

Daniel 11—A Hellenistic Chapter

Introduction

The forest was beautiful and quiet. I was enjoying the fresh air and scenery on my hike up a mountain. I just happened (God directed me) to look down near my feet to notice a western diamondback rattlesnake. He saw me about the same time. I slowly backed away, holding my walking stick between the rattlesnake and me. As I was trying to back away from the rattlesnake, I heard something behind me. While I knew that I needed to keep an eye on the snake in front of me, I also knew that I better find out what was behind me quickly. I glanced back to notice another rattlesnake, just as big and threatening-looking as the one in front of me. Both rattlesnakes were not backing down. As a matter of fact, they were both slithering toward me. There was a steep bank that I didn't think I could climb to my left. I was caught between. The story's conclusion will be at the end of the paper, and the ending will not make nearly as much sense if you skip ahead to read it.

Speaking of getting caught between, please take your left index finger and an old-fashioned way to read the Bible. By that, I mean one of those Bibles where you can flip through the pages rather than swipe through the pages. Now open your Bible to Matthew chapter one. Please place your left index finger there, and now use your right hand to flip to Acts 28—the last chapter of Acts. Please hold up the leaves of all those pages in between. These pages cover the most critical events in the history of the universe. These cover the birth, life, and death of Jesus and the triumphant spread of the good news of what Jesus did, is doing, and will do. How many years passed in these pages that you are holding? Not quite 70 years, but they are 70 years packed with the most significant events of history.

Now, please place these pages back down and take your right index finger this time and place it right between Matthew chapter one and the last chapter of the Old Testament. How many pages are in between? Maybe there are some extra-biblical explanatory notes, but there are no pages of Scripture. There are about 400 years passing from the end of the Old Testament to the beginning of the New Testament. Some really influential things happened in this period that completely changed the world, yet there is no inspired history of this period. For instance, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and Aramaic, but the New Testament was written in Greek. Notice that the names of places and the partition of political boundaries are very different in the New Testament from anything you will read about in the Old Testament. What happened, and why is that relevant today?

It just so happens that the chapter we have been studying is the one portion of the Bible that deals with this period. While we have been so intently focused on studying the last five verses and trying to understand the minute details to which these texts refer, this chapter has some extremely practical and important lessons for us today.

So this paper attempts to take a break from the usual ultra focus on the disputed portions of Daniel 11 and step back to take a broad view of the significance of the unique history that this prophecy presents and some lessons that I have personally found to be relevant.

It is incredible that while there is such a broad range of interpretations for the later portions of this chapter, there is a very general agreement on the first 15 verses¹. This is true not only among Seventh-day Adventists but even among most Christians, Jews, and secular individuals.

Could it be that its relevance has been overlooked because there is a general

¹ Verse 14 is an exception, especially in the Adventist church.

agreement on this section of the chapter? Could it be that understanding the history of this section could be the key to unlocking the more controversial sections?

I have to confess that I write this paper with more questions in my mind than answers. So, instead of seeing this paper as “my position” and thinking that my goal is in writing this paper is to convert you to “my position,” I request that we explore the significance of this history and work together to discover what relevance that it may have for the more controversial sections, and most importantly, what spiritual lessons there are for us today.

In this paper, I present only a few of what I believe are significant lessons for us today and their implications for interpreting the rest of the chapter.

Hellenism in Daniel 11

Of the 45 verses in Daniel chapter 11, at least 14 deal with the role of Greece and the Hellenistic Age. Other Adventist scholars say even more—as many as 18 verses.² The majority of Jewish and Protestant scholars say that the entire chapter concerns the Hellenistic kingdoms. The unique theme of Daniel chapter 11 is a conflict between a King of the North and a King of the South. This theme is based on the Syrian Wars between the Hellenistic empires of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. This theme continues throughout the chapter and is especially paralleled in the last five verses. It is fairly significant that from verses 5–15, the expression “King of the North” is used six times, and the “King of the South” is used four times, but from verses 16 through 39, only the King of the South is directly mentioned, and only twice at that. But in verse 40, after a hiatus

² Uriah Smith and many modern-Adventist interpreters understand verses 16–19 to deal with a transition from the Syrian Wars to the introduction of Rome into the prophecy. Most non-Adventist commentators, the Islamic View, and other interpreters of Daniel 11 see these verses as dealing with the final exploits of Antiochus III, his attempted interference in Greece, and his death.

of 25 verses, the phrases again appear together. Could this be that the angel Gabriel is trying to emphasize to us that the history of the Hellenistic Age will be mirrored at the end of time?

So, what is so significant about this period and what relevance does it have for the time of the end?

These two kingdoms (the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires) were not only two out of many thousands of pagan kingdoms. These kingdoms were the most advanced civilized nations of their day. They had a certain culture—Greek culture. Greek culture has heavily influenced our modern western culture in many ways. The ideas of modern science, secularism, medicine, mathematics, education, sports, and even theology, have all been heavily influenced by Greek culture. Greek culture was so strong that even after Greece and the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires were conquered by the Romans and Parthians, these lands of the former kings of the north and south maintained Greek culture.³ As we have already mentioned, the New Testament was all written in Greek. The culture of the New Testament is all Greek, even though the ruling kingdom was Rome. Yet, Greek culture not only survived, but in a sense, it even conquered other cultures.

The Roman poet Horace said, “Captive Greece captured her rude conqueror.”⁴ That is, after Rome conquered the Greek kingdoms militarily, Greek culture conquered Roman culture. I find this fascinating, but for further details, please see my companion paper, *The Significance of Hellenism in Daniel 11*.

When God sent Gabriel to Daniel to explain these prophecies, of all the many important things in the future that He could tell Daniel (and by extension, us), why did He select the specific details that He did? Was it just to prove that God knows the future and, therefore, we can trust Him?⁵ It is certainly one very important

³ See my list called, *The Significance of Hellenism in Daniel 11*.

⁴ Horace, Book II, epistle 1, lines 156-157

⁵ Isaiah 46:9–11

aspect of prophecy and perhaps one of the most fascinating features of the prophetic message. However, I believe that the Bible teaches that there is more to it than that.

God does not only know who will sit on the throne, but He is actively involved in setting the kings on thrones.⁶ God not only knows what kings will decide in the future, but the heart of the king is in the Lord's hands.⁷ During the Battle of First Manassas, we have been privileged to look behind the scenes and see that angels were actively involved in changing the course of the battle for the fulfillment of God's purpose.⁸ In other words, God not only knows the future, but He directs the future. Knowing that, would it not be reasonable to say that God not only knew that the four empires of Daniel 2 and 7 would rule over the land of Israel but that there may be reasons why each kingdom was selected? Taking this point to its logical conclusion, could we say that the first 15 verses of Daniel 11 are not only for the purpose of God demonstrating that He can tell us random future events but that God purposely selected those specific kingdoms for a reason? This paper investigates that possibility and its implications.

Besides these points, there are other reasons that Greek culture has importance for the last days. In Revelation 13, the Antichrist is pictured as a composite beast whose body parts come from several animals. All these parts of animals come from the vision of Daniel 7. Daniel 7 lists four animals representing four empires that would rule over Palestine. Notice that the feet of the antichrist-composite beast of Revelation 13 are of a bear, the head was of a lion, and the body was of what? A leopard. As a matter of fact, today, many refer to the first beast of Revelation 13 as the "composite" beast, but the Seventh-day Adventist co-founder, Ellen White, referred to it as the "leopard-like beast."⁹ The leopard

⁶ Daniel 2:21; 4:17

⁷ Proverbs 21:1

⁸ Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, pp. 266, 267

⁹ Ellen White, *The Great Controversy* (1888 Edition), page 445. Notice that the first and most prominent feature that stood out to John as he describes this beast: "And the beast which I saw was like unto a

represented Greece in Daniel 7¹⁰. So, in the last days, the antichrist power will have borrowed its body from Ancient Greece.

What about the Catholic Church is borrowed from ancient Greece? There are several things that the Catholic Church has borrowed from ancient Greece. There are several things about the Catholic Church that parallel the experience of ancient Greece. Here are a few parallels:

Both the Papacy and Greece were tiny literal kingdoms, but their influence was felt far beyond their borders.

The Greeks seemed to have a god for everything¹¹, and the Catholic Church appears to have a saint for everything.¹²

Both the Greeks and Catholic Church built the most impressive houses of worship. In addition, they created the most beautiful works of religious art and music of their days.¹³

The Cynic Philosophers of ancient Greece were the prototypes of the Monks.¹⁴

The Catholic Bible contains the Greek writings of the Apocrypha, which have Greek-pagan ideas such as the immortality of the soul, prayers for the dead, and almsgiving to atone for sin.

leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion...” Revelation 13:2 (emphasis supplied).

¹⁰ Also, notice that the fourth and dreadful beast of Daniel 7 has iron teeth (Daniel 7:7), linking this beast to the legs of iron from the image of Daniel 2 which represented the kingdom of Rome. This same beast also has claws of brass (Daniel 7:19) linking it to the belly and thighs of brass which represented the kingdom of Greece.

¹¹ <https://www.mylearning.org/stories/ancient-greeks-everyday-life-beliefs-and-myths/415>

¹² <https://openthemagazine.com/columns/of-saints-and-pandemics/>

¹³ Will Durant, *The Life of Greece*: [The Story of Civilization #2] pp. 217, 218

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 509, 651, 658

Perhaps the most significant aspects of ancient Greece that the Catholic Church borrowed were its philosophy and education.¹⁵ When someone mentions Ancient Greece, one of the first things people will think of are Greece's philosophers. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Pythagoras, and others have all left their marks on history. The influence of their teaching affects Western thought and education to this day. In the days of early Christianity, Plato perhaps was the most revered and influential. A quote from the *International Cyclopaedia* sums it up quite nicely:

"The works of Plato were extensively studied by the Church Fathers, one of whom joyfully recognizes, in the great teacher of the academy, the schoolmaster who, in the fullness of time, was destined to educate the heathen for Christ, as Moses did the Jews."¹⁶

According to the Church historian Mosheim, Plato was a significant influence in early Christian theology:

"But gradually the friends of philosophy and literature acquired the ascendancy. To this issue Origen contributed very much; for having early imbibed the principles of the new Platonism, he inauspiciously applied them to theology, and earnestly recommended them to the numerous youth who attended on his instruction. And the greater the influence of this man, which quickly spread over the whole Christian world, the more readily was his method of explaining the sacred doctrines propagated."¹⁷

A very influential but not well-known figure in Adventist history, E. A. Sutherland, M.D., taught that Plato and the other Greek Philosophers permeated the early Christian church through educational centers such as Alexandria, Egypt, and transformed the church into the papacy. He believed that these philosophical

¹⁵ The early church historian, Eusebius, appeared to take pride in the fact the church father Origen was so well versed in pagan-Greek philosophy that even non-Christians admitted that he was an expert philosopher. See *The Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius Pamphilus, bishop of Cesarea, page 237.

¹⁶ *The International Cyclopaedia: A Compendium of Human Knowledge*, Volume 11, page 786

¹⁷ Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern: In Four Books, Much Corrected, Enlarged and Improved, from the Primary Authorities*, Volume 1, p. 162,

teachings are still the basis for education in the secular schools of the West and even for many so-called Christian schools. He taught that it was largely through this false educational system influenced by pagan-Greek thought that prepared the world and many of the Christian churches in his day to reject the Advent message.¹⁸

Ellen White also warned of the negative influence of the Greek Classics in education.¹⁹

A Jewish man who converted to Adventist Christianity, F. C. Gilbert, claims that the same Greek-pagan education prepared the Jewish church to reject Jesus as the Messiah.²⁰

Paul gained many converts in the Greek cities to which he traveled. However, Athens, which was still the center of Greek philosophy in his day, was an exception.²¹

Though Daniel 11 clearly deals with the military aspect of history through prophecy, yet the significance of the spiritual battle between God's truth versus the Greek-pagan philosophy that occurred throughout this time period cannot be

¹⁸ Edward Alexander Sutherland, M.D., was a very influential Adventist educator in the early Adventist Church. He was influential in founding Andrews University, Walla Walla College, and Madison College. Ellen White personally mentored him and supported his work. Though, like all of us, he was not perfect, yet Ellen White became a member of the Board of Madison College while Dr. Sutherland was president, the only Adventist institutional board that she ever joined. Ellen White herself stressed the importance of reforming the education of our children and churches, the need to get back to the Scriptures and away from the pagan mindset in the popular education of the day. Dr. Sutherland followed her lead and wrote two primary books on the topic of pagan-Greek education and how it transformed early Christianity and prepared most of the Christian world to reject the Midnight Cry. Those books are *Studies in Christian Education* and *Living Fountains or Broken Cisterns*. Another Adventist pioneer and more well-known than Doctor Sutherland, A. T. Jones, also wrote a book about the contrast of Greek-pagan education and the education of the Bible—*The Place of the Bible in Education*

¹⁹ Ellen White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pages 381, 382; *Fundamental of Christian Education*, chapter 60 “The Bible in Our Schools.”

²⁰ Gilbert wrote an article for Ministry Magazine in 1933 in which he outlined what he believed was a primary reason for his people rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. He proposed that it had to do with the imbibing of Greek education. You can read the whole article via this link: <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1933/12/why-the-jews-rejected-jesus-as-the-messiah>

²¹ Acts 17:18, 32–34

ignored. Perhaps in focusing on interpreting the minute details of Daniel 11, we have overlooked a most significant lesson that this prophecy is telling us by the specific history it chooses to focus on.

Maybe it would be worth our time to study how the leopard portion of the Antichrist prepared the world to reject Christ at his first coming and how it is trying to get us to reject Christ now through these Greek-pagan teachings before He comes again.

For these reasons, I don't believe that it is an accident that Daniel 11 focuses so much on the Hellenistic Age and uses its theme as a basis for the whole chapter.

Relevance of the Hellenistic History to our Day

Most who are interested in Daniel 11 understand that at least the first 15 verses deal with detailed prophecies given in a straightforward, non-symbolic language. Except for verse 14, most of these first 15 verses easily match up with secular history. So clearly do these prophecies match secular history that many secular, Jewish, and Christian scholars believe that the book of Daniel could not have been written when it claimed to have been written—by Daniel in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, the great Babylonian king, until the time of Cyrus, the mighty Persian emperor.²² They believe that it had to be written around the time of the Maccabean revolt. Otherwise, the Bible would have actual predictive prophecy that promotes the concept of a supernatural origin and a God Who interferes in the affairs of humankind. A scholar could not be considered a true historian in many circles if he promoted such things.²³

²² Daniel clearly writes as though he is the literal author of the book: Daniel 7:15; 8:15, 27; 9:2; 10:2, 7; 12:15. Jesus confirmed that Daniel was an actual person and a prophet (Matthew 24:15). To deny the direct words of scripture that Daniel was a literal person and the author of the book of Daniel would be to accuse both the book of Daniel and Jesus of dishonesty.

²³ The author of *Alexander to Actium*, Peter Green, claims that “the historian, who is required to study the secular genesis of events rather than their divine revelation, cannot in any open sense work *sub specie aeternitatis* (viewed in relation to the eternal): though he does and must recognize the force of faith as a

This paper assumes that the Bible can be taken at face value and that the prophecies of Daniel and the whole Bible can be predicted years and thousands of years before the events transpire and that they can be matched up with history. As such, I would like to review the historical background of the Hellenistic section of Daniel 11 with the view that these prophecies were given centuries before the events they predicted and that they were fulfilled just as the prophecy said.

As most people know who study Daniel 11, after Alexander the Great died, he did not leave clear instructions about who was to succeed. Instead, his generals fought among themselves and divided his empire into separate and competing kingdoms. For the narrative in Daniel 11, only two of these divisions are mentioned. One of these divisions was ruled by Seleucus Nikator. His descendants are known in Daniel 11 as the kings of the north. The other major division was centered in Egypt and was governed by Ptolemy Soter. His descendants are known as the kings of the south.

Seleucus quite amazingly started out with an army of only about 1,300 men²⁴ and his charisma and began to take a chunk at a time of Alexander's empire from the other competing factions until he ended up with the largest of all the successor states. At its height, it stretched from Europe to India.²⁵

Seleucus' one-time partner and supporter, Ptolemy, controlled Egypt and fought

major historical determinant, he can only evaluate it in linear, temporal terms. If he accepts its presuppositions (takes it at face value), he becomes, strictly speaking, a propagandist—which means that, for the highest of nonhistorical motives, he has betrayed his calling.”—*Alexander to Actium*, page 497. to avoid being accused of being a “propagandist” and a traitor to historianism, many Jewish and Christian scholars accept interpretations of the Bible which attempt to strip any recognition of Divine will or foreknowledge. This has been the major influence in interpreting the authorship and time of authorship of the book of Daniel. The author of this paper is not ashamed to be accused of being a propagandist, if I must be considered as such in certain circles, for believing in predictive prophecy and Divine intervention in human affairs.

²⁴ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, page 195

²⁵ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, page 203

several back-and-forth battles with the most powerful successor at the time—Antigonus, the one-eyed, and his son Demetrius, the besieger, over control of the land of Cole-Syria, analogous to modern-day south Syria and Palestine.²⁶ Though Seleucus originally fought with Ptolemy against the Antigonids and understood how important Cole-Syria was to Ptolemy for his defense of Egypt, yet, he and the other successors decided that Cole-Syria should belong to Seleucus. Ptolemy, of course, thought otherwise.

Though Ptolemy was united with Seleucus and two other successors, Cassander in Macedon and Lysimachus in Thrace, in their opposition to the Antigonids, yet, he was the only successor who did not participate in the epic battle at Ipsus. At Ipsus in Asia Minor, the fate of Alexander's kingdom was sealed. Up until that battle, the Antigonids attempted to unite all the factions of the divided empire under their banner, making themselves the true successors of Alexander. But at Ipsus, the allies defeated and killed Antigonus the one-eyed and sent his son Demetrius the besieger in flight. Rather than participate directly in the battle of Ipsus, Ptolemy used the opportunity to retake Cole-Syria once again from the Antigonids.²⁷ The other successors did not seem very impressed with Ptolemy's version of aid in the anti-Antigonid cause. They agreed that Cole-Syria should go to Seleucus instead. However, Seleucus was not able to retake this area that the successors agreed was rightfully his.²⁸ His descendants would fight a series of 5 wars²⁹ until they got it back. This first section of Daniel 11 describes in detail the wars between these two kingdoms over this disputed territory.

²⁶ Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium*, page 499

²⁷ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, page 34; Polybius, *The Histories of Polybius*, 5.67

²⁸ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, page 35

²⁹ The Historian, John D. Grainger, lists nine Syrian Wars in his book, *The Syrian Wars*. Many other historians list only six. Daniel 11 only prophesizes directly about the third, fourth and fifth Syrian Wars. The fifth Syrian War was the one that permanently took Cole-Syria from Ptolemy. So, while there were more Syrian Wars, the first five (especially the fourth and fifth) were mostly concerned about Seleucus' descendants regaining the territory that they thought was rightfully theirs.

The Jewish historian Josephus claims that Ptolemy took Jerusalem by a rather rude deception.³⁰ Ptolemy supposedly pretended to want to come to Jerusalem to pay homage to the God of the Hebrews. However, once within the walls of Jerusalem, he took the city and enslaved thousands of Jews, and brought them to his capital, Alexandria. Josephus records conflicts in Israel over the high taxes they had to pay to this kingdom.³¹

As mentioned before, the kingdom of Seleucus was the largest of the successor kingdoms. Because the territory was so vast, Seleucus allowed many of his subject kingdoms to do their own thing. As long as they claimed loyalty to him, paid their taxes, supported him in times of war and not his enemies, he pretty much let them alone to do their own thing.³² Josephus records that Seleucus treated the Jews in his realm well and gave them equal privileges with the Greeks and Macedonians (the ruling classes) in his domain.³³

Ptolemy, on the other hand, ruled Egypt with an iron fist. The Egyptians were used to living under a communist-type government for thousands of years. However, the Ptolemies were so efficient in extracting every penny out of the people that the Egyptians ended up rebelling against these micromanagers. Historians compare the way the Ptolemies ruled Egypt to a species of socialism and communism.³⁴ I agree. However, I would make this distinction. Unlike Soviet Russia, the Ptolemies were rich. In fact, many historians believe that they were the wealthiest kingdom in the world at that time.³⁵ From the abundant stories of the exploitative rule of the Ptolemies, I would picture it as an industrial giant like

³⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 12.1.1

³¹ *Ibid*, 12.4.1–12.4.5

³² The Hellenistic Age Podcast, Episode 63: The Seleucid Empire – Kingship & Governance in the Arche Seleukia, transcripts notes, p. 7

³³ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 12.3.1

³⁴ Will Durant, *The Life of Greece: (The Story of Civilization #2)*, p. 587–592

³⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/place/ancient-Egypt/Macedonian-and-Ptolemaic-Egypt-332-30-bce#ref22341>

Henry Ford becoming the absolute dictator of America and micromanaging its citizens with ruthless efficiency.³⁶

If you or I were one of those Jews, caught between these two kingdoms, with whom would we be tempted to side?

For about a hundred years, the Jewish people of Israel were under the control of the Ptolemaic kingdom. Then, during the fourth attempt of the kings of the north to regain control of Cole-Syria (Daniel 11:10–12), the Seleucids gained control over most of the disputed territory. But the King of the South, Ptolemy IV Philopator, counterattacked and reconquered Israel and southern Syria. Notice how the Bible predicted that Ptolemy IV would feel after his victory:

“And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.”—Daniel 11:12.

The apocryphal book of Maccabees III claims that after this great victory, Ptolemy presumed to enter the temple at Jerusalem.³⁷ You may remember that King Uzziah in the Bible tried to do the same thing. He thought he would be a priest and presumed to offer incense in the temple, but the priests remonstrated with him. So, God punished him with leprosy for his presumption.³⁸ Likewise, Ptolemy was forbidden by the priests to enter the temple. As a result, he became so angry that he went back to Alexandria in Egypt and ordered the Jews to be marked with hot irons, registered, stripped them of their citizenship rights, and reduced them to the status of slaves unless they should compromise.³⁹ Maccabees III claims that he attempted to murder all Jews and anyone found

³⁶ Peter Green claims that the overall impression of the Ptolemaic Empire “is one of strangling royal interference in every area, of heavy taxation, of bureaucratic illiberalism run riot.”—*Alexander to Actium*, page 194.

³⁷ 3 Maccabees 1:4–2:24

³⁸ 2 Chronicles 26:15–21

³⁹ 3 Maccabees 2:25–30

hiding them.⁴⁰ However, the book claims that the Jews were miraculously delivered and that Ptolemy then treated them favorably.⁴¹

Though these stories are so apocryphal that they didn't even make it into the Catholic Apocrypha, they reveal that the Jews harbored some negative feelings against the King of the South, and likely for good reasons.

With that background, we come to the verse that I believe has some of the most important lessons for us today.

“And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.”—Daniel 11:14.

I mentioned that this verse is different from the rest of the first 15 verses in that there is not nearly as much unity of interpretation as there are verses 1–13 and verse 15. Part of the difficulty is the translation. Most Millerites and Adventists who wrote within the lifetime of Ellen White interpreted the King James “the robbers of thy people” to be the Romans. However, most modern Bible translations translate this phrase as “violent ones among your own people,”⁴² “Violent men among your own people,”⁴³ “The children of the violent among thy people,”⁴⁴ “The violent sons among your people,”⁴⁵ and so forth along those lines. Thus, Protestant interpreters understand this to be referring to Jews who would violently attempt to help this prophecy come true.

⁴⁰ 3 Maccabees 3:1, 25, 27, 29; 5:43

⁴¹ 3 Maccabees 5:6–13, 25–36, 50–7:23

⁴² *International Standard Version*

⁴³ *New Living Translation*

⁴⁴ *American Standard Version*

⁴⁵ As translated by a modern Adventist Scholar, Michael Younker, Ph. D. Dr. Younker, at the time of the writing of this paper, works for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in the Office of Archives, Statistics and Research.

This interpretation, to me, seems to fit best with the actual history of the time. Furthermore, it is consistent with the theme of verse 14, which speaks of many who would join the fight against the King of the South. According to the modern translations mentioned above, the point of this passage is that the Jews also joined in the fight against the King of the South.⁴⁶

Historically, just as the Bible predicted in verse 14, many did raise up against the King of the South (Ptolemy V, Epiphanes). He was just a boy at the time. The King of the North (Antiochus III, the Great) rose up against him with the aid of Philip V of Macedonia. Also, Ptolemy had rebellions, court intrigues, and major defections.⁴⁷ The Jews also rose against him just as this prophecy in verse 14 predicted.⁴⁸

In other words, picture yourself as a Jew in Palestine caught between these two warring powers.⁴⁹ For about a hundred years, your home has been taxed heavily by a kingdom that started to rule by cruelly tricking your ancestors and enslaving them. The ruler just previous to the current one has tried to murder thousands of your people. You have read this prophecy in Daniel 11 that the King of the North will:

“...return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches...”—Daniel 11:13

⁴⁶ This is a minority view at this time among the listed expositors and their varying views of Daniel 11 in Dr. Conrad Vine’s list “[Comparison Chart of Various Views on Daniel 11](#), July 2021.” However, there are a few in the list who agree with this view: Dr. Roy Gane, Perry Loudon, Pastor Edward Nelson, and Brendan Valiant,

⁴⁷ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 241, 251

⁴⁸ Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, comment under Daniel 11:14

⁴⁹ Peter Green Claims that in the years from the death of Alexander the Great to the take over of Rome, there were no less than 200 battles fought in or through the land of Israel. *Alexander to Actium*, p. 524.

“So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand.”
— Daniel 11:15.

Knowing the prophecy of these two verses, that the King of the North will win in a fight against the King of the South, but trying your best to ignore the prophecy in verse 14, with whom would you side? Keep in mind that thus far, the King of the North has allowed more freedom to certain ones in his realm and treated your ancestors reasonably well. Well, you would probably do exactly what many of the Jews did. They sided with Antiochus III (the King of the North) and aided him in his fight against Ptolemy V (the King of the South).⁵⁰ They did indeed try to violently help the vision be fulfilled. But what did verse 14 say would be the result?

What actually happened? Well, so far from failing (or falling as the KJV says), the Jews, for their assistance to Antiochus III, were greatly rewarded with tax breaks and other benefits.⁵¹ That doesn't sound like falling, does it? But that is not the end of the story.

As was mentioned in the “Hellenism in Daniel 11” section of this paper, Hellenistic culture was the “in” thing. Those who ignored Hellenistic culture back then could be compared to how many secular people see the Amish today. They would be seen as out of touch with the times. It was attractive to people, and it was also to God's people at the time. Especially after Antiochus III (the King of the North), the issues of assimilating Greek culture, especially around the land of Judea, were set in hyperdrive. Some Jews wanted to “keep up with the times.” They didn't want to be stuck back in the horse and buggy days, so to say. So, some of them built Greek centers of influence in Jerusalem. Others went so far

⁵⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12.3.3; Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium*, p. 504

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

as to want to do away with traditional religious practices that made them look outdated. They went so far as to petition the new Emperor, Antiochus IV, Epiphanies, to come and aid them. He did and led a brutal crackdown of Bible religion. Sabbath-keeping was forbidden. Unclean meats were forced upon the populace. The temple and its services were converted to the worship of the Greek god, Zeus. Antiochus even had a pig offered on the altar at Jerusalem. As if this was not enough, any who dared to be conservative were brutally tortured and murdered.⁵²

Some of those old-fashioned conservative-country folk decided that this was unacceptable. They stirred up a rebellion against the Seleucids and the Jews who compromised with them. Eventually, they won the war, and for the first time in over 400 years, the Jews had an independent kingdom. Well, that sounds pretty good. It doesn't sound like falling, does it? Many of them did believe that they were helping to fulfill this prophecy.

Once again, that is not the end of the story. Those same leaders who fought against the incursions of pagan-Greek culture later became the most ardent leaders in adopting Greek culture. They had been persecuted and forced to convert. So now they turned on those they had conquered and persecuted anyone who stood in their way, burnt many alive, and forced others to convert to Judaism or be slaughtered.⁵³ Perhaps you could say that they had a spiritual fall. But there's more.

Some people resisted these extremes of the new ruling Jewish class. They were the Pharisees. Many of the priests who supported that new ruling Hasmonian dynasty were the Sadducees. Many Pharisees heroically withstood the compromises of the ruling class, especially the idea of the offices of the King and High Priest being filled by the same person, which was the practice of the first

⁵² Most of this history is recorded in the first and second books of the Maccabees.

⁵³ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.15.4

Hasmonean monarchs. The Sadducees and others persecuted the Pharisees. In one instance, eight hundred prisoners, many of them Pharisees, were crucified. While they were dying on crosses, they had to watch their wives and children murdered before their eyes.⁵⁴

If you were alive at the time of Jesus, which party would you have been a part of? The conservative, persecuted, and brave Pharisees, or the wealthy, scientific, politically correct Sadducees? Which one rejected and crucified Jesus? Both did.⁵⁵ Both persecuted His followers.

As you know, both Pharisees and Sadducees perished in the destruction of Jerusalem about 40 years after the time of Jesus. What little political power they had left at the time of Jesus was now gone. Clearly, the violent ones among God's people did not fall all of a sudden. Still, they fell gradually until they lost what they had spiritually and eventually lost all of their autonomy.

For me, the most crucial point of focusing on this history of the Hellenistic Age section of Daniel 11 is the relevance that I believe that it has for us today.

Comparison and Contrast of Verses 5–15 and 40–45

Instead of rushing ahead to interpret the later and more controversial portions of Daniel 11, I believe that a deep look at the historical section can greatly help us better understand the renewal of the conflict between the kings of the north and kings of the south at the time of the end as is brought out in verse 40.

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.14.2

⁵⁵ Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, 405, 537, 538, 705

with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” Daniel 11:40

This is a highly debated passage in the Christian world and in the Adventist church, unlike the verses at the beginning of the chapter in which there is general agreement between Jewish, Christian, Adventist, and even secular scholars. This paper will not go into a detailed interpretation of this verse. Instead, I would like to explore some possible light that focusing on the history of verses 5–15 and especially verse 14 may shed on this controversial passage and, most importantly, some spiritual lessons relevant to the issues that we face today.

“And at the time of the end.” Getting past the controversy of just when that starts, as far as I know, most of the major interpreters from all of the main genres of interpretation would agree that we are living in “the time of the end.” So, this verse would be relevant to us now.

The fact that the Seleucids and Ptolemies are no longer in power has caused various ways of interpreting this passage to arise. Since the historical Seleucids were conquered by the Parthians and the Romans and the Ptolemies met their demise with their last ruler, Cleopatra VII, at the battle of Actium in 31 BC, how are we to understand the directly-mentioned reappearance of this conflict of the kings of the north and south?

After a hiatus of 25 verses, the directly mentioned conflict between the two resumes. A. T. Jones, Uriah Smith, and almost all other early Adventists believed that the key to understanding this time of the end reappearance of the kings of the north and south is to simply know which current kingdoms are now in control of the old lands that the Seleucids and Ptolemies once ruled.⁵⁶ This understanding of early Adventists followed the genre set by Josiah Litch. This

⁵⁶ A. T. Jones, *The Bible Echo*, Vol. 11, June 8, 1896, 171.

was in contrast to William Miller's understanding, who taught that the way to know who the King of the North and King of the South in the time of the end is was to find the main kingdoms north and south of the main character of the last five verses. He and almost every other Millerite and early Adventist believed that the chief character of the last five verses of Daniel 11 was Napoleon Bonaparte. Miller fought in the war of 1812, and it is no surprise that he would want to see Napoleon in the prophecy. With the exception of the Islam view, almost all succeeding Adventist views have Napoleon in the prophecy as a relic of this Miller original. So, the primary power north of France was Great Britain. That made Britain the King of the North to Miller. Whereas the primary power south of France was Spain. So the King of the South in the time of the end would have to be Spain.⁵⁷

The most popular view now is that since the kingdoms of the Ptolemies and Seleucids no longer exist, and the last five verses of Daniel 11 mention chariots and modes of warfare that are not used in the time of the end, and since specific people groups are mentioned who no longer exist, and for other reasons, the only proper way to understand these verses is in a spiritual or typological sense. Because Revelation uses the names of ancient cities and places to represent spiritual entities rather than literal ones, it is assumed that this particular portion of Daniel must also have a spiritual meaning.

Others believe that the key to understanding verses 40–45 is understanding these last verses as the third and final conflict between Papal-lead Christianity and Islam, as first expressed in the Crusades earlier in the chapter. In the last section, I will offer some potential insights that Hellenistic history may shed on viewing these last five verses. For now, I would like to focus on a spiritual lesson regardless of the genre of interpretation that one takes.

⁵⁷ Please see my paper, "Were's Assumptions and the Truth," for more on the views of Miller and the other Millerites and early Adventists on Daniel 11.
http://www.daniel11prophecy.com/uploads/1/1/3/7/113721993/liberty_20to_20differ_20on_20daniel_2013.pdf

Regardless of one's interpretive position, these verses repeat the theme of verses 5 through 15—the Kings of the North and the South. Like verses 5 through 15, the last five verses reveal a conflict in which the King of the North eventually comes off as a victor and takes the Beautiful Land. As in verses 5 through 15, the King of the South initiates the struggle, and the King of the North finishes it as the victor. Historically, the Seleucid Empire was weak as a naval power⁵⁸ until the time of Antiochus III, in which the King of the North captured some of the navy of the King of the South and built more ships to the point that he was able to use his new navy to strike the King of the South with “overwhelming” force. In the last five verses, the King of the North attacks like a “whirlwind” with “many ships.” In verses 5–15, the last-mentioned great Seleucid king, Antiochus III, reached the pinnacle of his power before he was abruptly defeated by Rome at Thermolopy and Magnesia with no allies. In the last five verses, the King of the North reaches the pinnacle of his power and then abruptly comes to his end with none to help him.

The last five verses also present some contrasts to verses 5–15. In verses 5–15, the King of the North becomes victor, but he doesn't wholly conquer the King of the South. Historically, the Ptolemaic King of the South lasted longer than the King of the North (31 BC for the end of Ptolemaic Egypt and 64 BC for the Seleucid Empire). However, in the last five verses, the King of the South gets all his territory invaded, and all the precious things of his kingdom are under the control of the King of the North. Second, in verses 40–45, the King of the North sets up his headquarters near Jerusalem. While the King of the North in verses

⁵⁸ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, page 47, states that the first King of the North, Seleucus I Nikator, had no navy. On page 86, Antiochus I, Seleucus's son and next king on the Seleucid throne, still seems to have no navy. He purposely attacked Ptolemy's coastal holdings in Ionia (Western Asia Minor), perhaps to get some coastal access, and built a navy to compete with Ptolemy's. Page 95 states that Ptolemy's navy “was in large part a Pheocian creation.” In other words, most of his ships were either constructed in Tyre, and/or the lumber to build them came from Phoenicia. This is likely a major reason why the Syrian Wars were fought, because of Syria's importance to the navy of whatever power controlled the region. However, on page 265, Grainger notes that Antiochus III had captured Sidon and a large portion of the Ptolemaic fleet to the point that Antiochus III likely had the largest navy west of Italy.

5–15 takes Jerusalem, yet he doesn't place much importance on it.

Perhaps the most essential point of comparing and contrasting verses 5–15 and the last five verses is made by asking the question, what was the whole point of verses 5–15? The entire point was to reveal two powers who fought over the land of Israel while God's people were caught between. Daniel's main concern was the fate of his people. So the angel, in the introduction to the purpose of the dictation of the prophecies of chapters 11 and 12, told Daniel that he would...

“...make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.” Daniel 10:14.

The history of the Hellenistic Age and the Syrian Wars was relevant to Daniel's concern because that history directly involved his people. Historically, that is easy to see in verses 5–15. But how about in the last five verses?

Setting aside the mighty urge to interpret this passage right now, let us ask some questions. If the point of this final vision, according to Daniel 10:14, is to show Daniel what would happen to his people in their latter days, then should even the secular and military history of the prophecy relate to how it affects the people of God? I believe the history that we have already covered shows that the answer could only be “yes.” This sounds strange since Daniel's people are only directly mentioned in verses 11:14, 32–36; 12:1–3, 7, 10, whereas the vast majority of the prophecy seems concerned with secular-military conflicts. Having shown how the conflicts of verses 5–15, though they only mention Daniel's people once, they very directly involve God's people when we look at the history of the times, I propose that in like manner, every other portion of the prophecy should also be about the fate of God's people even if they are not directly mentioned. This would include verses 40–45.

In the last portion of the study, I will offer some possible interpretive possibilities that studying this chapter in the light of the Hellenistic Age brings out. But for now, the most important thing to see is that behind all the secular wars of the 11th of Daniel is the fate of God's people.

Whoever the kings of the north and south are at the time of the end, their war with each other in some way should impact the people of God. Whoever they are, if the history of verse 14 is repeated, God's people may be tempted to take sides or in some way be involved in assisting one against the other. So, regardless of the particular identities of the kings of the north and south, could an essential lesson of this prophecy be to teach us that the world will be divided until the King of the North comes out on top, and there will be a significant danger that the people of God will be tempted to take sides?

If God's people would study the history of the sad consequences of taking the side of the King of the North against the King of the South in verses 13–15, they may be more cautious about taking sides in modern political movements. This history is as relevant as it could be for our day and age.

Take the Seventh-day Adventists Church, for instance. We have a particularly mixed record in our involvement in governmental affairs. Many of the Millerites and early Adventists were ardent abolitionists⁵⁹ and temperance advocates. So far from discouraging these things, Ellen White doubled down in her support of these issues to the point of advocating disfellowshipping a member who supported slavery,⁶⁰ voting on the Sabbath to support prohibition,⁶¹ and allowing women from the Women's Christian Temperance Union (who also happened to be advocating for a national Sunday law) to speak at our camp meetings.⁶²

⁵⁹ <https://www.nadministerial.com/stories/2020/6/18/the-seventh-day-adventist-pioneers-and-their-protest-against-systemic-racism>

⁶⁰ Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 358–360

⁶¹ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Lonely Years, 1876-1891*, Vol. 3, p. 161.

⁶² Ellen White, *Pamphlets* 136.10

Furthermore, the Adventist church has been vigorous in its campaign against Sunday legislation to the point of A. T. Jones testifying before the United States Senate on the issue.⁶³ For these reasons, many members have felt justified in becoming involved in whatever political matters they think are important. However, they fail to consider two things: the Adventist Church no longer has a living prophet to steer its members through the complexity and deceptiveness of political issues, and there are several examples in history when Adventists got political stances terribly wrong.

Adventists can look back with a sense of right that their church took a strong stand against slavery. However, its history is equally covered with the shame of church members becoming involved in genocide,⁶⁴ and whole conferences openly supporting the likes of Adolph Hitler⁶⁵ and actively disfellowshipping faithful members for no other reason than being Jewish.⁶⁶ Many other churches actively supported Hitler. How could Christians get so caught up in blind patriotism and devotion to a cult-like leader that they would actually participate in one of the worst atrocities of history? This history should warn us that we can get political involvement horribly wrong at times.

This warning is clearly brought out in the history behind verses 13–15. We have already seen the parallels between verses 5–15 and verses 40–45. As the many details of verses 5–15 are repeated in verses 40–45, could the issue of God's people taking political sides, as brought out in verse 14, also be repeated in the final battle between the King of the North and the King of the South?⁶⁷ I firmly believe that this is exactly what is happening now.

⁶³ You can read the arguments that Jones actually gave to the Senate via this link:
<https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Tracts/RLT/RLT1892-102.pdf>

⁶⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/feb/20/rorycarroll1>

⁶⁵ <https://adventist.news/news/europe-german-austrian-churches-apologize-for-holocaust-actions>

⁶⁶ <https://www.adventistreview.org/the-same-sabbath-as-the-jews>

⁶⁷ There are clear warnings about how not to be involved in politics in the last days:

“There is a large vineyard to be cultivated; but while Christians are to work among unbelievers, they are not to appear like worldlings. They are not to spend their time talking politics or acting as politicians; for by so doing, they give the enemy opportunity to come in and cause variance and

Some Interpretive Possibilities that Studying the Hellenistic Age Has For Us.

For me, the first thing that I started to notice as I studied the history behind verses 5–15 was that though this prophecy appears to be purely military and secular sounding yet, the greatest threat to God’s people at this time was not a military one at all—it was a spiritual one.

As we have already studied, Greek culture was immensely attractive to God’s people at the time.⁶⁸ To the point where, in order to participate in the gymnastic exercises, Jewish boys were willing to undergo genital deformation so as not to stand out from other Greek boys who were not circumcised.⁶⁹ Some Hebrews tried to adopt Greek drama and even made a play about Moses.⁷⁰ By the time the Maccabean revolt broke out, it was as much a civil war as it was a war for independence. It was a war between those who wanted to “modernize” Judaism and assimilate Greek practices and those who wanted to keep their traditional ways. The Greeks conquered more by their culture than they did by the spear. Whether their cultural conquests were intentional or not is beside the point; the historical reality is that Greek culture was so powerful that its influence permeated far beyond the geographical and time boundaries of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires.

discord. *Those in the ministry who desire to stand as politicians **should have their credentials taken from them**; for this work God has not given to high or low among His people...* Ellen White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 483, emphasis supplied.

⁶⁸ The Jews actually earned the reputation of being among the most zealous fans of Greek literature among the various peoples of the world at the time. Abraham Schalit, *The Hellenistic Age, Political History of Jewish Palestine from 332 B.C.E. to 67 B.C.E.*, page 6

⁶⁹ The ancient Olympics and other Greek sports were performed naked. As such, Jewish boys who participated would stand out because they were circumcised.

<https://www.popsci.com/story/science/weirdest-thing-foreskin-ties-zoo-poop-dimples/>

⁷⁰ Ezekiel, the Dramatist of Alexandria, composed the *Exagōgē*, which was a Greek-style drama of the Exodus with Moses as the main character.

In light of this history, we can clearly see that though the prophecy appears to be strictly dealing with secular events, the history definitely reveals that the most critical thing that happened at this time was not the military conflicts but the spiritual and cultural battles.

For decades there has been a debate whether we should interpret the last five verses of Daniel 11 in a mostly literal sense or a typological sense. If the last five verses are truly paralleled to verses 5–15, they should address literal military conflicts with far more important cultural and spiritual conflicts taking place behind the scenes. If they are indeed paralleled to verses 5–15, then the most critical point of all would be how it affects God’s people and how it affects them spiritually and culturally. For me, it was too obvious as I studied the history of verses 5–15 that though most all agree that they are literal military conflicts, yet, the spiritual and cultural wars which took place at the same time were too significant to be ignored.

So to me, looking at Daniel 11 through the lens of the history of verses 5–15, we should understand the prophecies of this chapter to be describing literal military conflicts but at the same time implying a deep spiritual war and meaning behind the scenes—the prophecies have a literal application with a spiritual implication.

The other interpretive possibility brought out by studying the Hellenistic history of verses 5–15 is that instead of seeing the King of the North and King of the South as being restricted to whatever power happens to occupy specific geography, or instead of changing the biblical hermeneutic from literal to spiritual, the time-of-the-end King of the North and King of the South could be the cultural decedents of the “Sons of Greece.” As was brought out in the “Hellenism in Daniel 11” section of this paper, the tendrils of ancient Greek culture have become entwined in multiple aspects of our modern world.

The Ptolemies and Seleucids are no longer in power today. But their culture, philosophies, and vying for influence over us continue to this day and will continue until the tribulation. This is as relevant to us in our time as anything possibly could be. When we turn on the news, we see and hear the aforementioned powers' cultural descendants fighting each other over who will influence you the most. When you log into social media, you can quickly notice a bitter war between the cultural descendants of the kings of the north and south, and God's people are caught between.

Whose side are you on?

Who in the time of the end could be the particular heirs of Greek culture that will play a role in last-day events?

If the last-day King of the North and King of the South are indeed paralleled to the King of the North and King of the South of verses 5–15, then they would both be persecutors of God's people, but they would be long-standing enemies to each other. In my companion paper, "The Significance of Hellenism in Daniel 11," I point out the many modern ideas and groups that had their origin or a significant revival in ancient Greece. I could not help but notice very quickly how the majority Adventist view of Daniel 11 (which views the time of the end King of the South as some version of communism, atheism, secularism, etc.) fits well with viewing the King of the South as a descendant of Greek culture. Communism, atheism, and secularism are all products of ancient Greek philosophy. In particular, the King of the South had the most striking parallels to communism, as I brought out in the "Relevance of the Hellenistic History to Our Day" section of this paper. Though I personally don't hold this view, yet even I could not ignore these apparent parallels. Also, this majority view sees the last five verses in a spiritual way. That would agree well that the most important thing about the literal Syrian Wars was not the battles themselves but the deep spiritual battles with God's people, which were happening behind the scenes.

As mentioned in the first point, if the last five verses are paralleled to verses 5–15, it should involve literal secular wars but have profound spiritual implications. The neo-Uriah Smith view is definitely good at seeing literal secular wars in Daniel 11. I would be interested in hearing from someone of this persuasion just how the deeply spiritual implication is supposed to come out with this view in verses 40–45 the way it did in the history of verses 5–15. The one way that I could think of was that any major war in which Palestine was involved would immediately set off a chain of events of worldwide importance. Evangelicals, Muslims, Catholics, and Jews all hold Palestine and Jerusalem in grave importance. Any significant events there could easily set off worldwide spiritual challenges to God's people.

The other prominent view in Adventism is the Islam interpretation. Though often thought of as a modern reaction to headline news, this view has been around for a long time.⁷¹ This view also could benefit from seeing the time-of-the-end King of the North and King of the South as the heirs of the Hellenistic Kingdoms. Both this view and the majority view see the papacy as the King of the North. In the section on "Hellenism in Daniel 11," I brought out the many ways the papacy is indeed a cultural descendant of ancient Greece. So, what about the King of the South? In my paper, "The Significance of Hellenism in Daniel 11," I bring out many parallels between Islam and Alexander the Great and how Islam, like Catholicism, has been influenced by Greek philosophy and science. Tim Roosenberg, in particular, sees the last five verses as having both a literal and

⁷¹ H.C. Lacy at the Bible Conference of 1919 stated: "The king of the south is, of course, the Mohammedan powers." <http://www.adventistarchives.org/docs/rbc19190716>, 360

Thomas Parker (1595-1677) of Newberry, Massachusetts, may have been one of the earliest expositors to view the KOS as the "Mohametans." Coming to verse 40, Parker says: "Now by those expeditions, and especially by the last against the Turks and Sarasins in the East, the King of the North, that is, Antichrist, rushed against the Mahometans like a whirlwind, with Charets and Horses, and with great fleets or with many ships, and overflowed and passed thorow. At length he came into the Holy-land (as they call) or into Judea, called the pleasant land, many Countries falling under him. He came into the Holy-land, at the last term of his inundation." Leroy Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. 3, p. 74

spiritual meaning. This agrees well with the parallel of verses 5–15. There are very literal, secular wars, but the important things were the spiritual and cultural battles behind the scenes.

There may be a benefit for all the major views to study more closely the history of verses 5–15 and how the last-day “Sons of Greece”⁷² may be playing a larger role in last-day events than we have previously thought.

Conclusion

There is much to learn from the leopard portion of the Antichrist. The leopard prepared many of God’s people to reject the Messiah at His first coming, and the leopard will do it again before Christ returns. Studying the leopard may give us interpretive insights into the more controverted portions of Daniel 11. At least, if nothing else, it gives us powerful spiritual lessons in the time of the end.

If I were a Jew in the times of the wars between the kings of the north and the south, I would definitely have been tempted to side with the King of the North. Do you remember what happened to those who supported the King of the North? If they thought they had it hard under the King of the South, it was nothing compared to the King of the North. But, then, they thought that they would have it better under their own kingdom. They ended up becoming like the King of the North in their compromises with paganism and persecution of the people under them.

⁷² Dr. Sutherland uses this phrase to describe the antagonists of the “Sons of Zion” in the final showdown between those who have learned pure truth at Jesus’ feet and those who have mixed Greek-pagan wisdom with Christianity (*Living fountains or Broken Cisterns*, p. 212). As Henry Main stated: “Except the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin.” Will Durant, whom I have referenced in this paper repeatedly, has an entire chapter titled, “Our Greek Heritage.” In his classic book, *The Life of Greece: [The Story of Civilization #2]*, he reveals the myriads of ways in which Greek culture permeates the modern world. So today, the world is divided in its interests, yet, the philosophy and culture of ancient Greece could be said to have made most ideologies and institutions of the modern world the “Sons of Greece.”

The political divide in the world was reflected by a divide in the church. All these political divisions in God's church back then united to crucify Jesus. I understand that all that happened back then is happening now and will continue to happen. So, while I have opinions, I know that my focus must never be on the warring factions but rather on Jesus. By beholding, we become changed.

Amid the divisions of the world and the church came Jesus. He was the only true answer to all their divisions, arguments, and problems. So it is today.

“The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago--a revelation of Christ...”⁷³

He was the answer then, and He is the answer now. He is our example in everything:

“Jesus had nothing to do with the various subjects of dissension among the Jews. It was His work to present the truth. His words shed a flood of light upon the teachings of patriarchs and prophets, and the Scriptures came to men as a new revelation. Never before had His hearers perceived such a depth of meaning in the word of God.”⁷⁴

So, a snake was in front of me, coming towards me. As I was backing up, I noticed another snake from behind me, coming toward me. A steep bank of dirt was on my left side. What could I do? Where could I go? I fled to the only remaining place—down the hill on the right. I am obviously here today. But why? Because that one place that I fled to worked. Today with the cultural wars in the world, with all the various factions in the world and in the church who constantly vie for our attention, there is only one safe place for us to flee. That is exactly where I want to go. How about you?

⁷³ Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p 142

⁷⁴ Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 253, emphasis supplied

Appendix

Compatibility of This Paper with the Neo-Uriah Smith View

In the process of writing this paper, I have shared it with friends of each major genre and asked for feedback. This is my third paper submitted to the Daniel 11 Conference. My first paper was mostly appreciated by the Islam View. The second paper was mostly appreciated by the Neo-Uriah Smith View. This paper is mostly appreciated by the Majority View. So, each paper appears to appeal to each of the major genres. To be honest, I did not write this paper with the intent of appealing to any one view. Rather, I wrote it for the purpose of appealing to each view to study more carefully the agreed-upon portion of verses 5-15 and to see what that may teach us spiritually today and how it may help us all better understand the more controversial sections.

To my surprise, my friends of the neo-Smith view felt that this paper contradicted their view. It was definitely not written for such a purpose. I was told that I was changing hermeneutical rules and not seeing the prophecy as literal. This puzzled me as I have high regard for Uriah Smith and find his book, *Daniel and the Revelation*, to be the most Christ-centered book on prophecy to this day. The second paper that I wrote was for the purpose of defending Uriah Smith from what I felt were unjust attacks.⁷⁵ Though I don't agree with Smith in certain details, yet I do not see this paper as completely incompatible with Smith's view or in any way changing the hermeneutic. So, I decided to write this appendix to explain how this paper can be compatible with Smith's teachings by making only slight modifications to his view.

Upon further discourse, I asked how my paper was in any way changing the hermeneutic or incompatible with Smith's interpretation. The answer was that my

⁷⁵ Were's Assumptions and the Truth, <http://www.daniel11prophecy.com/conference-papers1.html>

paper portrays the conflict of the last five verses as a conflict of the KON with the KOS as it is in verses 5-15. To me, this was taking a natural and consistent reading of the text. To do otherwise seemed to me to be changing the hermeneutic. However, to take what I feel is the natural reading of the text would put my paper at variance with what Smith taught about verse 40, as he believed it involved a triangular war where the KOS and KON don't fight each other but rather a third party. Nevertheless, after rereading Smith, I feel that his narrative could still fit into a two-way war.

So, what makes the KOS the KOS, according to Smith and the other pioneers?

Egypt is still, by common agreement, the king of the south, while the territory which at first constituted the king of the north, has been for the past four hundred years wholly included within the dominions of the sultan of Turkey. To Egypt and Turkey, then, in connection with the power last under consideration, we must look for a fulfilment of the verse before us.⁷⁶

For Smith and the other Adventist pioneers, the KOS is whoever so happens to be in control of the land of Egypt. This creates some difficulty in matching the historical narrative to the text. Nevertheless, who was in control of Egypt in 1798, according to Smith?

The downfall of the papacy, which marked the termination of the 1260 years, and according to verse 35 showed the commencement of the time of the end, occurred on the 10th of February, 1798, when Rome fell into the hands of Berthier, the general of the French. On the 5th of March following, Bonaparte received the decree of the Directory relative to the expedition against Egypt. He left Paris May 3, and set sail from Toulon the 29th, with a large

⁷⁶ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 302

naval armament consisting of 500 sail, carrying 40,000 soldiers and 10,000 sailors. July 5, Alexandria was taken, and immediately fortified. On the 23rd the decisive battle of the pyramids was fought, in which the Mamelukes contested the field with valor and desperation, but were no match for the disciplined legions of the French. Murad Bey lost all his cannon, 400 camels, and 3,000 men. The loss of the French was comparatively slight. On the 24th, Bonaparte entered Cairo, the capital of Egypt, and only waited the subsidence of the floods of the Nile to pursue Murad Bey to Upper Egypt, whither he had retired with his shattered cavalry, and so make a conquest of the whole country. Thus the king of the south was able to make a feeble resistance.⁷⁷

The KOS to Smith was Murad Bey, a leader of the Mamelukes. Why was he considered the KOS? Was he a literal descendant of the Ptolemies? Was he a cultural descendant? It could be argued that by virtue of their practice of Islam that they were cultural decedents of the Ptolemies because the Ptolemies developed a Hellenistic culture, and Islam derived many of its philosophies and understanding of science from Hellenistic culture after they acquired the writings of the Greeks by conquering Egypt and taking the famous library of Alexandria. But here, we want Smith's and the Adventist Pioneers' point of view. To them, what makes the KOS the KOS is not his culture, heritage, or philosophies but his geographical location. A. T. Jones stated it best when he said, "...whatever power might occupy these respective territories would be the king of the north or of the south." (*The Bible Echo*, Vol. 11, June 8, 1896, 171.)

So, who occupied Egypt in 1798? Murad Bey, according to Smith. However, he was driven out of both the ancient Ptolemaic capital and the capital of that day (Alexandria and Cairo) by Napoleon. So, by A.T. Jones, Smith's, and the other pioneer's definitions, Napoleon, instead of being some third party, should really

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, page 304

be the current KOS because he was the current “power” that occupied “these respective territories.”

There is another way to look at it. If you want to be technical, Egypt was a domain of the Ottoman Empire, so to be accurate, before the invasion of Napoleon, the lands of the KOS and KON were under the same government. True, Murad and Ibrahim Bey were acting as rebels to the Ottomans, but the land was still technically the Ottomans.⁷⁸

Can rebels become the new KOS and KON because they temporarily steal some territory? Not according to verses 5-15. The KOS and KON were not based on whoever just so happened to be in control of the geography of Egypt and Syria. They were the living kings of the Seleucids and Ptolemies. During the Third Syrian War, Ptolemy III managed to take the Seleucid capital in Antioch, Syria, and much of Babylonia. Though many scholars claim that he was grossly exaggerating, Ptolemy III left a monument in modern Eritrea that claimed that he conquered Mesopotamia, Persia, and as far east as Bactria.⁷⁹ The native Egyptians rebelled, forcing him back to Alexandria.⁸⁰ Otherwise, he may have completely conquered all Seleucid territory.

The native Egyptians rebelled several times, yet, they nor any one of their leaders ever became the KOS in the prophecy. The fact is that both the Seleucids and Ptolemies were not restricted to the geography of Syria and Egypt. They were both dynasties of large empires spanning many countries and

⁷⁸ There is plenty of debate among historians as to the role of Egypt during this period until the demise of the Ottoman Empire in 1922. Egypt never actually became a regular province of the empire (Chahinda Karim, *Ottoman Cairo: Religious Architecture from Sultan Selim to Napoleon*, page 168), and the ruling Mamelukes remained influential in the area clear to the time of Muhammed Ali, who would become famous for helping to fulfill the prophecy of Revelation 9:15. Yet through it all, Egypt was technically a part of the Ottoman Empire. Egypt’s relation to the rest of the Ottoman Empire remained complicated, and in light of these facts, it may be overly simplistic to say that Murad and Ibrahim Bey were the “King of the South” at the time of Napoleon’s invasion.

⁷⁹ Adoulis Inscription, Translation taken from (<http://www.attalus.org/docs/ogis/s54.html>)

⁸⁰ The Hellenistic Age Podcast, Episode 54: Ptolemaic Egypt – Berenice’s Lock and the Gates of Babylon, transcripts notes, p. 10

happened to have their capitals in Antioch (Seleucids) and Alexandria (Ptolemies). As in the aforementioned Third Syrian War, a KON or KOS can even lose their capital temporarily but still be the KON or KOS, not by virtue of geography but by virtue of their dynasty and culture.

In spite of Jones' and Smith's understanding, verses 5-15 do not tie down the KOS nor the KON to geography. As a matter of fact, the text never once ties the KON in particular to any geography. In history, the capital of the Seleucid Empire moved three times⁸¹. However, it does associate the KOS with geography:

“And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.”⁸²

The Ptolemies were Macedonians who were heavily influenced by Greek culture and took on several Egyptian customs to try to legitimize themselves in the eyes of their subjects. Also, notice that the text only states that the KOS would carry their gods into Egypt. It in no way restricts the KOS to Egypt. It simply states a fact without forcing a precedent that the KOS must always be whoever happens to rule Egypt.

During the reign of Ptolemy III, the Ptolemaic Empire not only reached the zenith of its power but it reached the zenith of its territorial expansion.⁸³ Ptolemy Euergetes lost most of his gains in Babylonia and Syria, but he expanded his domains to include the coastal cities of Thrace and the Hellespont (modern-day Dardanelles)⁸⁴. Control of this very important territory gave him more influence in the region and over the important grain shipments from the Bosphorus to Attica. It

⁸¹ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, page 195, 200

⁸² Daniel 11:8

⁸³ The Hellenistic Age Podcast, Episode 54: Ptolemaic Egypt – Berenice's Lock and the Gates of Babylon, transcripts notes, p. 7

⁸⁴ Adoulis Inscription, Translation taken from (<http://www.attalus.org/docs/ogis/s54.html>)

also gave him more northerly territory than anything that the Seleucid Empire possessed at the time or since until the expansions of Antiochus III.

So, once again, the geography of the KOS and the KON is complicated, and the text nowhere indicates that either the KOS or the KON are solely identified by whatever power may just so happen to be in control of Antioch and Alexandria. Even the literalist A. T. Jones states that the descendants of the Diadochi inherited not only dominions of land but also the same spirit of their forefathers.⁸⁵

It is true that the very phrases King of the North and King of the South indicate directional terminology which applies to geography, but there are many reasons for which you may call something north or south. For example, Nebuchadnezzar is stated to come from the north (Ezekiel 26:7). However, it is literally due east of Jerusalem and southeast of Tyre (Tyre was the point of reference in the aforementioned text). Why would Nebuchadnezzar be said to come from the north when he was due east from Jerusalem and southeast from Tyre? Because there was a great desert directly between Babylon and the Cole-Syria. Most armies of the ancient-settled kingdoms could not traverse large deserts and would usually take routes following rivers where they could obtain water. This is a major reason that the early Muslim conquests were so effective—the Muslim forces employed camel troops who could traverse this very region and other deserts, and so could attack their enemies from unexpected areas.⁸⁶ So, when Nebuchadnezzar and other civilizations east of the Euphrates attacked Cole-Syria, they followed the Tires and Euphrates northward and would then descend southward into Cole-Syria to either send their troops or ambassadors. Thus, it appeared to the inhabitants of Palestine that armies from Assyria⁸⁷, Babylonia⁸⁸, and Persia⁸⁹ were from the north.

⁸⁵ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, page 195

⁸⁶ “Thersites the Historian” Arab Conquests, 632-750, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14Q276sIbaw>

⁸⁷ Zephaniah 2:13

⁸⁸ Jeremiah 25:9; Ezekiel 26:7

⁸⁹ Jeremiah 50:9; 51:48

How about the south? Notice what Jesus said:

“The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”⁹⁰

This queen of the south was the queen of Sheba (2 Chronicles 9:1). Ethiopian tradition and Josephus claim that she was from Ethiopia. Other legends claim that she was from other far-flung places such as China. Many scholars today claim that Sheba was an ancient kingdom of modern-day Yemen.⁹¹ Either way, the point is that the word “south” is in no case always tied to Egypt. It can apply to any territory south of where the prophet was writing or south of one location in the narrative to another location in the narrative. Once again, there is nothing in Daniel or anywhere in the Bible which restricts kings from north and south to any specific kingdom or geography. The designations are used quite broadly in the Bible.

So, back to Uriah Smith and how his view is not incompatible with seeing verses 40–45 as a conflict between the KOS and KON. Notice what Smith says:

At this juncture, however, the situation of Napoleon began to grow precarious. The French fleet, which was his only channel of communication with France, was destroyed by the English under Nelson at Aboukir; and on September 2 of this same year, 1798, the sultan of Turkey, under feelings of jealousy against France, artfully fostered by the English ambassadors at Constantinople, and exasperated that Egypt, so long a semi-dependency of the Ottoman empire, should be transformed into a French province, declared

⁹⁰ Luke 11:31

⁹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Queen-of-Sheba>

war against France. Thus the king of the north (Turkey) came against him (France) in the same year that the king of the south (Egypt) “pushed,” and both “at the time of the end...”⁹²

By Smith’s own admission, Egypt was a semi-dependency of the Ottomans. That would make Egypt technically part of the territory of the KON. But Smith also admits that Egypt was becoming transformed into a French province. If we are strict with Jones’ and the other pioneers’ geographical definition of the terms KON and KOS, then both the Ottomans and Napoleon could be considered the KOS because they both controlled Egypt. So, with just a slight modification of Smith’s view, you could see the last five verses of Daniel 11 as a conflict between the KOS and KON:

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south (Napoleon) push at him (the KON): and the king of the north (the Ottomans) shall come against him (Napoleon who was at this time the KOS according to the Pioneers’ definition) like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.⁹³

Historically, you could say that Napoleon was the culprit who started the trouble and pushed against the Ottomans. It is a favorite of world leaders to debate who gets the blame for starting wars. But Napoleon was obviously the aggressor. He initiated the attack on the Ottoman territory of Egypt and then up into Palestine. As such the Ottomans responded, and with the help of the English, eventually drove Napoleon out of Palestine and Egypt.

There are some rough edges to this interpretation, but there are also several rough edges to Smith’s original interpretation, the chief of which is identifying the

⁹² Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 304

⁹³ Daniel 11:40 with my inserted words inside ()

KON and KOS by simple geography. This is not my personal interpretation of the text. I simply share it to point out that seeing verses 40–45 in context with the rest of the chapter as a conflict between the KOS and the KON is not entirely incompatible with Smith’s view. Even the most ardent supporters of the Neo-Uriah Smith view disagree with Smith on some points. Smith himself changed his mind on the fulfillment of verse 45⁹⁴ and the identity of the Willful King of verse 36⁹⁵. So, by seeing what I feel that the naked text appears to say that the last five verses are a conflict between the KON and KOS, this paper can be compatible with Uriah Smith’s view, though to do so, it would need to adjust some of Smith’s details.

⁹⁴ A significant article by Uriah Smith published in the *Review and Herald* of May 13, 1862, with the title “Will the Pope Remove the Papal Seat to Jerusalem?” explains what was “headline news” at the time. There was evidently at the time a desire of the French to secure Jerusalem for themselves and the Papacy. Uriah Smith, in commenting on this news, asks the following question, “Is not the above item significant, taken in connection with Dan. XI, 45?”

⁹⁵ In the *Review and Herald* of September 6, 1864, Elder J. N. Loughborough answered a write-in question to the review asking about the identity of the “he” of Daniel 12:6, 7. In the answer to this question, Elder Loughborough explains Daniel 11:30-36 as applying to the Papacy. Verse 36 describes the “Willful King.” Elder Smith was the editor at the time and let Elder Loughborough answer the question thus. The question was directed to either Loughborough or Smith. The fact that Smith could have answered the question seems to indicate that he did not object to Loughborough’s interpretation. This would make sense because many other Millerites and Adventist Pioneers also understood the Willful King to be the Papacy, such as William Miller, Hiram Edson, and James White. Smith also published other articles by different authors who supported the view of the Willful King as the Papacy e (*Review* of June 19, 1860, and the *Review* of April 4, 1865). Smith obviously objected to these views later and supported the interpretation of Josiah Litch, who believed that the Willful King of verses 36-39 was Revolutionary France.