

## Statement No. 8

### Imperial Rome Not Identified by the Text itself as King of the North

Statement Sponsor

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**Statement:** There is unity of belief that the leader of Imperial Rome is identified in Daniel 11 by the phrases *a raiser of taxes*, and *a vile person*. There is no mention of the phrase, *king of the north* in connection with any of the prophecies in Daniel 11 that relate to Imperial Rome. For this reason we should not call Imperial Rome the *king of the north*.

Perhaps the reason why the angel Gabriel never directly called the ruler of Imperial Rome the *king of the north* is because the ruler of Rome ruled both the north and the south from the west in Rome, Italy. And so Gabriel identifies the ruler of Rome as *a raiser of taxes* (Daniel 11:20) or *a vile person* (Daniel 11:21) rather than *king of the north*.

If we are looking for the true interpretation of a Bible prophecy, it is important that we not add details that the prophet did not place in the text. If we choose to label Imperial Rome the *king of the north* and if the text does not definitely define it so, we may not arrive at the correct interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel 11 downstream from that point where we added detail that the angel did not place in the text. If we add to the words of any prophecy, we are doing something that God told John was not a good thing to do (Revelation 22:18, 19). Some want to add the words, *of the north* to the king of verse 36. But it is far better to just leave it as the angel saw fit to name this king and add no prepositional phrase to this word.

A scholar/friend and I were discussing this issue of Imperial Rome being labeled as the *king of the north* and he wrote to me the following:

“The ‘king of the north’ is not explicitly mentioned until verse 40, however, in verse 25 the fact that Rome wars against the ‘king of the south’ clearly implies that Rome here is viewed as the king of the north.”

It is okay for us to do our best to venture interpretations on what is actually stated in the text, but once we either imply or add detail to the text in support of a particular point of view, I believe that we have crossed a line that will make it more difficult to arrive at a correct understanding of the prophecy. If we add detail, that will make it so that we no longer have a level playing field, making it difficult for divergent interpretations to press forward in the goal of coming into unity of message. If another person reasons that Imperial Rome should really be given the label *king of the south* because they conquered Egypt, it can readily be seen that these two views that arise from these assumptions will never come into agreement. If we all decide to not add details to the text of Daniel 11, I believe that we will have a better chance of uniting on the message that God wants us to present to the world.