

## Chapter 4: Daniel 11:2-39

Copyright (c) 2007 by Frank W. Hardy, Ph.D.

### Introduction

In Daniel's last vision there is a focus on the end of the series. Babylon is not mentioned at all, Persia only briefly in vs. 2. Greece is the power active in vss. 3-15 and, after Rome is introduced in vs. 16, it remains active in one form or another until the end of the chapter. [Fig. 1.a-b. or a-c.]

#### Greece

Greece exerted an immeasurable influence on the ancient world in such areas as philosophy, literature, mathematics, the sciences, political concepts (such as democracy), and language. Most of us have studied these things in high school, but there is another more useful way to look at them.

Greeks were suicidally fractious. They could not stop fighting – whether others, or themselves. After Alexander's death his empire collapsed under its own weight and was divided by his generals. The two parts of the divided empire that concern us here are Egypt, as ruled by the Greek Ptolemies, and Syria, as ruled by the Greek Seleucids.

Fighting was a respected profession and it was always reserved for Greeks. Conquered populations had no access to the army. It was closed to them. Egypt never fully recovered from the victory it won at # by breaking this rule. Of course the nature of fighting is such that some are victorious and others die. How to replace them? Well, if the needed replacements must be Greek, the place to look for them was Greece. So there was a steady influx of Greek language and culture from the homeland. This had the effect of spreading Greek ways of thinking, and living, and speaking over a wide area in the eastern Mediterranean and elsewhere.

This was in God's plan, because in the decades and centuries immediately after Christ one language could be widely used as an international medium of communication. By putting this one language in place God was preparing the world to receive the gospel of His Son.<sup>1</sup>

#### Rome

As talented as the Greeks were, there was one thing they could not do. They could not bring political stability. For that God turned to another group of people. Everything that Greece lacked in this area, Rome supplied – with a vengeance. Now, instead of Greek wars, there would be Roman peace. So it's not just that one empire would follow another in the book of Daniel and that God could foresee what they would

---

<sup>1</sup> It was in this context that God poured out His Holy Spirit at Pentecost and gave His followers the gift of tongues, so they could use not only an international language, comparable to English in our generation, but other languages as well. God wanted His message to be told everywhere and by every means available.

do before they did it. Instead it is that these particular empires would come, that they would come in the sequence documented above, that they would come when they did, and that they would accomplish what God ordained for them to accomplish. Each had a specific work to do as God prepared the world to receive His Son.

In the case of Rome, there is more than one way that Rome manifests itself in history – one secular, the other religious. Neither of these can be ignored. The history of the Mediterranean basin for the first five centuries after Christ is the history of the Roman emperors. The history of western Europe during the thirteen centuries after that is the history of the Roman popes. What we are talking about is nothing hidden or obscure. The events we need to discuss have shaped our world, and continue to shape it. Let me give a few examples of what I mean by saying this.

In the fields of drama, rhetoric, art, architecture, language, and law, Rome's influence was undiminished up until the nineteenth century, and in many ways it continues just as it always did.<sup>2</sup>

Language is an especially interesting example. In western Europe, during the middle ages, the language of diplomacy, the church, the university, and the courts was Latin. We can say that this is no longer the case and that Rome's legacy of Latin is a thing of the past. But Italian is merely a form of Latin, i.e., it is the form that Latin eventually took in Italy. French is also Latin, as that language developed over the centuries in France. Catalan, Portuguese, Rhaeto-Romance, Romanian, Sardinian, and Spanish fall in this same category. English, of course, is a Germanic language, so we can set English aside. Or can we? According to L. M. Myers, fully half of our English vocabulary today comes to us through French and is therefore, directly or indirectly, really from Latin.<sup>3</sup> The alphabet I use to write this sentence and that you use to read it is the Latin alphabet. The saying *e pluribus unum* ("Out of many, one"), which appears on every American dollar, is Latin. Rome's influence in the area of language continues to be pervasive despite the fact that Latin as such is not used so widely as before.

The architecture of our public buildings is often either Greek (using straight lines, i.e., columns with lintels) or Roman (if it uses curved lines, i.e., domes or columns with arches). Every visitor to Washington, DC sees innumerable examples of Rome's continuing impact on our public architecture, not to mention our public statuary.

More is true. If we could agree that, as a rule, Greeks wore beards, Celts wore mustaches, and Romans were clean shaven, then the reader, if he is a clean-shaven male, or is married to one, can bear living testimony that Rome continues to affect every aspect of our lives. It is not by accident that Daniel describes only four world empires and that the fourth, in one form or another, remains until the very end of the age.

---

<sup>2</sup> See Richard Jenkyns, ed., *The Legacy of Rome: A New Appraisal* (Oxford University Press, 1992). Each subject area listed above is given chapter-length treatment in Jenkyns' book.

<sup>3</sup> "The English vocabulary is now much the largest in the world, and well over half of it comes from French and Latin sources. It is often impossible to tell from which source an originally Latin word was actually borrowed; but even the direct Latin borrowings were certainly made easier by the fact that many French words were already in the language" (Myers, *The Roots of Modern English* [Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966], p. 131).

## Daniel 11:2b-15

### Introduction

[Get the outline right. It's 11:2b-12:3, with 11:2a and 12:4 providing an inclusio.]

This section can be divided into three parts: vss. 1-2, which mention Persia, and vss. 3-15, which deal with Greece. Within the latter subsection, vss. 3-4 have to do with the consolidation of Alexander's empire and vss. 5-15 discuss what happens to God's people when it is broken apart. These events can easily turn into a blur, with this battle and that and kings going here and there doing hostile things to each other, but the theme of vss. 5-15 is really quite straightforward. Two things are happening. North starts small and gradually overtakes South. Actually, vss. 5-15 provide the first of five examples in Dan 11 where North supersedes South. It is a major recurring theme – recurring because it is repeated in different ages of history.

In the present case both kings are Greek. Major protagonists in the story are the Ptolemies ruling Egypt and the Seleucids ruling Syria. The intrigues and battles and respectively drew them together and drove them apart occurred between about 300 BC and 165 BC. At the beginning of the period in question Judea, and with it the entire eastern coast of the Mediterranean (sometimes called the Levant), was ruled by the Ptolemies of Egypt. By the end of the period this entire area was ruled by the Seleucids of Syria. Thus, Dan 11:5-15 is the story of how Judea changed hands from Egyptian control, which they preferred, to Syria control, which they actively resisted – and for good reason. The Seleucids of Syria eventually tried to destroy the Jewish religion altogether.

The wars between North and South in vss. 5-15 eventually turn into a contest for control of the land where God's people live. In this contest please do not lose sight of the fact that Judea is caught in the middle, as it were, between Egypt and Syria. That is why we find terms such as South and North in the chapter. I emphasize this point because we meet it again in vss. 40-45.<sup>4</sup>

In vss. 16-22, and again in vss. 36-39, the word "South" does not occur in the Hebrew. Only four sections (i.e., vss. 5-15, 23-28, 29-35, and 40-45) contain the recurring theme of North superseding South. The fact that this theme is repeated should be taken as evidence that the chapter covers a wide period of time and that the references to North and South are symbolic in nature.

This is not a mere chronicle of endless fighting between North and South. It is an extraordinarily perceptive and goal oriented history of one empire after another rising above anything that would compete with it for power. Each section where this occurs has a different king of the North in view. In the different sections of Dan 11 each king of the North in turn corresponds to one of the world empires from the series originally announced in chap. 2, or to its various phases. This is a theme in the Old Testament.

---

<sup>4</sup> If the same motif really does extend all the way through the chapter, that fact will have a direct bearing on how we identify the Beautiful Land of vs. 41, since, in the language of the passage, it is precisely a small entity caught between two super powers. We return to this point in chapter 5 below.

Each empire is a king of the North. Each king of the North is a world empire from the series introduced in chap. 2.

In regard to kings of the North in different sections of Dan 11 corresponding to different world empires, there is much to say. In every vision the fourth empire is subdivided. Here also. There is a recurring formula ("he will do as he pleases") that marks the rise of each new power in turn. It occurs first in Dan 8, where the reference is to Persia. The same formula occurs three times within Dan 11 – in vs. 3 (referring to Greece), in vs. 16 (referring to secular Rome), and in vs. 36 (referring to religious Rome). One could argue that, although there are four empires rather than five, the two phases of Roman power are treated separately.

## Verse 2

Just as vs. 2 lays the foundation for vs. 3, vs. 1 lays the foundation for vs. 2. If Greece attacks Persia in vs. 3, the reason is that Persia attacks Greece earlier, in vs. 2. So vss. 2 and 3 are clearly in dialog with each other. There is a similar relationship between vss. 1 and 2, and yet the narrative proper begins in vs. 2, and more specifically in vs. 2b.

Notice that chap. 11 is flanked by a matched pair of references to Michael ("Who Is Like God"), which in this context is another name for Christ – the only One who is truly like God. If Michael is the Archangel, who would be better qualified to command them? Is there some reason for obedience better than the fact that we owe our existence to the One we obey? When these issues are correctly understood, identifying Christ with Michael as the Archangel does not lower Him. Instead it represents a claim to deity. Someone made the angels. Whoever that is, is their Commander. And so the reason for Michael's position as Commander of all the angels is precisely His prior status as Creator of all the angels. He can tell them to do because He first told them to be.

All of this bears a consistent witness to who Michael is and accounts in a robust manner for the angels' obedience to Him. There are other things that fit in this context as well. Here we have the reason why parents have the right and the responsibility of commanding their households after them (see Gen #). They must command their children under God, because under God they called those children into existence. They are their children's procreators. Here also is the reason why the claims of the fourth commandment are so important. The fourth, or Sabbath, commandment is a weekly reminder that we owe our existence to God. This is why we owe our worship to God. (Parents cannot command their children's worship because they did not create their children *ex nihilo*, but they can and must command their respect because human children would not come into existence without human parents.) Thus, God's creatorship, as recorded in Gen 1-2, is not only the basis for worship on the seventh day. It is that, but more is true. It is also the basis for all worship of the true God as distinguished from idols.

## Verses 3-15

From vs. 3 to vs. 15 the empire in view is Greece.

*"He will do as he pleases."* The formula, "he will do as he pleases," occurs three times in chap. 11. This is the first occurrence. The reference is to Alexander the Great, and through him to the Macedonian/Greek alliance that he commands. The use of this formula announces the beginning of Alexander's rule, and therefore the beginning of Greek rule in the chapter. Greece is the third of Daniel's four empires (see Dan 8:20).

*Verses 3-4.* The terms North and South are not introduced until vs. 5. The reason for this is that they refer to two of the four main divisions of Alexander's empire, which does not break up until vs. 4.

In vs. 3 Greece attacks Persia, in response to Persia's earlier attack on Greece under Esther's husband, Xerxes. That initial attack occurred in X.

The course of Alexander's campaign.

The breakup of Alexander's empire.

*Verses 5-15.* The terms North and South are introduced in vss. 5-15 to describe two of the four parts into which Alexander the Great's empire broke up at his death. After Alexander's death the Seleucids who ruled Syria were Greeks and the Ptolemies who ruled Egypt were also Greeks. In this section the term North simply means north from Judea and South means south from Judea. The significance of the terms in this section is entirely geographical.

Notice that the king of the North in vs. 5 is not the same person as the king of the North in vs. 6. From this I conclude that even at this point the terms are abstract even if they can be literally applied geographically. The actors change over time, but the symbols do not.

In vss. 14-16 we are dealing with the Maccabees. Consider the follow table.

	Vs. 14	Vs. 15	Vs. 16
	North	North	North
	God's People	South	North

Throughout the chapter there are three streams of influence. There is North, there is South, and there are God's people caught between the two major powers on either side of them. In vss. 14-16 we have an overview of these relationships. Verse 14 speaks of the king of the North's relationship to God's people. Verse 15 speaks of the king of the North's relationship to the king of the South. And vs. 16 speaks of the king of the North's relationship to the power that would succeed him in that role, i.e., there we have one king of the North dealing with another. That other king of the North – the successor, the invader, the one who comes against the power that has been king of the North up to now – is Rome. The confrontation between the two competing kings occurs in vs. 16.

By the end of the section the conflict between the kings of North and South has become a contest for control of Judea.

## **Conclusion**

# **Daniel 11:16-28**

## **Introduction**

This middle subsection is a tale of two cities – Jerusalem and Rome. The angel must not be criticized for not hurrying on past this bloc of history. This is the period that would see the birth of the Roman Empire and the death of the Jewish Messiah. There is much to say about this period of time and so the story is told from both points of view – from a Jewish point of view in vss. 16-22 and from a Roman point of view in vss. 23-28.

I do not mean to imply that no Romans are mentioned in the first subsection. Any discussion of a relationship must make reference to both parties, even if one has the primary focus. But in vss. 16-22 we have a symbolic description of how Jerusalem would be destroyed (see vs. 17), and in vss. 23-28 a prophetic reference to the length of time during which the city of Rome would be capital of the Roman Empire (see vs. 24). The capital was eventually moved to Constantinople, known earlier as Byzantium, and later as Istanbul.

In both cases what the subsection says about the respective capital cities is the last event to occur chronologically, and in both cases this information is conveyed in the second verse (vss. 17, 24). But what the subsection says about capital cities is not the most important thing. In both cases the subsection ends with what is most important, and that does not occur last. It is mentioned last because it is useful from a narrative point of view to end with the item deserving greatest emphasis. The last thing mentioned in vss. 16-22 is the death of Christ on a Roman cross, and the last thing mentioned in vss. 23-28 is the end of persecution by the Roman state against Christians.

## **Verses 16-22**

In this section the term "South" does not occur in the Hebrew. The focus is entirely on the activities of the king of the North. This does not mean that only one person is active. The king of the North is whoever rules the kingdom of the North – the kingdom that occupies the rule of a king of the North. Focus is always on the kingdom rather than the king. Starting with vs. 16 this king, or kingdom, of the North is Rome. The power that it interacts with in vss. 16-22 is Judea.

This first half of the section describes events from c. 160 BC to AD 70 from a Jewish point of view. The latest event to occur is the destruction of Jerusalem. The event with which the section ends is the crucifixion of Christ.

After the introduction of Rome, North no longer refers merely to a point of the compass. Rome is not geographically north from Judea, but it does truly occupy the role of a king of the North. Egypt, on the other hand, remains the king of the South and is geographically south from Judea. Thus, the significance of direction terms in vss. 16-22

is mixed. There is a geographical component, but there is also something more than just geography. The transition away from literal geographical applications is a gradual one.

*"He will do as he pleases."* This is the second occurrence of the formula, "he will do as he pleases," in the chapter. The first (11:3) is to Greece, the second to Rome. The use of this formula marks the appearance of Rome in the chapter.

*Verses 16-19.* In the first of these four verses Rome establishes itself in the area of Judea by expelling Antiochus IV Epiphanes from Egypt. Very few rulers in antiquity had ever conquered Egypt. For some reason it was almost impregnable. Darius the Great had conquered it, and so had Alexander the Great. Now Antiochus followed in the footsteps of these great rulers from the past – only to have Rome send him away by means of a legate armed only with a stick from a grape vine. It is a very tellable story, as Antiochus would immediately have realized.

In vs. 17 we look forward proleptically to a time when the relationship established in this way would result in the destruction of Jerusalem. It almost resulted in such destruction at the time, because as Antiochus returned from his summary expulsion from Egypt he massacred large numbers of people in the streets of Jerusalem and eventually tried to destroy the worship of God in Jerusalem. These events have been described already in vs. 14. In A.D. 70 Rome actually did what Antiochus would like to have done. There is a medieval sequel to all of this, which we come to in vss. 36-39.

In vs. 18 the Roman commander Pompey the Great extends Roman influence throughout the eastern Mediterranean and even enters Jerusalem itself, and within Jerusalem the temple, and within the temple the holy of holies. It is of special interest that Pompey should be praised for piety in an act of desecration, because he only entered the holiest of all and did not plunder it.

In vs. 19 Julius Caesar rises above his rival, Pompey, and becomes the supreme master of the Roman world. Immediately afterward, however, he is assassinated in the senate and comes to a bloody end.

*Verses 20-21.* The reason why this history is important is that it leads to the next three verses, which describe the end of the reign of Caesar Augustus – the Caesar of Christ's birth, and the beginning of the reign of Tiberius – the Caesar of Christ's death.

In vs. 20 Octavian, later known as Caesar Augustus, dies a peaceful death at home in his bed, covered with honor.

In vs. 21 Augustus is succeeded by his adopted son, Tiberius, whom no one wanted to see in power, but whose rise was inevitable all the same.

*Verse 22.* Here is the focus of the subsection. In vs. 22a the reign of terror under Tiberius is described. This reign of terror provides a context for Christ's death, because many prominent Romans during the time of Tiberius were condemned on fabricated charges of disloyalty to Caesar, their estates were seized, and they were condemned to death in a process of judicial murder. This is precisely what we have in the gospels regarding Pilate. The Jews threatened to accuse Pilate to Caesar on charges that he had failed to punish someone who claimed to be a king, in competition with Caesar. If they should make good on their threat, Pilate's estate would be seized and he would be

condemned to death in a process of judicial murder. This threat is what finally convinced Pilate to give in and hand Jesus over to the Jewish leaders for crucifixion. And so to avoid being treated like so many others back in Rome, Pilate allowed Jesus to be executed – not for heresy, but for sedition.

When the moment actually comes, the death of Christ is described in only three Hebrew words: *w'gam n'gid b'rit*, "(1) and also (2) [the] Prince of (3) [the] covenant." The word "also" refers to the treatment of prominent citizens who endured similar trials, not in Jerusalem, but in Rome. The reference here is not to armies, but to the large numbers of private citizens being swept away at this time by Tiberius. We must be clear that the death of Jesus is not merely one among many. It is unique. But every historical event has a context and the angel wants very much for us to understand the context for this one, more than any other.

In Isa 53 we read that Jesus would be associated "with the rich in his death." The application is to the fact that Joseph of Arimathea would place Jesus in his own unused tomb. This offers one level of fulfillment. In Dan 11 we have another level of meaning in the same prophecy. The reign of terror in Rome under Tiberius would provide a second reason for saying that Jesus would be associated "with the rich in his death."

### Verses 23-28

In this section we have the second of four examples where the king of the North supersedes the king of the South. Both kings are Roman.<sup>5</sup> The reason for this has to do with the period we're dealing with. The conflict is the end of the period of Rome's civil wars. Here we see Romans fighting Romans. The outcome is the transition from Republic to Empire. The protagonists are Octavian (later called Caesar Augustus), fighting from a base in Greece, and Mark Anthony, who was attacking him by sea with a mixed Roman and Egyptian navy. The battle of Actium took place in 31 BC – a date to which we return in a later section.

*Verses 23-24.* This section describes events from 31 BC to AD 330 from a Roman point of view. The latest event to occur is the transfer of the capital from Rome to Byzantium. The event with which the section ends is the transition to empire in 31 B.C. See fig. #.

---

<sup>5</sup> In the years leading up to the birth of the Empire under Caesar Augustus one could assume that Rome was engaged in foreign conquest because its armies fought in many places, but although the venue was foreign, the enemy frequently was not. "After a long political and military struggle, between 49 and 45 BC, which would take in battles in [Italia](#), [Greece](#), [Egypt](#), [Africa](#), and [Hispania](#), Caesar finally defeated the last of the traditional faction of the Roman senate at the [Battle of Munda](#)" (Wikipedia, s.v. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s\\_civil\\_war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_civil_war)). These battles were between one set of Romans and another.



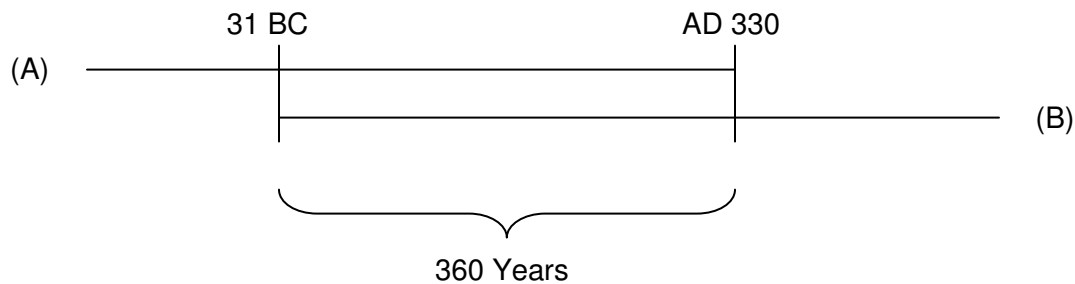


Fig. #. Rome was a capital city before the Republic became an Empire (A), and the Roman Empire continued on for many years after Rome had ceased to be its capital (B), but the period of time during which Rome as a city presided over Rome as an Empire was 360 years – one prophetic "time."

The verse division at vss. 23/24 deserves comment. The last sentence of vs. 23 is grammatical and complete with or without the first word of vs. 24, but the first sentence of vs. 24 does not make good sense so long as we assume that it must include the first word of the verse. The first word of vs. 24 is actually the last word of vs. 23. The only alternative to saying so is to change a letter of the text. I would rather move a verse number.

*Verses 25-28.* In these verses we have a detailed description of the birth of the Roman Empire. The defining event, at the end of the long period of civil wars, was the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C. There are many structural facts to consider in this section, which may be summarized as follows.

Table #  
Clause Relationships in Dan 11:25-28

Outcome	C	25c	South loses	Why South loses	26	C'
South	B	25b	South's advantage	Why South fights	27	B'
North	A	25a	North sets out	North returns	28a	A'

## Discussion

Earlier in the chapter I argued at length that vs. 16 marks the beginning of the section which spans the middle third of the chapter (vss. 16-28). There are a number of reasons for saying so. Once these facts have been established independently, as I believe they have been by now, here is where they lead.

There are certain symmetries within vss. 16-28 which cry out to be understood. The chiasmic structure of the section is best illustrated by the fact that the death of Christ occurs in the middle verse, but that is not the end of it. The violence done to the Prince

of the covenant is emphasized by the removal of violence from the two verses on either side, i.e., from vss. 20-21 on the one hand, and from vss. 23-24 on the other.



16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
4				2		1	2		4			
A				B		A	B		A			

Fig. #. Internal symmetry of vss. 16-28 showing selective absence of violence.

In vss. 20-21 Caesar Augustus dies peacefully in his bed and is succeeded by his adopted son, Tiberius, through a process of stealth and subterfuge that has become proverbial. Correspondingly, in vss. 23-24, the Roman use of policy is emphasized, by contrast with its equally enthusiastic use of military force.

There is a verbal parallel that emphasizes and isolates vs. 22. This is the word *bēšalwâ*, which occurs in vs. 21 and again in vs. 23, when the verses are divided correctly. I have argued that the first word of vs. 24 is really the last word of vs. 23. That word is *bēšalwâ*, which means "in peace" or, alternatively, "by stealth." Correctly understood, the use of this word in the two verses immediately adjacent to vs. 22 form an inclusio around that verse, framing it and emphasizing, by contrast, the violence done to the Prince of the covenant.

## Conclusion

Overlap 31 BC – AD 70. This period of approximately 100 years contains within it the beginnings of the Roman empire and the end of the Jewish nation. The lifetime of Jesus (c. 4 BC – AD 31) occupies roughly the middle third of this important period and His death on a Roman cross is the pivotal event portrayed. In vs. 22, in a clause of only three Hebrew words, the angel places his finger with surgical precision on the moment of Christ's death on a Roman cross.

## Daniel 11:29-39

### Introduction

Verses 29-39 divide into two parts in much the same way as vss. 16-28 (i.e., 16-22, 23-28). Again there is an overlap where the subsections are applied to history. One subsection (vss. 29-35) shows what events would occur during the period in question. The other (vss. 36-39) shows what thoughts and attitudes would accompany those events. No events as such are described in vss. 36-39; only attitudes. Similarly, no attitudes are described in vss. 29-35; only events. The two subsections complement each other perfectly. Both are required – together – before the period in question can be fully understood.

An earlier section discussed the transition from republic to empire and then the transition from Rome being the capital of the empire to Byzantium being the capital. If Rome had remained the capital, there would have been no political vacuum for the church to fill at a later time. Moving the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Byzantium (or Constantinople) was an immensely important event in the history of the Christian church.

[Figure]

The present section contemplates events in Rome after the secular capital of the empire was moved elsewhere. It deals with the rise of the papacy and its career during the middle ages and extends all the way up to the time of the end, which starts in 1798.

### Verses 29-35

Here we have the third example of South giving way to North. The first was in vss. 5-15, the second in vss. 23-28. In the present section the outcome is the transition from Rome as a state to Rome as a powerful amalgam of church and state. On one side is Rome – now no longer the capital of an empire. On the other side is Carthage – capital of the Vandal-Alan alliance. Geographically the two cities are directly opposite each other with the Mediterranean between them. Rome is on the northern side of the Mediterranean, Carthage on the southern side.

Here is the significance of the expression "ships of Kittim." If two hostile powers are separated by water, they must fight with ships. The Vandals are unique among the various barbarian – mostly Germanic – groups in a number of ways. They all opposed Rome and most were Christian, but only the Vandals do so by sea in any effective manner, and only the Vandals forcefully persecuted those who differed from them in religion. They enforced against Catholics all of the laws that the Empire enforced against Arians, which made a very heavy burden for Catholics.

The Vandal navy became so skilled that they attacked, not only Italy, but Greece, where the capital of the Empire had been moved some years before. They persecuted their Catholic subjects so violently that they almost obliterated the Catholic form of Christianity from their part of Africa. In a later day Catholicism is associated with persecution and changes that took the church away from its New Testament roots, but the issue in the conflict between Rome and the Vandals was on a different level. Rome stood for a correct understanding of the nature of Christ, while the Vandals represented the heresies of Arius.

But there is more involved than physical location. In this conflict Rome champions an orthodox understanding of the nature of Christ, while Carthage champions the heretical theories of Arius – an academic who had lived and taught in Alexandria, Egypt.

So there is a military conflict and also a religious conflict. Rome is still the king of the North, as it was in an earlier section, but now the barbarian Vandals and Alans are the king of the South. From a military point of view, Rome and Carthage are located opposite each other on the northern and southern sides of the Mediterranean respectively. From a religious point of view, the theories championed by the Vandals came from Egypt.

Notice also the nature of the particular heresy the Vandals represent. Arianism teaches that Jesus is less than and later than the Father. One of the catch phrases used by Arians was, "Before he became, he was not." This theory robs Jesus of His divinity and is consistent with the words of Pharaoh: "Who is the Lord? . . ." Rome, at this juncture, correctly taught the deity of Christ, while the Vandals tried by every means to establish the opposite teaching, i.e., that Christ is not truly and fully divine.

Verses 29-35 discuss the establishment of the papacy.

God led the Jews into Canaan, but God in the person of His Son tells the church, "[Y]ou will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). So the geographical aspects of the prophecy have changed since the days when North means north from Judea and South means south from Judea. The location of Judea is irrelevant in this section of the chapter. But it is the case that North is geographically north of South and South is geographically south of North.

Rome became the king of the North in vs. 16, but Egypt remained the king of the South. When the empire was born at the end of the long period of civil wars, Octavian's forces were from Rome and Mark Anthony's were from Egypt – the home of his lover, Cleopatra.

In vss. 29-35 Egypt is no longer the king of the South. Instead the king of the South is a barbarian power with three identifying characteristics. It is south from Rome, it attacks the empire by sea, and it persecutes religion. The Vandal-Alan alliance was the only barbarian power with any of these characteristics, and it had all three.

The Vandals and Alans cross into Africa from Gibraltar and established themselves at Carthage – directly south from Rome on the African side of the Mediterranean. To attack the empire from the south one would have to attack by sea. The Vandals were the only barbarian group ever to make effective use of ships, eventually become so adept at sailing that they attacked not only Rome but Byzantium itself. The Vandals were the only barbarian group to wage war on the Roman church as well as on the Roman state. Most of the other Germanic groups were tolerant of others' beliefs. Vandals made it their goal to root out Catholic Christianity from Africa, and nearly succeeded.

The Vandals, like most other barbarians of this time, were Christians. But they were Arian Christians. Arius taught that Jesus was later than and less than the Father. His theory is known today as Arianism. What makes all of this doubly interesting is the fact that Arius lived and taught at Alexandria in Egypt. So the navies and armies with which the Vandals attacked the Roman state came from bases in Carthage, but the system of theological belief with which they attacked the Roman church came from Egypt.

It is important to realize that the Vandals attacked Rome on both a military and a theological level. This fact is peculiarly important in view of the fact that the city of Rome at this time was becoming the seat of a powerful amalgam of both church and state.

## Verses 36-39

*"He will do as he pleases."* The formula, "he will do as he pleases," occurs three times in the chapter. This is the third occurrence. The first reference is to Greece, the second to Rome as a secular state, the third to Rome as an equally powerful amalgam of church and state. In this way the Rome of the Caesars and the Rome of the popes are simultaneously equated and distinguished.

Together vss. 29-35 and 36-39 lead up to the time of the end in vs. 40. There is more than one reason to say so.

*"The integrity of the section."* Verse 36 can't begin a new subsection within vss. 29-39. This is one consideration. The formula "do as he pleases" has the function of announcing a new power. This is a second consideration. These two considerations present what appears to be an exquisite conflict, but the conflict is resolved neatly if the two main parts of the section have the same period of time in view.

The relationship of vss. 29-35 and 36-39 is similar to that between vss. 16-22 and 23-28. In both cases one period of time is covered in two adjoining groups of verses. The presentation comes in layers. We will see one more example of this type of relationship below. It is a characteristic feature of the chapter. But let me add that in no case is any one item of information repeated.

*"One desired by women."* The reference to "one desired by women" has been interpreted in many ways. As a way out of the confusion I would suggest letting Scripture interpret Scripture. This is not a new principle, but it is a reliable one. One parallel passage that could be mentioned here is found in Isaiah: "In that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, 'We will eat our own food and provide our own clothes; only let us be called by your name. Take away our disgrace!'" (Isa 4:1).

The one I have primarily in mind, however, is this one from Haggai: "'I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the Lord Almighty" (Hag 2:7). The One desired by all nations, who would fill the second temple with glory – by His presence – was Jesus.

There are other passages where God's people are compared to a woman, and I suspect that I will be able to bring forward more Scriptural parallels for my position that those who argue for Tammuz, or some such application of the passage. [Examples]

On the strength of these parallels I submit that the "one desired by women" in Dan 11:37 is Christ. But once we have said so, what do we do with the rest of the passage? If the haughty king of vss. 36-39 is the papacy, how can the "one desired by women" be Jesus? And if it is, how can the rest of the passage represent the papacy? Doesn't the pope worship God? And of course the answer is, yes, he does. So what can the passage mean? (Smith)

Again the way out of this dilemma is to let Scripture interpret Scripture. The parallel in this case is with Eli. The story is told in 1 Sam 3 and 4. As we develop this parallel, let us notice what the passage says and what it does not say and be very clear in distinguishing the one from the other. What the passage says is:

<sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup> At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup> For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, <sup>[b]</sup> and he failed to restrain them. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.' " (1 Sam 3:11-14).

Did Eli worship God? Yes, of course. He led the nation in the worship of God. Did he honor God? No, he honored his sons more than the Lord. And so there is a difference between worship and honor. There is a question whether one can honor God without worshiping Him, but at this much is abundantly clear. One can worship God without honoring Him.

This is all that a papal application of the present passage implies. We are not saying that the pope in Rome is an atheist. That is not the case and we are not claiming that it is. We merely assert that, for the medieval popes, worshiping God did not prevent them from honoring themselves more. The sin being described here is one of pride, not of atheism.

*"The time of the end."* Verse 35 brings us to the time of the end and vs. 40 continues from that point on. This leaves no room for the events of vss. 36-39. The solution to this problem is to realize that there are no events in vss. 36-39. These middle verses discuss the attitudes and policies of the papacy at the time which accompany the events of vss. 29-35. This section reveals the Roman church's self concept during the high middle ages from God's point of view.

## Conclusion

## Conclusion