

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Theological Seminary, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

"The Use of the Expressions 'God' or 'God(s)' in Daniel 11:36-39 and their Theological and Interpretative Implications"

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The goal of this present research is (1) to understand the meaning of the 7 expressions that contains a name for 'God/god(s)', particularly אֱל (3x) and אֱלֹהִים (4x), in Dan 11:36-39 and (2) to seek the most probable explanation of the authorial purpose for this particular usage especially the words/expressions for "God/god(s)" in the prophetic context of Dan 11:36-39. This dissertation argues that Daniel makes use of these expressions through poetry to highpoint the haughtiness of an earthly king against God and His prerogatives. The expressions show the successful, but temporary attempts of an arrogant usurpation. Besides this, while some of them are synonymous, these phrases do have a specific meaning. Each one enriches their synonymous counterpart and contributes to the understanding and the interpretation of Dan 11:36-39.

The word study אֱל alludes to many ANE nations to be the supreme god. In Dan 11:36, 'the king' will exalt and magnify himself over any-supreme god(s) that could be found. The superlative expression אֱלֹהִים אֱל (11:36) along with other superlatives is an expression for God in Daniel (cf. 2:47; 6:20; 8:25; 9:4) and refers to the true God, the ultimate supreme One over all other gods. אֱלֹהִים cannot be understood and interpreted separated from the expression אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, which the OT utilizes to mean Yahweh, the God of covenant Israel.

אֱלֹהִים relates in the OT to God metaphorically as the notion of strength and/or of protection, with a few additional times when it refers to the notion of salvation. It is associated twice in the OT as צוּר, "rock," which is another metaphor for God as a place of refuge. In using אֱלֹהִים intentionally to refer to a false god, Daniel refers indirectly to the true God, as a way

to point out to the idea of usurpation, or at last, of replacement of God's prerogatives through the king's character and leadership.

This dissertation noticed that two expressions referred to God— אֱלֹהִים (11:36); and אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ (11:37). In prophetic passages, Daniel never uses the most common names for God (יהוה, אֱדֹנָי, or אֱלֹהִים), or god(s) (אֱלֹהִים). In Dan 11:36-39 Daniel deliberately selects this vocabulary (1) by choosing to use names of God that are used in poetry, and (2) to highlight the main theme: the sovereignty of God over all things (אֱלֹהִים), who does not forget His people (and not only Israel, but also all of "spiritual Israel" referring to all nations). He will come and rescue them (אֱלֹהִים; cf. 12:1-3). As for the phrase אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, which relates to the covenant and true God, it is used to replace the common name for God, יהוה.

In using these seven words/expressions for 'God/god(s)' in Dan 11:36-39, the prophet insists on the distinctly negative religious character of "the king." Such insistence refers directly to the unbelievably awful personage of "the king" as poetry. Daniel chooses to not be succinct in his exposition. Such haughtiness is too important to just be mentioned. It underscores the reason why God will finally come to judge the earth and to bring retribution against "the king." The use of such poetic features (i.e., parallelisms, word pairs) permits the prophet to repeat his ideas in a condensed manner.

"The Eschatological Time of Trouble of Daniel 12:1: An Intertextual Analysis and Theological Implications"

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Various interpretations of the time of trouble in Dan. 12:1 means that no scholarly consensus exists about what exactly is this time of tribulation including its historical setting. An obvious deficiency exists in the investigation of the theological significance for this time of tribulation in Dan 12:1 as related to the relationship between the time of trouble given in Dan 12:1 and other NT passages.

Chapter 1 overviews different interpretations by scholars. Major concerns include the time, agents, scope, location, nature of the issue, purpose, and duration. Chapter 2 offers an exegetical study of the time of tribulation in Dan 12:1. This dissertation provides three principles of interpretation. After these steps, this dissertation provides the basic histori-

cal setting surrounding Dan 12:1. Chapter 3 investigates the major theological implication of the time of tribulation of Dan 12:1 according to the major theological themes contained within this book. Chapter 4 discusses similar expressions about the time of trouble as found in other NT passages. This dissertation concludes that the tribulation given in Dan 12:1 is still in the future. To be more specific, it is just before the end of the history of the world at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The location is not limited to the land of Palestine. Instead, it will be a global event. The agents of the tribulation are both Michael, who is Jesus Christ, and the end-time wicked people. The time of tribulation is instigated by Michael and involves the angels and even natural resources. The scope of this time of tribulation includes both the end-time people of God and the end-time wicked. The nature of the issue of the tribulation is a religious matter rather than a political controversy. The duration of this time tribulation is relatively short: it occurs between the closing work of the heavenly evaluative judgment and the final destruction of the wicked that gives way for the final deliverance of God's people.

The theological study of the time of tribulation passage in Dan 12:1 exhibits the time of trouble as directly related to other major theological themes contained in the book of Daniel. The time of trouble is therefore a theological theme that connects with other theological themes in the book. This dissertation argues that all of the major theological themes contained in the book of Daniel meet together in Dan 12:1 to make this passage become the theological climax of the book. Thus, Dan 12:1 is the clearest text in the OT to reveal the future eschatological time of trouble.

This dissertation also argues that the counterpart of the tribulation passage of Dan 12:1 is found in the NT in Rev 7:14. The former gives in a more general manner what the latter gives a more detailed description. It is evident that the historical settings of Dan 12:1 is the same as found in Rev 7:14. These two parallel texts are the clearest biblical passages to explain the approaching time of tribulation.

"The Intelligibility of Tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:14-15"

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This thesis investigates the tongues on the part of the speaker. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the tongue speaker in 1 Cor 14:14-15 should be understood as tongues. In order to fulfill this goal

this thesis uses the historical-grammatical method of biblical interpretation. This research observes that there is an almost universal understanding that the tongue-speaker did not understand what he spoke about when he refers to tongues. Most scholars believe that the clause “ὁ νοῦς μου ἄκαρπός ἐστιν” in 1 Cor 14:14 proves this point. This thesis found that most scholars overlook the significance of the term ἄκαρπός in their study.

This study concludes that the tongue-speaker understood what they uttered in tongues based upon the following observations. First, the term ἄκαρπός is an expression of unmet expectation and therefore suggests that the edification of tongues is connected to the understanding of what the tongue-speaker said. In this way the author makes clear that the tongue-speaker did in fact understand what he said because it was already clear and did not need interpretation.

Second, the use of the term ἄκαρπός in the NT suggests that the term νοῦς stands for the content of the tongues-speech act. It makes clear that the tongue-speaker expressed his own mind through tongues. The gift of tongues might have served as a medium of communication for the tongue-speaker to express his/her own mind to the Gentiles who spoke in other languages.

Altogether, the following translation (NAS) of 1 Cor 14:14-15 seems to be clearest: “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. What ought to be done? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the mind. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the mind.”