

Daniel 8:14 studied in context
By Dale Ratzlaff

Most of our readers know that I and many other former Seventh-day Adventists left that church because of what we considered to be doctrinal error that undermined the new covenant gospel. We have on several occasions both in our books and in our presentations and articles shown that the investigative judgment does not measure up to the biblical test for truth. However, we have not spent much time explaining what Daniel 8:14 does mean in its contextual, biblical and historical setting. We have repeatedly shown the error of the Adventist interpretation but have often been silent on the real meaning of this text which is “the central pillar of Adventism”.

Adventists will do everything in their power to exclude Antiochus IV as the fulfillment of Daniel 8:8-14. If they admit that Daniel 8:8-14 describes the activities of Antiochus Epiphanes, then the “central pillar” of the Advent faith crumbles. My study leads me to conclude that Antiochus IV is in view in this passage for four reasons.

1. The historical account recorded in 1 Maccabees¹ is such a clear fulfillment of Daniel 8 that liberal scholars who do not believe in prophecy date the book of Daniel about 164 BC during the Maccabean Revolt.² Conservative scholars who believe in prophecy date this book about 540-530 BC and see Daniel 8 as a prophecy of the atrocities of Antiochus IV.

2. Josephus, the Jewish historian who gives an eye witness account of the horrible destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, also records other aspects of Jewish history. After describing the events of Antiochus IV and the Maccabean revolt recorded in 1 Maccabees, we find this insightful comment.

And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel, which was given four hundred and eight years before; for he declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship [for some] time.³

3. Some feel that Antiochus IV was not as great a king as the one pictured in Daniel 8 and therefore Daniel would not have given such space to this “little man”. However, his importance cannot be overemphasized. Left alone, Antiochus IV would have wiped out God’s people, all traces of the law, and Jewish worship.⁴

4. The majority of Bible scholars agree that Daniel 8:9-14 describe the atrocities of Antiochus IV.

Before I left the Adventist ministry I studied the Adventist’s sanctuary doctrine as thoroughly as I could with the resources available to me at that time. The material in this article is my current understanding of this verse in its own contextual setting. My comments—interpretation—inside the biblical quotes will be in brackets. At times I have colored words to show that there is a repeated theme and bolded or underlined for emphasis.

¹ 1 Maccabees is not a canonical book, however most scholars believe it is a reliable historical record of the Maccabean period.

² <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/apocalypse/explanation/bdaniel.html>

³ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XII, Chapter 4, verse 6.

⁴ For the importance of Antiochus IV see R.D. Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel* (New York, 1917) p. 270-276.

After we have studied Daniel 8:14 in context, we will consider the implications of Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:15-21.

The first principle of interpretation is to observe the biblical and historical context. Come, let us reason together. We will hit just the high points to bring contextual clarity. We will quote Daniel 8:8-14 to get an overview of the context and then come back to it again after we read what I consider to be the historical fulfillment of these verses, adding additional interpretation.

Daniel 8:1: In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king [of Babylon] a vision appeared to me, Daniel...

Daniel 8:8-14: ⁸Then the male goat [Greece] magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn [Alexander the Great] was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns [Alexander's four generals] toward the four winds of heaven [the four directions of the compass].

⁹Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn [Antiochus IV] which grew exceedingly great [in comparison to its small start] toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. [South is the direction of his conquests; the "beautiful land" is the land of Israel⁵].

¹⁰It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it **trampled** them down. ¹¹It even magnified *itself* to be equal with the Commander of the host and it removed the **regular sacrifice** from Him, and the **place of His sanctuary** was **thrown down**.

¹²And on account of **transgression** the host [God's people⁶] will be given over *to the horn* along with the **regular sacrifice**; and it will **fling truth to the ground** and perform *its will* and prosper.

¹³Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision *about* the **regular sacrifice** apply, while [durative time] the **transgression causes horror**, so as to allow both the **holy place** and the host to be **trampled?**"

¹⁴He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings *and* mornings; then the **holy place** will be properly restored."

Preliminary Contextual Conclusion:

- Daniel 8:8-12 details the activities of the wicked little horn which I believe to be Antiochus IV.
- Daniel 8:13 is a summary of verses 8-12 plus a question (note the colored words which reveal the parallel concepts).
- Daniel 8:14 answers the question asked in Daniel 8:13.

⁵ "Then I said, 'How I would set you among My sons, And give you a pleasant land, The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!' And I said, 'You shall call Me, My Father, And not turn away from following Me'" (Jer. 3:19).

⁶ Compare Dan. 8:24.

We conclude that Daniel 8:14 does have a context.

At this point we turn to the historical record found in 1 Maccabees where this inter-testament history is recorded and then we will come back to Daniel 8 and note the precise fulfillment.

1 Maccabees 1:8–5

Each of his [Alexander's] officers established himself in his own region. All assumed crowns after his death, they and their heirs after them for many years, bringing increasing evils on the world. From these there grew a wicked offshoot, Antiochus Epiphanies son of King Antiochus; once a hostage in Rome, he became king in the 107th year of the kingdom of the Greeks. It was then that there emerged from Israel a set of renegades who led many people astray. "Come," they said, "let us ally ourselves with the gentiles surrounding us, for since we separated ourselves from them many misfortunes have overtaken us." This proposal proved acceptable, and a number of the people eagerly approached the king, who authorized them to practice the gentiles' observances. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, such as the gentiles have, disguised their circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant, submitting to gentile rule as willing slaves of impiety.

1 Maccabees 1:41–53

The king [Antiochus Epiphanies IV] then issued a proclamation to his whole kingdom that all were to become a single people, each nation renouncing its particular customs. All the gentiles conformed to the king's decree, and many Israelites chose to accept his religion, sacrificing to idols and profaning the Sabbath. The king also sent edicts by messenger to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, directing them to adopt customs foreign to the country, banning burnt offerings, sacrifices and libations from the sanctuary, profaning Sabbaths and feasts, defiling the sanctuary and everything holy, building altars, shrines and temples for idols, sacrificing pigs and unclean beasts, leaving their sons uncircumcised, and prostituting themselves to all kinds of impurity and abomination, so that they should forget the Law and revoke all observance of it. Anyone not obeying the king's command was to be put to death. Writing in such terms to every part of his kingdom, the king appointed inspectors for the whole people and directed all the towns of Judah to offer sacrifice city by city. Many of the people—that is, every apostate from the Law rallied to them and so committed evil in the country,—forcing Israel into hiding in any possible place of refuge.

It is important to note that these atrocities started a short time of unknown duration BEFORE the abomination of desolation was set up. Now back to the historical record.

1 Maccabees 1:54—2:1–54

On the fifteenth day of Chislev in the year 145 the king built the appalling abomination on top of the altar of burnt offering; and altars were built in the surrounding towns of Judah and incense offered at the doors of houses and in the streets. Any books of the Law that came to light were torn up and burned. Whenever anyone was discovered possessing a copy of the covenant or practicing the Law, the king's decree sentenced him to death. Month after month they took harsh action against any offenders they discovered in the towns of Israel. On the twenty-fifth day of each month, sacrifice was offered on the altar erected on top of the altar of burnt offering. Women who had had their children circumcised were put to death according to the edict with their babies hung round their necks, and the members of their household and those who had performed the circumcision were executed with them. Yet there were many in Israel who stood firm and found the courage to refuse unclean food. They chose death rather than contamination by such fare or profanation of the holy covenant, and they were executed. It was a truly dreadful retribution that visited Israel.

With these historical events clearly in mind, we now turn back to Daniel 8 and review the immediate context of verses 10-12, inserting additional interpretation and noting the parallel linking topics in color.

Daniel 8:10-14: ¹⁰ It [little horn—Antiochus] grew up to the host of heaven [God’s true people] and caused some of the host and some of the stars [true Jews] to fall to the earth, and it **trampled** them down [killed them]. ¹¹ It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host [God—the coins of Antiochus were engraved with the words, *theos epiphanes* meaning “God manifest”) and it removed the **regular sacrifice** [daily burnt offerings] from Him, and the **place of His sanctuary** was **thrown down**.

¹² And on account of **transgression** [of the Hellenistic Jews who sided with Antiochus] the host [God’s people] will be given over *to the horn* along with the **regular sacrifice**; and it [little horn, Antiochus IV] will **fling truth to the ground** and perform *its will* and prosper. ¹³ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision *about* the **regular sacrifice** apply, while [durative time] the **transgression causes horror**, so as to allow both the **holy place** and the host [God’s people] to be **trampled**?” ¹⁴ He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings *and* mornings; then the **holy place** will be properly restored.”

Interpretation

- The 2300 days (evening morning) represents a durative time period during which Antiochus decimated the Jews and their worship during the Maccabean period.
- The sanctuary in view is the literal, earthly sanctuary.

Most commentators believe the 2300 days (literal evening, morning) refer to the morning and evening sacrifice and thus only 1150 actual days are in view. There are some who suggest that these refer to the full number of 2300 days. I found it fascinating that both time periods fit the persecution of the Jews under Antiochus depending how one calculates the periods.

If there are 1150 actual days in view, it is my conclusion that this interpretation fits the historical situation perfectly.

The profaning of Israel’s religion, including persecution, and death for those who did not go along with the proclamation of Antiochus started some short time BEFORE Antiochus erected the abomination of desolation (image to Zeus).

On the 15th of Chislev in year 145, the king erected the abomination of desolation.

On the 25th of Chislev in year 145, sacrifice was offered to the abomination of desolation.

Finally, the restoration (cleansing) of the sanctuary is recorded in:

1 Maccabees 4:36-59

Judas and his brothers then said, “Now that our enemies have been defeated, let us go up to purify the sanctuary and dedicate it.” So they marshaled the whole army, and went up to Mount Zion. There they found the sanctuary deserted, the altar desecrated, the gates burnt down, and vegetation growing in the courts as it might in a wood or on some mountain, while the storerooms were in ruins. They tore their garments and mourned bitterly, putting dust on their heads. They prostrated themselves on the ground, and when the trumpets gave the signal they cried aloud to Heaven. Judas then ordered his men to keep the Citadel garrison engaged until he had purified [cleansed] the sanctuary. Next, he selected priests who were blameless and zealous for the Law to purify [cleanse] the sanctuary and remove the stones of the

pollution to some unclean place. They discussed what should be done about the altar of burnt offering which had been profaned, and very properly decided to pull it down, rather than later be embarrassed about it since it had been defiled by the gentiles. They therefore demolished it and deposited the stones in a suitable place on the hill of the Dwelling to await the appearance of a prophet who should give a ruling about them. They took unhewn stones, as the Law prescribed, and built a new altar on the lines of the old one. They restored the Holy Place and the interior of the Dwelling, and purified the courts. They made new sacred vessels, and brought the lamp-stand, the altar of incense, and the table into the Temple. They burned incense on the altar and lit the lamps on the lamp-stand, and these shone inside the Temple. They placed the loaves on the table and hung the curtains and completed all the tasks they had undertaken. On the twenty-fifth of the ninth month, Chislev, in the year 148 they rose at dawn and offered a lawful sacrifice on the new altar of burnt offering which they had made. The altar was dedicated, to the sound of hymns, zithers, lyres and cymbals, at the same time of year and on the same day on which the gentiles had originally profaned it. The whole people fell prostrate in adoration and then praised Heaven who had granted them success. For eight days they celebrated the dedication of the altar, joyfully offering burnt offerings, communion and thanksgiving sacrifices. They ornamented the front of the Temple with crowns and bosses of gold, renovated the gates and storerooms, providing the latter with doors. There was no end to the rejoicing among the people, since the disgrace inflicted by the gentiles had been effaced. Judas, with his brothers and the whole assembly of Israel, made it a law that the days of the dedication of the altar should be celebrated yearly at the proper season, for eight days beginning on the twenty-fifth of the month of Chislev, with rejoicing and gladness.⁷

On the 25th of Chislev in year 148 the sanctuary was restored and sacrifices restarted. The intervening time between the erection of the abomination of desolation and the restoration of the sanctuary was three years and 10 days. In other words, the 1150 days exceeds by 45–70⁸ days the three years and 10 days that transpired between the erection of the image to Zeus in the temple and the restoration of the sanctuary. This disparity, however, fits the facts as outlined in 1 Maccabees perfectly, because the desecration of the temple started some time **before** the abomination was erected.

On the other hand, if one concludes that the 2300 evenings and mornings are 2300 literal days, then we calculate the time period as follows:

We have shown how impossible it is to explain this prophecy otherwise than by Antiochus: the event itself proves this to be its meaning....Christ numbers 2300 days for the pollution of the sanctuary, and this period comprehends six years and about four months. If we compare the testimony of history, and especially of the book of Maccabees, with this prophecy, we shall find that miserable race oppressed for six years under the tyranny of Antiochus. The idol of Olympian Jove [Zeus] did not remain in the temple for six continuous years, but the commencement of the pollution occurred at the first attack, as if he would insult the very fact of God. No wonder then if Daniel understood this vision of six years and about a third, because Antiochus then insulted the worship of God and the Law; and when he poured forth innocent blood promiscuously, no one dared openly to resist him...we see how very clearly the prophecy and the history agree, as far as this narrative is concerned.⁹

The 2300 days are thus, as well as the 1150 days, historically authenticated.¹⁰

⁷ This is the Feast of Lights or Dedication recorded in John 10:22, 23.

⁸ Depending how many days were in a year.

⁹ John Calvin, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/comment3/comm_vol25/htm/iii.xi.htm.

¹⁰ *Keil-Delitzsch*, p. 306

The following comparisons show the contradictions between the contextual teaching of Daniel 8:14 as confirmed by history and the Adventist teaching of its doctrinal “central pillar” as confirmed by Ellen White:

Considerations:

Daniel 8:14: the “Central Pillar of Adventism”

Contextual Teaching (CT)

Adventist Teaching (AT)

Study method:

CT: Observe the context and historical setting

AT: Daniel 8:14 has no context but is a “contextual island”

The Sanctuary in view:

CT: Earthly sanctuary

AT: Heavenly sanctuary

The one who pollutes the sanctuary:

CT: The wicked little horn, Antiochus, by his pagan sacrifices.

AT: Christ’s blood, “our sins are, in fact, transferred to the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Christ”.¹¹

The 2300 evenings and mornings.

CT: Either 1150 or 2300 literal days.

AT: 2300 years

CT: This is the duration of time during which Antiochus desecrated the Jewish people and worship.

AT: This is a point in time, October 22, 1844, when Christ entered, for the first time, the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary.

The Cleansing of the sanctuary

CT: When Judas and his brothers removed the polluted stones upon which pagans had offered unclean beasts, built a new altar, restored the temple furnishing, and restarted the regular morning and evening sacrifices.¹²

AT: When Christ at the close of the investigative judgment places the sins of the righteous onto Satan who will suffer for them in the lake of fire.¹³

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 266, See also, *The Great Controversy*, p. 417-422; 425, 479-487.

¹² See 1 Maccabees 4:36-48.

¹³ “When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 422. See also *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 266.

As the late Adventist Hebrew scholar, Dr. Raymond Cottrell said, Adventists have a choice: they can make Christ the wicked little horn who pollutes the sanctuary, or they can totally divorce Daniel 8:14 from its context.

There are no other choices.

Not only did Cottrell clarify the hermeneutical error of Adventism's central pillar, but Dr. Angel Rodriguez, recent chair of the Adventist Biblical Research Committee, said: "Without 1844 and the doctrine of the Sanctuary—this may sound strong to you, but I have already published it—there is no reason for us to exist. 1844 provided for us our identity and our mission. And if we are wrong there, then we are simply wrong."¹⁴ (My emphasis).

You make the call.

Daniel 8:14, Matthew 24:15 and Antiochus IV

Some attempt to take the focus off Antiochus by using Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:15.

Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.

The history of the Maccabean period gives insight to this statement of Jesus. I believe Jesus is making a connection between the destruction of Jerusalem that would come in AD 70 with events surrounding Antiochus IV's abomination of desolation, an idol of the Olympian Zeus, which he erected over the altar of burnt offerings in 167 B.C. These events are recorded in 1 Maccabees. The first nine chapters of this book are well worth reading. I have listed below a verse or two from the context of Matthew 24:20 with a corresponding section from 1 and 2 Maccabees.¹⁵ At times I have quoted from the historian Josephus, who lived in the first century A.D. Notice the close parallel in wording, ideas, and content between Matthew 24:15-22 and the Maccabean history.

"Abomination of desolation" in Holy Place

Therefore when you see the **abomination of desolation** which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy Place (let the reader understand) (Mt. 24:15).

The King (Antiochus) erected the **abomination of desolation** above the altar (1 Mac. 1:57).

The Jewish historian, Josephus, in commenting on this incident says:

¹⁴ In a tape given to a group of Adventist pastors at the Ministerial/Evangelism Council, "Answers to Ratzlaff's Challenges to Adventism", April 16, 1998, 2:00 p.m. Double Tree Inn, South Center, Seattle, WA.

¹⁵ 2 Maccabees may not be as historically accurate as 1 Maccabees.

For so it was, that the temple was made desolate by Antiochus, and so continued for three years...And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel, which was given four hundred and eighty years before; for he declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship [for some] time.¹⁶

There is some uncertainty regarding the interpretation of Christ's words, "the abomination of desolation ... standing in the Holy Place". Mark records this statement like this:

But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Mk. 13:14).

Luke resolves the matter by saying,

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand (Lk. 21:20).

Leave possessions and flee to the mountains

Then let those who are in Judea **flee** to the **mountains**; let him who is on the housetop **not go down to get the things out that are in his house**; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak (Mt. 24:16–18).

Then Mattathias went through the town, shouting at the top of his voice, "Let everyone who has a fervour for the Law and takes his stand on the covenant come out and follow me." Then he **fled** with his sons into the **hills**, **leaving all their possessions behind** in the town (1 Mac. 2:27, 28).

There is reasonably good tradition that Christians abandoned the city [Jerusalem] perhaps in A.D. 68, about halfway through the siege.¹⁷

Woe to women and babies

But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days (Mt. 24:19).

Her babies have been slaughtered in her streets, her young men by the enemy's sword...Mattathias and his sons tore their garments, put on sackcloth, and observed deep mourning (1 Mac. 2:9,14).

Pray that it not be in winter or on the Sabbath

But pray that your flight may not be in the **winter**, or on a **Sabbath** (Mt. 24:20).

...And many...went down to the desert and stayed there, taking with them their sons, their wives and their cattle...A strong detachment went after them preparing to attack them on the **sabbath** day..."Enough of this! Come out and do as the king [Antiochus] orders and you shall be spared." But they answered, "We refuse to come out, and we are not going to obey the king's orders and so profane the **sabbath** day." The others at once went into action, but they offered no opposition; not a stone was thrown, there was no barricading of the hiding places. They only said, "Let us all die innocent; let heaven and earth bear witness that you are massacring us with no pretense of justice." The attack was pressed home on the **sabbath** itself, and they were slaughtered, with their wives and children and cattle, to the number of one thousand persons. When the news reached Mattathias and his friends, they mourned bitterly for the victims, and said to one another, "If we all do as our brothers have done, and refuse to fight the pagans for our lives and

¹⁶ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, (Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1960), Book XII, Chapter VII, Paragraph 6.

¹⁷ D.A Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Volume 8, p. 501.

institutions, they will only destroy us the sooner from the earth.” So then and there they came to this decision, “If anyone attacks us on the sabbath day, whoever he may be, we will resist him; we must not all be killed, as our brothers were in the hiding places” (1 Mac. 1:57; 2:29, 32–41).

The “abomination of desolation” **was set up in winter, on December 8, 176 B.C.**¹⁸

A great tribulation

For then there will be **a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall (Mt. 24:21).

First Maccabees 1–7 records the terrible three-and-a-half-year war between Antiochus and the loyal Jews. This was a determined attack on the worship of YHWH with the intent of completely wiping out the covenant people and all traces of their worship.

Then the king [Antiochus] issued a proclamation to his whole kingdom that all were to become a single people, each renouncing his particular customs...The king also sent instructions by messenger to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah directing them to adopt customs foreign to the country, banning holocausts [burnt offerings], sacrifices and libations from the sanctuary, *profaning sabbaths* and feasts, defiling the sanctuary and the sacred ministries, building altars, precincts and shrines for idols, sacrificing pigs and unclean beasts, leaving their sons uncircumcised, and prostituting themselves to all kinds of impurity and abomination, so they should forget the Law and revoke all observance of it. Anyone not obeying the king’s command was to be put to death (1 Mac. 1:41–53).

Any books of the Law that came to light were torn up and burned. Whenever anyone was discovered possessing a copy of the covenant or practicing the Law, the king’s decree **sentenced him to death**...Women who had their children circumcised were **put to death** according to the edict with their babies hung round their necks, and the members of their household and those who had performed the circumcision were **executed** with them (1 Mac. 1:59–64).

The atrocities that took place at the destruction of Jerusalem are unthinkable. I encourage you to read Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Books 5 and 6.

Sabbath keepers at the destruction of Jerusalem

Jesus foresaw there would be many people still observing the Sabbath when Jerusalem would be destroyed. Obviously there would be many Jews who were not Christians keeping the Sabbath. There were also many Jewish Christians who were still observing the Sabbath. We know this from the record in the book of Acts.

But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees *who had believed*, stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them *to observe the Law of Moses*” (Acts 15:5).

You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those *who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law*; and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs (Acts 21:20).

There were many thousands of Christians at the time of Jerusalem’s destruction who continued to follow “Moses,” practicing circumcision and living according to “the customs”, which certainly included Sabbath observance.

¹⁸ See footnote in the Jerusalem Bible at 1 Mac. 1:57. “December 8th, 167.”

Matthew written to Jewish Christians

It is interesting to note that Matthew is the only Gospel writer to include “Pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.” Mark simply states, “Pray that it may not happen in the winter” (Mk. 13:18). He includes no mention of Sabbath. Luke’s account of Jesus’ Olivet address does not mention either the Sabbath or winter. Most scholars believe Matthew was written specifically to the Jewish-Christian community.

The Gospel of St. Matthew was intended for Jewish Christians.¹⁹

This Gospel [Matthew] has a strong Judaic background.²⁰

The gospels of Mark and Luke, however, are intended for Gentile audiences.²¹

Far future fulfillment?

Many Christians also believe that, because of the context of Matthew 24:21-31 which describes tribulation and signs that immediately precede “the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (v. 27, quoted from Daniel 7:13), there may yet be a future fulfillment of the abomination of desolation and a tribulation “such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will be” (v. 21). This view sees Daniel 12:1-3 as foretelling such a time.

Conclusion

Whether or not one sees a far future fulfillment yet to come, however, Daniel 8:9-14 is a clear reference to the atrocities of Antiochus IV against the Jews, the law, the literal sanctuary, and worship of God. In Matthew 24:15-18 Jesus warns the Jewish Christians that the soon-coming destruction of Jerusalem will be patterned after the atrocities of Antiochus IV and they should be ready to leave with haste.

There are a number of places in Scripture where there is a prophecy or event which becomes a type of what follows. I believe this is true in Daniel²² regarding the abomination of desolation and in John regarding antichrist. The same concept is seen in the faith of Abraham which Paul shows to be a type of new covenant righteousness by faith in Romans 4.

The central pillar of Adventism is built on a flawed hermeneutic based on Ellen White’s visions and writings instead of on contextual reading of Scripture confirmed by history. In fact, the only way to find any support for the Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14 is to use the text of *The Clear Word* which has no basis in the original language at all

He answered, “After two thousand, three hundred prophetic days (which represent actual years), God will restore the truth about the heavenly Sanctuary to its rightful place. Then the process of judgment will begin of which the yearly cleansing of the earthly Sanctuary was a type, and God will vindicate His people” (Dan. 8:14, *The Clear Word*).

¹⁹ Alfred Wikenhauser, *New Testament Introduction*, (Herder and Herder, New York, NY), p. 195.

²⁰ Everett F. Harrison, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 161.

²¹ Wikenhauser, *New Testament Introduction*, pp. 169, 219.

²² Daniel mentions the abomination of desolation or similar concepts several times.

In context, Daniel 8:14 cannot in any way support Adventism's "central pillar". To make Daniel 8:14 apply to the heavenly sanctuary, the 2300 evenings and mornings apply to 2300 years ending on October 22, 1844, and the cleansing of the sanctuary to apply to Christ placing the sins of the righteous on Satan to me is without any biblical support and should be renounced by every believing Christian.