

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

An Introductory Note Regarding the divisions between Chapters 10, 11 and 12.

Stephen Langton, the English Cardinal and Archbishop of Canterbury between 1207 and 1228, is credited with having divided the Bible into arrangement of chapters used today. Many scholars including this author have major disagreements with how he went about this, and the last 3 canonical chapters of Daniels are a good example of why. They all concern one vision that obviously spanned several hours in Daniel's life, but is nonetheless one single experience. It is this author's belief is that a better separation point between Chapters 10 and 11, if such a division is necessary, would be better between verse 1 and 2 of 11 and not where it currently exists. A more detailed explanation will be included as the text itself is examined.

Vision of the Glorious Man

10 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.

Daniel opens with a clear start point, “*the third year of Cyrus king of Persia*”, however we have 3 different options of which his “*third year*” was. Cyrus the Great (600–530 BC) was the second King of Persia with that name and ruled from 559BC. Our first date for his “*third year*” therefore could be 556BC.

At the time Cyrus became king of Persia, Astyages was the King of Media and overlord of Persia who Cyrus had to pay homage to. In 553 Cyrus rebelled against Astyages and, according to the Nabonidus Chronicle, after three years of fighting, Astyages' troops mutinied during the Battle of Pasargadae in 550. As a result, Cyrus conquered the Median Empire and folded it into Persia as a client state, but retained much of its culture as a form of dual-monarchy. Eventually it would be absorbed into the Persian

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

Empire and is not generally remembered other than by historians. 549, therefore, is the year that Cyrus became overlord of the Medo-Persian Empire, and, therefore, 546 is a second option for Cyrus' "*third year*".

After becoming the dominant power in the combined Empire, Cyrus began a conquest of Lydia, but dates are difficult to pin down. It must have been between 550 and his conquest of the city of Babylon in 539. Most historians agreed that around 547 was the best date but this has become disputed. Cyrus encouraged the citizens of Ionia, the region surrounding the city of Ephesus in West Turkey, to revolt against Lydia, which was rebuffed, and Cyrus marched against the Lydians. As he went, he tried to collect local forces while the Lydians sent for aid from their allies. Being late Autumn, locals were reticent to fight for a leader they had previously rejected and the following Battle of Pteria in 547 was effectively a stalemate, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. Notably, some sources have Cyrus outnumbered around 5:1 and was still able to hold his position to an indecisive result. Numbers were still not in Cyrus' favour before the battle of Thymbra in December of the same year, but the Median General Harpagus convinced Cyrus to put the camels that carried his baggage train in a defensive formation around his less armoured troops. The Lydian Cavalry, smelling the unusual beasts, scattered in fear and were decimated. The resulting victory routed the army with an estimated 20:1 casualty rate in favour of the Persians. The Lydian capital, Sardis, fell about two weeks later and Lydia was absorbed into the Persian Empire also.

A short-lived revolt occurred when a man named Pactyas choose to hire mercenaries instead of take the Lydian treasury back to Persia, and Cyrus had to spend some time putting that conflict down. The majority of the next five years was spent conquering Asia Minor even moving across the Hindu Kush Mountains and into India.

By 540BC, Cyrus had conquered Elam, situated on the Persian Gulf leading to the modern Iraq/Iran border. Shortly before the final siege of Susa, modern day Shush in Iran, Babylonian priests removed their cult statues back to the city of Babylon, indicating that war with Persia was already under way. What caused this war is somewhat unclear but as Cyrus had conquered most of Babylon's vassal states and moving on a very weakened city now seemed to be easy. After consolidating his forces, he moved north to circle around Babylon and fought the Battle of Opis, routing

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

Nabonidus' army on the Tigris River. A short time later, on 12 October, Cyrus' army was able to enter the city of Babylon in events described in Chapter 5 of Daniel and supported by both Herodotus and Xenophon. The third option for Cyrus' "*third year*" is, therefore, 536BC, as this would relate to the third year that he was king over Daniel.

Dating the start of this triple-chapter, from the "*third year of Cyrus king of Persia*", therefore has 3 options:

- the 3rd year of his personal reign, 556BC,
- the third year of his combined reign of Media and Persia, 546BC or
- the third year of his reign in Daniel's time, after the Babylonian conquest, 536BC

These are complicated by the reference in verse 20 "now I (that is the messenger) must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come" and again in verse 1 of Chapter 11 saying "Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him".

Personally, I prefer the 556BC date because it positions these events in the early reign of Nabonidus and shortly before they come to fruition, but that is entirely personal preference. This date works because the Messenger's statement that he "*must return to fight with the prince of Persia*" can be interpreted that he is going to support the Persian Prince, but the fight has not yet begun. A revolt of the type staged in 556 would have taken several years to prepare for both logistically and tactically and with the messenger of the Living God in his ear, such preparations could be made precisely. This also matches my preference of interpretation of the identity of Darius the Mede, who is a historical anomaly.

Although no historic figure named Darius the Mede can be pinned down, his events match very clearly with Cyrus the Great as detailed in the last 2 verses of Chapter 5: "*30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.*" Being born in 600BC, 539 makes him 61 but we are talking about late in 539 so an early birth would put him around 62 years of age. Furthermore, the first verse of Chapter 11, "*Also in the first*

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

year of Darius the Mede, I, even I (that is the messenger), *stood up to confirm and strengthen him*” would take place shortly after these events were written.

This also matches a form of interpretation of Daniel 6:28, “Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, **and** the reign of Cyrus the Persian”, to read “Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, **even** the reign of Cyrus the Persian”, making them the same individual. The use of double names not unusual historically and it is most likely that Cyrus was his Persian name and Darius his Median. Regnal names of this type are very common, the most famous current one being Pope Francis I who's birth name was Jorge Bergoglio. King George VI was known as 'Bertie' by his family (his first name being Albert), Ramesses II is often called Ozymandias in ancient Greek sources and Emperor Augustus was born Octavian. Different names are often political, used for different purposes and at different times. Cyrus most likely used the name Cyrus when he was addressing his Persian subjects and the name Darius when talking about Median affairs.

Although we have gone to pains to find this date, pinning it down is rather irrelevant to the interpretation of these Chapter except to say that it refers to a time when Cyrus the Great was king of Persia.

2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. 3 I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Daniel opened by saying that he believes what he saw, “[t]he message was true” but that it would not happen for a long period of time; “*but the appointed time was long*”. Daniel recognised what he saw and “*understood the message, and had understanding of the vision*” but what he saw terrified him. What he saw was devastating and he knew that it would not be a good experience for his people over a very long period of time, similar to his experience in Chapter 9 about 34 years later. It is clear that for three weeks he was in a deep depression, shattered by what he saw.

This warrants the question; what did he see? The text recorded here is simplistic and can be seen as some evidence of Daniel's horror at the events he saw. The fact that he chose not to include details of the events that unfolded clearly demonstrates that he

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

was moved to not want his readers to experience the similar horror but his rationale for writing it, that “[t]he message was true”, is enough for him to pen this text. It is possible that this is a reference back to seeing the events of Chapter 9 again and that he is reliving that experience, but that is unclear.

4 Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, 5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! 6 His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

The Babylonian and Jewish calendars matched to some degree with the year beginning in early Spring, meaning that when Daniel was walking beside this great river we can imagine a warm breeze or a chilly wind. The man, clothed in linen is rather appropriately dressed for this time of year and the girdle or large waist band that he is wearing, a normal fashion for the time, is said to be made of gold of Uphaz.

This 'gold' is most likely the colour of his garment and not literally made from gold, although cloth of gold was not unknown at that time. Uphaz has given scholars some concern with the only other reference being in Jeremiah 10:9 and of similar reference as a place that produces quality goods. Some speculation is that this relates to the port of Ophir mentioned in Kings and Chronicles as similar references are made to the Gold of Ophir equating to that of Uphaz. Ophir's products were so good that they were used in the building of Solomon's temple; regular shipments are referred to in 1 Kings 10:22 and recent pottery translations prove its existence, making it a likely candidate for Uphaz.

Alternatively, similar names have been found from colonies in Yemen and India making it possible that Uphaz is a reference to goods of extremely high quality coming from a distant land where their quality is recognised. We would today, for example, speak highly of French cheese or Swiss watches without specifically naming a location or producer. That could indicate that the designs and style of this garment are recognisably foreign.

All in all, the recognition here should be that this person is dressed in high quality garments and Daniel acknowledges that. Wealth equated to status and access to information and knowledge at this time, which puts this person in a position of authority worthy of respect the equivalent of a politician or university lecturer in today's world.

Who is the Man in Linen?

The identity of this man is peculiar and worthy of evaluation. For the remainder of this text I will refer to him as the 'messenger' but his identity is worth considering. The detail mentioned in Daniel's text is clearly intended to make the character recognisable to the reader, probably drawing upon a previously established description in Ezekiel's writing. The fact that these descriptions are similar, often quoted as a demonstration of plagiarism, is intentional to make it relatable to the reader.

Ezekiel 1 describes the four creatures that stand around the throne with similar language to this description including that the *“soles of their feet... sparkled like the colour of burnished bronze”* (vs 6) and that *“their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches ... and ... [t]he fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning.”* (vs 13) writing later about the individual sitting on the throne above these four creatures, he adds that an individual appeared *“with the appearance of a man”* (vs 26) with *“the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the colour of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.”* (vs 27) Although these are clearly not the individual mentioned in Daniel, the similarities of the language clearly are drawing from a unified language pool. Daniel is attempting to make the references relatable, not to make them out to be the same person.

A much clearer similarity, however, appears in Revelation 1 when John describes who he knows to be Jesus. John's and Daniel's texts share striking similarities that warrant much deeper analysis.

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive
Vision of the Glorious Man

Daniel 10		Revelation 1
<i>a certain man</i>		<i>One like the Son of Man</i>
<i>clothed in linen,</i>		<i>clothed with a garment down to the feet</i>
<i>waist was girded with gold of Uphaz</i>		<i>girded about the chest with a golden band</i>

Both are clearly identified as men. Daniel refers to “*a certain man*” man which would indicate his identity may be known to both the author and reader without naming him. If I was to write, for example, “we all know a certain man who died for our sins” any Christian would recognise the reference to Jesus Christ. While this obviously looks like a nod-and-wink to the reader, time has made the identity of this “*certain man*” unclear, and we can no longer be sure who it is. On the other hand, this reference could be simply Daniel paying homage to this individual's authority; giving him the respect that is due to the message coming from the Divine.

John the Revelator, on the other hand, knew Jesus personally and was able to relate to the reader who he was directly. There is no ambiguity here, this person looked like he remembered the “*Son of Man*” to be. In John's description, nothing is said of the garment's material and the girdle and band are effectively the same.

Furthermore, the two descriptions of the faces are, functionally, the same.

<i>face like the appearance of lightning</i>		<i>countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.</i>
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Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

The question of if these are the same or different is not easy. Lightning is a bright, white light while the sun is plausibly the reflection of the other orange flames of candlesticks surrounding the Son of Man. As will be gone into in more detail in the body description, these are not, necessarily, different but different perceptions of the same thing.

No mention		<i>head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow</i>
<i>eyes like torches of fire</i>		<i>His eyes like a flame of fire</i>

Although their eyes are equated; torches are large flames, the hair and face are referenced in one or the other text. The omissions are not contradictory, and we can only draw the conclusion that these two characters are similar from this.

<i>body was like beryl</i>		No mention
<i>arms and feet like burnished bronze in colour</i>		<i>His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace</i>

Beryl can come in a wide variety of colours but typically references a rich, sea-green or emerald colour. This body colour is not mentioned in John's revelation.

However the colour of the legs and feet is the only, apparent, difference between the two texts. Brass and bronze are different metals, both copper alloys but with different mixtures of other metals to make different colours. Bronze is typically a darker, richer

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

colour more akin to brown, while Brass is a lighter and more gold colour. Both are described as clean; polished and fine, meaning there is no green oxidation.

There are many plausible explanations for this apparent contradiction, the most obvious being that they are two different people. However, we must be practical in this analysis. In John's case, the Son of Man is being described as walking around amongst a candlestick, bathed in light and Daniel is seeing his person across a river. They could be seeing somewhat different impressions of the same person from different perspectives with different lighting.

<i>the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.</i>		<i>voice as the sound of many waters</i>
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Again, these are, effectively, same description, a cacophony of sounds. Multitudes of water are a vast collection of different types of sounds that hit the ear at the same time just like a multitude of voices in a crowd are indecipherable from each other. These metaphors are practically the same.

No mention		<i>in His right hand seven stars</i>
No mention		<i>out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword</i>

The inclusion of these in Revelation and not Daniel relates directly to what John discusses and are irrelevant to Daniel's story. Their omission is therefore also irrelevant.

These two are extremely close and it is debatable if Daniel had seen Jesus before, although he does refer in other places that he is able to identify the Son of Man. It is not impossible to say that Daniel saw Jesus in this moment. What is clear here is that the name Gabriel is not mentioned, unlike in Chapter 8.

My Opinion of Who the Man in Linen Is

What must be reviewed here, in the context of the other portions of the text, is just how important this message is and, therefore, who would be authorised to carry it. In Chapter 8, Gabriel, the Archangel who replaced Lucifer after his fall, gives a message to Daniel and explains it, but this vision goes far beyond the context of that text.

My interpretation is not a hill I will die on, but one that makes sense to me. I record it here for advisory purposes. As stated, throughout the remainder of this text, I will refer to this individual as ‘the messenger’ but in my opinion, the explanation given here is done by the Holy Spirit, not Jesus. This conclusion resolves around 2 factors that; that Jesus and Michael are the same person, and that Michael is clearly referenced as a separate person from the messenger. The connection between Jesus and Michael is described in my Revelation analysis as well as reproduced in a separate essay, so for the purpose of this text it will be taken as read.

The fact that elements of these two individuals described here and in Revelation are highly similar but marginally differently described draws the plausible inference that they are different people. Irrespective of the discrepancy, the remainder of the language, as compared with Ezekiel above, puts this individual on a similar level with Christ, as does the fact that he is described and not named as God has no name.

Why the Messenger Cannot be Michael/Jesus

There are 4 primary examples of the referencing Michael or Jesus as a separate person to the messenger, and a further example in Chapter 12, all of which I will walk through here. Firstly, in verse 13, the messenger stipulates that “*the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. 14 Now I have come to make you understand.*” The messenger was spending his time with this king of Persia before Michael came to assist. Michael is therefore explicitly not the same person as this messenger, although his involvement in this matter does not diminish his military prowess. Indeed, if we assume the 556BC date is accurate for these chapters, then this messenger’s position is more understandable as a diplomatic

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Vision of the Glorious Man

or logistic influencer toward Cyrus before the military influence of Michael is necessary when the revolt itself starts. The fact that he says he has been left '*alone*' with the Kings of Persia also demonstrates both the lack of immediate importance of Cyrus as his place in history has not yet started and the importance of this messenger who would be given the responsibility of shepherding a character named in Isaiah 45, some 150 years before he was born.

“15 When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. 16 And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips” and *“18 Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me.”* both describe a different person to the messenger speaking to Daniel with the particular description of having the “likeness of the sons of men” and the “likeness of a man”. The first one is exceptionally close to the common title for Jesus, the Son of Man, while the second is a broader description. The point here is that Daniel describes them at all! The fact that he does not simply say “the messenger touched me” makes the appearance of either this person or these people noteworthy enough for Daniel to bring it into the story. As we find in Chapter 3, there are in fact 3 people in this place at this time.

In verse 20, the messenger makes another comment that clearly identifies he and Michael as two separate people, but then goes on to make an interesting qualifying comment at the start of Chapter 11. *“20 Then he said, “... now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia... 21 No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.”* The messenger says he is going back to help with the fight, and that Michael is the only one standing with him. As detailed above, Cyrus' revolt was against the most powerful nation of the time; the Median Empire, and was unlikely to succeed. However, during these few years before the revolt was launched, psychological and logistical campaigning was underway to prepare. When the fight came, the messenger implies that he was facing the onslaught of the universe and only Michael could help him. Again, this points clearly to a separation between the Messenger and Michael.

In Chapter 12, the messenger opens with a reference to Michael beginning a military campaign in his own right, *“12 At that time Michael shall stand up”*. This contrasts with the Messenger becoming involved in events, such as when he opens Chapter 11

saying “*Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.*” The Messenger is clear that, when He is involved in events, He will record such references while when Michael is involved, he records that in the third person.

Return to Identifying the Messenger

It is very clear that the Messenger and Michael are separate people, but the question of identifying the messenger still remains. In Chapter 12, when Daniel snaps out of his vision or out of what is shown to him, he takes a moment to look at his situation. “*5 Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?”*” There are clearly 3 people in this situation: one on either river bank and another floating above the water. The one floating - the messenger - is the one that is questioned of the other two. This can be an indication that he is in some position of authority over the others, or at least having more knowledge.

Three is a holy number in Judaism but it also gives credibility and support to the others in the little group. This messenger had been said to be 'alone' for quite a period of time and is now taking a break from his duties to be with Daniel. We also know that what Daniel saw scared him, and it could have been natural for Daniel to believe this person to be a demon rather than divine if he was alone. Three, together, can support each other and ask open questions like is done here.

“*7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.*” The fact that this individual swore by God would indicate that he is not, himself, a member of the Godhead. However, the messenger swore by “Him who lives forever”, a term generally applied specifically to God the Father. If this individual is the Holy Spirit, he is not swearing by the Godhead but by his counterpart, the Father.

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive

Continuing the Chapter

If this is an Angel, then it must be one of the very highest caste to be able to influence the greatest of characters in the historic story. An alternative member of the Godhead makes more sense to me considering the language used here. When Michael is referred to here, he is referred to as an equal with a different job; like an English teacher speaking of a Maths teacher. Two people with different jobs that are on an equal footing. It just makes logical sense to me for that this messenger is the Holy Spirit.

As clearly stated, this is my opinion, not a hill I'm prepared to die on and makes no practical difference to the interpretation of the text. As explained above, it simply makes more sense to me. My analysis is based on the author being Daniel in the 6th Century BC and, so long as the messenger is from Heaven and an agent of God, the identity of the messenger makes no difference. I will go so far as to say that there is no evidence for this character to be a divine one, simply a messenger from heaven. Therefore, I will call this individual the 'messenger' for the remainder of the analysis.

Continuing the Chapter

7 And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. 8 Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigour was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. 9 Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

Being in his 50s here, and one of the senior members of the Babylonian kingdom, the fact that he is not alone is not unusual, but Daniel puts himself at some risk here. He stipulates that he “*alone saw the vision*” and his compatriots “*fled to hide themselves.*” Daniel was unable to draw on their experiences if questioned later to explain what happened or to support his memory of events. It is somewhat unlikely that the others would have been able to see a vision in Daniel's head, but nevertheless he was unable to share the experience with them. Daniel himself was clearly shocked and devastated by the events he saw, saying that he had no strength and fell into “*a deep sleep*”. This was most likely a fainting episode as one's adrenaline generally rises and sleep becomes impossible when one is afraid, so we can rephrase this as “I passed out”. Yet,

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive
Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

he was still able to hear the words spoken to him and was able to understand. In reality, what we have here is Daniel being taken into vision in a similar form as John the Revelator or Ellen White.

Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

10 Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. 11 And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. 12 Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

The messenger revives Daniel and brings him to comprehension by simply touching him, and Daniel kneels before him. Importantly, this character does not say “stop kneeling before me” like other times, because Daniel is not worshiping this person. He is kneeling in front of him because he was unconscious and is requested to stand, not chided for being on his knees. This does not let us draw any inference regarding the divinity or not of the messenger.

The messenger also says that he “*I have now been sent to you*”. This is an interesting way of saying it, God had to rearrange his plans entirely because Daniel was having trouble understanding some weird stuff. The fact that Daniel persevered, set himself to comprehend the words of the Lord and humbled himself before God in prayer, as we saw him do in Chapter 9, meant God was willing if not eager to explain the visions to him. Daniel received the understanding he was so eager for, and that understanding troubled him. There is a good sermon in this simple statement on the power of prayer, I'm certain, but I'll leave it to a more skilled scholar.

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. 14 Now I have come to make you understand what

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive
Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

The statement here is that the prince of Persia “*withstood*” this messenger for 21 years before Michael was called in to support him. What influence this messenger is trying to move Cyrus to or from here is not stated, and it's also not relevant. What is made clear is that Michael's support was required and was brought into play with this. We can infer that it is some kind of military decision but that is speculation.

What we can also speculate on is peering into the battle of influences between God and Satan over the minds and purposes of these mighty men. The prince of Persia has a choice to make, whether he knows it or not. This is a simple glimpse of the battle of wills that happens in the minds of men, and it appears that, from this reference, Michael is coming to win that battle. This brief window is not expanded on, and is left for us to ponder, as is the question of why this is included in the text here as it makes no bearing on the message. It certainly demonstrates a lack of polish on the part of the author and publisher, but as we will see, these three chapters have sacrificed much of that polish in the name of precision.

Unlike Nebuchadnezzar's dreams and other revelations of Daniel, he did not include the original message here. We see no dragons and monsters, just the explanation and Daniel stipulates that this messenger has come “*to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days*”. The original message that troubled Daniel so much he “*ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled*” is shrouded from us. That's not a big issue for our interpretation, but it is an interesting thing that Daniel did not feel it necessary to include the earlier vision.

What this messenger does make clear is that the things in the vision are not as immediate as the other ones he and other prophets have had. This one is “*what will happen to your people in the latter days*” and that it refers to events “*many days yet to come*”. The messenger is clearly making the point that these events are going to take place over a very long period of time, which immediately becomes apparent when he opens Chapter 11 with the idea that “*three more kings will arise in Persia*”. The expected reign of a king would still have been a minimum of 10 years, many times that

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive
Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

for an empire of the power of Persia. Part of Daniel's troubles, we can speculate, is the sheer time that his people would have been under the lash of enemies.

15 When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. 16 And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. 17 For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.” 18 Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. 19 And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!”

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

Whether intending to or not, Daniel clearly admits his humble situation before this individual, as stated above, a different person in this trio. Daniel refers this person to as his “*lord*” admitting his subservience and questions him about he will be able to commune with these beings without any strength or the ability to function. But through a simple touch, Daniel was strengthened. The vision he was about to experience and understand would take the strength of the divine for him to endure.

20 Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. 21 But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

Chapter 11 “Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)

The Chapter ends by establishing the introduction to the following vision. As stated, chapters 10, 11 and 12 should not be separated as all but is in fact one story and the messenger makes that clear here. He needs to “*return to fight with the prince of Persia*”. The word “*with*” can imply, as stated above, to struggle to influence him to not succumb to the Devil's plans or it can mean to assist in preparing for the oncoming

Chapter 10 – The Messengers Arrive
Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

battle when he launches his revolt against Astyages. The latter seems more appropriate with Michael, the head of the heavenly army, being his support.

This messenger foreshadows that following Persia will rise the state of Greece, linking to what he had, at this time, already told Nebuchadnezzar in Chapter 2 and had been revealed to himself in both Chapters 7 and 8. In the late 6th Century BC, Greece was in its ascendancy, but was still a disparate collection of city states starting to establish themselves. Alliances were temporary and unity was circumstantial, but the Grecian civilisation thrived. However, to say that “*the prince of Greece will come*” is quite a stretch for the extremely proud and divided city states. To say it will be the next great empire was absolutely ludicrous and, as discussed in Chapter 8, conflicts with Persia would be constant before Alexander the Great rose.

The messenger says, clearly, that he will explain “*what is noted in the Scripture of Truth*” implying that the original vision being here explained was written down, but lost to history. Although it would have been a fascinating read, the explanation has been preserved and why the original wasn't is a question for the other side of Heaven.

Finally, as stipulated above, Chapter 11 starts with the commentary that this messenger came to “*confirm and strengthen*” “*Darius the Mede*”, the name Cyrus took when he became the King of Persia. This gives us a starting point - the reign of Cyrus/Darius and that is where Chapter 11 will take up from.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The 11th Chapter can be extremely complicated in trying to interpret it so to make it easier I will begin every explanation with the dates involved and who the King of the North and South are along with any changes. The reasons will be explained throughout, and, considering we are dealing with ancient sources and events, many of the dates have a small margin. The date of Alexander the Great's death, for example, is well known, but the end of the Diadochi Wars is highly debatable.

Warring Kings of North and South

2 And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.

Date: 530 - about 465 BC.

The interpretation of Daniel's unseen vision starts off giving some scope. Daniel glosses over 3 kings and moves to a fourth. Often interpretations of Daniel focus around local kings and small events or jump immediately to Antiochus IV and try to make everything about him. By simply having "*three more kings*" be a footnote for this text, Daniel clearly is recognising the size and broad timeline that we will be looking at throughout this chapter.

Upon his death in 530 BC, Cyrus was succeeded by his son, Cambyses II, and then by his second son Bardiya in 522. Bardiya was quickly overthrown by Darius the Great in the same year who then ruled until October of 486 BC. The overthrow threw parts of the empire into chaos and caused unrest amongst several allies which Darius had to put down. He restructured the empire into administrative provinces governed by Satraps and standardised the currency by minting gold Darics and silver Sigloi. These measures meant taxation and money raising were streamlined, swelling his power. Notably, Darius issued the decree to rebuild Jerusalem detailed in Ezra 6, that started the 70 Weeks prophecy of Daniel 9.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Warring Kings of North and South

In 492 BC, Darius launched the first invasion of Greece by Persia to punish Athens and Eretria for supporting Ionia and others in their revolt early in his rule. Parts of Macedon were recaptured but his attempts at Greece were crushed at the famous Battle of Marathon, after which the race is named.

Darius' only established power and the mechanisms for wealth but was not able to reap the gains himself before his death in 486 BC when he was succeeded by his son, Xerxes I. After crushing small, local revolts in Egypt and Babylon, Xerxes led a massive, multinational army into Greece to avenge his father's defeat in 480 BC. As well depicted in recent Hollywood blockbusters, this army was, effectively, a slave army of subjugated troops who fought because they had no alternative or as well-paid mercenaries. Xerxes, "*by his strength, through his riches,*" stirred "*up all*" the nations he controlled "*against the realm of Greece*" in a way that his father could only dream of.

The text here also makes an inference that is demonstrated in History. Xerxes was able to "*stir up all against the realm of Greece*" but was unable to win victory. As established in Daniel 2, 7 and 8, Greece was the next nation that would arise and Xerxes' conquest of it would make that somewhat difficult. Xerxes' attempts to subjugate Greece came to humiliating defeat, first at the battle of Thermopylae where 300 Spartans and maybe 2 thousand other Greeks would hold the entire Persian army and later at the Battle of Platea where the Greeks soundly defeated the Persian invaders.

When analysing history, we must rely on ancient sources regarding numbers and compositions of these battles. Modern historians believe these to be rarely accurate. In this case, however, we can be somewhat sure that the 300 Spartans is an accurate number considering its fame through the ages. Numbers regarding the Persian forces are much less accurate, as Herodotus suggested as many as 2 million troops while more modern estimates range from 120,000 to 300,000. Either way, the poultry 2,000 to 7,000 Greeks should have stood no chance and yet they held the Persian onslaught for several days. Herodotus puts the numbers at the Battle of Platea at 300,000 Persians against 110,000 Greeks although modern estimates lower this to 70,000 - 120,000 Persians against 80,000 Greeks. While Persia did win some

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

important victories, such as sacking and burning Athens, the Greek ultimate victory against overwhelming odds is extremely impressive.

Also noteworthy, this ‘stirring up’ did not end with Xerxes, with the Greco-Persian wars lasting until about 449 BC. Debate still rages amongst scholars about the treaty known as the ‘Peace of Callias’ and no consensus as to why further conflict between Greece and Persia did not arise after the Battle of the Eurymedon. A series of wars broke out amongst the Greek city-states especially between Athens and Sparta, ultimately leading to the Treaty of the Common Peace in 338–337 BC under Philip II of Macedon, ostensibly to unify Greece in an effort to conquer Persia. Persia was no less dysfunctional, with several kings assassinated and several Satraps’ revolting during the early 4th Century and constant conflict in both the Babylonian and Egyptian client states.

By presenting things in this way, Daniel establishes how he intends to act and write the events of this vision, concentrating on the dominant powers that rule and control the world. What we will also come to find is that these are, like Daniel 2, 7 and 8, all powers that rule over Jerusalem and have strong influence in Jewish affairs. Cyrus the Great, for example, was the ruler who permitted the Jews to rebuild the Temple and the conflict with Greece leads into the next conquest. The internal conflicts between city-states and internal revolts had little impact on the Jews and, from Daniel’ s perspective, can be ignored.

3 Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.

Date: 336 - 323 BC.

Alexander the Great, one of the greatest generals of history now steps into Daniel’ s story. No other contender for this position arises within the few hundred years and no other has his empire broken upon his death.

Succeeding his father in 336, Alexander turned the power of the Hellenic League to its established purpose and invaded Persia in 334, crushing that power at the battles of

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

Issus and Gaugamela. The battle of Gaugamela, fought on 1 October 331 BC, is still regarded as one of the greatest victories of all time, with ancient sources claiming as many as 1 million Persians were defeated by 47,000 Greeks in a spectacular use of more modern tactics and weapons. Having secured Asia Minor, including Israel and Egypt, Alexander turned his attention to the wider world, conquering as far as the Punjab in modern North India where his army mutinied in 326 BC. Famously Plutarch is often misquoted as saying that ‘when Alexander saw the breadth of his domain, he wept for there were no more worlds to conquer’ .

Alexander’ s conquests are too numerous and far outside the scope of this analysis to go into in any further detail. One notable anecdote, however, comes from Josephus when Alexander approached Jerusalem. Josephus records that:

“when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest’ s direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests. And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended.”

(Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 11, Chapter 8. Available From: <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0146%3Abook%3D11%3Awhiston+chapter%3D8%3Awhiston+section%3D5>)

Josephus’ reputation as a historian is generally accepted although, for some reason this passage is generally considered a fabrication. If it is true, it demonstrates the importance of Daniel’ s writings as early as 336 BC, some 230 years before the earliest carbon-dated copies we have.

4 And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

Date: 323 - 300BC.

It is debateable but often claimed that Alexander never lost a battle. After the mutiny he returned to Babylon where he started to reorganise his empire. He executed several of his governors and fixed a variety of administrative and mutinous problems before receiving the Persian treasure hoard. His closest confidant and possibly lover, Hephaestion, died in the Median capital Ecbatana which devastated Alexander and he ordered a massive funerary feast and the erection of an enormous Pyre in Babylon. Alexander celebrated the feast with his army on May 29, 323 BC, and began planning a series of Arabian conquests to keep his depression over the death of his dearest friend in check.

There are three primary theories regarding Alexander's death. Tradition holds that he became sick after drinking two large goblets of Babylonian wine, a particularly strong beverage that reputedly only the Gods could imbibe more than one mouthful of. (Diodorus Siculus, Library of History, Book XVII, Chapter 117, Section 1. Available From:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Diod.+17.117.1&redirect=true>)

Although this is preposterous on its face, a second theory of poisoning has been presented by Leo Schep from the New Zealand National Poisons Centre. In a 2003 BBC documentary he suggested that white hellebore or arsenic may have been mixed into his wine as either added flavour or an assassination attempt. This suggestion was not new as Diodorus, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin all mentioned the theory that Alexander was poisoned, some dismissing it. As Alexander died between 11 and 14 days after becoming ill, Typhoid Fever, West Nile disease or even Malaria are much more likely causes than poisoning. During that time common soldiers and senior generals alike marched past his sick bed to pay their respects and the Empire's leaders began debating its future after his death.

Alexander's wife, Roxana, was pregnant at the time of his death and the boy would be christened Alexander, but he would be assassinated in 310, when he was about 13. The regency was never going to be a success and the resulting Diadochi (successor) Wars lasted until about 275BC. Negotiations for the Partition of Babylon in 323 and Partition of Triparadisus in 321 had as many as 50 generals involved but conflict but

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

were eventually reduced that to four. Cassander centralised his power in and around Macedon while Lysimachus held the remainder of Greece. Ptolemy took Egypt and adopted its culture while Seleucus took the remaining are of Asia Minor and what once was Persia. The empire that Alexander attempted to forge, an amalgam of the various cultures that he had conquered passed into history and Macedon' s place has been completely supplanted by the combined Greece, despite Alexander' s Macedonian pride never diminishing.

To this end we can clearly say that Alexander' s *“kingdom (was) broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity (his children) nor according to his (Macedonian) dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.”*

The phrase *“the four winds of heaven”* can be considered to be a euphemism but is also valid as a specific reference. After his death, Alexander' s empire was divided amongst his 4 senior generals and to a collection of smaller princes but did not remain that way, as we will shortly see. This phrase can be seen either as the four senior generals remembering that winds always have light breezes away from the main, or as a reference to the scattering of his empire toward ununified powers. As tradition has always held that it refers to his four generals, Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy, I will include this here, but it really makes little difference in the broader analysis if it is just a turn of phrase.

5 “Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

Date: 323 - 300BC.

King of the North: Selucus I Nictor

King of the South: Ptolemy I Soter

This verse typifies the problem with interpreting the history of Daniel. The repeated pronouns become confusing quickly and can be interpreted a variety of different ways. This complication is multiplied when considering the number of languages that these

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

verses have been translated through. A statement like “*king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes*” raises the question of who the ‘his’ in “*his princes*” refers to. It can refer to the King of the South and one of his subordinates, or it can refer back to Alexander the Great and one of his subordinates. This is even more complex when we say who ‘he’ and ‘him’ are in “*he shall gain power over him*”. It clearly relates to the prince or the king, but deciding which is which requires some deep analysis.

Let me put this another way, first, let’s rewrite these 2 verses in some slightly simpler English.

“Alexander the Great’s kingdom was split amongst 4 kings. The king of the south became strong. One of his princes also became strong.”

In English, ‘One of his princes’ would refer to one of the King of the South’s princes, but ancient languages generally treat clauses as independent. ‘One of his princes’ could refer to the King of the South’s subordinates but could equally refer to one of Alexander’s other princes. Ambiguities of language like this are very common amongst ancient scripts and this is not unique to Daniel or the Bible; it’s part of what make ancient translation so difficult.

This ambiguity can also help us get out of trouble. There is no question of where in history we are, we have clearly identified that we are immediately after the breakup of Alexander the Great’s empire.

Before we try to layer history on Daniel, let’s be extremely clear about what this verse says so we know what we are looking at when we find it and rewrite the English more clearly as we go. I have made clear what I have changed from the NKJV script. We’ll add in Verse 4 for context and, as we have already identified some of the players, the King of the South, so let’s put them in there for convenience’s sake.

4 And when (Alexander the Great) has arisen, (Alexander’s) kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

(Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy), but not among his (Alexander 's) (children) nor according to (Alexander 's) dominion (Greece/Macedon) with which (Alexander) ruled; for (Alexander 's) kingdom shall be uprooted, even for (the other Greek States) besides these.

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

Firstly, “*and he*” is simply a continuation of the previous subject, “*One of his princes*”. There is no contradiction or separation of the clause here that would make it a reference to the “*King of the South*”, in fact using “*and*” makes it a continuation.

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of his princes (who) shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

The next thing the verse says is that this prince “*shall gain power over him*”. We must ask who the ‘his’ when we read “his prince” and then we have to ask who he will get power over. In English this would be easy, but in ancient script, we need to do a little digging. The easiest way to do this is to plug some names into that gap and see what we get and we have only 2 names to choose from, which makes this pretty easy. What makes this even easier is that Alexander and his empire are no more. So really, the question is, who’s prince is going to conquer Ptolemy; Alexanders or Ptolemy’s?

This sounds complicated so let’s rewrite it again.

Both

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of (Ptolemy 's) princes (who) shall gain power over (Alexander) and have dominion.

and

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of (Alexander ' s) princes (who) shall gain power over (Alexander) and have dominion.

make no sense. Alexander is dead with no dominion. His dominion has already been “*broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven*”. These two can be eliminated.

So this verse either reads:

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of (Ptolemy ' s) princes (who) shall gain power over (Ptolemy) and have dominion.

or

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of (Alexander ' s) princes (who) shall gain power over (Ptolemy) and have dominion.

Both of these are plausible, but the first one is somewhat unlikely. If one of Ptolemy' s generals or children revolted, why would he only “*have dominion*”? Dominion means conquest but leaves the original power intact. Why wouldn' t he kill him and take the throne for himself, leaving a threat to his power? It' s certainly not impossible, but it is illogical.

So this brings us to a most-likely interpretation as far as a plain-text reading of this passage goes.

4 And when (Alexander the Great) has arisen, (Alexander ' s) kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven (Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy), but not among his (Alexander ' s) (children) nor according to (Alexander ' s) dominion (Greece/Macedon) with which (Alexander) ruled; for his (Alexander ' s) kingdom shall be uprooted, even for (the other Greek States) besides these.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
Warring Kings of North and South

5 Also (Ptolemy I) shall become strong, as well as one of (Alexander' s) princes (who) shall gain power over (Ptolemy) and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

Now let's look at what history teaches us and see if that fits with Daniel. Throughout this analysis, this is the method taken when interrogating passages, although it is only included here in full as an example. The reader can certainly undertake this exercise at their leisure.

Unfortunately, the Diadochi Wars are very complicated and involve a lot of characters so we will simply focus on the important points.

At the outset, Ptolemy was already the Satrap or governor of Egypt and held that area. He also had the body of Alexander buried in Memphis, giving him prestige. That area was not seriously under threat during the following conflict although Ptolemy made moves to try and keep ground in various parts of Macedonia, Greece, Syria and Israel. By the end of the conflict around 300 BC, his holdings in Greece and Turkey were small and, generally, weak.

Another of Alexander' s generals, Seleucid, was able to spend time making and breaking alliances to conquer practically all of the other portions of Alexander the Great' s domain over time. Although many of the very far east provinces were left to fall to local control, Babylon and Syria were held outright by Seleucid while Macedon, Turkey and Greece were shared between allies of the Ptolemy and Seleucid. It is extremely fair to say that Seleucid' s “*dominion (was) a great dominion.*”

Seleucid, therefore, easily fits the bill for the one of Alexander' s generals who becomes strong with a great dominion. The power and dominion he exercises over Ptolemy are the subject of much of the next 10 verses of the chapter, referred to by historians as the Syrian Wars.

From this point forward, we' re going to take it slow and explain the history, but won't go through the same detail as this analysis for brevity's sake.

Date: 300 - 274 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus I Soter (Saviour)

King of the South: Ptolemy II Philadelphus (Ptolemy Sibling-Lover/Lover of his Brother)

Daniel is clear about some time passing, meaning that we have moved our Kings forward a little. The “*end of some years*” is more or less covered by the above fighting. It’s noteworthy that throughout this chapter, Daniel is dealing in very literal language and therefore this is not a symbolic number of years.

In 285, Ptolemy made a son, Ptolemy II, co-regent after a struggle with his older brother. Ptolemy I’s eldest, legitimate son, Ptolemy Ceraunus (Thunderbolt), fled to the court of Lysimachus, one of his father’s allies. When Ptolemy I died in January 282 aged 84 or 85 and Ptolemy II Philadelphus, which can either mean Sibling-Lover or the one who loves his brother (and in this case both are true), took the throne. It is important to note that the term, Philadelphus, is not intended to be derogatory as Ptolemy II married 2 of his sisters, confusingly both named Arsinoe, and tried to work well with the rest of his family.

Ptolemy Ceraunus was involved in a variety of court intrigues before assassinating Seleucus I in 281 BC and becoming King of Macedon. He ruled for seventeen months before his death in battle against the Gauls in early 279 BC.

Seleucus I was succeeded by his son, Antiochus I Soter (Saviour), whom he had appointed co-ruler the year before. Antiochus was the last known ruler to be attributed the ancient Mesopotamian title ‘King of the Universe’, mostly because the infighting during his reign made it clear that his rule was not uncontested. Relations with India remained friendly but the separation between the powers became more and more acute as time went on. Trade between India and Syria was expanded, but any plans of reconquest seem to have been finally abandoned during his rule.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

So the King of the North is now Antiochus I Soter and the King of the South is Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

6 ... they shall join forces...

Date: 274 - 253 BC.

The phrase “*they shall join forces*” can be interpreted two ways; either as joining in battle or as uniting together to a common end or to some common purpose. Throughout the majority of Daniel both are true as he focuses on what historians refer to as the 6 Syrian Wars, taking place from around 274 to 165BC. The events in this verse are the start of those wars.

It is important to remember that Daniel’ s perspective is only about the forces that controlled or strongly influenced Jerusalem specifically and the Israelitish people in general. The major geopolitical players and their interactions are important but other places, like China for example, had neither influence nor impact on Daniel or his people and interpreting things to relate to that country is vast stretch. It is very easy to get lost in the historiography of this time, so this is an important guide.

The Syrian Wars

As was rather common for the time, when Antiochus I inherited the throne a rebellion broke out that took some time to crush. These left him in a strong position and gave him his soubriquet, ‘Soter’ or ‘Saviour’ after using Indian war elephants to bring the Gauls to his side instead of simply crushing them. He then turned his attention to the Levant, the modern states of Syria, Lebanon, Northern Iraq and Southern Turkey. This area was under Ptolemaic control but had been disputed since the breakup of the Alexandrian Empire. The borders and resultant taxes on trade hampered the Seleucids and their natural move was for conquest to remove Ptolemaic control from norther Syria and Turkey.

As stated above, the succession crisis between Ptolemy II and Ptolemy Ceraunus made him and the Egyptian empire appear weak and divided while Antiochus II’ s struggles

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

were mostly external after securing his throne. Antiochus II, as some extra backup, made an alliance with Magas of Cyrene, Ptolemy II's maternal half-brother and king of Cyrenaica, modern day Libya, to Egypt's West, directly threatening Ptolemy II's heartland. With that secured, Antiochus II invaded and Ptolemy moved troops to combat the threat, but neither side seemed to have wanted a serious war at this time. Nevertheless, the skirmishes and minor sieges were sufficient that when both sides fell back, Antiochus II had to effectively rebuild his army while Ptolemy was in a strong position. Ptolemy had conquered more than he had when the war started and was in a position to counter Magas' invasion of Egypt of 274BC.

A peace agreement in 253 BC between Antiochus II and Ptolemy, finally brought this war to a close, but will be discussed in the next few verses.

6 ...for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.

Date: 253 - 246 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus II Theos (The Divine) ->

Seleucus II Callinicus (The Beard)

King of the South: Ptolemy II Philadelphus (Ptolemy Sibling

Lover/Lover of his Brother) ->

Ptolemy III Euergetes ("the Benefactor")

Daughter of the king of the South: Berenice Phernophorus

("Dowry Bearer") aka

Berenice Syra, the daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

Following the peace agreement of 253 BC to end the Second Syrian War, Berenice was sent north to marry Antiochus II. He had divorced his then wife, Laodice I, and upon their marriage transferred the succession to Berenice's children. Berenice took the

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

name “Syra,” referencing the Syria that she was now queen of. This was a natural part of peace negotiations of the time, the “*agreement*” that she was intending to be a part of.

Bernice’ s sobriquet, Phernophorus (“Dowry Bearer”), is in reference to the exceptionally large dowry that she brought to the marriage because of her advanced age. This, along with the theory that children from the marriage would rule both lands, adds new meaning to the idea that “*they shall join forces*”, uniting both lands, although this was never going to be easy.

Ancient sources imply that the marriage was entirely political as shortly after Ptolemy II died in 246BC, Antiochus divorced her and took back up with his ex-wife, Laodice I. She, therefore, did “*not retain the power of her authority*” as she was now separated from her role as queen.

Although there is some ambiguity about which ‘He’ is referenced, the last King of the North was Antiochus II Theos who also died in 246BC shortly after the re-marriage to Laodice I in unusual circumstances.

Understandably, Laodice I was upset about losing her position and considering the resistance across the Syrian Empire to the Egyptians, Laodice retained her influence multiplied by sympathy for her plight. To secure her position, and possibly as vengeance, it is highly likely that Laodice poisoned Antiochus shortly after their re-marriage, although sources are very light on these points.

Laodice had 5 children while Berenice only had 1, a boy also named Antiochus. Under the rules of the new marriage, and peace treaty with Egypt, Berenice’ child should inherit the empire after Antiochus II. The child could not have been more than 8 years old, meaning a regency would have been automatic. Thanks to the boy’s Egyptian heritage unsurprisingly there was a power struggle. Again, sources do not expand widely on the situation but by the end of the same year, 246BC, both Berenice and her son had been murdered. Naturally her personal guard, at the very least Egyptian leaning if not actual Egyptian soldiers, would have also need to have been eliminated in the struggle.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

The result was that not only was Berenice dead by the end of 246, but so were “*those who brought her, and ... him who begot her, and ... him who strengthened her in those times.*”

7 But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail.

Date: 246–241 BC.

King of the North: Seleucus II Callinicus (The Beard)

King of the South: Ptolemy III Euergetes (“the Benefactor”)

To say someone will come from “*a branch of her roots*” indicates that he is from the same family but not her children. Enter Ptolemy III Euergetes (“the Benefactor”) who was Bernice’ s brother and who took over after his father, Ptolemy II, died.

The Third Syrian War is often also referred to as the Laodicean War in respect to Laodice I who sparked it with her murder of Bernice and her son. Laodice instead put her son, Seleucus II Callinicus (The Beard), on the throne. He immediately found himself at war with Egypt. If Ptolemy III’ s own account is to be believed, he did not know that his sister and nephew were dead when they were deposed but was able to stir up enough Egyptian anger to bring a very large army to Antioch, encountering little resistance along the way. It was only when he arrived at the royal palace that he discovered their murders.

He then set about conquering Syrian holdings and recent cuneiform tablets have been discovered prove even reached as far as conquering Babylon; possibly intending it to be formally incorporated into his empire.

8 And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North.

At the time of writing, 18 July, 2023, the price of silver is \$1,182.94 per kg and gold is \$92,432.09 per kg.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

Records of what Ptolemy III carried into Egypt in 245BC account for some 40,000 Talents worth of Silver and some 2500 gold images which include both the Egyptian Gods lost when the Seleucids conquered Egyptian territories and the Seleucid Gods from Antioch and Babylon.

It is important to note that Ancient to Modern conversion is almost impossible, so we need to take an average of approximately 1 talent being roughly equal to 50kg.

For silver $50 \times 40,000 \text{ talents} = 2,000,000\text{kg}$ and if we assume each image of a god weighed a talent: $50 \times 2,500 = 125,000\text{kg}$

At today' s prices, that is approximately \$2,365,880,000.00 worth of silver and \$11,554,011,250.00 of gold, totalling \$13,919,891,250.00 in just this booty. This does not include the personal holdings of his army, nor the ransom value of the “*princes*” also captured.

To round this verse out, Ptolemy lived from 280 – 222 BC while Seleucus 265 – 225 BC. Ptolemy clearly lived longer, so it is very clear that “(*Ptolemy*) *continue[d] more years than the (Seleucus II)*” by about 3 years.

9 “Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land.

Date: 241–225 BC.

The speed of Ptolemy' s advance fractured the Seleucid Empire, and the result was that Seleucus II spent the rest of his life fighting wars of reunification. The forging of imperial power, however, paid off and by 225BC he was in a position to bring a sizeable army south. He retook a number of lost provinces and came to the borders of Egypt.

It was while on this campaign that Seleucus II died unexpectedly in 225 BC as the result of a fall from his horse, so he naturally “*return[ed] to his own land*” for burial.

10 However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.

Date: 225–221 BC.

King of the North: Seleucus III Callinicus (The Beard) ->

Antiochus III Megas Basileus (the Great King)

King of the South: Ptolemy III Euergetes (“the Benefactor”) ->

Ptolemy IV Philopater (Lover of his Father)

It’s important to note that “*sons*” does not necessarily relate to their direct issue in this context but can mean grandchildren or children down a lineage.

As the last ‘he’ referenced is Seleucus II Callinicus (Beautiful Victor), let’s take a look at his children:

Seleucus III Ceraunus (Thunderbolt) 243 BC – April/June 223 BC didn’t accomplish much in his 18-month reign. He strengthened the army but kept fighting his father’s war against Pergamum in modern-day Turkey. It appears his intention was to reclaim his father’s losses before he was assassinated in an Army Coup, although details are sketchy.

Nevertheless, in terms of “*stir[ing] up strife*”, preparing the army certainly would help to build the whirlwind.

Antiochus III Megas Basileus (the Great King) 241 – 3 July 187 BC learned from watching his brother get killed and strengthened his relationship with the army. He inherited a still disorganised state that was starting to fracture, and he had to find ways to reunify. The best for him to do was to point south at the old enemy, and paint them as a renewed threat.

Ptolemy IV Philopater (Lover of his Father) replaced his father by the time of this verse when Egypt had developed into a pretty juicy target. The vast wealth taken

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

earlier from the Selucid Empire along with substantial trade deals enabled the kingdom to become luxurious and lazy, lapsing into the usual politics of idleness.

Ptolemy IV' s mother had been murdered in a typical Palace Intrigue, and his generals and advisors were more interested in self-indulgence than preparing for war. This means Egypt, although appearing quite strong, was actually rather weak. We have seen in our own recent times that Generals who spend too much time in luxury can become tricked into overconfidence. The internal conflict amongst the aristocracy caused disquiet amongst the people making Egypt start to look like there was disquiet.

Antiochus III wanted to make the most of his situation and unite his empire in a purpose. To this end, in 221 he invaded the Levant and began attacking Ptolemaic Egypt' s territory. The Ptolemaic governor of the region, Theodotus, pushed back against his intrusion and Antiochus III was forced to instead move East and put down some rebellion in Media. In 219 Antiochus III tried again, moving down the seacoast and conquered many of the cities in Seleucia Pieria (Seleucia by the Sea on the Southernmost tip of Turkey) and Phoenicia, amongst them Tyre. His conquests probably stretched as far as the Egyptian border before he decided to hold and consolidate this new territory into his empire. This conquest was not unopposed but was exceptionally swift and the army that moved back to his territory, most likely the city of Tyre itself, was powerful.

From Tyre, Antiochus III engaged in a propaganda war against Ptolemy IV while also making moves to expand his already formidable army.

11 "And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy.

Date: 221 - 217 BC.

In response to this invasion, Sosibius, Ptolemy IV' s senior minister, began levying and training a force of both Greek and Egyptian troops.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

Ptolemy IV himself was upset about losing these northern conquests and Antiochus' propaganda describing him as a self-indulgent sloth. This seems to have prompted him to purge his generals and encourage Sosibius to recruit a MASSIVE army, possibly with the interest of defeating Syria once and for all. So far as possible, 218 BC was spent training and innovating new technology to prepare them to repel the invader before marching North.

The Battle of Raphia

Both armies campaigned in 217 BC and met mid-June near the small Syrian town of Rafah, about 65 miles or 107 kilometres from Jerusalem on the Southwestern point of the Gaza strip. Ptolemy IV' s army numbered 70-80,000 troops including 73 African Elephants while Antiochus III' s army was 60-70,000 troops and 102 Asian Elephants. The only known battle in which African and Asian elephants were used against each other and was one of the largest battles in the ancient world.

After 5-7 days of skirmishes and raids, Antiochus III arrayed for battle in the North and Ptolemy IV in the South. Coming from Greek backgrounds, both used similar tactics with a Phalanx in the Centre. Troops held 18+ foot long Spears and heavy shields and pushed against each other, hoping to break the enemy formation by pushing them apart. Because of the distance, there was much movement but few casualties. Phalanxes, however, were vulnerable to cavalry attack from anywhere but the direct front and, considering the length of the spears, were difficult to manoeuvre quickly.

Cavalry was used on the wings of the phalanxes with the intention of using them to strike the back of the enemy troops. Elephants were intended to stomp through and disperse cavalry and infantry but were vulnerable to faster moving cavalry. Antiochus III' s Asian elephants were described as being much larger and stronger than Ptolemy IV' s African elephants. In theory, the Asian elephants could be more imposing and do more psychological damage while the African elephants could move quicker and disrupt more troops. For this battle, both sides fielded elephants in front of their wings with the cavalry further out.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

To make things easier to follow, I have use East and West rather than Left and Right, with Ptolemy in the South and Antiochus in the North.

When Battle opened, Antiochus, who had position himself on his West flank, attacked and pushed Ptolemy' s wing back hard. Antiochus' elephants cause Ptolemy' s troops to fall into disarray and the Egyptian cavalry was badly dispersed. The Egyptian flank folded around to the rear of their centre while the Syrians attempted to engulf them.

On the East, Ptolemy's force attacked without their designated Elephants - who were scared at the sound of their brothers dyeing other flank - and pushed Antiochus' cavalry off the map, routing them.

Ptolemy took personal command of the Centre Phalanx, pushing their attack against the Syrian one, and the two became locked in combat. Antiochus, however, pursuing the Egyptian cavalry, believed the battle was won and didn' t try to get back to his centre until it was too late. The Egyptian cavalry on the east, returning after routing Antiochus' cavalry and filled with warlike vigour, struck hard at the rear of the Syrian centre, taking the pressure off Ptolemy. He was able to drive his Phalanx forward into the enemy, winning the battle.

The resulting losses were some 10,000 Troops, 1,000 Cavalry, 25 Elephants to the Syrians against only 1,500 troops, 700 Cavalry, and 16 Elephants from the Egyptian troops. Antiochus' force was still serviceable, but had to move out of the combat area smoothly before it could be routed.

12 When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.

Date: 217 - 204 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus III Megas Basileus (the Great King)

King of the South: Ptolemy IV Philopater (Lover of his Father) ->

Ptolemy V Epiphanes Eucharistos (the Manifest, the Beneficent)

After the victory at Raphia, Ptolemy was able to celebrate and continue to push Antiochus III north. Casualties from the battle alone were in the tens of thousands, but the mopping up operations after killed a similar number of troops. However, it was not long before Ptolemy's leadership team returned to their decadent ways, neglecting their borders. This was not immediate, but the text uses the future-tense "*will*" which we shall see in verse 14.

Several revolts broke out in Egypt that the generals were slow to respond to. Work on the now famous Temple of Horus at Edfu was stopped due to fighting between 207 and 206 BC and around that time the Egyptian forces were not positioned to respond to Nubian incursions. What sparked these uprisings is not clear nor is the cause of death of Ptolemy IV around mid 204BC, although one source of 900 years later, John of Antioch, does say there was a fire in the royal palace at that time.

With his death, Ptolemy V Epiphanes Eucharistos (the Manifest, the Beneficent) succeeded his father but was only 6 years old at the time meaning a regency council was running Egypt with all the associated politicking and power struggles that could have been charitably described as anarchy at several points.

13 For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

Date: 204 - 200 BC.

After Raphia, Antiochus III fell back and fought off several rebellions which were the natural result of losing a large battle in that time period. Raphia served as a rallying call for Antiochus, appealing to his empire that his claim the Egyptians were a severe

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

threat was justified. He held control of Jerusalem and Josephus is clear that he treated the Jews very well and was well received. He was able to use his propaganda machine to build a stronger army and conquered his way to the edge of India and Afghanistan. As a result, his army was very large and VERY rich with a mass of different technologies in it, battle hardened and tested before the next conflict with Egypt.

It bears mentioning at this point that everything up to this point is generally agreed amongst biblical scholars ends. From this point forward there are starting to be more differing interpretations.

Battle of Panium

In 202 BC, the Ptolemaic governor of the Levant, defected to Antiochus III who then invaded and occupied most of the province, including the city of Gaza. The Ptolemaic commander, Scopas of Aetolia, reconquered parts of the province during the winter 202-201 campaign, while Antiochus had moved back to Syria. Antiochus gathered his army at Damascus and in the summer of 200 BC he confronted the Ptolemaic army at the stream of Panium near Mount Hermon.

Antiochus fielded some 70,000 troops against 40-55,000 Egyptians who, owing to the internal conflict in that country were not as formidable troops as their Syrian opponents. The resultant Syrian victory was crushing with some sources suggesting half the Egyptian warriors were killed.

14 “Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. ...

Date: 200 -170BC.

King of the North: Antiochus III Megas Basileus (the Great King)

King of the South: Ptolemy V Epiphanes Eucharistos (the Manifest, the Beneficent)

The crushing defeat at Panium exposed the weak state of Egypt and both internal and external threats rose quickly. Antiochus III encouraged and funded a lot of these rebellions and kept pressure up by raiding the Egyptian borders regularly. He did not,

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

however, operate a wholesale invasion of Egypt due to the relationship growing between that country and Rome. We will discuss Rome more from verse 16.

Philip V of Macedon, who had just strategically withdrawn from its alliance with Carthage during the Second Punic War with Rome, allied himself with the Syrians. Philip had used the First Macedonian War against the Roman Republic, to help keep pressure on Egyptian holdings in Asia Minor, besieging Samos and capturing Miletus. This and his naval raids of the Egyptian coast were a contributing factor that led to the Second Macedonian War with Rome, who was an ally of Egypt at the time.

Such was the state of unrest in the country, the day after Ptolemy V's coronation, 26 March 196 BC, a synod of priests from all over Egypt issued the Decree of Memphis, also known as the Rosetta Stone decree, being the text engraved on the famous Rosetta Stone. It contained a number of tax concessions and notes about Ptolemaic victories over rebels but also demonstrates that the priests had substantially been empowered by the unrest and the weakness of Ptolemy's crown.

14 ... Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall.

Date: 200 - 63 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus III Megas Basileus (the Great King) ->

Seleucus IV Philopator (Father-Loving) ->

Antiochus (unnumbered) ->

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest)

King of the South: Ptolemy V Epiphanes Eucharistos (the Manifest, the Beneficent) ->

Ptolemy VI Philometor (Mother-Loving)

Early in his reign, Antiochus secured Israelitish support by resettling around 2000 Jewish families that were living in Babylon back to Jerusalem. He respected their religious rights to rule themselves, Josephus saying that they could live “*according to the law of their forefathers*” (Antiquities of the Jews, Book XII, Chapter 3) and in return they strongly supported Antiochus III.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

In terms of the text, we have to remember that this is an angel explaining things to Daniel - let us not forget the context - and so when he says “*violent men of your people*”, he is obviously referring to Daniel’ s Jewish compatriots who believed they were revolting “*in fulfillment of the vision*”. This relates to the rebellion of Judas Maccabeus, but we need to give some context.

Some timely context

Antiochus III drew the ire of Rome and was defeated during the Roman–Seleucid war of 192–188 BC. This was an extension of the Second Macedonian War between Macedon and Rome, the latter having come to the defence of Egypt. Antiochus invaded Greece with a 10,000-man army, led by the famous Carthaginian general Hannibal, in 192 and the next year the Roman Consul Glabrio routed his force at Thermopylae, forcing a withdraw to Asia Minor.

The defeat demonstrated Antiochus’ weakness and he immediately faced multiple rebellions, forcing him to spend the remainder of his reign putting them down. It was while fighting in Luristan that he was killed while pillaging a temple of Bel at Elymaïs, Persia, in 187 BC.

Seleucus IV Philopator (Father-Loving) was Antiochus III’ s second son who ruled for about 12 years before being assassinated by Heliodorus, one of his leading bureaucrats. He chose not to battle Rome, instead rebuilding the rump of the Syrian state and paying the reparations to Rome under his father’ s treaty. To fund this he raised taxes across the empire which is why the author of Maccabees mistakenly thought he was the king referenced in vs 20 of this chapter. As the rebellion has not arisen, that is not possible as neither history nor this prophecy jumps around in that manner. Otherwise, Seleucus IV’ s reign was combatively quiet.

Seleucus IV son, Antiochus, then took the throne at the age of 5, with Heliodorus as regent. Almost immediately his uncle, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest) began an illegal co-rulership and disposed Heliodorus for murdering his brother. Antiochus IV then wielded power which became sole on the death of his nephew in 170/169 BC, possibly at Antiochus IV’ s machinations.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

While Syrian kings were passing the throne down, in 180 Ptolemy V died and passed the throne onto his son, Ptolemy VI Philometor. Relations with Rome had fractured and diplomatic messages of congratulations regarding their victories had been ignored. Ptolemy V had spent the last several years of his life putting down revolts and was probably planning a new invasion of Syria at his death. Ancient historians allege that he was poisoned by his courtiers, who believed that he intended to seize their property to fund a new Syrian war.

His son, Ptolemy VI, was again only 6 years old when he was immediately crowned with 2 regents; Eulaeus and Lenaeus, appointed by his co-regent mother, Cleopatra I. Being a daughter of Antiochus III, she wished peaceful relations between Syria and Egypt and was probably murdered between 178 and 176 to allow preparations for war to start.

Civil wars and palace intrigue plagued Ptolemy VI even after he had taken the throne in his own right in 170. Power, most likely, remained with his 2 regents, now senior advisors, but who were unable to stem the push toward war with Syria. The conflict is described in the next verse.

Returning to the Text

Although Jewish traditions and rites had been respected by the Ptolemies and Syrians when they controlled Judea, Antiochus IV reversed this almost immediately on becoming king. It is unclear what was responsible for this change in his attitude, but what seems most likely is that there was a dispute over leadership of the Temple in Jerusalem and the office of High Priest. Such offices in other places were political and generated revenue for the crown while the Jewish tradition made it a family matter. It may have also been a minor revolt, the origins of which were lost to history after its crushing, that caused Antiochus to investigate the area's governance and he realised that changes could be made. Either way, in short order he issued decrees forbidding many traditional Jewish practices and began a campaign of persecution against devout Jews.

It should be stressed that the nature of these decrees and persecutions was exceptionally unusual for the time and went against Syrian practise. Syrians certainly

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

had their own religions which were promoted in captured lands, but they were also, generally, very tolerant toward any practice that was not seen as a threat to their own administration. For Antiochus to make these moves was extraordinary and one must ask if it was not to fulfil this prophecy that the divine permitted or instructed such a change.

Nevertheless, his actions toward the Jews and their practices were extreme. Of the time, Diodorus wrote that Antiochus;

*“...sacrificed a great swine at the image of Moses, and at the altar of God that stood in the outward court, and sprinkled them with the blood of the sacrifice. He commanded likewise that the books, by which they were taught to hate all other nations, should be sprinkled with the broth made of the swine’s flesh. And he put out the lamp (called by them immortal) * which burns continually in the temple. Lastly he forced the high priest and the other Jews to eat swine’s flesh”*

(Diodorus Siculus, Library of History, Book XXXIV, Chapter 1, Section 4. Available From: <http://attalus.org/translate/diodorus34.html>).

*Note: The lamp mentioned was the replacement for the Shekinah Glory which did not return after the rebuilding of the Temple under Zerubbabel. Although the presence of God himself, in the form of the Shekinah Glory, was on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant in Solomon’s temple, the Ark was lost during Nebuchadnezzar’s sacking of the temple and was replaced with a perfect cube of white marble. A lamp was set on top which was respected as if God himself was still present, although the Shekinah Glory had long since departed.

In addition to these insults the temple services were modified to add Syrian pagan elements throughout, triggering a major rebellion by Judas Maccabeus and his family in 167 BC. These events were chronicled in Jewish scriptures known as the books of the Maccabees and are probably the best documented ancient revolt. I would direct you to those books for more information, but here presents a brief rundown.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

After taking the movements mentioned above, Antiochus moved south to deal with an Egyptian threat explained in the next verse. Between 167 and 164, the rebels spent most of their time training and using guerilla tactics to supply their followers, before taking control of Jerusalem in the latter year. Upon liberating the city, the temple was rededicated which was the origin of the festival of Hanukkah, still celebrated to this day.

This was about the same time, 164 BC, that Antiochus IV himself died and the internal squabbles meant that the Syrians offered some peace terms; unbanning practices and reinstating some ceremonies instead of outright crushing the rebels. This caused a fracture amongst the Jewish forces with some being content to accept while others wanted to push for more independent territory. At the Battle of Elasa in 160 BC, Judas Maccabeus was killed and Seleucids reestablished control, although a determined guerilla campaign continued. In 141 BCE, Simon Thassi, sometimes called Simon Maccabeus as he was the brother of Judas, finally pushed the Syrian forces out of Jerusalem and established the Hasmonean dynasty as a semi-autonomous member of the then disintegrating Seleucid Empire. As this empire declined, the Hasmonean principality (it was ruled by a prince, not a king) expanded to conquer most of modern-day Israel while the Seleucids were being dismantled by Rome and Parthia.

Nevertheless, the principality was never peaceful with uprisings and disquiet, or what we would today call ‘terrorism’ being a constant presence. The Pharisee and Sadducee factions arose during this time as political groups who wanted varying amounts of peace with other nations and contrasting with the Zealots who wished for absolute autonomy. Various civil wars and conflicts arose that caused the entire area to become unstable, and the tremendous complexity of disagreements made finding common ground difficult. When an appeal was made to the Roman governor of Syria, Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, around 64 BC some efforts were made to resolve the conflict but the next year Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) himself came to Jerusalem indenting to absorb the entire province into roman hands. The resulting war and siege of that city was short and Pompey himself entered the Holy of Holies in the Temple after capturing the city. The province was then administered by Rome with client kings and little autonomy. This is also discussed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Syrian Wars

The language of the text does lend itself to a broader timeframe than just that of Antiochus himself. The verse says that “*violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall*” and a plaintext reading of the phrase “*but they shall fall*” permits a distance between their ‘exaltation’ and fall. The rule I have tried to implement throughout is that events must move forward and not jump forward and back as many other commentators do. In this case, that period lasts around 100 years, from 167 to 63 BC when any freedom and the purity of the Jewish people was crushed. The argument can be made that the revolt of AD 70, which will become important in future verses, was the final elimination of Jewish unity, which again is an appropriate interpretation of the ‘fall’, some 200 years after the ‘exaltation. Many interpretations of this type are valid and which, explicitly, it refers to is not excessively important. What is important is that these variations of interpretation do not detract from the truth of the verse. They are variations, not contradictions. The Jews revolted, exalted themselves to independence and then fell, irrespective of when one considers that fall to have taken place.

Several options for which “*vision*” these rebels felt they were fulfilling have been proposed. Some relate it to Daniel 9 when Jerusalem and its temple is prophesied rebuilt, the Messiah comes, and the covenant renewed. Others suggest Isaiah 40 or that the full completion of Jeremiah 29 required independence. Most of the suggested options are valid and the text makes no clear reference that can be deduced. Indeed, it could be said that they need to rise up to fulfil this very verse, making it a paradox; that the Jews read this verse and rose up in order to fulfil this verse. Although this last is nonsensical, as the text is highly ambiguous, any suggestion that relates to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and reconstruction should be considered valid, and there is little reason to speculate further.

15 So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist.

Date: 169 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest)

**King of the South: Ptolemy VI Philometor (Mother-Loving) and
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Tryphon (the Benefactor,
the Opulent) aka Ptolemy VIII Physcon (the fat)**

As mentioned above, the events of this verse overlap with those of the previous. It should also be noted that there is a feeling of a missing verse in this section; as if history or Daniel has not recorded a line. Nevertheless, we can only go on what has been preserved.

After establishing his laws against the Jews, Antiochus IV moved to defend against an invasion from Egypt, sparking the Sixth Syrian War. What triggered the Egyptian movements is not clearly known but it's most likely that the palace intrigues mentioned between Antiochus IV and his nephew made the Egyptian court think Syria was weak.

As stated in the previous verse, the Egyptian court was pressing and preparing for war, thinking it was in a strong position. Combat opened in 169 after an Egyptian army departed Pelusium but was swiftly intercepted and destroyed by the Syrians. Antiochus IV then moved to put Pelusium to siege. Pelusium was "*a fortified*", i.e. walled or protected and strategically important city; the gateway to the Delta, close to modern-day Port Said. Antiochus conquered it and held it for the remainder of the existence of the Syrian Empire, however the siege constructions are no longer visible. Through the last 2 millennia, the town changing hands in battle too many times for such relics to be distinguishable. Pelusium was arguably the most important city on the Eastern side of the Nile, and understandably has been the sight of much conflict. With his conquest of Pelusium, and destruction of the Egyptian army, Antiochus IV, had effectively captured Egypt.

As a result, and as should be expected in the ancient world, civil war broke out in Egypt and while Antiochus IV tried to secure Ptolemy VI as a probable client king, an uprising in Alexandria attempted to replace him with his brother and co-ruler, Ptolemy VIII. The uprising was caused by the occupation across all of Egypt. To secure his holdings,

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

‘He’ who comes against him.

Antiochus IV moved to siege the capital but was unable to enclose it and instead withdrew leaving Egypt divided with two Pharaohs.

In the absence of Antiochus IV, the two Ptolemies reconciled together and resisted the Syrian overlordship. Enraged, Antiochus invaded in 168 but because of the civil conflict, troops were needed to keep the country together. Egypt truly had “*no strength to resist*” the Syrians and the “*choice troops*” were involved in keeping civil order. To try to retain its independence, Egypt appealed to Rome with whom it was rebuilding a relationship and who had cause to oppose the Seleucids themselves.

Ptolemy VII

It should be noted here that Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator (the Father-loving God) is lost to history. He was probably a son of Cleopatra II to either Ptolemy VI or VIII and was named as co-ruler for a short period with one of them, although because of the constant use of the name ‘Ptolemy’ in historical sources, determining who he was and his actions very difficult. Recent historiography is helping but there is little consensus amongst historians. It is also, frankly, irrelevant to our analysis of this text.

16 But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.

‘He’ who comes against him.

The “*he*” introduces a new character and does so in a very complicated way as far as the language is concerned. In the situation we find the text in, the King of the North (KOTN) (Antiochus) has captured one of the King of the South’s (KOTS) (Ptolemy’s) fortified cities and the KOTS has now power to resist. Then the next verse opens by saying “*But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will*”.

Finding out who this “*he*” character is has caused much confusion because it can be either the KOTN or KOTS or a new character entirely. Fortunately, we have established some rules in earlier verses to help us decode this language.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Firstly, we must first understand who is the “*him*” that “*he*” is coming against. If we use our substituted method again to rewrite verse 15, we understand the context; “*15 So (Antiochus IV) shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of (Ptolemy) shall not withstand him. Even (Ptolemy's) choice troops shall have no strength to resist.*”

Using the principals we established, the subject of verse 15, in the ancient language form, is Antiochus, who defeated Ptolemy, conquered his city, and who wiped out the strength for Ptolemy’s troops to resist him. Ptolemy has “*no strength to resist*” Antiochus, let alone anyone else, and so it’s a given that Antiochus is already doing “*according to his own will*”. The writer has made this clear so to say that it is Antiochus “*who comes against him*” is repeating a point in a way that we have not seen before.

With Antiochus’ as the subject of this passage, it makes more sense. “[*H*]e who comes against (*Antiochus*)” is clear, but also eliminates Ptolemaic Egypt as the power that comes against Antiochus. If Ptolemy’s troops have “*no strength to resist*”, they certainly cannot do “*according to [their] own will, and no one shall stand against [them]*” moments after they have “*no strength to resist*”.

By a purely logical and rational exercise, we haven’t an alternative conclusion than that this “*he who comes against him*” power is a new player in this story, separate from both Egypt and Syria. We can again turn to history to find that the next great power to step into the mix at this time is Rome. Like Daniel I have only referenced Rome when necessary, but this is the verse when they enter. To that end, let me give a **very** brief overview of their entry to the scene.

Rome

Roman Kingdom (753–509 BC)

The founding of Rome, like all ancient civilisations, is bathed in mystery and tradition. Evidence of settlement on the Capitoline hill, Rome’s central hill on the banks of the river Tiber, goes back as far as 1700 BC although archaeological evidence of settled

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

habitation can be found closer to 1600 BC. Like Jerusalem, any evidence is tainted by constant digs, excavations and fabrications so dating is very difficult.

Tradition, however, leaves a fascinating tale that became the core of Roman psychology. Rhea Silvia, a priestess and the daughter of the displaced King of Alba Longa, Numitor, was visited by the god of war, Mars. Sex happened and she gave birth to twins, Romulus and Remus.

Seeing them as a possible threat to his rule, the usurper King, Amulius, ordered for them to be killed and they were abandoned on the bank of the Tiber to die. The god Tiberinus, the Father of the River saved the boys and in the most well-known episode, the twins were suckled by a she-wolf, in a cave now known as the Lupercal. Eventually, they were adopted by Faustulus, a shepherd, at the site of what would eventually become Rome. They grew up tending flocks, unaware of their true identities and over time became natural leaders and attracted a company of supporters.

The brothers disagreed about the hill upon which to build their city. Romulus preferred the Palatine Hill, above the Lupercal; Remus preferred the Aventine Hill. When they could not resolve the dispute, they agreed to seek the gods' approval through a contest of augury. Remus first saw 6 auspicious birds but soon afterward Romulus saw 12 and claimed he had won divine approval. The new dispute furthered the contention between them. In the aftermath, Remus was killed by Romulus who went on to found the city of Rome named in his honour, along with its institutions, government, military and religious traditions and reigned for many years as its first king.

Tradition holds that the city was founded on 21 April 753 BC. This is when the city grew beyond a small community into something exercising autonomy. The month and day is well fixed, celebrated by the festival to Pales, goddess of shepherds, called Parilia (or Palilia). However, as years were counted by electing consuls during the Republic, counting back is often difficult. The year 753 was fixed by Varro (116-27BC) and although there is debate, practically all modern historians agree that it seems the best date and variations are academic.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

During the 4th and 5th Centuries AD, the Gauls sacked Rome multiple times and destroyed most of the early records. However traditional history says the Monarchy period had 7 elected Kings after Romulus. This was not a constitutional monarchy per se, it was a monarchy elected for life akin to the Holy Roman Empire.

The insignia of the kings of Rome were twelve lictors wielding fasces bearing axes and the kings were the only individuals with the right to sit upon a curule seat, wear a purple toga picta, red shoes, and a white diadem on the head. Of all these insignia, the most important was the purple toga picta.

To support his running of the kingdom, Romulus established a Senate as an advisory to the King but with very limited power. Its main role was to oversee the election of king and advise on major matters and as a pool of talent for the King to draw executives and general from.

The final King of Rome was Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. His reign is remembered for his use of violence and intimidation to control Rome, and his disrespect for Roman custom and the Senate. Tensions came to a head when the king's son, Sextus Tarquinius, raped Lucretia, the wife and daughter to powerful Roman nobles. Lucretia told her relatives about the attack and immediately committed suicide to avoid the dishonour of the episode. Four men, led by Lucius Junius Brutus, and including Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, Publius Valerius Poplicola, and Spurius Lucretius Tricipitinus incited a revolution that deposed and expelled Tarquinius and his family from Rome in 509 BC.

The Rape of Lucretia is one of the most widely known stories in antiquity and a subject of renaissance art. Brutus and Collatinus became Rome's first consuls, marking the beginning of the Roman Republic. The word 'rex', Latin for king, became a filthy swearword in Roman society.

As far as Expansion goes, Rome was pretty content to only fight the few small towns around Rome itself, expanding itself to maybe 100KM area. There is disagreement amongst historians about when Rome started to expand and why, but at this time there

is general agreement that their needs were comfortably met by the surrounding area and there was little need to push beyond those borders.

The Roman Republic (509–27 BC)

After the king was expelled, a Republic was declared and some small, local conflicts took place. Viewing the state as weak and divided, local tribes attacked and had to be fought off. Between 509 and about 396, Rome conquered most of its close neighbours as a way of ensuring security from further harassment.

In 390 Gauls invaded from the North and Rome had to fight them off. The war lasted until 387, when Rome realised that, in order to have some security, it had to continue to conquer its neighbours. The Unification wars and Samnite Wars lasted until around 290 and as a result, Rome had taken effective control of the Italian Peninsula and Sicily.

Rome's military tactics changed during these wars, moving from the Hoplite style of fighting to a much more flexible Maniple system where several types of troops work together. The Hoplites, discussed in the Battle of Raphia using very long spears, was not well suited for the hilly Italian country and Rome demonstrated one of its core abilities; adaptability.

In 282, several Roman warships entered the harbour of Tarentum in southern Italy, breaking a treaty between the Republic and the Greek city which forbade the Roman Navy from moving into Greek city states. This led to the Pyrrhic War (280–275 BC). Pyrrhus of Epirus, a cousin of Alexander the Great, dethroned by Cassander in 302BC but kept around as a client king, was supported by Ptolemy I when he invaded Italy with an army of 25,500 men and 20 war elephants in 280BC. Through lots of fighting, Pyrrhus almost conquered Rome but was killed during the Battle at Argos in 272. Rome's victory brought them into contact with Greek matters, but not directly into Grecian politics as Rome was not a major power at this point. They did, however, start trading heavily with Egypt and acted as a deterrent for anyone who wanted to threaten that country.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

During his time in Sicily, Pyrrhus opened the door for the Carthaginians to invade which led to the First Punic War (264–241 BC). Much of this was fought on or in the waters of Sicily, and led to a Roman invasion of Africa. Rome had to develop naval technology to match the Carthaginian might and, again, was not fighting to conquer and expand, at this time. The treaty between the powers demanded tribute of 3,200 talents of silver and took Sicily as a Roman province before Rome's focus returned to Italian matters.

Both Rome and Carthage were decimated by this war. Carthage's financial situation forced them to request a 2,000-talent loan from Ptolemaic Egypt, which was refused, and Rome had lost some 17% of its adult male population in the war. As Carthage couldn't pay their mercenaries a series of rebellions broke out. It then invaded Iberia (Spain) to take its wealth of Silver to fund its reconstruction. Rome's support of one of the rebellions was so obvious that Carthage retaliated by conquering the pro-Roman city of Saguntum in Spain. This sparked the Second Punic War of, 218–201 BC.

At the outset of the war, Carthage's senior general, Hannibal, had a sizeable force in Spain where he had been campaigning. At the outbreak of war, he moved this army by land to North Italy, was resupplied by a multitude of Gallic allies, and crossed the Alps into Italy. At the Battle of Lake Trasimene on 21 June, 217 BC, the Romans were outnumbered around 2-1, and the leading General, former Consul Gaius Flaminius, was killed. On 2 August 216 BC, Battle of Cannae saw the single greatest defeat in Roman history; a battle still taught in modern tactics classes today.

After these massive losses, Italian tribes started to revolt with several vying for independence. The Fabian strategy, where attrition and indirection tactics are favoured and pitched battles avoided, became Roman combat doctrine around this time to minimise losses. While Italy was under extreme pressure, Roman forces in Iberia were seeing successes, conquering the majority of Spain and forcing Carthage to fall back. This eliminated that country as the Carthage power base, along with the silver resources that Spain was known for, now in Roman hands. The important Battle of the Metaurus on 23 June 207 BC, saw the last of Hannibal's allies defeated in Italy and he was forced to fall back to Africa with what was left of his troops. With Hannibal

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

defeated, Rome was able to turn its attention to other matters but was now a great power, although the Seleucid Empire was still more powerful.

Philip V of Macedon had made an alliance with Hannibal before starting strikes against Egypt, which were intended to develop a route to send aid to Carthage and possibly weaken Egypt to the point where Carthage could absorb its neighbour. This could allow them to reclaim the position lost when Rome pushed them out of Spain. Philip launched this war while Rome was occupied with Carthage, hoping that it would be unable to fight on two fronts. Rome was not really interested in becoming embroiled in Grecian affairs and the First Macedonian War 214–205 BC ended with a strategic defeat for Phillip but an overall stalemate. Rome's primary goal; breaking the Macedonian - Carthaginian alliance, was successful as referenced in verse 14.

Philip V instead looked to his Greek neighbours for expansion and started stirring up trouble. Several Greek states appealed to Rome for support as its defeat of Carthage had made it an important but still not a superpower; those being Syria and Egypt, as we have seen. Rome, however, was independent of almost all matters and could speak as a neutral arbitrator. Rome sent an ultimatum to Macedon to stop expanding but considering the limited fighting of the First Macedonian War, Philip V did not take it seriously. Rome responded by sending an army of Romans and assembled Greek allies, beginning the Second Macedonian War 200–197 BC. Rome, again, had no conquest ambitions, so after Philip was soundly defeated at the Battle of Cynoscephalae 197BC, he gave up his Greek conquests and Rome pulled out of Greece entirely, establishing strong allies to operate on their own and not as vassal states.

It was this defeat of Philip that triggered Antiochus III to start his conquest, both against Greece and against Egypt, again as mentioned in vs 14. Antiochus III hired Hannibal as his senior military commander, and it has been theorised that they two were intending to conquer Rome like Alexander the Great conquered India.

Except for Egypt, practically all of Alexander's former conquests had been reunited. Philip V and several other Greek allies appealed to Rome for support and defence. Scipio Africanus was again to lead a Roman army, this time to Greece to fight what became The Seleucid War (192–188 BC) also known as the Romano-Seleucid War.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Scipio had defeated Hannibal at the Battle of Zama in 202 BC where he had earned the sobriquet ‘Africanus’ meaning ‘conquer of Africa’ and ending the Second Punic War.

Hannibal’s Greek troops were still using Hoplite tactics that Rome’s Manipular system were designed to counter. As a result, the Seleucids were sorely defeated. The demonstration of this was the Battle of Thermopylae in 191 BC where the Greeks believed they could use their spears to repeat the Spartan heroics a few centuries earlier. Instead, they were exterminated with minimal Roman losses. After the Battle of Magnesia during either December 190 or January 189 BC, Antiochus sued for Peace and was, frankly, humiliated. He had to give up his Greek conquests and started facing uprisings across his massive territory which was now too wide for him to control effectively.

Rome, again, withdrew from Greece; not wanting to Conquer, but this time stayed closely involved in Greek affairs, hoping a Greek power block would rise up to counter the Seleucids. Instead, the Greek city-states fractured and began their usual infighting. As stated above, Antiochus III died while trying to work to reunify his empire and his son Seleucus IV took the throne. Seleucus had been in combat at Magnesia alongside his father and had been made co-regent before he joined his father signing the Treaty of Apamea in 188 BC. This treaty saw the Syrians supply grain and scouts to Roman and Pergamene forces in their next conquest of Galatia. Seleucus IV almost joined an invasion of Galatia against Rome in the early 170s but thought better of drawing the anger of Rome and withdrew before being assassinated in 175. Rome sent ambassadors to the area to try and restore peace without fighting. Roman troops, probably unhappy being in foreign countries keeping peace, staged a series of mutinies which were easily put down by their seniors.

When Antiochus IV took the throne, Rome believed that he could be worked with as he had been a hostage in Rome during his youth and knew both the power and prestige of the Republic. Hostages were a normal part of peace treaties and, although being treated nobly, were trained in war and warlike means. When he became King, as stated above, Antiochus IV moved to Egypt which brings us to the 6th Syrian War and back

to our analysis of the text. I am working to complete the history of Rome in a longer essay.

16 he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him.

Date: 168 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest)

‘He’ : Roman Republic

As mentioned, Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VIII had been reconciled and their government recognised they could do better acting as Rome’s breadbasket than Antiochus’ servant Kingdom. Their appeal to Rome had been made when Antiochus returned to Egypt with his force. He conquered Memphis and had himself crowned Pharaoh.

Knowing that Antiochus was going to stir a fight in Egypt, Rome sent one of their Proconsuls, Gaius Popillius Laenas, to intervene and make Antiochus recognise that Rome was there to stop the conquest of Egypt. Popilius had been Consul in 172BC and would be again in 158BC. Antiochus moved to attack Alexandria again, but Popilius Laenas told him to stop. Antiochus then tried to play for time with his army on the move and met with the Roman commissioners.

The Day of Elesius

Popilius Laenas was reported to be a cantankerous character; somewhat angry in manner but wise and, by this time, old. When he met with Antiochus, he wasn’t interested in playing games and recognised Antiochus was trying to simply drag things out as long as possible as there was no strong Roman army in the area.

The sources tell us that Antiochus offered his hand to Laenas to greet as friends, but the Roman ignored the formalities, instead simply presenting him with the Roman decree to stop advancing. This naturally ended with the famous epithet ‘This is presented in the name of the Senate and the People of Rome (SPQR).’ Antiochus IV,

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

arguably the most powerful man on the face of the planet at that time, tried to negotiate and discuss terms with this influential but still rising power. Laenas took his walking stick and drew a circle in the sand around this most powerful king, and simply told him that he was not to step out of that circle until he could, satisfactorily, answer Rome's decree.

While tradition teaches that he stood there for 2 days, the sources say it was only a short time before he relented and agreed to everything the Romans wanted.

So, when Rome '*came against*' Antiochus, Rome did '*according to his own will and*' Antiochus could not '*stand against him*' despite Antiochus being the, technically, superior power. Historical sources tell the story much better than I can and I refer you to Livy (History of Rome, Book 45, Chapter 12) and Polybius (The Histories, Books XXVII and XXVIII) for a much better story. But the clear point is that when the most powerful man on the face of the earth, Antiochus IV, was given an instruction and a threat by a roman envoy who would have had a few hundred servants', assistants and personal bodyguards at most, Antiochus backed down to his shame.

It is important to note here that Rome's introduction does not use monarchic language and is not referred to as a king in the text at this point. We can deduce this for a couple of reasons. Firstly, Rome, at this time, wasn't a monarchy and, compared to the style of the KOTN and KOTS, never was. Rome always had a senate which had a lot more power than the councils of advisors that supported the autocracies of most other places. What's more, Rome's kings were elected meaning that, while it did have hereditary transferal, that was the circumstance rather than the rule. While the Empire could be spoken of as a kingdom, the Senate's place was not just to rubber stamp the Emperors decisions and hereditary power was not the norm. Unfortunately, this makes determining who is who even more difficult in the next part of the chapter.

16 He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power

Date: 169 - 60 BC.

King of the North: Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest)

King of the South: Ptolemy VI Philometor (Mother-Loving) and

**Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Tryphon (the Benefactor,
the Opulent) aka Ptolemy VIII Physcon (the fat)**

Where the “Glorious Land” refers to can only be Greece or Judea. Spain, Carthage and Rome were important by this time but were unknown to Daniel and his period. Babylon and, more broadly, Persia, no longer have any power by this time and have been majorly depleted. Egypt too, although powerful, has been badly destroyed and divided by war and infighting. The Angel talking to the author, Daniel, would want to promote his land for the Glory of the Lord, while Greece is still seen as the seat of government and intellect at this time. The rest of the world has no impact on either Daniel, the Israelites or the European story so our choice is between those two and both are opportune as we will see.

Although we have established who the ‘He’ power is, contextually we should assess who ‘he’ is in this verse. The ancient language makes it ambiguous enough that it can be almost any of the previous characters. We can immediately eliminate Ptolemy, the KOTS, as he has no power and is now, essentially, a Roman vassal. The two possible options are Rome or the KOTN. Antiochus doesn’t fit, but Rome does.

‘He’ = Antiochus IV

At this time Antiochus is in control of Judea and moved back to impose his will on the Jews as stated above. I have already explained this above but what is important is that although Antiochus **could** have destroyed Jerusalem and the Jews, he didn’t. The small garrison in Judea was defeated by the rebels at the Battle of Emmaus in 165 while Antiochus himself had to move the majority of his army to deal with the Parthian Empire. The bulk of his army moved through Judea but did not do much more than was normal for a transitioning army. They also had to move East when they got to Northern Syria instead of West into Greece. He, therefore, again, **could** have moved into Greece and retake sections but had better things to occupy his army. Clearly, destruction was certainly “*in his power*” but was not exercised.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

What is clearer is that Antiochus most certainly could not “*do according to his own will*”. Rome had humiliated him and his part in this story now comes to an end. ‘He’ must now translate to another power.

To round out his story, Antiochus finally died at Isfahan, Persia, in 164 BC. His son, Antiochus V Eupator (“of a good father”) was only nine years old when he took the throne and the regency brought divided government and power struggle that Rome took great interest in. Rome may have supported the Judean rebels and Parthia to help speed this decline, but the end of the Seleucid Empire came from internal strife and civil war. This is not the end of the Seleucids in our story, but this is the end of their influence on the worldwide scale. When Antiochus IV had that circle drawn around him, that was the end of his empire.

‘He’ = Rome, specifically Pompeii Magnus

Rome makes much more sense in the flow of this story.

15 So (Antiochus IV) shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of (Ptolemy) shall not withstand him. Even (Ptolemy ’ s) choice troops shall have no strength to resist.

16 But (Rome) shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against (it). (Rome) shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.

Rome’ s authority was without discussion or question. The balance of world power tipped in its favour at the start of the 1st Century BC after the conquest of Carthage and the Seleucids. This was also the result of the Marian reforms, attributed to Gaius Marius, a general who was consul in 107, 104–100, and 86 BC. Although the extent of Marius’ reforms is debated as this was a time of natural change within Rome and its army, for our purposes around this time Rome became the supreme power and would only be challenged by internal trials for the next few centuries. Conscription was introduced around this time along with a measure to have the state supply their equipment, which was previously paid for by the individual soldier.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Marius is credited with redesigning the javelin into the Roman Pilum. Javelins, long, wooden spears with short, wide metal tips, were redesigned to be half-metal with a throwing pivot just off the centre, and a thinner and lighter metal strip. This gave the weapon a longer range and harder impact when it crashed into an enemy's shield or armour. A light wood peg between the shaft and metal tip was designed to break on or shortly after impact, sometimes bending the metal into the shield preventing the weapon from being thrown back or from being easily removed. With a metal spick sticking from it in the heat of battle, this would effectively make the shield useless and would have to be discarded. These were the first weapon used by Roman Soldiers for the next several centuries, with every trooper carrying two, one lighter than the other. These were thrown at the advancing enemy before drawing their short sword, called a gladius, and engaging in hand-to-hand combat. Troops further behind the lines would be out of range at first, but as they advanced into the mele would be able to toss their pila into the enemy ranks.

Other reforms of the time reorganised the army from maniples; small, specialised units that needed support from other units to fight effectively, into cohorts, larger units that were able to act much more independently. Along with standardising equipment and armour, training was also unified so that all soldiers were able to use most tools. This gave commanders more flexibility to use larger units that could, at least, hold out against much larger enemy forces regardless of what they threw at them, while their training also meant that the individual soldiers had more flexibility in battle. This flexibility was also supported by another of Marius' initiatives, having soldiers carry their baggage in packs rather in an extended train that required guarding. Dubbed muli Mariani ("Marius' s mules"), within a short period a roman Legion (consisting of 10 Cohorts) could march 20 miles in a day from an established encampment consisting of a ditch and a palisade of wooden stakes to a new, almost identical, camp. This made assaulting troops on the march much more difficult, and the design of packs meant that they could easily be removed when combat broke out.

Within 100 years of 'The Day of Elesius', Rome was truly able to "*do according to his own will, and no*" power on earth could "*stand against (it).*" As stated previously, Rome's had already involved itself in Grecian affairs and nobody was able to stand

against it. As also stated, Pompey the Great moved into Judea during the 1st century BC and make the area a client kingdom under Herod. The statement that “*(Rome) shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power*” works regardless of which definition one chooses for “*Glorious Land*”.

17 “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him.

Date: 60-47 BC

‘He’ : Roman Republic, specifically Pompey Magnus and Julius Caesar

Rome now “*set(s) his face*” or ‘turns his attention’ to enter a place with the entire force of his kingdom. Rome is, at this time, a republic so at first the reference to a ‘king’ -dom can be viewed as undermining the identification, but, from about 150BC forward, Rome moved from crisis to crisis, usually having a single ‘dictator’ appointed to deal with the conflict. These individuals exercised near absolute authority over the state and its resources, making them little different from a king, and when the office was unoccupied, the consuls exercised the powers akin to a modern constitutional monarch anyway. To some this seems like semantics while to others it is an important point. Rome was not a kingdom, but, unlike an Athenian democracy, conducted itself as much like a kingdom as any other power of its time.

The question that arises from this verse is where Rome is going or ‘entering’ with its full might. Again, we need to remember that our focus has to be to Greece, the Middle East and Egypt and it is in this latter that we find the most logical kingdom to ‘enter’ .

As we are taking the “*Glorious Land*” as representing Judea, we can connect this Roman intervention to the events mentioned during vs 14. Pompey Magnus conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC, shortly after his successful conclusion of the Third Mithridatic War in modern-day Turkey. His intention, to end the civil war, was successful but his subjugation of Judea would haunt the romans for the next century. Pompey

considered leaving client kings with some autonomy but recognised that the attachment to power was too great a temptation. As a part of his reorganisation of this area, Syria became a Roman province and the Seleucid empire ceased to exist.

In other words, the king of the North no longer exists.

The Julio-Pompeian Civil War

Pompeii returned to Rome where, on his 45th birthday in 61 BC, he was awarded a triumph, his third, for his conquests in Asia Minor. The Senate, however, then refused to ratify the treaties agreed by Pompey as part of his settlement of the East and defeated a bill to distribute farmland to his veterans. Promises made by Pompey could not, therefore, be delivered upon. Pompey had been consul in 70BC so was not eligible for election until 60BC, meaning he had no authority to push these measures through, and was probably hesitant to move toward power after the variety of civil conflicts Rome had experienced in the preceding century. Instead, Pompey aligned himself with Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gaius Julius Caesar who had spent some time in the political wilderness themselves, to form what is referred to as the ‘First Triumvirate’. Caesar’s election for consul in 60BC, exploiting his office as head of the Roman Religion, Pontifex Maximus, to ignore his counterpart, Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus, pushed a great many of the measures that the three agreed with through the Senate including the land reforms and treaties, and Pompey married Caesar’s daughter Julia. Their political jobs done, Pompey was given command of Spain and North Africa, Caesar North Italy and Crassus Syria, where they were all released to make peace and war as they saw fit.

Caesar’s conquest of Gaul is legendary and outside of the scope of this analysis. Pompey stayed in Rome where his wife died in 54 BC during childbirth. By all accounts he and Caesar were both devastated, and some accounts describe their friendship as drawn closer by the mutual loss, but any family ties were, naturally, dissolved as a result. Political violence had not stopped in Rome, rather it had increased, and in 52 BC Consular elections had to be suspended. Rather than appoint a dictator, Pompey was elected sole consul, a technically unconstitutional measure but one backed by the Tribunes of the Plebs and other senior officials. Plutarch and others report that this

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

was to deny Pompey the dictatorship while also ensuring government continued to function. After he restored order, Pompey married Cornelia, Crassus' widow, and appointed her brother, Metellus Scipio, as the other consul for the remaining term.

To help clear up this violence, Pompey passed several measures that impacted Caesar directly, although historians' debate about if this was intentional or incidental. Caesar had long been accused of using violence during his consulship of 59 BC, but proconsular immunity prevented his prosecution for 10 years after he took his position in Gaul. Roman law prevented the prosecution of a military leader serving in a governance position called '*imperium*'. Caesar had intended to get around this prosecution by running for Consul in 48 BC while still in Gaul. This was before his governorship of Gaul, and therefore his '*imperium*' had run out, but also required a special constitutional action to permit him to run for Consul a year early. He had already secured senate approval to do this and was beginning to plan his term.

However, Pompey's reforms had made prosecutions easier and had made it a requirement that anyone wishing to run for election needed to be physically present in the Forum when nominated. This required crossing into the boundaries of Rome. Typically, a commander automatically lost his authority when coming close to the city. This would mean Caesar had to risk arrest while he traversed into Rome and inside the Pomerium, Rome's religious centre, weapons were outlawed. With both Caesar and Pompey in command of multiple legions, this left the pieces in place for Civil War.

Both consuls for 50 BC, Paullus and Gaius Claudius, were opponents of Caesar, as was Curio, tribune of the Plebs. Legislation was presented to remove Caesar from his command in Gaul early, but Caesar allegedly bribed the Consuls to block this. Curio presented an alternative proposal; Caesar and Pompey should both disarm at the same time or be declared enemies of the state. An attractive proposal as it prevented war, it was infeasible as it still risked Caesar's arrest and his opponents knew he could still run for office.

The Senate organised a consular army to be led by Pompey to protect good order, extremely clearly aimed at Caesar. In December, Caesar crossed the Italian Alps with the XIIIth Legion, veterans of the Gaullic and Germanic campaign. They camped at

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Ravenna, close to the border with the Roman Republic. On 1 January 49 BC, Caesar sent an ultimatum demanding that the Senate accept his compromise, threatening to march on Rome “to avenge his country’ s wrongs”. Confident their forces significantly outnumbered those available to Caesar, on 7 January the Senate declared him a public enemy. Four days later, he crossed the little river Rubicon into Italy. Suetonius attributes the phrase “*Ālea iacta est*” (“The die is cast”) to Caesar as he stepped into the waters.

Caesar was left with a difficult choice, being an outlaw but not wanting to rule Rome as a dictator. He had to defeat Pompei or at least come to an agreement with the Senate about his position or risk being executed as a traitor. His XIIIth Legion being composed of highly experienced veterans, he was able to move much faster than Pompey’ s forces in Italy could and almost cut them off in Brundisium. His troops moved down the East coast of the Adriatic and did not ransack the countryside, instead letting captives go at the earliest, practical opportunity. This made Caesar popular and when he arrived at Brundisium on 9 March, his army had swollen to six legions from the families of retired soldiers inhabiting most of Italy.

Pompei fled to Greece where he intended to raise troops from the various legions in Roman territories. Caesar followed and forces met on 9 August 48BC at Battle of Pharsalus. Caesar had elements from 8 understrength but very experienced, battle-hardened legions who were absolutely devoted to their commander. Pompey was almost double Caesar’s force, but his troops were very green. As Pompey saw his army break, he packed his camp, disguised himself and fled south, ultimately aiming for the Roman Legions in Egypt. When he arrived there, Ptolemy XIII Theos Philopator (Divine Philosopher) had him assassinated.

As a result of this battle, the rump of the Senate declared Caesar Dictator at the end of 49BC and he moved on Egypt with a substantial force, expecting Pompey to have rallied Egyptian forces to oppose him. When presented with Pompey’ s head he was disgusted and ordered him to prepare him for a Roman burial fit for one of Pompey’s rank. Caesar deployed his troops to try and deal with the civil conflict between Ptolemy XIII and Cleopatra VII Philopator, while present, as well as with any other forces that might come to attack him while there in what appeared to be a weak position.

Returning to the Text

Caesar, therefore, entered into Egypt at the head of a large force and brought with him the Roman officials to oversee a variety of disputes. Pompeii and Cleopatra were in near civil war over who held the throne. Their father, Ptolemy XII Auletes (the Flautist) had left a substantial debt to Rome in his will. As Caesar had, effectively, won the civil war, such diplomatic force was naturally coming to his side as he was acknowledged as the leader of Rome.

Caesar, therefore, “*set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him*” bringing his nobles to support his movements in Egypt. His dalliance with Cleopatra is legendary and too salacious for this scriptural study, so we will gloss over it. It is important to say that it was Caesar that appointed Cleopatra as the senior ruler of Egypt. Although this was intended as a joint rulership with her brother, Ptolemy XIII attempted to rebel and rule with his other sister, Arsinoë IV. This brought him into direct conflict with the Romans and Ptolemy drowned in the Nile after a crushing defeat in 47BC.

Caesar, therefore awarded Egypt to Cleopatra, “*the daughter of women*” but as the story goes, her assignation with Mark Antony after Caesars death led her into conflict with Rome, and ultimately she was responsible for the destruction of her kingdom; she “*destroy(ed) it*”. Furthermore, Cleopatra chose to avoid using her armies wherever possible and not get into conflict, nor consider herself a part of the regular world. As an Egyptian queen, she considered herself to be the ‘daughter of Isis’ and a living goddess in her own right. To that end, when conflict arose in Rome, she chose “*not stand with him, or be for him.*” Notably, although her affections had turned to Mark Antony by the time after Caesar’ s death, at the naval Battle of Actium in 31 BC, Cleopatra ordered her squadron of some 60 ships to retreat without engaging in battle at all. This constituted more than 1/5th of Antony’ s force, and it has been theorised that this cost Antony the battle; not to mention that she knowingly left her lover to die. This was indicative of Cleopatras attitude toward mortal men.

There is a little overlap with this commentary with Cleopatra that folds over to the next verses. Caesar did move into Egypt and made Cleopatra queen before returning back to Rome. She would, ultimately, made the decisions that would lead to Egypt becoming

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

a part of the Roman Empire while other events that directly concerned Rome took place. The way this is phrased is not contradictory, we have to remember that there are two stories going on that overlap.

18 After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him.

The translation is a bit wonky with this verse, but we will persevere.

“(C)oastlands” really should read ‘Isles and Coastlines’ , but that is of little consequence. Caesar conquered Rhodes and then handed it over to the Egyptians and on his sojourn back to Rome, cleaned up a number of other smaller islands that were resisting Rome or were acting as pirates. Since being captured by them in 75BC, Caesar had taken a special place for pirates and destroyed them whenever possible.

The next section is better translated “*But (as) a ruler (he) shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and (even) with the reproach removed, (they) shall turn back on him*” as otherwise it’ s, frankly, nonsensical. Caesar returned to Rome and as was his style, issued broad pardons to bring the conflict to an end. He was named dictator perpetuo (dictator for life) in February 44 BC, given 4 Triumphs and was the first living Roman to appear on coinage. The matters that led to the civil war had been dealt with and, although not forgotten, were considered finished.

However, debate still rages about if Caesar was eager for power or was trying to defend himself from prosecution and the Civil war happened as a result. At that time, the Romans were concerned that Caesar was trying to make himself a King, the one thing that the Romans hated above all others. The word King, ‘rex’ in Latin, was considered a very grave insult when addressed to a person. By Shakespeare’ s time, Caesar’ s ambition was an open question, as described in his play. At Caesar’ s funeral, Mark Antony reminds the crowd that:

*“You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,*

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?"

Julius Caesar, Act 5, Scene 2, lines 104-106

In antiquity, as in Shakespeare, Caesar' s ambition was considered a grave threat to the Republic, and this question remains today. Nevertheless, this was the cause of his assassination.

I want to make clear that I am not taking a side in this debate for the purpose of this analysis simply because it is irrelevant.

19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.

Date: 47-44 BC

‘He’ : Julius Caesar

The plan to assassinate Caesar was long established and, as stated, was a result of his perceived ambition. Some sources say that at one point there were 60 conspirators although most were not, finally, involved in his death. The two most recognisable, Gaius Cassius Longinus and Marcus Junius Brutus have become immortalised by their part. Brutus claimed descentance from Lucius Junius Brutus who led the revolt against the last king, Tarquinius, after the rape of Lucretia had him declared a tyrant. Graffiti of the day calls Julius Caesar a Tyrant and Mark Antony did offer him a crown during the Lupercal festivities as mentioned above.

Three events pushed the conspiracy into action.

Firstly, in late 45 BC or possibly early 44 BC, the Senate had voted a large group of honours upon Caesar and sent a delegation to present them to him formally. When they arrived, etiquette called for Caesar to stand up to greet the senators, but he remained seated and joked about their presentation, saying that the Senate needed to stop giving him such trinkets. Suetonius wrote that Caesar failed to rise in the temple, either because he was restrained by the consul Lucius Cornelius Balbus or that he balked at the suggestion he should rise, while Dio said that he may have had a sudden attack of diarrhoea. Either way, the Senators were insulted.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Second, at about this time, two tribunes of the plebs discovered a diadem on the head of a statue of Caesar in the Roman Forum. According to Suetonius, the tribunes ordered the wreath be removed and, as it was a symbol of Jupiter and royalty. They were insulted at the implication that Caesar was either divine, a king or both. He goes on to state that nobody knew who had placed the diadem, but Caesar suspected that the tribunes had arranged for it to appear so that they could have the honour of removing it themselves in a public show of politics.

Further to this, at the end of January, Caesar was riding on horseback to Rome on the Appian Way when a few members of the crowd greeted him as rex (“king”). Caesar replied, “I am not Rex, but Caesar” (“Non sum Rex, sed Caesar”). This was wordplay; “Rex” was a family name as well as a Latin title. The same aforementioned tribunes were not amused, and ordered the man who first cried “rex” arrested. In a later senate meeting, Caesar accused the tribunes of attempting to create opposition to him and had them removed from office and membership in the Senate. This insulted the people as the plebs took the sanctity of their tribunes seriously. Caesar was now very much on the wrong side of public opinion.

Thirdly was the previously mentioned attempt by Mark Antony to crown Caesar at the festival of the Lupercalia, on 15 February 44 BC. Mark Antony, who had been elected co-consul with Caesar, climbed onto the Rostra and placed a diadem on Caesar’s head, saying “The People give this to you through me.” While a few members of the crowd applauded, most responded with silence. Caesar removed the diadem from his head; Antony again placed it on him, only to get the same response from the crowd. Finally, Caesar put it aside to use as a sacrifice to Jupiter Optimus Maximus. “Jupiter alone of the Romans is king”, Caesar said, which received an enthusiastic response from the crowd. At the time, many believed that Caesar’s rejection of the diadem was a way for him to see if there was enough support for him to become king and despised him for it.

This was enough for the conspirators to move into action and plan a very public assassination. In keeping with Roman tradition, they chose to act in public because the people could see and choose for themselves the justice of the cause. Caesar had long planned another military campaign in Asia Minor, and had announced his

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

intention to leave on 18 March, meaning that he had to die before then. Caesar knew of plots but had little specific information about those involved or he would have had them arrested.

The morning of the 15th of March, the famous ides of March, Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, had a terrible nightmare and convinced her husband not to go to the Senate that day. This was the last sitting day before he left on campaign and, as Caesar was the Pontifex Maximus, both took the dreams as signs from the Gods. Suetonius also says that a soothsayer named Spurinna had consulted both Caesar and Calpurnia to tell them that dangerous things would happen; the famous "beware the ides of March". It has also been suspected that Caesar, an epileptic, had a fit during this evening leaving him feeling weak. Caesar, therefore, sent Mark Antony to dismiss the Senate as was his right as Pontifex Maximus.

This, obviously, shattered the conspirators' plans, and one, Decimus, was quickly dispatched to talk him into coming to the Senate. "What do you say, Caesar?" Decimus said. "Will someone of your stature pay attention to a woman's dreams and the omens of foolish men?" This insult to his manhood was sufficient and Caesar left for the Forum. En route, he caught sight of Spurinna. "Well, the Ides of March have come!" Caesar called out playfully. "Aye, the Ides have come," replied Spurinna, "but they are not yet gone."

Mark Antony started to enter with Caesar but was intercepted by one of the plotters and detained outside. As Caesar's friends and a fierce fighter in his own right, the conspirators did not wish to have Antony in a position where he could intervene, and as one of the consuls, they considered his position sacrosanct.

According to Plutarch, as Caesar took his seat, Lucius Tillius Cimber presented him with a petition to recall his exiled brother. The other conspirators crowded round to offer their support. Both Plutarch and Suetonius say that Caesar waved him away, but Cimber grabbed Caesar's shoulders and pulled down Caesar's toga. Caesar then cried to Cimber, "Why, this is violence!" ("Ista quidem vis est!"). Casca produced his dagger and made a glancing thrust at the dictator's neck. Caesar turned around quickly and caught Casca by the arm. According to Plutarch, he said in Latin, "Casca,

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

you villain, what are you doing?” Casca, frightened, shouted simultaneously “Brother! Help me!”.

Though Caesar was able to violently throw Casca away, he was slashed in the side. Within moments, Caesar was attacked from all directions, with Cassius, slashing Caesar’ s face, Bucilianus stabbing at the back and Decimus slicing his thigh. Caesar attempted to fight back but tripped and fell; the men continuing to stab as he lay defenceless on the lower steps of the portico. Caesar was finally stabbed 23 times.

Suetonius relates that a physician who performed an autopsy on Caesar established that only one wound, the second one to his side and ribs, had been fatal. This autopsy report, the earliest known post-mortem report in history, describes that Caesar’ s death was mostly attributable to blood loss from his stab wounds.

Caesar was killed at the base of the statue of Pompey in the Theatre of Pompey. His last words are a contested subject among scholars and historians. Suetonius himself says he said nothing but mentions that others had written his last words were the Greek phrase “καὶ σύ, τέκνον”, transliterated as “Kai su, teknon?”: “You too, child?” in English. Shakespeare latinised this into the famous “et tu brute”, “Even you Brutus?” as he was supposedly the last of the conspirators to stab the dictator. Plutarch also reports that Caesar said nothing, pulling his toga over his head when he saw Brutus among the conspirators, a common death ritual amongst the Romans when not in armour.

According to Plutarch, after the assassination, Brutus stepped forward as if to say something to his fellow senators not involved in the plot; they, however, fled the building. Brutus and his companions dipped their hands in Caesar’ s blood and then marched through the city, announcing: “People of Rome, we are once again free!” showing their bloody hands as they went. They were met with silence, as the citizens of Rome had locked themselves inside their houses as soon as the rumours of what had taken place began to spread. According to Suetonius, after the murder all the conspirators fled; Caesar’ s body lay untouched for some time afterwards, until finally three slaves put him on a litter and carried him home, with one arm hanging down.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

At the foot of Pompey's statue in the Forum, "*the fortress of his own land*", Caesar "*stumble(d) and (fell)*".

For further reading, see:

Cassius Dio, Roman History, Book 44, Chapter 11. Available from:

https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/cassius_dio/44*.html

Plutarch, The Parallel Lives, The Life of Julius Caesar. Available from:

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3atext%3a1999.03.0078%3atext%3dCaes.>

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, De Vita Caesarum (The Lives of the Caesars), Book 1. Available from:

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0132>

20 "There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle.

Date: 44 BC - AD14

'He' : Gaius Octavius, also known as Octavian, later Caesar Augustus

Antony, as famously recounted by Shakespeare and modern Hollywood, avenged Caesar's death in a brutal war called the Liberators' civil war. Uniting with Caesar's nephew and, in his will, his adopted son and heir, Gaius Octavius, to prosecute and eliminate the conspirators. While some made various motions toward peace and reconciliation, some, specifically Brutus and Cassius, fled and started to raise armies to fight.

The interactions between Antony and Octavian have been widely published. Octavian, an extremely intelligent but young man, came to resent Antony treating him dismissively, while Antony considered Octavian arrogant. A variety of moves to prevent all-out war between them were tried including dividing the Republic along with a third party, Lepidus to create a buffer, but conflict was more or less inevitable.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

The War of Actium (32–30 BC) was the last civil war of the Roman Republic after Octavian declared war on Antony's lover, Cleopatra. 40% of the Roman Senate, together with both consuls, left Rome to join the war on Antony's side. As stated earlier, Cleopatra betrayed Antony at the battle of Actium itself, 2 September 31 BC, and they both withdrew to Alexandria, where Octavian besieged the city. At the end of the siege, both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide, the later famously with a poisonous asp.

What is especially of note is that with this conquest, the power of Egypt was eliminated once and for all. Octavian was named Pharaoh, and Egypt became his personal possession. Egypt became an important part of the Roman state and was folded into the personal possession of the emperor.

In other words, the king of the South no longer exists.

Exploiting his pseudo-monarchical powers, but ostensibly wishing to retain the trappings of the Republic, Octavian began reorganising the provinces. This was long overdue as the Republic had grown far too large for the way it was currently being organised and the government needed to centralise. On the march back into Rome, Octavian and his senior general Agrippa were elected consuls by the Senate. Although years of civil war had left Rome in a state of near lawlessness, the republic was not prepared to accept the control of Octavian as a despot. Octavian could not risk give up his authority as further civil war would almost certainly be the result, regardless of his ambition or lack thereof. Octavian's aims from this point forward seems to be to return Rome to a state of stability, traditional legality, and civility.

On 13 January 27 BC, Octavian made a show of returning full power to the Roman Senate and relinquishing his control of the Roman provinces and their armies. He retained the loyalty of active-duty soldiers and veterans alike and his financial power was unrivalled anywhere in the Republic. The public was aware of the vast financial resources that Octavian commanded. When he failed to encourage enough senators to finance the building and maintenance of networks of roads in Italy in 20 BC, he paid for them himself, as publicized on the Roman currency issued in 16 BC. Effectively he was personally floating the treasury of the entire Empire.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

On 16 January 27 BC the Senate gave Octavian the new title of ‘Augustus’. Augustus comes from the Latin word *augere* meaning “to increase” and can be translated as “illustrious one” or “sublime”. It was a religious title rather than political one, indicating that Octavian now approached divinity. This was chosen over ‘Romulus’ in reference to the story of the legendary founder of Rome which was associated too strongly with notions of monarchy; an image that Octavian actively tried to avoid. The Senate also confirmed his position as ‘Princeps Senatus’, which originally meant the member of the Senate with the highest precedence. In this case it became an almost regnal title for a leader who was first in charge. The honorific ‘Augustus’ was inherited by all future emperors and became the *de facto* title of the emperor. Modern historians usually regard this event as the beginning of his reign as “emperor” as Augustus himself appears to have reckoned, dating his “reign” from 27 BC.

Augustus styled himself as *Imperator Caesar divi filius*, “Commander Caesar son of the deified one”. With this title, he boasted his familial link to deified Julius Caesar, and the use of *imperator* signified a permanent link to the Roman tradition of victory. He transformed Caesar, a cognomen for one branch of the Julian family, into a new family line that began with him.

Augustus realised quickly that he would not be able to keep the empire afloat personally for long and one of his first acts was tax reform. Augustus brought a far greater portion of the Empire’s expanded land base under consistent, direct taxation from Rome, instead of exacting varying, intermittent, and somewhat arbitrary tributes from each local province as Augustus’ predecessors had done. This reform greatly increased Rome’s net revenue from its territorial acquisitions, stabilized its money flow, and regularized the financial relationship between Rome and the provinces, rather than provoking fresh resentments with each new arbitrary exaction of tribute.

The measures of taxation in the reign of Augustus were determined by population census, with fixed quotas for each province. Augustus appointed Publius Sulpicius Quirinius to the post of Legate of Syria and he conducted a tax census of Syria and Judea in 6 AD. This triggered the revolt of Judas of Galilee; quickly crushed by Quirinius. Owing to the reconstruction, taxes would have been minimal prior to this but Augustus was “*one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom*”.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Augustus' reforms are far too numerous for this analysis, but it was not long after he began his tax reform that he finally died in 14AD. As the text said he died "*not in anger or in battle.*" Tacitus and Dio both say his death was rumoured to have been by his wife, Livia, poisoning fresh figs, although most modern historians say that he died naturally after a long and fruitful life.

21 And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honour of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.

Date: 14 - 37 AD

‘He’ : Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (Tiberius)

During a severe illness in 23BC Augustus was convinced he was shortly to die and worked hard to ensure the princeps position continued after his death, however he did not overtly appoint an heir as that would be far too much like a monarchical succession. He instead gave important responsibilities to his favoured general Agrippa and co-consul Piso, while many historians also feel he began favouring his nephew, Marcellus. Marcellus would die at the end of 23BC from the same illness Augustus suffered and Agrippa married Augustus' daughter.

Agrippa died in 12BC, followed shortly by his sons, Lucius Caesar in 2 AD and Gaius Caesar in 4AD. Augustus had adopted both boys and was in the process of introducing them to political life, obviously to present them as his heir, when they predeceased him. Augustus also tried to position his stepsons, Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus (Drusus) and Tiberius Claudius (Tiberius), to support the dynasty, granting them military commands and public office, favouring Drusus who died in 9 BC.

Tiberius, however, had attempted to retire to the isle of Rhodes, not wanting to play a major part in public life, but was recalled in June of 4 AD after the death of Gaius Caesar. He was adopted by Augustus on the condition that he, in turn, adopt his nephew Germanicus to ensure 2 generations of heirs. That same year, Tiberius was given the dignities, although the position did not exist at the time, of co-emperor with Augustus and by 13 AD was considered equal to Augustus.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Augustus died on 9 August AD 14 and on 17 September, the Senate convened to validate Tiberius' s position and powers as Princeps. He only lacked the titles of Augustus and Pater Patriae, "Father of the country". As with Augustus, the idea of king was still reprehensible, and the Senate would "*not give (him) the honour of royalty*". He did, however, "*come in peaceably*" and was able to "*seize the kingdom by*" Augustus' "*intrigue*."

Although I will not go into detail here, Tiberius was undoubtedly a "*vile person*". Little is actually known of his retirement on Rhodes, but in AD 26, Tiberius moved to an imperial villa he inherited from Augustus, on the island of Capri, just off the coast of Campania. Historians of all ages have debated the true scale of his sexual deviance, paedophilia, paranoia and general cruelty as well as its motives but ancient sources comment on it with relish. Regardless of what metric one considers; from his interactions with the senate to his sadism, for Tiberius, "*vile person*" is an understatement.

22 With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant.

Date: 37 - 314 AD

‘He’ : The Roman Emperors

The Prince of the Covenant: Jesus Christ

This verse is one of the more difficult to analyse and interrogate but considering it in context we can come to some conclusions.

Firstly, "the prince of the covenant" can only refer to one individual: Jesus. Nobody else makes sense. Firstly, we need to ask what covenant this is referring to? There are 5 primary covenants in the Old Testament:

- The Covenant with Adam in Genesis 3 includes a separation between the serpent and woman; humans and Satan. This is the least explicit of the major covenants, but includes a mechanism for humans to achieve 'victory' over Satan

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

and his agents. This is why this is considered the promise of a Saviour in the earliest portion of scripture.

- The Covenant with Noah in Genesis 9 saw God pledge never to destroy the world with a flood again, requiring no prince.
- The Covenant with Abraham of Genesis 17 to make him a great nation and conquer the land of Canaan was accomplished prior to the reign of King Saul.
- The Covenant with Moses of Exodus was a new form of the Abraham covenant after that one had been forgotten during the Egyptian Bondage. Again, it was accomplished prior to the reign of King Saul. The other portion of this covenant in Leviticus and Deuteronomy was also a reformation of the spiritual side of the Abrahamic covenant, accomplished by Christ.
- The Covenant with David of 2 Samuel 7 was for one of his children - Solomon - to build a temple for the Lord, accomplished during the 10th Century BC. This goes on to say that both the royal and spiritual lines of David would endure eternally.

Noah's covenant can be dismissed as it is an eternal promise that requires no prince or administration. The explicit language of Abraham's covenant also means that there is no prince required, but its reinterpretation by Moses means that the spiritual aspect cannot be dismissed. The only one that explicitly references a royal aspect is David's while Moses' and Adam's did speak of a future saviour.

But these covenants need not be considered separate; the ancient Israelites certainly knew that they were all united. The Messiah Daniel wrote about in Chapter 9 was long awaited and well recognised as the one Moses Ceremonial law pointed toward to complete the intention of Adams covenant. David's covenant makes it important that Jesus be royal, and both recorded genealogies in Matthew and Luke make it clear that Jesus came from David's bloodline through both his parents. The "*prince of the covenant*" must be Jesus.

Indeed, when we consider the circumstances here, no other covenant or person mentioned makes any sense but the messianic covenants. As made very clear, Daniel's purpose in writing this book is to make clear the journey his people went on. Other

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

characters, like Cyrus, who were named by other Bible writers either make no sense in this context or have already long died by the date of this verse.

Furthermore, Jesus fits this timeline. Born around 4 BC, Jesus began his mission between 27 and 30 AD and died and was resurrected between 30 and 33 AD, depending on which particular timeline you choose. Tiberius was emperor from 14 to 37 AD, so Jesus' reign certainly fits within Tiberius' reign. Under Tiberius, Jesus was most certainly "*swept away... and be broken*".

However, the note about this "*prince of the covenant*" is an addendum and not the focus of the verse. This is why the word "*also*" is used to say that the violence was done to him similar to others. Who these others were is not explicit, but the verse is also grandiose. It clearly does not refer to one individual or any one group. The "*force of a flood*" must be a reference to the absolute and indiscriminate destruction like the Earth experienced during Noah's time.

The question here should be who is "*they*"? The reference is broad and vague but in context, that is the important aspect. The Pax Romana, as a concept, was established around 27BC under Tiberius and lasted for the next 200-250 years. Any group that tried to tackle with Rome was crushed and Rome itself only fell to infighting and political intrigue. "*(T)he force of a flood ... swept away from before (Rome) and broke(n)*" any enemy that came against it.

But even still, if we try to tie ourselves to Daniel's context and his people, we find that under Tiberius anti-Jewish and anti-Christian sentiments started to arise among the empire. Under Tiberius, the protections and privileges the Jews enjoyed, such as an exemption from conscription and a very relaxed freedom of religion, were revoked and the province of Judea was in a constant state of terrorism. After a major rebellion broke out in 66 AD, Vespasian, who would later be Emperor, besieged and destroyed Jerusalem and the Israelitish people practically ceased to exist by 150 AD at the hands of Rome. The power of Rome during this time was absolute.

This verse has the longest scope up to this time, and rightly so. Rome's power to sweep away any that stood against it was absolute and brutal. But with the destruction of the

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Judean peoples, the Christian Church – which became God’s people after the cross – were too small to be in any position to make trouble and had minimal interaction with the Roman State for about a century. Formal persecution of Christians became a problem around the first century, but that also reinforces the text here; “*With the force of a flood*” the Christians were “*swept away*” in the colosseum and circus. This demonstrates the start of a broadening of timelines that stretch wider and wider. As we have established that Daniel is concerned with God’s people, this is understandable as both history and the text will shortly demonstrate Christianity becoming the dominant power. From this point, as is natural because the “*prince of the covenant*” has been mentioned, we can move away from Jewish and Judean matters and let Christianity step forward as God’s people.

23 And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.

Date: 314 - 337 AD

‘He’ : Constantine I, also known as Constantine the Great

We need to consider what type of league or agreement is made with the Roman Emperors. A league refers to a collecting together of a group or an alliance between groups for a common purpose. We are, therefore, searching for the Roman Emperors making a collection with outside powers or allying themselves with a new association, and several options have been presented.

The first option is that this is a reference to the Jewish League, previously discussed, formed with Pompey Magnus. This does not really fit as Rome was not the power that acted “*deceitfully*”, the Israelites did and that dated to the Republic, not the Empire. It also involved the entirety of both nations, not “*a small number of people.*”

This could also be a reference to the progressive power struggles to remain Emperor. Deceit and intrigue were part of becoming an Emperor but at this point the position of Emperor is well established. The stories of how some candidates became emperor and what others had to do to remain are numerous and outside of the scope of this analysis, but unlike modern government with a small cabinet, there was no “*small number of people*” that were advising the Emperor. The senate consisted of between 300 and 500

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

members, were generally the only group to advise the Emperor, and small number it is not.

The ‘League’ could also refer to the changes of Diocletian establishing the Tetrarchy. In 284 AD, Diocletian initiated reforms to the way that the Empire was managed as a result of the Crisis of the Third Century. The Empire was simply too large for any one person to manage and in 268, three competing states had formed from it. Aurelian (270–275) reunited the empire militarily and Diocletian then restructured how governance was handled. He started by raising one of his generals, Maximian, to the title of ‘Caesar’, a junior Emperor under his own title, ‘Augustus’. Co-rulership was not unusual but had also not been formalised in this way. This positioned the senior ruler in political and overall, ‘big picture’, control and gave the junior partner a more active position. The relationship between the two also immediately became couched in religious language, with Diocletian taking title ‘Iovius’ (Jovius or Jupiter), and Maximian that of ‘Herculius’ (Hercules). This may have been a religious reaction to the Crisis of the Third Century, where the senate and populace felt that the Gods alone could have fixed the problems. To be clear, the two emperors were not deified; were not made Gods themselves but were awarded divine title as a petition to the Gods for divine wisdom.

These changes were improvements but still left instability as this, effectively, created an alternate emperor who could be the centre of palace intrigues and because the Empire was still too wide to be governed efficiently by two people, no matter how much they cooperated. In 293, Constantius, a former governor was given the title of ‘Caesar’ when his father-in-law, Maximian, was Augustus. Diocletian did the same for Galerius, his son in law and also a highly respected general. The empire was then, administratively, divided among the 4 generals with the senior, Maximian and Diocletian overseeing the junior, Constantius and Galerius. Maximian managed Spain, Italy and North Africa while Constantius was assigned Gaul and Britain. Diocletian took Greece and the Eastern Adriatic while Galerius was initially assigned Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and responsibility for the eastern borderlands. In 299, Diocletian and Galerius swapped their allocated provinces.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome



Such relationships implied succession, with the junior succeeding the senior on their death, and as all were related; Diocletian and Maximian being brothers by marriage and their juniors both their sons in law, an expectation was that the empire could remain bonded by family ties. They all took religious positions and titles and became heavily involved in the religious life of Rome. The Tetrarchy lasted until Constantine I defeated his counterparts Licinius (Augustus) and Maxentius (Caesar) at the Battle of Chrysopolis in 324 AD. Dividing the Empire into 2 parts always had the potential for civil war and under Constantine the Tetrarchy saw its end.

Although the tetrarchy was amongst “*a small number of people*” and it could easily be called a “*league*” nobody acted “*deceitfully*”. The emperors were all rather public and honest with each other and with Rome and the fall were all because of public matters that finally broke out in Civil war. This does not really fit either.

But it is within the Tetrarchy that we find an unlikely alliance that could fit. Religion was a core component of the rulership exercised by the emperors and their positions at the head of Roman Religion was far from ceremonial. Since Julius Caesar, the head of the Roman State had also held the religious title, Pontifex Maximus, the elected head of the Roman church and Curia, called the College of Pontiffs. As stated, the

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Tetrarchy took a very serious view on their religious part in the Roman world and exercised their powers often.

The major change to this position and to Religion in Rome widely, was under Constantine I. Diocletian had persecuted Christians in stages, ramping up to an out and out ban and public persecution in 303 AD across the Empire. As will be discussed further in Revelation Chapter 2, this ban continued until Constantine's victory at Milvian Bridge in 312. Constantine was the first emperor to stop the persecution of Christians and to legalize Christianity as a part of a general toleration policy across all religious groups that did not threaten the peace of the Empire. The proselytising of the Christians had been a major reason Diocletian had put them under interdict in the first place, but Constantine wanted to take advantage of the political power bloc they represented.



Constantine's personal religion has been a matter of debate for the last 1700 years and will probably remain so. The Christian chroniclers Eusebius of Caesarea and Lactantius state that he became a Christian on the eve of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, 28 October 312 AD. Facing Maxentius, who Constantine treated as a usurper, most commentators position Constantine as understrength or as having marched his army a great distance, as well as being much less experienced than their battle-hardened opponents. That evening, Constantine had a dream or vision in which a cross symbol was presented to him along with the Greek words “Εν Τούτῳ Νικά”, usually translated into Latin as “in hoc signo vinces”, spoken to him. The literal meaning of the phrase in Greek is “in this (sign), conquer” while in Latin it's “in this sign, you shall conquer”. The cross displayed was the chi rho symbol, one of the earliest forms of Christogram, formed by superimposing the first two letters — chi and rho (XP) — of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Christos). The Romans considered Greek to be the language of wisdom and education, and the fact that this happened in Greek made the story very credible to the Romans. Before the battle, all the troops had the Chi-Rho symbol painted on their shields.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Constantine won the battle and Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber. Constantine would go on to become sole emperor in 324 AD and promoted Christianity while not oppressing paganism across the empire.

The question of when Constantine became a Christian, if he did at all, is still an open one. His mother was a Christian, and much criticism has been made of him being baptised on his death bed, although this was very common for the time. Predominant theology held that after baptism, any future sin could prevent one from getting into heaven, and therefore baptism and committing one's life to God was held for the last possible moment, which is the ancestor of the Catholic 'extreme unction' and 'last rights'. Through his life, Constantine's toleration was broad toward all religions, not just focused on Christianity and he participated in Pagan rituals often.

Much more "*deceitfully*," Constantine oversaw and encouraged practices where Christian theology adopted pagan ones to make it more appealing to those groups. His purpose was to make Christianity more palatable for the pagan religions and make the Christians see the Pagans as having brotherhood with them. Using his authority as Pontifex Maximus and, therefore, head of the Roman Religion, Constantine held a number of synods where the churches theology was discussed and debated. At the Council of Arles in 314 AD, Easter was adopted from the pagan celebrations around the resurrection of Tammuz in Babylon and Eostre, a Germanic Barbarian goddess of spring. At this council it was decree that it should be held on the same day throughout the world, rather than being set by each local church, and the date was then set at the Council of Nicea in 325AD. Nicea also established a variety of laws around what was and wasn't appropriate conduct on Sundays. Constantine had issued a civil decree on March 7, 321, making Sunday a day of rest from labour and explicitly replacing the Saturday of their Jewish ancestors.

The "*the league...made*" with Constantine was not honest amongst any of the partners and he dominated the synods of the church he held. Clearly, Constantine "*become strong with a small number of people*", managing the church himself or through his influence. The church was still a minority when the first arrangements were made with him.

24 He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.

Date: 337 - 1095 AD

‘He’ : Various Roman Empires (Pagan Rome) -> the Papacy (Spiritual Rome)

“*He shall enter peaceably*” is a very dramatic difference from the Roman Empire proper, and especially the Republic. The leaders of Rome prior to the Empire would simply move into a place with the sword and slaughter all who stood before them. But with the advent of Christianity, the Emperor’s role evolved to have a leadership role in spiritual matters. As Christianity spread to other parts of the world, the Roman Emperor started to get access to parts of the world, specifically the German Goths, that had previously brought only conflict. This represents a change in how the Emperors conducted themselves.

When Emperor Gratian took the highest office in 379, he refused to take the office of pontifex maximus and instead passed it onto Pope Siricius who is widely considered the first to use the title of Pope, coming from the title, pontifex maximus. Although Bishops had been known in the Christian church before this time, being more or less synonymous with the elders of the church, the more formal hierarchy has been lost to time, despite what the Roman church might want to believe. While the Roman Emperors still took a part in religious life of their people, leadership in theology now passed to the Pontif and his Curia, court, a “*small number of people*”.

As discussed in other places, the Western half of the Roman Empire ceased to exist on 4 September, 476 AD when Emperor Romulus Augustus was deposed by a client of the Byzantine Empire, the renamed Eastern Roman Empire, Odoacer, and proclaimed himself King of Italy. The Church, however, continued to flourish and expand wherever the believers went. The officers of the church had become recognised as important but non-political figures, for the most part, and could “*enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province*” without concerns for their safety or

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

integrity. The Church in Rome had become a force that was dominating the conduct of life across the Empire.

Furthermore, in taking the religious step rather than the political one, the popes were truly doing “*what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers*” inasmuch as they were ruling from a place of religious power and not from military strength. After Rome's destruction, the popes came from, or were kings of, the German or Gothic tribes in a period known as the Ostrogothic Papacy, from 493 to 537. During this time, simony or the sin of selling church offices was widely practiced by the 10 popes of the period, “*dispers(ing) among them the plunder, spoil, and riches*” of the conquests of the Gothic Kings that were their patrons. Plans were drawn up amongst the Kings and Popes to reestablish the western Empire but Justinian I, the new Byzantine Emperor wanted to reunite Christianity himself and this included the papacy. Although the Goths “*devise(d)...plans against the strongholds,*” they were only able to act “*for a time*” before Byzantium came to crush them.

This verse, as we will see in the next, represents a change between the referenced powers being physical and spiritual. Rome ceases at this point to be a physical or military power and instead becomes a spiritual power, specifically the Roman Church. This is associated closely with the Byzantine Empire for the next few hundred years until Rome itself is reestablished, but we will see that as we go through it.

25 “He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him.”

Date: 1095 - 1099 AD

‘He’ : Urban II

King of the South: Seljuk Empire and the Fatimid Califate

This verse presents, what appears at first to be a major difficulty for interpreting the Chapter, as we have clearly stated that Egypt and the King of the South no longer Exists. But if we take the earlier verse as an example, can we find in the South a new force that also has a spiritual component?

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

After Egypt was conquered by Rome as stated above, it became the personal fief of the emperor, and therefore usually had a heavy military presence. It became the breadbasket of the Empire and for the next 300 years little of major impact happened in Egypt. When Constantine reforged Constantinople into the capital of the Eastern Empire, Egypt was naturally folded into that area and Egypt's wealth now went to the Byzantine East. Justinian had to take units from Egypt to conquer Rome as mentioned in the last verse, which left it dangerously under guarded.

Between 618 and 621, the army of the Sasanian Empire, the last Persian Empire prior to the foundation of Islam, invaded and conquered Egypt from Byzantium. The empire had some significant losses and as a result of a treaty in 629, Persian troops left Egypt and it reverted to the Romans.

In 609, an Arabian merchant named Muhammad started writing the Quran, finishing in 632AD. He claimed the text to be partly revelations from Gabriel and partly visions he had taken with God whom he referred to as Allah and claimed his document to be a third Testament from God.

Like Constantine's move to include paganism in Christianity, the Quran adapted the tribal language of the nomadic tribes and proved attractive to a wide range of people, although even today divisions still exist.

Muhammad amassed a large following and began the process of establishing an empire. A succession crisis, naturally, arose after his death in 632, splitting the Muslim world into factions that still exist today. Shia Muslims believe Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, a cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, raised by him from the age of 5 and one of the first believers was designated his successor. Suni Muslims, however, believe Muhammad had not designated a successor and accept the rule of Abu Bakr, who was elected after his death and given the title of 'khalifat rasul Allah', commonly translated as "the successor to the messenger of God" and shortened to khalifa, latinised to caliph.

This Caliphate, the Rashidun Caliphate, went into conflict with Byzantium between 639 and 645, conquering Egypt in 642 and almost the entire Sassanian Empire by the next

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

year. Egypt has remained a Muslim nation from then to present, held by successive Califates until becoming part of the Ottoman Empire in 1517 until 1882. It was then British until 1922 until it became independent.

If we follow this logic, the King of the South as described here has become Muslim Egypt. If we are going to view the above ‘he’ force as a spiritual force, i.e. Roman Christianity, the same association can be seen here. Therefore, if the “He” Power is Roman Christianity, the King of the South is Islam.

The Umayyad Caliphate, which succeeded the Rashidun Caliphate, completed the Islamic conquest of Byzantine holdings in North Africa and kept the pressure on the Empire as the Abbasid Caliphate succeeded the Umayyad. Palace intrigue did not help the Byzantine situation and the rump that remained at the turn of the Millennium was reduced to modern-day Greece and Turkey. As the Seljuk Empire had not relented its pressure, in 1095 Emperor Alexios I Komnenos sent an appeal to the Pope for some knights to head East and support his efforts. Being extremely rich by Western standards, he hoped to get a collection of volunteers or mercenaries that could turn the tide.

Pope Urban II held the Council of Clermont from 17 to 27 November 1095, on the last day using Alexos’ letter as a pretext to preach a Crusade East to recapture Jerusalem and free the Christians perceived as being in bondage. His speech certainly “*shall stir(red) up his power*” as the resulting movement of people toward the east has better been described as a migration than anything else. The size of the force that moved against Islam will never truly be known, but numbers as high as 250,000 easily fits the definition of “*a great army*”.

Although the details of the Crusade are far too complex for this analysis, in short a peoples crusade led by Peter the Hermit moved to Constantinople where Alexos encouraged them to wait for the main army to arrive. They refused, moved across the Bosphorus and into northern Turkey where the army of Kilij Arslan was ready for them. The force was slaughtered at the Battle of Civetot.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

The next year, 4 armies from Europe moved to Constantinople and met with Alexos before making the invasion of Turkey and moving south into Judea. Nominally, Adhemar of Le Puy, the Papal Legate, was in charge but in reality the four armies acted as independent forces, collaborating and coordinating when possible or necessary.

In 1097, Nicaea was sieged but a comparatively small Byzantine army led by general Boutoumites were able to negotiate a secret surrender. The betrayal angered the Crusaders greatly and their relations with the Byzantine Empire soured. They defeated the Turks at the Battle of Dorylaeum and then sieged and captured Antioch before moving onto Jerusalem which they also captured in 1099. In a very short space of time, the Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, and a Christian foothold was fortified in Syria.

Many historians have commentated at the very fortunate timing of the conquest. The “*great army*” that moved against “*the king of the South*” did so at a time when Muslim leadership in Baghdad and Syria were debated a great many matters within their empire. In addition, although the preaching of the Crusade was known in the East, the People’ s crusade being such a pathetic force and easily handled made the Islamic forces overconfident. They majorly underestimated the armies that the princes brought against them and could not rally enough force to combat them in time.

This did not last long, however, and In August 1099, Fatimid vizier al-Afdal Shahanshah landed a force of 20,000 North Africans at Ascalon. These troops came from Egypt, naturally “*the king of the South*”, and were prepared for “*battle with a very great and mighty army*” battle hardened veterans. The Crusaders opposed them with just 200 knights and 9,000 foot soldiers but were able to surprise and rout the Fatimids who fled back to Egypt. Planning for this attack was swift but well-engineered and the Egyptian Force did “*not stand*”.

26 Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.

Date: 1099 - 1171 AD

King of the South: al-Afdal and Saladin

A “*portion of his delicacies*” is a very curious phrase, and considering they are “*his*”, this must related to one of the two kings. Logically, the last king referenced was that of the Fatimids and the “*delicacies*” monarchs enjoy are, generally, in the form of either tax or personal fiefs. The fact that the people referred to “*eat of the portion of his delicacies*”, further logically, would refer to those who raise taxes.

The Fatimids employed a form of tax farming similar to that which Emperor Augustus’ overturned as a part of his early reforms. As taxation was much less certain in such times than with modern accounting, governments would sell the rights to a person or group to collect the taxes and rents on a particular area or population. They would, effectively, pay the taxes due for a particular group and then either collect the taxes themselves or use other means to fund the payment. Matthew, one of Jesus’ disciples, is the best-known example, and the various caliphates used it up to and including the Ottoman Empire.

The size of the army that moved north, and was ultimately “*swept away, and many ... slain*” at the Battle of Ramala, meant that the revenue from the areas that the tax farmers had already paid for was sorely reduced. Furthermore, the refugees fleeing into Egypt caused plague and famine to break out, reducing the population even further. The Fatimid dynasty did not survive and in 1171, Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, commonly known as Saladin, founded the Ayyubid dynasty.

27 Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time.

Date: 1099 - 1192 AD

‘He’ : Baldwin IV, Richard I (Lionheart) and others

King of the South: Salah ad-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub (Saladin)

“Both these kings” must refer to both the Christian and Muslim kings - the ‘He’ king and the King of the South. However, interactions between them were scarce at best. A healthy respect existed between Baldwin IV and Saladin but the nobles and other crusaders, especially the Kings Templar, refused to respect the various peace arrangements made between Christian and Muslim. Baldwin is widely considered the premiere king and accomplished much during his 11 year reign despite debilitating leprosy. As Hollywood has tried to portray, Guy of Lusignan and Raynald of Châtillon harassed Muslim caravans and overtaxed pilgrims that crossed their lands while Saladin was the leader of only one faction and had little control over others, including the Order of Assassins. Both were intent on eliminating the other to bring their apocalyptic view of the world to a close.

After Baldwin IV’ s death, and that of his nephew and co-ruler, Baldwin V, Guy of Lusignan, married to Baldwin IV’ s sister, Sibylla, became king and began actively attacking Muslims while claiming to want to continue Baldwin’ s peace. This demonstrated the lack of respect Guy had for Saladin and the Muslim forces. Saladin had no choice but to move into open warfare and leading to the Battle of Hattin in July 1187 and the capture of Jerusalem in October of that year.

Pope Gregory VIII had issued a bull, *Audita tremendi*, and begun preaching a new crusade before hearing of the fall of Jerusalem. This began one of the most famous duels in history began when, on 8 June 1191, Richard I of England - the famous Richard the Lionheart - made landfall at the Siege of Acre. His arrival and siege engines, including two enormous mangonels named ‘God’ s Own Catapult’ and ‘Bad Neighbour’, battered the walls and the city surrendered to the Christians on 12 July. Saladin set about ransoming the captured garrison, but Richard was impatient to move toward Jerusalem. He therefore went back on an agreement and executed 2,700 prisoners. Saladin did the same thing with his captured Christians.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Richard then moved to conquer Jaffa, fighting the battle of Arsuf on the way, before advancing toward Jerusalem. Saladin sent his brother, Al-Adil to negotiate with Richard. This included attempts to marry Richard's sister Joan or niece Eleanor to Al-Adil, but would have required one of the pair to convert to the other's faith. Hampered by the weather, Richard instead moved to Ascalon and continued negotiations and skirmishing.

Saladin attacked Jaffa in 1192 in an attempt to cut off the Christian forces, capturing the city. However, his army were so angry from Richard's massacre at Acre that they started slaughtering everyone and Saladin is reported to have sent messages to the surrendered troops to shelter in the city's citadel while he moved to retake control of his own men. There is no way he was not aware of the bitterness of his troops, and some believe he gave them an inch and they took a mile.

Richard himself and a small, 2000 strong force attacked Jaffa from the sea in a surprise attack that the Ayyubids were not prepared for. The freed prisoners reinforced his army but Saladin, believing himself superior in numbers, counter attacked. Saladin's lightly armoured masses were not able to make a dent in the heavily armoured defenders whose immobility worked in their favour and some 700 Muslims died before Saladin retreated in ignominy.

Finally, on 2 September 1192, Saladin completed the Treaty of Jaffa with Richard that saw Jerusalem remain under Muslim control but allowing unarmed Christian pilgrims and traders to visit the city. Ascalon was to have its defences demolished before being returned to Saladin's control. Richard did not take the offered opportunity to tour Jerusalem and the holy sites and instead departed for France on 9 October.

Throughout this time, all negotiations between Christian and Muslim were done with an element of intrigue and subterfuge, with both sides not dealing entirely honestly with the other while still respecting the conventions of honour and chivalry. Baldwin IV and Saladin were both compromised by making promises they knew they would not, or could not, keep, either through their own choices or their inability to manage the nobles they were nominally in command of. *“Both these kings' hearts”* were truly

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

“*bent on evil*” and although they used negotiators, both “*(spoke) lies at the*” negotiating “*table*”. What’s more, neither got anywhere near what they wanted: Baldwin did not protect, and Richard did not capture, Jerusalem and Saladin did not evict the Christians from the area. In other words, both did “*not prosper*”. Both were looking forward to their respective end of time, but with this history being 900 years ago, it is clear that it was not the time of the end, and that “*the end will still be at the appointed time.*”

28 While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.

Date: 12th Century to the Reformation

‘He’ : Catholic Popes and Leaders

Throughout the time of the crusades, “*great riches*” were transferred back to the West, both in the forms of Gold and Silver but, much more importantly, books. Lots of literature was moved back east for evaluation although most of it ended up either in Constantinople or the Vatican. After the 4th Crusade - which was against Constantinople - much of this literature made its way into the courts of Europe and ultimately became an important element in the Renaissance and Reformation.

However, the century or so of trade with the Muslims had brought some substantial intellectual changes to the Christians that returned back to Europe who, owing to their position, spread these changes broadly. Islamic practices like the style of ‘Sabbath’ observance; attending a religious service once a week, spread amongst Christians. For Jews, Shabbat is a day of rest while early Christians considered the church as a place of social and theological congregation despite the day of the week. Catholic prayer beads used in the saying of the Rosary have been said to have been introduced by Peter the Hermit after his first pilgrimage to the East, long before the Crusades. Tradition hold that he adopted the Islamic misbaha for Christians to make reciting prayers easier. Religious innovations are not new, but to adopt such practices can be said to “*do damage*” and be “*against the holy covenant*”.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Rome

Alternatively, this time period saw substantial anti-Jewish moved by the broader church. The inquisition was established in 1184 to investigate heretics but quickly also targeted Jews and other keepers of Mosaic Law. Depending on how you interpret the “*holy covenant*”, antisemitic attacks can fit this passage too.

In light of the loss of Jerusalem, a series of anti-Christian crusades were also launched during this time against those perceived to be anti-Roman. Crusades were called against the Cathars in Languedoc and against Bosnia; the Hussites in Bohemia; and, more importantly in Adventist history, against the Waldensians in North Italy. There were also several popular ‘Crusades’ in the name of but not officially sanctioned by the Church, and the Church used Crusade to settle its political scores absent religious reasons. The Waldensians in particular can match the reference to “*his heart... moved against the holy covenant*” as they retained a Saturday-Sabbath tradition which aligned itself to the 4th Mosaic commandment in Exodus 20: “*8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*” There will be more discussion on this in the next few verses.

The crusading experience taught Christians that they had a divine authority to kill those who disagreed with them and it was only a matter of time before they turned their attention to fellow Christians that they had disagreements with. At the same time, the “*damage*” done “*against the holy covenant*” came in many forms, any one of which could fulfil this verse adequately.

29 “At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter.

30 For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage.

“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.

Date: 1240 - 1270 AD

‘He’ : Louis IX aka Saint Louis

King of the South: Islamic Egypt

Through the next century or so, crusades continued to be made but the full force of Islam had now been stirred up against the invaders. Nevertheless, Louis IX of France, commonly revered as Saint Louis, launched 2 crusades directly against Egypt as it was the heartland of Muslim power, intending to overcome it. Both crusades were launched from ships invading North Africa and, as with every previous crusade before, were intended to recapture Jerusalem.

The interesting reference in these verses is that they are “*ships from Cyprus*”, which at first seems a very unusual place to launch a Crusade from. Richard the Lionheart had captured Cyprus on his way to the Crusade in 1191 and then sold it to the Knights Templar. Not wanting to be away from the fight for very long, the Templars returned Cyprus to Richard who then gave or sold it to Guy of Lusignan after his eviction from the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Island was firmly Christian and was the seat attached to the waiting King of Jerusalem which was in the political process of merging with the Kingdom of Cyprus, ultimately to happen under Hugh III of Cyprus. On his way to the Crusade, Louis IX arrived in Cyprus on 17 September 1248 before heading South to attack Egypt. The Ships Louis used to launch the crusade, literally, came from Cyprus.

Louis landed in Egypt and laid Siege to Damietta, conquering it in June 1249. The plan was to make this a stronghold that could be used to launch an attack into Gaza but he lost the Battle of Mansurah in February 1250 and fell back to Damietta. Louis' army was ultimately defeated at the Battle of Fariskur on 6 April 1250, during which Louis and an estimated 30,000 crusaders were captured. Louis bought his freedom with Templar money and set sail for Acre, effectively ending the crusade.

In 1270, Louis would again return to North Africa, landing in Ifriqiya in modern Tunisia. Louis died shortly after arriving and little of significance happened in this crusade. To round out the story of the crusades, Edward, Duke of Gascony, later Edward I of England, would launch a crusade in 1271-2 that accomplished little and the rump of the Christian states would fall to the Mamluks in 1302. Other crusades

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

would be launched by smaller groups, all against Judea itself and none making any major impact.

Louis' crusade was most certainly "*not be like the former or the latter.*" It was the only one to directly target Egypt and was unique in its ability to draw on "*ships from Cyprus*" for both authority and support. To try and prevent any concept of crusading following this up, the Mamluks who had control of the Holy Land ceased the free passage of Christians and turned the Churches into Mosques. The Muslims were so "*grieved*" that they responded in "*rage against the holy covenant,*" recognising that the Christian forces were a greater threat than previously considered. Their attention was turned toward Byzantium and they attempted to destroy it, finally succeeding in 1453.

The second portion of the verse, however, refers back to Louis. As we have discussed earlier in the language, "*So he shall return*" is a contrasting phrase against the earlier 'he' who is "*grieved*". Louis IX was a pious fanatic who believed in Self-Flagellation, destruction of Jews and burning any books that did not match his, personal, views. These views were entirely in support of the Roman Church' s doctrine. The Pious king was the model of Chivalry and kingship for all of Europe' s monarchs for generations to come, including the destruction of those Rome saw as heretics and Jews as discussed in the above verse. Louis exercised this attitude when he returned from his Seventh Crusade, but was obviously unable to after his death during the Eighth.

Blasphemies

31 And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.

There is a very clear change in how the language conducts itself in this section. The messenger is more or less saying something along the lines of:

"So, this guy we' ve been talking about, the 'He' power, well, he' s going to get a lot of different forces together and he will defile the sanctuary, take away

the ‘daily sacrifice’ and setup some abomination there that makes everything desolate.”

This is far too flippant a colloquialism but helps to understand what the messenger is telling Daniel. The messenger wants to explain the next section and is moving away from the clear military power struggles and into a character explanation of the ‘He’ power. That is not to say that the messenger is not being literal, but just that he is moving into spiritual matters.

We need to consider the context that this comment is made. It follows after the ‘He’ power will “*show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.*” This is the transition between the literal and spiritual while remaining in reality; the power that is doing all the things being discussed, Crusades and persecution, are favourable to those who have gone against or “*forsake[n] the holy covenant.*” The fact that this verse has multiple layers of meaning, as discussed in the last section, reenforces how this interpretation is applied.

The messenger makes it clear that he is talking about those “*forces ...mustered by him*” to do evil things to the Sanctuary. He is making this clearly literal and saying that they are going to defile, pollute and destroy. However the language he uses here can clearly be applied to both the literal and spiritual “*defil[ing] the sanctuary fortress [and] tak[ing] away the daily sacrifices*”.

The Daily Sacrifice

The “*daily sacrifice*” was a ceremony held every day in the tabernacle or temple, regardless of where the Israelites were and what was happening. These were established in Exodus 29 under Moses’ and continued with minimal interruption through to 30 August 70 AD. When the Children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, the Tabernacle was used for daily intercession between God and man. When Solomon completed the temple, the service was transferred there. After Nebuchadnezzar destroyed that temple and the people were moved to the city of Babylon, the wilderness Tabernacle was brought out of storage and used as the place of worship. When Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple, the services were again transferred there. The day after

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

Pompey desecrated the temple in 63BC, the services were resumed. During Herrod's reconstruction of the temple, on the few times when the work did not permit the service to be done on the Temple site, the Tabernacle was again used before that became the central location of worship again. When Emperor worship was brought into Jerusalem by Caligula, it was done alongside the 'daily sacrifice'. Jewish sources claim that the 'daily sacrifice' was done every day from about 1490BC through to 30 August 70 AD no matter where the Israelites were.

The purpose of the ceremony was for anyone who either could not physically attend the temple; due to sickness, travel or simple distance from it, to remember that their sins were forgiven. All Jewish services looked forward to the coming Messiah, unlike the other religions they did not believe that the ceremonies were to appease God themselves, but that they were following God's request for a memory. The daily intercession was a reminder for the people that there would be a sacrifice that would come.

The 'daily sacrifice', therefore, has 2 aspects to it: the physical and the spiritual.

The Physical and The Abomination of Desolation

What is very clear is that the Roman Empire destroyed the physical form of the 'daily sacrifice' on 30 August 70 AD. As has been stated, Judea was a very troublesome province for the Romans to manage. After the death of the tyrant, Herod the Great, his son Herod Archelaus took the throne before being deposed as a part of Augustus' reforming of the Roman Empire. Judea became a province, entirely governed by Romans without the client kings. This brought near 30 years of peace as the Roman Governors tolerated Jewish law and customs. However due to Roman political intrigue, statues of the emperor for worship were established around 38-39AD which caused widespread riots until they were tastefully removed. Riots and an insurgency between 46 and 48AD were indicative of the high tension between the Jews and Romans.

Matters came to a head in Caesarea when Greek merchants sacrificed birds Infront of a Synagogue. One of the Jewish Temple clerks, Eleazar ben Hanania, refused prayers

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

and sacrifices for the Roman Emperor at the Temple. Gessius Florus, the procurator of Judea ordered troops to move into the temple and took a large sum of money, claiming it as back taxes. The people of Jerusalem mocked him openly as a result, passing money baskets around as he travelled past, claiming to be taking up a collection for the poor man. Florus sent troops into the city to arrest a number of city leaders who were scourged and crucified, outraging nationalist factions who started to mobilise and one group, the ‘Sicarii’, captured the mountain fortress of Masada from the Roman Governor.

Nationalist groups opened as widespread conflict as they were able, sieging the Jerusalem garrison who eventually surrendered under condition they were given safe passage from the city. They were, however, betrayed and the Jewish rebels slaughtered the troops and let their commander, Metilius, go free on the grounds he converted to Judaism.

According to the early Church writers, Eusebius of Caesarea and Epiphanius of Salamis, the Christians took the opportunity when the gates were opened to flee from the city, knowing that they would be unlikely to get another chance and how vicious the Romans would be in retaliation.

Being Christians, they had listened to Jesus’ warning. In Matthew 24, Jesus spoke of the temple when he said that “*1[a]ssuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down*” before continuing to advise them that “*15 ”when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 ”then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.*” Luke also recorded the same conversation in chapter 21, when he said wrote “*5 Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones*

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

and donations, He said, 6 "These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." He continued "20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

At the time Jesus spoke these words he was going against the best wisdom of the day, as the 2nd book of Maccabees, chapter 6 had declared Antiochus IV's action the Abomination. Yet Jesus is explicit that the event has not yet happened, and the Christians living just after his ascension knew that the time had come.

Upon hearing the news of the rebellion, Gaius Cestius Gallus, then governor of Syria, took the XIIth legion (the Thunderbolt Twelfth Legion) and elements of the IIIrd Gallica (Gaullic), IVth Scythica (Scythian) and VIth Ferrata (Ironclad) to put down the rebels. This was a total of between 30,000 and 36,000 troops and axillaries. After strong initial victories and moving to put Jerusalem to siege, Gallus withdrew to the coast where he was ambushed and defeated in a stunning fight at the Battle of Beth Horon, the VIth Legion even loosing their Aquilla standard in combat. This is still considered one of the worst military defeats of the Roman Empire by a rebel province throughout its history with 6,000 Romans killed and many more casualties. The Jews took the initiative and had some success, but political infighting caused divisions. The leader of the Sicarii was executed for trying to take power and they withdrew from Jerusalem to the captured stronghold of Masada.

Nero sent general Vespasian with the Xth Fretensis (legion of the Strait) and Vth Macedonica (Macedonian) Legions who was soon joined by his son Titus and the XVth Apollinaris (Apollo's own) along with a selection of local allies; approx. 60,000 in total. Vespasian started with Galilee where the famed but flawed Jewish historian, Josephus,

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

was a military commander before surrendering. By 68AD, some 100,000 rebels had been killed or sold into slavery and Galilee was under Roman control. Those who had wish to continue fighting had withdrawn to Jerusalem.

With so many disparate and ununited forces in Jerusalem, anarchy quickly took hold, and the city was geographically broken up into factions. 20,000 Idumeans from Edom, the famed Petra in modern-day Jordan, arrived at the city thinking that Judea had surrendered and became involved in the civil conflict, while their own homeland was raided by the Sicarii from Masada. The Zealots and Idumeans, thinking that the High Priest was trying to make peace with the Romans, sieged the Temple and killed many members of the priesthood and innocent civilians before finding out that they had been misinformed. This action, however, brought the Zealots in full control of the city although street fighting amongst the factions would continue until the Roman conquest.

During the campaigns of 68 and 69, Vespasian left Jerusalem to its anarchy while keeping close watch and secured much of the Judean countryside. Vespasian became embroiled in the Year of Four Emperors in Rome and returned to that city, leaving Titus to finish the job. Vespasian would rule as emperor for the next 10 years. Titus circled Jerusalem, taking the small towns and areas around it before laying siege. Unable to breach the walls, they instead entrenched the city with anyone caught in the trench trying to flee being crucified in sight of the city, as many as 500 on a single day.

The Zealots burned much of the food stock to encourage people to fight, and starvation was quickly rife through the city of between 600,000 and 1 million people, a wide range as nobody knows how many diaspora Jews were in the city for Passover. After a 7-month siege, in 70AD, Roman forces broke through the three walls and burned the entire city which included the Temple. Although the Romans wished the Temple to be spared, the defenders inside needed eliminating and siege equipment was quickly brought in to knock down the gates. According to Josephus, the Jewish defenders attempted to use fire to stop the Roman advance before the entire place went up in flames, although the truth of this is debated. The fire was supposedly so hot that the lead roof melted into the street.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

With this destruction, both the temple and those who would conduct the daily sacrifices were destroyed, and the temple furniture was taken to Rome as spoils. The ‘daily sacrifice’ was no longer possible in any physical sense and all the equipment for it was no longer accessible to anyone who could use it. What’s more, the entire priesthood was exterminated, meaning that there was nobody who knew how to conduct the service. In the very physical sense, “*the abomination of desolation*” stood in the “*place*” of the “*daily sacrifices*” and there was no physical way that it could ever be resurrected.



The Arch of Titus clearly displaying Jewish Spoils.

The Jews were practically eliminated from the area by the end of 73 AD. Tradition tells that near 900,000 Jews from Jerusalem were sold as galley slaves and another quarter million were crucified. Titus returned to Rome in the spring of 71 and was awarded his own triumph, and his arch still clearly displays the spoils of the campaign that are recognisable today. With his departure, Sextus

Lucilius Bassus was put in charge of completing the conquest, but he was ill and died early into his command. Lucius Flavius Silva took command and retained the Xth Legion while the others were reassigned. After cleaning the rest of Judea, he positioned his troops to siege Masada.

A mountain fortress that contained about 960 people, Masada was difficult to assault but equally difficult to escape from. Josephus states the Roman Legion of 4,800 brought an additional 15,000 slaves to lay siege to the hilly outpost. They built a wall around the fortress and moved thousands of tons of stones and beaten earth to construct a ramp up to the western side. Day after day the Sicarii rebels watched this ramp come closer and closer, knowing they had no chance to hold out. Completed in 73 AD, the Romans laboriously moved a large siege tower up the long ramp before torching the timber wall protecting the city. When they entered the city on 16 April, they found the storehouses and all other things that would catch fire burned and the rebels had killed their families before killing each other. According to Josephus, 2 women and 5 children were all that were left alive, cowering in the sewers; their

husbands not bearing to kill them before being killed themselves. The last rebel setting fire to the synagogue before killing himself.

Masada was the last outpost of Jewish resistance and with its fall the Jewish Nation was almost entirely destroyed. Diaspora Jews in other parts of the world would survive but the core of Israel fell, and took with them the Temple, its services and anyone who remembered them.

The Spiritual

The ‘daily sacrifice’ always looked toward Christ’s coming, and with his death and resurrection were no longer necessary. However, Jesus made no mention or comment about them being ended. He had no reason for them to be concluded, simply for people to realise they were accomplished. It is entirely possible that the ceremony would still be taking place today as a memory to Him had the Jews backed his death and sacrifice rather than rejecting it. Their physical destruction made retaining that ceremony impossible, however we can dig deeper into the purpose of the ceremony to get a better comprehension of how it has become corrupted.

As stated above, the ‘daily sacrifice’ pointed toward the Messiah, the “*prince of the covenant*” and was intended only act as a reflection. During the time of Assyrian influence when Baal worship became the mainstay, some historians believe that the ‘daily sacrifice’ became viewed as an actual intercessory sacrifice, one of the things that Elijah reformed to remind the people that it was just a reflection. After the destruction of the Temple, Christians, who were still a sect of Judaism at the time, were faced with attempting to rebuild their philosophy at about the time that their patriarchs were dying. Possibly only 4 of the original apostles were still alive; John the Revelator most certainly was alive, and it is highly likely that doubting Thomas was too while Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thaddeus are all unknown but possible. With the loss of their authority figures, the new generation of Christians struggled to cope with the loss of their Jewish ancestry in such an aggressive way.

Left in such a vulnerable state, it was natural for the new Christians to look around at the other religious groups that they mingled with. Trinitarian theology was starting to

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

blossom, but there was no room for any more than 3 divine beings in the Christian pantheon. Yet they were surrounded by pagans who had hierarchies of several hundred gods, each with different purposes and areas to manage and who interacted with the hierarchies to intercede on behalf of man. Complicating this was their lack of understanding of the Transfiguration of Jesus before the Cross and the presence of Moses and Elijah at that event. Elijah was known to be translated to Heaven in a chariot of Fire (2 Kings 2) while Moses died on Mt Nebo (Deuteronomy 34). Their presence was especially confusing as Jewish tradition taught that death is the end of life awaiting the day of judgement.

The Gospel of Jude made clear that the tradition was that Michael the Archangel, the military name for Jesus, contended with the Devil for Moses' body which permitted his resurrection at Christ's discretion. Moses' presence at the Transfiguration required a literal resurrection prior to Christ's incarnation as he represented the dead that Christ was dying to save; Elijah represented the living. As new believers flooded into a Church that lacked a detailed theological structure or experience to explain Christ as the only intercessor, the appearance of Elijah and Moses could easily have led to a conversation about other members of Heaven who speak on behalf of those living on earth. The idea of Jesus' taking his followers to heaven after their deaths instead of during a literal, physical second coming, would have quickly become attractive to believers who watched their fellows die in the faith. With them being spiritually translated to Heaven, a pantheon of saints who understood the plight of those on earth evolved as a tradition which was galvanised by persecution into an article of faith. Unlike the Jewish traditions that preceded them, Paul and other writers asked for the faithful to pray on their behalf (Romans 15) and special emphasis was put on those who requested Jesus for intercession on their behalf (John 2; Mark 5, Matthew 9, Luke 8; Mark 1, Matthew 8, Luke 5; Luke 17 amongst many others) and received positive responses.

The divinity of Christ was also being debated at this time and correspondingly how he could be born of a virgin. The purity of Mary was openly discussed and Joseph, appropriately, ignored, leading eventually to the doctrine of her apotheosis and her mother, St Anne, also being a virgin. The earliest Christian frescoes all include scenes of the Life of Christ including his birth which, naturally, depict Mary and the virgin

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

birth is described in the Gospels as a reference to the Old Testament Prophets. By the 3rd Century, when Constantine encouraged Christians to adopt foreign traditions, adoration of the saints and Mary in particular was widespread.

Concurrent with this divine intercession was a special emphasis on the confession of sins. The apostles had wanted confession amongst the brethren to be open so as to avoid conflict amongst believers, but the shame associated with admitting wrong drew this into the shadows. As leadership figures started to encourage the reconciliation between believers, the idea of a priest acting as an independent mediator between parties, as supported by Matthew 18, became quickly the norm. As priests started to become established as full-time church servants akin to the Levites, their position started to be viewed as more holy and, again like the Levites, with special access to God over the common man. Without the Jewish leaders to explain that the sanctuary services were all symbolic and did not, in themselves, allow access to the divine, the pagan teaching of approaching the divine through ritual became part of the Church doctrine. The first-century sharing of bread and wine as Christ had instructed at the last supper (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 13, 1 Corinthians 11) took on a ritualistic tone and simple remembrance was plagued with stylised liturgy.

Within the First Century, the theory of Transubstantiation; the idea that the body and bread are changed into the literal body and blood of Jesus in the stomach of the penitent, started to become an article of faith amongst the community. This pagan adaptation through the Babylonian Mysteries came from the Mithraic sacraments that included cake and Haoma drink which was itself adapted from the Egyptian Sacraments of Osiris. Ingesting the divinity supposedly made them more accessible in these philosophies.

Through all these changes, the intention was for the penitent person to become closer to God or Jesus as they were so choosing. Either by asking a person they believed to be in Heaven to speak with God on their behalf or by the priest interceding to ask the saints and apostles themselves, a layer of separation was produced between the individual and God that did not exist before. Jesus unequivocally said “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*” (John 14)

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

while these doctrines now suggested that the penitent must approach a third or even fourth party before coming to Christ.

The “*daily sacrifice*” that pointed toward Christ was, and in Catholic Catechism remains, replaced with a true “*abomination*”. Their claim is that Christ “*entrusted the exercise of the power of absolution to the apostolic ministry which he charged with the “ministry of reconciliation”*” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1442), rather than having Christ being the sole forgiver of sin; Mark 2; “*the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins*”. An abomination stands between God and Man that has replaced Christ. Whether with a priest, a saint or with Mary herself, the doctrine that anything should prevent the penitent Christian from approaching the saviour save for themselves is a blasphemous abomination.

What’s more, this abomination caused great “*desolation*.” Persecution and outright crusades were waged against a wide variety of groups over the question of intercession including the Cathars, Waldensies and Hussites amongst a great many others. The Protestant Reformation was started over the question of selling indulgences; money paid to the church that supposedly remitted sins by Papal authority. For Luther and others, this was enough to revolt and many paid for it with their blood, furthering this “*desolation*” this “*abomination*” wrought. Even today, the dominance of the Roman Church in matters of civil rights, sexuality and marriage are called heavily into question when such issues should be the prevue of the individual with their God. The heartache and pain exposed by the recent scandals are enough to truly warrant the title of an “*abomination*”.

This verse, therefore, straddles both the physical and spiritual sides of the language spoken of by the Church. As we move into the spiritual blasphemies that the Roman church still teaches and believes, let us never forget that for more than 1200 years any comment made was backed up with an army. It was only under the destruction of the Papal states and military force by Napoleon and his general, as detailed in Chapter 7 and 8, that the world was able to gain some freedom from that power. But, as detailed in Revelation 13, the deadly wound inflicted is healing as the papacy repositions itself as a political player once again. John Paul II was instrumental in supporting the Communist states to hold out against oppression and Francis I has been instrumental

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

in encouraging social programs around the world, both positioning the Papacy closely with the common people. But other forces are also starting to arise. At the time of writing the 16th Synod of Bishops has only recently completed in the Vatican where the conservative American clique have threatened schism over the Pope's position on contraception and abortion by emphasizing individual conscience.

Time will tell the result of these conservative and liberal separations, but as we return to the text of Daniel, we should remember that the influence of Vatican City has not been this strong since the destruction of its earthly power 225 years ago.

Uniting the Physical and Spiritual

The other phrase included in this verse, that “*they shall defile the sanctuary fortress*” also serves to unit the physical and spiritual through the elements that can be seen in every Roman Church. Christian iconography dates to when Christianity was adopted into the Roman and Byzantine philosophy. The Roman Empire used iconography to promote its propaganda, to use a modern word, and explain its position widely as well as to promote its history through the engraved frescoes on triumphal arches. The earliest Christians can be identified by the fish-symbol which was quickly joined by the crucifix. As stated above, Constantine the Great, prior to the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312AD had a dream in which he was instructed to paint the Chi-Rho symbol on his army shields which, after his victory, he adopted as the symbol of Christianity.

This symbol became spread everywhere and as Constantine moved his capital to Byzantium, the Byzantine form of iconography quickly accepted this and the other Christian symbols for their art. By the time of Justinian, such iconography was exceptionally widespread, and examples can be found across the Christian world. Although these started as simple ways of telling stories, by the 7th Century the icons were becoming a part of actual worship, and the oldest elements were being venerated themselves. This coincided with the veneration of saint's relics and beliefs that physical interaction with, or even keeping pieces of the saints would allow the penitent Christian to demonstrate their devotion to the saint who would show their favour. Images of the saints and Godhead were quickly seen as a secondary version of this worship and small forms of what amount to idols were widely produced.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

This opposed the original text of the 10 Commandments as recorded in Exodus 20 saying:

“4 You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

From that time to this, icons and idols can be found in Roman Catholic Churches, generally in the form of Crucifixes above and attached to their altars. Saint’s medals, necklaces and rings are still very popular amongst the Catholic Faithful. If we contrast this idol establishment and worship against both Antiochus IV’s establishment of the Marduk statue and Caligula’s Emperor worship, to say that the Church “*defile[d] the sanctuary*” is almost an understatement.

32 Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

The early church acted widely to bring Gentile converts in against the Jewish traditions they had inherited. Aside from that stated above, the reverence of Christmas and Easter adopted practices that made the church more attractive to Pagans by using the same language and ceremony. The new covenant, an individualistic one, was replaced with the bureaucratic system of priests and saints explained above, all an abomination to the Christian's Jewish ancestors.

However, those who stayed true to God’s word withstood the flood. Although The Waldensies and other groups were quickly the minority, they were able to accomplish great matters with God on their side.

33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

As stated, despite the Waldensies and the other church reformers being earnest in their appeals to reform and return the Church to a holy state, their payment was inquisition and crusade. These fathers “*who underst[ood]*” attempted to teach widely and “*instruct many*” but they instead “*they ... f[e]ll by sword and flame*”. The burning of heretics was a staple of the Roman Church and the property of anyone so convicted was forfeit to the Church body itself. Nobody truly knows the real death tolls from the persecuting phase of the Church's history, nor how many spent time in “*captivity*” for their beliefs.

34 Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue.

Its noteworthy that the people who were put to death might have been sentenced by the Church but were killed by the local forces. The Church ordered the match struck but it was the police or military force in the area that generally did the actual killing. The local forces were happy to hand their sovereignty over to the Papal Bull.

The forces that stood against the church, however, were also generally insurgencies against their own dominion and not purely for religious reasons. Most of the time the groups attacked had no power to fight back, but when forces arose that would actually fight, they were often given “*a little help*” from sectarian rebels too, who sided “*with them by intrigue.*” The first of the major forces to stand against Rome was, famously, England, the king of whom, Henry VIII, had his own marital interests in mind and not the purity of the Church. This is partly why the Protestant Church is so fractured today.

Many governments exploited the Protestant movements in other countries as destabilising moves, such as the events that led to the 30 Years War. These were clearly not for religious reform but sectarian promotion.

35 And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

Men like Calvin and Luther had no interest in breaking up the Church, they wanted to reform it, get specific elements out of it rather than separate and forge a new

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

movement. They saw their duty as keeping the membership pure until Christ's return, not to protect the broader establishment.

Daniel here refers to “*the appointed time*” when Catholic dominion will end, a reference to the 1260 Days. After 1798 these reform movements were able to much more easily become independent churches, like the Methodists well inside the Anglican structure until after John Wesley's death. Other movements that arose after this time, like the Adventists, were and remain purely hostile toward the Roman Church. The messenger saying that “*it is still for the appointed time*” means he won't dwell on that timeframe, and we should not expect much more commentary in the text on those timeframes.

36 ”Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

The Pope has been the King of Rome for generations and, even today, is the king of the 'Holy See'. He is the last absolute monarch remaining in the world. Within Vatican City, whatever he says is law and is absolutely unquestionable. As a King he exchanges ambassadors with most of the world's countries including the US, UK and Australia and is received as a state leader whenever he travels.

What's more, according to the First Vatican Council, he is also infallible. “We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed that the Roman pontiff when he speaks ex cathedra, that is when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, by the Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed in defining doctrine regarding faith or morals, and that therefore such definitions of the Roman pontiff are of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, irreformable.” For the Papacy, to say he is able to “*do according to his own will*” is actually an understatement compared to the rest of the world!

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

Furthermore, to say that he “*exalt[s] and magnifies] himself above every god*”, for the Papacy this also includes Jesus and God the Father. On 27 April 2014, Pope Francis I canonised two of his predecessors with the following liturgy: “*For the honour of the Blessed Trinity, the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the increase of the Christian life, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own, after due deliberation and frequent prayer for divine assistance, and having sought the counsel of many of our brother Bishops, we declare and define Blessed John XXIII, John Paul II, be Saints and we enrol them among the Saints, decreeing that they are to be venerated as such by the whole Church. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen*”. As explained above the job of saints is to intercede with Jesus on behalf of the penitents and the Papacy is, by these statements, instructing that they are “*Saints and ...enrol[ed] ...among the Saints*”. This means that the Pope, by his own authority, has declared these individuals to be listened to by Christ on matters that concern his church.

There are far too many “*blasphemies against the God of gods*” to be counted in this short text, but those explained here, such as claiming infallibility, promoting Mary to second person after 2nd Jesus and priestly and saintly intercession should suffice for any discussion that is warranted. But the messenger is clear that he “*shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished*”. The rise of the Roman Church is a result of the Jews not following God’s word, as discussed in Daniel 9, and the Christians not sticking to Christ’s teaching as explained above. These horrors and abominations are the fulfilment of prophecy, and regardless of how much God might want to stop the horror, “*what has been determined shall be done.*”

37 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

It is no secret that the Roman Church persecuted the Jews heavily, being one of the primary purposes of the Inquisition when it was established. With the destruction of Jerusalem, the Roman Church abandoned all the philosophical and religious practise that had come before them, and instead chose to find their own way forward. The “*God of his fathers*” was not good enough for them.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

Indeed, one of these philosophies that the Romans abandoned was the traditional tribe system where fathers and sons would follow one after another. Instead, by the 350, church leaders were more or less expected to be celibate, although this was not canon law until the 11th century. Organised celibacy, as explained by Paul in Ephesians 5, is a crime against man and God's very first commandment; be fruitful and multiply and scorning the “*desire of women*” is neither holy nor healthy.

The Pope claims dominion over All Kings, Emperors, men and Gods; and they listen! He “*exalt[s] himself above them all*” regardless of position and excommunicates them at his leisure. The list of excommunicates includes Henry IV: Holy Roman Emperor (5 times), Harold II to permit William the Bastard to invade England, Frederick I Barbarossa, Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket and his murderers, John and Henry VIII of England amongst many, many others, often for purely political purposes and not at all for religious matters. In recent times, presidents of the United States have been even called into question about their religious affiliation. Such was the recognised influence of the Papacy in the 1960s that then presidential candidate John Fitzgerald Kennedy had to affirm that he was not an agent of the Papacy in a speech on September 12, 1960. He stated:

“I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute, where no Catholic prelate would tell the president (should he be Catholic) how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote... I believe in an America that is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish; where no public official either requests or accepts instructions on public policy from the Pope, the National Council of Churches or any other ecclesiastical source... I am not the Catholic candidate for president. I am the Democratic Party's candidate for president, who happens also to be a Catholic. I do not speak for my church on public matters, and the church does not speak for me. Whatever issue may come before me as president — on birth control, divorce, censorship, gambling or any other subject — I will make my decision in accordance with these views, in accordance with what my conscience tells me to be the national interest, and without regard to outside religious pressures or dictates. And no power or threat of punishment could cause me to decide otherwise.”

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

The Papacy presenting itself as superior to Kings and Emperors has very wide ranging implications.

38 But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.

The word “*fortresses*” here is better translated “*forces*”. The Roman Church is certainly one that likes to concern itself with the forces at its disposal, regardless of what that may be. One of its primary tools is the concept of ‘sacred tradition’, a theological term used in major Christian traditions, primarily those claiming apostolic succession, such as the Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Assyrian, and Anglican traditions. It refers to the foundation of the doctrinal and spiritual authority of Christianity and of the Bible. According to the Christian theological understanding of these Churches, scripture is the written part of this larger tradition, recording (albeit sometimes through the work of individual authors) the community’s experience of God or more specifically of Jesus. Thus, the Bible must be interpreted within the context of sacred tradition and within the community of the church and the text is much less important than how or what they choose to interpret it too. This is partly why the Bible was restricted for specific clergy for long periods of time, so that not anyone could read it and interpret it in a different form to how their ‘sacred tradition’. Such tradition is still the most important and widest used too, as well as its strongest ‘get out of jail free card’ the Papacy still has when combined with Papal infallibility. The Church is right because it holds the authority of being right because the Pope cannot be wrong. What nonsense!

It is also noteworthy that all of these concepts are novel to the Catholic church and are philosophies which their Jewish “*fathers did not know*”. Jews have textual interpretation, to be sure, but they are much more attached to the letter of the text than they are to the infallibility of one who interprets the text. These structures are completely Gentile in nature.

However, another interpretation can be brought in to define who the “*god which his fathers did not know*” is. As stated, veneration of Mary started about the same time as saintly veneration, however because of her position as Theotokos (“birth-giver of

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

Blasphemies

God”) or Meter Theou (“Mother of God”), her veneration became much more passionate. By the 3rd century her own form of virgin birth, with her mother, Anne, who is not recorded in scripture, also being a virgin when she gave birth to Mary. While the First Council of Nicaea in 325 certified Christ's virgin birth, her own immaculate conception was widespread through the 3rd century and her perpetual virginity, despite Jesus' having brothers named in the Bible, was affirmed at the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, 553. By the 7th Century the Assumption of Mary, that is that she was taken bodily into heaven either at, or before, her death, became a common doctrine although it has only been affirmed in recent times by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

Mary's position to this day is held much higher than any saint, and she is seen as the conduit to which one may approach Christ. To that end, the ‘Hail Mary, full of grace’ prayer is included in the Rosary and is seen as one of the most important intercessory prayers within the Roman liturgy. Mary's veneration is as close to actively worshiping her as a god as one can get to, and she obviously can be considered a “*god which [Jewish] fathers did not know*”. Jeremiah spent much of chapter 44 explaining that those who worship “*the queen of heaven*” were the antithesis of those who worship God, yet the Roman Church was quick to promote Jesus mother above all others. This does, however, tie into the discussion of Daniel 8 on the Babylonian Mysteries where veneration of female deities was commonplace. This was an additional appeal for Christians who were trying to bring foreign pagans in, many of whom heavily involved worship of female deities.

The Roman Church's promotion of Mary is illogical when considering the biblical text. She has almost no role in the story after the Wedding at Cana and is only tangentially present at the Crucifixion. Although her recognition as Christ's mother is understandable, the fact that she is, even today, such a prominent and powerful symbol of that church can only be explained when one adds in Papal Infallibility. She is not a god because she is divine, she is a god because the Papacy has decided that she is one. For that reason alone she stands at the very top of the Catholic Hierarchy, just below the trinity.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Northern King's Conquests

As for “*gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things*”, the insane opulent wealth of the Roman Church needs no discussion here; their fiscal power is unquestionable!

39 Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

With all these tools, the Roman Church was, and still does, stand against the “*strongest forces/fortresses*” on the planet. As detailed, their use of foreign tools to excommunicate world leaders in their infallible wisdom permitted the Roman church to remain in a position of influence against every power or authority across the world. Even today, long after their martial power has been destroyed, they draw upon the forces of the world to accomplish their ends and admit to the world that it is their own glory that they are trying to promote. The Church today is the largest institution in the history of the world who has strong influence over approximately 1 in every 7 people on the face of the earth. Truly, even today, the Papacy is able to “*rule over many*” and use that strength to accomplish practically anything it turns its mind too.

What is more, the Church has always owned the land their buildings were on, and even today they are exempt from tax or direct allegiance to the state in most places. They “*divide the land for*” their own, personal “*gain.*”

As the text now moves back to the literal and away from the spiritual, it is worth noting that there is no other power in the history of the world that fits this spiritual description. No other power exists in this format and no other power could possibly fit into this mould.

The Northern King's Conquests

40 "At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.

Date: This is future prophecy.

We cannot date any of this as it involves events that have not yet happened.

King of the South: Islam in some form.

Possibly a new Califate, possibly the Mahdi

King of the North: ???????

As seen in the previous language, we now have another complete change in language. The messenger returns back to the original sets of timed prophecies by saying the following events will happen “(at) *the time of the end*”. He has referenced “*the time of the end*” throughout his expose to Daniel and, as we will see, it refers to the time shortly preceding Christ’ s second coming. The Book of Revelation has a great deal more information about this time period that will be discussed there.

To be clear, we today live between vs 39 and 40 of Daniel Chapter 11.

The last passage being around the focus of ‘He’ and how he has blasphemed God, there is no evidence that the King of the South’ s identification has changed. We therefore have no alternative but to consider the King of the South to still be Islamic force, possibly based in or around Egypt. The most logical of these is a new Califate that arises and challenges the western world. Saying that “*the king of the South shall attack him*” indicates that this war is going to be started by the Islamic community and not the Christian world. One thing that is important to note is that in Islamic eschatology, an expected individual known as the Mahdi, is said to appear shortly before the Prophet ‘Īsā (Jesus Christ) and will lead the Muslims to rule the entire world. This descendant of Muhammad is probably expected before the Second Coming of Jesus. However, the Mahdi does not appear in the Quran and is not overtly referenced in Muhammad’ s other writings but has become a part of Islamic culture. As early as the 8th Century, individuals claiming to be the Mahdi have arisen, but the best remembered in Western eyes is Muhammad Ahmad bin Abd Allah (1844–1885).

Muhammad Ahmad led a Sudanese revolt against the Khedivate of Egypt, the Ottoman Turkish tribute backed by the British. Fighting their way up the Nile, they finally laid Siege to Khartoum from 13 March 1884 to 26 January 1885, which had been reinforced

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires

The Northern King's Conquests

with British troops under the command of the famous General Charles Gordon as Governor-General of Sudan. An eccentric evangelical Christian who belonged to no Church, the Mahdi viewed this as the showdown leading to the end of the world while the rest of the world viewed it as a small affair. Gordon's death at the end of the Siege, was viewed as a chivalrous end to a Christian Knight in a Victorian period that was glorifying the Crusades, but the Mahdi's success was short lived. He died some six months after the city fell of typhus.

Some have also linked this attack to modern Islamic terrorism, but that does not really work for my interpretation. The previous wars involving the King of the North or South were near total wars, meaning that they brought almost the entire nation with them or devoted almost their entire strength to the fight. Islamic terrorism, however, remains only a small faction within the Islamic world, the rest being very content to remain in amity with the West.

The next character that comes into play has not been seen prior to this. Who is "*the king of the North*"? Identifying this power has been an open debate amongst theologians for generations and was a popular family conversation in my ancestry. Suggestions as to who this is have ranged from apostate Protestantism to the United States of America through to a new world government that aligns itself in favour of the Roman Papacy. For the purpose of his analysis, I will not speculate on who it is, but we will analyse some specifics that we can see as we move through.

Firstly, it must be a spiritual power. Both 'He' and the King of the South are now spiritual powers; the resurrected King of the North must be also.

Second, he musters extremely large forces, moving "*like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships*", and nothing was able to stop him, as he will be able to "*enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.*" This power is going to command an almost unstoppable power.

Third, we need to look at how the language is used but he will either fight with or against the "He" power. The phrase "*the South shall attack him*" is reasonably clear; the King of the South will attack the last power discussed, the 'He' power that we

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
The Northern King's Conquests

have identified as Rome and that the messenger has just spent pages speaking about. However, in the phrase “*the king of the North shall come against him*”, the ‘him’ is much more ambiguous. If we follow the rules we have set previously, the ‘him’ should refer to the King of the South, but there is enough ambiguity that we cannot be certain here, however we will see that this is the most likely as the text continues.

41 He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.

42 He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

These verses are rather self-explanatory. He, the King of the North, will attack and conquer a number of places. As discussed, the Glorious land most likely refers to Judea and the Israelitish nations.

Edom, Moab and Ammon all exist on the East of the Dead Sea in modern Jordan and the text says that they will be conquered but will also “*escape from his hand*”. If we take this as a literal reference, then some kind of agreement will be made with what is currently Jordan to release them after conquest, although in the modern world we cannot imagine what such an agreement would look like.

What is interesting is both Edom, Moab and Ammon all oppressed Israel at different times. By freeing them or making an alliance with them would indicate that the KOTN has some sympathy for those who oppose the true word of God, which the messenger has identified previously with the ‘He’ power, Roman Catholicism.

It is interesting that Egypt is, explicitly, named here; not just referenced like the King of the South. As we are looking at this in as highly a literal form as we can, It is likely that Egypt itself is going to be a target for this particular power.

This would seem to indicate that this KOTN power will fight against the KOTS, alongside the ‘He’ Roman power, but again the ambiguity in the text means we cannot be absolutely certain.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
The Northern King's Conquests

43 He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

This will be an exceptionally rich and well-resourced power, that will not only have power over treasures but also “*precious things*”. In our modern context, this power could see a move to control the historic artefacts and holdings from Egypt or, as discussed earlier, could be a reference to Egyptian knowledge; Islamic traditions that are adopted for their own means. The mentioning of the “*Libyans and Ethiopians*” is also interesting as these are powers to the West and South of Egypt respectfully. To “*follow at his heels*” would indicate that alliances are made with those powers, or, in context, they are bought off with “*treasures of gold and silver*” and follow as servants following their master.

44 But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

When this power is in the middle of his conquests, an Eastern force will trouble him. East of the ‘Glorious lands’ would be Persia or, eventually, China, which have both been presented as options. But it is not an army that comes from these Eastern states to attack, but “*news*” which could be diplomatic or trade related. Somehow this changes things for the power, and rather than continuing his attack on Africa, he turns his attention North, either to Turkey or, further, to Europe; possibly even Russia and the Baltic states.

45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

To “*plant the tents of his palace*” would indicate that he is setting down long-term roots, establishing a base that he will remain in. This is the clearest indication that whoever this power is, they do not currently exist, as to move your capital “*between the seas and the glorious holy mountain*” - that is, broadly, in the area between Jerusalem and the Ocean - requires abandoning a previous stronghold. Western nations like the United States and England have very well-established capitals that it is pointless to, or logistically almost impossible to, move to a place like Israel.

Chapter 11 – Clash of Empires
The Northern King's Conquests

This power, however, will fall or “*come to his end, and no one will help him.*” From the fast movement that we see here, it will most likely, like Napoleon and Hitler in their attempts to conquer Russia, not be able to sustain and supply the speedy advance and be overtaken by the forces that come against them. Supply lines too thin and surrounded by enemies, this power will be broken and, either through upsetting everyone, the speed of his fall or because there is no logistical way to support him, “*no one will help him.*”

This power will arrive, conquer, establish itself and then be destroyed in what appears to be a very short space of time.

A Chapter 11 Rewrite with the Historical Elements Included

Understanding the 11th chapter of Daniel has been an exceptionally difficult exercise throughout history but is certainly not impossible. In order to make referencing it easier, I have rewritten the historic portion of the chapter with the names of kings and specific events referenced so that the reader has a quick reference guide.

For further information, please see my broader interpretation of Daniel 11. In no way should this be considered a new interpretation, but rather as a historic edit.

Warring Kings of North and South

*1 In the first year of Darius the Mede (**Cyrus the Great**), I, even I (**A messenger from God**), stood up to confirm and strengthen him.*

*2 And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings (**Cambyses II, Bardiya and Darius the Great**) will arise in Persia, and the fourth (**Xerxes**) shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all (**the empire of Persia**) against the realm of Greece.*

*3 Then a mighty king (**Alexander the Great**) shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.*

*4 And when (**Alexander the Great**) has arisen, (**Alexander's**) kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven (**Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy**), but not among his (**Alexander's**) (**children**) nor according to (**Alexander's**) dominion (**Greece/Macedon**) with which (**Alexander**) ruled; for (**Alexander's**) kingdom shall be uprooted, even for (**the other Greek States**) besides these.*

*5 Also (**Ptolemy I**) shall become strong, as well as one of (**Alexander's**) princes (**Seleucid, who**) shall gain power over (**Ptolemy**) and have dominion. (**Seleucid's**) dominion shall be a great dominion.*

A Chapter 11 Rewrite with the Historical Elements Included
Warring Kings of North and South

6 *(Some years later, after some combat,) (they shall have a peace agreement) for (Berenice Phernophorus (“Dowry Bearer”)) daughter of (Ptolemy II) shall go to (Antiochus II) to make an (peace) agreement; but (Berenice) shall (not survive long), and neither (Antiochus II) nor (the peace treaty) shall stand; but (Berenice) shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times (, her father, Ptolemy II).*

7 *But **(another member of Berinice's family, her brother, Ptolemy III)** shall arise in **(Ptolemy II's)** place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of **(Antioch)**, and deal with **(Berenice's murders)** and prevail.*

8 *And **(Ptolemy III)** shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall **(live)** more years than **(Seleucus II)**.*

9 *”Also **(Seleucus II)** shall come to the **(Egypt)**, but shall return to his own land **(for burial when he died on campaign)**.*

10 *However **(Seleucus II's)** sons **(Seleucus III Callinicus and Antiochus III Megas Basileus)** shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and **(Antiochus III's force)** shall certainly come and overwhelm **(Ptolemy IV's defences)** and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress **(of Tyre)** and stir up strife.*

11 *And **(Ptolemy IV)** shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with **(Antiochus III)**, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be **(soundly defeated at the Battle of Raphia)**.*

12 *When **(Ptolemy IV)** has defeated **(Antiochus III)** , his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not **(win ultimate victory)**.*

13 *For the **(Antiochus III)** will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come **(to the Battle of Panium)** at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.*

A Chapter 11 Rewrite with the Historical Elements Included
Warring Kings of North and South

14 Now in those times many shall rise up against **(Ptolemy V)**. Also, violent **(men of Israel)** shall exalt themselves in fulfillment **(of the prophecies that Israel will rise again)**, but they shall fall.

15 So **(Antiochus IV)** shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of **(Ptolemy)** shall not withstand him. Even **(Ptolemy's)** choice troops shall have no strength to resist.

16 But **(Rome)** shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against **(it)**. **(Rome)** shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.

17 “**(Rome, Julius Caesar)** shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom **(into Egypt)**, and upright ones **(diplomatic advisors)** with him; thus shall he do. And **(Caesar)** shall give **(Egypt)** the daughter of women **(Cleopatra VII Philopator)** to destroy it **(Egypt)**; but **(Cleopatra)** shall not stand with **(Caesar)**, or be for **(Marc Antony)**.

18 After this **(Caesar)** shall turn his face to the **(Isles and Coastlines)**, and shall take many. But **(as)** a ruler **(Caesar)** shall bring **(the civil war)** against them to an end; and **(even)** with the reproach removed, **(Rome)** shall turn ~~back~~ on him.

19 Then **(Caesar)** shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall **(be assassinated)**, and not be found.

20 ”There shall arise in his place **(not a hereditary successor)** one who imposes taxes **(Octavian/Caesar Augustus)** on the glorious kingdom **(Israel)**; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle **(possibly poisoned, possibly old age)**.

21 And in his place shall arise a vile person **(Tiberius)**, to whom they will not give the honour of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue **(not by military or untoward means but by Augustus’ scheming)**.

22 With the force of a flood they **(anyone that opposed Rome and especially the people in Judea)** shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant **(Jesus Christ’s Death)**.

A Chapter 11 Rewrite with the Historical Elements Included
Warring Kings of North and South

23 And after the league is made with (Constantine the Great,) he shall act deceitfully (adopting pagan practices and including them in the Christian Religion, like Sunday, Easter and Christmas), for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.

24 (**The spiritual authority of Rome**) shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province (**proselytising**); and he shall do what his fathers have not done (**rule with spiritual/religious power and not military force**), nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches (**though simony and bribery**); and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds (**to take military power**), but only for a time (**until the Byzantine Papacy**).

25 (**Pope Urban II**) shall stir up his power and his courage against (**Seljuk Empire**) with a great army (**of Crusaders**). And (**the Fatimid Califate**) shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand (**at the Battle of Ascalon**), for they shall devise plans against him (**to conquer Jerusalem**).

26 Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies (**the Fatamid Tax farmers**) shall (**stage a revolt and**) destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain (**at the Battle of Ramla**).

27 Both these kings' hearts (**Baldwin IV, Richard I (the Lionheart) and Saladin**) shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table (**truce after the Siege of Acre and the retaliation at Jaffa, the Treaty of Jaffa amongst others**); but it (**the peace**) shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time.

28 While returning to his land with great riches (**gold and literature from the Holy Land**), his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant (**Islamic practices adapted for the Christian Church and/or attacks against Jews**); so he shall do damage (**to Christianity**) and return to his own land (**cease major crusade actions against Muslims and turn them against Christians, especially the Sabbath-keeping Waldensies**).

29 "At the appointed time he shall return (**hold another Crusade**) and go toward

Blasphemies

*the south **(Egypt)**; but it shall not be like the former or the latter **(the only crusader king to directly target Egypt)**.*

*30 For ships from Cyprus **(Louis IX aka Saint Louis's Crusade)** shall come against him **(Egypt)**; therefore he **(Egypt)** shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage **(ceased free passage for Christians, attacked Byzantine)**. "So he **(Louis)** shall return and show regard **(support)** for those who forsake the holy covenant **(the Papacy)**.*

Blasphemies

*31 And forces shall be mustered by him **(Pagan Rome's army and Papal Rome's false Doctrines)**, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress **(Pagan Rome will destroy the Sanctuary, Papal Rome introduces idol worship)**; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. **(Pagan Rome burned the Temple and destroyed Jerusalem, slaughtering everyone possible, Papal Rome replaced Salvation through Christ Alone with the intercession of Priests, Saints and Mary)***

32 Those who do wickedly against the covenant (pagans) he shall corrupt with flattery (bring their beliefs of Christmas, Easter, Sunday worship and many others into the Church); but the people who know their God (Waldensies and other puritans who retained the Jewish view of the scriptures) shall be strong, and carry out great exploits (hold out against persecution).

*33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many **(Waldensies etc)**; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame **(be persecuted through crusades and other oppression)**, by captivity and plundering **(loose their goods to the Church)**.*

34 Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. (sectarian authorities will side with the Roman Church and rebels will join them to combat the sectarian government, not because they share their views.)

A Chapter 11 Rewrite with the Historical Elements Included

The Northern King's Conquests

35 And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end (**reformers will give their lives knowingly to try and bring the Church back to God's word**); because it is still for the appointed time. (**the end of the 1260 days**)

36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will (**Holy See/Papal states has always been an absolute monarchy**): he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. (**Papal infallibility, instructing the divine on who is and isn't a saint, promotion of Saints and Mary, etc**)

37 He shall regard neither the God of his fathers (**Jewish tradition and philosophy**) nor the desire of women (**priestly celibacy**), nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

38 But in their place he shall honor a god of (**forces**) (**sacred tradition**); and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor (**Mary**) with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. (**Church wealth is undisputed and excessive**)

39 Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses (**world-wide power**) with a foreign god (**Mary**), which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain. (**Roman churches own their own land and are generally exempt from most civil taxes and laws.**)

The Northern King's Conquests

40 "At the time of the end (**the time around when Probation has closed**) the king of the South (**Islamic forces**) shall attack him; and the king of the North (**?????**) shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships (**a massive army and navy**); and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through (**defeat but not conquer**).

Chapter 12

41 He (?????) shall also enter the Glorious Land (**Judea**), and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon (**Modern-day Jordan or powers that oppressed Israel; i.e. the 'He' power's forces or allies**).

42 He (?????) shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

43 He (?????) shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt (**possibly Islamic and other religious knowledge**); also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

44 But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. (**indecipherable but possibly about Persia or, less likely, China**)

45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain (**between Jerusalem and the Ocean**); yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him (**when the power reaches his final fight, he will be deserted and nobody will strengthen him**).

Chapter 12

At that time (**When the King of the North is defeated**) Michael (**Jesus**) shall stand up, (**Take up his position as King of this world at his second coming**)

The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people;

And there shall be a time of trouble (**persecution, wars and other such horrors**), Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time.

And at that time your people, (**Those who are on Christ's side**)

Every one who is found written in the book.

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,

*Some to everlasting life, **(at the second coming, the "dead in Christ shall rise first")***

Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

*3 Those who are wise shall shine **(those who read and understand Daniel's writings)***

Like the brightness of the firmament,

*And those who turn many to righteousness **(who teach Daniel's word and explain it to the world)***

Like the stars forever and ever.

4 But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

*12 “At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people;*

“*At that time*”, as this new King of the North power is falling and after this massive fight has gone on between Rome, Islam and them, at “*that time Michael shall stand up*”. To “*stand up*” means to step forward and begin His reign. Michael is the identity or position that Jesus takes when he commands the Armies of God. This is his title as general of the hosts of Heaven and is as kingly a title as that of King Arthur. Jesus is now stepping into the worlds affairs as a King, as a ruler and as the greatest general the universe has ever seen.

For Jesus to step into this position, he is preparing the way for the establishment of his Kingdom on earth. He is a rising power the same as Persia, Media, Greece or Rome were. The difference here is that he is the “*great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people*”. As King of the Universe, he has no interest whatsoever in conquering a small corner of this planet; he wants to protect his people. He is standing up in a time when his people are under threat from this great power that has stepped forward, and when they are oppressed by the ‘He’ power as we have discussed.

For Christ to step up now means that this is **immediately** before the 2nd Coming of Jesus, as we will shortly see. The stone of Chapter 2 is being thrown to the feet of the statue and the Kingdom of Heaven is about to descend.

*And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation,
Even to that time.*

The time of Trouble is better explained in Revelation but relates to persecution surrounding the Close of Probation. The powers we have discussed have oppressed and persecuted God’s people. There can be no other trouble; nothing else matters to

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

Daniel in his recording or the messenger in his presentation. It's important to draw this distinction between them and the other nations of the world who have their troubles laid out in the previous verses. Here, however, the messenger tells Daniel “man, things are going to get worse than you've ever seen it.”

For Christians who follow the truth, this means that when we look back on the horrors that the Jews have experienced; from Egyptian Bondage to the civil wars to Roman occupation and extermination to the harassment of the Crusades and inquisition and finally the concentration camps, things are still going to be worse again...

*And at that time your people,
Every one who is found written in the book.*

“*And at that time*”, in the height of the trouble, when the worst possible events fall. Michael's rise either triggers a time of trouble or happens at the moment when the tension between God's people and the powers that control the world are at their height. They are linked, but how is not clear in the text. What is clear is that it is “*at that time your people shall be delivered*”.

Deliverance can only come in one form; freedom from oppression. It does not say that there will be a fight or struggle, and it leaves no room for anyone to be left out or any remnant to remain like in other experiences. It is clear that “[e]*very one who is found written in the book*” “*shall be delivered*”. This can only be the moment of the Second Coming, when Christ shall take his redeemed to everlasting life and those who have opposed him to everlasting contempt. No other event fits this description for every other time we have seen oppression or freedom, someone has been left out. The Romans attacked the Jews and left the diaspora spread around the world. The Catholic crusaders attacked the protestants and fuelled the fires of other reformers. But here, there can be no avenue for that.

What's more, the language of the next verse makes any remnant impossible.

*2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

No earthly victory or defeat would have this impact. The resurrection can only take place at the moment of Christ's second coming. And there can be no question that this is what this is. No other figure has the authority, save Jesus himself, to resurrect the dead for He alone paid the ransom for us.

3 Those who are wise shall shine

Like the brightness of the firmament,

And those who turn many to righteousness

Like the stars forever and ever.

“*Those who are wise shall shine*” is a rather interesting way to end the revelatory section of the book. It is a warning; be wise so that you might shine. Understand what God has put before you and do not let yourself be pulled into the darkness of ignorance or despair. Instead, be one of those who can “*turn many to righteousness*” by understanding what this is about. Be one who can make others shine at their fullest and be a person who follows God's will and word, even if it leads to your death.

But this is immediately followed by a command that snaps Daniel out of his learning.

4 "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

The messenger ends by giving him an instruction; “*seal the book until the time of the end*”. He is saying that until the events that surround the opening of 11:40 are ready to happen, nobody will understand what is going on. Notice that he does not say that it is a secret, but he says that there is a requirement for knowledge to increase before the events can be understood. Never does he say the events are secret or not to be discussed, quite the opposite. He identifies that “*many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase*” indicating that people will debate and worry about the events described until they finally come to pass. He explains that people will progressively understand what these passages are about as time passes and people will be able to better understand when they look back.

This snaps Daniel out of his conversation and he turns his attention back to his surroundings.

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

5 Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?"

Daniel's associates are not mentioned but have either fled or been struck dumb by the revelation given by the messenger. Instead, this exchange, obviously intended for Daniel's consumption, is played out between these figures. The one asks the other a pretty simple question: "*How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?*" I think, by this point, it is a question we are all asking but I don't think this is a genuine question. This is a question asked so that Daniel can get an answer without Daniel asking the incorrect question as he obviously will shortly. Daniel, as will be clear in the last verse, is confused, terrified and desperate to understand. He is not in the 'head space' to ask a question that these individuals would be able to answer, so instead the question is asked for him. It is also to engineer an answer that relates the entire text of Daniel 11 to the other timed prophecies that Daniel has or will write about.

What is important is that these two interlocutors are members of the holy team supporting Daniel here. They are not asking this question out of their own interest; they are asking it to generate a particular answer.

7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.

Our friend in linen takes up the question and does something incredibly strange. He swears "*by Him who lives forever*". He pledges an oath that the answer to the question is given by the authority of the living and eternal God. He is not just speaking on the authority of the Divine, he must have been given authority to put the Divine to judgement should these events not come to pass. This is an incredible moment, and considering who this character is, this is arguably the most powerful statement written in scripture. I would argue that this constitutes the same type and power of a covenant that Abraham made with God in Genesis 15. In that covenant, God moved between the

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

pieces of several animals, demonstrating to Abraham that, should the covenant not come to pass, the consequences for God would be that Abraham could cut God into pieces and walk amongst them. As we all know, Abraham's descendants today account for between a third and a half the world's population, and God's covenant was fulfilled.

The question asked here is about how long "*these wonders*" would be. Wonders could include the history of spiritual elements discussed but is left ambiguous. What the man in linen does give is an end time to these events: "*when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished*". He also gives us a clear timeframe for how long these events will last; "*it shall be for a time, times, and half a time*". This last reference relates us back to Chapter 7 which Daniel would have experienced several years before this revelation. Daniel Chapter 7 opened in "*In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon*" which equates to approximately 552BC, while Chapter 10, the first part of this revelation, dates to "*the third year of Cyrus king of Persia*" which could date to 556BC, 546BC, or 536BC. As I stated in Chapter 7, I personally ascribe to the idea that Daniel is given these events before those in Chapter 7 as it explains his concern over the little horn and his persecuting ways.

Nevertheless, we cannot consider the two chapters separated, and even here the texts work closely together. In Chapter 7, Daniel is told that "*25 ...the saints shall be given into his hand [f]or a time and times and half a time*" and here, Daniel is informed "*that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.*" Daniel's people will be oppressed and persecuted by this power for the 1260 days as established in Chapter 7. All the other elements discussed in Chapter 7; the "*pompous words against the Most High*" and that "*the saints shall be given into his hand*" as well as the persecutors intention to "*change times and law*" are all reflected in our analysis of Chapter 11 here and need little revision. These elements do, however, reinforce our interpretation that the persecuting power of Chapter 7 is Papal Rome.

As a reminder, 538 was the year that Rome was returned to the Papacy, when he was given an army to persecute and when the supremacy of the Papacy was certified at the opening of the Third Council of Orléans under Pope Vigilius. 1798 was the year when

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

Napoleon and his general Berthier captured the Papacy and destroyed their military power.

The question we must review, then, is if the end time of this prophecy, that the “*a time, times, and half a time*” ends when “*the power of the holy people has been completely shattered*”. In other words, did the analysis that we made that 538 AD + 1,260 gives us 1798 end at a time when God’s people; Christians who followed God’s word and not the Papacy had “*been completely shattered*”?

To say “*completely shattered*” is a curious phrase that does not, necessarily, relate to a military destruction. A cup or plate can be dropped and shattered by accident. What is clear is that it is split into a number of pieces of different sizes and shapes. Logically we are looking to ask if the forces opposed to the Papacy when it fell in 1798 were united or divided.

The answer is exceptionally clear. Martin Luther is widely recognised as the first protestant to attempt to reform the Roman church when he nailed his 95 Thesis on the door of Wittenburg Cathedral in 1517, which forgets the multitude who came before him including Huss, Waldo and Wycliffe. In their own way, each spawned their own movement, the Hussites, Lollards and Waldenses in those three examples, who may have shared some perspectives but did not unite together in any meaningful way. Although they had common ground, without an organising authority and anyone to lead the discussion, each new reformer or theologian formed their own splinter group that explains the tens of thousands of different protestant organisations that exist today.

Prior to 1798, in addition to those just named, Calvin, Knox, Zwingli had all started their own movements and the Thirty Years War had released some areas from Papal dominion. While these groups would, like today, read each other’s writings, organised discussions on unity were rare and accomplished little. Although persecution was now much more localised, “*the power of the holy people [was] completely shattered*” by their disunity and disinterest in finding common ground to work together. The fact of the Protestant Reformation’s failure as it did not unite the church and instead resulted

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

in highly splintered groups spread around the world is proof positive that the same “*a time, times, and half a time*” mentioned here matches that of Chapter 7.

8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?”

9 And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

Daniel asks a pretty innocent follow up question. “What will be the result of all of this”. He is confused, overwhelmed, terrified and is looking for some reassurance. Instead, he is chided. He has crossed a line. He wants to understand what is going on, but he is told that these events are to be “*sealed till the time of the end.*” To give away more than what he has would make these events not come to pass, and they needed to happen exactly. For God is not God if his word is not true.

The messenger does add a mild comment to make him feel better. Because of what he has written and because of his concern, “*Many shall be purified, made white, and refined*” but this is also combined with a warning: “*but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand*”. Through Daniels writings, many who were going to be lost will be saved but those who oppose Daniel’s writings will not be stopped because of them.

God makes it clear to him that his writing will make a difference; “*the wise shall understand*”. At the time Daniel is given this message he is given it with a most stern commission; “you need to tell people these things or you could, potentially, be responsible for people not accessing the wisdom promised from God on High.”

11 “And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

We are now forced to find an actual date that the “*daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up*” which, prior to this point, has been somewhat flexible. This date should serve as the start point for both these 1290 and 1335 days that have not been mentioned before in Daniel. It does not, necessarily, need to be the same date as the establishment of the Roman Church and State being the same thing as we have above; that was the date when persecution happened. In fact, if we read this clearly, this date must precede that. As stated in Chapter 11, the “*abomination of desolation*” is the ability to persecute those who disagree with the philosophy and teaching of the Roman Church, and so this ability to do something must be established before it begins. One cannot drink from a cup that contains no liquid.

As detailed very clearly in the last chapter, the removal of the “*daily sacrifice ... taken away*” and “*the abomination of desolation is set up*” are both spiritual and literal and we must view them as such. To that end, we can take the literal destruction under Pagan Rome as read, seeing as its persecution was accomplished and these verses clearly relate to long-term persecution. To that end, we must establish when the Papacy had the capacity to undertake persecution; that is when it had a force of its own to work with.

In 538 when the Papacy returned to Rome after Justinian had defeated the Goths, it did not march in alone. The first king to unite all Frankish tribes under one ruler, King Clovis I, was also in control of much of modern-day Germany and Austria. After the Battle of Tolbiac on Christmas Day 508, Clovis converted to Catholicism and devoted his kingdom to the authority of the Pope. In 511, shortly before his death, he called for the First Council of Orléans to define how his kingdom would be jointly ruled by Crown and Church. When the Pope returned to Rome, his retinue was full of Frankish troops. Furthermore, this was when the Pope achieved his sovereignty as Clovis I devoted his throne and empire to the Papacy as an office, not to an individual. This gave the Popes a power that they could command on their own, albeit having to discuss plans with several Frankish tribal leaders.

508 can therefore act as a starting point for the 1290 days and when we do the math another surprising element arises. $508 + 1290 = 1798$, the year that, as stated, papal sovereignty was eliminated as well as its ability to persecute and act. This math should

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

reenforce the truth of the dates as we have them and give a greater assurance over the 1335 number that has not been seen before.

The text says “*Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days*” but what are they waiting for? In context, we should view this as following on after the end of persecution and the destruction of the Papacy. Instead, we now have a few extra days to wait.

Again, when looking at the pure numbers, something remarkable is seen. As stated, the start date for these 1335 days should be the same year, 508, as the 1290, because that is what is given to us in the text. When we make that calculation, we find that $508 + 1335 = 1843$, the same date that was calculated in Chapter 8 when looking at the 2300 days when “*the sanctuary shall be cleansed*”. The cleansing of the Sanctuary happens after the end of persecution when those powers that wish God’s people to be restored are free enough to make it pure. Yet, historically, we find that... nothing happened. Just nothing at all. The Great Disappointment of William Miller’s teaching demonstrated that nothing at all of any pronouncement happened.

However, as discussed in Chapter 8, the Sabbath Truth; the reality of the violation of God’s law by Constantine I when he made Sunday the day of Worship in 312, was a major doctrine that became a point of discussion about that time. This doctrine came, seemingly, from nowhere as the Waldensies and other truth-keeping groups who, allegedly, keep the Jewish Sabbath had become corrupted and were mostly Sunday-worshippers by this time. The Sabbath Truth moved through Protestant circles from nowhere and without any ability to trace its history.

Yet the Sabbath Truth also matches what the language of this passage is. With the Sabbath truth, the final element of Christ’s intercession is restored as violations of all of God’s law can clearly be known. Jesus said himself said in John 14 “*15 If you love Me, keep My commandments*” and with the restoration of the Sabbath Truth, a fuller understanding and keeping of the Ten Commandments was now possible and Sabbath-keeping denominations started to arise from all major protestant groups. The important element of the “*daily sacrifice*”, that of a willingness to ask for forgiveness was now actually possible as all sins being forgiven were known. What is more, “*the*

Chapter 12 – God Stands Up

Prophecy of the End Time

abomination of desolation” was, by this time, well destroyed and in no position to persecute and oppress those who wished to live by God’s, and not man’s word. More on this can be found in my analysis of Chapter 8 but it is truly gratifying to know that the last timed prophecy in Daniel relates to the purity of God’s law.

13 ”But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”

The Book of Daniel ends with 2 clear statements made by the messenger. First is that he will not see these events. He will die before the majority of these events start. Daniel has already seen a great many things by the time of this chapter being written and he has many things yet to see. He is not a young man, but also no so old that he has become jaded. He has the wisdom of middle age and the understanding that experience brings.

Secondly, Daniel is told that he will be one of the raised at the end of days. As a prophet of God, his own salvation is assured, and he has nothing to fear. He will not live through this tribulation but will receive his glorious reward. What a better way to end such a turbulent and troublesome book, with a promise of eternal glory.