

Dear Dr Goldstein,

On 8 November 2004, I sent a long email to Dr Gerhard Pfandl regarding his notoriously flawed presentation of the book of Daniel in the fourth Sabbath School Quarterly of 2004. Since you were the editor of those lessons, I also sent you a copy. The third original recipient of my email was Jan Paulsen, the President of the General Conference. As perhaps you remember, my email contained a lot of questions. None of you cared to answer, which may be just as well, considering you're all very active people with busy schedules. In any case, as you probably know, about four months after you had received my email, it was uploaded to a web site so that the public in general might become aware of these issues and the perhaps not-too-surprising silence from the SDA leadership.

In any case, perhaps the current 3rd Quarterly of 2006, *The Gospel, 1844, and Judgment*, can be considered as being some sort of a response to my requests for clarification, or perhaps to many other people's requests. Therefore, as you can imagine, I've read the teachers' edition of this recent booklet of yours with a lot of interest and attention, just in case it provided some worthy insight that went beyond your presentation in books like *1844 Made Simple* and *Graffiti in the Holy of Holies*. As was perhaps to be expected, this new Quarterly is entirely consistent with previous productions of yours, and, unfortunately, I'm not saying this as a compliment. Allow me to elaborate on what I perceive as weaknesses in your presentation. Naturally, the purpose of my observations is to help you and others to wake up to the *serious* difficulties stemming from the official SDA teaching regarding the relevance of 1844 and some celestial work deemed to have begun on 22 October that year. Considering you yourself invite dialogue with dissenters at least twice in these lessons, perhaps this letter could be a prime opportunity for you to put that into practice.

Before we start, though, let me say that your handling of the subject of the 'investigative judgment,' which you, along with some other modern SDA apologists, dub as the 'pre-Advent judgment,' deserves particular attention. After reading your material, the informed reader might rightfully wonder whether you are actually defending the standard form of that peculiar teaching. After all, the SDA-authorized presentation of the notion of an investigative judgment made by Ellen G. White in *The Great Controversy*, p. 480 states:

In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. "Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?" 1 Peter 4:17.

Yet, not only is such a salient notion absent from your presentation, but your material, though claiming to defend SDA doctrine, is actually inconsistent with standard Adventist beliefs. For instance, contrary to the obvious teachings of Ellen White, your first lesson intimates that the primary defendant in the pre-Advent judgment is none other than God himself! Not that you've invented such a notion; I know someone else came up with that idea, but, to her credit, Ellen G. White cannot be held fully accountable for such a monstrosity, even if she planted some of the seeds that gave growth to such an ugly weed. Then again, your attested tendency to mix together many Bible verses that mention various aspects of God's *different* judgments throughout history and at the *eschaton* hardly helps to buttress the SDA notion of an investigative judgment that is *solely* for Christ's professed followers, not for the ungodly. Since you fail to address such basic tenets of SDA doctrine, while at the same time pretending to defend it, your careful readers are forced to take your statements with a pinch of salt and address both the standard doctrine that you claim to defend and your version of it for the misinformed.

Now, I know that this quarterly of yours has raised considerable interest in Christian circles

beyond the confines of Seventh-day Adventism, and I have noticed several worthy criticisms of your material in various web sites. Let me assure you, however, that my analysis of this material of yours has not been influenced by such web sites or specific criticisms, as I don't read them until I have studied each particular lesson and critiqued it on my own. Differently from what I did with Dr. Pfandl's email, I don't have enough time to study the whole quarterly in one go now, so I have to content myself with studying one lesson every Sabbath afternoon and typing my critique afterwards. Actually, most of the material that follows was written weeks before this paragraph. In any case, I'm sure you'll understand that some coincidence in arguments between the above-referred critiques on various web sites and my own is inevitable. It's undoubtedly one of the aspects of the fulfilment of Christ's promise that the Holy Spirit would lead his children to all truth, so it is very understandable that Christians living in different countries, with different mother tongues and diverse cultures will reach the same conclusions when they study the Bible independently from one another. Please, take my criticism as coming not from an enemy of the SDA Church, but rather from a fellow Seventh-day Adventist who is very serious about abiding by Bible truth, irrespective of what tradition says, and, therefore, one that doesn't want to be led up the garden path.

As was the case in my email to Dr. Pfandl, I'll also be presenting questions about your presentation this time, since I consider that asking a good question is probably the most significant step to finding a valid answer and avoiding fallacious reasoning. However, in order not to confuse would-be readers, I'll try to keep the number of questions to a bare minimum, so this time I'll contribute some pertinent remarks so that others besides yourself will have a clear-cut picture of the true nature of this quarter's seeming ploy, instead of forcing them to exert themselves probing the depths of what some readers might consider the doublespeak they've been so craftily subjected to by masters of cover-up.

In order to make reading easier, and since I'll be quoting you extensively, [a different typeface and colour](#) will be employed for your words and the words of other contributors to the teachers' edition of the quarterly. So, here are my questions and observations for you and—in a few weeks' time—other would-be readers.

Questions and observations regarding your introduction

1. Of course, there's nothing wrong in your observation that 1844 is unique to Seventh-day Adventism, since the purported validity of the doctrines revolving around that date — particularly the so-called 'investigative judgment' (recently dubbed the 'pre-Advent judgment')— is not shared by other people you recognise as Christians. However, I'm at a loss with your surprising statement that ['It's precisely because no one else teaches this judgment that we have been raised to do so.'](#) Other religious bodies, such as the Mormons, also teach some doctrines that are peculiar only to themselves. Have they also been raised to teach such peculiar, wrong doctrines? By whom have they been raised to teach such doctrines? God? The devil? Themselves? Shouldn't the Bible, not subjective intuition, be the *only* criterion in determining what is to be taught theologically?
2. In your introduction, and throughout the quarter, you often seem to equate the unqualified noun *judgment* —which presents a biblical concept taught by Jesus Christ himself and that no Christian would dare to doubt— with the SDA notion of an investigation going on in heaven right now —in the absence of those being investigated,— which is a concept rejected by most Christians who have come across it. When you write that ['judgment without the gospel is like law without grace'](#) and many similar statements, aren't you, in fact, referring to the former, biblical concept of judgment, the one no Christian questions, and not to the latter, SDA concept of an 'investigative judgment' almost universally

rejected? If so, shouldn't *all* rhetoric derived from the orthodox concept of a final judgment be ignored when endeavouring to uphold the SDA notion of an investigative judgment? Since Christians do not reject the reality of the final judgment, but most Christians and theologians (some of the latter being SDAs themselves!) do emphatically reject this notion, the only logical procedure for a Seventh-day Adventist theologian wishing to defend this theory of an investigative judgment ought to be to *biblically* prove that:

- a. the Bible contains an indication that the hour of judgment is *not* one of those 'times or dates the Father has set by his own authority' (Acts 1:7);
- b. the Bible contains somewhere an indication that God, for unknown purposes, would reveal the date of commencement of the judgment to some mortals;
- c. the divinely-revealed date for the commencement of those celestial proceedings is 22 October 1844 at some unspecified time of the day along some unknown meridian;
- d. the proceedings would consist in merely investigating those who have ever professed faith in Jesus Christ, and not the rest of mankind;
- e. the whole judgment is *in absentia*;
- f. for uncountable millions it is a *posthumous* process.
- g. the proceedings themselves have not been communicated to millions of the living;
- h. evil continues to be done throughout the world as this autistic judgment is going on.

The paramount question at this juncture is, To what extent have your musings this quarter succeeded in showing *all* of the above notions *using the Bible alone*, not illustrations and syllogisms?

3. You state that ['Perhaps the clearest link between the gospel and judgment is the first angel's message: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach... Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come" \(Rev. 14:6, 7\).'](#) You seem to be saying that the angelic warning about God's κρίσις (judgment) is one of the most essential components of 'the everlasting gospel' that the angel had 'to preach'. However, aren't there other even more relevant biblical passages that present the *real* connection between the Gospel and judgment? For instance:
 - a. 'Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment [κρίσις] than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment [κρίσις] than for you.'" (Matt. 11:20-24; cf. Luke 10:12-15).
 - b. 'Whoever believes in him is not condemned [this is a form of the verb κρίνω, a cognate of the noun κρίσις], but whoever does not believe stands condemned [κρίνω] already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son' (John 3:18).
 - c. 'I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned [κρίνω]; he has crossed over from death to life' (John 5:24).
 - d. 'Therefore, there is now no condemnation [κατάκριμα, another cognate of κρίσις] for

those who are in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8:1). This passage happens to be quoted in your introduction.

In other words, doesn't the Bible teach that judgment is the inevitable result of the *rejection* of the Gospel? On the other hand, isn't the very essence of the Gospel the fact that Jesus' life, death and resurrection have forever set us free from the condemnation of sin? From the analysis of the previous texts, wouldn't it be foolish to consider that judgment is so basic a component of the Gospel that a church was raised to preach such a concept?

4. You state that the Quarterly consists of five parts:
 - a. 'First, we'll let Scripture fill in the background for the judgment and the whole plan of salvation.' There's nothing wrong with that, of course. However, the attentive reader of your material would be wise to suspend judgment (no pun intended) until the second part is completed regarding your success to establish the SDA notion of an investigative judgment on the Scriptural data regarding God's judgments and the final judgment.
 - b. 'Next, in the bulk of the quarter, we'll establish the biblical basis for the 1844 judgment, seeing for ourselves just what a solid basis we have for this teaching, rooted in the Cross.' Obviously, this is the crux of the matter. Your thesis, as well as your hope that it will help ground someone in the belief, or reinforce the knowledge of those who already know these things in depth, stands or falls with the evidence to be presented.
 - c. 'We'll then look at some questions the teaching faces, using them as a vehicle to better grasp the biblical basis for the pre-Advent judgment.' Perhaps one of the reasons why the so-called 'investigative judgment' has been dubbed 'the pre-Advent judgment' is because this latter expression sounds orthodox enough so that few dissenting voices will air their opposition. Of course there is 'biblical basis for' a 'pre-Advent judgment'! But that is not the point! The point is, Is there biblical basis for *the* SDA 'investigative judgment'? That's the basic question that 'the teaching faces.'
 - d. 'We'll look at the judgment in the context of the gospel, of Christ's death in our behalf, with the understanding that because of His death we can have assurance in the judgment.' This is great, of course, but, once again, the onus is on you to show that the Bible passages that all Christians acknowledge as being related to the judgment have some connection with the SDA 'investigative judgment' that most Christians reject.
 - e. 'Finally, we seek to answer such questions as: What does a judgment whose beginning was dated in the nineteenth century mean for us in the twenty-first? What does it tell us about ourselves, our church, and, most important, about the God who promises to return and take us home?' Interesting questions, no doubt about it, whether that 19th-century judgment is a reality or sheer myth.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 1, "Principalities and Powers"

1. Although this is quite collateral, on Sunday's section you assert that 'Scripture mentions inhabitants from other worlds.' As if you'd suddenly realised that Scripture nowhere mentions other inhabited worlds, as such, you rephrase your sentence as being equivalent to 'Scripture mentions... the existence of intelligent entities, not of earthly origin.' I am afraid that is not quite the same. It is not a matter of biblical revelation that angels inhabit 'worlds' or planets. Just as you say, the Bible *does* speak of heavenly 'intelligent

- entities, not of earthly origin,' but I am afraid they cannot possibly be detected using the telescopes and radio telescopes you allude to in your presentation.
2. Having successfully established, by means of a few biblical passages that mention angels, the existence of non-terrestrial intelligent beings, you go on to analyse, on Monday's section, the famous passage of Rev. 12:7-13. It is really a pity that the broader context is lost by beginning your study in verse 7. In John's visionary narrative, the episode of the war in heaven follows immediately the flight of the woman 'into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days' (verse 6). Taking this interesting fact into account, several questions arise. Should context be considered in this passage as a clue as to when the war in heaven took place, or should the interpreter's ingenuity take the day? If, as seems logical, context should be paid attention to, and considering that you later seem to uphold the view that the 1,260 days are actually over one millennium that began in the early Middle Ages and ended at the time of Napoleon, when exactly did the war in heaven take place? In the sixth century of our era? At the time of Waterloo? Earlier on, John the revelator speaks of the time when the woman's male child 'was snatched up to God and to his throne' (verse 5), a phrase thought by many to refer to Christ's ascension. Why would you not agree that the war in heaven took place roughly at the time of crucifixion? Considering passages like 'Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out' (John 12:31), or even 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven' (John 10:18), is there any *biblical* proof at all that the war in heaven took place before Adam's fall, or even earlier than Christ's birth? On Tuesday's section you go to the passage of Gen. 3:1-7 in an attempt to establish the desired temporal link between Rev. 12 and Adam's fall, but the whole thing is a mirage, since you've failed to prove that the tempting serpent had been previously engaged in some kind of celestial warfare. Besides, we have the very interesting wording of Rev. 12:13, 'When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.' Surely, if he had actually been hurled to the earth back in the days of Creation, his belated reaction of pursuing the woman several millennia later can only be explained by some neurological condition resulting from severe amnesia-producing, coma-inducing shock!
 3. In the introduction and elsewhere in this lesson you make repeated references to a '[great controversy between Christ and Satan](#)' for which, sadly, you provide no biblical reference. You very successfully show that Satan is called 'the accuser of our brethren... which accused them before our God day and night' (Rev. 12:10). Of course, that would be an excellent proof-text for the concept of a 'great controversy between *man* and Satan,' but for you to prove the concept of a controversy between *Christ* and Satan, you should probably provide some biblical text presenting Satan as an accuser of Christ or God himself or as attacking God. Is there such a text?
 4. On Wednesday's section, you state that '[sin didn't begin here; it began somewhere else in the universe](#),' and the proof-texts you provide are, apart from the previously mentioned Rev. 12:7, the OT passages of Isa. 14:12 and Ezek. 28:15. To what extent can it be said that passages explicitly mentioning evil *human* rulers of Babylon and Tyre are an indication that sin began '[somewhere else in the universe](#)'?
 5. On Thursday's section you tackle the issue of theodicy, which you say means '[the justification of God](#).' You preface this section quoting Rom. 3:25, 26, a passage that states God presented Christ 'as a sacrifice of atonement... He did this to demonstrate [actually, "in demonstration of", or "as a token of", a form of the noun ἔνδειξις, from which the word *index* derives] his justice [a form of the noun δικαιοσύνη]...' Actually, the word

theodicy comes from two Greek words: θεός, ‘God’, and δίκη (‘justice,’ ‘punishment’ or ‘penalty’) a cognate of δικαιοσύνη. It is a *human* intellectual endeavour that, according to my dictionary, means ‘the vindication of divine goodness and providence in view of the existence of evil.’ This ‘vindication’ is effected by believers in ‘divine goodness and providence,’ not necessarily by God himself, and, quite certainly, it is done for their own benefit and for that of unbelievers, not for some would-be extraterrestrial accuser of God. You further compound your argument by referring to such passages as:

- a. ‘Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge’ (Psa. 51:4). Actually, this text does not show God has to vindicate himself at all. It only shows that man’s wickedness contrasts with God’s justice.
- b. ‘What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God’s faithfulness? Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: “So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge”’ (Rom. 3:3f). This passage, in its context, means that even if some Jews failed to have faith in Jesus, they were not the standard of truth — God was!
- c. ‘After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her”’ (Rev. 19:1f). This does not mean that before the harlot’s judgment anyone among that great multitude in heaven had any doubts about God’s justice.
- d. ‘His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms’ (Eph. 3:10). What has been translated as ‘heavenly realms’ is the plural form of the adjective ἐπουράνιος. It is tempting to assume that Paul is referring to angels of some sort. However, in the very same epistle he remarks that ‘... the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ’ (1:3). ‘And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus’ (2:6). Now, since it is stated that we are seated ἐπουράνιους, yet, we have never left this planet, would it be wrong to surmise that those ‘rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms’ may share the same earthly condition as Christians?
- e. Although earlier in the lesson, you also refer to 1 Cor. 4:9, a passage that is actually a fine example of apostolic humour: ‘For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men.’ Paul’s reference to the arena of amphitheatres and his earlier reference to an investigation by a human court regarding administrative matters (verses 1-3) are hardly the setting for a discussion on theodicy!
- f. Lastly, in the teachers’ additional material you mention 1 Pet. 1:12, another usual proof-text for the Great Controversy motif. In its context, it says, ‘Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from

heaven. Even angels long to look into these things' (1 Pet. 1:10-12). Once again, this passage proves too much to be of much use to Great Controversy buffs. If just because angels are interested in the progress of the gospel we are to conclude that God needs to be justified in their sight, he would also need to be justified in the sight of the prophets, who were quite terrestrial!

It is a pity that you seem to have overlooked very pertinent texts regarding that purported need of God to justify himself before some intelligence. Here are a few of them:

- 'Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "He has no hands"? Woe to him who says to his father, "What have you begotten?" or to his mother, "What have you brought to birth?" This is what the LORD says—the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker: Concerning things to come, do you question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands? It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshalled their starry hosts' (Isa. 45:9-12). Isaiah taught that God has no need to explain his actions to anyone.
 - 'At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes towards heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honoured and glorified him who lives for ever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. **He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No-one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"**' (Dan. 4:34f). Clearly, even Nebuchadnezzar knew that God is under no indictment. That's what a sane person would easily understand. Insane people can think otherwise, of course.
 - 'Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. **And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"**' (Luke 18:1-8). According to what Jesus taught, God's justice is taken for granted. There's no room for discussion or explanation. Period.
6. You are not far from the truth in one of the statements you make on Tuesday's section. In your words, ['if we were perfect, what would Satan have to accuse us of?'](#) Absolutely right. But then again, God is perfect, is he not? Why on earth would Satan or any other intelligent being accuse him of anything? Only a foolish human would think of doing such a thing, but God has absolutely no need to explain his ways to fools.
 7. There's a further little thing in Tuesday's section that deserves some comment. You quote the famous passage of Zec. 3:1-4, which is very illustrative of the accusing role Satan has in OT theology. In the NT we have this fascinating difference 'Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us' (Rom. 8:33f). How come you didn't mention this well-known passage?

8. At long last, your presentation in Thursday's section reveals the reason for such misguided insistence on the Great Controversy motif and theodicy: 'The whole idea of the great controversy and the ultimate vindication of God and His ways forms a wonderful background to the plan of salvation.' Yes, perhaps it could be a wonderful idea for a novel, or an epic narrative, like Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The problem here is that we aren't dealing with merely human literature, but with God's revelation about himself in the Bible. If God has not revealed the concept of a great controversy *anywhere* in the Bible, who is to say there is one? For instance, where in the Bible do we find Satan's alleged hatred for the law? How about one single verse? You also say that '[t]he concept of theodicy... helps us understand the background for the pre-Advent judgment; that is, it helps us understand why God even has the judgment.' So, what you are saying is that these non-biblical concepts are a convenient foundation to further the notion of the investigative judgment because, in a most curious twist of events, SDA theologians want to have God himself as the defendant in that judgment!
9. Thursday's section ends with these confident words: 'In short, we are not alone in the universe; other beings exist, and it's before these other "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Eph. 3:10) that issues in the great controversy will be resolved in a way so that, as the psalmist said of God: "You are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge" (Ps. 51:4, NIV).' I'm afraid that, as the foregoing analysis shows, your summary is entirely unwarranted and constitutes a *serious* distortion of Bible truth.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 2, "Judgment Must Begin"

1. Your introductory remark that we should 'just let the Bible speak for itself on this important topic' is highly commendable.
2. In your introduction and on Sunday's section you very successfully establish that acceptance of the gospel means avoiding a negative verdict in God's judgment. That is excellent, but then again, perhaps nobody had denied that basic Christian teaching to begin with. In any case, your insistence that '[b]y its very definition, the gospel includes judgment' is contradictory with what has preceded it. The gospel is the announcement that our deserved penalty has already been paid by Someone else, so the Christian needn't fear God's judgment on impenitent sinners.
3. In your effort to defend the validity of the concept of divine judgment, something that, as far as I know, nobody had denied to begin with, you have put together an impressive number of Bible passages. Now, since the particular judgment that this quarterly claims to be focussing on is what has been dubbed as the pre-Advent judgment, or, more traditionally, the investigative judgment, I wonder if you would be willing to parade the earlier quotation from *The Great Controversy*, p. 480.

Here, then, are your proof-texts, with pertinent comments:

- a. '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. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan 12:1f). This hardly qualifies for a general resurrection of the righteous. There's no reason in this passage to assume that those multitudes sleeping in the dust had been dead (cf. *Psa.* 113:7), and those written in the book might well be living citizens, like in *Isa.* 4:3f.

- b. 'But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matt. 8:12). This passage is in the context of the healing of a centurion's servant or child. Jesus' words refer to the fact that God's grace is open to everyone, irrespective of their national origin. Some Jews, because of their rejection of God's Son, were thrown outside. This has nothing to do with an investigative judgment that purportedly started centuries later.
- c. 'Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet." But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, ill-treated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find." So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. "Friend," he asked, "how did you get in here without wedding clothes?" The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, "Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth'" (Matt 22:1-13). A theology professor once taught me that doing theology out of parables is a dangerous business. Let's notice a few details that defy classification into the SDA lifestyle and mindset. First of all, it does not seem vegetarianism was of any concern for the king and his guests. Secondly, not only did the first people who had been invited to the wedding banquet decline the invitation, but they also became murderers and were executed by order of the king. The investigation of the wedding clothes takes place *after* the murderers are executed, not before, so this has nothing to do with an investigation that started in the 19th century.
- d. 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left... Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life' (Matt. 25:31-33, 46). Just two comments. The first one is that the text itself says that the separation between righteous and evil people will take place '[w]hen the Son of Man comes in his glory,' not at some 19th century investigation. Secondly, that separation is simultaneous, that is, the text does not say that the righteous receive eternal life considerably earlier than the penalty of eternal punishment is imposed on the unrighteous.
- e. 'Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son' (John 3:18). As the verbal tense clearly implies, this has been going on ever since the gospel began to be preached about two millennia ago. There's nothing here that suggests an investigative judgment, or, if there is, that judgment began in the days of the apostles.
- f. 'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive

- what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad' (2 Cor. 5:10). This text does not convey the notion that one person's appearance before the judgment seat of Christ is *in absentia*. Neither does it imply that what is due to that person is to be received years or centuries after the presentation of his or her case before God's tribunal. Or that many cases are scheduled for a later trial.
- g. 'This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares' (Rom. 2:16). This isolated verse quoted by you should be read in its context. If, as in the NIV translation, verses 14-15, dealing with righteous Gentiles, are parenthetical, then the true context of verse 16 is made up by 12f: 'All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.' So, the full sentence is that those who do not obey Christ's law, whether Gentiles or not, will perish, but those who abide by it will be declared righteous on the day when God will judge men's secrets. There doesn't seem to be room here for different court sessions or for secret verdicts.
 - h. Although you content yourself with verse 9 when quoting 2 Thessalonians 1, allow me to quote it together with its context: 'Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marvelled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you' (2 Thes. 1:4-10). There are two noteworthy things here that deserve our immediate attention. The first one is that, according to Paul, God's judgment was an ongoing process that had already begun, the righteousness of which was evident. Secondly, the punishment of everlasting destruction for those who do not obey the gospel would take place on the day Jesus comes to be glorified in his holy people, an obvious reference to the parousia. No indication of a separate time of retribution and investigation for each group.
4. Tuesday's section addresses the question of whether believers covered by Jesus' justice must face trial or not. To prove such a contention, you use the following texts.
 - a. 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"' (Matt. 7:21-23). This passage fails to prove that Christians will face trial, as it speaks of *false* Christians. Perhaps you should have quoted the fuller account in Matt. 25:31ff, which you had used before while omitting precisely verses 34-40, which happen to be antithetic to the ones you mention in Tuesday's section: 'Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was

thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?” The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” The persons involved in this process are not presented as being involved in a trial. They just look surprised to receive a reward they didn’t think they deserved.

- b. ‘You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat’ (Rom. 14:10). Is this not the same as saying ‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged’ (Luke 6:37; cf. Matt. 7:1)? Should we take the ‘you will not be judged part’ literally, Dr Goldstein?
 - c. ‘For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people”’ (Heb. 10:30). The author of Hebrews is quoting Deut. 32:35f in this passage. As the context of the Song of Moses shows in Deuteronomy, inspiration is speaking of idol-worshippers, ‘a nation without sense’ (verse 28) and of the calamities that would befall them. Let’s read in full, by way of contrast, the two verses quoted in Hebrews: “‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them.’” The LORD will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone and no-one is left, slave or free.’ So, what this text is saying is that God will ‘judge’ his people by extending his compassion on them and taking revenge for them from their enemies! How does this compare with a 19th century investigative judgment?
 - d. ‘For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?’ (1 Pet. 4:17). Does this prove an investigative judgment solely for ‘the family of God’? Why not read it in its context? Speaking to first-century believers, Peter said, ‘However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?’ So, Peter is speaking of the difficulties that early Christians were facing on earth. That ‘judgment’ of theirs had *already* begun! What does that have to do with an 1844 investigative judgment?
5. Wednesday’s section adds a few more verses to Tuesday’s list.
- a. ‘For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil’ (Eccl. 12:14). If this text applies to the investigative judgment, does the inspired author of Ecclesiastes refer to the good and evil deeds just of the repentant? If he refers to good and evil deeds of both the repentant and the unrepentant, how does this illustrate Mrs White’s previous statement?
 - b. ‘But I tell you that men will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned’ (Matt. 12:36f). There is the distinct possibility that the ‘day of judgment’ refers to his righteous judgment, of course. However, let us keep in mind that these words can have a more general meaning, having a bearing on everyday life. For instance, they remind us of Eliphaz’s comment that ‘[y]our own mouth condemns you, not mine; your own lips testify against you’ (Job 15:6).

Solomon conveys the same idea with these words ‘Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin’ (Pro. 10:14); ‘The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit’ (Pro. 18:21). James has a similar thought: ‘We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell’ (Jam. 3:2-6).

- c. ‘Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear’ (1 Pet. 1:17). The present tense of God’s judgment in this verse shows that Peter is referring to a continuous action, not to some judgment that was purportedly to begin in the 19th century.
 - d. ‘And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books’ (Rev. 20:12). In standard Adventist literature, this text is said to describe events after a millennium in heaven, and it is supposed to affect the lost. Why is this passage put in connection with a judgment that is deemed to have begun in the 19th century?
6. Thursday’s section endeavours to show that some time before God’s sentence is carried out, he has already decided what it will be. Why are so many lines devoted to prove such a truism? Even bad judges do that! Naturally, the fact that God knows everything entails the notion that a mere instant before the sentence is passed, God has full knowledge of what the sentence should be. No painstaking analysis of records is necessary. Just as you say, since [‘the reward or punishment comes at the Second Coming, there must be some sort of reckoning or judgment prior to that event itself,’ ‘be that judgment a hundred years or a hundred seconds before the punishment or vindication is carried out.’](#) Very interesting indeed. In any case, aren’t you contradicting standard SDA beliefs that state that punishment does not take place at the Second Coming, but only after the millennium? As a matter of fact, doesn’t standard SDA theology claim that uncountable millions *won’t* be raised from the dead at the Second Coming?
7. Friday’s section presents your summary. Point 3 states that [‘among those judged are the professed followers of Christ,’](#) which is biblical enough. However, seeing that you are trying to uphold the SDA concept of an investigative judgment for the professed followers of Christ, as defined by Mrs White in an earlier quotation, why do you use the preposition ‘among’? Wouldn’t the omission of the preposition be perfectly standard in Seventh-day Adventism? After all, that’s precisely what the lesson outline in the teachers’ edition frankly admits when it says [‘The pre-Advent judgment investigates the lives of those who have professed a belief in God!’](#) Would it be correct to surmise that the omission of that preposition would not fit your purposes?

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 3, “Daniel 2”

1. Before analysing your presentation of Daniel 2 proper, it is remarkable that your index on page 1 presents your summary of what you consider relevant chapters in the book of Daniel, namely, chapters 2, 7, 8 and 9. Why, may I ask, don’t you devote some time to

analysing chapter 11, which is largely parallel to earlier chapters, though more detailed? For instance, in Dan. 2:43 it is stated that in what we might call the era of the fourth kingdom ‘they are mixing themselves with the seed of men: and they are not adhering one with another’ (Young’s Literal Translation). Consider for a moment these words:

After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be handed over, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her. (Dan. 11:6). He will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the South. And he will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him. (Dan. 11:17).

Don’t you think these words are remarkable amplifications of the germinal prediction of 2:43? Or, take, for instance, the impressive prediction, in 2:34, 45 that the collapse of the statue wouldn’t be the result of the intervention of human hands. Chapter 11 offers this wonderful parallel:

He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no-one will help him (Dan. 11:45).

Seeing that there are such noteworthy parallels between chapters 2 and 11, why is it you renounce so prematurely the richness that chapter 11 might provide regarding the identity of the actors of chapter 2? Would it be wrong to surmise that it provides evidence that is contrary to your thesis? If so, is it honest to ignore it?

2. Dan. 2:44, the memory verse for this lesson is quite enlightening. First of all, reference is made to ‘the days of these kings’. *What kings* is Daniel talking about? Please, elaborate. As for the kingdom ‘which shall never be destroyed’, is Daniel’s prediction *qualitatively* different from OT prophets such as Ezekiel or Isaiah? For instance, the OT has a lot of prophecies that present an idyllic state of a new earth *in* this old one, with death still in operation (Isa. 65:20, for instance). Besides, the Bible has many references to eternal things such as the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 1:7), or the covenant of circumcision. Is Daniel’s prediction of the eternal kingdom of God established at the time of the collapse of the statue more deterministic, say, than Ezekiel’s prophecies in the last nine chapters of his book? Take for instance, God’s words, as recorded by Ezekiel:

Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites for ever. The house of Israel will never again defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings at their high places. When they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they defiled my holy name by their detestable practices. So I destroyed them in my anger. Now let them put away from me their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings, and I will live among them for ever. Son of man, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins. Let them consider the plan, and if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and entrances—its whole design and all its regulations and laws. Write these down before them so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations. This is the law of the temple: [...]. (Eze. 43:7-12).

This was never fulfilled, was it? And, after the cessation of animal offerings, it will never be fulfilled. Are you certain that Daniel’s prediction is qualitatively different from Ezekiel’s?

3. In your introduction you tell the tale of the young man who was impressed by Daniel 2 the first time he read it. Of course Daniel 2 is impressive! It is impressive in itself, independently from the specific identity of the metals.
4. Monday’s section presents the usual historicist claims of the march of empires, from Babylon to the end of the world. Which specific exegetical detail makes you think that ‘the fourth kingdom, symbolized by the iron in the legs [...] was the Roman Empire, which eventually led into the nations of modern Europe, symbolized by the feet, part of iron and part of clay’? Where does Daniel hint at such an interpretation? What is the

geographical perspective of the statue? You rightfully insist that the book of Daniel takes us to ‘the time of the end’. Curiously enough, you somehow forget one very instructive reference to such time of the end, namely, Daniel 11:40-45:

At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission. But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no-one will help him.

Please, Dr Goldstein, can you explain why this very pertinent passage escaped your scrutiny? If Daniel 2 has something to do with our future, as you claim, can you please explain the relevance of ‘Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon’ in that ‘time of the end’ that you claim lies right ahead of us?

5. Tuesday’s section presents the notion that, contrary to what happens to other metals in Daniel 2, ‘the iron [...] stays there until the stone cut out “without hands” (vs. 34) destroys everything. [...] In the interpretation of that part of the vision, the metal representing the fourth power, iron, remains until the end, as well, though it’s depicted as mixed with miry clay (vss. 40-44). The point is unmistakable: The fourth power arises after Greece and remains until the end, even though it is manifested in a different form.’ Now, it is very unfortunate that you should state such a thing, when it flies in the face of both the dream itself and its interpretation. Inspiration stated long ago:

While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing-floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth. (Dan. 2:34f). Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay. In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure for ever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. (Dan. 2:40-45).

In both the dream and its interpretation, all metals and all kingdoms are crushed by God’s kingdom, not just that represented by iron and clay, so I’m afraid these verses quite outspokenly negate the validity of historicism, so your claim, on Thursday ‘that the historicist approach to interpretation (of which Adventists remain almost alone in still adhering to) is what the text demands’ takes some nerve to say!

6. Can you explain why most non-Catholic exegetes reject historicism? Why do you say on Wednesday that ‘only one power can possibly fit’ the role of the fourth kingdom?
7. In Thursday’s section you speak of Daniel’s ‘predictions about Europe’ being painfully accurate. What exactly did Daniel predict about Europe? I’ve never read anything about it. You insist on this concept in Friday’s section.
8. You might want to rephrase your claim, in Friday’s section, that ‘Christ’s words in Matthew 24:15 prove that Jesus believed that some of Daniel’s prophecies were yet future.’ To begin with, Christ’s words in Matt. 24:15 don’t point to Daniel 2, but rather to Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. Secondly, Jesus’ application of the expression ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ to the Romans doesn’t preclude that it can have had a prior

fulfilment anymore than his words in Matt. 13:13-15 preclude the validity of Isaiah's denunciation some eight centuries earlier (cf. Isa. 6:9f), '[i]n the year that King Uzziah died' (Isa. 6:1)!

9. There is one last consideration that might deserve your attention. You claim that historicism is the interpretive system demanded by Scripture itself. Although I'm afraid no answers for my questions will ever be forthcoming from the historicist field, perhaps die-hard historicists such as yourself should be brought face to face with reality regarding actual historicist claims relative to the succession of kingdoms. Historicist propaganda claims that after the fourth kingdom, God's kingdom will be established on earth, does it not? That's precisely what you claim in your quarterly. However, SDA theology claims that on the occasion of Christ's second coming, all human life on this planet will become extinguished, since this planet will be a desolate Satanic kingdom for one thousand years. Please, explain how that fits into the make-believe historicist scenario you so stubbornly defend.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 4, "Daniel 7"

1. Before analysing your presentation of Daniel 7 proper, it is remarkable, as was also noted for that of chapter 2, that your index on page 1 presents your summary of what you consider relevant chapters in the book of Daniel, namely, chapters 2, 7, 8 and 9. Why, may I ask, don't you devote some time to analysing chapter 11, which is largely parallel to earlier chapters, though more detailed? For instance, the little horn's blasphemies and hostility against God's people mentioned in Dan. 7:25 are made even more explicit in Dan. 11:28-36:

The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country. At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant. His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time. The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.

Don't you think these words are remarkable amplifications of the germinal prediction of 7:25? Seeing that there are such noteworthy parallels between chapters 7 and 11, why is it you renounce so prematurely the richness that chapter 11 might provide regarding the identity of the actors of chapter 7? Would it be wrong to surmise that it provides evidence that is contrary to your thesis? If so, is it honest to ignore it?

2. In your introduction you state that '[in Daniel 7 we are shown the pre-Advent judgment.](#)' May I ask, The pre-Advent judgment of whom? As you know well, in SDA parlance, the investigative judgment does not deal with the actions of confessed enemies of God, as those actions will be the object of a later judgment. Then, if Heaven's investigation of the evil actions of the little horn is not, by definition, the object of God's scrutiny in the investigative judgment that purportedly began in 1844 to investigate the actions of God's children, why do you say that in Daniel 7 we are shown the pre-Advent judgment? What pre-Advent judgment? By the way, it is clear as crystal that God investigates the evil activities of the little horn, but which verse in Daniel 7 presents the

notion that God is investigating true believers, either collectively, or individually (as in the SDA dogma)?

3. Monday's section repeats the erroneous concept that 'the iron, the fourth power, arises after Greece [...] remains until the end. It was destroyed only when God set up His kingdom.' As noticed earlier, the iron was no different from other metals. Chapter 2 explicitly stated that *all* metals were destroyed simultaneously. Not having extracted the proper instruction from Holy Writ, you make the same mistake in chapter 7, since you state 'In Daniel 7, with the fourth beast, the fourth power, the same thing happens. The fourth beast, which arose after Greece [...], remains until the end of time (though taking another form), when it is destroyed at the establishment of God's eternal kingdom [...].' There are two basic problems in this statement of yours. The first is the need for you to exegetically justify your parenthetical observation 'though taking another form.' What scriptural passage mentions this new 'form' of yours? I'm afraid all theological notions must be firmly grounded in the Bible, so your mere imagination is not good enough. Secondly, and most significantly, Holy Writ itself explicitly specifies that all four beasts were alive when the judgment of the little horn was under way:

Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.) (Dan. 7:11f).

So, according to the inspired explanation of the vision, all beasts remained alive when the judgment began, and the fourth one came to its final demise when the judgment concluded. Interesting, don't you think?

4. At the end of Monday's section you insist that the little horn, 'though arising out of the fourth beast, exists until the end of time.' However, there's nothing extraordinary about that! All powers exist until the end of time, including the fourth beast itself, which is only slain as a result of God's judgment of the little horn! The notion that the fourth beast met its demise centuries earlier than the little horn is alien to Scripture.
5. Tuesday's section presents your contention that the little horn of Daniel is the papacy and that 'it can't be anything else.' Of course, that dictum of yours is unduly founded in a dearth of exegesis. For instance, your insistence that the little horn arises from some pagan power, namely Rome, seeks to obtain recognition from people who know the papacy is not fully pagan. However, there's nothing in Daniel that would intimate that the little horn is any less pagan than the fourth beast itself, so paganism has nothing to do with the issue. The fact remains: both the little horn and the fourth beast itself meet their demise at the *eschaton*, and both seem *equally* pagan. As for the biblical mandate to warn people about the dangers of the beast of Rev. 13, let us also keep in mind that there's also the biblical mandate not to bear false witness against our neighbour.
6. Wednesday's section presents the issue of the purported duration of the little horn's persecuting activities. The Aramaic of Daniel says it's 'time, times and dividing of time.' You favour the view that this means three and a half 'prophetic' times. However, the Aramaic behind 'times' is ܥܕܢܝܢ (ʿiddānîn), which, in any case, is plural, not dual. The noun ܥܕܢܐ (ʿiddān) is also used for Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 4, but there it's not taken as 'prophetic' time. Why do you surmise that ܥܕܢܐ is prophetic in chapter 7, but not in chapter 4? Your appeal that the symbols in chapter 7 invite the notion that time be equally symbolic is quite fallacious. Is the judgment symbolic too? What about the little horn's activities. Are they symbolic, too? How about the ancient of days? Is he also symbolic?
7. Wednesday's section also presents your rather imprecise contention that the purported

- 1,260 years of papal persecution began sometime in ‘the late fifth, early sixth century’ and that it ended in ‘the late eighteenth, or early nineteenth, century.’ Apart from failing to mention such standard dates in SDA parlance as 508, 538 and 1798, this thesis of yours presents some problems. What brought about the end of the oppression of the little horn in ‘the late eighteenth [...] century’? I can see in Daniel 7 that the little horn’s oppression comes to its end due to divine intervention and its being destroyed at the eschaton. But you are saying that, somehow, the little horn’s activities have ceased, but it continues to exist. Please, justify your claim.
8. Your last contention on Wednesday is that, ‘according to this prophecy, the judgment in heaven comes *after* the 1,260-day prophetic period, sometime *after* that phase of persecution that ended in the late eighteenth, or early nineteenth, century yet before the Second Coming.’ Please, Dr Goldstein, I’m afraid I’m going to have to ask you to justify that this prophecy actually places the judgment of the little horn *after* the close of its dominance. The inspired prophet himself notices that the little horn continues his blasphemies during the trial, and then the sentence against him is passed. Please, justify that the period of dominance of the horn was a thing of the past when the judgment convened.
 9. Thursday’s section contains your novel description of apocalyptic. Unfortunately, contrary to all scholarly evidence, you claim that ‘*apocalyptic simply means dealing with end-time events.*’ Now, you seem to have confused the word *eschatology* with the term *apocalyptic*. Apocalyptic simply means ‘resulting from a revelation’, and it may not be related to end-time events at all. In any case, perhaps it would be a good idea to analyse whether Daniel is really apocalyptic. I wouldn’t count on it if I were you!
 10. Friday’s section contains this observation of yours: ‘*Sure, the papacy didn’t end in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but that’s not what the prophecy says. Instead, it says only that persecution would last for this length of time, or at least that phase of that persecution (Revelation 13, of course, talks about a resurgence of papal persecution, but that’s another issue).*’ Indeed, there are so many ‘other issues’ here that it is incredible you would have the gall to say something like that. Let’s see Dr Goldstein, either you present some evidence from Daniel 7 itself that the end of the persecution by the little horn is *not* coincident with its demise after God’s judgment or you are left without an excuse to present this inaccurate portrayal of what Daniel teaches.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 5, “Daniel 8”

1. Before analysing your presentation of Daniel 8 proper, it is remarkable, as was also noted for those of chapters 2 and 7, that your index on page 1 presents your summary of what you consider relevant chapters in the book of Daniel, namely, chapters 2, 7, 8 and 9. Why, may I ask, don’t you devote some time to analysing chapter 11, which is largely parallel to earlier chapters, though more detailed? For instance, the prophetic detail about the initial smallness of the little horn and how he ‘grew in power to the south and to the east and towards the Beautiful Land’ (Dan. 8:9) is very impressively amplified in these verses of chapter 11:

He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honour of royalty (v. 21).
 At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand (vv. 40f).
 He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no-one will help him (v. 45).

Don't you think these words are remarkable amplifications of the germinal prediction of 8:9? Or, take, for instance, the impressive prediction, in 8:11f that the little horn would take away 'the daily sacrifice.' Most readers would probably find an impressive parallel of this in the following words:

His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation (Dan. 11:31).

Seeing that there are such noteworthy parallels between chapters 8 and 11, why is it you renounce so prematurely the richness that chapter 11 might provide regarding the identity of the actors of chapter 8? Would it be wrong to surmise that it provides evidence that is contrary to your thesis? If so, is it honest to ignore it?

2. Your Sabbath introduction reminds your patient readers about the ['overwhelming evidence from previous chapters'](#) regarding the eschatological nature of Daniel's predictions, something that, in your view, is ['a problem for those who want to limit the events of Daniel 8 to a historical period in Israelite history that ended in the second century before Christ—a view that for this reason \(and others\) is untenable.'](#) Considering your blatant refusal to analyse the evidence of Daniel 11:40f, where 'the time of the end' is clearly connected with the existence of 'Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon,' one is tempted to think that it is precisely your view the one that is untenable.
3. Also in your introduction, you announce that ['the part about the sanctuary being cleansed is not explained'](#) in chapter 8. If I may, isn't this sheer interpretation on your part? It is true that the angelic instructor of the prophet states that '[t]he vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future' (v. 26), but that does not mean in itself that the prophet couldn't understand what was said in verses 10-14. There is no evidence that Daniel was a mathematical ignoramus, so the sealing of this vision might merely convey the notion that it was both important and for the distant future. And then, of course, there's verse 27. The NIV has 'I, Daniel, was exhausted and lay ill for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.' Adventist tradition has it that Daniel was ill because he couldn't understand the vision. That's a very strange, especially when a presumably similar condition is presented in 10:8-12. If Daniel was sick in 8:27 because he couldn't understand the figure 2,300 mentioned in 8:14, perhaps his bewilderment continued after his experience in chapter 9, don't you think? In any case, do you believe that, after the angelic instruction that the prophet seal the vision, Daniel began divulging its contents to his fellow citizens or trusted friends? Did Daniel actually disobey Gabriel? Probably not, so perhaps the translation that the vision 'was beyond understanding' is not as certain as it seems. The Hebrew has [מֵאֵין מִבֵּין](#) [wə'ên mēbîn], which literally means 'and none understanding.' Isn't it likely that the prophet simply means that he was appalled by the vision but that nobody knew about his illness, which resulted from his concern about the evil horn's future activities? In any case, I'll be looking with due attention for the specific verse that you'll provide in ['the next chapter, in which an explanation is finally given'](#) about ['the part about the sanctuary being cleansed.'](#)
4. Sunday's section recalls the instruction received by Gabriel to ["make this man understand the vision."](#) Do you think Gabriel fulfilled his mission successfully, or was the order one of impossible fulfilment?
5. It is interesting that you remark that the vision of Daniel 8 'deals with ["the end."](#)' That obvious truth will be worth remembering for future arguments.
6. Also on Sunday, you nicely summarise for your readers the historical counterpart of

chapter 8. Apart from the now identified second and third kingdoms of previous chapters, Media and Macedon, we are presented with an evil power known as the little horn, for whom, curiously enough, no beastly counterpart is assigned. In any case, haven't you forgotten mentioning that the villain in this story is explicitly characterised in verses 11-13 as disrupting the sanctuary cultus? Don't you think that is highly significant, and the obvious antecedent explaining why the sanctuary needs cleansing? Dan. 11: 31 repeats the prediction of the pollution of the sanctuary in a context where the saints are conspicuously *absent* and the polluter is identified with the evil king of the North, whose armed forces effect the sacrilege. Why is it that Seventh-day Adventism omits this obvious parallel from its musings on saintly ritual pollution of the holy place? Can it be because it manifests that the saints play no role whatsoever in the pollution of the sanctuary in Dan. 8:13?

7. Monday's section contains a table where you insist that the demise of the power appearing after the equivalent of Macedon in chapters 2, 7 and 8 results from some supernatural intervention. Now, what is *supernatural*? As far as I can see, it merely means without identifiable outside intervention. Daniel 2 merely speaks of a rock cut out of a mountain 'not by human hands' (vv. 34, 45). In other words, the only thing that is warranted is the conclusion that the little horn was *not* to perish as a result of an assassination plot (stabbing, poisoning), public execution or in the midst of a battle. The NT tells the end of Herod Agrippa I in Acts 12. Verse 23 teaches that 'an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.' No fireworks, but quite effective nevertheless, don't you think? Could the little horn have perished this way?
8. To your question '[From what you have studied so far, what is the identity of that little-horn power in Daniel 8?](#)', the only honest answer I can give is Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Of course, this answer is not based on your convoluted reasoning, but rather on an analysis of God's Word and some reasonably detailed knowledge of ancient history. Obviously, this is not the answer you were seeking, since Monday's section also contains this little morsel '[Looking at the parallels between the visions, one can see it was Rome in Daniel 2, Rome in Daniel 7; thus, obviously, it's Rome in Daniel 8.](#)' No Dr Goldstein, one *cannot* '[see it was Rome in Daniel 2,](#)' neither can anyone see it was '[Rome in Daniel 7,](#)' unless they are hypnotised into believing a twisted version of history by some master magician that refuses to consider all opposing relevant evidence. The real truth is that anyone who will care to read Daniel 11 will see that it is ***NOT*** Rome in Daniel 11, so it isn't Rome in either Daniel 2, 7 or 8. And that's that (see the summarised evidence presented in my Addendum, *infra*, "Rome in Danielic Studies," originally included in another scholar's analysis of your lesson 10). The fact that the little horn remains until the time of the end is self-fulfilling. Naturally, he was to remain until the time of his own end! Have you ever seen otherwise?
9. Monday's section contains one last rhetorical consideration from you: '[what power, coming up after Greece, existing until the end, could be depicted as greater than Media-Persia other than Rome?](#)' Your whole polemic is highly artificial. By comparing adjectives like "'great" (*vs. 4*),' "'very great" (*vs. 8*)' and "'exceeding great" (*vs. 9*)' you want to convince your unsuspecting reader that the little horn was even greater at least than Persia! Of course, somehow you've forgotten to mention that Danielic comparisons of kingdoms may refer to something other than military greatness. For instance, Daniel says of Persia that it was to be 'inferior' to Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom (Dan. 2:39), when, in reality, it was more than five times bigger than the Babylonian Empire! So, perhaps you shouldn't be so confident in assertions you can't possibly prove.

Besides, somehow you've neglected to quote Dan. 8:9 in its context. The angelic interpreter says, 'Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and towards the Beautiful Land.' How interesting, don't you think? It 'started small.' Why don't you inform your unsuspecting readers about the initial smallness of the little horn, Dr Goldstein? But then it 'grew in power *to the south and to the east and towards the Beautiful Land.*' We are not told that it grew in power towards the north. Maybe it was pitiful in other areas, but we are informed that its power was highly noticeable in the indicated directions, particularly in the Beautiful Land, Israel. How very fascinating! Why in the world would you neglect to mention such insightful detail? Perhaps you could have mentioned the Crusades! But then, of course, you might have run into difficulty, considering the Beautiful Land is east of Rome. Naturally, it just happens to be west of Babylon and Seleucia. Makes you think, doesn't it?

10. Tuesday's section speaks again about the purportedly overwhelming nature of the identification of the little horn and Rome. I won't insist on the inanity of such contention, absolutely discredited in the eyes of any thinking person. In any case, there's a sentence of yours that deserves some comment: 'If nothing else, in Daniel 2 we see the idea of Rome changing form at some point in history.' Why don't you provide a verse reference to back this statement? If you were thinking of the baked clay in the iron feet of the statue (verses 33-35), the inspired explanation does not hint at a change of form, but rather to the instability of the fourth kingdom.
11. Tuesday's section also contains the now customary historicist claim that 'the little horn [...] depicted as coming from "up among them"' actually comes from 'one of "the four winds of heaven"' (*vs. 2, NIV*), its immediate antecedent! This fascinating notion forgets the universal fact that there are antecedents that are *not* immediate. For instance, if I say 'I saw a man on a bench in the park yesterday that was eating a sandwich,' *that* is a relative pronoun, and it most certainly has an antecedent, a noun. Shall we look for the 'immediate antecedent,' Dr Goldstein? Let's see, 'yesterday' is often a noun. Was yesterday eating a sandwich? Probably not. How about the park? Was the park eating a sandwich? No, I don't think so? Let's try with the bench, shall we? No, wrong choice, again! Now, *the man* was eating a sandwich. That makes sense, doesn't it? So, it is always wise *not* to use grammar in order to reach ridiculous conclusions. Allow me to quote my email to Dr Pfandl:

Isn't it true that a literal translation of Dan. 8:8,9 would be "And came up [plural, feminine] notable [singular, feminine] four in its place [feminine] toward four winds [feminine] of the heavens [feminine]. And from one [feminine] of them [masculine; there are textual variants where 'them' is also feminine] came [masculine] horn [feminine] one [feminine] little [feminine]"? Isn't it true that the best Hebrew grammars warn that sometimes Hebrew shows a somewhat erratic behaviour regarding gender agreement, like E. Kautzsch, editor, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, 2nd edition, 17th printing, translated by A. E. Cowley, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), §§ 110 k, 144 a, 145 p, t, u, 135 o? Isn't the notion of a horn coming out of a wind somewhat unexpected, both biologically and theologically? Is there any other occurrence of such a thing? Does the angel hint at such an understanding in the explanation to the vision? Is the inclusion of the expression "out of one of them" informative or uninformative? If Inspiration had wanted to convey the notion that the "little horn" was geographically unrelated to the other four kings, how would readers more easily get the idea, by adding "out of one of them" or by omitting it? Will the author resort to "the nearest antecedent" when analysing the 70 weeks along the customary Messianic interpretation? If not, why not?

The claim that the little horn of Dan. 8 grew out of a wind stretches your credibility beyond reasonable bounds. How could such a horn appear in the vision? Since you don't like it attached to another horn or to the forehead of the originating beast, was it hovering in mid air? Besides, in the explanation given to the prophet, we are told that '[i]n the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king,

a master of intrigue, will arise' (verse 23). Would that be in the latter part of the reign of the winds, Dr Goldstein, or in the latter part of the reign of the horns? Obviously, it is this last option the only one that makes sense. In any case, it also contains a gem of truth that, somehow, you've neglected to mention. We are informed that the little horn was to arise in the latter part of the existence of the Hellenistic kingdoms. And yet, you insist that the little horn is the papacy, and in the previous lesson you had stated something to the effect that it came into existence in the late fifth or early sixth centuries of our era! And yet, the last of the Hellenistic kingdoms, Egypt, was occupied by Rome in 30 BC. Will you please elaborate? When did the little horn come into existence?

12. Tuesday's section contains one more morsel from your imaginative brain. From the fact that Holy Writ says that the little horn was to attack ["the "host of heaven," \[...\] the "Prince of the host," \[and\] even \[...\] the sanctuary itself,"](#) you conclude that its activity is ["vertical, heavenward"](#)! Let's see, Dr Goldstein. You are quoting the KJV of Dan. 8:10f. The host of heaven need not be angels. In Joseph's dream, his brothers were presented as stars. The host of the heavens are the armies and princes of Israel! Obviously, the prince of the host is the commander of the armies of Israel, who was quite human, I'm afraid. Even if the text referred to Jesus Christ, which it does not, when the earthly authorities (Herod, Pontius Pilate, etc.) caused Jesus to be crucified, they were not involved in some ["vertical, heavenward"](#) activity! Neither were Nebuchadnezzar or Titus involved in such heavenward activity when the Hebrew temple was reduced to rubble! So, why on earth would you, when dealing with the little horn, speak of ["the religious nature of its attack"](#)? You should have spoken of the *ir*religious nature of its attack, Dr Goldstein, so your summary that ["here in Daniel 8 \[...\] we are given two phases of the same power: first the pagan phase then the distinctly religious activity of the papal phase"](#) is absolutely unwarranted. There's nothing in Daniel 8 that would intimate that the little horn is any less 'pagan' than previous powers in Daniel or than other OT enemy powers, like King Sennacherib!
13. Wednesday's section carries the title 'Sanctuary cleansed.' For some reason, you've neglected to devote one section to the pollution of the sanctuary. You content yourself with merely saying that the cleansing of the sanctuary follows ["a depiction of the little-horn's activity in a certain historical period"](#)! Quite indefinite! Why didn't you say that it was the little horn the one that polluted the sanctuary to begin with, as amply demonstrated in point 6 above?
14. Wednesday's section ends with your polemic that the launching of God's eternal kingdom in Daniel 2, 7 and 8 implies that ["the idea that limits the cleansing of the sanctuary to some mere human event, such as the removing of enemies from the temple precincts in the second century B.C., falls apart."](#) That all depends on the specific nature of God's eternal kingdom in the book of Daniel, don't you think? There's no reason to think it's any more eternal or tangible than the one presented in the last few chapters in the book of Ezekiel or in Isaiah 65, don't you think? In any case, Dr Goldstein, the Bible is full of mere human events portrayed in a cosmic setting, such as the exodus, or Nineveh or Babylon's demise. In any case, any reasonable person can see that even ["some mere human event, such as the removing of enemies from the temple precincts in the second century B.C."](#) can indeed be ["an event of major importance,"](#) particularly if we consider that if that ["mere human event"](#) hadn't taken place, Israel itself would have ceased to exist! Major importance indeed, don't you think?
15. Thursday's section contains one puzzling piece of evidence. You claim that ["this](#)

heavenly judgment in Daniel 7—the judgment that leads to the end of the world—is the same thing as the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8.’ This is poorly sustained. Both events could be closely connected in time, but there’s nothing in the text that would intimate they are the same thing. Since it is the little horn who is effecting the pollution of the sanctuary, it is obvious that the cleansing of the sanctuary takes place *after* the pollutant has been done away with! On the other hand, it is equally obvious that it is the ‘massive’ judgment, as you like to call it, of this evil character what brings about his downfall. So, naturally, the judgment of the little horn *precedes* the cleansing of the filth he caused to be accumulated in the sanctuary! Sorry, but they are not the same thing.

16. Friday’s section contains a joint portrayal of your version of history from Daniel’s days in Babylon to the second coming. It nicely summarises usual SDA contentions. However, don’t you think there’s something wrong with this view? Considering that we are now living in AD 2006, AD being *Anno Domini*, in the year of the Lord, one would think that the start of our era, even if a minor mistake was made in the actual reckoning of the birth date of our Saviour, should play a major role in *all* presentations of history. Where is it in your table? Are you saying that in Daniel 7 and 8 Inspiration wanted us to focus on the list of the Persian monarchs or that of Roman consuls and emperors and some 19th-century celestial judgment and cleansing of heavenly structures but that, somehow, it neglected to mention the *one* event in history around which all the rest revolve? Sorry, Dr Goldstein, that picture is even more blurred than the one the Hubble telescope used to convey. There’s something radically wrong in your optics.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 6, “Daniel 9”

1. Before analysing your presentation of Daniel 9 proper, it is remarkable, as was also noted for those of chapters 2, 7 and 8, that your index on page 1 presents your summary of what you consider relevant chapters in the book of Daniel, namely, chapters 2, 7, 8 and 9. Why, may I ask, don’t you devote some time to analysing chapter 11, which is largely parallel to earlier chapters, though more detailed? For instance, the abomination of desolation mentioned in 9:27 reappears very prominently in chapter 11:

His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. (Verse 31).

Don’t you think these words are highly significant and that their context might shed valuable information as to when these events took place? Or, take, for instance, the prediction regarding the demise of an anointed prince, 9:26. Don’t you think that could be amplified by the following passage?

Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed. (Dan. 11:22).

Seeing that there are such noteworthy parallels between chapters 9 and 11, why is it you renounce so prematurely the richness that chapter 11 might provide regarding the identity of the actors of chapter 9? Would it be wrong to surmise that it provides evidence that is contrary to your thesis? If so, is it honest to ignore it?

2. Your introduction reproduces previous unfounded appraisals of yours, such as ‘The crucial point that should be understood now is that the judgment scene in Daniel 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 are the same event and that this event takes place sometime after the 1,260-year period that depicted a phase of papal persecution of the saints.’ So far, you’ve entirely failed to prove that:
- a. ‘the judgment scene in Daniel 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 are the same event’;

- b. the Bible speaks of a 1,260-year period somewhere;
- c. that the purported 1,260-year period has some relationship with the papacy;
- d. your supposedly identical event of the judgment scene and the cleansing of the sanctuary ‘takes place sometime after the 1,260-year period that depicted a phase of papal persecution of the saints.’

Consequently, your whole ‘crucial point’ is a huge *non sequitur*. Contrary to your wishes, it cannot ‘be understood now’ or at any other time, unless you provide biblical evidence to back your outrageous claims.

3. Also in your introduction, there’s this little exercise in absurdity: ‘considering the time frame for this event, the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, what’s the only possible sanctuary that’s being cleansed here, the one on earth or the one in heaven (see Matt. 24:2; Luke 21:6; Heb. 8:1, 2)?’ Well, if we consider that you’ve utterly failed to provide biblical support for such an imprecisely-defined period, you have no reason to ask such a question. I could also ask that, considering the interest displayed in Daniel 8 about the Beautiful Land (v. 9), Israel, why would anyone think that the sanctuary to be cleansed was anywhere but in the Beautiful Land? If you insist it wasn’t in the Beautiful Land, provide the objective, independent evidence. You can’t say that it *has* to be in heaven because in 1798 there wasn’t a sanctuary in Jerusalem for several reasons:
 - a. You haven’t provided *any* clues whatever to the relevance of 1798 or the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries in Danielic studies.
 - b. There *was* a sanctuary in Jerusalem in 1798. It still exists today and it is sacred for the Muslims. As a matter of fact, there are sanctuaries all across the world. Even with the senseless notion that Dan. 8:14 is speaking of the 19th century, what makes you insist that it’s a heavenly sanctuary the one needing cleansing when it was the little horn, an earthling, who polluted it to begin with?
4. One last argument of yours in your introduction is that ‘[The Lord]’s framing these great truths around world history, as firm a foundation as possible. God, obviously, wants us to believe these truths; that’s why He makes it easy for us to do just that.’ Yes, the Lord made it easy for us to follow the truths contained in his Word. That’s undoubtedly why he gave a thorough explanation in Daniel 11, confirmed by ‘things as immovable, unchangeable, and verifiable as are possible in this world,’ which completely demolishes your twisted and capricious interpretation.
5. Sunday’s section has the significant title ‘Unfinished Business.’ Your whole argument is that Gabriel left something unfinished in chapter 8 and that now in chapter 9 he comes back to complete his original mission. Your argument that there was something Daniel didn’t understand has already been refuted (previous lesson, point 3). Let’s see now a few things you’ve somehow neglected to mention:
 - a. First, there’s the time frame of each vision. The one in chapter 8 happened ‘[i]n the third year of King Belshazzar’s reign’ (Dan. 8:1). According to the *SDABD*, Belshazzar was made co-regent in the third year of his father Nabonidus’ reign. If so, Belshazzar’s third year must be roughly equivalent to Nabonidus’ sixth year, approximately in the year 550 BC. On the other hand, the vision in chapter 9 is dated ‘[i]n the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom’ (v. 1) that is, after Babylon’s downfall to Cyrus in 539 BC. The actual date is probably 538 or 537 BC. Naturally, this means that about a dozen years separate chapter 8 from chapter 9. Why is it that you neglect mentioning

- this significant and relevant piece of evidence?
- b. You claim that the 2,300 ‘days’ were left ‘unexplained’ in chapter 8, although you’ve failed to indicate what explaining that figure required. It is true that Daniel was appalled by what he saw and heard, but it doesn’t mean that he needed an explanation about that. The reason he was appalled was that he understood very well what he witnessed. In any case, Dan. 8:26 indicated that the vision was sealed ‘for it concerns the distant future.’ Well, then, if the angel came back to ‘explain’ some part of Daniel 8, why does he do that? Did Daniel overtake the ‘distant future’ in just twelve years? Did Gabriel ignore his very own edict to seal the prior vision?
6. You revisit the same argument of some unfinished business in Wednesday’s section, when you confidently state that [‘Now, the same angel interpreter appears and specifically says that he has come to give him “understanding.” Understanding about what? The 2,300 days obviously, the last time Daniel needed any understanding.’](#) The usage of the Hebrew verb בִּין (bîn) throughout Daniel is very instructive indeed, and his angelic instructors always are instrumental in his achieving understanding. That being the case, you have no reason whatever to say that Gabriel in chapter 9 comes back to give Daniel understanding about some unfinished business in chapter 8. Particularly lethal for your interests is the specific angelic instruction in 9:23: ‘Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision,’ וְבִין בְּדָבָר וְהָבֵן בַּמְרָאָה (ûbîn baddābār wəhābēn bammar^{eh}). Now, if you say that in chapter 9 Gabriel came to explain the מְרָאָה (mar^{eh}) of chapter 8, logic would require that he also came to explain some דָּבָר (dābār). Fatally, the noun דָּבָר does not appear once in chapter 8; only three *piel* forms of the cognate verbal root דָּבַר, ‘to speak,’ appear in verses 13 and 18. However, we have the immediate antecedent of the noun דָּבָר of the closing statement of Dan. 9:23 in the early part: ‘As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given’. The noun דָּבָר also appears in chapter 9 in verses 2 (‘the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet’), 12 (‘You have fulfilled the words spoken against us’) and 25 (‘From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven “sevens”’). Now then, if Gabriel came in chapter 9 to explain the word referred in chapter 9, what is the logic behind your reasoning that he came to explain the vision of chapter 8. *Why not the vision of chapter 9 itself?*
 7. Thursday’s section contains your polemic about the supposedly vastly different nouns חֲזוֹן (hāzôn) and מְרָאָה (mar^{eh}), the primary meaning of both being ‘vision.’ Now you claim that מְרָאָה of 9:23 *must* of necessity refer back to 8:16, 26f. Let’s subject your assertion to the ample evidence provided by Daniel 8-11, shall we?
 - a. According to 8:1f, Daniel has a חֲזוֹן and sees himself in Susa, in Elam.
 - b. In 8:13, Daniel hears a question asked about the duration of the חֲזוֹן.
 - c. In 8:15, immediately before an explanation is granted to the seer, Daniel tells us he was seeking an understanding of the חֲזוֹן. Your argument might be slightly more persuasive if Daniel had said that he was trying to understand the מְרָאָה. But let’s not despair yet, shall we?
 - d. Daniel must have rejoiced when the words of 8:16 were pronounced, since Gabriel was commanded to explain the מְרָאָה to the prophet.
 - e. In 8:17, in *precise* fulfilment of that command, Gabriel approaches Daniel and tells him that he has come to make him understand the חֲזוֹן! Obviously, unless Gabriel had serious difficulties to understand the instructions he was given, חֲזוֹן and מְרָאָה are perfectly interchangeable! How come you didn’t mention such informative

- details?
- f. In Dan. 8:26 the angel indicates that the **מִרְאֵה** of the evenings and mornings is true, and, consequently, the prophet is admonished to seal up the **סֵפֶר**. For some reason, the second part of this verse is left elliptical in your treatment of this passage: “*And the vision [mareh] of the evening and the morning which was told is true. . . . [sic!] And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision [mareh], but none understood it*” (Dan. 8:26, 27).’ You should really watch these little omissions, Dr Goldstein, or people might think there’s some intentionality in ignoring opposing evidence.
 - g. Dan. 8:27 indicates that Daniel was appalled by the **מִרְאֵה**.
 - h. Dan. 9:21 says that Daniel had seen Gabriel earlier in the **סֵפֶר**.
 - i. As we’ve already seen, in 9:23 Daniel is told to understand the **מִרְאֵה** and the **סֵפֶר**, neither of which contain an unequivocal reference to chapter 8.
 - j. In 9:24, the angel explains that the seventy weeks were connected with the sealing period of the **סֵפֶר**.
 - k. In 10:1, Daniel says of himself that he had understanding of the **סֵפֶר** and the **מִרְאֵה**. Is this referring to Dan. 8 or 9, Dr Goldstein? Why should it?
 - l. In 10:7f, Daniel says that he was the only one to see that **מִרְאֵה** (*mar^ah*), a cognate of **מִרְאֵה**. He says he was also dismayed and nearly fainted as a result of this **מִרְאֵה**.
 - m. In 10:14, Daniel’s angelic interpreter tells him he has come to make him understand the **סֵפֶר**.
 - n. In 10:16, Daniel replies that he is very concerned about the **מִרְאֵה**.
 - o. Finally, 11:14 states that some violent men would rebel in fulfilment of the **סֵפֶר**. Now, Dr Goldstein, it is patently clear that both Daniel and his angelic interpreters took **סֵפֶר** and **מִרְאֵה** as interchangeable. Being a Hebrew, and presumably capable of reading Hebrew, what has caused you to disregard this plain evidence to mislead your readers into believing something that cannot be supported by objective evidence?
8. Your appeal, in Friday’s section, to the authority of some rabbis who intimate a connection between Daniel 8 and 9 might be more meaningful if you were prepared to uphold their interpretation of the 70 weeks. Will you do that, or won’t you? If you don’t, I guess you think they are mistaken. Why do you quote as authorities people whose opinions you otherwise disregard in the very context we are considering?

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 7, “70 Weeks”

1. Your introduction insists on the validity of two unproven premises of yours.
 - a. To begin with, you claim that ‘*[t]he judgment in Daniel 7 and cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 are the same event, and it occurs after the 1,260 years.*’ You have proved neither of these contentions.
 - b. ‘*Second, Daniel 8 ended with the vision of the 2,300 days not explained. Daniel 9 picks up with the end of Daniel 8: Gabriel offers Daniel the explanation he lacked in the previous chapter.*’ This is a distorted version of truth. The Bible doesn’t say there was something left unexplained about the vision of the 2,300 evenings and mornings. Daniel understood so well what it meant that he was devastated! The link between chapters 9 and 8 is purely imaginary. Chapter 10 also contains hints regarding Daniel’s physical reaction to the revelations he was receiving, very much in line with the description given in chapter 8, and no intimation

is given that such fainting spells demand that some later chapter be interpreted as providing the answer to the prophet's concerns more than a decade before. A comparison between Daniel's physical reaction in chapters 8 and 10 leads to the inescapable conclusion that both visions are equally self-contained.

2. Sunday's section kindly invites your unsuspecting readers to do a little arithmetic. The question is asked 'Which prophecy is longer, 2,300 days or 70 weeks?' How very interesting! Let's play with toy questions, shall we? Let's see, which prophecy is longer, the 'time, times and half a time' of Dan. 7 or the 'seven times' of Dan. 4? In order to uphold your fiction you need to say it is the 'time, times and half a time,' but, by doing that, you are showing the whole world that you are doing something entirely different from mathematics. It's called *eisegesis*!
3. Sunday's section also contains the old Adventist theory that '*chatchak* means "cut off,"' both in Hebrew and Ugaritic. You further have the temerity of stating that this *hapax legomenon* is translated that way in 'most Hebrew lexicons.' Quoting one or two would have perhaps sufficed. Here is the list of the lexicons I have which I've looked up myself. They are quite standard, but none of them upholds the late Mishnaic meaning that you so capriciously defend *for ancient Hebrew*:

Brown, Driver, Briggs, <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> (Unabridged)	Divide, determine (Modern Hebrew <i>id.</i> , cut, cut off, decide)
Koehler-Baumgartner, <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT</i> (HALOT)	Determined, imposed
Holladay, <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT</i> (HOL)	Decreed, ordained

In addition, Harris et al., *Theological Wordbook of the OT*, adds that 'This verb appears only in the passive stem (Niphal), and only in Dan 9:24, the famous "seventy weeks" passage. In rabbinic Hebrew the root ḥtk basically means "cut," hence the translation "decreed" in most versions'!

In any case, whether ancient Ugaritic would prove otherwise or not, even the basic meaning of 'cut' leads one to the translation 'decreed' in most versions, which negates the whimsical notion that the seventy weeks were cut off from some previous time prophecy. If they are cut off something, then they must have been cut off from the aeons of history. Nothing more is warranted. As for imaginary situations involving the painting of rooms, anyone can think up such situations. For instance consider the folly of exegeting an answer like 'Four years, then we get a new one' without resorting to the previous question, 'How long is the mandate of the Government in your country?'

4. Monday's section invites us to '[r]ead carefully and prayerfully Daniel 9:25.' Well, I've tried to and noticed that in Hebrew there's an *atnah* (a significant pause) after the first seven weeks, at the end of the relevant verse. The sixty-two weeks seem to occur after the appearance of the מַשִּׁיחַ הַנְּגִיד (māšîḥ nāgîd). The מַשִּׁיחַ mentioned in verse 26 is cut off after sixty-two weeks, *not* sixty-two and a half. How come you didn't explain these fascinating aspects of the 70 weeks? How come you didn't explain that the destruction of the temple and city mentioned in the prophecy as occurring within the time frame of the 70 weeks themselves occurs 36 years after the close of the period you interpret as the fulfilment of the 70 weeks? Considering your sloppy treatment of the whole passage, why

should one reach the conclusion that either of the māšîʾah figures in this passage has any links whatsoever with Jesus Christ?

5. Tuesday's section uses the old ploy of doing some arithmetic in an orchestrated fashion (you already know beforehand that the Cyrus, Darius and 444 Artaxerxes equations won't yield the intended result because the intended result was the starting point for the reverse calculation $33 - 490 = -457$, 33 being the purported year of the crucifixion and -457 being in equivalent of 457 BC in the minds of those that ignore the facts of history). This, together with your neglect to adequately explain what the first seven weeks and the later sixty-two weeks are, makes of Tuesday's section a fine example of convoluted wishful thinking.
6. Wednesday's section *is* interesting. You might have my sympathy as far as the identification of the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4 goes. However, your readers would probably like to know your insight regarding these words, written by Ellen White:

Untiring in their opposition, the Samaritans "weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius." Ezra 4:4, 5. By false reports they aroused suspicion in minds easily led to suspect. But for many years the powers of evil were held in check, and the people in Judea had liberty to continue their work. (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 571)

During the reign of Cambyses the work on the temple progressed slowly. And during the reign of the false Smerdis (called Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7) the Samaritans induced the unscrupulous impostor to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city.

(*Ibid.*, pp. 572-573; cf. RH, December 5, 1907, "The Return of the Exiles – No. 5 Loss Through Delay")

Now, if what Mrs White states here is *not* true, we are in a whole new ball game, aren't we? However, if what she says is true, and I suppose you believe it's true, then your resorting to **false** reports to a **false** king in an effort to prove something that the available evidence does not warrant is a prime example of intellectual dishonesty. If this is not a blatant example of dishonesty, then there's no such thing as intellectual dishonesty. No, Dr Goldstein, Ezra 4 does *not* prove that Artaxerxes I ever authorised the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The only thing it can possibly suggest is that Ezra's party undertook the *unauthorised* rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. Since Artaxerxes hadn't authorised such a thing, it was easy for him to see to it that this illegal work was stopped; otherwise, the biblically attested inviolability of Persian and Median law would have made it difficult for Artaxerxes to doubly reverse himself with Ezra and Nehemiah!

7. Thursday's section half-heartedly recognises that '[nothing in \[the\] decree \[of Ezra 7\] specifically talks about rebuilding the city,](#)' but then you go on to say that '[it was obviously understood to entail that, because, according to what we read yesterday, that's exactly what the Jews were doing!](#)' No, it is not obvious that it entailed anything of the sort, Dr Goldstein. You've neglected mentioning that Hag. 1:1-4 is ample proof that the city of Jerusalem was already rebuilt in the days of Darius, Artaxerxes' grandfather! It was Cyrus, not Artaxerxes, who authorised the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Isa. 44:24 – 45:1ff).
8. Thursday's section promotes the validity of the date 457 BC for Artaxerxes' decree, the one not involving any rebuilding work of any kind. Well, it is very unfortunate that you should insist. Mrs White's notion of 457 BC is that the decree either came into effect or was issued in the *autumn* of 457 BC (*GC* 327, 398-399, 410; *DA* 233; *PK* 698-699; cf. *IT* 52). Unfortunately, although the decree of Ezra 7 itself is not dated, we know that Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, in fulfilment of the decree, on 23 *July* 457 BC at the very latest. Please, explain how on earth the decree could have gone into effect or been issued about three months *after* Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem if he had left Babylon, at the latest, on 26

March of the same year following the provisions of the decree. I'm afraid that from now on you'll have to include a time machine into the Adventist equation!

9. On Friday's section, your reference to Isaac Newton, the one upholding an AD 33/34 date for the crucifixion, proves nothing. Finally, Horn and Wood's *The Chronology of Ezra 7* won't help you in your quest, since that book merely attests to the existence of different calendrical computations at the Jewish colony of Elephantine, in Egypt, in the days of the Persian Empire. It gives dates like the ones I've provided in the previous point, but that has nothing to do with the decree itself, which is not dated, but rather with Ezra's journey alone!

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 8, "1844 Made Simple"

1. As usual, your introduction tries to convince your unsuspecting readers that your claims have been previously demonstrated. This time, once again, you try to hammer in the unproven notion that there is some meaningful connection between chapters 8 and 9 of Daniel, whereby chapter 9 provides some explanation to fully understand some visionary details given in chapter 8. Naturally, this contention of yours should require some kind of objective evidence you've so far failed to provide. The second unproven notion that you try to buttress is that the 70 weeks began sometime in 457 BC, even though you were utterly unable to prove that some decree was issued that year authorising the rebuilding of Jerusalem. It was all left to pure guesswork. So, your case is hardly strengthened by mere repetition of unproven premises, since they will never constitute a valid, proven conclusion. Logically, you also fail to address the question of the separate 7 and 62 weeks, which, for you, become 69 weeks, as if the ancient Hebrews counted in a most peculiar fashion. Hebrew grammars warn about odd ways of expressing the numbers 15 and 16 when expressed as figures, but this stuff about 7 and 62 being taken for granted as an odd way of saying 69 should require some explanation, don't you think?
2. Sunday's section insists on several inaccurate conclusions of yours, like '[Last week we saw that the "commandment to restore and build Jerusalem" occurred in the reign of the Persian King Artaxerxes.](#)' No, Dr Goldstein, who saw nothing of the kind. You merely stated that, with insufficient proof, so we didn't *see* it. Besides, the fact that an order, whether human or divine, was issued to have Jerusalem restored in the days of the Persian Empire, not in the days of Artaxerxes, of course, but in those of Cyrus, does not establish any links whatsoever between Daniel 9 and 8. Naturally, the arithmetic you want your readers to do, namely, adding 483 years to 457 BC, is meaningless, as that won't take us to the מָשִׁיחַ נְגִיד (māšîḥ nāgîd). For that, the Hebrew specifies 7 weeks, not 69, so your whole operation is faulty and misleading. Besides, there's no way of proving, even if Jesus was anointed in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, that Jesus' baptism took place in AD 27. Tiberius became emperor on 18 September, AD 14, so his 15th year should be closer to AD 29 than AD 27. Counting inclusively from an assumed co-regency with Augustus in AD 13 is an unworthy trick demanded by the sheer necessity of Adventism to inject Jesus Christ into this prophecy that has nothing whatsoever to do with him.
3. Monday's section deals with the cutting off of a מָשִׁיחַ, which, in your view is none other than Jesus Christ, the same person as the מָשִׁיחַ נְגִיד of verse 25. The problem in your presentation is that the prophecy says this מָשִׁיחַ would be cut off after the 62 weeks, not after 62 and a half weeks. Claiming that his cutting off would take place *more* than 62

weeks after the purported beginning of the prophecy deserves just as much credit as the claim that the 70 weeks can have extended beyond the 70th week itself. So, even if your dating were correct (but it isn't), the מְשִׁיחַ would have been cut off precisely at the time he was anointed (since you don't accept the obvious truth that there's a first מְשִׁיחַ after just 7 weeks), leaving no time for Jesus' earthly ministry!

4. Tuesday's section invites us to read Dan. 9:27. I've just done that, and I've noticed that the subject of the verbs introduced in this section seems to be the last individual introduced in the previous verse, a fiend, a רָעָל that was to come. So, it was this evil prince who made a covenant with the enemies of God's law (*cf.* 11:32), and, in perfect agreement of other predictions in the book of Daniel, it was this evil prince the one that caused sacrifices to be abolished for half a week. Jesus Christ wasn't responsible for these evil actions of the enemy רָעָל. In any case, your theory needs an AD 31 date for the crucifixion, but that can't be proven. AD 30 is far more likely.
5. Since several of the claims you make on Wednesday's section have already been analysed, the only thing, other than your silence on the fact that Jerusalem and the temple are attacked during the 70th week, that deserves some passing comment is your observation that, as for 'A.D. 34, many believe it was the year that the apostle Paul accepted the gospel and became the great preacher to the Gentiles (Acts 9).' It would appear the trend among scholars is to date Paul's conversion to Christianity in AD 33, or even 32, rather than later. In any case, the only thing that the prophecy of the 70 weeks predicts as its outcome is the end of the evil enemy that caused so much desolation. How are Stephen's stoning or the conversion of Paul connected with that?
6. Thursday's section just presents graphically the Adventist claim that the 70 weeks are the first section of the 2,300 'years.' Since you confidently state that the 70 weeks began in 457 BC, those 2,300 'years' take your unsuspecting readers to AD 1844, when nothing can be proven to have happened in fulfilment of prophecy.
7. Friday's section tries to 'explain' why, in Adventist thinking, the 70 weeks are considered to be the first part of the 2,300 'years,' not their final part. The reason is that, if the Adventist reasoning is followed, all other options are illogical. Fine reasoning. The discussion questions at the end of the lesson are intended to elicit whimsical answers based on ignorance.
8. The last few lines of the teachers' material for this week's lesson have some worthy insights: 'As a church, we place a lot of emphasis on the prophecies of Daniel. In a sense, you could argue that we were founded on our understanding of the prophecies of Daniel. What role does your belief in Daniel's prophecies play in your Adventist walk? What do some other denominations teach about the book of Daniel? In what areas do they see it the same as we do? What are the differences? Though there's no question we would have plenty to show them [*sic!!*], might we be able to learn something from them, as well?' Sadly, your readers are badly equipped to answer this intelligently, since you've systematically denied them the necessary knowledge to know what other Christians think and why they deny the Messianic character of the 70 weeks.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 9, "Day-Year Principle"

1. Your introductory Sabbath material, as usual, summarises for your readers the notions that you have failed to prove in previous lessons and merely *assumes* that such notions have been learnt or seen. In this case, your emphasis is on these *unproven* notions that:

- a. the judgment in Daniel 7 leads to the second coming of Christ;
 - b. the judgment in Daniel 7 is the same thing as the cleansing of the sanctuary in Dan. 8:14;
 - c. both of these things occur ‘sometime after the 1,260-year period of persecution (late eighteenth to early nineteenth century) yet before the Second Coming’;
 - d. there was something unexplained in the prophecy of the 2,300 evenings and mornings;
 - e. Gabriel came in chapter 9 to explain precisely that;
 - f. the 70 weeks were cut off from the 2,300 evenings and mornings;
 - g. the 70 weeks, rooted in Jesus, mark the starting point of the 2,300 evenings and mornings.
2. Sunday’s section presents a very appropriate question about some of Daniel’s time periods: ‘What justification do we have in making [the] assumption that these were not literal but prophetic times and that we should use the day-year principle while interpreting them?’ Let’s now evaluate the justification you provide starting with Sunday and see how much sense it makes:
- a. ‘In Daniel 8:17, 19, 26, Daniel is told in one way or another that the prophetic vision he was given was for the “end.” In fact, he was specifically told that the vision concerning “the evening and the morning” (the 2,300 days) would be “for many days” (Dan. 8:26). Why do these facts help prove that the time prophecy in Daniel 8 isn’t literal?’ Well, if one is allowed to answer, even a massive empire, as you are so fond of calling them, one lasting for thousands of years, can have things predicted about them, and about their end, that are measured just in days, not years. Remember Nineveh and Jonah? Good, so, even if Daniel’s prophecies actually reached the end of the world (which they don’t, according to Dan. 11:40ff), his time predictions about that end needn’t be taken as meaning centuries or millennia. As for Dan. 8:26, the fact that the vision of the evenings and mornings was ‘for many days’ does not actually mean that it would be progressing for a long time; only that it would take ‘many days’ to start running. In any case, even if it meant that it would last for many days, which it doesn’t, 2,300 evenings and mornings are ‘many days,’ so I’m afraid there’s nothing here for the year-day ‘principle.’ The score of this argument of yours is zero.
 - b. Your second argument is that ‘[t]he little-horn power, which arises from pagan Rome (a power that ended more than fifteen hundred years ago), will exist until the end of the final judgment that brings the end of the world.’ There are several problems with this line of argument. The first one is that you’ve failed to prove any connection between Rome, pagan or not, and the little horn. Secondly, you run into serious exegetical problems when you insist that the empire the little horn arose from ended centuries before the judgment scene of Daniel 7, for the inspired record explicitly states that the empire of which the little horn was a representative was alive and well during the judgment scene (7:10-12). So, you see, if you insist that this judgment is something that began in the 19th century, you immediately run into difficulties by identifying the empire with Rome. You would be more credible if you set your eyes elsewhere. Ever tried the British Empire or Russia? There might be there something for you! Now, seriously, Dr Goldstein, if you insist that Rome is prominent in Dan. 7, then the judgment in which she is involved cannot possibly have taken place after her demise, so perhaps another line of investigation for you might be

setting Rome's pre-Advent judgment in the fifth century of our era! In any case, even if, by some miracle, your claim that the little horn is alive and well today, and a descendent of the extinguished Roman Empire, the period Daniel predicted about its infamous actions could still be measured by days, not centuries. Once again, unfortunately, the score of this argument of yours is zero.

- c. Your third argument goes back to the 'massive' nature of the empires to which the Danielic time periods apply. Apart from what has been mentioned before, there's the problem of the usage of 'times' in Daniel 4, a symbolic prophecy about one of those 'massive' empires you emphasise so strongly, but, lo and behold, there you don't want the times to be symbolic. How come? And then, in Daniel 11, where reference is made to equally 'massive,' Hellenistic empires, we have the word 'years' in verses 6, 8, 13. In all three cases, the word is plural, not dual, which might imply a minimum of three years for each occurrence. Since these are three different occurrences, we have a minimum of nine 'prophetic' years in Daniel 11. Shall we compute this according to your equation, Dr Goldstein? Let's see, $9 \times 360 = 3,240$. Over three thousand years! Wow! Would this be the longest running prophecy in the Bible, Dr Goldstein? Where shall we make it begin? How about at the time of that imaginary decree of 457 BC? That will take us to the year AD 2784? Fond of time-setting, Dr Goldstein? I'll dispense with the sarcasm your sciolism deserves and simply state that the score of this argument of yours is zero, again. Not doing well at all, I'm afraid.
- d. Your fourth argument on Sunday's section is that '[o]nce [...] the day-year principle is applied, the time prophecies make more sense, fitting in much better with the scale of events in which they are depicted.' Of course, this is circular reasoning. If you apply the year-day 'principle' to prophecies you imagine run for thousands of years, then it makes sense. The problem is that there is nothing in Holy Writ itself that demands the long spans you fancy, so the vast majority of interpreters don't let fantasy seize their imagination when exegeting the Bible. This fourth argument of yours has a score of zero.
- e. Your fifth argument comes from the passage of the 70 weeks, which you sort of mention on Monday. Curiously, the word 'day' doesn't appear once in the passage, and you fail to mention this. You further try to bring scorn on the scholars that interpret the 70 weeks as weeks of Sabbatical years, since 'the word translated "weeks" in Daniel 9:24 never appears anywhere else in the Bible other than as "weeks."' Now, there are two Hebrew words usually translated *week*. The most common one, the one appearing in Dan. 9:24ff, is שָׁבוּעַ (šābūʿ). You are absolutely right that *in the Bible* it means *week*. However, the Qumran sectarian manuscripts attest to the fact that it could also mean a heptad, a sevenfold period that may involve, for instance, seven *years*. For instance, 1QS (Rule of the Community) 10:7 mentions לַשְׁבוּעִיהֶם שָׁנִים, 'years for weeks,' and the Damascus Document 16:4 mentions לְיוֹבְלֵיהֶם וּבְשָׁבוּעוֹתֵיהֶם, 'for the jubilee of weeks.' So, the extra-biblical usage of שָׁבוּעַ as heptad is attested in antiquity. Besides, Daniel's precision in 10:3 that the weeks of his fasting were יָמִים שָׁבָעִים, 'weeks of days,' unless an idiomatic usage is intended (full weeks), perhaps should leave the options open for the concept of a 'week of years'. The other biblical word for 'week' is שַׁבָּת, Sabbath. שַׁבָּת stands for week in Lev. 23:15 ('count off seven full *weeks*'); 25:8 ('Count off seven *sabbaths* of years —seven times seven years— so that the seven *sabbaths* of years amount to a

period of forty-nine years'). Curiously, the NT word for *week*, *σάββατον* derives precisely from *שַׁבָּת*, not *שְׁבִיעַ*. So, the onus is on you if you want to challenge the validity of the 70 weeks as being weeks of years, whereby rendering all appeal to the year-day principle invalid. If you want to play with the obvious meaning of words, how about providing one instance in the Bible where the word 'day' actually means 'year'? Once again, your argument has a score of zero.

- f. The second third of Tuesday's section mentions the well-known passages of Eze. 4:5, 6 and Num. 14:34. There are three basic problems with those passages as you apply them. The first one is that in no way can they be considered as representative of so-called 'Apocalyptic' prophecy; the second one is that, unless proven otherwise, whenever a prophet, like Elijah, Jeremiah or Jonah, mentioned a time period, whether in years or in days, it never occurred to their contemporaries that their words should be understood at other than their face value. The third problem is that, both in Ezekiel and in Numbers, the specification about the future was fulfilled literally. That is, Ezekiel used a literal number of days, not years, in his dramatic forecast; and the Israelites wandered across the wilderness for 40 years, exactly as predicted. No prediction was made that they would be wandering for 40 days symbolising 40 years!
 - g. The last third of Tuesday's section and Friday's section mention a few biblical passages where reference is made to years and days. But, Dr Goldstein, there's something you should know, as all Bible writers knew this, and it is common knowledge from kindergarten onwards: the former are made up of a number of the latter! Years are made of days. The problem comes when you want to insist that, in prophecy, one day is one year. You haven't proven that to be the case, so we'll have to keep waiting. Just a kindly reminder: the joint score of your arguments is still zero.
3. The first third of Tuesday's section does a little make-believe arithmetic, and you do a magnificent job at convincing yourself that, since 2,300 literal days are shorter than 490 years, whereas the latter, in your unproven view, must have been cut off from the former, a straw case is built for the 2,300 'days' being considerably longer. The fact that a mere handful of other non-SDAs have shared the same fanciful notion is meaningless, if biblically unsound.
 4. Wednesday's section has the title '[More proof.](#)' Those two words bring to my mind the little scene of the mad hatter of Alice in Wonderland. He asked Alice if she wanted more tea. Very perceptibly, she answered how she could possibly want *more* when she hadn't had *any yet*. This is exactly what is happening here. You haven't offered any proof so far, so, quite certainly, this can't be *more*! So, let's start afresh. This must be it! You manifest your opposition to the KJV (!) and NIV insertion of the word *concerning* in their translation of Dan. 8:13 (you could equally refer to the *about* in NAS or the *of* in YLT). You claim that Hebrew grammar doesn't allow for the presence of that word. You are obviously referring to the circumstance that the word *חֲזוֹן* is not in the construct, but in the absolute state. That would be correct, but from that elementary observation does not necessarily follow that *concerning*, *about* or *of* are incorrect for one very simple reason: Hebrew, like many other languages, including modern languages, knows the principle of apposition. For instance, 2 Sam. 24:13 speaks of *שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים רָעָב* (*šeba^c šānīm rā^cāb*), literally 'seven years famine.' The word *שָׁנִים*, years, just like *חֲזוֹן* in Dan. 8:13, is in the absolute state, not construct. And yet, only an incompetent translator would neglect adding the preposition *of*, so as to have the correct 'seven years *of* famine.' Now, what were you saying about Hebrew grammar, Dr Goldstein? You must be kidding!

5. Next, you have the audacity to affirm that *'the question isn't just about the activity of the little horn. Instead, the question is about everything depicted in the chapter, which includes the vision about the ram and the goat.'* That claim of yours doesn't compare favourably with a similar question and answer found in chapter 12. After the elaborate angelic explanation of chapter 11, which began in Persian times, a similar question is asked: 'How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?' (6), and a similar answer is given: 'It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed' (7), so the claim that these periods must cover the whole visions involved is groundless. Besides, your curious paraphrase of Dan. 8:13, *'How long will all these things, from the rise of Media-Persia, the rise of Greece, and finally to Rome's attack on Christ's heavenly ministry, be allowed to go on?'*, reveals a gem of truth that most of your readers will fail to perceive. You have just admitted that the vision of chapter 8 deals with *'the rise of Media-Persia.'* That makes things easier for me. Hadn't you said that, I would have argued that verse 3 bespeaks the ascendancy of the Persians in the formerly powerful Median Empire, so, indeed, the prophecy does deal with *'the rise of Media-Persia,'* and it's very good that you have admitted that. Now, the problem for you, Dr Goldstein is that if the question of 13 really is about the whole vision, the one dealing with *'the rise of Media-Persia,'* then the answer to that question must of necessity be connected with *'the rise of Media-Persia'!* Now we are in real trouble. You see, the Persian Empire didn't begin in 457 BC, but predated Cyrus' access to the throne in 559! You have just set off the beginning of the יָיָן by one full century! Not a small accomplishment by any account. Congratulations!
6. Your final consideration in Wednesday's section is a classical example of question begging: *'Read the literal translation of the text given above. Why does this show that the 2,300 days cannot be taken as literal time? If literal, how could it cover all the events depicted in the question?'* Now, of course, if what you call a *'literal translation'* were the actual translation of the passage, though it isn't, then, of course the whole thing would be meaningless. All those who have no desire to promote absurdity should therefore be wise and avoid your illiterate translation.
7. Thursday's section revisits the claim that symbolic time must be meant when time periods are expressed in symbolic prophecy, but that claim has already been sufficiently refuted above. However, there's a very insightful double question at the end: *'[W]hy is the day-year principle so important to us as Adventists? What would happen to our whole prophetic foundation were this principle thrown out?'* Yes, it is easy to see what may well happen when someone decides that, no matter what, they will still build on sand. The structure collapses. But there's a solution: Don't build on sand!

Observations regarding Lesson 10, "Rome and Antiochus"

I hope you won't mind if my critique for this lesson is a global one that was uploaded to an Internet site just in time for the discussion of your material. It is repeated here as an Addendum, *infra*, "Rome in Danielic Studies."

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 11, "The Sanctuary and the Little Horn"

1. Your introductory remark that *'it's only in the context of the heavenly sanctuary and its services that we can get a better understanding of the little horn's assault'* is quite astounding. What would make you think that millions of believers throughout the ages

who didn't share the extra-biblical notion that the sanctuary in Dan. 8 is in heaven, didn't have a good understanding of Dan. 8? The truth is, paraphrasing your sentence, *only in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the heavenly sanctuary and its services can we get an Adventist understanding of the little horn's assault.*

2. Sunday's section uses Dan. 8:11, 25 in order to advance the notion that the little horn is or was involved in some kind of attack against Jesus Christ. The first verse speaks of the שַׂר־הַצְּבָא (śar-ḥaṣṣābā'), whereas the second one uses the expression שַׂר־שָׂרִים (śar-šārīm). Though both are usually translated *prince*, שַׂר is an entirely different word from the references to princes (נְגִיד) in 9:25f. Now, שַׂר is usually employed for a military commander, or even for a priest in command of the army. Apart from Dan. 8:11, שַׂר־הַצְּבָא occurs in 1 Sam. 17:55 (applied to Abner), in 1 Kings 1:19; 11:15, 21 (applied to Joab), in 2 Kings 4:13 (applied to a commander of the army in the days of Elisha), in 2 Kings 25:19 and Jeremiah 52:25 (applied to the 'chief officer in charge of conscripting the people'), in 1 Chron. 19:18 (applied to Shophach), and in 1 Chron. 27:5, applied to "Benaiah son of Jehoiada the priest". In which of these references is there a Messianic implication? Since 1 Chron. 27:5 witnesses to the possibility of a priest having the title of שַׂר־הַצְּבָא, would it be legitimate to suppose that Daniel predicted that the "little horn" would interfere with the Aaronic priesthood or that he would even eliminate one of the priests, or the high priest himself? Since that possibility obviously exists, your case for a Messianic application is groundless. The references to heaven, the sanctuary, the daily, etc. don't mean, as you claim, that the little horn is any more successful in fouling heaven itself than other OT tyrants in their attack against the earthly sanctuary!
3. Monday's section focuses on the sanctuary, indicating that the sacrificial animals of Dan. 8 are an unmistakable link to the OT cultus. That's excellent. Of course, the very presence of the sacrificial animals, and the explicit reference in Dan. 8:11-13 (cf. 11:31; 12:11) to the vetoing of the daily or תָּמִיד (tāmîd), take us back to OT days, not to the Christian dispensation! In any case, the sacrificial animals of Dan. 8 were not *exclusive* to the Day of Atonement rituals, as your discourse would need. The words אֵיל (ʿáyil), *ram*, and צִפְּרֵי־הָעִזִּים (ṣəp̄îr-hāʿizzîm), *male kid goat*, appear frequently in the Pentateuch to refer to various rituals, not exclusively in the Day of Atonement. As a result of these observations, your consideration at the end of Monday's section that the sanctuary the little horn attacked must have been the heavenly one because of chronology is bromidic and cannot be exegetically sustained. Nothing in the text suggests that the little horn's attack on the sanctuary would occur centuries after AD 70, so your celestial alibi has just been found lacking!
4. Tuesday and Wednesday's sections maintain that, given your a priori assertion that the attack takes place after AD 70, when there was no earthly sanctuary, and your equally unproven notion that the prince is Christ, it is obvious (!) that the little horn is symbolically attacking the heavenly sanctuary by denying the Adventist notion of that sanctuary and by inventing the sacrifice of mass. Of course, the mass is restricted to Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Church, but all non-SDAs reject just as strongly the SDA invention of the two-phase ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, so this would make all Protestants part of the little horn as well, don't you think? As for your contention that the little horn's attack on the daily does not entail an attack on the Yom Kippur ritual, it's improvable. An attack on the daily involves an entire disruption of the sanctuary cultus, and no hint exists that this tyrant would allow the rituals of 10 Tishri to be carried out unimpeded! In any case, the whole of Christendom's rejection of SDA notions applies

just as heavily to the second ‘phase’ of a celestial mediation as to the first ‘phase’, so, if the papacy were to be the little horn, it would foul both the celestial ‘most holy place’ just as much as the ‘holy place’! Your disingenuous considerations don’t deserve further refutation.

5. Your catechism quotes in Friday’s section have nothing to do with exegesis. If anything, they can only show how misled some people are, not that their mistakes were the object of a specific prediction in Holy Writ. Just make a little effort and imagine this scenario: Some misinformed fellow takes you for a serious commentator of prophecy from the SDA perspective and uses some of your obtuse statements in order to demonstrate that the SDA Church is a wilful promoter of error and, therefore, *the* representative of the forces of darkness on earth. Of course, that approach would be somewhat unfair. Misconceptions and daydreaming are one thing. Being an actual instrument of Satan is an entirely different matter, and it cannot be justified by mere hearsay, even from official or semi-official *claims!*

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 12, “The Pre-Advent Judgment”

1. After several general remarks in Sabbath’s section, the second paragraph of Sunday’s section is devoted to the following rhetorical question, ‘[What is this cleansing of the sanctuary that was of such importance that it would be linked with the great empires that Scripture uses to depict the history of the world?](#)’ Similar questions could be asked for other instances of God’s judgments in antiquity. Think of Sennacherib’s doom before Jerusalem, or of the prophecies of Nahum or Obadiah, or about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. None of these judgments of antiquity were historically isolated from contemporary society; they didn’t occur in some distant, isolated planet or moon, but on this earth, while civilisations existed, while kings were reigning and armies were in existence, sometimes quite *massive*, as you are so prone to say. What were those judgments that they would be linked with kingdoms like Egypt, Assyria or Babylon? Well, they were an indication that God rules history! Now, what about the judgment in Daniel 7? Obviously, it’s the same thing. No new teaching here!
2. Your sentimental appeal in the second half of Sunday’s section regarding the eternal possession of God’s kingdom by the saints can hardly help anyone identify the chronology of these events, as similar promises (like the perpetuity of David’s kingdom) are well attested throughout the OT. All scholars know these promises are conditional upon the people’s obedience to God’s plans. Since you’ve failed to prove that the implied promises in Dan. 7 and 8 are different from other similar promises in the OT, the evidence you so desperately need turns out to be nonexistent.
3. Monday’s section contains an insightful question, at last: ‘[Why in both Daniel 7 and in Daniel 8 is the judgment/sanctuary cleansing depicted in the context of the little horn, at least the phase of the little horn shown in the vision? What does the little horn have to do with the pre-Advent judgment?](#)’ Even though you claim ‘[i]t’s very clear,’ your answer entirely misses the question. Hebrew justice, like the justice of any other civilisation, saw to it that the innocent were unmolested, while the guilty got punished, of course, but *where exactly are the saints in Daniel presented as being under some kind of scrutiny by God or some other celestial intelligence?* The truthful answer to this most basic question is ‘*Nowhere!*’ This being the case, your entire argument is denied any virtue. The judgment in Daniel 7 is that of the evil little horn, and there’s no biblical evidence that this individual ever was one of God’s people, so this has nothing to do with

- the SDA ‘pre-Advent judgment.’ Likewise, as indicated before, the saints play no role in the pollution of the sanctuary (cf. Dan. 11:31).
4. Tuesday’s section contains three questions. Allow me to answer them biblically.
 - a. ‘What event is taking place [in Dan. 7:9, 10]?’ The judgment of the little horn!
 - b. ‘Where is it taking place?’ The text doesn’t say. However, considering that the Ancient of Days is initially seen as standing and then sitting is probably an indication that the seat he sits on is not his permanent sitting place. The text states explicitly that ‘thrones were set in place’ (v. 9), so this very much looks like an *ad hoc* tribunal that has been set outside the boundaries of a regular court of justice! Besides, the reference to clouds in the coming of the son of man before this tribunal (v. 13) bespeaks a terrestrial context for this judgment, not a heavenly one. We know clouds in the sky to be an atmospheric phenomenon of this earth, but I don’t think the Bible reveals that a similar phenomenon exists anywhere else in the universe or around God’s very presence in heaven itself! So, the answer to your question is, Somewhere on earth!
 - c. ‘Before whom?’ Before those with authority to pass judgment and before the earthly saints, who benefit from the little horn’s demise.
 5. Wednesday’s section contains quite a shallow question from you: ‘How fair would it be to sentence someone and then, only after the sentence, have a trial and investigate the facts?’ Now, Dr Goldstein, whoever said that God would ever do such a thing? God is God, and he knows everything. He doesn’t need to investigate anything after judgment is passed, or even before judgment is passed. And the Bible doesn’t say he has to ask for anyone’s acquiescence when he judges. That Christ comes back and brings his reward with him doesn’t mean there is a SDA-style pre-Advent judgment; only that he’s God. Since he knows everything, he can bring his just reward with him. Period.
 6. Thursday’s section contains the usual SDA reference to Heb. 9:22-24. Unfortunately for your interests, Dr Goldstein, the verb καθαρίζω, apart from ‘cleansing,’ can also mean ‘dedicating,’ prior to use, and this is the meaning here, as the historical context clearly indicates. Therefore, this proof-text entirely fails to teach the heretical concept that heaven needs purifying from some uncleanness, and, quite certainly, they have never ‘baffled non-Adventist scholars’! It’s a pity that you don’t provide the full context of Craig Koester’s commentary on Hebrews in the Anchor Bible series. If he’s such an authority for your brief quotation, why not quote the solution he offers? Something tells me that his explanation won’t line up with yours.
 7. Friday’s section appeal to Jewish traditions regarding *Yom Kippur* is irrelevant, as you’ve utterly failed to show a connection between Dan. 8:14 and *Yom Kippur*. There is, however, a very insightful personal question to be posed to Sabbath School students across the world: ‘Do you know people who are struggling with our understanding of pre-Advent judgment?’ Although it wouldn’t be fair to say that I’m ‘struggling’ with the bewildering SDA ‘understanding,’ perhaps you are thinking about people like me. If so, I see some light in this suggestion of yours: ‘Why not, as a class, plan a house meeting in which, after prayer and fellowship and food, you can share some of the things you have been learning?’ Hey! I’m all for that. Considering the distance from the US to Spain, I’ll content myself with a response to this email.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 13, “The Gospel and Judgment”

1. Your introductory remarks regarding the nature of atonement, biblically connecting it with the cross, are somewhat confusing, since you begin identifying the Day of

Atonement with the year 1844. Unless you mean the crucifixion of our Lord took place in 1844, the connection between the crucifixion (and atonement) with 1844 is very confusing.

2. Monday's section dwells on the meaning of blood, and the foreshadowing of Jesus' sacrifice in the sacrifices carried out at the Israelite sanctuary. That is interesting. There's an interesting sentence of yours, '[B]ecause blood was shed and then ministered on the Day of Atonement, this tells us that, central to the Day of Atonement, are the life and death of Jesus—in our behalf!' This is all very true, but, since the shedding of Christ's life took place at Calvary, the atonement has been a completed action since the days of the crucifixion. If so, what does this have to do with 1844? Earlier on in this section, there is this revealing observation: 'We as Adventists believe—based on (1) the earthly sanctuary model, (2) the book of Hebrews, and (3) the prophecies in Daniel—that since 1844 Jesus has been in the Most Holy Place, where the judgment, clearly seen in Daniel 7, is now taking place.' Sorry, Dr Goldstein, but this order of priorities for such a belief is all wrong. First of all, it doesn't start where it should, in the New Testament. Secondly, the earthly sanctuary model, and the references made in the book of Hebrews to it, don't reveal that Jesus would be entering a second ministering phase nearly eighteen centuries after the time that book was written. Thirdly, the judgment in Daniel 7 isn't a judgment of professed believers, let alone individually, as the SDA investigative judgment purportedly is, but a judgment of the evil little horn, who was no believer. Fourthly, nothing in the book of Daniel suggests that this judgment of the little horn would take place in the 19th century. Fifthly, even though in history God's judgment on the little horn and the cleansing of the Israelite sanctuary may have been coincident in time, they are different events. The cleansing of the sanctuary is related to the sanctuary as a whole, including its Most Holy Place, of course, but the judgment of the little horn does not take place in the Most Holy Place or in heaven, but rather where the little horn perished here on earth.

Questions and observations regarding Lesson 14, "The Meaning of the Judgment Today"

1. As my previous criticism demonstrates, your confident Sabbath assertion that '[u]sing everything from the earthly sanctuary model to the prophecies of Daniel to the life and death of Jesus and to the book of Hebrews, we've seen that, as Adventists, we are on solid biblical ground with our teaching on the 1844 judgment' is absolutely astounding. For we've all seen just the opposite, and repeatedly so, on *all* accounts! After considering what this doctrine meant for post-disappointment pioneers, you ask the rhetorical question, 'Why is it important for us to know and believe this teaching?'
2. Sunday's section contains the following reflection: 'Perhaps one of the most important points of the 1844-sanctuary doctrine is its teaching that there will be a judgment, a just judgment in which evil will be condemned and righteousness vindicated.' Sorry, Dr Goldstein, but 'teaching that there will be a judgment, a just judgment in which evil will be condemned and righteousness vindicated' is the standard belief of *all* Christians, particularly of those who *reject* any relevance whatsoever to 1844. So, I'm afraid that is not 'one of the most important points of the 1844-sanctuary doctrine.' Later on, you actually say what you wanted to say all along: 'In fact, the [SDA] message tells the world that *this judgment already has begun*' (emphasis provided).
3. Monday's section revisits the issue of theodicy, previously presented in lesson 1. This

time you come up with a few more Bible texts to buttress that notion of yours that God needs, or wants, some intelligence to certify his justice as good. The passages are these:

- a. 'The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring for ever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous' (Psa. 19:9). Indeed. This was written some 3,000 years ago, and it was true then, as it has always been and will always be. God is God, and nobody in their right mind would think about sitting God in the dock. In short, 1844 has nothing to do with theodicy.
- b. '[H]e did it [presenting Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement] to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus' (Rom. 3:26). Once again, God did this from the time of the crucifixion onwards. What Paul calls 'at the present time' occurred two millennia ago, not in 1844!
- c. 'Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God' (1 Cor. 4:5). Two things: Firstly, this text does take us to the final judgment on the occasion of the second coming, but that has nothing to do with 1844. Secondly, this text teaches that God's judgment is the final instance of justice, not that there shouldn't be any human judgment at all. Paul himself judged certain circumstances severely himself (see, for instance, 1 Cor. 5:1-5).
- d. 'Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known' (1 Cor. 13:12). Once again, this text in the midst of Paul's best-known chapter about love, takes us to the second coming. Nothing to do with 1844.

None of these passages have anything to do with the concept of God's necessity to justify his actions before some celestial intelligence, or angelic host, so your contention that '[t]hey, right now, are seeing the righteousness and fairness of God's judgment' is futile, because they always have, not just since 1844. Equally futile is your appeal to 1 Cor. 6:3, 'Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!' Does this bear any relationship at all with 1844? Are *you* judging any angels right now, Dr Goldstein? If you are, I suppose any believer, say, in the 16th century would have been equally entitled to do so back in his era. And if you aren't because that must wait until the second coming, what is the relevance of 1844 for this? None whatsoever!

4. Tuesday's section revisits the wrong notion that the second coming is depicted in Dan. 7. Since that has already been refuted, there's no need to elaborate again. Claiming, as you do, that a non-event like 1844 can somehow patch up hope in the second coming, a real future event, is nonsensical: 'Here's where the 1844 judgment comes in, for it's a powerful indicator of the times we are living in. It's a message from God, to us, saying basically, *Trust me, I am coming as I have said. It can't be too far off.*' No, sir, most definitely 1844 is *not* 'a message from God.' Jesus Christ didn't teach such a message, and none of his apostles did. That circumstance in itself very much excludes the possibility of this concoction being 'a message from God.'
5. Wednesday's section contains a highly commendable presentation of justification by faith surrounded by two unwarranted claims: 'Perhaps the greatest and most important point about the 1844 pre-Advent judgment is that it is a message of assurance' and 'This is the most important message of the 1844 pre-Advent judgment.' What would you say, Dr Goldstein, if I claimed that I had discovered America? Wouldn't you say I was vastly exaggerating my actual achievements? Crossing the Atlantic these days hardly qualifies

anyone as a fellow discoverer of Christopher Columbus! The same thing happens, you see, with justification by faith. It was precisely the 1844 confusion what caused most of the leaders of Adventism to be wholly ignorant of justification by faith until its rediscovery in 1888 at Minneapolis. Meanwhile, Evangelical Christians had a clear picture all along. So, I would suggest that you do not attribute the merits of sound theology to promoters of error. *The correct understanding of justification by faith owes ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to 1844, thank you very much.*

6. Later on, Wednesday's section contains this statement: 'Some Christians have no concept of a pre-Advent judgment because they believe in "once saved, always saved."' It's good that you should recognise as fellow Christians believers of a more Calvinistic persuasion. However, the vast majority of non-Calvinistic Christians are also characterised by having 'no concept of a pre-Advent judgment' even if they don't 'believe in "once saved, always saved."' How's this for a reason? *Most Christians have no concept of a pre-Advent judgment because the Bible doesn't teach it, so they do very well indeed!*
7. Finally, your Wednesday's fine distinction that '[t]he judgment is not a time when God decides to accept or reject us; it's the time when God finalizes our choice as to whether or not we have accepted or rejected Him' bears no relationship with 1844 either, for countless millions died centuries before 1844, so that time when God decided to accept or reject them, the time when God finalized their choice as to whether or not they had accepted or rejected him cannot possibly be dated after their death, which verifies the utter folly of your explanation.
8. Thursday's section tries to convince its readers of the need of doing 'greater works' considering 'we are now living in the time when those works are being judged.' This is patently absurd reasoning. Considering that the quick and the dead will all be judged by one and the same standard, there's no reason whatever why the people living at the time purportedly coincident with that fictional pre-Advent judgment of yours should behave any differently from believers of gone-by ages.
9. Friday's section wraps up the connection between SDA investigative judgment theology and Millerite chronological musings. Your first five and a half lines accurately summarise the factual link between both systems of reasoning. There's one word in the conclusion you try to extract, next; however, that is entirely unwarranted. You state that 'Hence, it's important for us, as a people, to understand the **biblical** reasoning that leads to 1844.' The emphasised word is an oxymoron because there's *no* biblical reasoning that leads to 1844! All the tricks up your sleeve won't do you any good except when trying to instruct illiterate readers of the Bible. And repetition won't help you either: '[B]y being firmly rooted in the **biblical** basis of 1844, we have the assurance that the prophetic foundation upon which **our church was founded is, indeed, a foundation rooted** in the Word of God itself. In short, it's important for us to be grounded in the 1844 teaching because it affirms the **biblical** basis upon which we, as a church, with our distinctive message, exist' (emphasis provided). You are correct that the SDA church was founded on that basis, but that isn't something to be proud of, I'm afraid. It compares very unfavourably relative to the true foundation of the Christian faith as delineated by Holy Writ itself: 'For no-one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 3:11).
10. Your last discussion question is very interesting: 'As a class, take what you have learned this quarter and put together a seminar for the whole church, in order to help

everyone understand the solid biblical foundation of our 1844 message and what it means for the church today.' I sincerely believe you are taking too much for granted when you state that someone has learned something this quarter through your instruction, other than a masterful exercise of convoluted sophistry, but I like the idea of a seminar for the whole church. Tell me, though. What sort of a seminar do you envisage? One in which all the thinking must come from higher hierarchical levels, or one in which dissenting voices can be heard? Do you think I stand a chance of taking part in this seminar?

After reading all the material your imagination has produced, with the due attention the subject deserves, I can't help but thinking that you've succeeded in achieving something that very few people in the world could have accomplished: making Dr Pfandl's 2004 Sabbath School Quarterly a masterful piece of exegetical rigour by comparison! If I may one last time employ one adjective you've used profusely throughout this quarter, your presentation is not so much related to *massive empires* as it is in itself *massive fraud*. The damaged goods you've so blatantly passed on to your unsuspecting readers are, by far, the very worst official presentation of the SDA 1844 heretical theology ever produced for the laity. Seeing the self-degrading trend of partisan apologia for such a monstrosity is certainly encouraging, as one can only expect that the next visitation of this ugly doctrine will be even more hapless, difficult though that may seem. It appears that the denomination is running short of hired help willing to waste ink on such fruitless effort, and that's good news. Perhaps the day when this stillborn theory will be certified defunct isn't far in the future. That day all Christians will rejoice that the misguided self-appointed visionaries that blindly followed William Miller's folly have at long last rejoined the family of believers that found all their hopes and theology in *Sola Scriptura*. And what a happy day that will be!

Yours sincerely,

Eduardo Martínez-Rancaño

Addendum

Rome in Danielic studies

Prominent among the various views about the specific identities of the different world powers presented in the book of Daniel by means of various symbols (particularly in chs. 2, 7 and 8) is the notion that Rome is the last villain presented in the relevant visions. Although the contrary view has been gaining an ever-increasing measure of support for many decades now, defenders of the Roman view, most of whom are entrenched Seventh-day Adventist historicists, usually resort to the following methods to propagate their conviction to inexperienced Bible students:

1. Using history books to show the importance of the Roman Empire in antiquity. This is the usual procedure for people whose knowledge about ancient empires is quite limited.
2. Parading the manifest relevance of the Roman Empire in NT times, and the particular involvement of Roman authorities in the crucifixion of our Lord.
3. Using direct or indirect NT references to Daniel to buttress the notion of a sinister Roman prominence in the book of Daniel.
4. Claiming that Rome is the only world power that can somehow reach the end of the world, according to their interpretation of such passages as Dan. 2:44.
5. Ignoring all contrary evidence.

Actually, the first two points are quite irrelevant for this investigation, since scholars who reject a prominent role for Rome in the book of Daniel have never tried to play down the importance of Rome for the history of mankind. Apart from showing a few cases where the fifth point is manifest, the rest of this addendum will deal with points 3 and 4.

Rome, Revelation and Daniel

Historicists usually take it for granted that the easy identification of the sea beast, [Rev. 13:1ff.](#), with Rome will lead all doubters to concede that the horrible beast of Dan. 7:7ff. *must* likewise be Rome. However, this is a classical *non sequitur*, because the sea beast, in reverse order:

- “had a mouth like that of a lion” (2), the first beast of Dan. 7, which no historicist will ever claim was Rome;
- “had feet like those of a bear” (2), the second beast of Dan. 7, which no historicist will ever claim was Rome;
- “resembled a leopard” (2), the third beast of Dan. 7, which no historicist will ever claim was Rome;
- “had ten horns” (1), like the fourth beast of Dan. 7, the *only* one historicists claim was Rome.

Now, if, in the case of the lion, the bear and the leopard, John the Seer felt authorised to re-employ for Rome Danielic symbols representing heathen nations *other than Rome*, his use of the fourth Danielic beast for Rome does not prove Daniel foresaw Rome as the fourth kingdom any more than it would prove the lion, the bear or the leopard were also Rome. In fact, logic would advise suggesting a nation *other than Rome* as the *alter ego* of the fourth Danielic beast. Moreover, John adds one addi-

tional detail to his composite beast *not* found in Daniel: it had “seven heads” (1), elsewhere associated with seven hills and seven kings (Rev. 17:3, 7).

The nature of John’s borrowing from Daniel is manifest: God’s timely message to his children through his prophet announced the doom of a contemporary power that was the very personification of *all* heathen nations of antiquity; so Rome is depicted as embodying the traits of Babylon, Persia, Macedon and the fourth Danielic world power, whose identity will be revealed in the course of this addendum.

The Gospels, the Abomination that Causes Desolation, and Daniel

Historicists also rely heavily upon the directive of Matt. 24:15: “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation’, spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—...”, a manifest reference to the Roman army (*cf.* Luke 17:20). The parallel passage of Mark 13:14, while not mentioning Daniel by name, also speaks of “the abomination that causes desolation,” a Danielic expression appearing in the following passages:

Reference	Hebrew	Transliteration	Translation
Dan. 9:27	שְׁקוּצִים מְשׁוֹמֵם	<i>šiqqušîm m^ešômēm</i>	desolating abominations
Dan. 11:31	הַשְּׁקוּץ מְשׁוֹמֵם	<i>haššiqquš m^ešômēm</i>	the desolating abomination
Dan. 12:11	שְׁקוּץ שׁוֹמֵם	<i>šiqquš šômēm</i>	desolating abomination

Although the specific vowel points vary slightly from text to text, the expression is basically the same in all three cases, the plural noun being the most remarkable peculiarity in the first case, though followed by a singular poel participle from the root שָׁמַם. The plural probably indicates a collective noun, therefore, employed as a singular. The noun שְׁקוּץ is used elsewhere in the OT for abominable idols, such as that of Milcom (1 Ki. 11:5; 2 Ki. 23:24), or the abominable practices of heathen worship (Nah. 3:6). The equivalents in the Septuagint and Theodotion for all three Danielic references are as follows:

Reference	Septuagint	Theodotion
Dan. 9:27	βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων abomination of the desolations	βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων abomination of the desolations
Dan. 11:31	βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως abomination of desolation	βδέλυγμα ἠφανισμένον disfigured abomination
Dan. 12:11	βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως abomination of the desolation	βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως abomination of desolation

The reasoning behind historicist claims is that if our Lord applied the “abomination that causes desolation” presumably to a Roman desecration of the temple precincts in his future, then it cannot possibly have had an earlier fulfilment. There are several problems with this line of reasoning.

First of all, it is to be noted that two of the passages that mention the “abomination of desolation” are located in the last two chapters of Daniel, rarely expounded in Seventh-day Adventist literature, fond of dwelling on chs. 2, 7 and 8. It is true that the reference 9:27 is at the close of the famous 70-week prophecy, but it is significant that the destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary mentioned in verse 26 immediately *before* the last “week” is presented cannot possibly be made to fit with A.D. 70 while maintaining that the 70 “weeks” themselves end in A.D. 34!

The fact remains that the “abomination of desolation” passages belong in portions of Daniel not primarily connected with the standard historicist claims of chs. 2, 7 and 8.

Secondly, there is the issue of what exactly NT quotations of the OT entail. It is well known by the average Bible student that the NT frequently quotes the OT in a non-exegetical manner, very much following the practice of *midrash* literature. The question can be asked, Is there any evidence whatever that NT writers, or possibly Jesus Christ himself, quoted an OT passage in such a way, reapplying to their times or the future some texts that had already met their fulfilment? If the answer to this question were yes, the whole effort of shaping our understanding of Daniel or any other OT books from later applications would prove fruitless.

Now, there is ample evidence that, more often than not, this is precisely the way the NT quotes the OT. There are actually too many cases to illustrate this, so two examples must suffice to illustrate this non-exegetical employment of the OT by NT writers.

During the Council of Jerusalem, James expressed his conviction that the time had come for the Gentiles to be a part of God's people. After mentioning the commencement of the ministry to the Gentiles through Peter, James stated, "The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things'" (Acts 15:15-18). Now, this quotation comes from the badly translated Septuagint of Amos 9:11f., whose Hebrew text conveys these thoughts:

"In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name," declares the LORD, who will do these things.

Despite James' use of the LXX translation of this verse to uphold the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, there is nothing in Amos 9:11f. to suggest this. Actually, after predicting Israel's ruin (9:1-10), Amos, a prophet of the northern kingdom of Israel, is announcing its future restoration (11-15), and this entails *political* dominion of Edom and of all other territories where God's name has been heard! This is one prime example, surely, of the *conditional* nature of prophecy (cf. Jer. 18:7-10). Through God's grace, this passage, which announced national conquest for the seceded northern kingdom of Israel, was turned into something entirely different: the opening of the gospel message to the Gentiles. But this re-application cannot possibly make us blind as to what it originally meant.

The second example comes from the mouth of Jesus himself. Explaining why he used to speak using figures of speech, our Lord said: "This is why I speak to them in parables: 'Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand'" (Matt. 13:13). Jesus was quoting from Deut. 29:4; Jer. 5:21; and Eze. 12:2. But then he goes on to say:

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them." (14f.)

The passage Jesus was quoting is Isaiah 6:9f. The exegesis done by our Lord was entirely correct, because God's words through Isaiah were indeed very fitting for many of Jesus' contemporaries. However, there is a significant detail regarding this OT passage: it comes from Isaiah's very calling to the prophetic ministry. Just before the quoted passage, we have: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!' He said, 'Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving'" (8f). So, obviously, as far as chronology is concerned, these divine words met their *complete* fulfilment more than seven centuries before Christ, "in the year that King Uzziah died" (1).

So, the problem for those wishing to enforce a Roman reading on Daniel based on Matt. 24:15 is that the attested phenomena of non-exegetical and non-chronological re-applications of OT passages must be taken into account. Since Jesus saw fit to reapply Isaiah's previously fulfilled prophecy to his own contemporaries, his re-application of Daniel's שְׁקִיז שָׁמַם to the future military desecration of the temple need not contribute *anything* to designating the armed forces that originally defiled "the temple fortress," vetoed "the daily sacrifice" and set up "the abomination that causes desolation" (Dan. 11:31).

Rome and the *Eschaton* in Daniel

As for the third point, historicist claims must of necessity ignore:

- Explicit indications in the book of Daniel itself in the sense that *all* world powers survive until the *eschaton* (Dan. 2:34f., 44; 7:11f.). Nowhere does Daniel intimate that the fourth power is the only surviving empire at the time of the *eschaton*. He explicitly states that *all* components of the statue in chapter 2 are "broken to pieces at the same time" (2:35) and that God's kingdom supersedes "all those kingdoms" (2:44), obviously meaning the only kingdoms the seer has mentioned so far, i.e., those represented by the gold, the silver, the bronze and the iron. Furthermore, immediately following the presentation of the judgment scene described in 7:9f., Daniel states: "Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped

of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time)” (11f.). So, it is manifest that:

- All previous kingdoms are presented as alive during the judgment scene;
- The fourth kingdom itself meets its doom not centuries before the little horn, but as a *result* of the latter’s death sentence.

If the *eschaton* is thought of as reaching the end of the world, by no stretch of the imagination can this be made to fit with the history of the Roman Empire, which is long gone.

- Explicit indications in the book of Daniel itself that the “time of the end” (עֵת קֶשֶׁת, *‘ēt qēṣ*) involves geopolitical and historical situations entirely out of sync with the modern world and the foreseeable future: “At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand” (11:40f.). Such warfare and the long-gone nations described here bespeak the past, not the future.
- Although the realisation may come as a shock to them, Seventh-day Adventist historicists do not actually believe that “[i]n the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people” (2:44), or that this kingdom would “become a huge mountain and [fill] the whole earth” (35), for authoritative statements by Ellen White claim that there will be a hiatus after the downfall of human kingdoms before the actual establishment of God’s kingdom on this earth. This hiatus will be nothing short of a millennial desolated Satanic kingdom! So much for coherence in prophetic exposition!

Of course, none of these observations will by itself disqualify Rome as playing some type of role in the book of Daniel. It is theoretically conceivable that, even after the debacle of the whole historicist scenario, Rome could still be perceived as fulfilling its purported prophetic role way back in antiquity. But, as I say, that is only theoretical, and the perception that Rome plays an important role in Daniel is purely subjective, being derived from history books, not from rigorous exegesis of the book of Daniel itself.

Rome in Daniel

Although there are far too many details whose accurate analysis would demand more space than currently available, let the following highly summarised line of reasoning suffice. Throughout his book Daniel’s basic theme is the same: Although, for a time, human rulers may be in control of the affairs affecting God’s children, in the end they will all be superseded by God himself. The different chapters depict various aspects of this principle. Chs. 2 and 7, particularly, speak of four vast empires succeeded by God’s kingdom. Ch. 8 presents almost the same thing, although the first empire does not appear and the fourth power, having been derived from the third empire, is presented not as a beast, like the second and third empires, but as a horn, which had surfaced in the previous chapter as a part of the fourth empire. The 70-week prophecy of ch. 9 focuses upon the restoration of Jerusalem and the re-consecration of the sanctuary after the sacrilege committed by the evil ruler who was to come (26). Ch. 11 adds much more detail to the prophetic forecasts of the previous chapters.

It is curious that Seventh-day Adventist presentations of prophecy consistently fail to do justice to Dan. 11. In contrast to how Dan. 2, 7, 8 and 9 are treated in the current Sabbath School Quarterly, Dan. 11 is ignored for its 1844 polemic. Ch. 11 is very explicit about “a contemptible person” (21) who was the successor on the throne of the “king of the North” who sent out “a tax collector to maintain the royal splendour” (20). This evil king of the North is said to do everything chs. 7 and 8 attribute to the little horn! The paramount action crowning his infamous reign is presented in 31f.: “His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.” His God-ordained end “at the time of the end” is also presented in 40ff. Naturally, the divine intervention in his demise does not entail fireworks, as Dr Clifford Goldstein might like. Divine intervention may simply consist of acute irreversible infectious disease, just as in the case of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:19-23).

Now, the problem for historicism is that Dan. 11 is so precise, carefully following the dynastic rulers of the main two kingdoms that were split from the formerly unified kingdom of “Javan” (Greece or, more properly, Macedon) (verse 2). No mention whatever is made *anywhere* in this chapter that a foreign empire or nation replaces either of the leading actors in this secular fight between the king of the South and the king of the North. So injecting Rome into the character of the king of the North cannot be achieved successfully. However, Rome does appear in ch. 11. Our English versions of the Bible say:

At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant. (29f.)

Instead of *ships of the western coastlands*, the KJV has “ships of Chittim.” Now, Chittim is believed to be the Cypriote town of Kition, although a *ship of Chittim* is thought to be a certain type of ship, more particularly, a galley. It is interesting that the LXX (not Theodotion) for Dan. 11:30 says this:

καὶ ἥξουσι Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ ἐξώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμβριμήσονται αὐτῷ · καὶ ἐπιστρέψει καὶ ὀργισθήσεται ἐπὶ τὴν διαθήκην τοῦ ἁγίου · καὶ ποιήσει καὶ ἐπιστρέψει καὶ διανοηθήσεται ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ, ἀνθ’ ὧν ἐγ-κατέλιπον τὴν διαθήκην τοῦ ἁγίου.

In plain English:

And the Romans will come and will drive him out. And he will be moved to anger, and he will return and be furious against the holy covenant. And he will act, and return and reach an understanding with those who are against and abandon the holy covenant.

So, Rome is *not* the evil king of the North after all; only the power that expelled him from Egypt on the occasion of his second invasion of that country! Most commentators believe the actual armies of the Republic of Rome had already appeared in verse 18, where the commander that puts an end to Antiochus III’s insolence is Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, the Roman Consul in command of the legions that defeated the Syrians at Magnesia, near Pergamum.

Now, this must be shocking news for Seventh-day Adventist historicists, but they had better get used to it. It’s the truth. Rome’s role in Dan. 11 is *not* insignificant, but, most certainly, it is not one of the leading roles. The leading roles are those of the king of the North and the king of the South, that is, the king of the Seleucid Empire, and the king of Ptolemaic Egypt. The geographical setting is that of the former realm of Alexander the Great, not Western Europe. The time setting is that of Hellenism, not the Middle Ages or contemporary or even future history. It was all in the past before Jesus was born.

Of course, this analysis is quite devastating for historicist claims, and it can be extended to all previous chapters of Daniel, and even to ch. 12. For instance, the true historical setting of the “seed of men” of Dan. 2:43 (KJV) has *nothing* to do with the marriage alliances between the various European monarchies in the days of Queen Victoria, but *everything* to do with the marriage alliances between the Hellenistic kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, as indicated in Dan. 11:6, 17, well attested historically.

In short, the divided fourth kingdom of Dan. 2 has nothing to do with Rome’s demise and the appearance of the European nations, but everything to do with the feuding Hellenistic kingdoms, an echo of the divine forecast that “his empire will be broken up and parcelled out towards the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others” (Dan. 11:4).

The Paramount Villain in the Book of Daniel

At least since the days of Flavius Josephus, most scholars have identified the evil little horn or king of the North as Antiochus IV Epiphanes. In short, his “accomplishments” in Israel were the following:

- Promoting the peaceful Hellenisation of the country through the creation of:
 - a gymnasium, where priests and the general public were invited to participate naked, whereby their circumcision was manifest; a surgical operation to “decircumcise” their foreskin became fashionable;
 - a public, State-sponsored brothel;
 - frowning upon anything that looked Jewish;
 - eliminating all public figures that stood for Judaism; this included the rightful high priest, who was first supplanted by his ambitious brother, a firm supporter of Greek culture, and then assassinated.
- The demolition of Nehemiah’s wall. This was used to build the *Akra* in the heart of Jerusalem, where a permanent Syrian garrison was stationed. Archers used to fine-tune their aim against worshippers who dared to approach the temple. Part of the structure of the temple was also demolished so that it could not be used as a defensive wall by faithful Jews. Eventually, Jerusalem was abandoned by every Jew who wanted to remain loyal to their faith.
- Taking violent measures (under the penalty of death) consisting of:
 - banning the possession of copies of the Scriptures;
 - banning the observance of the Sabbath and other national festivals;

- proscribing circumcision for newborn boys; offending mothers saw their children hanged, were paraded with them hanging from their breasts or necks and then thrown to their deaths from the top of the wall of the Akra;
- forcing the Jews to eat pork in public and offer incense to heathen gods;
- eventually, proscribing the worship of Yahweh in any of its forms.
- Rededicating the temple of Jerusalem to Zeus. This involved the erection of a statue with the image of Antiochus himself. The altar of the temple was used for the sacrifice of sows. The temple precincts became the working place of prostitutes, who practised their trade there.
- Terrorising the people of Israel by means of “exemplary” public executions, basically consisting of:
 - crucifixion;
 - dismemberment;
 - frying people alive.

The above list, based on the evidence presented by Flavius Josephus and other older books, such as 1 and 2 Maccabees, gives an idea of the nature of the brutal onslaught that Antiochus Epiphanes meant for the people of Israel two centuries before Christ. It has *all* the earmarks of the deeds of the little horn.

Against this overwhelming evidence, all historicists can do is try and confuse incipient Bible students by means of half-witted historical and pseudo-exegetical considerations. Typical among these are:

- *Antiochus cannot be the little horn because the little horn will perish supernaturally at the time of the end, on the occasion of the second coming.* Answer: Nowhere does Daniel speak of the second or first coming of Christ. When he speaks of the time of the end, he merely speaks of the days when his predictions will meet their fulfilment, which need not involve the end of the world as such. Antiochus died very much like Herod Agrippa did two centuries later, and it was understood as supernatural even by heathen historians, like Polybius.
- *Antiochus cannot be the little horn because he was not great enough.* Answer: It is curious that a character called little should be said to be incompatible with someone who was not very great. Naturally, some petty character can be towering enough in some particular sense. Prophecy predicts that the little horn would grow “in power to the south and to the east and towards the Beautiful Land” (8:9). Nowhere does prophecy intimate that the little horn would be bigger than the eminent horn in the forehead of the he-goat of 8:5-8. In any case, Antiochus IV was one of the few foreign kings of all time who successfully conquered Egypt once (he captured Memphis), and, one year before his death, he recovered Armenia and Bactria (northern Afghanistan) for his empire. Both territories had become independent after his father’s defeat at Magnesia. Not bad, as far as military victories go! Of course, he was expelled from Egypt on the occasion of his second invasion, but that had been predicted too, as we have already seen. The major setback for a more prosperous reign was Israel, but that had been predicted, too.
- *Antiochus cannot be the little horn because he only reigned for twelve years, but we know the little horn would rule for at least 1,260 years.* Answer: We know nothing of the kind. The 1,260 years are a figment of the imagination of historicists. A rule of twelve years for Antiochus does not compare too unfavourably with Alexander’s thirteen-year rule.
- *Antiochus cannot be the little horn because he reigned shortly after the middle of the Seleucid line, whereas Dan. 8:23 specifies that he was to appear at the end of the reign of the Hellenistic kingdoms.* Answer: The original of 8:23 uses the word אַחֲרֵיתָא (*ah^harît*), which conveys the notion of the latter, or second part of something (cf. Job 42:12). In perfect agreement with prophecy, Antiochus IV did appear “in the latter part of their reign,” so a better fit would be impossible. Historicists have a more difficult task if they are to explain how on earth the pope managed to appear in the latter part of the Hellenistic kingdoms, considering the last one disappeared in 30 B.C. After all, in all historicist literature, the little horn is supposed to begin his reign of terror about A.D. 538. Perhaps he had appeared in the days of Mark Antony but then slumbered for five and a half centuries!
- *Antiochus cannot be the little horn because his activities cannot be mathematically demonstrated to fit the time periods mentioned in the Bible.* Answer: The people who present this objection do not really want to be cross-examined on mathematics. Never will they provide objective corroboration for their imaginary 22nd October, 1844 terminus for the 2,300 evenings and mornings. And they do not really want anyone to dig too deeply into their interpretation of the 70 “weeks,” their alibi for all this *massive fraud*. It just happens that *all* the dates in that “chain of evidence” (457 and 408 B.C., and A.D. 27, 31 and 34) are irrelevant non-events (there was no decree in the autumn of 457 to restore Jerusalem, for the city was already restored more than half a century before; nothing is known to

have happened in 408 B.C.; there is no evidence that Jesus was baptised in A.D. 27; it is doubtful that he was crucified in A.D. 31; and there is no compelling evidence that A.D. 34 has anything to do with Stephen's stoning or Paul's conversion). In any case, and somewhat to the relief of the enquirer, whoever said that biblical periods must be mathematically precise according to modern systems of reckoning? To begin with, despite the "three days and three nights," our Saviour is generally believed to have been in the tomb for less than 72 hours! So much for mathematical accuracy. In any case, it just so happens that the historical evidence about Antiochus' deeds in Israel (mostly, time periods in Josephus) is in close agreement with the figures given by Daniel. It appears that the various time figures given by Daniel (2,300 evenings and mornings, possibly equal to 1,150 days, 1,290 days and 1,335 days) may refer to the celebration of various national festivals following the cleansing of the sanctuary (*Hanukkah*), and this can be documented far better than the 22nd October, 1844 mirage, which cannot possibly be documented *at all!*

Historicists have several more objections that, like the above, constitute an irresponsible exercise of obfuscation intended to keep believers away from the truth, but they are all reasonably easy to expose.

Conclusion

Rome's relevance for the study of various parts of the NT cannot be denied. However, her importance for the history of the OT in general, and for its prophetic portion in particular, or, more precisely, for Danielic studies, has clearly been blown out of proportion by historicist interpreters, whose agenda requires an arch-villain close to their own time to justify their dreamed-of prophetic stance. They maintain the fiction of injecting Rome into portions of Daniel whose parallel in ch. 11 manifestly presents a historical fulfilment of the seer's forecast *in the days of Hellenism*, not at the time of the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages or sometime during the existence of the European Union! Historicist counter arguments twist either the facts of history, the evidence of Scripture, or both, in order to maintain the fiction. Besides, they resort to non-exegetical NT quotations of the OT to inject the re-application to Rome that some NT authors make of certain OT symbols into a pseudo-exegesis of Daniel that agrees with the Seventh-day Adventist scenario they wish to advance.

On the other hand, actual historical evidence pertaining to the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the aftermath of his crimes is consistent with the specifications that can be exegetically derived from a careful examination of the book of Daniel. So much so that this is the most important of the reasons why most modern scholars accept the view that the book of Daniel itself was written *after* the events described in it had transpired! The present author does not share such a view, but is greatly impressed by the astounding precision of the prophetic forecast. Transplanting Daniel's prediction to a different geographical milieu (Europe) and to a different era (the Middle Ages, or ours) can only bring chaos to its exposition, as is painfully evident in Seventh-day Adventist literature in general and in the current Sabbath School Quarterly in particular.