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### Review of: Jacques B. Doukhan, Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study

Roy E. Gane

Andrews University, [gane@andrews.edu](mailto:gane@andrews.edu)

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**Review of Jacques Doukhan. *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019.**

**by Roy E. Gane**

*Daniel 11 Decoded* is the first book-length verse-by-verse commentary on Daniel 11 by any well-known Seventh-day Adventist scholar. This innovative reading of the challenging biblical chapter is remarkable in that it is the most radical of historicist interpretations. Doukhan earlier presented a sketch of this view in his *Daniel: The Vision of the End*,<sup>1</sup> but in *Daniel 11 Decoded*, he refines, further supports, and fleshes it out.

Following a brief overall introduction, the first five chapters outline Problems and Methods, Parallels of Structures, Significance of Daniel 8, North-South Symbolism, and The Literary Structure of Daniel 11. Chapter Six is much longer, consisting of the Verse-by-Verse Commentary. This commentary includes discussion of interpretative issues in the Hebrew text, Supporting Readings from history books that allow the reader to assess historical applications of the text, and Discussion of Interpretations, including brief critiques of Critical, Futurist, Classic Adventist, and Islamist (those who identify the King of the South in the latter half of the chapter as Islamic power) interpretations. Included at the end of the commentary is a helpful summary Sketch of Suggested, Predicted History in Daniel 11. Chapter Seven discusses Theology of Daniel 11 and Chapter Eight is an Excursus on Daniel 11 and Islam. A brief overall Conclusion is followed by a Bibliography, Scripture Index, and Subject Index that includes an index of authors cited.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques B. Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press: 1987; revised ed. 1989).

The book has a number of strong points. It is well written with clear language (very few typos), logically organized, exposes key issues, interacts with a lot of secondary scholarly literature, and makes many helpful points of critique regarding previous interpretations. Chapters 2 and 5 provide detailed discussion and outlines of literary structures. The textual commentary elucidates the meanings of many Hebrew words and expressions in light of their usage elsewhere in the Bible. Doukhan's stated approach of examining the biblical text before identifying historical fulfillments is manifestly correct. He provides plenty of convincing support, including through parallels with Daniel 8, for the view that the King of the North represents the papacy in the latter half of Daniel 11.

Doukhan implicitly invites critique of his interpretation.<sup>2</sup> So this reviewer accepts the invitation, having found exegetical problems, of which there is space here to identify only a few of the most prominent ones concerning the literary genre of Daniel 11, kings of the North and South, pagan and papal Rome, "The prince of the covenant," the Crusades, and conflict during "the time of the end."

**1. Literary Genre.** As reflected by the title of his book, Doukhan claims at the outset that Daniel 11 is "coded," using "a symbolic language."<sup>3</sup> However, the discourse unit consisting of 11:2-12:3 does not record a symbolic vision or allegory (as in Rev 11, referring to "Egypt" in v. 8); rather, it is the third angelic explanation (with elaboration) of the symbolic vision in Daniel 8:3-14, following the explanations in 8:17, 19-26 and 9:24-27. The language of these explanations is basically literal, containing some non-

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<sup>2</sup> Jacques Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019), 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

literal language, but not successions of symbols that would fail to explain what was going on. Bennie H. Reynolds III concurs. Based on detailed analysis, he observes:

Daniel 10-12 does not use symbolic ciphers to describe earthly or heavenly realities. Instead, the text employs explicit, realistic terminology. Some of the language might be described as esoteric, but opaque language is significantly different from symbolic, metaphorical, or allegorical language.<sup>4</sup>

As an example of Doukhan's approach, he interprets the marriage alliance between the kings of the North and South in 11:6 as "the union between the Church and faithless society (especially kings who converted to Christianity in order to establish their power) that characterized the rise of Christianity."<sup>5</sup> Support for such a metaphorical meaning of a marriage alliance is lacking elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (2 Chr. 18:1 is literal; cf. 2 Kgs. 8:18; 2 Chr. 21:6). Doukhan claims that there is a disagreement between Daniel 11:6 and historical sources regarding the marriage of Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II, to Antiochus II because "the biblical text notes that it is the king's daughter who takes the initiative."<sup>6</sup> However, the text simply says that "the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north."

Doukhan interprets "North" and "South" throughout Daniel 11, beginning with verse 5, as referring to "symbolic entities," rather than geographical directions.<sup>7</sup> He identifies them as "a religious and spiritual power, represented by Babylon (the King of the North), that replaces God, and a human, self-reliable, secular, political power,

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<sup>4</sup> Bennie H. Reynolds III, *Between Symbolism and Realism: The Use of Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Language in Ancient Jewish Apocalypses 333-63 B.C.E.*, *Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements* 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 225 (cf. 226-7).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 60; cf. Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 171-2.

represented by Egypt (the King of the South), that ignores and denies God.”<sup>8</sup> However, North, South, East, and West are literal directions even in the symbolic vision of Daniel 8 (vv. 4-5, 9), and literal directions make sense in Daniel 11, where “Persia” is Persia (v. 2), “Greece” is Greece (v. 2), and “Egypt” is Egypt (vv. 8, 42).

Just because kingdoms begin to be identified by their rulers as “King of the South” and “King of the North” in verse 5, rather than explicitly by name, as in verse 2—“Persia” and “Greece”—does not support that notion that the kings of the North and South are symbolic, rather than literal political entities.<sup>9</sup> For one thing, there is no need to identify these kings as Greek because they originate from the breakup of the empire of the “mighty king” Alexander the Great (vv. 3-4), which was Greek. Furthermore, verse 8 does explicitly identify the King of the South as Egypt, so his enemy, the King of the North, must have ruled the Greek kingdom that bordered on Egypt to the north, which was Seleucid Syria. There is no change of literary genre beginning at verse 5, as Doukhan claims.

One of Doukhan’s preferred methodological tools to support his spiritual readings is a form of what James Barr termed “illegitimate totality transfer”: “The error that arises, when the ‘meaning’ of a word (understood as the total series of relations in which it is used in the literature) is read into a particular case as its sense and implication there.”<sup>10</sup>

For example, Doukhan comments on “But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his [King of the South] place” in 11:7a:

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<sup>8</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 60.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>10</sup> James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961; repr. London: SCM, 1983), 218; cf. 222.

The only other biblical passage in which the Hebrew expression *netser shorsheyha*, “branch of her roots,” appears is in Isaiah’s messianic prophecy, which describes the wonder of Christ’s appearance: ‘a Branch shall grow out of his roots’ (Isa. 11:1)... Daniel’s use of the same language suggests that the prophecy refers to a messianic usurpation. This applies to the Church, as an emerging power that pretends to be Christ on earth.<sup>11</sup>

Here Doukhan imports/eisegetes the contextually conditioned messianic usage of the expression in Isaiah 11:1 into Daniel 11:7, where there is no hint of a messianic figure whose position is usurped.

Doukhan regards my article on Daniel 11<sup>12</sup> as inconsistent because it goes back and forth between spiritual and literal applications<sup>13</sup> However, I would suggest that he does not seem to have grasped some points that I demonstrated from the text of Daniel 11 regarding its literary genre:

First, although the chapter is basically literal, it contains some idioms and metaphors that can be recognized as such within their respective contexts.

Second, it is true that in light of salvation history, we can identify God’s loyal people following the death of Christ (v. 22) as Christians (vv. 32-35; 12:1), but Daniel 11 does not symbolically identify them as “Israel” or “Jews.” Just because they can be called spiritual “Israel” elsewhere in the Bible (e.g., Rev 7:4) does not mean that everything associated with them is necessarily symbolic. For one thing, they endure literal persecution “by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder” (Dan 11:33). It is true that spiritual “Israel” does not control the territory of “Israel” on earth, which has no covenant significance after the cross event. However, this does not mean that Daniel 11 cannot

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<sup>11</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 89.

<sup>12</sup> Roy E. Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation of Daniel 11:2-12:3,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27/1-2 (2016): 294-343.

<sup>13</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 266-7.

refer to the literal territory that belonged to ancient Israel as “the glorious land,” both before Christ (v. 16) and after Christ (v. 41), in contexts where human armies enter this land.

Third, a term that refers to a heavenly reality, such as God’s temple in heaven in Daniel 11:31 (cf. 8:11, 13-14), is not necessarily symbolic. Here “the temple” literally means “the temple” in heaven; it does not represent something else.

Fourth, some non-symbolic language is archaic, such as “with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships” (v. 40).

Fifth, in the latter half of Daniel 11 after Christ’s death in verse 22, “the King of the North” literally, not symbolically, represents the papacy, which is a religious-political church-state union. It has a King and it is in the northern part of the former Roman Empire. The fact that it wields spiritual authority does not mean that everything associated with it is spiritual. It has a physical geographical capital, and with its supporters, it has waged many physical wars (as Doukhan shows), as well as ideological wars. Therefore, “the King of the South” in the last half of Daniel 11 could also be a religious-political power, which would explain why it competes with “the King of the North” and why this competition involves physical warfare.

**2. Kings of the North and South.** Doukhan seems to regard any interpretation of Daniel 11 that includes Seleucids and Ptolemies as the kings of the North and South as inextricably bound to the preterist identification of the “contemptible person” as Antiochus IV Epiphanes in verses 21 and following to the end or almost the end of the chapter. It is true that Antiochus was a Seleucid ruler and that preterists date the authorship of Daniel 11 to an anonymous contemporary of his, thereby denying that the

chapter is predictive prophecy. However, it is also possible to see Ptolemies and Seleucids in the chapter without this dating or interpretation of verses 21 and following. There are plenty of compelling reasons why Antiochus cannot be the King of the North in Daniel 11. But both Daniel 8:8 and 11:4 (cf. 7:6) speak of a fourfold division of the Greek empire of Alexander the Great (cf. 8:21), of which Ptolemaic Egypt and Seleucid Syria were two of the four Hellenistic kingdoms. So they are already represented in the biblical text by this point and further textual elaboration concerning them in Daniel 11 is at least possible.

Doukhan attempts to skip the Ptolemies and Seleucids by jumping from the division of Alexander's empire in Daniel 11:4 to the rise of papal Rome at the beginning of verse 5. He does this by interpreting "others than these" at the end of verse 4 as pagan Rome.<sup>14</sup> Doukhan introduced this view in his *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, but it has gained no noticeable traction among scholars.<sup>15</sup> There he argued that because "these" is plural, it can only refer to "the four winds of heaven," and therefore "these" must come after the four Hellenistic kingdoms, referring to Rome.<sup>16</sup> However, the logical antecedent of these is Alexander's 'ah<sup>a</sup>rît, "end," which is singular in form but collective in meaning and in this kind of context refers to an individual's descendants (cf. Jer 31:17; Ps 109:13).

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 79-80, 233.

<sup>15</sup> Hotma Saor Parasian Silitonga did consider Doukhan's interpretation of Daniel 11 in *Daniel: The Vision of the End* in comparison with views of other historicists, but rejected it ("Continuity and Change in World Rulers: A Comparative Study and Evaluation of Seventh-Day Adventist Interpretations of Daniel 11" (PhD diss., Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, 2001), esp. 183-189; cf. 216-17, 269-70, 274-5, 282-3. For example, against Doukhan's assertion that Rome is implied in 11:4 as it is in 8:9 (Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, 4, 78-79), Silitonga argued that although the "little horn" appears to originate from the north in 8:9, this does not show that the King of the North in Dan 11 is the same as the "little horn" power throughout vv. 5-45 because "the successive kings of Dan 11:2-4 present the same Babelic/Luciferic character linked in Isa 14:12-14 to 'the sides of the north (רְפָצָה)'" (Silitonga, "Continuity and Change," 187; cff. 185-6, 188-9). Furthermore, it does not seem reasonable to assign only one phrase in 11:4 ("others besides these") to the long history of pagan Rome (ibid., 187).

<sup>16</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, 78-79.



Therefore, the idea is that Alexander's empire goes to others besides his children, namely, to the dynasties of the four kingdoms.

In *Daniel 11 Decoded*, Doukhan shifts his argument to reach his same conclusion: "The demonstrative 'these' refers to the kingdoms implied in the word *'akharito*, which are the kingdoms succeeding Alexander." Thus, "others than these" refers to the power following these Hellenistic kingdoms, that is, pagan Rome.<sup>17</sup> Doukhan supports this by pointing out that "in the book of Daniel, the word *'ah<sup>a</sup>rît* never refers to 'posterity' or direct 'descendants.'"<sup>18</sup>

However, in Daniel 11:4, the context is unique in the book in that it concerns the breakup of an individual's estate, where the natural sense is "descendants" as "heirs." Confirming this, the possessive pronominal suffix on *'ah<sup>a</sup>rîtô* (represented in this transliteration by "-ô") refers to his *'ah<sup>a</sup>rît*, i.e., what comes after Alexander that belongs to him, just as in 8:23 the pronominal suffix (plural "-ām") in *bə 'ah<sup>a</sup>řrît malkûtām*, "at the end of their royal dominion" (my translation) refers to the dominion that belongs to them, i.e., the four Hellenistic kingdoms. So *'ah<sup>a</sup>rîtô* in 11:4 does not refer to the dynastic kingdoms succeeding Alexander, which did not belong to him.

Hotma Silitonga has shown that Daniel 11:4 has a parallel structure in which the "others" besides Alexander's descendants to whom his empire went after his death are the four divisions of the Greek empire, rather than the Roman empire: "his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven" parallels "for his kingdom shall be uprooted and go to others besides these."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 80.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>19</sup> Silitonga, "Continuity and Change," 184, 187.

Doukhan’s close reading surprisingly misses the key indicator regarding the relationship between Daniel 11:4 and 5: Alexander’s Greek empire is divided “toward the four winds of heaven” (v. 4) which represent the four directions—North, South, East, West (cf. Zech 6:5-8), and “Then the king of the south shall become strong...” (Dan. 11:5). Obviously, the King of the South is the ruler of the Greek kingdom that is located in the South, which is Ptolemaic Egypt, as recognized by all (to my knowledge) scholars other than Doukhan.

Then the King of the North introduced in the next verse (v. 6) must be the ruler of another Greek kingdom, of which there are three possibilities: Antigonid Macedonia, Attalid Pergamon (or Pergamum), and Seleucid Syria. Historically, it was Seleucid Syria that occupied the territory to the north of the land of Israel and that engaged in ongoing rivalry and conflict with Ptolemaic Egypt, finally taking Palestine from Egypt, matching the contours of the text description in 11:6-16. Then Antiochus III the Great, the same Seleucid king who took Palestine in 198 B.C. (v. 16), gave his daughter, Cleopatra I, to Ptolemy V in a marriage alliance in 193 B.C. (v. 17), attempted to expand his kingdom through military campaigns into Asia Minor and Greece, but was defeated by a Roman commander in 190 B.C. (v. 18), returned to his homeland of Syria, and then met his demise in 187 B.C. (v. 19). The correspondence between the text profile and the combination of distinctive historical events in the same order during the career of Antiochus III is too close to ignore, as a number of scholars recognize.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> E.g., André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, transl. David Pellauer (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), 223-5; John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 378-81; Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 275-7; Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 341-46; Gane, “Methodology for Interpretation,” 304-5, 316-17; John Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., Word Biblical Commentary 30 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 533-6. Reynolds comments on Daniel 11: “The

In light of the factors mentioned here, many will likely find Doukhan's commentary on Daniel 11:5-19 (pp. 81-132) unpersuasive. Therefore, they will regard the fascinating historical accounts regarding "The Paganizing Church-Rise of Christianity," "The Rise of Papal Supremacy: Church and State," and the "Catholic Counter-Reformation" that he proposes as fulfillments of these verses to be off target.

**3. Pagan and Papal Rome.** As background for his interpretation of Daniel 11, Doukhan takes "out of one of them" in 8:9 to mean: out of one of the four animals of Daniel 7, namely, "the fourth animal of Daniel 7, which represents pagan Rome."<sup>21</sup> He proposes that because the "little horn" in Daniel 8 comes "out of one of them," i.e., pagan Rome, this horn must be the same as the "little horn" in Daniel 7, namely, papal Rome. Therefore, the expansion of the little horn in 8:9 "does not refer to a local, political, and/or military event...but has a spiritual and cosmic significance."<sup>22</sup> The problem is that there is no reference to the four animals of Daniel 7 in Daniel 8 and the previously symbolized powers are the four Greek kingdoms (8:8, 21-22), not pagan Rome. Doukhan's claim that the antecedent of "them" is in the previous chapter seems out of the realm of syntactic possibility.

Doukhan supports his interpretation by arguing that the phrase "toward the four winds of heaven" in 8:8 implies the presence of the fourth animal because this phrase parallels "the four winds of heaven" in 7:2, introducing the "four great beasts" (v. 3).

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history is surprising both in its detail and its accuracy. Much of it appears to be corroborated by other ancient and independent accounts of the same events" (*Between Symbolism and Realism*, 236).

<sup>21</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 39.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

Therefore, “the directions of the four horns, which refer to the rise of the four Hellenistic powers in 8:9, are reminiscent of the directions of the four beasts in Daniel 7:2.”<sup>23</sup>

But the usages of “the four winds of heaven” in these passages are different. In Daniel 7:2, the winds “were stirring up the great sea,” from which the beasts emerged. “The four winds” are not “directions of the four beasts,” as Doukhan asserts in order to make this instance close to that of 8:8. Thus, the presence of “the four winds” in 8:8 does not imply the presence of the four animals. In 8:9, the “little horn” (literally “horn from smallness,” implying growth) emerges at the end of the four Hellenistic kingdoms (cf. v. 23), so it must represent pagan Rome, not papal Rome. In fact, pagan republican and then imperial Rome did initially expand in horizontal directions from its homeland in Italy (cf. horizontal expansions of the ram and goat from their homelands in 8:4-5) toward the literal South and East and toward the land of Israel, as predicted in 8:9. Then papal Rome went vertical as a novel religious-political power in an attempt to challenge God (vv. 10-12).

Use of one symbol—the “little horn”—for both the pagan and papal phases of Rome in Daniel 8 reflects the historical continuity between them. The fact that this usage differs from that in Daniel 7, where the “little horn” only represents the papal phase because it grows on the head of the fourth animal that represents pagan Rome, is not a problem because apocalyptic symbols and their referents can vary in different contexts. For example, in Daniel 7:6 a leopard-like composite animal represents Greece, the third kingdom after Babylon (cf. 2:37-38; 8:21), but a leopard-like composite animal in Rev 13:1-2 represents the papacy (cf. vv. 3-10; compare the “little horn” in Dan 7:21, 25).

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 39.

Doukhan uses his view of Daniel 8 to support his claim that the parallel chapter 11 moves directly to the period of the emergence of the Roman Catholic Church, represented as the King of the North, in 11:5,<sup>24</sup> where the King of the South is the contemporary “political power of pagan Rome.”<sup>25</sup> Even if Doukhan were correct about 8:9, this literary structural factor should not be a determining factor in Daniel 11, where verses 5 and following do not describe a great new power that radically expands and supersedes the Hellenistic kingdoms, but military conflicts between two competing Hellenistic kingdoms that are much weaker and less successful.

In support of his spiritual approach, Doukhan says that the parallel between 11:5, where the King of the South dominates the King of the North, and verse 40, where the King of the South attacks the King of the North, “confirms the interpretation that these two texts concern the same entity...represented by the King of the North (the Roman Church), which is implied before being dominated/attacked by the King of the South (Dan. 11:5a).”<sup>26</sup> Even if this reading of verse 5<sup>27</sup> were correct (which I am sure it is not), a literary parallel like this does not by itself show that two passages concern the same entity because history can repeat itself with analogous events.

**4. “The Prince of the Covenant.”** Doukhan’s interpretation raises a problem with Daniel 11:22b, which predicts the death of the “prince of the covenant,” i.e., the Messiah. Jesus died under pagan Rome, not papal Rome, which Doukhan has already introduced in verse 5. To solve this anachronism, Doukhan interprets verse 22 as referring to Christian victims of persecution by the papacy: “Jesus Christ is, again, being

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 46-51.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 79-80.

crucified in the martyrdom of His people.”<sup>28</sup> However, those that are swept away and broken by the King of the North in 22a are not Christian martyrs, but “armies,”<sup>29</sup> referring to military forces, as in verse 15 (cf. Ezek 30:22, 24-25). It would be strange for Daniel 11 to only indirectly mention the death of Christ, especially at the center of the chapter (the apex of Doukhan’s chiasm), when this event features in the previous much shorter explanation in 9:26.

**5. The Crusades.** Doukhan opposes the “Islamist” view that sees 11:25-30 as fulfilled by the papal (King of the North) initiated Crusades against Islamic powers (King of the South) that had taken over the southern portion of what had been the Roman empire.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, he sees the Crusades in verse 10b<sup>31</sup> before the prediction of Christ’s death in verse 22. If the Crusades can be in Daniel 11, why would they not be where they belong—after verse 22? Also, why couldn’t the ongoing King of the South nemesis of the papacy, including in verses 40-43, be religious-political Islamic power, which fought the Crusades against the armies of Christendom?<sup>32</sup>

**6. Conflict During “The Time of the End.”** Doukhan views the attack by the King of the South against the King of the North in Daniel 11:40 as referring “historically to the mortal blow against the Church by Napoleon in A.D. 1798, followed by the Church-State treaty (Concordat) he signed with the pope” and “to the political attack against the Church, when, in A.D. 1870, the emerging nation of Italy took away the Papal

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 171.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 152-3.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 102-3.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the fifth and sixth “trumpets” in Rev 9, where traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation has seen attacks by Islamic powers: *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1957) 7:791-6; Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950 [orig. 1888]), 334-5.

States.”<sup>33</sup> The church was also spiritually assaulted during the mid-nineteenth century by “the powerful currents of secular thought.”<sup>34</sup>

For Doukhan, the response by the King of the North to this attack in the same verse (11:40) “applies historically to the Church’s recovery after the blow it had received from the French Revolution and Napoleon, which John identifies as the healing of the wound of the beast (Rev. 13:3).”<sup>35</sup> This recovery occurred on the political level when Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty (1929) and on the spiritual level when the “doctrinal position of the Church was strengthened and the Catholic hierarchies were reestablished throughout Europe” and at the first Vatican Council (1869-1870), when “the dogma of the infallibility of the pope was declared.”<sup>36</sup>

The language of Daniel 11:40 rules out this interpretation. According to Doukhan, the King of the South decisively defeats the King of the North so that it takes more than a century for him to recover, and even then, he does not really politically retaliate against the King of the South. However, the text says that the King of the South provokes and initiates mutual combat (reciprocal *hithpael* of the root *n-g-ḥ* + preposition ‘*im*, “with”), as in the NJPS translation: “the king of the south will lock horns with him.”<sup>37</sup> Retaliation by the King of the North is swift and overwhelming, so that he quickly conquers the territories of the King of the South (vv. 40-43; except for “Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites” in v. 41). Nothing like this has happened in the history of the

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<sup>33</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 202.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-3.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. and ed. under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1994-1999) 2:667: “hitp: impf. הִתְּנַחֵם: to join in combat with (עִם), to wage war Da 11:40.”

papacy thus far since the beginning of the “time of the end” in 1798-1844, so it is clear that we have not seen the fulfillment of the end-time events predicted in Daniel 11:40-43.

To summarize, Doukhan’s *Daniel 11 Decoded* has some strong points and is thought-provoking. However, informed readers will find serious problems with his exegetical methodology and with various levels of his interpretation. Nevertheless, Doukhan does us a service by drawing attention to this remarkably detailed and relevant prophetic chapter, which calls for further research in pursuit of solid understanding.