

The King of the North

Part 3 – Who is the King of the North?

It comes as a surprise to many that there was once a time when the Adventists were united in their belief that the king of the north was the Ottoman Empire. Adventist teaching today, if it is mentioned at all, is that this prophecy refers to the Papacy and that the pioneers believed so, too. We saw in our first study on this topic that the history of Adventism has been obscured on this point. But why would they think in those days that the Ottoman Empire had any significance when it was of little consequence to the world? It turns out that more has been obscured than the history of Adventist teaching on the king of the north. The very history of the Ottoman Empire and the politics of Europe during the 19th century have been forgotten for too long. It's time we took a closer look at our history.

It has been claimed that one of the problems with the old view of Adventism on the king of the north was that they did not compare scripture with scripture on Daniel 11, but simply compared the chapter with history and pointed to its fulfillment. It is thought that we should be identifying symbols in this prophecy.

Principals of Prophetic Interpretation

William Miller gave us fourteen principles for the interpretation of prophecy. Number 11 reads “How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it must be understood literally, if not, figuratively.” Number 13 reads, “To know whether we have the true historical event for the fulfillment of a prophecy: If you find every word of the prophecy (after the figures are understood) is literally fulfilled, then you may know that your history is the true event. But if one word lacks a fulfillment, then you must look for another event, or wait its future development. For God takes care that history and prophecy doth agree, so that the true believing children of God may never be ashamed.” *Views of the Prophetic Chronology, Selected from the Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life by Joshua V. Himes, 1841, page 22 (parenthesis supplied by Miller).*

Sister White tells us “The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed. These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared, ‘Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.’ The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed. Christ has given the promise, ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.’ If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad, and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error.” *Review and Herald, June 28, 1906.*

The vision of Daniel 10-12 is unique, as it gives the history in plain language instead of in symbols. There is no controversy on the first portion of this vision. Its meaning is too plain and it is literally fulfilled in Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Because of this we haven't chosen to go over this portion of the prophecy but are focusing our attention on the last six verses of Daniel 11. It has been suggested that these verses should not be understood to be referring to literal nations but that they have a spiritual

application. However, the prophecy has been talking about literal nations up to verse 39 and there is nothing in either verse 39 or 40 to indicate any kind of change. It only makes sense that the last six verses be just as literal as the first thirty-nine. So let's take a look at the prophecy and the history and see if we can find in history events that literally fulfill every word.

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” *Daniel 11:40*

We understand the time of the end to begin in the year 1798. In our last study we established that the king of the south is the king or nation of Egypt. “Him” refers to the willful king, the king who was the protector of the Papacy. It is interesting to note in this connection that it was the conversion of the French king in 496 that was the beginning of the end of paganism in Europe. It was France that opened the way for the beginning of the 1260 years. It was France who supported the Papacy during the 1260 years, and it was France who took the Papacy down in 1798. What better description of France during this period could we find than that given us of the willful king in Daniel 11:36-39?

We also established that there was a war fought between Egypt and France in the year 1798 that exactly fits the description in verse 40. But now we see another power, the king of the north, entering the picture. Who is this king of the north? It can't be the Papacy here because they had just received their deadly wound and could not be described as attacking anybody “like a whirlwind.” It has been claimed by some that this king of the north is the same power as “him.” But this doesn't work. If France just conquered Egypt and is now united with the king of the south, France cannot then come “like a whirlwind” because he would be fighting with himself. We must look elsewhere to define this power.

The King of the North

We first meet the king of the north at the beginning of chapter 11. Speaking of Alexander, the angel says, “And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.” *Daniel 11:4-6*

There is no controversy that here the king of the north was the northern division of Alexander's empire. This king controlled what is now roughly Syria and Turkey. The king that controlled this area is always the king of the north until we reach verse 40. Does it make sense that the king of the north should be from somewhere else in verse 40? It is very obvious that neither France, nor the papacy, ever controlled this region. But who did in 1798? The Ottoman empire. Did the Ottoman empire come against France “like a whirlwind” after Egypt pushed at him? Yes. On February 27, 1799, Napoleon marched from Egypt, heading toward Syria. He met with little resistance until he reached St. Jean D'Acre. There the Turks, aided by Sir Sidney Smith and a force of British sailors, dug in and fought back. Napoleon laid siege to the city.

“Napoleon had been engaged for ten days in an almost incessant assault upon the works of Acre, when the approach of the great Turkish army was announced. It consisted of about thirty thousand troops, twelve thousand of whom were the fiercest and best-trained horsemen in the world. Napoleon had but eight thousand effective men with which to encounter the well trained army of Europeans and Turks within the walls of Acre and the numerous host rushing to its rescue. He acted with his usual promptitude... Kleber was sent forward with an advance guard of three thousand men. Napoleon followed soon after with three thousand more.

“As Kleber, with his little band, defiled from the narrow valley at the foot of Mount Tabor, he entered upon an extended plain. It was early in the morning of the 16th of April. The unclouded sun was just rising over the hills of Palestine and revealed to his view the whole embattled Turkish host spread out before him. The eye was dazzled with the magnificent spectacle, as proud banners and plumes, and gaudy turbans and glittering steel, and all the barbaric martial pomp of the East, were reflected by the rays of the brilliant morning. Twelve thousand horsemen, decorated with the most gorgeous trappings of military show, and mounted on the fleetest Arabian chargers, were prancing and curveting in all directions... The French, too proud and self-confident to retreat before any superiority in numbers, had barely time to form themselves into one of Napoleon’s impregnable squares, when the whole cavalcade of horsemen, with gleaming sabers and hideous yells, and *like the sweep of the wind*, came rushing down upon them. Every man in the French squares knew that his life depended upon his immobility, and each one stood, shoulder to shoulder with his comrades.” *John Stevens C. Abbott, The life of Napoleon Bonaparte, page 102-103 (Emphasis Supplied).*

There is a striking similarity between the secular historian’s description of this skirmish and the description in Daniel. “Come against him like a whirlwind,” “like the sweep of the wind.” This was only one of several battles Napoleon fought with the Turks during the siege of Acre. But the prophecy also mentions “many ships.”

The Turks have never been known as a seafaring people, but the prophecy points out “many ships” as being one of the marks of this conflict. As unusual as it seems, Russia, the avowed enemy of Turkey, united with them in defense against Napoleon. The Russian fleet was sent with the small Turkish fleet to the harbor of St. Jean D’Acre and they were joined there by two British squadrons. The total number of ships reaching more than thirty. Napoleon was defeated for the first time. The Turks certainly did “come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships.” *Daniel 11:40*

The Power that Overflows

“And he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” *Daniel 11:40* Who does this? Some have attempted to prove that this refers to France under Napoleon. “To whom do the words ‘he shall overflow and pass over’ refer? To France or to the king of the north? The application of the remainder of this chapter depends upon the answer to this question.” *Uriah Smith, Thoughts on Daniel 1883 edition, page 353.*

But can we establish with any degree of certainty which power this is referring to? Remember that principle we quoted earlier from William Miller? Every word must find its fulfillment. We cannot find adequate fulfillment in the subsequent history of Napoleon for this phrase to apply to France. “Some

considerations certainly favor the idea that there is, in the latter part of verse 40, a transfer of the burden of the prophecy from the French power to the king of the north. The king of the north is introduced just before as coming forth like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and many ships. The collision between this power and the French we have already noticed. The king of the north with the aid of his allies, gained the day in this contest; and the French, foiled in their efforts, were driven back into Egypt. Now it would seem to be the more natural application to refer the ‘overflowing and passing over’ to that power which emerged in triumph from that struggle; and that power was Turkey. We will only add that one who is familiar with the Hebrew assures us that the construction of this verse is such as to make it necessary to refer the overflowing and passing over to the king of north, these words expressing the result of that movement which is just before likened to the fury of the whirlwind.”
Uriah Smith, Thoughts on Daniel, 1883 edition, page 354.

But what of the “Countries” he should enter into? According to Strong’s concordance this word could also mean regions. The Ottoman Turks entered the regions they had formerly controlled, overflowed and passed over the ground as they followed Napoleon’s defeated army into Egypt.

The Glorious Land

“He shall enter also into the glorious land,” *Daniel 11:41*

What is the “glorious land”? William Miller and several of the early pioneers thought that this phrase referred to Italy. But this is not consistent with the first part of the chapter. We first find this phrase used in verse 16. “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.” *Daniel 11:16*. This verse is referring to Rome when it conquered Palestine in 63 BC and broke down Jerusalem’s walls. If this is Palestine in verse 16 and there is no indication of a change in location, then it must be Palestine again in verse 41.

The Turks followed the French down through Palestine and attacked Napoleon in Egypt. Here Napoleon was victorious at Aboukir but seeing that he wouldn’t be able create a path to India and because his armies in Europe were not doing well, he abandoned his troops in Egypt and returned to France. There he proclaimed himself Emperor and started the conquest of Europe. The Turks, with the English, then recaptured Egypt and brought it under their control again.

The Countries Overthrown

“And many countries shall be overthrown.” *Daniel 11:41*. The word “countries” is supplied by the translators. It originally read “and many shall be overthrown.” Both Napoleon and the Turks lost many men in these battles and when Napoleon retreated back into Egypt he had 1800 wounded, 600 dead to the plague, and 1200 dead to the enemy. He lost one third of his army in the invasion of Syria. But at the battle of Aboukir 10,000 Turks were drowned and more were captured or killed. Certainly “many were overthrown” no matter which way you look at.

“But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.” *Daniel 11:41*.

This is interesting. The land east of the Jordan, what is now the country of Jordan, was anciently inhabited by the descendants of Lot and Esau. The land of Edom was in the desert regions east and south of Israel. Many of the descendants of these nations spread out into Saudi Arabia. Among those Adventists who still have faith in Uriah Smith it is now popular to believe that the king of the north is the religion of Islam rather than a specific country. But if this is true, it does not fit this description. The lands east of Jordan could never be considered to escape out of the hand of Islam. Jordan itself is an Islamic nation. Islam is the official religion in the country. The same is true of Saudi Arabia. Identifying this power as Islam simply will not fit the prophecy here. But the Ottoman Empire, while sharing the same religion, was never able to completely subdue the region east and south of the Jordan river. In fact they were forced to pay annual tribute to the tribes living in this region to assure safe passage of the caravans to Mecca. The Ottoman Empire controlled the coasts of Arabia but never controlled the interior. Also the battles with Napoleon all occurred west of the Jordan, and when the Turks reconquered these lands, all the area east of the Jordan was ignored by them.

He stretched out his hand “also upon the countries,” or regions that had once been his and ruthlessly brought them back under his control. The Turks tortured and beheaded any French soldiers they found and any who sympathized with the French. The land of Egypt did not escape either. It appears that Egypt would want to escape but did not. We find an interesting passage in a book written in the early 19th century by Richard Robert Madden. “Read of the atrocities attributed by Sir Robert Wilson to the French, and you will imagine that the only object of our interference was the domestic happiness of the invaded people. Yet, strange to say, the Arabs speak of the French with respect, and of their expulsion with regret.” *Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia and Palestine in 1824, 1825, 1826 & 1827 page 173.*

The Treasures of Gold and Silver

“But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.” After Napoleon left Egypt, the remaining French forces were driven out, or captured by the Turks and English. One of the young Turkish officers who helped drive out the French, was an Albanian named Mohamed Ali Pasha. After he gained control of Egypt, it remained an Ottoman province. The Pasha extorted every bit of wealth from the country. He levied high taxes on the people and used every means, legal and illegal, impoverishing the people and making them dependent on him. He then sent some of this money as tribute to Constantinople or used it for conquering the neighboring regions. Thus the Sultan, through the Pasha had access to “the treasures of gold and silver” and “all the precious things of Egypt.”

The Libyans and Ethiopians

“And the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.” These are regions lying west and south of Egypt. Lybia was early conquered by the Ottoman Empire along with all the Mediterranean coast of northern Africa. The region of Lybia became almost entirely independent in 1711 when an Ottoman cavalry officer, Ahmed Karamanli, took over the area and established his own dynasty, although still nominally under the control of the Ottoman Empire. The region was virtually autonomous until 1814, when the Sultan re-established direct control over the area. This was after the Sultan had regained control of Egypt. The prophecy indicates that Libya would be at his steps after he conquered Egypt and the Ottoman Empire regained control of the region after driving Napoleon out.

The country of Ethiopia today lies south and east of the Sudan and was never part of the Ottoman

Empire or even bordering it. So on the surface this word does not seem to fit. However, take a look at this comment, “The Egyptian priest Manetho (c. 300 BC) listed Egypt’s Kushite (25th) dynasty, calling it the ‘Aethiopian dynasty.’ Moreover, when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek (c. 200 BC), the Hebrew appellation ‘Kush, Kushite’ became in Greek ‘Aethiopia, Aethiopians,’ appearing as “Ethiopia, Ethiopians” in the English King James Version.

“Greek and Roman historians of a later era, such as Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, confirmed much of Herodotus’ account of several distinct nations within the vast region of ‘Ethiopia’ south of the Sahara desert, such as the Troglodytae and Ichyophagi, described as living all along the African Red Sea coast (in modern Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somaliland), as well as several other peoples farther west. These authors also described second-hand stories of the mountainous part of Ethiopia where the Nile was said to rise.” *Wikipedia, Aethiopia (Classical Greek term) (parenthesis supplied by Wikipedia).*

So the term anciently referred to the region directly south of and bordering Egypt. This area is now Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia. Egypt, under the direction of the Sultan, captured northern Sudan in 1820. Thus the “Lybians and the Ethiopians” were “at his steps” during this time, just as the prophecy says they would be.

Tidings from the East and North

Up until this point everything in Daniel 11:40-45 fits the Ottoman Empire perfectly. But the next two verses were either in the process of fulfillment, or still future when Smith was writing. He predicted that the Sultan would move his government from Constantinople to Jerusalem and come his end. It was also predicted by Adventists of this period that when this happened Europe would erupt into the worst war in history. They believed that this war would be the battle of Armageddon with Christ coming shortly after. It seems obvious that this did not happen. The Ottoman Empire ended quietly in 1922 and Christ has not returned yet.

So, did the prophecy fail? Have we identified the wrong power? Was Smith completely wrong on this one? The Ottoman empire seems to have little significance in world history after it started to decline in the 15th century. They accepted European protection in 1840 and became “the sick man of the east,” a term coined by the Russian ambassador, which became a popular phrase to describe the Ottoman empire in the 19th century. A sick and dying man kept alive by the powers of Europe who were afraid of what would happen if he died. But the fact is that this power had an enormous impact on the world and its demise was one of the major causes of the two most destructive wars in this world's history.

Let us continue laying the prophecy beside the history and see how it fits. Bear in mind that while we are examining what to us are historical events, these things were current or future events to Smith.

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him:” *Daniel 11:44*. Who was north and east of the Ottoman empire? Take a look at a map and you will see that the country lying directly north of Turkey is Russia and the country directly east is Persia (now Iran). But what were the tidings that would trouble the Ottoman Empire from this direction?

From the dawn of the Russian Empire to its end in 1917 there was conflict between these two

empires. “The Russo-Turkish wars were a series of wars fought between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire during the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. It was one of the longest conflicts in European history.” *Wikipedia, History of the Russo-Turkish wars.*

But what of Persia on the east? Did disturbances come from the east as well? Yes they did. At the same time as it was fighting Turkey, Russia was also fighting Persia in the Russo-Persian wars, the last of which was fought in 1826-28. These wars were won by Russia. “According to the terms of the treaty, the Khanates of Erivan and Nakhichevan passed to Russia. The Shah promised to pay an indemnity of 20,000,000 silver roubles and allowed his Armenian subjects to migrate to Russian territory without any hindrance. More importantly, the Shah granted the Russians the exclusive right to maintain a navy in the Caspian and agreed that Russian merchants were free to trade anywhere they wanted in Persia.

“In the short term, the treaty undermined the dominant position of the British Empire in Persia and marked a new stage in the Great Game between the empires. In the long term, the treaty ensured the dependence of the Caucasus on Russia, thus making possible the eventual emergence of the modern states of Armenia and Azerbaijan on the territories conquered from Persia during the war.” *Wikipedia, Russo-Persian War (1826–1828).*

Again, if you look at a map of all these battles, you will see that a major share of them were fought on the north and on the east side of the Ottoman Empire. Russia was putting pressure on the empire from the north and east.

There is a little known piece of history that fits into this picture. “The Russian Tsarist Empire waged war against Circassia in the Northwest Caucasus for nearly a hundred years, trying to get Circassia's prominent position along the Black Sea coast. After a century of insurgency and all-out war and continual failure to end the affair, the Tsar ordered the expulsion of most of the Muslim population of the North Caucasus. This event is remembered among Circassians as a national tragedy and is well-known among other Caucasian peoples and in Turkey as well. In the modern context of the word, there have been many claims, by Circassians, by Western historians (Colarusso, Charles King, etc.), by Turks and by Chechens that the events of the 1860s constituted one of the first ‘modern’ horrible genocides in modern history, where a whole population is eliminated to satisfy the desires (in this case economic) of a powerful country.” *Wikipedia, Genocides in history (Parenthesis added by Wikipedia).*

The Russians killed about 1.5 million Moslems and the remainder were deported. Where were they sent? Into the Ottoman Empire, from the north and east.

The nations of Europe were not blind to what was going on and they feared Russia's expansionist ideas.

“Fringe territories were lost to Russia in the north. But more importantly the Empire began to fall behind technologically compared to the west. The outside world was still mostly unaware of the extent of the Empire's decline until the 1820s, when it became clear that the Ottoman armies had no way to put down the Russian-backed revolt in southern Greece. The great powers of Europe decided to intervene to give Greece its independence. Thus Greece became the first independent country created out of a section of the Ottoman Empire. Russian aspirations for a section of the empire and bases on Russia's southern flank provoked British fears over naval domination of the Mediterranean and control

of the land route to India... When in 1853 Russia destroyed the entire Ottoman fleet at Sinop, Britain and France concluded that armed intervention on the side of the Ottomans was the only way to halt a massive Russian expansion, on the grounds that the Ottoman armies could do nothing to stop a Russian march on Constantinople. Even though Ottomans and Russians were on the opposing sides, the roots of the ensuing Crimean war lay in the rivalry between the British and the Russians. The war ended unfavorably for the Russians, with the Paris peace of 1856.” *Wikipedia, History of the Russo-Turkish wars.*

While this conflict was political in nature it also had religious undertones. The state religion in the Ottoman Empire was Islam. The Christians lived in isolated communities, they had no civil rights and very little civil protection. As long as they kept to themselves they were usually not bothered. But they could not proselytize nor hold government offices. These Christian communities were often divided by ethnic lines as much as by religious belief. The Greeks were Orthodox. The people of the Balkans, Catholic. The Armenians had their own Christian church and there were other smaller groups of various Christian and ethnic backgrounds scattered throughout the empire.

The French claimed the right to protect and advance the interests of the Catholics in the empire. The Russians claimed the Orthodox as their protectorate. Both of these churches, and thus their protectorate countries, wanted to control the holy sites in Jerusalem. In 1853 the Sultan signed a treaty with France giving the French control of the holy sites. This is why the Christian shrines in Jerusalem are Catholic. Russia was furious and attacked the Turks from the north. England did not want the Russians gaining control of the eastern Mediterranean, they were afraid they might lose control of the Suez Canal. They joined the war on the side of Turkey. The war ended with a Russian defeat. But the peace treaty required the Sultan to extend equal rights to his Christian subjects. In 1877 the Russo-Turkish war was fought over the control of the Balkans and the mistreatment of Christians by the Turks.

The Canadian philosopher, George Grant “suggests that the succession of wars was a result of the Romanov Czars’ belief that ‘a forcible containment of the Islamic threat to their strategic security was absolutely crucial.’ He goes on to note that ‘none of these struggles ever resulted in much change in the balance of power in the middle East.’” *Wikipedia, History of the Russo-Turkish wars.*

The Sick Man of the East

During this time the Sultan began losing his hold on Europe. At its height in 1610 the empire extended to the gates of Vienna, Austria. But now the Balkans started gaining their freedom, again, partly through Russian influence. Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, one after another they gained their independence. The empire was breaking up and the rest of Europe prepared for battle. Each power moved to get the best advantage for gaining their interests when the empire collapsed. Alliances were formed, military spending increased. The goal was to maintain a balance of power but each nation also wanted to be in the most advantageous position possible. The “sick man of the east” was dying and everybody wanted a part of his realm.

Germany came into dominance in the last half of the 19th century. Germany became friends with the “sick man.” They offered to build the Baghdad railway for the bankrupt Turks. The Sultan, wishing to modernize his empire jumped at the chance. Austria-Hungary was afraid Russia was gaining too much influence in the Balkans and began annexing the newly independent Balkan states to protect herself.

She allied herself with the the German and Ottoman Empires to stave off Russian expansion. Thus was formed the nucleus of the Central Powers.

France feared the expansionist plans of her northern neighbor and also had her eye on the riches of the Middle East. She united with England. These two laid down the battle ax with Russia and the three became allies to fend off the threat of the Central powers. This formed the Triple Entente and the stage was laid for the World War I.

Today we look at things in the past colored by events in the 20th century and tend to forget that the world looked much different before the world wars. Many things we know as historical facts would have been beyond the worst imaginations of the people living during the 19th century. Many of the issues which led up to World War I seem lost on the world today. The demise of the Ottoman empire seems unimportant. But the “eastern question” was a huge debate all over the world from 1840 to 1914. The question was, “Who gets what when the Ottoman Empire collapses?”

When we understand the political situation in the world in 1900, it all of sudden becomes clear why the Adventists’ prophecy seminars would focus so much on Turkey and the king of north prophecy of Daniel 11. The entire world was on the brink of the worst war in history and no one knew what would happen next. When Adventists preached on this topic it aroused widespread interest.

Go Forth with Great Fury

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.” Smith pointed to the way the Turks fought in the 1877 Russo-Turkish War as a fulfillment of this verse. But Smith died in 1903 and after his death events occurred that better fulfill this verse. We notice in the prophecy that it is the tidings from the north and east that cause this power to “go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

For more than a century Russia had been pressuring Turkey to grant civil rights to the Christians in their realm. On June 28, 1914, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Serbia, a former Ottoman territory. The man was not well liked by anybody but it was the spark that set off the powder keg. Within weeks the world was embroiled in World War I. Now was Turkey’s chance, with the great powers occupied, to rid his realm of these Christian pests. He began the systematic annihilation of every Christian ethnic group in his realm, beginning with the largest Christian group, the Armenians. The traditional homeland of the Armenians is the region centering around Mt. Ararat. “According to tradition Jude (Thaddeus) and Bartholomew preached Christianity to the Armenians in the first century. Some say that Thomas also preached there before going to India. By the end of the third century the whole nation was considered Christian. Armenians believe that the Armenian Apostolic Church is the oldest organized Christian church body. They are called Gregorian Christians after Saint Gregory.” *Terror by Night and Day, An Armenian Girl’s Story, By Marie Abelian Egitchanoff, page 5.*

“Waves of Persecution followed one another down through the centuries, some more severe than others. Political fortunes altered the boundaries of nations without regard to the people living there. By the dawn of the twentieth century Armenia as an entity had long ceased to exist. The territory once belonging to the “house of Togarmah” had been carved into three principle sections. The western part,

including Mount Ararat, belonged to the Turkish Empire; the northern part along the Caucasus mountains became one of the republics under Russian rule; the eastern part bordering the Caspian Sea had long been under Persian control. The people, like many other national groups, became dispersed; but unlike others, they largely maintained their identity.” *Terror by Night and Day, An Armenian Girl’s Story, By Marie Abelian Egitkhanoff, page 6.*

Did you catch that? Armenia was divided into Persia, on the east, Russia, on the north, and Turkey, on the west, the exact regions the prophecy describes.

“By 1914, Ottoman authorities had already begun a propaganda drive to present Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire as a threat to the empire’s security. An Ottoman naval officer in the War Office described the planning: ‘In order to justify this enormous crime the requisite propaganda material was thoroughly prepared in Constantinople.’ [It included such statements as] ‘the Armenians are in league with the enemy. They will launch an uprising in Istanbul, kill off the Committee of Union and Progress leaders and will succeed in opening the straits (of the Dardanelles).’” *Wikipedia, Armenian Genocide (parenthesis supplied by Wikipedia).*

In 1910 “A convention in Salonika called for the total extermination of Armenians in Turkish territory.” In 1914 “Turkey joined the German axis. The German authorities advised moving all Armenians from Russian border regions and replacing them with the Arabs who had moved north.” On October 30, 1914, “Turkey declared Jihad (Holy War) against all ‘infidels.’” In 1915 “Secret plans were formulated for the final eradication of Armenians. Germans advised a ‘white massacre;—Simply let them ‘walk to their graves.’

“Ultimatum: Accept the Moslem faith, or forfeit all right to remain at home. Those deported had to turn over to Turkish officers the keys to their homes ‘for safekeeping’” *Terror by Night and Day, An Armenian Girl’s Story, By Marie Abelian Egitkhanoff, page 7 (parenthesis supplied by Egitkhanoff).*

The Germans not only agreed to turn a blind eye to the Turks’ activities, in some cases they advised and aided them. The Turks rounded up the Armenians on the pretext of protecting them and sent them on a march into the Syrian desert without food or water. Men, women, and children were forced to march on and on till they collapsed and died of exhaustion and starvation. Hundreds were put on ships and sent into the Black Sea where the ships were capsized and the people on board, mostly women and children, drowned. Others were inoculated with typhus and died of disease. The first massacres actually occurred in the 1890’s and they extended to 1923, with the worst ones occurring during the war years. By 1923 the Turks had killed one and a half million Armenian Christians as well as many members of other Christian ethnic groups. The western world was aghast at the enormity of the destruction and cruelty.

“Despite Turkish denial, there is no doubt about the Armenian Genocide. For example, **German ambassador** Count von Wolff-Metternich, Turkey’s ally in World War I, wrote his government in 1916 saying: **‘The Committee [of Union and Progress] demands the annihilation of the last remnants of the Armenians and the [Ottoman] government must bow to its demands.’**

German consuls stationed in Turkey, including Vice Consul Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richner of Erzerum [Erzurum] who was Adolf Hitler’s chief political advisor in the 1920s, were eyewitnesses. Hitler said to his generals on the eve of sending his Death’s Heads units into Poland, ‘Go, kill without mercy... who today remembers the annihilation of the Armenians.’

“Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the **neutral American ambassador** to the Ottoman Empire, sent a cable to the U.S. State Department in 1915: ‘Deportation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eye witnesses [sic] it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion.’

“Morgenthau’s successor as Ambassador to Turkey, Abram Elkus, cabled the U.S. State Department in 1916 that the Young Turks were continuing an ‘... **unchecked policy of extermination through starvation, exhaustion, and brutality of treatment hardly surpassed even in Turkish history.**’” *Fact Sheet: Armenian Genocide Knights of Vartan Armenian Research Center, The University of Michigan-Dearborn, Dearborn, MI 48128 www.umd.umich.edu/dept/armenian/facts/genocide.html (emphasis and parenthesis supplied by the website).*

The Armenian Genocide was one of the first modern genocides. In fact the word genocide was coined to describe what happened to the Armenians in Turkey. There was no word to describe it before. “Law professor Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term ‘genocide’ in 1943, has stated that he did so with the fate of the Armenians in mind, explaining that ‘it happened so many times... First to the Armenians, then after the Armenians, Hitler took action.’” *Wikipedia, Armenian Genocide.*

Could there be a better fulfillment of the prophecy than this? The troublesome tidings caused him to “go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.” Just as the prophecy said it would. When we compare the one and a half million Armenians to the holocaust or the millions who died under Stalin it seems insignificant. But remember, those events hadn’t happened yet. Just for comparison, one million Jews died in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and this was thought horrendous till Hitler killed six million of them. The total number killed during the Napoleonic wars was about six and a half million and that was considered staggering during the 19th century. If you don’t think that 1.5 million Armenians is enough to qualify the Ottomans for the phrase “Destroy and make away many,” we can add to that about 800 thousand Greek Christians in Turkey, and 750 thousand Assyrian Christians in what is now Iraq and Iran. The Greeks were of the Greek Orthodox church and the Assyrians were a Christian ethnic group in Iran, who, like the Armenians, were early converted to Christianity and clung to it and the true Sabbath through centuries of persecution. This brings the total number of Christians slaughtered by the Ottomans to nearly 3 million. This is a piece of history that few people are even aware of. That is twice as many as the number of Moslems the Tzar killed 50 years earlier.

The Tabernacles of His Palace

“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain;” Dan. 11:45. This is the problem phrase. If it wasn’t for this phrase there would be little doubt that this prophecy is about the Ottoman Empire. Uriah Smith and the Adventists in general predicted, based on this phrase, that the Sultan would move his seat of government from Constantinople to Jerusalem. Adventists watched eagerly for this event to occur, but the British general Allenby captured Jerusalem in 1917 while the Sultan still ruled in Constantinople. He never regained control of the city and was deposed five years later. Because of this Adventists began looking for a new interpretation of the king of the north prophecy and a different power to appear.

So, were Uriah Smith and virtually all Adventists wrong for more than 70 years about the entire prophecy? Remember, every word must have its fulfillment. But what do these words actually mean? We have encountered the “glorious land” before in this prophecy. The first time was in verse 16

referring to Rome entering Palestine. The second was in verse 41 referring again to Palestine. It would only make sense then that this phrase “between the seas in the glorious holy mountain” is referring to a specific place in Palestine. What is the holy mountain in Palestine? It is Jerusalem, which is also located between the seas.

What does the word tabernacles mean? I think of the tabernacle the Israelites built at Sinai. It really refers to any temporary or moveable structure or a tent. Something easily and quickly set up and taken down. Some have claimed that the king of the north is really the power of Islam and the tabernacles is referring to the Dome of the Rock but we immediately see a problem here. The Dome is certainly not a temporary nor moveable structure. In fact the dome was built in 689 A.D. and is still standing. It has stood for more than 1300 years. More than three times as long as Solomon’s temple and more than twice as long as the second temple. The dome of the rock does not fit this prophecy.

What about the word palace? A palace is a grand and beautiful home where the ruler or important official lives. Certainly it is associated with the government. But the word here is translated from a different word. The word translated here as palace is *appeden* (**af-feh'-den**). It is a Hebrew word but comes originally from the Persian language. It is derived from the Persian Military campaigns. The Persian king would accompany his soldiers to the battle. When they made camp there was a very large tent or tents pitched for the king to occupy. This tent was like a palace. It had all the amenities and luxuries of the palace in the capitol.

We know from history that the Persian kings stayed in such tents when on military campaigns. In fact, the Greeks visited the king in one of these tents and were so impressed with the luxury and opulence they saw that they wrote detailed descriptions of what the tents contained, but did not leave us a description of the tents themselves. There were usually three or four tents set up for the king while the rest of the army slept outdoors on the ground.

This word *appeden* is #643 in Strong’s and this is the only place in the entire Bible where it is used. There are many places the word palace appears but they are always translated from words that mean “fortress,” or “citadel.” In other words, all the other times the word palace is used it denotes a permanent structure. But here we see a double use of the word tent, almost as if the prophet is trying to emphasize the fact that this event is exceedingly brief and very temporary in nature.

The phrase could be literally translated as “He shall plant the tent of his palace tent.” Or maybe it could read “a piece of his palace tent.” Could this mean that he doesn’t move his entire government to Jerusalem as has always been assumed? That he only moves a piece of his palace to Jerusalem?

The question to answer now is, did the Sultan put part of his palace in Jerusalem near the end of the Ottoman Empire? The answer is yes, take a look at this:

In 1887-88 “Ottoman Palestine divided into the districts of Jerusalem, Nablus and Acre—Jerusalem District is ‘autonomous’, i.e. attached directly to Istanbul.” *Wikipedia, Jerusalem Timeline.*

It is interesting that here the word autonomous is used to mean that it was attached directly to Istanbul when there were other regions that were autonomous, meaning that they pretty much governed themselves, independent of Constantinople.

Then in 1897 the “First Zionist Congress at which Jerusalem was discussed as the possible capital of a future Jewish state. In response, Abdul Hamid II initiates (the) policy of sending members of his own Palace staff to govern (the) province of Jerusalem .” *Wikipedia, Jerusalem Timeline.*

Here again the historian uses almost the exact language of the prophet. The tent of his palace tent, members of his palace staff. But here is a little more detailed evidence that this really happened.

“Following the end of Egyptian rule in 1841, the Jerusalem *sancak* started to enjoy a higher status amongst the other Palestinian *sancaks*, as a consequence of foreign interest in the city. In the summer of 1872, the *sancak* of Jerusalem was detached from the *vilayet* (Province) of Syria and placed under the direct control of Istanbul. The *sancak*, or *mutasarrıfluk* (both terms refer to the same institution) of Jerusalem was ruled by a *mutasarrıf* (governor). After the *sancak* was detached from the *vilayet* of Syria, the *mutasarrıf* of Jerusalem became unique amongst the other governors throughout the Ottoman Empire, as he was directly appointed and, therefore, responsible to the central administration in Istanbul, not to the *vali* of Syria. Nevertheless the Jerusalem *sancak*, though highly independent, was subordinate to the *vilayet* of Beirut in judicial matters, remaining so until 1910 when a Court of Appeal was established in Jerusalem. Furthermore, although troops were stationed in Jerusalem, the *sancak* was also dependent militarily on the authority of the Fifth *Ordu* (army), quartered in Damascus.” *Roberto Mazza, Jerusalem from the Ottomans to the British, page 20-21 (Parenthesis supplied by Mazza).*

“The strength of the governors depended not only on their personal skills, but also on the authority given them by the central government in Istanbul... In the late nineteenth century, during the reign of Abdülhamid II, governors were appointed from among the palace secretaries of the Sultan, including Ekrem Bey, Governor of Jerusalem from 1906 and 1908. Later at the beginning of the twentieth century, governors were appointed by the Young Turks among Turkish officials.” *Roberto Mazza, Jerusalem from the Ottomans to the British, page 21 (Parenthesis supplied by Mazza).*

It certainly looks like the Sultan planted a piece of his palace in Jerusalem during the 1890’s before coming to his end in 1922. But in addition to this, Jerusalem became the military headquarters for the Middle Eastern army of the Ottoman Empire during the battles for Palestine.

In 1917 the British general Edmund Allenby was given command of the British army in Palestine and began to prepare to capture Jerusalem. “While Allenby was reorganizing his army at the operational level the Turks were reorganizing theirs at the strategic level. In June 1917, the irrepressible Enver Pasa ordered the activation of a joint Turco-German army group that he named the Yildirim Army Group. The heart of this army group was composed of surplus Ottoman forces from Galicia, Romania, and Thrace transferred to the Near East for offensive operations. The commander of the new army group was German General Erich Von Falkenhayn, who was initially given the mission to retake Baghdad (which had fallen to General Stanley Maude on 11 March 1917). However, by midsummer the strategic situation in Palestine had grown so dangerous that the inbound Yildirim divisions were re-routed to the Sinai front.

“In a complex political and military command environment, Cemal Pasa’s Ottoman Fourth Army headquarters in Palestine was inactivated on 26 September 1917. This cleared the way for Enver to activate the new Ottoman Eighth Army on the Gaza front (commanded by Kress von Kressenstein) six days later. A second Ottoman army, the Seventh, was activated and ordered to assemble near Aleppo

under the command of Fevzi Pasa... In these orders, Fevzi Pasa's Seventh Army assumed operational command of the eastern half of the Ottoman front... The Eighth Army remained in control of Gaza and the western half of the front.

“The majority of the Yildirim Army Group staff was stationed in Jerusalem, working under Turkish assistant chief of staff Captain Huseyin Husnu and German Staff Major von Papen. Its commander, von Falkenhayn, remained in Aleppo. This was a difficult decision for von Falkenhayn, who feared that while traveling south to Jerusalem, he might be caught without communications.” *Ottoman Army effectiveness in World War I: a comparative study* By Edward J. Erickson, page 107-108 (parenthesis supplied by Erickson).

A year later the Ottoman Empire Surrendered. But was the Ottoman Empire really that significant in World War I? Take a look at this from the Literary Digest of 1919.

“If shades can laugh, the spirits of Peter the Hermit, Louis IX, and Richard the Lion-Hearted may have joined in an outburst of sardonic mirth the other day when the empire that ten crusades failed for three centuries to vanquish, sent its Grand Vizier to Paris, and a delegation of Turkish notables along with him. On their way to and from the sessions of the Council of Ten of the Peace Conference in the cloakroom of the Quai D’Orsay, they were required to enter and depart through different doors from those used by the members. As the Charleston Evening Post remarks: ‘These smooth-speaking gentlemen from the Golden Horn were not envoys of an empire, for it is not yet quite determined whether Turkey is to be considered as still having a national entity.’ They visited Paris simply as experts from whom the Council of Ten might obtain information regarding Turkish affairs. While there they sought to exonerate the Sultan from all responsibility for the war, obtain for him the right to remain in Constantinople, and present the views of the Moslem population, which ‘desires with equal earnestness the maintenance of the status quo ante bellum, of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, which during the last forty years has been reduced to the least possible limits.’

“After an interval, remarkable for brevity, as these things go, the Council of Ten advised the emissaries from the Sublime Porte to return thither, which they did, not excepting Grand Vizier Damad Ferid Pasha himself. Nevertheless, the Council had the goodness to answer their petition, and they have carried home a note, in the course of which Mr. Clemenceau says to the Sultan’s chief representative:

“ ‘The Council is anxious not to enter into unnecessary controversy, or to inflict needless pain on your Excellency and the delegates who accompany you. It wishes well to the Turkish people, and admires their excellent qualities. But it can not admit that among those qualities are to be counted capacity to rule over alien races. The experiment has been tried too long and too often for there to be the least doubt as to its result.’” *End of the Turkish Empire, Literary Digest July 12, 1919 (Quoted from the transcripts of the 1919 Seventh-day Adventist Bible Conference page 905).*

If the Ottoman Empire wasn't being considered responsible for the war, why would they be so eager to exonerate themselves? The fact is, that the Ottoman Empire was a major player. So what happened after the war?

Yet He Shall Come to His End

“Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” This seems to indicate that he had received

help in the past but now there is no help for him. As we have seen, he certainly did receive help for nearly 100 years, but now the help was withdrawn. Within a year after the loss of Jerusalem, the Ottoman Empire surrendered. Europe no longer cared about the Ottoman Empire. Russia had withdrawn from the war because of the Bolshevik revolution. She was now communist and did not care about Christians or the Greek Orthodox church. England had what she wanted. She had captured the riches of Palestine and the Middle East. The United Nations divided these regions up and put them under British Mandate. Britain didn't care about Turkey anymore. Austria-Hungary no longer existed and her domains had been carved up into numerous independent countries busy with internal affairs. Germany was smoldering under what she considered an unfair loss of territory and restrictive peace treaty. The Ottoman Empire was left to die on its own.

Weakened even further by its defeat in the Great War and having lost all of its Middle Eastern territories, the Ottoman empire was embroiled in civil war in 1919. The people were unhappy with the government and wanted change. In 1922 the Sultanate was abolished and the ruling sultan went into exile. In 1924 the Caliphate was abolished and the Caliph was also exiled. From that time till now Turkey has been a secular government with no religion favored over another and the Moslem religion has had no single, visible leader.

“The Turkish state has been officially secular since 1924. Approximately 99% of the population is Muslim. Most Turkish Muslims follow the Sunni traditions of Islam, although a significant number follow Alevi and Shiite traditions. Questions regarding the role of religion in society and government, the role of linguistic and ethnic identity, and the public's expectation to live in security dominate public discourse... Defeated, shorn of much of its former territory, and partly occupied by forces of the victorious European states, the Ottoman structure was repudiated by Turkish nationalists brought together under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The nationalists expelled invading Greek, Russian, French and Italian forces from Anatolia in a bitter war. After the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey the temporal and religious ruling institutions of the old empire (the sultanate and caliphate) were abolished.” *U.S. Department of State* <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm>

The Ottoman Empire as the King of the North

One of the things that has been mentioned in opposition to the Ottoman Empire being the king of the north is that if this power was conquered by another nation then the conquering nation would become the king of the north and the prophecy would fail. This makes sense because that is what has happened over and over again throughout the prophecy and it certainly appeared that Turkey would be conquered by another European nation. But this is not what happened. The Ottoman Empire simply ceased to exist when the help offered it by other nations was removed. Turkey and Syria still exist today but the Ottoman Empire is gone. Just as the prophecy said would happen.

So lets review the main points of the prophecy.

King of the north	Papacy	Islam	Ottoman Empire
1. Triangular war with Egypt and France at the time of the end	No	Yes, The Ottoman Empire was Moslem	Yes, Napoleonic War 1798-9

2. Controls the territory of Turkey and Syria	No	Yes, through the Ottoman Empire	Yes
3. Edom, Moab, and Ammon escape out of his hand	Yes	No, They are Moslem to this day	Yes, paid tribute to them
4. Gains control over Egypt after the battle	No	No, Was already in control of Egypt	Yes, Egypt became again an Ottoman vassal
5. Lybia and Ethiopia at his steps	Yes	Yes, through the Ottoman Empire	Yes
6. Tidings out of the East and North trouble him	No	Yes, through the Ottoman Empire	Yes, Russian pressure throughout the 19 th century
7. Goes forth with great fury to destroy and make away many	No	Yes, Armenian, Greek and Assyrian Genocides 1890-1923	Yes, Armenian, Greek and Assyrian Genocides 1890-1923
8. Plants a part of his palace in Jerusalem	No	No	Yes, Members of palace staff sent to rule Jerusalem 1897
9. Comes to his end with none to help him	No	No, has not ended	Yes, Ended quietly in 1922, no one would help him anymore

As you can see from the chart there are only two things in the prophecy that could fit the Papacy currently and only five that really fit Islam. Also to apply this prophecy to the Catholic church we are forced to turn it into a spiritual, rather than a literal prophecy. At the beginning of Daniel eleven the powers portrayed are political in nature. They are kingdoms and empires. There is nothing in the chapter to indicate that this changes to religions or to spiritual applications in verse 40.

Most of those who adhere to Smith's interpretation still put verse 44 and 45 in the future, as he did. This gives us the same problem we had with the papacy being the king of north in verse 40. There is an ever widening gap between verses 43 and 44 if we interpret it this way. In this space of time we have had the worst wars and genocides in the history of the world, with no mention whatever made of them in the prophecy. This just doesn't work. God could not have forgotten to tell us about these things that so greatly affected his church.

We also find this statement in the Spirit of Prophecy. "The time of trouble, which is to increase until the end, is very near at hand. We have no time to lose. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecies of the eleventh of Daniel have almost reached their final fulfillment." *Review and Herald Nov. 24, 1904.*

This was written just ten years before the events of World War 1 and twenty years before the Ottoman Empire collapsed.

As you can see from the chart all nine points fit the Ottoman Empire perfectly. Remember what William Miller said in 1842?

“To know whether we have the true historical event for the fulfillment of a prophecy. If you find every word of the prophecy (after the figures are understood) is literally fulfilled, then you may know that your history is the true event. But if one word lacks a fulfillment, then you must look for another event, or wait its future development. For God takes care that history and prophecy doth agree, so that the true believing children of God may never be ashamed.” *Views of the Prophetic Chronology, Selected from the Manuscripts of William Miller With a Memoir of His Life by Joshua V. Himes, 1841, page 22.*

Have we not seen how every word is fulfilled perfectly by the Ottoman Empire? Where does that leave us now? The very next verse is Daniel 12:1, but we will deal with that in part 4.