

Dan 12:1-4 in Relation to Dan 11:44-45

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"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people – everyone whose name is found written in the book – will be delivered. ² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴ But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge." (Dan 12:1-4, NIV)

Introduction

In this paper we discuss Dan 12:1-4. This passage contains two very different sets of material. Verses 1-3 form an appendix to the narrative of Dan 11 and are closely linked to what goes before. On the other hand, Dan 11:4 is not part of the narrative spanning Dan 11:2b-12:3, but it is not part of the conclusion in Dan 12:5-13 either. It is transitional in nature.

Daniel 12:1-3

The first clause of Dan 12:1, quoted above, should lead us to ask what time "that time" refers to and also who Michael is. Both of these questions have been discussed in earlier papers.

The question about Michael was discussed in a paper entitled, "Who Did Daniel See and Speak With in Dan 10?"¹ He spoke with the preexistent Christ. In that paper I was saying that Christ is the Archangel in the sense that He is the Commander over all the angels. The reason why He commands these mighty creatures is that He called them into existence. He is their Creator. Thus, in its fullest sense the term "archangel" (see 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 9) can apply to no one but Christ. Within canonical Scripture the term is used only in the New Testament. The nearest Hebrew equivalent to the Greek term *archaggelos* is *śar-haššābāʾ* "the Prince of the host" (Dan 8:11) or, equivalently, *śar-šēbāʾ-YHWH* "commander of the army of the Lord" (Josh 5:14) ("commander of the Lord's army" in vs. 15). Notice that the same Being who calls Himself "commander of the army of the Lord" in Josh 5:14 is also called "the Lord" (*YHWH*) a few verses later in Josh 6:2.² "Archangel" in the New Testament does not mean "angel"; it means *archon* (Ruler) over angels. The name associated with this title is always Michael.

The second question--about time--was discussed briefly in my paper entitled, "Toward a Typological Interpretation of Dan 11:40-45."³ What I was saying there was that Michael, or

Christ, delivers His people (at the beginning of chap. 12) when their need for deliverance is greatest (at the end of chap. 11). The two chapters overlap in time. This latter fact is the topic of the present paper.

Repetition in the Book of Daniel

Repetition is characteristic of the book of Daniel generally.⁴ In Dan 11, for example, whole sections deal with the same time period. See table 1.

Table 1
Historical Repetition Across Blocs
of Text in Dan 11

Period	First Bloc	Second Bloc
Babylon
Persia	Vss. 2-4	...
Greece	Vss. 5-15	...
Rome 1	Vss. 16-22	Vss. 23-28
Rome 2a	Vss. 29-35	Vss. 36-39
Southern challenge	Vs. 40a	...
Rome 2b	Vss. 40b-45	12:1-13

The same kind of overlapping or double treatment of a period that we find in Dan 11:16-22 / 23-28 and 29-35 / 36-39 is evident also in Dan 11:40-45 / 12:1-3.⁵ Notice that all three of these examples have to do with Rome and that each time the prophecy discusses Rome--in Dan 10-12 and also in Dan 2, 7, and 9--it does so twice.

In this context notice that Ellen White begins chap. 39 ("The Time of Trouble") of her book, *The Great Controversy*, by quoting Dan 12:1-3. Elsewhere I have argued that chap. 39 of *Great Controversy* corresponds to Dan 11:44b.⁶ Is there a conflict in associating Ellen White's chapter entitled "The Time of Trouble" with both passages? Not at all. Doing so merely illustrates the principle of repetition in Daniel. To describe the events of Dan 11:44b is to describe those of Dan 12:1-3. The two passages are substantially the same as regards their time of application. When Dan 12:1 says, "At that time Michael, . . . , will arise," the reference is to the timeframe of Dan 11:44-45. Thus, it is especially appropriate that Ellen White should use just the quotation she does.

I take Ellen White's use of Dan 12:1-3 at the beginning of *Great Controversy* chap. 39 as supporting evidence for the proposed overlap. The claim is not that she uses Dan 12:1-3, therefore the passages must be assumed to overlap. Instead I submit that her usage is especially appropriate and significant because Dan 11:44-45 and 12:1-3 can be shown to overlap using other evidence.

What do the Two Passages Say?

The outline of Dan 11:40-45 is largely determined by three facts: First, at the beginning of the section there is a period during which the king of the South is strong enough to challenge the king of the North (vs. 40a). Second, when the king of the North responds, he sets out from the North marching Southward. Contrary to all expectations, his treatment of Egypt is benign (vss. 40b-43). No one is hurt. The king merely appropriates Egypt's wealth to himself. And third, after achieving his original objective, the king responds to a much smaller challenge – behind him, from the people of God – and sets out from the South to retrace his steps, marching Northward. His treatment of Jerusalem, as the imagery of the passage would have it, is extremely severe (vss. 44-45).

The parallel with Dan 12:1-3 does not involve all of Dan 11:40-45 or the entire subsection labeled "Rome 2b" in table 1 (vss. 40b-45) but only that portion which has to do with the king's final attack on spiritual Jerusalem (vss. 44-45). See table 2.

Table 2
Comparison Dan 11:40-45 And 12:1-3

Period	First Bloc	Second Bloc
Southern challenge	Vs. 40a	...
Rome 2b (Southward)	Vss. 40b-43	...
Rome 2b (Northward)	Vss. 44-45	12:1-3

With this much as background, let us consider in more detail the correspondences between the four clauses of Dan 11:44-45 and the five of Dan 12:1-3. See table 3.

Table 3
Comparison of Dan 11:44-45 and 12:1-3

Dan 11		Dan 12	
Vs.	Topic	Vs.	Topic
44a	Reports come to the king	-	...
44b	The king sets out to destroy	1a	Michael stands to protect
45a	Royal tents established	1b	Time of trouble
45b	The king comes to his end	1c	God's people delivered
-	...	2	Resurrection
-	...	3	Saints glorified

The reports that alarm the king in the first clause of Dan 11:44 are the same as the messages stated initially in Rev 14:6-12 and forcefully repeated in Rev 18. The second and third messages are repeated; the first is not. For the second angel's message, see Rev 18:1-3. For the third, see vss. 4 and following. Here I wish to focus especially on vs. 4: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her

plagues; . . ." This is the loud cry of the third angel – repeated with immense power just before human probation closes.

When the king, enraged by what he has heard, sets out to destroy earth's final remnant who "keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (Rev 12:17),⁷ Michael stands up. Or rather, when Michael stands up at the end of the judgment, which was seated or began its session in Dan 7:9-10, the king is allowed for a short time to vent his anger. As the king establishes his royal tents around spiritual Jerusalem, the people of God go through the time of Jacob's trouble. During this time Michael is en route coming to their aid.⁸ His absence from the sanctuary defines the end of human probation, and allows the complete abandon with which His enemies pursue the remnant's destruction.

When Michael arrives, with all the angel's of heaven "following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean" (Rev 19:14), that is the second coming. It is also Armageddon. That is when earth's last king of the North "will come to his end, and no one will help him" (Dan 11:45). The living saints he had thought to annihilate are rescued, the sleeping saints of all ages are raised to life, and all are personally escorted to heaven where "they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years" (Rev 20:6). That's one side. Those who remain are "the lawless one" and his followers, which "the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming" (2 Thess 2:8).

Armageddon

In vss. 40-43 the last king of the North sets out to swallow up all who have opposed him (cf. Dan 7:7). He marches through all the countries traditionally serving as buffers between North and South. Then in vss. 44-45 he annexes the territory of the king of the South, as well all his allies. In taking over the kingdom of the South this outwardly religious power takes over the world. All peoples – with one small but significant exception – are gathered under the control of earth's last king of the North.

In this context notice that the main predicate in Rev 16:16 is not a verb which means "fight," but one which means "gather": "Then they gathered [*sunēgagen*] the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon." It is significant that the only verse in the Bible which uses the word "Armageddon" makes no mention of fighting, but only gathering, which on one interpretation is the opposite of fighting.

The kings who gather in the above manner way unite for the purpose of opposing the remnant, not each other. Having once rejected the law of God, it is a small additional step to reject all law whatever, so we can be sure that society will give every appearance of crumbling into anarchy under such leadership. The gathering of Dan 11:40b-43 and Rev 16:16 does not imply that those who come together will necessarily get along. But however this may be, in Dan 11:44-45 the North with its false religion and the South with its secularity are fully and finally joined. Any differences between opposing God in this way and opposing Him in that way no longer apply. The only distinction which remains is between those who obey God and those who do not, corresponding to the sheep and the goats in Christ's parable (see Matt 25:31-46).

To understand the battle of Armageddon in its biblical rather than popular context, we must understand the nature of the issues being contested. The first battle in the war between

"Michael" and "the dragon" (Rev 12:7), i.e., between Christ and Satan, is not named but we know from Rev 12 that it takes place in heaven and results in Satan being cast out into the earth. In Rev 16:16 the last battle in this same war is called "Armageddon," but it is not discussed there. The missing discussion comes later in Rev 19:11-21 and results in Satan being, first chained in the bottomless pit of a deserted and desolated earth for a thousand years, and ultimately being cast into the lake of fire (see Rev 20:10). The end of the war is related to its beginning and we must see the connection between them. We must study such passages as Rev 16:16 and 19:19 together or we will surely misunderstand them.

Daniel 12:4

Dan 12:4 occupies a role that is almost wholly unique within the prophecy. I say "almost" because there is one other passage that occupies a similar role. The other passage is Dan 11:1-2a, quoted below.

(. . . And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)
² "Now then, I tell you the truth: . . . (Dan 11:1-2a)

One could argue that this introductory statement begins in Dan 10:19. In any case, both passages (11:2a, 12:4) have the angel addressing Daniel personally with the word "you."

But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge. (Dan 12:4)

Throughout the body of Dan 11, here defined as Dan 11:2b-12:3, the angel is relating information to Daniel. But he addresses the prophet directly just before (11:1-2a) and just after (12:4) his main narrative begins and ends respectively. Together 11:1-2a and 12:4 form an inclusio around the narrative of Dan 11. The narrative itself is what comes between these two points. This is important information to have, because understanding the content of Dan 11 depends so heavily on understanding its form.

It is imperative that Dan 11:44-45 be studied together with 12:1-3 and with the passages from Rev 14 and 18 that we have discussed above. It is also imperative to understand the role of Dan 12:4, which together with 11:1-2a, show us where the prophecy begins and ends. Verses 1-3 are not separate from Dan 11:2b-45. Nor are they directly joined to Dan 12:5-13. These two facts will be seen to have extremely important implications both for our understanding of Dan 11 and for our understanding of Dan 12. Pursuing all of the reason for saying so goes beyond the scope of the present paper. For now suffice it to say that the real dividing line between Dan 11 and Dan 12 is Dan 12:4.

Conclusion

Dan 12:1-3 and 11:44-45 are inseparably linked in theme and content. In these two passages we see essentially the same sets of events from two different points of view. In Dan 11:44-45 we see earth's last events from a human perspective. God's remnant people are in immediate danger of losing their lives. In Dan 12:1-3 we see the same events from a divine perspective. Christ never acts pointlessly. He rescues His saints when they most need rescuing.

Earth's culminating battle cannot be joined until both parties to it are present. The one side consists of "the beast and the kings of the earth" (Rev 19:19). They are here already and can gather to oppose Christ in the person of His saints at any time (see Dan 11:44b/12:1a and 11:45a/12:1b), but they cannot fight the battle of Armageddon at any time. They must wait until the other army arrives. When the particular army in question arrives, that is the second coming (see Dan 11:45b/12:1c). The result of the encounter between all the forces of earth on the one hand, and all the forces of heaven on the other, is that "the lawless one" will be destroyed "with the splendor of his coming" (2 Thess 2:8). Those who are not destroyed by Christ's splendor, reflect it. The angel tells us that,

"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever." (Dan 12:3)

Note: All Scripture quotations in this paper, except when noted otherwise, are from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society.

¹*Historicism* No. 10/Apr 87, pp. 2-17. See also, "Michael," *Historicism* No. 6/Apr 86, pp. 39-48.

²See Hardy, "What Does the Hebrew Word *mal'āk* Mean?" *Historicism* No. 5/Jan 86, pp. 2-25.

³*Historicism* No. 22/Apr 89, pp. 2-97.

⁴There is more than one reason for such repetition. "As a concluding observation, we should not neglect the aesthetic side of this feature of chiasmic structure. Various commentators have observed that the type of writing present in Dan 4 and 5 is very repetitious. The dullness of the repetitions to the modern eye recedes in importance, however, when it is realized that these transparently repetitious passages actually form an integral part of the larger literary design of these two chapters. Thus, instead of contributing to boredom, these repetitions should enhance one's appreciation for this work as a carefully crafted piece. The narratives of the two chapters do indeed relate history, but they do so in an aesthetically artistic fashion" (William H. Shea, "Further Literary Structures in Daniel 2-7: An Analysis of Daniel 5, and the Broader Relationships Within Chapters 2-7," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 23 [1985]: 294).

⁵See Hardy, "Some Comments on Dan 11:36-39," *Historicism* No. 19/Jul 89, p. 7.

⁶See Hardy, "Typological Interpretation," pp. 53-56.

⁷There has always been a remnant, although it did not always have the present eschatological significance. See Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*, Andrews University Monographs: Studies in Religion, vol. 5 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1974), p. 402.

⁸"Then Jesus laid off his priestly garment and put on his kingly robe, and took his place on the cloud which carried him to the East, where it first appeared to the saints on earth--a small black cloud which was the sign of the Son of Man. While the cloud was passing from the Holiest to the East, which took a number of days, the synagogue of Satan worshipped at the saint's feet" (Ellen G. White, *Day Star*, March 14, 1846, p. 7; quoted in Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1951], p. 625). We could discuss what it means for the "synagogue of Satan" (see Rev 2:9; 3:9) to "worship at the saints' feet" ("saint's feet" in the printed source). But my point has to do with the amount of time that passes between the end of Christ's high priestly ministry in heaven and His second coming here to the earth. When He leaves there it takes "a number of days" for Him to arrive here. Into this brief period we must fit all of the plagues. In this sense also the last movements will be rapid ones.