 predicts the Crusades fought by the religious-political papacy, with its allies, as the king of the north, the king of the south here is religious-political Islamic power. Therefore, the king of the south in verses 40-43 is also Islamic power because it has never been superseded, just as the papacy has continued. By tracing the cosmic conflict predicted in Daniel 11, we can recognize the climactic period in which we are living and have assurance that God will soon deliver us and fulfill the remainder of His promises.

Keywords

Eschatology — King of the north — King of the south — Rome — Papacy — Islam

Resumen

Una lectura detallada de Daniel 11,2-12,3 dentro de su contexto en el Libro de Daniel revela que esta unidad de discurso predice una sucesión de poderes políticos humanos que afectan la vida del fiel pueblo de Dios desde la época de Daniel hasta el comienzo del reino eterno de Dios. Si Daniel 11,25-30 anticipa las Cruzadas peleadas por el papado religioso-político, con sus aliados, como rey del norte, el rey del sur aquí es el poder religioso-político islámico. Por lo tanto, en los versículos 40-43, el rey del sur también es el poder islámico, porque nunca ha sido reemplazado, así como el papado ha continuado. Al trazar el conflicto cósmico predicho en Daniel 11, podemos reconocer el momento culminante en que estamos viviendo y tener la seguridad de que Dios pronto nos librará y cumplirá el resto de sus promesas.

Palabras claves

Escatología — Rey del norte — Rey del sur — Roma — Papado — Islam

Introduction

The goal of this paper is to identify the referents of the kings of the north and south at the end of Daniel 11 in verses 40-43. To do this, it is necessary to place these rulers in context by ascertaining the overall purpose of the whole literary unit 11,2-12,3 that contains these verses and by identifying the succession of kings throughout this unit. It is beyond the scope of the paper to interpret all of the details in the unit, which would require a book-length treatment. However, this study can help to discern a textual-historical framework within which details are placed.

Daniel 11,2-12,3 comprises a single discourse unit of historical apocalyptic prophecy communicated to Daniel by an otherworldly being who appeared to him as a man.¹ The unit commences in 11,2 with the words “And now I will tell you the truth...” (NJPS) and continues through 12,3, after which the speaker changes his address to an epilogue: “But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end” (v. 4).²

The purpose of the discourse unit is stated in the narrative introduction to it in Daniel 10,1-11,1. The succession of kings in 11,2-12,3 can be understood from the following factors: (a) explicit mention of successive kings of Persia in 11,2, which provides an initial base point for working from that which is clearly known to that which requires interpretation; (b) transitions between segments of the text from one kingdom or dynasty to another; (c) patterns of succession that emerge from the transitions between rulers; (d) descriptive profiles of the characters and activities of rulers within text segments concerning them; (e) additional information from the following unit in 12,4-13 that forms the conclusion to the larger literary section consisting of Daniel 10-12; (f) intratextual parallels with

¹ On the genre “apocalypse”, of which “historical apocalypse” is a sub-genre, and the Book of Daniel, see, e.g., Roy Gane, “Genre Awareness and Interpretation of the Book of Daniel”. In *To Understand the Scriptures: Essays in Honor of William H. Shea*, ed. by David Merling (Berrien Springs, MI: Institute of Archaeology/Siegfried H. Horn Archaeological Museum, 1997), 137-148, and sources cited there, including *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre*, ed. by John J. Collins; Semeia 14 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979).

² ESV here and in subsequent biblical quotations unless otherwise indicated.

earlier revelations in the Book of Daniel; and (g) correlations between text profiles and known historical entities and events.³ Valid exegesis takes all of these factors into account where they are relevant, without making one element of interpretation, such as a particular view of literary structure in Daniel 11 as compared with Daniel 8, override other factors.

The present study will first consider the narrative introduction in 10,1-11,1 and then analyze segments of 11,2-12,3 in terms of the seven factors just listed to arrive at identification of the kings of the north and south in 11,40-43. The conclusion will briefly address implications regarding alternative interpretations of Daniel 11,2-12,3.

Narrative Introduction to the Discourse Unit

The narrative in Daniel 10,1-11,1 reveals conflict between powerful heavenly beings on the side of Daniel's people, who are God's people (10,13.21), and apparently evil supernatural forces behind the human kingdoms of Persia (10,13;10,20a) and then Greece (v. 20b). The fact that a heavenly being involved in the conflict informs Daniel that he stood to strengthen Darius the Mede (11,1), a ruler of the (Medo-) Persian Empire, indicates that at least part of the goal of the competing sides is to influence human kingdoms who affect the lives of God's people.

The glorious heavenly being announces to Daniel in 10,14: "Now I have come to help you understand [Hiphil of בִּינֵה] what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision [חִזְיוֹן] pertains to future days" (NET Bible, with words in brackets supplied). These words introduce the revelation as concerning the future of Daniel's people within the context of the cosmic conflict. The revelation must be an additional interpretation of the vision in Daniel 8, which concerns "the time of the end" (v. 17), because chapters 9-12 do not include a description of a vision. In Daniel 8 the word חִזְיוֹן, "vision", refers to the entire vision recorded in that chapter (vv. 1-2), which is described in verses 3-14 (and referred to in

³ See further Roy E. Gane, "Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27, no 1-2 (2016; appeared in 2017): 294-343.

vv. 13.15.17.26), beginning with a ram that represents the kings of Media and Persia (vv. 3-4.20).

From Daniel 10,14 we can derive two initial points regarding 11,2-12,3. First, this unit is the third, and now radically expanded, interpretation of the vision in Daniel 8, following the interpretations in that chapter (8,17.19-26) and in chapter 9 (vv. 24-27). Accordingly, 11,2-12,3 also begins with the kings of Persia (11,2). Therefore, the interpretations in Daniel 8 and 9 should provide an intratextual interpretive framework within which to place the details of chapter 11.⁴ Second, the interpretation in 11,2-12,3 belongs to the same apocalyptic sub-genre as the interpretations in chapters 8 and 9, which explain the symbolic vision of 8,3-14 in non-symbolic language. There is no textual (including discourse) indicator of a shift from this non-symbolic sub-genre anywhere in 11,2-12,3.

Segments Regarding Kings in Daniel 11,2-12,3

Segments of Daniel 11,2-12,3 regarding different kingdoms or dynasties, including phases in the long career of the king of the north in 11,23-45, are as follows:

Table 1. Kingdoms/Dynasties of Daniel 11,2-12,3

Reference	Kingdom/Dynasty
11,2	Persia
11,3-19	“Mighty king” and four divisions of his empire
11,5-19	Kings of south and north divisions, including wars between them
11,20	“One who shall send an exactor of tribute” (replacing king of north)
11,21-22	Despised usurper (taking king of north position from ruler in v. 20)
11,23-45	One who “shall become strong with a small people” = king of north

⁴ For parallels between Dan 8-9 and 11, see Appendix II.

11,25-30a	Wars against king of south
11,30b-39	Religious activities: worship replacement, persecution, self-exaltation
11,40-43	War against king of south
11,44-45	Religious activities: persecution, attempt at self-exaltation, but meets his demise
12,1-3	“Michael” arises; trouble, deliverance, resurrection

Continuity of the same kingdom or dynasty is shown by repetition of the designation for that kingdom, such as “king of the north”, or by Hebrew syntax, i.e., pronouns or person and number elements of verbs (e.g., 3rd person masculine singular), referring to that designation as antecedent. Transitions between kingdoms or dynasties are indicated by breaks in continuity with introductions of new rulers.

The designations “king of the north” and “king of the south” refer to monarchs within lines or dynasties of rulers over northern and southern kingdoms, just as kings of Persia in verse 2 are individual rulers of that kingdom. Thus, 11,7 explicitly signals a succession between kings within the “king of the south” dynasty through the following words: “And from a branch from her [daughter of the king of the south; *cf.* v. 6] roots one shall arise in his [king of the south] place”. This is intradynastic succession, as indicated by the words “from a branch from her roots”, which express continuity of the royal family. By contrast, verses 20-21 employ the expression “in his place”, without any indication of dynastic continuity to introduce new kingdoms.

The remainder of this paper examines the segments in Daniel 11,2-12,3 in order to identify the kingdoms or dynasties represented in them. For the sake of clarity, titles of sections discussing the segments reflect their conclusions.

Persia (11,2)

Daniel 11 begins its overview of future history from the time of the prophet’s life during the early Medo-Persian period, the same point where chapter 8 begins (v. 20). However, Daniel 11 adds the information that a fourth Persian king, whom we know from history to be Xerxes

(= Ahasuerus; reigned 486-465 B.C.), would deploy his vast wealth to attack Greece. After verse 2 introduces Greece as the object of Persia's unsuccessful invasion (480 B.C.), the next verse skips the remaining Persian kings after Xerxes and moves directly to the kingdom that later conquers Persia, which is Greece (including Macedonia). By using the literal terms "kings" and "kingdom" and referring to the known kingdoms of Persia and Greece, Daniel indicates at the outset of Daniel 11 that the revelation concerns a historical succession of human political rulers.

Greece (11,3-19)

Daniel 11,3-4 does not name the kingdom of the "mighty king", whose kingdom would "be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven", i.e., in four directions (*cf.* Zech 6,5-6, "four winds of heaven... north country... south country"). However, Daniel 8 identifies this kingdom as Greece (v. 21a; *cf.* vv. 8.22), of which the first king, whom we know from history to be Alexander the Great, conquers Medo-Persia (vv. 5-7, 21b). Daniel 11,4 adds that his descendants would not inherit his kingdom, which means that he would not establish his own dynasty. Rather, it would be divided among others. Indeed, Alexander's empire split four ways into Antigonid Macedonia, Attalid Pergamum, Seleucid Syria and Ptolemaic Egypt.

Daniel 11,5-19 predicts political and military competition between two of the four Greek kingdoms. The fact that individual rulers who are members of these dynasties are called "the king of the south" and "the king of the north" identifies the dynasties as two of the four divisions of Alexander's kingdom, which is divided toward the four directions (v. 4; see above). The terms "king of the south" and/or "king of the north" are explicit in 11,5-9.11.13-15 and pronouns with one or both of these kings as antecedents appear in verses 10.12, and 16-19.

Verse 8 explicitly identifies the territory of the king of the south as Egypt and verse 16 predicts that the king of the north would "stand in the glorious land", i.e., the land of Israel (Ezek 20,6.15; *cf.* Dan 11,45 of the temple mount). Only Ptolemaic Egypt to the south of Israel and then Seleucid Syria to the north of Israel occupied this land, so Israel is the

geographic reference point. Confirming this is the historical fact that the Seleucid king Antiochus III the Great (ruled 222-187 B.C.) did take over the land of Israel after he defeated Ptolemaic Egypt (*cf.* Dan 11,15). To further support Antiochus III as the ruler in Daniel 11,16, it happened that within the context of the same reign, it was also Antiochus III who gave his daughter Cleopatra I to Ptolemy V of Egypt (v. 17), but Antiochus gained no advantage from this because Cleopatra was loyal to her husband and to Egypt, fulfilling the last part of Daniel 11,17: “but it shall not stand or be to his advantage”.⁵

Notice that the unique sequence of events concerning Antiochus III in Daniel 11,15-17 shows that the prophecy still concerns the Hellenistic kingdoms at this point.⁶ These verses illustrate the fact that Daniel 11 can be correlated with history by matching text descriptions of sequences of elements, not only individual features, with historical kingdoms, individuals, and events.⁷ In fact, events predicted in verses 18-19 continue to fit the reign of Antiochus III, who tried to expand his kingdom along the “coastlands” of Asia Minor and Greece, but was stopped by Roman armies at Thermopylae in Greece in 191 B.C. and at Magnesia in Asia

⁵ With André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans. by David Pellauer (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1979), 225; John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, Word Biblical Commentary 30 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 298; John J. Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 381; Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 345; Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 277.

⁶ Some Seventh-day Adventist have introduced Rome before this, including by interpreting “the daughter of women” in v. 17 as Queen Cleopatra VII, the daughter of Ptolemy XII Auletes (69-30 B.C.), who had affairs with the Romans Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. 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; William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader's Guide* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 247. But this later Cleopatra was a Ptolemy from the south, so she was never given by the “king of the north” in a political marriage to the “king of the south”.

⁷ See Appendix I on correlations between Dan 11,5-19 and the rulers of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties.

Minor in 190 B.C., with the Romans at Magnesia commanded by the consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio (subsequently called “Asiaticus”). Thus, “a commander shall put an end to his insolence” (v. 18). After the Romans forced Antiochus to withdraw to his home territory, he was killed at Elymais in 187 B.C., fulfilling Daniel 11,19b.⁸

Rome (11,20-45): Republican (v. 20), Imperial (vv. 21-22) and Papal (vv. 23-45).

Republican and Imperial Rome (11,20-22)

Daniel 11,20 and 21 both begin with the words וְעָמַד עַל־כִּנּוּ, “Then there shall arise in his position...” (my translation), i.e., the position of the king of the north whose reign has ended in verse 19.⁹ The words “in his position” indicate a kind of succession. However, here this is not qualified as intradynastic succession as in verse 7, where a transition within the dynasty of the king of the south is described (see above). This difference suggests that verses 20 and 21 may signal two larger transitions that transfer the position and therefore the territory of the king of the north from one dynasty/kingdom/power to another, first from the king of the north in verse 19 to another power in verse 20 and then to a third power in verse 21. This possibility is confirmed, at least with regard to the second transition, by the fact that in verse 21, the despised one who seizes the kingdom by intrigue (smoothness/slipperiness) has not had royal majesty conferred on him. That is, he is a usurper, rather than a legitimate successor within a dynasty.

Thus Daniel 11,20 and 21 appear to indicate transitions of the designation “king of the north”, which we now know refers to the Seleucid

⁸ With Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 225; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 298; Collins, *Daniel*, 381; Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, 346. Against Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 252; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 4:870; Maxwell, *God Cares*, 293; Shea, *Daniel*, 248; and Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 419, who are off target when they interpret “stumble and fall” in 11,19 as the assassination of Julius Caesar in Rome in 44 B.C.

⁹ For the meaning of כִּנּוּ as “place” in the sense of “position” or “office”, cf. Gen 40,13; 41,13.

dynasty, to another dynasty/kingdom (v. 20) and then to another power (v. 21). A key to identifying the power in verse 21 is found in the next verse (v. 22), which continues the activities of this ruler or dynasty: “Armies shall be utterly swept away and broken before him, and the prince of the covenant [נְגִיד בְּרִית] as well” (NRSV). The only covenant (בְּרִית) otherwise mentioned in Daniel 11 is “the holy covenant” that the king of the north opposes (vv. 28.30). This is a covenant with the true God, as shown by the contrast in verse 32: “Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits” (NKJV). Therefore, “the prince of the covenant” must be a good person, a leader of the true divine-human covenant.

This individual was already introduced in Daniel 9 as “an anointed one, a prince” (מְשִׁיחַ נְגִיד, v. 25). This anointed one (מְשִׁיחַ), i.e., Messiah, would “be cut off” and “have nothing” (v. 26a), after which another prince (also נְגִיד) would come and “destroy the city and the sanctuary” with overwhelming military power (vv. 26b, 27b). Then, referring to the anointed/messianic prince (נְגִיד), “he shall make a strong covenant (בְּרִית) with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering” (v. 27). Therefore, this individual can aptly be termed “the prince of the covenant” (נְגִיד בְּרִית) in 11,22.

Daniel 9,25 further identifies the messianic prince in terms of the timing of his arrival: $7 + 62 = 69$ “weeks” from the word/decreed to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The Hebrew word for “weeks” (plural of שָׁבוּעַ) can refer to weeks of days or of years, and only weeks of years suits this context because the events prophesied here obviously would occur over a much longer period than $7 + 62 = 69$ weeks of days, which is 483 days, about 1.3 years.¹⁰

The going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem, which refers to restoring the city to control by the Jews after the Babylonian exile so that they could

¹⁰ Cf. Ludwig Kochler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. and ed. under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson; 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 2:1383-4, which places the instances in Dan 9,24-27 under the meaning, “a week of years, a period of seven years”.

rebuild it, occurred in 457 B.C. when the decree of Artaxerxes I went into effect in the seventh year (458-457 B.C.) of his reign (Ezra 7). Sixty-nine weeks of years = 483 years after that, Christ was baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:21-22; cf. 4:18; Acts 10:37-38) in “the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar” (Luke 3:1), i.e., in about A.D. 27.

During his ministry on earth, followed by initiation of his priestly ministry in God’s heavenly temple (Heb 7-10), Christ established the “new covenant” (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; Heb 8:6-13; 9:15; 12:24; cf. Jer 31:31-34). So he fits the profile of “the prince of the covenant” in Dan 11:22, who was “broken”, i.e., died, during the time of domination by imperial Rome, before which armies were “utterly swept away”. This parallels 9:26-27, where the “anointed one” (*māšīah*) = Messiah, i.e., Christ, makes a covenant to be strong for many and is “cut off”, and Jerusalem and its temple are destroyed. Therefore, following the Hellenistic kingdoms in 11:5-19, vv. 20-22 transition to the period of imperial Rome.¹¹

Identification of “the prince of the covenant” in Daniel 11,22 with Christ during the time of imperial Rome constitutes a crucial anchor point for interpreting Daniel 11.¹² For one thing, this means that the despised usurper in verse 21 to whom the pronoun “him” in verse 22 refers introduces imperial Rome. This indicates that verse 20 refers to another power between Antiochus III (v. 19) and imperial Rome (v. 21). What could this be? History shows that the imperial phase of Rome began with usurpation of rule by the Roman senate of the Roman republic by Julius Caesar. So the “one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom” is likely the Roman senate. This idea is reinforced by the fact that the “commander” who stopped Antiochus III in verse 18 (see above) led an army of republican Rome.

¹¹ Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3”, 311-312, and cf. sources cited there in footnotes. “Since Daniel 9:26, 27 and 11:22 obviously refer to the crucifixion of Christ under the Romans, the Roman Empire must enter the stage of history sometime prior to Daniel 11:22.” Gerhard Pfandl, *Daniel: The Seer of Babylon* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2004), 107.

¹² On this and other anchor points in Dan 11, including vv. 31,32-34, see on “Relations Between Daniel 11 and Daniel 7, 8, and 9” in William H. Shea, “Unity of Daniel”. In *Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies*, ed. by Frank B. Holbrook; Daniel and Revelation Committee Series 2 (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 245-247.

Notice that Daniel 11 introduces Rome as defeating a king (Antiochus III) of the previous power (the Seleucid dynasty) who was trying to expand his realm (v. 18; *cf.* v. 19). Then the text skips all the remaining Seleucid rulers, including the infamous Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 175-164 B.C.), moving immediately to Rome as the power that replaced the Seleucids (v. 20). We saw the same pattern at the beginning of the chapter, where a fourth Persian king attempts to expand his empire by conquering Greece (v. 2) and the next verse skips the remaining Persian monarchs and moves to Alexander the Great.

Papal Rome (11,23-45)

Going back to the historical framework provided by Daniel 8, a “little horn” replaces the four Greek kingdoms (vv. 8-9) “at the latter end of their kingdom” (v. 23). Daniel describes this “little horn” as growing “exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land” (v. 9). Earlier in the same vision, Daniel saw a “ram charging westward and northward and southward” (v. 4), which shows that it came from the east, as did Medo-Persia, which the ram represents (v. 20).¹³ So the directions to which the “little horn” expanded (south and east) indicate that it came from the northwest, which fits the location of Rome. Indeed, republican Rome, which was superseded by imperial Rome, did conquer from Italy toward the south and east and toward “the glorious land”, i.e., the land of Israel.¹⁴

Thus far, all of the powers in Daniel 8 have expanded in horizontal directions because they are political (including military) powers. In verses 10-12 (*cf.* v. 13), however, the “little horn” also grows vertically up to the

¹³ The goat representing Greece came from the west (vv. 5.21), also in harmony with geographic reality.

¹⁴ *Cf.*, e.g., Shea, *Daniel*, 178. Stefanovic comments on “toward the south and toward the east and toward the Beautiful Land” in 8,9: “From Daniel’s point of reference in the vision, Palestine was located in the west. That means that the little horn most likely came from the north, because the direction left out in this verse is the north”. However, the directions are not from Daniel’s location in Susa in the Babylonian province of Elam (8:2), just east of Mesopotamia, at the time of the vision, but from the point of origin of the new power, in this case, Rome in Italy, just as the ram charged “westward and northward and southward” from its original territory in Persia, to the east of Elam.

“host of heaven”, makes himself to be as great as the “prince of the host”, takes away “that which is regular”, which apparently refers to regular worship belonging to the prince of the host, and the place of the sanctuary of the prince of the host is cast down, and the “little horn” throws truth to the ground (*cf.* interpretation in vv. 23-25). This is clearly a religious power,¹⁵ but the fact that the “little horn” destroys “holy people” (v. 24b; *cf.* vv. 10.13) indicates that it is also a political power possessing coercive force, although “not by his own power” (v. 24a). This profile matches the papacy, which we have found to be the “little horn” in Daniel 7 and the “king of the north” in part of Daniel 11, at least in verses 31-37.

Whereas Daniel 7 represents the political and political-religious phases of Rome by two different symbols—the fourth beast and the “little horn”—to show the distinction between them, Daniel 8 represents both phases by the same “little horn” symbol to show the continuity between them.¹⁶ These representations are not contradictory, but complementary and historically accurate because the religious-political power of papal Rome did arise from imperial Rome but was also distinct from it. Because Daniel 11 expands on Daniel 8, with the literal “king of the north” designation in place of the “little horn” symbol, it is likely at the outset that Daniel 11 emphasizes continuity between the imperial and papal phases of Rome.

This continuity in Daniel 11 is confirmed by the fact that the pronouns referring to the despised usurper in verse 21, which is identified as imperial Rome (see above) continue all the way to the end of the chapter (v. 45) through the portion that predicts activities of papal Rome (vv. 31-37; see above). This raises the question of where the transition from imperial to papal Rome appears in the text. The breaking of “the prince of the covenant” = Christ in verse 22 indicates imperial Rome to this point, but the profile in the next verse does not fit imperial Rome: “And, from the time an alliance is made with him, he will practice deceit; and he will rise

¹⁵ On the transition from horizontal, earthly directions representing territorial conquests in the first part of Dan 8 through v. 9 to the vertical, religious dimension introduced in vv. 10-12, *cf.* Shea, “Unity of Daniel”, 193-194; *ibid.*, *Daniel*, 178-179.

¹⁶ With Shea, “Unity of Daniel”, 189-190.

to power with a small band” (v. 23 NJPS). Imperial Rome was already an overwhelming power with a large number of people before Christ died (*cf.* v. 22a) and it needed no alliance or deceit in order to rise to power. This verse indicates the rise of a new power in a way that fits the rise of the papacy: The church of Rome grew from a position of smallness and weakness,¹⁷ gained its power through “an alliance” with imperial Rome and subsequently acted “deceitfully” by, among other things, mixing paganism with Christianity for political advantage.

Papal wars against Islam = Crusades (11,25-30a)

The papal king of the north also aroused “his power and his heart against the king of the south with a great army” (v. 25). Here we see the reemergence of the king of the south, who was last seen when Ptolemaic Egypt was defeated by the Seleucid king of the north in verses 15-16 (named in v. 14). What happened to the king of the south, i.e., the ruler/dynasty of the territory of Egypt, between the Ptolemaic period and the reign of the papacy? Ptolemaic Egypt, i.e., greater Egypt, was absorbed into Rome, the king of the north, just after the death of Cleopatra VII in 30 B.C. This was 160 years after the defeat that the Romans inflicted on Antiochus III at Magnesia (190 B.C.; see v. 18), portending the eventual transition of power.

The Romans, including the eastern Roman Byzantine Empire, ruled Egypt from 30 B.C. to A.D. 641, except for a brief period of control by the Sasanian Empire from A.D. 619-629. Muslim forces conquered Egypt in A.D. 641, removing it from Roman/Byzantine rule so that it again became a separate country with its own “king of the south”, and the country has remained Muslim until the present time. So the “king of the south” attacked by Rome during the period of the papacy (Dan 11,25) must be Islamic. Egypt is only part of Islamic territory, which came to include all of north Africa and most of the Middle East, as well as a number of other countries in various directions. Compare the fact that Rome itself is only part of the territory controlled by Rome.

¹⁷ *Cf.* Maxwell, 293.

Daniel 11,25-30 predicts a series of major conflicts between the (northern, more precisely, northwestern) papacy and (southern, more precisely, southeastern) Islamic religious-political power from a number of middle eastern countries, which were matched in history by the Crusades.¹⁸ As prophesied in verse 25, a king of the north initiated the conflict: Pope Urban II called on the countries of “Christendom”, i.e., the Christian nations of Europe, to launch the first crusade in A.D. 1095. The issue was access to and control of pilgrim sites in what had been the land of Israel. In Daniel 11, conflict between the two powers continues to the beginning of verse 30, where the king of the north turns back after failing to subdue the king of the south.

Papal religious activities (11,30b-39)

After failing to overcome the king of the south, the king of the north turns back to his own territory and carries out actions with religious significance against “the holy covenant” (v. 30), including changing worship (v. 31), persecuting God’s faithful people (vv. 32-35) and exalting himself above every deity and speaking blasphemy against “the God of gods”, i.e., the true God (vv. 36-37; cf. vv. 38-39). Before this, the power in the king of the north position is depicted simply as a political (including military) power (vv. 21-30), but in verses 30-39 he appears as a religious-political power.

Daniel 12,7 confirms the identity of the king of the north at this point in Daniel 11. In answer to the question regarding the timing of “the end of these wondrous events” (12,6 NET Bible), i.e., the events predicted in 11,2-12,3, Daniel is first told that there would be “a time, times, and half a time”¹⁹ to the end of the “shattering” (persecution) of “the holy people” (Dan 12,7). The fact that harassment and persecution of God’s holy people, which is perpetrated by the “king of the north” in 11,32-35 before “the time of the end” (v. 40), lasts 3½ times identifies this period with the time when the “little horn” power persecutes “the holy ones of the Most

¹⁸ As seen by Maxwell, 293-295 and Shea, who also includes Dan 11,23-24 in the Crusades (*Daniel*, 253-9), but the king of the north does not attack the king of the south until v. 25.

¹⁹ Rev 12,6.14 equates this period with 1,260 days.

High” in 7,25. Therefore, the blasphemous king of the north (*cf.* 11,36-37), whose religious-political activities come to dominate the world stage in the latter part of 11,2-12,3, is the same as the blasphemous “little horn” (*cf.* 7,8, 11.20.25), which is papal Rome.²⁰

Now there appears to be a chronological problem. The events in the first part of Daniel 11 occur in chronological order, but if verses 25-30 concern the Crusades, these began centuries after the papacy gained dominance and established its worship system, as predicted by verse 31, where forces from the king of the north replace that which is regular (worship) with “the abomination that makes desolate”. This is the replacement that marks the beginning of the 1,290 days in 12,11.²¹ However, the 1,290 days (plural of יום) provides a clue. This cannot be 1,290 literal days, which is about 3.5 literal years, not nearly enough time until “the end of these wonders” (12,6). So here the plural of יום, “day”, must have the meaning that appears several times elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible: “years” (e.g., Judg 17,10; 1 Sam 1,21; 27,7).²² Therefore, the worship replacement by the papacy began a very long period of 1,290 years. While this period commenced before the Crusades, it continued until the time after the Crusades, as did the persecution predicted in 11,32-35 (*cf.* 12,7) and the blasphemous self-exaltation described in 11,36-37.

²⁰ Daniel 2, 7, 8 and 11 present parallel sweeps of history from the time of the prophet to the establishment of God’s eternal kingdom. In these prophecies, the first of four great successive kingdoms is Neo-Babylonia (*cf.* 2,37-38), which is followed by Medo-Persia (8,20; 11,2) and then Greece (8,21), which Daniel explicitly names. Daniel does not name the fourth kingdom. However, it is common historical knowledge that Greece was followed by mighty Rome, which fits the profile in 7,7.19.23, from which emerged the religious-political power of papal Rome, which matches the profile of the “little horn” in 7,8.20-21.24-25, which is paralleled by the profile of the king of the north at least in 11,32-37.

²¹ Therefore, the time periods in Dan 12 do not cover the full duration of the history covered in 11,2-12,3, but begin with the king of the north. The fact that this event is mentioned in Dan 11,31 just before the king of the north begins to carry out persecution (vv. 32-35), which lasts 3½ times (= 1,260 days; Rev 12,6.14), implies that the two periods of 3½ times and 1,290 days overlap. The language of Dan 12,12—“Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days” indicates that this period overlaps and extends beyond the other two periods.

²² Roy E. Gane, *Who’s Afraid of the Judgment? The Good News About Christ’s Work in the Heavenly Sanctuary* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2006), 69.

Therefore, although the sequence of successive powers in Daniel 11 is chronological, some arrangement in the long section on the papal period (vv. 23-39) is thematic, beginning with the political rise of the papacy (vv. 23-24) and its political-military wars against Islamic power (vv. 25-30), followed by its religious-political elements throughout its period of dominance (vv. 31-39). Thus, Daniel 11 follows the pattern set in Daniel 8 by describing political-military aspects and activities of (Medo-) Persia, Greece and Rome (11,2-30; *cf.* 8,3-9.20-22) before introducing the religious-political aspects of papal Rome (11,31-39; *cf.* 8,10-13.23-25).

Daniel 11,30 provides a seamless transition from the outline of the Crusades (vv. 25-30), which the papacy ultimately lost, to the account of its religious-political supremacy over its own territory (so-called “Christendom”) in the following verses (vv. 31-39). Verse 30 says that after withdrawing from warfare against the south, the king of the north “shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant”. This introduces religious activity of the papacy in the aftermath of the Crusades. The next verse (v. 31) begins: “Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress...” (NASB 1995). This appears to be the next event, but the Hebrew disjunctive syntax at the beginning of this verse (conjunction ׀ followed by noun, not verb) allows for the possibility that it records chronologically earlier background information, the results of which continue.²³

²³ “Interclausal *waw* before a non-verb constituent has a disjunctive role. There are two common types of disjunction. One type involves a continuity of scene and participants, but a change of action, while the other is used where the scene or participants shift...the disjunction may come at the beginning or end of a larger episode or it may ‘interrupt’ one. The ‘interruptive’ use, better called explanatory or parenthetical, ‘break[s] into the main narrative to supply information relevant to or necessary for the narrative’”. Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 650-651; 39.2.3, citing Ruth 4,6-8 as an example and referring to Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 164, which cites 1 Sam 1,9; Gen 29,16; *cf.* Gen 13,7. The verbs in Dan 11,31 are imperfect and perfect consecutive, indicating future time, which makes sense because the whole prophecy is a prediction, although v. 31 could have a beginning point that is chronologically earlier than the end of the Crusades in v. 30.

Papal war against Islam (11,40-43)

Daniel 11,40 introduces the final episode of the career of the king of the north, which begins with renewed conflict with the king of the south in (“at” or “during”) the time of the end. Here both of these kings are explicitly labelled as “king of the south” and “king of the north”.

This time the situation in verses 25-30 is reversed. There the king of the north failed after having initiated hostilities against the king of the south. Here at the end of the chapter, the king of the south initiates hostilities by engaging in warfare (goring/thrusting, i.e., aggressive military action) with “him” (v. 40). Use of the pronoun “him” in the first clause of verse 40, with the king of the north in the previous verses as the antecedent, shows that this power remains the same, i.e., the religious-political papacy with allied nations under its influence, which earlier fought the Crusades by means of Christian political-military allies under its influence.²⁴ However, this time the papal king of the north prevails and conquers the territory of the king of the south (*cf.* vv. 41-43).

So, who is the king of the south who once again reemerges here in 11,40? When the king of the south reemerged earlier in verse 25, it had changed from Ptolemaic Egypt to Islamic power. So, could it be something else in verse 40?

The change from Ptolemaic Egypt to Islam was due to the Muslim conquest of Egypt. This accords with the fact that throughout Daniel 11, one power supersedes another only through military conquest or political succession. Greece conquers Persia, republican Rome becomes the king of the north by taking over Seleucid Syria, imperial Rome takes the place of republican Rome, and papal Rome replaces imperial Rome. So, what power has superseded Islam in Egypt and the countries named along with it in Daniel 11,41-43 as parts of the territory of the king of the south (areas of ancient Edom, Moab, Ammon, Libya, and Cush)? The answer is none, just as no power has superseded papal Rome. Papal Rome tried to defeat Islamic power during the Crusades, but failed (*cf.* v. 30a), so Islamic power continued. If Daniel 11,25-30 predicts the Crusades between

²⁴ *Cf.* the end-time “Babylon” alliance in Rev 16-18.

the papacy and Islamic power, the former remains the king of the north and the latter the king of the south in verses 40-43 during the “time off the end”, which is the time in which we are living because the long period of papal persecution predicted in Daniel 12,7 is over.²⁵

The two competing state religions that harness destructive political-power developed differently from Abrahamic faith to threaten biblical trinitarian Christianity from opposing sides. Islam’s anti-trinitarian view of monotheism excludes the divinity of Christ as the Son of God. The papacy goes beyond trinitarianism to virtual polytheism, with some humans regarded as heavenly intercessors worthy of veneration.

Papal religious activities (11,44-45)

In Daniel 11,44-45 the papal king of the north is prevented from enjoying his victory over the Islamic king of the south in peace because he is alarmed by “news from the east and the north” and is provoked to go out with the intent to destroy many people and devote them to destruction in what he regards as holy war (*Hiphil* of חרם, *cf.*, e.g., Deut 7,2; 20,17). In the process of his campaign, “He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain” (Dan 11,45 NASB 1995). This refers to the location of headquarters that he sets up.

The “beautiful/glorious holy mountain”, which must be in the beautiful land (Dan 11,16, 41), can only be Jerusalem/Zion (*cf.* Isa 66,20; Joel 2,1; 3,17 [Heb 4,17]) or, more specifically, the temple mount in Jerusalem (*cf.* Isa 27,13; 56,7). The references to holy war and the holy temple mount indicate religiously motivated activity, as in verses 30-35, when the king of the north turned back after losing to the king of the south. Verse 45a does not say that he takes “the beautiful Holy Mountain”, but it appears that he may intend to do so in order to carry out what he did earlier in verse 36: “He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god”. However, he mysteriously meets his demise (verse 45b), with no indication that he is destroyed by defeat from a stronger human military power.

²⁵ On the expression “time of the end”, see Pfandl, *Daniel: The Seer of Babylon*, 107.

The fact that Daniel 11,45 refers to the temple mount in Jerusalem does not support futurist dispensationalism, according to which God has a covenant plan for literal Jerusalem long after Christ's death and the opening of his "new covenant" to the Gentiles. This verse refers to the papacy's plan, not God's plan. Just as the papacy, with its allies, wanted control of Jerusalem during the Crusades, it will again seek to control what it regards as a "holy city" in order to advance its agenda of total religious domination. No doubt verse 45 refers to the mountain of/in Jerusalem as holy in order to identify the location to Daniel, who prayed toward Jerusalem three times a day (6,10). The possibility that in some contexts Jerusalem can be a literal geographic referent in an eschatological prophecy is supported by Zechariah 14,4, where the Lord "shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two...", which Ellen G. White interprets as taking place at the literal Mount of Olives 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..."²⁶

"Michael" arises, with transition to God's kingdom (12,1-3)

Daniel 12,1-3 predicts that at the time when the career of the king of the north comes to an end, Michael would arise and there would be an unprecedented time of trouble, but Daniel's people whose names are "written in the book" would be delivered and there would be a resurrection from the dead, "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (v. 2). The fact that Michael is "the great prince who has charge of your [Daniel's] people" (v. 1) and that he has helped the powerful heavenly being who speaks to Daniel (10,13; 10,21) indicates that he is also a heavenly being who is on the side of the true God and guards Daniel's people, i.e., people who are faithful to God and are delivered, and those of whom are dead rise are raised to everlasting life. This class of people corresponds to the earlier "people who know their

²⁶ 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), 662-663.

God”, who do not “violate the covenant” (11,32) and “the wise among the people” who “shall make many understand” (v. 33; *cf.* 12,3—“those who are wise... who turn many to righteousness”), whom the king of the north persecuted (11,32-35).

Therefore, the papal king of the north and Michael with Daniel’s people are on opposing sides. This suggests that the final religious war of the papacy (11,44) is directed against God’s true people, who are spared when Michael arises, and then the king of the north comes to an end. If so, it appears that heavenly power terminates the king of the north, as implied by 8,25 regarding the “little horn” power: “and he shall be broken—but by no human hand” (ESV, supplying “human”). Similarly, the “little horn” in Daniel 7 is destroyed after it is condemned by the heavenly court (vv. 9-11.26).²⁷

In Daniel 12,2-3, the resurrection is the final event in the cosmic drama, so it coincides with the commencement of God’s eternal kingdom, which Daniel also predicts in 2,44-45 and 7,27. 1 Thessalonians 4,13-18 agrees: the resurrection of God’s faithful people will take place at Christ’s Second Coming.

Conclusion

Close reading of the text of Daniel 11,2-12,3 within its context in the Book of Daniel has shown that this discourse unit predicts a succession of human political powers that affect the lives of Daniel’s people, that is, the people who remain faithful to God, from the time of Daniel to the commencement of God’s eternal kingdom. Now we can identify the historical powers in this succession as follows (table 2):

²⁷ *Cf.* 2 Thess 2:8, regarding the “lawless one”, whom “the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming”.

Table 2. Historical succession of human political powers in Daniel 11,2-12,3

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

The following table shows differentiation between northern and southern kingdoms or combinations of the two (table 3):

Table 3. Differentiation/combination between the northern and the southern kingdoms/dynasties

Reference	Kingdom/Dynasty	
11,2	Persia	
11,3-19	Greece: Alexander and four divisions	
	North	South
11,5-19	Seleucid Syria	Ptolemaic Egypt
11,20	Rome: Republican	
11,21-22	Rome: Imperial	
11,23-45	Rome: Papal	(Byzantine Empire)
11,25-30a		Islam
11,30b-39		
11,40-43		
11,44-45		
12,1-3	Transition to God's kingdom, with resurrection	

In some cases, there are gaps in the successions of rulers where the text jumps to the next power when it is introduced as successfully clashing with the earlier power (11:2-3, 18, 20).²⁸ The terms “king of the north” and “king of the south” refer to positions that are occupied by successive individuals within dynasties, beginning with the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Hellenistic kingdoms and continuing with the geographic progression of powers that have conquered or superseded these northern and southern kingdoms.

As in Daniel 8, Rome begins as a political power and later becomes the religious-political papacy. If 11:25-30 refers to the Crusades fought by the papacy with its allies, the king of the south is Islamic power here. Therefore, the king of the south in verses 40-43 is also Islamic power because it has never been conquered or superseded into the “time of the end” and there are no signs that it will be, just as the papacy has continued.

The interpretation presented here rules out several alternative approaches to Daniel 11,2-12,3 or parts of it.

First, the view that Daniel 11,5 already introduces papal Rome²⁹ overlooks the fact that the designations “king of the south” and “king of the north” logically follow the divisions of Alexander’s empire to the four winds = directions, and too many details in verses 5-19 closely match the

²⁸ William H. Shea points out “a basic principle for interpreting Daniel’s apocalyptic prophecy. That principle is this: it is only necessary to continue with one kingdom, or line of kings, until the new one of importance is introduced on the scene of action”. *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, Daniel and Revelation Committee 1; ed. by F. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 41.

²⁹ Jacques Doukhan interprets the words at the end of v. 4—“his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these” as “given to Rome”. *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, revised ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 78-79; cf. *ibid.*, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 168. Because Doukhan places pagan Rome at the end of v. 4 and regards v. 5 as indicating “a new step in both form and substance” (*Daniel*, 79), he interprets vv. 5-39 in a spiritual, rather than literal, sense (skipping all of the Ptolemies and Seleucids) as paralleling 8,23-25 to cover the period of papal Rome = the “little horn” (*ibid.*, 79-80, 87-89; *Secrets of Daniel*, 169-175). For him, “allusions to the north and south become abstract and metaphorical... On the one hand, we have the north representing religious power striving to usurp God, while on the other, we have the south standing for human endeavors that reject God and have faith in humanity alone”. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 172-173.

period of Ptolemaic Egypt versus Seleucid Syria.³⁰ Furthermore, the idea that papal Rome already begins in verse 5 ignores the parallel between 11,22 (breaking of the prince of the covenant = the death of Christ) and 9,25-27, clearly still in the time of pagan rather than papal Rome.

Second, preterists regard most of Daniel 11 (usually to v. 40) as *ex eventu* prophecy (history purporting to be prophecy) and believe that the despised usurper in 11,21 is Antiochus IV Epiphanes,³¹ although he was not really a usurper.³² They view most of the remainder of Daniel 11 as describing events during the reign of this Seleucid ruler.³³ They miss the clear indications of Christ as the “prince of the covenant” in verse 22, referring to 9,25-27, during the period of the usurper, taking this to be the Jewish high priest Onias III, who was murdered in about 171 B.C. during the reign of Antiochus IV (2 Macc 4).³⁴ But the death of Onias was not after 69 weeks of years following the word/decreed to restore and build Jerusalem (Dan 9,25-26), and Onias did not make a strong covenant with many (v. 27).³⁵

Third, Uriah Smith identified the “king of the north” in Daniel 11,40-45 as literal Turkey, which ruled the territory controlled in ancient times by the Seleucid kings of the north, in opposition to literal Egypt as the king of the south.³⁶ Smith overlooked the continuity from the papacy, as indicated by the pronoun “him” in verse 40, which has the papal king of the north in the previous verses (clearly identified in v. 31, compared with

³⁰ See Appendix I.

³¹ E.g., Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 226; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 299; Collins, *Daniel*, 382; Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, 346-7.

³² Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a son of Antiochus III who succeeded to the throne in a dynastic succession at a time of difficulty for his royal family after the murder of his brother Seleucus IV.

³³ E.g., Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 226-233; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 299-305; Collins, *Daniel*, 382-390; Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, 347-359.

³⁴ E.g., Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 196, 226; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 263, 299; Collins, *Daniel*, 356, 382; Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, 306-7, 347.

³⁵ Newsom admits that even in the flow of events during the reign of Antiochus IV, the reference in Dan 11,22 to the “prince of the covenant” being swept away “is somewhat intrusive and chronologically out of place” (347; cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 382).

³⁶ Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 289-299.

8,11-13) as its antecedent. Smith also missed the facts that Turkey has never succeeded in conquering or otherwise superseding the papacy, and the terms “king of the north” and “king of the south” in Daniel 11 move geographically as powers designated by these terms are politically superseded by other powers. Thus, while the Seleucids and Ptolemies were north and south of the land of Israel, Rome to the northwest has taken the place of the king of the north, and Islamic power includes not only Egypt and other parts of north Africa to the south,³⁷ but also most of the Middle East to the north of Egypt³⁸ and east of Rome, including Turkey.

Fourth, a number of Seventh-day Adventists maintain that the king of the south in Daniel 11,40-43 is atheism and/or secularism, which opposes papal Christianity, the king of the north, as atheism did during the French Revolution (*cf.* Rev 11,7-10) and in more recent times in the context of communism and western secularism. Thus, this view holds that the final victory by the king of the north over the king of the south involves the triumph of the papacy over atheism/secularism.³⁹

Several supports are adduced in support of the atheism/secularism approach, all of which are off target because they ignore plain indicators in Daniel 11, picking and choosing textual factors that they wish to acknowledge and eisegeting external elements into the text. These supports include:

³⁷ Including Libya and Cush (11:43). Cush is an ancient term for modern Sudan. Anson F. Rainey and R. Steven Notley, *The Sacred Bridge: Carta's Atlas of the Biblical World*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Carta, 2014), 27).

³⁸ Including Edom, Moab and Ammon in the territory of modern Jordan (v. 41).

³⁹ For example: “In Daniel 11 the prophecy points to a time thousands of years later than his own day when the king of the north does much more than carry Israel’s sacred treasures to Egypt, a name that here stands for secular and philosophical powers that deny God (see Rev. 11:8). For he now wields power over rulers in the secular, atheist domain at the same time that he practices his grand spiritual pretense”. Jacques Doukhan, “Final Deception”, *Adventist Review* 195, no. 8 (August, 2018), 39. “Traditionally staunch enemies, the Roman Catholic Church, king of the north, and the secular state power, king of the south, are coming into closer and closer alignment” (*ibid.*, 41). It is unclear how “coming into closer and closer alignment” constitutes definitive victory, even spiritual/religious victory, after conflict, as predicted in Dan 11,40-43, and this interpretation appears to be influenced by current events.

1. Illegitimate totality transfer (a kind of eisegesis) of symbolic “Egypt” in Revelation 11,8 (referring to a city, not a country, also called “Sodom” and “where their Lord was crucified”) into the end of Daniel 11 to identify the king of the south (Egypt) as atheism.⁴⁰
2. Premature intertextual comparison (another kind of eisegesis) claiming that the Israelite exodus from Egypt serves as the background to the end of Daniel 11, and therefore reading elements of the exodus narrative into symbolic interpretation of Daniel 11 while ignoring important indicators in the text of Daniel 11 itself that should be considered before any intertextual comparison is made.⁴¹
3. Imposing on the text the idea (a further kind of eisegesis) that after the cross event, an Old Testament apocalyptic prophecy involving Israel, or terms referring to it, can only be symbolic, referring to spiritual “Israel”.⁴²

⁴⁰ For example, Doukhan, “Final Deception”, 39 (see above).

⁴¹ For example, Ángel M. Rodríguez, pamphlet *Daniel 11 and the Islam Interpretation*, Biblical Research Institute Release 13 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015), 8-17.

⁴² “The Christological qualification of the name Israel has superseded all former religious-national boundaries and ethnic limitations (Eph 2:14-16). This has inevitable repercussions on the traditional territorial promises regarding the Middle East. Rather than being made void, however, these territorial promises are extended world-wide (Mt 5:5; Rom 4:13) so that the old limited boundaries and restrictions are eliminated, in harmony with the Christological meaning of the terms embracing Israel and Judah. From this point of view, since the cross of Christ and Pentecost, there is theologically no longer a holy land, city, or mountain on earth (Jn 4:21; Mt 23:38)”. 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), 231.

“All those OT prophecies that apply to the time after the cross of Christ—that is, to eschatological time—will find their fulfillment solely in and through Christ and His covenant people as the true Israel of God and in their avowed enemies” (ibid., 236). It is true that members of spiritual “Israel” are the people of God in the Christian era (e.g. Rev 7:4; cf. Daniel’s people in Dan 12,1) and LaRondelle is right that during this period there is no longer any theological role for the literal land of Israel as having a special spiritual/religious place in God’s plan. However, the “primary concern for ‘spiritual Israel’ as the Christian church in apocalyptic prophecy referring to events after the cross does not mean that we should overreact against futurist dispensationalism by holding that such events must always be symbolic and cannot in any context involve the literal land of Israel. Context is king in exegesis of any text, biblical or otherwise, so a strong pattern observed in many passages does not rule out the possibility of exceptions in some other contexts”. Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3”, 326.

It is true that atheistic power has weakened the papacy, but it is another threat that is predicted in Daniel 11,40-43. The atheism/secularism view of the king of the south fails because no such philosophy or any other has ever conquered or superseded (militarily, ideologically, or in any other way) and thereby replaced Islam, which is the king of the south in Daniel 11,25-30 during the Crusades. Also, there is no indication of a shift in sub-genre from literal to symbolic in the Daniel 11,2-12,3 discourse unit. The latter half of Daniel 11 after verse 22, which records the death of Christ, is full of literal language, including some military language.⁴³ This cannot be coherently construed as symbolic vision language, which it is not; it is interpretative language. This language, with some idioms/metaphors, continues unabated into verses 40-43. If verses 25-30 predict the Crusades, which were fought over literal Jerusalem in the literal land of Israel, verses 40-43 also involve literal Israel.

In Daniel 11 the interpretation of cosmic conflict involving interaction between human and superhuman beings who are faithful to God and those who are not (as indicated by Dan 10) necessarily includes some spiritual elements, such as “the prince of the covenant” in verse 22, true and false worship by people who are faithful to God (i.e., true Christians) or opposed to him in verses 30-35, the blasphemy of the king of the north in verses 36-39, “Michael” and “the book” in 12,1, and the resurrection in 12,2. But the text refers to these spiritual entities or actions in literal descriptive terms, not in symbolic language such as head of gold = Babylon in Daniel 2; bear = Medo-Persia in Daniel 7; or goat = Greece in Daniel 8. In Daniel 11 there is no dichotomy between what is “literal” and what is “spiritual”, and the fact that spiritual elements are included does not justify spiritualizing most of the chapter.⁴⁴

⁴³ Cf. the non-symbolic reference to Roman military activity after the death of Christ in Dan 9,26. The “flood” metaphor emphasizes overwhelming military force that destroys “the city and the sanctuary”, but other terms are literal (“destroy”, “city”, “sanctuary”, “war”).

⁴⁴ As Doukhan does (see above); cf. his presentation on Dan 11, “Afternoon Program with Dr. Jacques B Doukhan”, YouTube video (May 7, 2016), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScdL6mPQTcE>.

Understanding Daniel 11 shows in a marvelous way the detail to which God's prophecies to Daniel have been fulfilled in history through particular individuals and events. This confirms that Jesus is "the prince of the covenant" (v. 22) because he appeared in precisely the predicted historical context during Roman imperial rule, following a detailed outline of the preceding Hellenistic period that foreshadows later north-south conflicts. By tracing the cosmic conflict through the Dark Ages of religious oppression down to the "time of the end" (v. 40), we can recognize the perilous and climactic period in which we are living and have assurance that God will soon deliver us and fulfill the remainder of his good promises. Even if we do not yet comprehend everything in Daniel 11, we can grasp enough to give us confidence that "the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will" (Dan 4,17.25; cf. 5,21).

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Appendix I

Table 1. Ptolemies versus Seleucids in Daniel 11,5-19

Daniel 11,5-19 (NASB 1995)	Historical Referent
<p>Dan 11,5. Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with [one] of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain [will be] a great dominion [indeed].</p>	<p>Ptolemy I Soter (322-285 B.C.) Seleucus I Nicator (312-280 B.C.)</p>
<p>Dan 11,6. After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in [those] times.</p>	<p>Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.), married to Antiochus II Theos (261-246 B.C.)</p>
<p>Dan 11,7. But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against [their] army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display [great] strength.</p>	<p>Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 B.C.), brother of Berenice</p>
<p>Dan 11,8. Also their gods with their metal images [and] their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from [attacking] the king of the North for [some] years.</p>	
<p>Dan 11:9. Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his [own] land.</p>	<p>Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226 B.C.)</p>

<p>Dan 11,10. His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his [very] fortress.</p>	<p>Seleucus III (226-223 B.C.) and Antiochus III the Great (223-187 B.C.)</p>
<p>Dan 11,11. The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but [that] multitude will be given into the hand of the [former].</p>	<p>Ptolemy IV (221-203 B.C.) Antiochus III (223-187 B.C.), cont.</p>
<p>Dan 11,12. When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail.</p>	
<p>Dan 11,13. For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont.</p>
<p>Dan 11,14. Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down.</p>	<p>Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203-181 B.C.) Jews</p>
<p>Dan 11,15. Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand [their ground], not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont.</p>
<p>Dan 11,16. But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will [be able to] withstand him; he will also stay [for a time] in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont. Palestine</p>

<p>Dan 11,17. He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand [for him] or be on his side.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont. Ptolemy V, cont., married to Cleopatra I, daughter of Antiochus III</p>
<p>Dan 11,18. Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont. Lucius Cornelius Scipio (Roman general; defeated Antiochus III 190 B.C.)</p>
<p>Dan 11,19. So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more.</p>	<p>Antiochus III, cont.</p>

Appendix II

There are several clear points of contact between Daniel 11 and the earlier prophecy in chapters 8-9 (with 9,24-27 as supplementary interpretation of chap. 8), including use of identical Hebrew terms (in bold below), as shown in the following table.⁴⁵ The translation is mostly ESV, with footnotes indicating ESV in selected places where I have given my own translation.

Table 1. Parallels between Daniel 8-9 and 11⁴⁶

Daniel 8-9	Daniel 11	Powers
8,20. As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia .	11,2. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia ...	Kings of (Medo-) Persia
8,8. Then the goat became exceedingly great... 8,21. And the goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king.	11,3. Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.	Greek king Alexander the Great
8,8. ... but when he was strong, the great horn was broken , and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven . 8,22. As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.	11,4. And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven , but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.	Four Greek kingdoms, divided from Alexander's empire

⁴⁵ On such "Relations Between Daniel 11 and Daniel 7, 8, and 9", see Shea, "Unity of Daniel", 245-247; cf. *ibid.*, *Daniel*, 239, 252-253; Maxwell, 295; Stefanovic, 396, 423.

⁴⁶ Adapted from Gane, "Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3", 306-310, followed by explanation in 310-315.

<p>9,25. ... from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks...</p> <p>9,26. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.</p> <p>9,27. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week...</p>	<p>11,22. Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, even the prince of the covenant.</p>	<p>Imperial Rome</p>
<p>8,25. By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great and in the midst of peace he shall destroy many.</p>	<p>11,23. And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a small people</p> <p>11,24. In the midst of peace.⁴⁷ He shall come into the richest parts of the province, and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time.</p>	<p>Papal Rome</p>

⁴⁷ Reading the first phrase of v. 24 as the end of the sentence in v. 23.

<p>8,11. It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And that which is regular⁴⁸ was taken away from him, and the place of his temple⁴⁹ was overthrown.</p> <p>8,12. And a host will be given rebelliously against that which is regular,⁵⁰ and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.</p> <p>8,13. Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, “For how long is the vision concerning that which is regular,⁵¹ the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?”</p>	<p>11,31. Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple, the fortress,⁵² and shall take away that which is regular.⁵³ And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.</p>	<p>Papal Rome, cont.</p>
<p>8,24. ... and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints.</p>	<p>11,33. And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder.</p>	<p>Papal Rome, cont.</p>

⁴⁸ ESV—“the regular burnt offering”. “Burnt offering” is not in the Hebrew.

⁴⁹ ESV—“sanctuary”.

⁵⁰ ESV—“And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression”.

⁵¹ ESV—“the regular burnt offering”.

⁵² With NJPS because the two nouns are in apposition without the conjunction supplied by ESV—“the temple and fortress”.

⁵³ ESV—“the regular burnt offering”.

<p>8,19. “Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end.</p> <p>8,24. His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does...</p> <p>8,25. ... and in his own mind he shall become great... And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes...</p>	<p>11,36. And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.</p>	<p>Papal Rome, cont.</p>
<p>8,19. “Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end.</p>	<p>11,40. At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind...</p>	<p>Papal Rome, cont., versus Islamic power</p>
<p>8,25. ... and he shall be broken—but by no human hand.</p>	<p>11,45. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.</p>	<p>Papal Rome, cont.</p>