

A Literal King of the South: Avoiding Phantomized Interpretations

**Daniel 11:40 Prophecy Conference
Bering Springs, Michigan
October 19-21, 2018**

John C. Witcombe

Prologue

It is not easy for a Seventh-day Adventist scholar or layman to change their views on prophecy. And because we have all lived our entire lives in a church in which there has been no unity of message on Daniel 11:40-45, we have come to accept this as normal. I happen to believe that God is not pleased with our status quo and is going to correct our state of disunity. In my epilogue, I am going to lay out the only path of which I am aware that will bring us into unity on Daniel 11:40-45.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a worldview that believes that the Papacy will be involved in bringing the final persecution to God's people. Therefore, the Papacy must be the final power brought to view in Daniel 11:45. This is a deeply held belief. This paper will provide evidence that counters this papal view of verse 45. And I can tell you right now, no matter how convincing the facts that I provide, the reader is not likely to change his view:

“Have you ever noticed that when you present people with facts that are contrary to their deepest held beliefs they always change their minds? Me neither. In fact, people seem to double down on their beliefs in the teeth of overwhelming evidence against them. The reason is related to the worldview perceived to be under threat by the conflicting data.”¹

Every prophetic expositor believes that there would be unity in our church if everyone would simply believe what they have to present. Yes, we are hopelessly divided and will continue in this hapless condition unless...

Most will leave this Daniel 11 Prophecy Conference more committed to the views with which they came unless...

¹ Michael Shermer, *Scientific America*, How to Convince Someone When Facts Fail, January 1, 2017.
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-convince-someone-when-facts-fail/>

This conference will only serve to further cement the disunity that is present in our church unless...

...unless we all seriously consider and embrace the radical solution that God has provided for us which I have outlined in this paper's epilogue. But first, take note of the convincing facts put forth in this document. We'll start by identifying a primary rule of interpretation that is essential to follow in order to understand any prophecy of God's Word.

Primary Rule of Interpretation

But before we get to that rule, let's first define the word *phantomize*: If a word in the Bible can be understood in its plain, literal sense and we choose to give it a figurative meaning for its primary biblical interpretation, by so doing, we *phantomize* the word. 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”²

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:³

“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.”⁴

² EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 360, emphasis added.

³ EGW, *The Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884.

⁴ 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.

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.

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 2018 = 69 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 paper⁵ that helped bring an end to the literal view of Daniel 11:40-45. Louis F. Were⁶ 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 Conference 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

⁵ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d9574e_300cb844e27840e9af1f18d4c559e6d7.pdf

⁶ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d9574e_16d92479026840a78c3c854c4301dbc1.pdf

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 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...”⁷

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:⁸

- 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.”⁹

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

⁷ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 321.

⁸ James Henderson, *Terror Over Jerusalem*, vol. 1.

⁹ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 598.

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.

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.”¹⁰

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.”¹¹

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.”¹²

¹⁰ <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/5846-biblical-interpretation-rules>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² <http://www.whattimeitis.org/ComingEvents/24rules.htm>

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”.

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”¹³ 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...”¹⁴

The author believes 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. The author, too, often states 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.

Who are Daniel’s People?

“Seventy weeks are determined upon *thy people* . . .” {Daniel 9:24, emphasis added}.

“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people in the latter days*: for yet the vision is for many days.” {Daniel 10:14, emphasis added}.

“. . . and at that time *thy people* shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” {Daniel 12:1, emphasis added}.

¹³ The SDA Encyclopedia calls Uriah Smith’s view “the classical exposition of Daniel” (SDA Encyclopedia, 1966, p. 325).

¹⁴ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 1912 edition, 302.

Clearly, the “thy people” of Daniel 9:24 applies to Daniel’s literal kinsmen—the Jews. But what about the “thy people” of Daniel 10:14 and Daniel 12:1? Is Gabriel still referring to literal Jews?

Can we take the plain sense of Gabriel’s words and believe that he is speaking about literal Jews in all three verses? Or does something happen from Daniel 11:22 onwards, post-Calvary in the text, which takes us from literal, historical, local actors to a global conflict, global players/forces, and a global resolution in Daniel 12:1? Because if “thy people” changes from literal to spiritual then we might decide that we must also spiritualize the *kings of the north and south* from the cross forward. So this is a very important question for which we must find a biblical answer. We can’t afford to guess at this one:

“He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything.”¹⁵

Miller’s Rule #11 tells us that we must first see if we can take the angel at his word and see if it is possible to understand “thy people” in Daniel 10:14; 12:1 as referring to literal Jews before we decide to view this phrase figuratively. If we don’t make the effort and if we just make a guess, we could end up phantomizing the text.

Here is the biblical evidence showing that we must take the plain, literal reading of Gabriel’s words and understand that “thy people” is referring to the identical ethnic group in all three verses:

“For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into *their own olive tree*?” {Romans 11:24, emphasis added}.

Paul is speaking here of literal, ethnic Jews after the cross. The good olive tree belongs to them—“*their own olive tree*”. Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle John wrote: “He came unto his *own*, and his *own* received him not.” {John 1:11}. Jesus’ *own* were ethnic Jews—Daniel’s people. Non-Jews must be grafted into the Jewish tree—the good olive tree who is Jesus Himself, the offspring

¹⁵ EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 598.

of David. Gentile Christians must be separated from their own wild olive tree. Their wild olive tree does not become the good olive tree; it does not replace the tree that belongs to Israel. The natural branches that belong to the good olive tree (whether they are connected or broken off) are the “thy people” of Daniel 9:24, Daniel 10:14 and Daniel 12:1. Read carefully what Paul is saying here:

“And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.” {Romans 11:17-23}.

Again, the global Christian Gentile population *does not replace literal Israel*; they connect to the good olive tree (which belongs to literal ethnic Jews according to Romans 11:24) along with the faithful natural branches of literal Israel. Daniel’s kinsmen, “thy people”, of which he and Paul had such concern, remain significant to the very end of time:

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” {Romans 3:1, 2}.

Jesus said: “. . . for salvation is of the Jews.” {John 4:22}. Why is it of the Jews? Because the good olive tree, the root that bears the branches is the root and offspring of David. The good olive tree is a Jew, one of Daniel’s kinsmen, a root of Jesse, who today ministers on behalf of His people in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary. Even today, post crucifixion, post resurrection, Jesus identifies Himself as the offspring of David:

“And in that day there shall be *a root of Jesse*, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.” {Isaiah 11:10, emphasis added}.

“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, *the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David*, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” {Revelation 5:5, emphasis added}.

“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. *I am the root and the offspring of David*, and the bright and morning star.” {Revelation 22:16, emphasis added}.

Knowing that the good olive tree is the Son of God who is today a human being with Jewish DNA should eradicate anti-Semitism. It should eliminate the popular teaching that Daniel’s people “the children of thy people”, spoken of in Daniel 12:1, are only figurative, having no relation to the natural branches, the literal kinsmen of Daniel.

Notice Paul’s interest in Daniel’s people:

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, *my kinsmen according to the flesh:*” {Romans 9:1-3, emphasis added}.

Daniel too was concerned about *his* people and *his* people are the same ethnic group that Paul was willing to be accursed from Christ so that they could come to a knowledge of the truth.

“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people in the latter days*: for yet the vision is for many days.” {Daniel 10:14, emphasis added}.

This audition found in Daniel 11 is concerning Daniel’s people—the Jewish nation. “Thy people” is not referring to spiritual Israel from all ages. No, Daniel is concerned specifically about his people, the literal nation of Israel.

Children of Thy People

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the *children of thy people*: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time *thy people shall be delivered*, every one that shall be found written in the book.” {Daniel 12:1, emphasis added}.

The phrase, “children of thy people”, refers to the descendants, those kinsmen of Daniel’s who would be living at the end of time. We can be certain that the phrase “of thy people” cannot be speaking of spiritual Israel because there is no such thing as there being *spiritual children or offspring* of spiritual Israel. We cannot obtain spiritual Israel status through kinship. “Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor

daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness” {Ezekiel 14:20}. Children are literal descendants of literal people. Another good indication that the “thy people” of Daniel 12:1 is not speaking of spiritual Israel but rather it is speaking of the literal kinsmen of Daniel is the clause: “every one that shall be found written in the book.” All those who are a part of spiritual Israel, by definition, have their names written in the book. That last phrase would not be necessary if Gabriel was referring to spiritual Israel. Daniel is being told that his people, the descendants of the same ethnic group Gabriel was referencing in Daniel 9:24 and Daniel 10:14, will be delivered. But it won’t be all his people; only those of his ethnicity that shall be found written in the book – those who have become spiritual Israel (thus all who are grafted in are included). Many of Daniel’s kinsmen will not be found written in the book. They will be lost. And it was for these lost Jews that Daniel and Paul both had such a burden.

Paul, speaking about his people down at the end of time writes: “Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness:” {Romans 9:27, 28}. The *children of Israel* in this verse is clearly not referring to spiritual Israel. They are the “children of thy people” mentioned in Daniel 12:1. The remnant that is saved refers to the same group of whom Daniel speaks: “every one that shall be found written in the book.”

Paul’s important teaching regarding spiritual Israel should not diminish the significance of literal Israel for whom Daniel and Paul had such concern:

“For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is circumcision* that which *is outward* in the flesh; but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is not* from men but from God.” {Romans 2:28-29, emphasis added}.

This is true today even as it was 500 years before Christ. These only whose hearts have been circumcised have always and will always be the Israel of God. Nothing changed in 31 AD as far as this is concerned. This important statement of Paul’s regarding spiritual Israel does not eliminate the

significance of literal Israel any more than Paul's teaching in Hebrews 4 regarding the spiritual Sabbath rest we find as we rest in Christ eliminates the significance of the literal Sabbath rest of the seventh-day Sabbath.

The vision of Daniel 11 is focused on Daniel's people: "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.*" {Daniel 10:14, emphasis added}. The angel said that he would make Daniel understand what would befall Daniel's people. The prophecy will relate to them in a direct way down at the end of time.

Daniel's people and their city were destroyed in 70 AD but just as the nation of Judah was still Paul's people after 31 AD so they would have still been Daniel's people. If Paul could have lived for 2000 years he still would today feel that the Jews were his people. There is no violation at all for God to use events in that area of the world to which the prophecies of Daniel refer, to act as way-marks to let us know where we are in relation to the close of probation. Is it not remarkable that Daniel 11 ends with the mention of Daniel's homeland (glorious holy mountain) for which he had such a concern? No, it is not a sacred place today. And yet, it is still the future site for the capital of the Universe. Certainly Daniel will like that.

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:

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 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

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.

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 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 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

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

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

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

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}.

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:

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.”

“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 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.

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.

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

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 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

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

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

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.

“*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

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

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

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 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

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

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 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).

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

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 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

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.

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.

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 to 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 Erdogan at this point in time) **shall plant** (place or establish) **the tabernacles of his palace** (a religious/political entity—Islamic Caliphate?) **between the seas** (Mediterranean and Dead seas) **in the glorious holy mountain** (Jerusalem—Mount of Olives); **yet he** (the *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 1949.³³

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:

³³ <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/SSQ/SS19490401-02.pdf>

“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.”³⁴

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*.”³⁵

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.³⁶

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**.³⁷”

The *Worcester Daily Spg.* published a record of what Elder Smith’s 1884 Eastern Question lecture entailed.³⁸

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*

³⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9jVaegURXpnUXdobHU5dXNyQ1k/view> emphasis added.

³⁵ EGW, Ms189-Dec. 25, 1898.

³⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/h9ld7yf>

³⁷ EGW, Lt55-Aug. 24, 1884.

³⁸ <http://tinyurl.com/zeewka7>

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.”³⁹

The *Haverhill Daily Bulletin* published a detailed report of this lecture on August 26, 1877 the following day.⁴⁰

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.⁴¹

Final Thoughts

The author understands 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”⁴² 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

³⁹ EGW, *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 279, emphasis added.

⁴⁰ <http://tinyurl.com/h4hlytq>

⁴¹ <http://tinyurl.com/zrbntta>

⁴² EGW, *The Great Controversy*, 335.

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!

Epilogue

Caution: If you haven't read the first 25 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. . ."⁴³

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

⁴³ EGW, Letter 25b, 1892.

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.”⁴⁴

“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.”⁴⁵

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 down to the spiritual wants of the common people, yet elevated and dignified. This standard work should be in the library of every believer.”⁴⁶

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*.⁴⁷

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?”⁴⁸

“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.**⁴⁹

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:

⁴⁴ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 3, 1862, 4.

⁴⁵ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 21, 1862, 164.

⁴⁶ James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 16, 1867, emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Arthur White, *Ministry*, January 1945, emphasis added.

⁴⁸ EGW, Manuscript Release, vol. 1, 63, emphasis added.

⁴⁹ EGW, Manuscript, 76, 1901, emphasis added.

“There must be no long discussions, *no presenting of new theories in regard to prophecies that God has already made plain.*”⁵⁰

“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 *Daniel and the Revelation*. There is found *solid, eternal truth for this time*. Everyone needs the light and information it contains.”⁵¹

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.’”⁵² (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

⁵⁰ EGW, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1900, emphasis added.

⁵¹ EGW, Manuscript Release, vol. 1, 61, 1896, emphasis added.

⁵² EGW, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 293, emphasis added.

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.⁵³

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*, before they advocate new points of importance, which they may think the Bible sustains.”⁵⁴

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

⁵³ EGW, Letter 8, 1851, emphasis added.

⁵⁴ EGW, *Early Writings*, 61.emphasis added.

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 them, and just because others believed differently would make these differences the whole burden of the message and get up contention and variance.”⁵⁵

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 collaborer, 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.”⁵⁶

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.”⁵⁷

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 conference 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.

To contact the author of this paper: pastorjcw@gmail.com

This paper is the abbreviated, 30-page version of the original 60-page document. The extracted 30 pages have been made into a Supplementary Material document which can be accessed on the Documents page at: ThirdWoe.com (Password: 1844)

⁵⁵ EGW, Letter 37, 1887, emphasis added.

⁵⁶ EGW, Letter 25b, 1892, emphasis added.

⁵⁷ EGW, *Review and Herald*, August 19, 1909, emphasis added.