

Statement No. 16
Phantomizing Daniel 11:40-45
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Statement: If a word in the Bible can be understood in its plain, literal sense and we choose to give to it or even add to it a figurative or spiritualized meaning for its primary biblical interpretation, by so doing, we phantomize the word.

Regarding the word *phantomize*, here is what Ellen White wrote in her book *The Great Controversy*:

“Concerning the popular system of interpreting, or *misinterpreting*, the Scriptures, Wolff wrote: ‘The greater part of the Christian church have swerved from the *plain sense of Scripture*, and have turned to the *phantomizing system of the Buddhists*, who believe that the future happiness of mankind will consist in moving about in the air, and suppose that when they are reading Jews they must understand Gentiles; *and when they read Jerusalem, they must understand the church; and if it is said earth, it means sky*; and for coming of the Lord they must understand the progress of the missionary societies; and going up to the mountain of the Lord’s house, signifies a grand class meeting of Methodists.’ --Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff, page 96”¹

The hermeneutical principle that is employed in this paper to identify the *king of the south* in Daniel 11:40 is most clearly stated in Rule #11 of William Miller’s Rules of Prophetic Interpretation—rules that were endorsed by Ellen White:²

“How to know when a word is used figuratively. *If it makes good sense as it stands*, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, *then it must be understood literally*; if not, figuratively. Rev 12: 1, 2; 17:3-7.”³

Rather than viewing a single word of this contested phrase *king of the south* figuratively, this document will, instead, present a plain, literal interpretation of this expression. You will see that it *can indeed* make **good plain sense** as it stands.

¹ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 360, emphasis added.

² EGW, *The Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884.

³ Joshua V. Himes, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology Selected From Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 22, emphasis added.

There are two time periods (approximately) in the Seventh-day Adventist Church where the majority embraced a specific hermeneutic regarding the interpretation Daniel 11:40-45:

1872 to 1949 = 77 years (SDA Church embraced a literal view hermeneutic).

1949 to 2019 = 70 years (SDA Church embraced a figurative view hermeneutic).

Just prior to that 77 year period of time, a ten-year (1862-1872) group-study was conducted by Uriah Smith of the books Revelation and Daniel at the Battle Creek Church. Smith's book, *Daniel and the Revelation*, represents the results of this thorough investigation. In this book we discover that the group-study's conclusion was that the entire chapter of Daniel 11 was to be interpreted literally and for the next 77 years this was the predominant view in our church.

Then in 1949 Raymond F. Cottrell published a paper⁴ that helped bring an end to the literal view of Daniel 11:40-45. Louis F. Were⁵ united with Cottrell in his understanding and today, the majority in our church views these verses figuratively.

The primary question that must first be answered at this Daniel 11 Prophecy Symposium is this: was there a reasonable, scriptural basis for this literal view that our church held for 77 years? In other words, can a sensible, literal interpretation be found in the historical records for the prophecies found in Daniel 11:40-44?

If we are absolutely certain that no events can be found in the historical records that even come close to fitting a literal view of these verses or, if we are certain that there is no possible scenario of future events that could ever fit a literal view of these verses, then there is only one option and that is to view them figuratively. But if we are not absolutely certain that only a figurative reading of the text would work and, furthermore, if events in the historical records can actually be found that perfectly match a literal reading of these prophecies, then, according to

⁴ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d9574e_300cb844e27840e9af1f18d4c559e6d7.pdf

⁵ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d9574e_16d92479026840a78c3c854c4301dbc1.pdf

Miler's 11th Rule of prophetic interpretation, we *must* view these last six verses literally. If we choose to view them figuratively we then would be guilty of *phantomizing* the text.

Ellen White's Rules of Interpretation

Here are two important rules from *The Great Controversy* that can inform us as to how we should understand the phrase *king of the south* in Daniel 11:40:

“Taking the manner in which the prophecies had been fulfilled in the past as a criterion by which to judge of the fulfillment of those which were still future...”⁶

Taking this sensible rule into consideration, we would want to see by whom the phrase *king of the south* was fulfilled in the past and use that as a criterion by which to judge how it should be fulfilled in verse 40. Here are the kings of Egypt who fulfilled this phrase in the past:⁷

- Verse 5: King of the South = Ptolemy I Soter
- Verse 9: King of the South = Ptolemy Euergetes
- Verse 11: King of the South = Ptolemy IV Epiphanes
- Verse 14: King of the South = Ptolemy V

Following this rule of prophetic interpretation, it would be reasonable to expect that the king of the south in verse 40 would also be an identifiable male leader, ruling from Egypt.

Here is a second rule of prophetic interpretation stated in *The Great Controversy*:

“The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed.”⁸

Seeing that the phrase *king of the south* in its previous usage, was never used as a symbol or figure, but always understood according to its obvious meaning, it is therefore reasonable to take the obvious meaning of this phrase *king of the south* in verse 40 and seek to find a civil ruler of Egypt who would fit the fulfillment for this prophecy.

⁶ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 321.

⁷ James Henderson, *Terror Over Jerusalem*, vol. 1.

⁸ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 598.

Additional Support for Miller's Rule #11

These rules, expressed by William Miller and Ellen White, prevent us from *phantomizing* scripture (making figurative what can be viewed literal). And Miller and White are not alone in urging the plain reading of the Bible:

“The rule of DEFINITION: What does the word mean? Any study of Scripture must begin with a study of words. Define your terms and then keep to the terms defined. The interpreter should conscientiously abide by the plain meaning of the words.”⁹

The word *king* means “*A male sovereign; ruler of a kingdom*”. So, once we define that word then we must keep to the term defined unless the text indicates otherwise. We cannot change the meaning of the word *king* or the word *south* in Daniel 11:40. We must “conscientiously abide by the plain meaning of the words.”

“The rule of PRECEDENT: We must not violate the known usage of a word and invent another for which there is no precedent.”¹⁰

There is no precedent for changing the phrase, *king of the south*, from meaning an individual who rules from a geographical location to the meaning of an *ism* of some sort. These words, *king* and *south*, are never used anywhere in scripture to refer to a religion or philosophical ideology. Those who invent another usage for this phrase, *king of the south*, are in violation of the rule of precedent.

“Any passage of Scripture that can have a natural application must have a natural application. Look for it; God wants to reveal it to you.

“Look first to a natural or literal understanding of a passage before lifting out of it a spiritual principle (1 Cor. 15:46). People who spiritualize everything in the Bible never get truly grounded in the truth of God's Word.”¹¹

Most of the listing of rules that are found online included such principles as cited above, which, if carefully followed, would keep us from embracing “the phantomizing system of the Buddhists”.

⁹ <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/5846-biblical-interpretation-rules>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ <http://www.whattimeitis.org/ComingEvents/24rules.htm>

Switching Rules Midstream

What do you think about switching our method of interpretation for the phrase *king of the south* in verse 40 just because we are post 1798? The idea is that before 1798 the *king of the south* was a literal person ruling from Egypt, but now that the 1260 year papal reign has come to an end, we should view the phrase *king of the south* as representing something other than a civil ruler over Egypt.

Let's answer this question by looking at Daniel 2. In this chapter we have literal civil powers represented in the feet and toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. These kings were established in their literal territories before 1798. Then in Daniel 2:44 these kings are again brought to view after 1798: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...". Because this prophecy applies to the time of the end, do these kings no longer refer to civil rulers located in Europe? Ellen White indicates that these kings do, in fact, refer to civil rulers in Europe.¹² We do not change geography or the meaning of the word *kings* just because the prophecy applies to a point in time after 1798. We do not make a universal or spiritual application of these *kings*. They are civil powers from start to finish in Daniel 2.

If there are no rules of prophetic interpretation that would allow us to change our interpretative method for the *kings* represented by the feet and toes in Daniel 2 after 1798, then there are no established rules that could be cited that would allow us to change our interpretive method for the phrase *king of the south* in verse 40.

There is nothing stated in the text of Daniel 11 that requires or instructs us to switch from a literal to a symbolic understanding of the phrase *king of the south*.

There are some prophetic expositors that have chosen to make symbolic, universal applications of the *kings of the north and south* after the cross instead of waiting until 1798. They

¹² EGW, Manuscript 39, 1899.

have constructed a rule of prophetic interpretation that requires them to switch from a literal, localized application of these *kings of the north and south* before the cross to a symbolic, universal application after 31 AD. If this is truly a rule of prophetic interpretation rather than a rule of convenience designed to make the text say what they think it should say, then this rule must have universal application. If it cannot be applied to Daniel 2 with equal force as they apply it to Daniel 11, then the contrived rule is shown to be just that—a rule designed to support a preconceived opinion.

To show that this “rule” cannot be applied to Daniel 2, thus demonstrating that it is not a valid rule of prophetic interpretation, I will insert a segment of material from his booklet, *Unholy War*:¹³

In Daniel 2 we find a vision of a composite image made up of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay. The interpretation given in the text itself makes it clear that this image is foretelling coming civil kingdoms that would rise to power. Looking back through history, we can name those kingdoms:

- Head of Gold: Babylon
- Chest of Silver: Medo-Persia
- Belly and Thighs of Brass: Greece
- Legs of Iron: Rome
- *Feet and Toes of Iron and Clay: What do they represent?*

Some prophetic expositors interpret the feet of iron and clay as representing universal, apostate religion united with civil governments. Another interpretation taught by many is that the feet and toes represent the nations that arose from the fall of Rome.

How can we know which interpretation is the correct *biblical* interpretation? It all comes down to how the word *kingdom* should be interpreted in verses 41 and 42:

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the *kingdom* shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the *kingdom* shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”—Daniel 2:41-43.

Is the term *kingdom* in these verses to be interpreted in the same literal manner as it is interpreted from the beginning of the prophecy—as indicating literal civil kingdoms? Or should we change its literal interpretation and give it a figurative interpretation since

¹³ John C. Witcombe, *Unholy War*, 4-8.

the time of the feet and toes is after the cross, at a time when the church is no longer the literal nation of Israel?

If the term *kingdom* in verses 41 and 42 of chapter 2 can be interpreted literally as a civil power, as we interpret the four preceding *kingdoms* in this chapter—and “if it makes good sense as it stands”—then it must be interpreted that way.

According to Miller’s 11th Rule, we do not have the option of interpreting it figuratively if we are looking for the correct *biblical* interpretation.

Clearly, it is evident that the previous usage of the term *kingdom* requires a literal interpretation. In verse 41 and 42, there is nothing in the text itself to indicate that we should change from a literal interpretation of the term *kingdom* at this point in the prophecy. So we stay with a literal, civil interpretation, even though the literal Jewish nation had come to an end and the church, at the time of the feet and toes, is now worldwide.

Therefore, our historicist understanding of the feet and toes of iron and clay as having to do with the division of Rome into the modern nations of Europe is correct. Without this interpretation, the identification of the little horn of chapter 7 as being the papacy would not be evident.

Ellen White clearly supports the view that the various image parts, including the feet and toes of iron and clay, represent literal civil kingdoms of the world:

“The image shown to Nebuchadnezzar in the visions of the night represents the kingdoms of the world. The metals in the image, symbolizing the different kingdoms, became less and less pure and valuable, from the head down. The head of the image was of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the sides of brass, and the feet and toes iron mingled with clay. So the kingdoms represented by them deteriorated in value.”—*Review and Herald*, February 6, 1900.

This is the interpretation that is presented in every prophecy-based Adventist evangelistic series.

Metaphorical Applications

We should note that Ellen White also makes use of several *metaphorical* applications of the image that go beyond the *literal biblical* interpretation of the text. Here are three such *metaphorical* applications she draws from the image:

1. The image represents the “deterioration of religion”:

“*While representing the kingdoms of this earth*, the image that was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar also fitly represented deterioration of religion. We grow weak morally and spiritually, just in proportion as we forget God.”—*Review and Herald*, February 6, 1900, emphasis supplied.

Notice that the *metaphorical* application does not replace the *biblical* interpretation: “*While representing the kingdoms of this earth...*”

2. The feet of iron and clay represent “God’s sacred work”:

“We have come to a time when God's sacred work is represented by the feet of the image in which the iron was mixed with the miry clay. God has a people, a chosen

people, whose discernment must be sanctified, who must not become unholy by laying upon the foundation wood, hay, and stubble.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1168.

Perhaps the iron represents the foundational truths of our denomination, and the clay could be the spurious teachings indicated by the wood, hay, and stubble. This is not the *biblical* interpretation that we would teach in an evangelistic meeting—it is simply a *metaphorical* application of the text.

3. The feet of iron and clay represent “the mingling of churchcraft and statecraft”:

“The mingling of churchcraft and statecraft is represented by the iron and the clay. This union is weakening all the power of the churches. This investing the church with the power of the state will bring evil results.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1168.

Now Ellen White is saying that the feet of iron and clay represent, not God’s sacred work, but the evil one’s work in uniting the power of the state to the churches in Protestant America. Is this an interpretation or simply a *metaphorical* application? To be a legitimate interpretation, every specification of the prophecy must fit—which in this case, it doesn’t. Notice that verse 43 says, “but they shall not cleave one to another,” and we know that church and state will be cleaving together to enforce a national Sunday law. She wrote: “This *union* is weakening all the power of the churches.” Union is the very opposite of what the text actually teaches. Therefore, her use of the text is clearly a *metaphorical* application rather than a *biblical* interpretation.

With the word “kingdom” in chapter 2, as it relates to the image itself, we stay with a literal, geographical, civil interpretation from start to finish. Even in the feet and toes, which come into play after the literal Jewish nation had come to an end and the church at this time is worldwide, the word *kingdom* is still interpreted as referring to literal, civil powers.

With this information in mind, let’s look at Daniel 11. Can you think of any term in chapter 11 that, like the word *kingdom* in chapter 2, is found from start to finish throughout the prophecy?

North and South, Alexander’s Empire, and Applying Rule #11

What about the terms *north* and *south*? The reference to these two compass directions begins in verse 5 and goes clear through to the very last verse. These terms—*north* and *south*—refer to two of the four geographical divisions of Alexander’s Empire.

They are included in the *four heads* of the leopard in chapter 7, the *four horns* of the goat in chapter 8, and the *four winds* of heaven in verse 4 of chapter 11. These represent the four geographical regions into which Alexander’s four generals divided his empire. In Daniel 11 these four geographical regions are reduced down to two—*north* and *south*.

If, in Daniel 11, we would maintain a literal interpretation of the terms *north* and *south* from beginning to end—just as we maintain a literal interpretation of the term *kingdom* in Daniel 2—we would discover the true interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45, where the time period corresponds with the same time period as the kingdom of the feet and toes of Daniel 2.

Uriah Smith's Perspective

Who is the *king of the south* in Daniel 11:40? This paper will answer this question from the “Classical Adventist View”¹⁴ which is the perspective that Uriah Smith presents in his book, *Daniel and the Revelation*.

Commenting on Daniel 11:40, Smith wrote: “The king of the south was at that time Egypt...”¹⁵

I believe that Smith was being a bit careless in stating that Egypt was the *king of the south*. The “king” of the south is the “king” and not the country! He knew the identity of the king of Egypt in 1798 and mentions him by name several paragraphs later.

Let's not fault Smith for this. I, too, often state that Egypt is the *king of the south*. But because there is such a diversity of thought on this phrase, if we wish to arrive at a correct understanding we need to be very precise; we need to carefully follow all pertinent linguistic rules as well as all relevant rules of prophetic interpretation.

Can the Word *South* Represent an *Ism*?

Let's take a closer look at this teaching that *south*—in the phrase *king of the south*—represents an “*ism*” whether that be atheism, Islamism, secularism, communism, humanism, etc. Those who spiritualize this phrase usually connect the word *south* with *spiritual Egypt* brought to view in Revelation 11:8 “...which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt...” and then, using this spiritual approach, they apply their chosen *ism* to the word *south*. But before we travel down this spiritual *ism* road too far, notice the following concern:

¹⁴ The *SDA Encyclopedia* calls Uriah Smith's view “the classical exposition of Daniel” (*SDA Encyclopedia*, 1966, p. 325).

¹⁵ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 1912 edition, 302.

There is no rule of prophetic interpretation that would allow us to take a literal equivalency from the book of Daniel and combine it with a spiritual equivalency from the book of Revelation in order to come up with a brand new equivalency not explicitly taught in the Bible. The following is a demonstration of this hermeneutical breach:

Because the *head of gold* is equivalent to *literal Babylon* in Daniel 2:38 and because *spiritual Babylon* is equivalent to the *Mother of Harlots* in Revelation 17:5; therefore, the *head of gold* should be equivalent to the *Mother of Harlots*.

It is evident in this example that we have arrived at a nonsensical/non-biblical conclusion by joining an equivalency related to literal Babylon with an equivalency related to spiritual Babylon in order to come up with a new equivalency. There is no rule of prophetic interpretation that allows for this manipulation of scripture.

Notice in the following example that this is *exactly* what is being done by many prophetic expositors with our phrase—*king of the south*:

Because *south* is equivalent to *literal Egypt* in Daniel 11:8 and because *spiritual Egypt* is equivalent to *atheism* in Revelation 11:8; therefore, *south* should be equivalent to *atheism*.

The very same reasoning is being followed here as in our Babylon example above. We have joined an equivalency related to literal Egypt with an equivalency related to spiritual Egypt in order to come up with a new equivalency.

If *south* is equivalent to *atheism* then, using the same logic, the *head of gold* should be equivalent to the *Mother of Harlots*. When we step outside well-accepted rules of prophetic interpretation, we are going to come to erroneous conclusions. The word *south* in Daniel 11 is a geographical designation only and has no relationship to atheism or, for that matter, to Islamism, secularism, communism, humanism, or any other *ism*.

Furthermore, if we insist that *south* represents atheistic France or communistic Soviet Union which are both geographically *north*, we end up with the word *south* designating a territory that is in the *north*, sounding very similar to what Joseph Wolff wrote: "...and when they read Jerusalem, they must understand the church; and if it is said earth, it means sky..." We have thus "swerved from the plain sense of Scripture" as Wolff puts it (quoted in *The Great Controversy*, page 360). He calls this, turning "to the phantomizing system of the Buddhists".

The King of the South Is . . .

Now to answer the question placed before us at this prophecy conference—Who is the *king of the south* in Daniel 11:40? Here is a simple, straightforward, easy to teach and understand, answer to our question:

In 1798, the *king of the south* (south = the southern region of Alexander's original empire which was Egypt) was Murad Bey—an Egyptian Mameluke ruler.

This answer does no violence to the linguistic rules of the English language and follows the rules of prophetic interpretation which requires one to first look for a literal interpretation before attempting to find a symbolic interpretation:

William Miller's Rule #11: "How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it *must* be understood literally; if not, figuratively."¹⁶

Let's put into our verse all the literal applications of which we can be certain and see if we can find, in the historical records, any event that would fulfill this prophecy. But before we do that, notice what a professor of ancient languages, who believes that there is a three-way rather than a two-way battle depicted in verse 40, had to say:

"In Daniel 11:40, there exist two significant but parallel clauses, which are rendered in the NKJV as, (1) 'the king of the South shall attack *him*,' and (2) 'the king of the North shall come against *him*.' The construction, in the Hebrew Bible involves, in

¹⁶ Joshua V. Himes, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology Selected From Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 22, emphasis added.

each clause, an active verb followed by a preposition to which a pronominal suffix is attached (literally, ‘*immo* “with *him*” and ‘*alayw* “against *him*”). In this syntactical arrangement, a person who is familiar with Hebrew syntax would immediately perceive here the existence of such an obviously parallel idea and construction that it would tend to eliminate *any idea of a reciprocal action* as being pictured in these two verbs and their prepositional objects. One just cannot obtain the idea in 11:40 that the King of the South and the King of the North are somehow attacking each other; they are here represented instead as *both* attacking a common enemy *who is simply represented as “him”* in each of the two clauses! In fact the first clause itself pictures an attack against some previously mentioned antecedent (“with *him*”); *and it is thus anaphoric in its sense rather than cataphoric and should therefore not be construed (either syntactically or exegetically!) as representing an attack against someone who is to be mentioned in the following part of the verse. . . .* In brief, then, the pronominal suffix at the end of both verbs (in 11:40) must refer to one single entity that is utterly separate from both the King of the North and the King of the South. In other words, *a third power is clearly involved here. . . .*”¹⁷

Here is verse 40 with all the literal applications applied of which we can be certain:

40. And at the time of the end (1798. In Daniel 11:35 and 12:7-9, the phrase *the time of the end* is equated with the end of the “time, times, and half a time”) **shall the king of the south** (*south* still representing Egypt, as identified in Daniel 11:8. The leadership of Egypt in 1798 was Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey—Egyptian Mameluke rulers) **push at him** (we will leave this pronoun “*him*” unidentified for the moment): **and the king of the north** (*north* still representing the northern territory as identified in Daniel 11:5-15. The leadership of this northern region in 1798 was Caliph Selim III of the Ottoman Empire) **shall come against him** (the same unidentified pronoun at which the *king of the south* pushed) **like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships** (this contest must involve cavalry and ships of war); **and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over** (we will know to whom this last pronoun *he* refers once we identify the battle of which this prophecy speaks. The word *overflow*, which is also used in verses 10 and 26 of this chapter, speaks of the one who triumphs in the battle just described. Whichever one of the three kings prevailed in this contest, they would be the one referred to by this last pronoun and would thus be the king that is referred to by the pronouns of the remaining verses of chapter 11. They would be the *he*, *his*, and *him* of verse 45). {Daniel 11:40}.

So, the only way to identify this last pronoun of verse 40 will be to find in the historical records a battle that fits this prophecy and then discover who it was that prevailed in that conflict.

Was there ever a battle involving Egypt that took place after the time of the end began—a battle that that involved horses and where many ships had a significant part to play, a battle that included the *king of the north*, who in 1798 was the leader of the Ottoman Empire, who ruled the

¹⁷ Richard L. Litke, PhD, *The Ultimate Ladder Of Biblical Prophecy*, 142, 143, unpublished manuscript.

territory that historically was ruled by the past *kings of the north*; a three-way battle that included some other civil power against which both *kings of the north and south* fought?

With all those factors being required, the chances of actually finding an historical fit would be virtually impossible. If it wasn't for the fact that God sees into the future and told Gabriel to dictate the details of this coming battle to Daniel, it would be impossible to forecast a future battle with such specificity and then find such a battle anytime in the history of this world, much less a specific year—1798. But, because it was a prophecy of things to come, we can be certain that a perfect fit in the historical record will be found.

Consider the Napoleon Egyptian Campaign of 1798. It fits perfectly with the details of a literal interpretation of verse 40. And because of this perfect fit, we can be certain that we have found the event that Daniel foretold 2500 years ago.

Egypt pushed against the invasion of Napoleon, and the Ottoman Empire came against Napoleon like a whirlwind with wagons, horses and many ships.

Without the many ships spoken of in verse 40, Napoleon may have prevailed in this contest. But as it turned out, the Ottomans prevailed and thus the pronouns *he*, *his* and *him* in the next five verses refer to the *king of the north*.

This interpretation is only valid if Napoleon is a fit for the *him* against which both *north* and *south* do battle. This pronoun takes us back to verse 39 where we encounter another personal pronoun: “. . . and **he** shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.” {Daniel 11:39, emphasis added}.

Who comes to mind in this time period—just before 1798—that caused them to rule over many? A literal reading of the last phrase of Daniel 11:39 finds a striking historical fit with the activities of Napoleon Bonaparte:

“Napoleon successfully quelled a revolt against the revolutionary government. The new government, the Directory, promoted him to commander of the Army of the Interior in 1796. Napoleon then initiated a series of campaigns against the Austrians and Sardinians in Italy, winning in rapid succession Savoy, Nice, Lombardy, and Mantua for France. In 1797 he crossed the Alps into Vienna and negotiated the Treaty of Campo Formio, ending the first phase of the Revolution.”¹⁸

There is good evidence that Daniel 11:30-39, following the same pattern found in the other prophecies in Daniel, chronicles the activities of the most prominent civil horn branching from Rome—France. This power had significant interaction with the papacy during its 1260 year reign which is noted in these verses. But the focus of Daniel 11 is on civil powers from start to finish, thus the primary subject of these verses is France.

Identifying the *Him* of Verse 40

Because the identification of the *him* in verse 40 is critical, additional evidence will be provided for France being the power brought to view in Daniel 11:30-39.

The persecution of God’s people by the papacy is brought to view in verses 30-35. And it was France, the eldest son of the Church¹⁹, who played a major role in wielding the sword. The papacy is powerless without the state. It was the uniting of church and state that produced the 1260 years of papal persecution. And just before the civil arm of the papacy was amputated in 1798, giving her a deadly wound, her true colors were revealed to the world through the Reign of Terror. Notice the following:

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4 Paul is telling us that the second coming will not take place until the man of sin is revealed:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” {2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4}.

¹⁸ <http://knarf.english.upenn.edu/People/napoleon.html>

¹⁹ James Aitken Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, Vol. 1, 10. “The Pope styled him [Clovis] ‘the eldest son of the Church,’ a title which the Kings of France, his successors, have worn these 1,400 years.”

The fulfillment of Daniel 11:37-39 revealed to the world this “man of sin”, the “son of perdition” who is the papal power. It was the country of France who most fully embraced the policies of the papacy who revealed the man of sin in the three and a half year Reign of Terror as you will see in the following four statements:

“When Satan wrought through the Roman Church to lead men away from obedience, *his agency was concealed, and his work was so disguised that the degradation and misery which resulted were not seen to be the fruit of transgression.* And his power was so far counteracted by the working of the Spirit of God that his purposes were prevented from reaching their full fruition. The people did not trace the effect to its cause and discover the source of their miseries. *But in the Revolution the law of God was openly set aside by the National Council. And in the Reign of Terror which followed, the working of cause and effect could be seen by all.*”²⁰

“The war against the Bible, carried forward for so many centuries in France, culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. *That terrible outbreaking was but the legitimate result of Rome's suppression of the Scriptures. It presented the most striking illustration which the world has ever witnessed of the working out of the papal policy-- an illustration of the results to which for more than a thousand years the teaching of the Roman Church had been tending.*”²¹

“*It was popery that had begun the work which atheism was completing. The policy of Rome had wrought out those conditions, social, political, and religious, that were hurrying France on to ruin.* Writers, in referring to the horrors of the Revolution, say that these excesses are to be charged upon the throne and the church. *In strict justice they are to be charged upon the church.* Popery had poisoned the minds of kings against the Reformation, as an enemy to the crown, an element of discord that would be fatal to the peace and harmony of the nation. It was the genius of Rome that by this means inspired the direst cruelty and the most galling oppression which proceeded from the throne.”²²

“The suppression of the Scriptures during the period of papal supremacy was foretold by the prophets; and the Revelator points also to *the terrible results that were to accrue especially to France from the domination of the ‘man of sin.’*”²³

For nearly 1260 years the papal power ruled the nations but during this time the man of sin was concealed in sacerdotal garments:

“It required a desperate struggle for those who would be faithful to stand firm against the deceptions and *abominations which were disguised in sacerdotal garments* and introduced into the church. The Bible was not accepted as the standard of faith. The

²⁰ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 285, emphasis added.

²¹ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 265, emphasis added.

²² EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 276, emphasis added.

²³ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 266, emphasis added.

doctrine of religious freedom was termed heresy, and its upholders were hated and proscribed.”²⁴

It was in those 3½ years of France’s Reign of Terror that the sacerdotal garments came off. The principles and policies of the papal power that had controlled France for centuries bore its fruit in the orgy of evil thus revealing the papacy for what she really was.

Today, the man of sin is once again concealed. With the apparent humility of the current pope, the memory of the good works of Mother Teresa, the strong stand against abortion—the world now considers the papacy a moral force for good. But at the very end of time the man of sin will once more be revealed but to a far greater degree than the revealing that took place in France:

“At the same time anarchy is seeking to sweep away all law, not only divine, but human. The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer classes for the defense of their interests and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; the world-wide dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution--all are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.”²⁵

When the deadly wound is healed which will be evident by the civil enforcement of a papal universal Sunday law resulting in a world-wide dissemination of papal teaching, the man of sin will once again be revealed during the great time of trouble when the whole world will experience a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.

Notice what Ellen White says regarding this repeating of the revealing of the man of sin:

“We have no time to lose. Troublous times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that "shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant." [Verses 31-36, quoted.] Scenes

²⁴ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 45, emphasis added.

²⁵ EGW, *Education*, 228, emphasis added.

similar to those described in these words will take place. We see evidence that Satan is fast obtaining the control of human minds who have not the fear of God before them.”²⁶

Verses 30 through 35 speak of the papal persecution of the Christian Church during the Dark Ages utilizing the armies of France. Much of the history of this persecution will be repeated just before the Second Coming of Jesus.

In the statement above we find these words: “In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of. . .” What is this power? This power will “have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant”. Them who forsake the holy covenant are the leaders of the papal system. So this power cannot be the papacy. The power that will be brought to view in verses 30-36 is the civil arm of the papacy—France. Ellen White calls civil governments *powers*:

“Through the great powers controlled by paganism and the papacy, symbolized by the dragon and the leopard-like beast, Satan for many centuries destroyed God’s faithful witnesses.”²⁷

Identity of the King of Verse 36

Ellen White says that the history of verse 36 will also be repeated. To know what this history will be, it is critical that we first understand the identity of the king brought to view in this verse:

“And **the king** shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and **shall speak** marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.” {Daniel 11:36, emphasis added}

To discover his identity we will first go to Revelation 13:

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he **spake** as a dragon.” {Revelation 13:11}

According to this prophecy, the United States of America is going to legislate (speak) draconian laws that will bring persecution upon God’s church.

²⁶ EGW, Manuscript Release, vol. 13, 394, 1904, emphasis added.

²⁷ EGW, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 8, 276.

“The ‘speaking’ of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy. The prediction that it will speak ‘as a dragon’ and exercise ‘all the power of the first beast’ plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopardlike beast. And the statement that the beast with two horns ‘causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast’ indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy.”²⁸

“Of the leopardlike beast it is declared: ‘There **was given unto him a mouth speaking great things** and blasphemies. . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it **was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them**: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.’ This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the *little horn of Daniel 7*, unquestionably points to the papacy.”²⁹

From this last statement it is clear that the little horn of Daniel 7 is the leopardlike beast of Revelation 13. It says in Daniel 7:20 that the little horn has a mouth that speaks great things. The additional information that we find in Revelation 13 tells us that the mouth that this little horn has is not his own mouth but is a mouth that is given to him.

Why was a mouth for speaking given to the papacy? Because the papacy, of its own accord, has no mouth with which to speak. The symbolic mouth used to speak great things represents legislative power. The papacy cannot enact laws for the purpose of persecuting the saints of God. So whose mouth for speaking was given to the papacy? What primary civil nation enacted laws on behalf of the papacy? The answer is France. It was the mouth of France that was given to the papacy. It was the sword of France that was given to the papacy to make war with the saints.

This is critical information of which we must be aware if we wish to discover the identity of the king of Daniel 11:36:

“And **the king** shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and **shall speak** marvellous things against the God of

²⁸ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 442, emphasis added.

²⁹ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 439, emphasis added.

gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.” {Daniel 11:36, emphasis added}

The king wasn't given a mouth to speak. He just speaks because he is the civil power that is enacting laws on behalf of the papacy. This informs us that the king in this verse cannot be the papacy (the papacy cannot speak/legislate), but is rather the civil arm that is acting on behalf of the papacy:

“In 1685, Louis XIV issued the Edict of Fontainebleau, which cited the redundancy of privileges for Protestants given their scarcity after the extensive conversions. The Edict of Fontainebleau revoked the Edict of Nantes, and repealed all the privileges that arose therefrom. By this edict, Louis no longer tolerated Protestant groups, pastors, or churches to exist in France. No further Protestant churches were to be constructed, and those already existing were to be demolished. Pastors could choose either exile or a secular life. Those Protestants who had resisted conversion were to be baptized forcibly into the established church.”³⁰

As noted above, Ellen White says that the history of verse 36 will be repeated. Once again a civil leader, corresponding to Louis XIV, will unite with apostate Christianity. This time it will be a President of the United States who will sign Sunday law legislation thus reviving papal persecution.

Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4 was led by the Spirit of God to use the very words found in Daniel 11:36 to describe the man of sin which is the papacy. In fact, verses 36-39 uses language that can describe the activities of both the papacy and the country of France during the Reign of Terror perfectly because France embodied the principles and policies of the papacy. The incident that is brought to view in Daniel 11:37-39 is the identical incident brought to view in Revelation 11:8-12 – France’s Reign of Terror.

A Literal, Civil Interpretation of Daniel 40-44

Let’s look at verse 40 once again with the literal interpretation of the *him* inserted:

40. “And at the time of the end (1798) shall the king of the south (Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey—Egyptian Mameluke rulers) push at him (Napoleon. Egypt pushed against the invasion of France in 1798.): and the king of the north (Caliph Selim III of

³⁰ <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory/chapter/louis-xiv-and-the-huguenots/>

Turkey) **shall come against him** (Napoleon. Turkey declared war on France in 1798) **like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships** (Lord Nelson's fleet of ships supported Turkey in its war with France); **and he** (*king of the north*—Caliph Selim III of Turkey) **shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.**" {Daniel 11:40}.

Verses 41-43 fill out the rest of the details of this battle:

41. He (Caliph Selim III of Turkey) **shall enter also into the glorious land,** (Palestine) **and many countries** (*countries* is a supplied word and thus is not in the original) **shall be overthrown** (the Turks reclaimed the territory of Palestine, which Napoleon had just taken): **but these shall escape out of his** (Caliph Selim III of Turkey) **hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief children of Ammon** (Edom, Moab, and Ammon, the territory and inhabitants of modern-day Jordan who are the descendants (children) of these three nations, lying outside the limits of Palestine, south and east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River, were out of the line of march of the Turks from Syria to Egypt, so escaped the ravages of that campaign).

42. He (Caliph Selim III of Turkey) **shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape** (Egypt once more came under the control of the Turks).

43. But he (Caliph Selim III of Turkey) **shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over the precious things of Egypt** (Egyptians paid annually to the Turkish government a certain amount of gold and silver, and 600,000 measures of corn and 400,000 of barley): **and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps** (the unconquered Arabs, who sought the friendship of the Turks and were tributary to them at that time). {Daniel 11:41-43}.

Daniel 11:44 has also been fulfilled:

44. But tidings (intelligence reports) **out of the east** (Persia) **and out of the north** (Russia) **shall trouble him** (Caliph Abdülmecid I of Turkey): **therefore he** (Caliph Abdülmecid I of Turkey) **shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many** (fulfilled by the Crimean War of 1853-56, in which Russia and Persia conspired together³¹ to destroy the Ottoman Empire but failed in their attempt). {Daniel 11:44}.

If we reject this perfectly logical, literal, historical fit to this prophetic text and choose to make figurative or symbolic what can reasonably be viewed as literal, we, by this choice, phantomize the text. Smith's interpretation "does no violence to the simple laws of nature" and "makes good sense as it stands". There is a reason why William Miller stated so emphatically that the text *must* be understood literally if at all possible. Perhaps he knew that if we made

³¹ "Russian Negotiations with Persia, 1853-1855.—In the autumn of 1853 Prince Dolgoruki made secret proposals to the Shah that Persia should co-operate with Russia against Turkey." Sir Percy Molesworth Sykes, [A History of Persia](#), vol. 2 (Macmillan & Co., London, 1915), 449.

figurative what could be understood literal we would be guilty of embracing the “the phantomizing system of the Buddhists”. No Christian would want that charge leveled against himself. Let’s review Miller’s Rule #11 one last time:

“How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, *then it must be understood literally*; if not, figuratively. Rev 12: 1, 2; 17:3-7.”³²

If we all would strictly adhere to this *primary rule* of prophetic interpretation, there would more likely be only one narrative for the last six verses of Daniel 11. On the other hand, if we choose to ignore this rule, it is guaranteed that we will end up with multiplied, competing narratives and the unity of our prophetic voice will be shattered—just what the enemy would desire.

A Literal, Civil Interpretation of Daniel 11:45

According the Uriah Smith, Daniel 11:45 is the only verse in Daniel 11 that is yet to be fulfilled. But with the literal understanding of verses 40-44 and their fulfillment in history, it is much easier to project a scenario that would fulfill verse 45.

45. And he (the *king of the north*—the leader of Turkey—Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at this point in time) **shall plant** (place or establish) **the tabernacles of his palace** (a religious/political entity—Islamic Caliphate³³) **between the seas** (Mediterranean and Dead seas) **in the glorious holy mountain** (Jerusalem—Mount of Olives); **yet he** (the

³² Joshua V. Himes, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology Selected From Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 22, emphasis added.

³³ It is evident that there is a desire amongst many Muslims to see the Caliphate restored. Will it be restored? Will it be headquartered in Istanbul or in Jerusalem? The answer to these questions will only be known if any of these events ever take place. Perhaps there never will be a restored Caliphate. What we do know, following a consistent literal hermeneutic, is that the king of the north (a ruler from the northern portion of Alexander’s former empire) will plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain (Jerusalem). Now, just *what* does planting the tabernacles of his palace mean? No one can know for sure until it takes place. But those who have the *who* and the *where* correct will most likely recognize the *what* of this prophecy when it takes place. A modern-day suggested interpretation of verse 45 as presented here is similar to what Uriah Smith provided for his day. He proposed a reasonable scenario that could have taken place at that time that would have met the requirements for a fulfillment of the prophecy. Will it happen as I have suggested? Maybe and maybe not. “Time will soon determine this matter” as Uriah Smith so wisely stated. The scenario presented is consistent with how the rest of the chapter met its fulfillment. The identical hermeneutic that is used for the previous 44 verses is being followed for verse 45. Now, if someone can come up with a better scenario without changing the hermeneutic, I would gladly present that better scenario. But so far, no one (who is staying with an *Eastern Question*-based interpretation) has suggested anything better.

king of the north) **shall come to his end, and none shall help him** (something will happen that brings the rule of the *king of the north* to an end. {Daniel 11:45}).

Those who have been watching the developing crisis in Turkey over the past two years know that movement is taking place in Turkey that could readily lead to a literal fulfillment of this prophecy. If the work of Jesus in the Most Holy Place is almost over then Jesus will allow these evolving developments to rapidly continue their course to completion. To see what is happening in regards to the literal fulfillment of this prophecy, go to the *News* tab on the website: JerusalemCaliphate.com

The Eastern Question in Bible Prophecy

The above view of Daniel 11:40-45 was called *The Eastern Question in Bible Prophecy*. This view was published in *Daniel and the Revelation, Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, and in the second quarter's Adult Sabbath School Quarterly of 1949.³⁴

Speaking at a camp meeting on May 12, 1889, Elder Smith Sharp—as reported in *The Topeka Daily Capital*—stated that we were all in unity on Daniel 11:40:

“I shall claim as undisputed that the time of the end began in 1798, and shall pass over to verse 40 which *all* admit is Egypt, pushing at France, and Turkey shall come against the latter.”³⁵

Over 800 newspaper articles have been located from the late 1800s and early 1900s documenting that this lecture was given by our ministers and evangelists as a primary means of establishing interest in the message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across this nation and around the world.

Ellen White, in commenting on the *Eastern Question* lecture on December 26, 1898, had this to say:

“Elder Daniells speaks this evening upon the *Eastern Question*. May the Lord give His Holy Spirit to inspire the hearts to *make the truth plain*.”³⁶

³⁴ <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/SSQ/SS19490401-02.pdf>

³⁵ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9iVaegURXpnUXdobHU5dXNyQ1k/view>, emphasis added.

The plain reading of this statement is declaring that Elder Daniells was going to be teaching *truth* that evening when he presented his *Eastern Question* lecture.

Geelong Advertiser reported on the content of Elder Daniells' *Eastern Question* lecture.³⁷

Ellen White stated on August 25, 1884 that this lecture had power to open the eyes, ears and mouths of outsiders:

“The evening meeting was largely attended. Elder Smith **spoke with great clearness**, and many listened *with open eyes, ears, and mouths*. *The outsiders seemed to be intensely interested in the **Eastern question***. He closed with a very solemn address to those who had not been preparing for **these great events in the near future**.”³⁸

The *Worcester Daily Spg.* published a record of what Elder Smith's 1884 *Eastern Question* lecture entailed.³⁹

Here is one more statement from Ellen White regarding the *Eastern Question*:

“Sunday morning [August 26, 1877] the weather was still cloudy; but before it was time for the people to assemble, the sun shone forth. Boats and trains *poured their living freight upon the ground in thousands*. Elder Smith spoke in the morning upon the **Eastern Question**. *The subject was of special interest, and the people listened with the most earnest attention*. In the afternoon it was difficult to make my way to the desk through the standing crowd. Upon reaching it, a sea of heads was before me. The mammoth tent was full, and thousands stood outside, making a living wall several feet deep.”⁴⁰

The *Haverhill Daily Bulletin* published a detailed report of this lecture on August 26, 1877 the following day.⁴¹

In a local newspaper reporting on a Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting in 1897, the *Eastern Question* was listed as one of our major beliefs right alongside our other fundamental teachings.⁴²

³⁶ EGW, Ms189-Dec. 25, 1898, emphasis added.

³⁷ <http://tinyurl.com/h9ld7yf>

³⁸ EGW, Lt55-Aug. 24, 1884, emphasis added.

³⁹ <http://tinyurl.com/zeewka7>

⁴⁰ EGW, *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 279, emphasis added.

⁴¹ <http://tinyurl.com/h4hlytq>

⁴² <http://tinyurl.com/zrbntta>

Final Thoughts

I understand why it is that many in our church do not want to see Turkey as the subject of Daniel 11:40-45. Our prophetic teaching, many believe, ought to only focus on the merging of Protestantism with Catholicism and the coming mark of the beast. It seems like Smith's Turkey view is just a distraction from our prophetic message.

But think about this: Josiah Litch's message regarding the Islamic Ottoman Empire's connection with Revelation 9 was not the Millerite message. Their message was the second coming of Jesus and how to get ready. Yet God used this "distraction" as a powerful attraction to the main message. Looking back now we can see that this Turkey distraction actually was designed by God to serve His purposes. Ellen White reports that "wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement"⁴³ on account of this Islamic Ottoman Empire time prophecy that ended on the date of August 11, 1840.

The fact is, the Turkey view of Daniel 11:40-45 is not our message. It is only the worm to attract the fish. Ellen White said that the outsiders listened with *open mouths* to the *Eastern Question* lecture. That's exactly what we hope a fishing lure will accomplish. The worm is to work in concert with the hook. And the hook is the three angel's messages. Especially in today's Middle-East news-saturated environment this lure would be a great asset in reaching the lost. When our historic interpretation of Daniel 11:45 is fulfilled in accordance with what we have been teaching since the 1860s, wonderful impetus will be given to the Loud Cry message.

The multiplied spiritualized views that have become prominent in our church since the mid-20th century have removed a valuable fishing lure from our tackle box. What do you say we get back to fishing with one of the most successful lures our church has ever used!

⁴³ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 335.

Epilogue

Caution: If you haven't read the first 24 pages, I recommend that you do so before reading this epilogue. The radical solution that God has provided for our disunity on the interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 will take an inordinate amount of courage on our part for its implementation. Ellen White understood this and stated: "But few have courage to do this. . ." ⁴⁴

Here is the radical solution:

God made sure that His remnant church got it right in those formative years. Our doctrinal platform (22 Sabbath Conferences—1848-1850) and our prophetic message were formed through careful Bible study, aided by the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Here is the historical record on how our prophetic message was formed during that ten-year (1862-1872) group-study that was mentioned earlier:

"Connected with the Battle Creek Sabbath-school is a large and flourishing Bible-class conducted by Bro. Uriah Smith. This class has once passed through the entire book of Revelation, free from the spirit of debate, all coming to the same conclusion on almost every point, and confident that they had found a better harmony than they had before seen, and clearer light on some portions of the book. Sabbath, May 17, the class commenced the book again, with the intention of taking one chapter for each lesson. In this investigation, we take a deep interest, and design to report in the *Review*, by way of a few thoughts on one chapter each week. Should we be called away for a few weeks, the class propose to leave the book of Revelation, in our absence, for some other portion of the Scriptures, until we return. Judging from past investigation of this book by the brethren and sisters of the Bible-class, we hope in expressing our views to express theirs also, yet we choose to be alone responsible for what we may say." ⁴⁵

"Being from home much of the time we are able to progress but slowly with the Revelation. Bro. Smith has consented to conclude the book, commencing with chapter x." ⁴⁶

In 1867 James White writes in reference to Smith's book:

"These thoughts are not the fruit of one brain. In the time of the end the Revelation was to be unsealed and opened. And from, the open book, light has been shining. William Miller saw much. Others since have seen more. . . . This . . . is a book of thoughts, clothed in the author's happy style, plain, yet critical and practical, coming

⁴⁴ EGW, Letter 25b, 1892.

⁴⁵ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 3, 1862, 4.

⁴⁶ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 21, 1862, 164.

down to the spiritual wants of the common people, yet elevated and dignified. This standard work should be in the library of every believer.”⁴⁷

In *Ministry*, Arthur White wrote:

“In 1872, five years after *Thoughts on the Revelation* was printed, a companion volume, *Thoughts on Daniel*, was issued and announced for sale on December 31, 1872. This, too, quite largely represented the *joint study of able Bible students*. After passing through several editions as single volumes, the two companion books in 1881 appeared as a combined work, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*.⁴⁸

It was through this corporate process that our church united on the prophetic message that we would share with the world. Our prophetic understanding was published in Uriah Smith’s book. Ellen White was told that God used Smith as a channel for presenting the light of prophetic truth:

“The interest in *Daniel and the Revelation* is to continue as long as probationary time shall last. **God used the author of this book as a channel through which to communicate light to direct minds to the truth.** Shall we not appreciate this light, which points us to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our King?”⁴⁹

“Everything that can be done should be done to circulate *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*. I know of no other book that can take the place of this one. **It is God’s helping hand.**”⁵⁰

And God did not want any of us to present our own new theories on any of the prophecies that His helping hand had already made plain:

“There must be no long discussions, *no presenting of new theories in regard to prophecies that God has already made plain.*”⁵¹

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

⁴⁷ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 16, 1867, emphasis added.

⁴⁸ Arthur White, *Ministry*, January 1945, emphasis added.

⁴⁹ EGW, Manuscript Release, vol. 1, 63, emphasis added.

⁵⁰ EGW, Manuscript, 76, 1901, emphasis added.

⁵¹ EGW, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1900, emphasis added.

Daniel and the Revelation. There is found *solid, eternal truth for this time*. Everyone needs the light and information it contains.”⁵²

Let the gravity of this last statement sink in. If we present something new, something substantively different from the “solid, eternal truth” that God gave to His church through the book, *Daniel and the Revelation*, the rebuke of God is upon us. Let’s talk plainly: if we teach a *figurative/phantomized* view of Daniel 11:40-45 which is certainly something new and something substantively different from what God gave to His church via His “helping hand”, then God’s rebuke is upon us.

All our modern-day figurative interpretations of Daniel 11:40-45 are “*presenting . . . new theories in regard to prophecies that God has already made plain*.” Now if someone has new light on the prophecies, light that does not change the prophecy substantively but enhances our understanding we have instructions to follow that will help maintain a united voice in our prophetic message:

“There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to *brethren of experience*. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety.’”⁵³ (5T 293)

“I ...also told them ...that the messengers of God should be *perfectly united in their views of Bible truth* and should consult with each other, and should not advance any new view until they first went to the messengers and examined those views with the Bible, and if they were correct, let all the messengers spread them, and if they were error, lay them to one side. Then the gospel seed would be sown in union and raised in strength; and all the messengers east and west, north and south, would be telling the same story.”⁵⁴

We need to define the phrase, *brethren of experience*.

“I saw that the shepherds should consult those in whom they have reason to have confidence, *those who have been in all the messages, and are firm in all the present truth*,

⁵² EGW, Manuscript Release, vol. 1, 61, 1896, emphasis added.

⁵³ EGW, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 293, emphasis added.

⁵⁴ EGW, Letter 8, 1851, emphasis added.

before they advocate new points of importance, which they may think the Bible sustains.”⁵⁵

Brethren of experience are those who hold firmly to the doctrinal and prophetic truths established during the Sabbath Conferences and during the 10-year investigation of Daniel and Revelation. Anyone who holds substantively differing views would not fit the category of *brethren of experience*.

If these *brethren of experience* saw no light in someone’s new interpretation, that person would set their new interpretation aside. From what God commands in 5T 293, they would be required to “yield to their judgment”. This is the method that God has ordained to enable His workers to present a united front in the presentation of prophetic and doctrinal truth. What a perfect plan God has devised to bring unity of message to His work. We are free to ignore God’s clear command in 5T 293 and insist on presenting to the world our own individually crafted prophetic views, but if we do that we will not be among that group who will be perfectly united: “The 144,000 were all sealed, and perfectly united.” {CET 58.2} We will not answer the entreaty of Christ:

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

“The Reformation was greatly retarded by making prominent differences on some points of faith and each party holding tenaciously to those things where they differed. We shall see eye to eye ere long [*this is the promise regarding the unity of the 144,000*], but to become firm and consider it your duty to present your views in decided opposition to the **faith or truth, as it has been taught by us as a people**, is a mistake and will result in harm, and only harm, as in the days of Martin Luther. Begin to draw apart and feel at liberty to express your ideas without reference to the views of your brethren, and a state of things will be introduced that you do not dream of [*this state of things is our present state*]. **My husband had some ideas on some points differing from the views taken by his brethren**. I was shown that however true his views were, God did not call for him to put them in front before his brethren and create differences of ideas. While he might hold these views subordinate himself, once they are made public, minds would seize upon

⁵⁵ EGW, *Early Writings*, 61.emphasis added.

them, and just because others believed differently would make these differences the whole burden of the message and get up contention and variance.”⁵⁶

From this statement we can see that it is okay to hold some ideas that are different from the brethren but we must not share these ideas with others if *brethren of experience* see no light in what we believe. We must all *speak* the same thing to the world.

“But have you as a colaborer, one who has had long experience in the work, gone to these men with your soul imbued with the love of God, *feeling pained to the very heart to perceive a shade of difference in views and positions*, and said to them, ‘Brethren, we must be a unit’? Christ prayed that we might be one as He is one with the Father. Let us together bring our ideas to the Scriptures. Let us lay aside prejudice, and be determined we will cherish brotherly love, and in meekness and lowliness of mind try to see eye to eye.’ **But few have courage to do this**; yet it is the only Christlike course that will prevent divisions.”⁵⁷

I would guess that there will not be found one in one hundred who will have the courage to obey the command of Christ as recorded in 5T 293. Why? Because:

“The *natural stubbornness* of the human heart resists the light of truth. Its *natural pride of opinion* leads to independence of judgment and a clinging to human ideas and philosophy.”⁵⁸

I want to say that I do not have a horse in this race. I am not presenting an interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 that I have crafted. I have nothing new to offer. Because I do not want to risk having God’s rebuke upon me, I discarded all my prophetic interpretations that significantly differed from what was given to us through “God’s helping hand”. I want to invite everyone at this symposium to do likewise. Let’s allow the Holy Spirit to bring us each to that place where we so desire and long to all speak the same thing that we will have the courage to obey 5T 293.

This paper is the abbreviated version of the original 60-page document. The extracted extra pages have been made into a Supplementary Material document which can be accessed on the Documents page at: ThirdWoe.com (https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d9574e_4dc47afe962b4cb9bd19448fa855a9ca.pdf)

⁵⁶ EGW, Letter 37, 1887, emphasis added.

⁵⁷ EGW, Letter 25b, 1892, emphasis added.

⁵⁸ EGW, *Review and Herald*, August 19, 1909, emphasis added.