

The Book of Daniel - Number One-Hundred and Sixty-One

Rome's Role in Establishing the Vision of Bible Prophecy: A Detailed Examination of Daniel Chapter Eleven

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The vision of Daniel chapter eleven, is the main point of reference for all the visions of Bible prophecy, and the vision of chapter eleven is established by the symbol of Rome.

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

Jones addresses the previous verse as follows:

“When the Amorites had filled up the measure of their iniquity, their place was given to Israel, the people of God. When Israel, following the way of the heathen, filled also the cup of iniquity, God brought up the kingdom of Babylon, and took all away. When Babylon had filled up the cup of its iniquity, the power was transferred to Persia. And when the angel was turned away by the wickedness of the Persians, then the prince of Grecia comes in and sweeps it away.”

“And how long was the power of Grecia to continue? When was it to be broken? ‘When the transgressors were come to the full.’ That nation stands until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity, and then the power is transferred to another kingdom. That power to which it was transferred was the Roman, as we learn from Daniel 11:14. ‘And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south; also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.’ This nation is pointed out as a nation of robbers—the children of robbers, as says the margin of the text.

“These are the ones to whom the kingdom is now given, and what for?—‘The children of robbers shall exalt themselves to establish the vision.’ When this nation comes upon the scene, then there enters that which establishes the vision, that which is one great object of the vision, the one chief landmark in the line of vision which God has given through the prophets for all time.” A. T. Jones, *The Columbian Year and the Meaning of the Four Centuries*, 6.

Jones says when the Roman power “comes upon the scene, then there enters that which establishes the” ... “line of vision which God has given through the prophets for all time.” In Miller’s history the Protestants taught, as Laodicea Adventism now does, that the robbers of thy people represent Antiochus Epiphanes, a Seleucid king who ruled from 175 to 164 BC. He was a member of the Seleucid dynasty, which was one of the Greek successor states which came out of the breakup of Alexander the Great’s empire. The disagreement over this issue was so specific in Millerite history, that the identification of Antiochus Epiphanes is represented upon the 1843 pioneer chart.

The reference to Antiochus on the chart represents the only reference to something that is not found in God's prophetic Word. It is there to refute the false teachings of the Protestants of that period, which is now the false teaching of Laodicean Adventism. Whether William Miller understood the depth of importance in understanding that Rome is the earthly power that establishes the "line of vision which God has given through the prophets for all time," is doubtful, but it was clear enough to soundly defend the fact that Rome establishes the vision.

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. Proverbs 28:14.

Solomon recorded that where there is no vision, the people perish, and the Hebrew word "vision," in verse fourteen is the same as in Solomon's proverb. The vision is a life-or-death proposition, and the "vision" is established by the symbol of Rome. The word "vision" in verse fourteen, is the same word for vision in Habakkuk, chapter two.

I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Habakkuk 2:1-3.

The word "reproved" in verse one, means "argued with". William Miller was the watchman that was set upon the tower in the history of the movement of the first and second angels, and when in prophetic symbolism he asked what he should answer in the debate of his history, he was told to write the vision, which is established by the symbol of Rome. In agreement with this fact, when the Millerites produced the 1843 pioneer chart in fulfillment of these three verses of Habakkuk, they gave reference to the very heart of the debate they engaged in. They no doubt, did not understand that their referencing to the foolish argument that Antiochus Epiphanes was the power who established the vision represents the debate of Habakkuk chapter two, but Sister White said that chart was "directed by the hand of the Lord, and should not be altered," so the reference to the debate on the chart was from God's hand.

The Millerites came to correctly understand that the first disappointment on April 19, 1844 initiated the tarrying time, referenced by Habakkuk and also Matthew's parable of the ten virgins. They also came to understand that those two prophecies were directly connected with Ezekiel chapter twelve, where Ezekiel identifies a period of time where the effect of every vision will occur. That word "vision", is the same Hebrew word we are now considering. This is why Jones is correct when he states, "When" Rome "comes upon the scene, then there enters that which establishes the vision, that which is one great object of the vision, the one chief landmark in the line of vision which God has given through the prophets for all time." Rome establishes the entire vision of God's prophetic Word, and more specifically it is Rome that the entire structure of chapter eleven is built upon.

When Sister White refers to the final fulfillment of chapter eleven of Daniel and states that "much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated," she is

identifying that the histories of chapter eleven that had already been fulfilled typified the final verses of Daniel chapter eleven. The subject of the final verses of chapter eleven is the king of the north, who there represents modern Rome. Therefore, the histories of Daniel chapter eleven, that are repeated, are histories that represent Rome.

In the last six verses of chapter eleven modern Rome (the king of the north), conquers three geographical powers. In verse forty he conquers the king of the south (the former Soviet Union in 1989), the glorious land (the United States at the soon coming Sunday law), and Egypt (the entire world as represented by the United Nations.) In Daniel eleven pagan Rome is represented as conquering three geographical powers in order to capture the then-known world, and then papal Rome is represented as conquering three geographical powers in order to capture the earth.

Pagan Rome is first mentioned in the chapter in verse fourteen, in order to identify it as the symbol that establishes the vision, but its rise to power is not addressed until verse sixteen. Alexander the Great's kingdom was divided into four parts in fulfillment of God's prophetic Word, but those four parts quickly consolidated into two primary antagonists that are identified as either the king of the south or the king of the north in the prophetic narrative that continues to the conclusion of the chapter. In verse fourteen the rising power of Rome is mentioned as the power that would establish the vision, but the subjects that are being addressed are the struggles between the remnants of Alexander's kingdom as represented by the kings of the north and the south.

In verse fifteen, those two kings are still engaged in their struggle, and the king of the north is prevailing. But in verse sixteen Rome arrives and the verse says, "But he that cometh against him," meaning that when Rome comes against the northern king who has just been prevailing over the southern king, the king of the north will be unable to stand against Rome. Rome prevails, and in verse sixteen, Rome was also to stand in the glorious land of Judah. In verse seventeen Rome shall "set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom." He took the northern king who was unable to stand before him, then he took Judah, then he entered into Egypt.

And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed. 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, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. Daniel 11:14–17.

The conquering illustrated in these verses is a fulfillment of Daniel chapter eight.

And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. Daniel 8:9.

The little horn of verse nine is pagan Rome, and verse nine identifies, in agreement with verses fourteen through seventeen of chapter eleven, that pagan Rome would conquer three geographical

entities as it took control of the world. Those entities were the south (Egypt), the east (Syria, the king of the north) and the pleasant land (Judah). The history of verses sixteen and seventeen are typifying the historical three-step conquering of modern Rome in verses forty through forty-three, for as Sister White stated, “Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated.”

“Although Egypt could not stand before Antiochus, the king of the north, Antiochus could not stand before the Romans, who now came against him. No kingdoms were longer able to resist this rising power. Syria was conquered, and added to the Roman empire, when Pompey, BC 65, deprived Antiochus Asiaticus of his possessions, and reduced Syria to a Roman province.

“The same power was also to stand in the Holy Land, and consume it. Rome became connected with the people of God, the Jews, by alliance, BC 162, from which date it holds a prominent place in the prophetic calendar. It did not, however, acquire jurisdiction over Judea by actual conquest till BC 63; and then in the following manner.

“On Pompey’s return from his expedition against Mithridates, king of Pontus, two competitors, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, were struggling for the crown of Judea. Their cause came before Pompey, who soon perceived the injustice of the claims of Aristobulus, but wished to defer decision in the matter till after his long-desired expedition into Arabia, promising then to return, and settle their affairs as should seem just and proper. Aristobulus, fathoming Pompey’s real sentiments, hastened back to Judea, armed his subjects, and prepared for a vigorous defense, determined, at all hazards, to keep the crown, which he foresaw would be adjudicated to another. Pompey closely followed the fugitive. As he approached Jerusalem, Aristobulus, beginning to repent of his course, came out to meet him, and endeavored to accommodate matters by promising entire submission and large sums of money. Pompey, accepting this offer, sent Gabinius, at the head of a detachment of soldiers, to receive the money. But when that lieutenant-general arrived at Jerusalem, he found the gates shut against him, and was told from the top of the walls that the city would not stand to the agreement.

“Pompey, not to be deceived in this way with impunity, put Aristobulus, whom he had retained with him, in irons, and immediately marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. The partisans of Aristobulus were for defending the place; those of Hyrcanus, for opening the gates. The latter being in the majority, and prevailing, Pompey was given free entrance into the city. Whereupon the adherents of Aristobulus retired to the mountain of the temple, as fully determined to defend that place as Pompey was to reduce it. At the end of three months a breach was made in the wall sufficient for an assault, and the place was carried at the point of the sword. In the terrible slaughter that ensued, twelve thousand persons were slain. It was an affecting sight, observes the historian, to see the priests, engaged at the time in divine service, with calm hand and steady purpose pursue their accustomed work, apparently unconscious of the wild tumult, though all around them their friends were given to the slaughter, and though often their own blood mingled with that of their sacrifices.

“Having put an end to the war, Pompey demolished the walls of Jerusalem, transferred several cities from the jurisdiction of Judea to that of Syria, and imposed tribute on the Jews. Thus for the first time was Jerusalem placed by conquest in the hands of that power which was to hold

the 'glorious land' in its iron grasp till it had utterly consumed it.

“‘VERSE 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, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.’

“Bishop Newton furnishes another reading for this verse, which seems more clearly to express the sense, as follows: ‘He shall also set his face to enter by force the whole kingdom.’ Verse 16 brought us down to the conquest of Syria and Judea by the Romans. Rome had previously conquered Macedon and Thrace. Egypt was now all that remained of the ‘whole kingdom’ of Alexander, not brought into subjection to the Roman power, which power now set its face to enter by force into that country.” Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 258–260.

We have already noted, more than once in these articles, how verse thirty and thirty-one of Daniel eleven align with verses forty and forty-one, and the history of verses thirty and thirty-one also aligns with the plucking up of three horns.

I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. ... And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. Daniel 7:8, 20.

Just as Daniel chapter eight, verse nine, represents the three geographical areas of conquering that established pagan Rome on the throne, so too, the plucking up of the horns (representing the Heruli, Ostrogoths and Vandals) represented the three geographical areas of conquering that established papal Rome on the throne. Both those histories align with verses forty to forty-three of Daniel eleven, and the plucking up of the three horns aligns with the history of verses thirty and thirty-one.

“‘VERSE 8. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.’

“Daniel considered the horns. Indications of a strange movement appeared among them. A little horn (at first little, but afterward more stout than its fellows) thrust itself up among them. It was not content quietly to find a place of its own, and fill it; it must thrust aside some of the others, and usurp their places. Three kingdoms were plucked up before it. This little horn, as we shall have occasion to notice more fully hereafter, was the papacy. The three horns plucked up before it were the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. And the reason why they were plucked up was because they were opposed to the teaching and claims of the papal hierarchy, and hence to the supremacy in the church of the bishop of Rome.

“And ‘in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things,’ the eyes, a fit emblem of the shrewdness, penetration, cunning, and foresight of the papal hierarchy; and the mouth speaking great things, a fit symbol of the arrogant claims of the

bishops of Rome.” Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 132–134.

It is Rome that establishes the vision of Bible prophecy, and especially the vision of Daniel chapter eleven. In that chapter much of the prophetic history that had been fulfilled before the Millerite movement was to be repeated in the last six verses of Daniel eleven. The conquering of three geographical obstacles that established both pagan and papal Rome upon the throne is represented in chapter eleven, and those two representations typify the time when modern Rome is again established upon the throne. It is Rome that establishes the vision, and Paul identifies that papal Rome is revealed in its time.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–6.

The papacy took the throne as the fifth kingdom of Bible prophecy in the year 538, and many who consider verse six, would no doubt assume that Paul means that “the Papacy would be revealed in 538.” This may be correct, but it is at minimum a secondary truth of what Paul was identifying. Paul, like all prophets is speaking more about the last days, than his own time period. He was referring to how the papacy would be revealed prophetically, for as a prophet he was in agreement with all the other prophets. Line upon line, those who have not the vision perish, and those who have not the vision, have not the vision because they do not know what establishes the vision. Knowing that Rome establishes the vision is a life-or-death understanding. Paul, in agreement with the other prophets is identifying that what reveals papal Rome, who is the Rome of the last days is “his time.” The prophetic “time” associated with Rome, is what reveals what and who Rome is.

We will continue this study in the next article.

“The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the great apostasy which would result in the establishment of the papal power. He declared that the day of Christ should not come, ‘except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ And furthermore, the apostle warns his brethren that ‘the mystery of iniquity doth already work.’ 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 7. Even at that early date he saw, creeping into the church, errors that would prepare the way for the development of the papacy.

“Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, ‘the mystery of iniquity’ carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the

requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

“This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of ‘the man of sin’ foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will.” *The Great Controversy*, 49, 50.