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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
INTERPRETATION OF TWO TIME PROPHECIES IN THE BOOK  
OF DANIEL - THE 2300 DAYS OF DANIEL 8 AND THE 70  
WEEKS OF DANIEL 9.**

# **ASSUMPTION 4**

**Daniel was sick before the  
explanation by Gabriel was  
finished**

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### A. Purpose of this Assumption

This is a crucial assumption for the assumptions that follow. To link Dn8 with Dn9, there has to be some plausible reason to say Dn9 is the continuation of Dn8. Without this connection, it would be so much harder to link the 2300-days with the 70-weeks. To do that, SDA historicists interpose the fainting illness of Daniel in verse 27 into the explanation itself as the causal link between the two chapters. That is to say, Daniel was ill while Gabriel was explaining the vision to him, and this sickness interrupted the mission of Gabriel and Gabriel leaves, unable to finish his explanation, due to Daniel's feebleness and ill health. Since Daniel was sick and there could be no explanation regarding the start of the 2300-days, Dn9 must be the continuation and completion of the explanation of Dn8.

### Method of Developing this Assumption

The following are a sample of typical statements from SDA publications stating that Daniel was sick before the explanation by Gabriel in Dn8 was finished:

As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days." "And I was astonished at the vision," he says, "but none understood it." (White, 1888, p.325)

At the close of Daniel 8, we left Daniel in distress. The vision of the little horn and the trampled sanctuary had made him ill. He returned to his government responsibilities after spending a few days in bed; but he says "**I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.**" Daniel 8: 27 His failure to understand the vision of Daniel 8 was in conflict with Gabriel's commission to "**make this man understand the vision.**" Daniel 8:16. Therefore in chapter 9, Gabriel returned to continue his interrupted explanation. (Maxwell, 1981, p. 195) [Emphasis his-FB]

...the Roman kingdom, which grew out of one of the four horns, would destroy the people of God, and would even stand up against the Prince of princes Himself when he should come to the earth. This last view was more than Daniel could endure. When he saw that this power would even take the life of the Prince of princes, he fainted; and when Gabriel said, "The vision of the evening and the morning which was told was true," he found it was useless to proceed, as Daniel was not able to comprehend. [Haskell inserts footnote here: "Dn8:20-27"]

Daniel was sick for some days, but soon began to pray for a full explanation of the vision. We have this prayer recorded; it is not long. When he began to pray, God in heaven commissioned Gabriel to go and answer the prophet's prayer, and before he had finished praying the angel touched him.[ Haskell inserts footnote here: "Dn9:1-23"] (Haskell, 1914, p.190)

Daniel evidently fainted when Gabriel reached the fourth part of the vision about the 2300 days. (Daniel 8:27.) Hence the angel could not then explain this period of time to him. Since Gabriel had been commissioned to make Daniel understand the vision, we would naturally expect that at some subsequent time Gabriel would return to the prophet to explain this period of the 2300 days. (Schuler, 1923, p.14)

Right away we must determine the relationship between this appearance and the vision of chapter 8. In that earlier vision Gabriel had said, "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision" (Dan. 8:17). Yet Daniel did not understand. Although the ram and the goat were explained to him, he fainted before he had been given a clear explanation of the 2,300 days. He said, "I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it" (verse 27). (Woolsey, 1978, p. 42)

The prospect of terrible persecution during the course of the 2300 "days" (Dan8: 10-13, 23-25) proved more than the aged Daniel could bear and as a result he "fainted, and was sick certain days" (ch 8:27; GC:325). Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time. (Nichol, 1976, p.850)

Because of Daniel's sudden illness as the vision of chapter 8 was being explained to him, Gabriel had been unable to explain this remaining time feature – the 2300 days of verses 13, 14 and 26. The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet suddenly to faint and become ill (verse 27). So the explanation broke off precipitately at that point. (Seventh-day Adventists, 1957, p. 269)

God commissioned the angel Gabriel to make Daniel "understand the vision" (Dan. 8:16). But its impact was so shocking that Daniel became ill and Gabriel had to discontinue his explanation. At the close of the chapter Daniel remarked: "I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it" (Dan.8:27, RSV). Because of this interruption, Gabriel had to delay his explanation of the time period – the only aspect of the vision he had not explained. Daniel 9 describes his return to complete this responsibility. Daniel 8 and 9, then, are connected, the latter being the key to unlocking the mystery of the 2300 days. (Ministerial Association, 1988, p.323)

The various sample statements above have this common sequence:

1. Gabriel unfolded the unpleasant aspects of the vision;
2. Daniel could not bear the revelation any more, lost his physical strength, and fainted;
3. Gabriel had to abort his mission before he had finished conveying all the information to Daniel.
4. Daniel and was sick for a number of days.

There is no dispute over the fact that Daniel was ill after the vision.

There is no dispute over the fact that Gabriel unfolded unpleasant details to the prophet.

**The dispute centres on points two and three listed above:**

- Daniel could not bear the revelation any more, lost his physical strength, and fainted.
- Gabriel had to abort his mission before he had completed conveying all the information to Daniel.

The following two sections will focus on the issues related to these two points, highlighting the problems and showing the manner in which they are invalid.

## PART I

### 1. Why Daniel could not bear the explanation any more.

There are three options by SDA writers for the trigger of the fainting spell of Dn8.:

- the terrible persecution of God's people;
- the length of the oppression and calamities and thirdly;
- The command to "shut the vision" before the explanation was complete.

#### a. The Terrible Persecution

According to the three authorities quoted below, the trigger to this fainting spell is the mention by Gabriel of the "terrible persecution" that the church / God's people will endure. Notice the statements:

**As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision**, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days." "And I was astonished at the vision," he says, "but none understood it." ([White, 1888](#), p.325)

**The prospect of terrible persecution during the course of the 2300 "days"** (Dan8: 10-13, 23-25) **proved more than the aged Daniel could bear and as a result he "fainted, and was sick certain days"** (ch 8:27; GC:325). Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time. ([Nichol, 1957](#), p.850)

Because of Daniel's sudden illness as the vision of chapter 8 was being explained to him, Gabriel had been unable to explain this remaining time feature – the 2300 days of verses 13, 14 and 26. **The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet suddenly to faint and become ill** (verse 27). So the explanation broke off precipitately at that point. ([Seventh-day Adventists, 1957](#), p. 269)

God commissioned the angel Gabriel to make Daniel "understand the vision" (Dan. 8:16). **But its impact was so shocking that Daniel became ill and Gabriel had to discontinue his explanation.** At the close of the chapter Daniel remarked: "I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it." (Dan.8:27, [RSV](#)). ([Ministerial Association, 1988](#), p.323)

Daniel was astonished and did not understand the vision. But he was more than astonished. When he saw what this would do to the sanctuary, to religion, to God's people, to the truth, he was "sick certain days." Verse 27. Here was a blasphemous power that would persecute God's people and attempt to destroy the truth and prosper in so doing. Even the sanctuary would be cast down and trodden underfoot. The one ray of hope in the whole vision concerned the time. The sanctuary and the truth would not always be trodden underfoot. The truth would come into its own again. It would be vindicated. At the end of the twenty three hundred days the sanctuary would be cleansed. To that time God's people were to look. (Andreason, 1969, p.286)

Maxwell includes in his reasons, the vision of the beasts and horns as well:

After Daniel looked at the beasts and horns and heard the prediction about the evenings and mornings and about the sanctuary, he naturally desired an explanation. Gabriel started to provide one, **but what he said about the beasts and horns and their effect on Christ's heavenly ministry and on the people of God so overwhelmed Daniel that he fainted before Gabriel could deal specifically with verse 14.** (1981, p.179)<sup>1</sup>

According to Maxwell, Daniel had to stop because of the information about the coming persecution.

## b. The 2300 days – The Length of the Oppression and the Calamities

Some SDA writers see the trigger as the 2300-days:

What then did he [Daniel] not understand? Plainly it was the prophecy of the twenty-three hundred years. **Because Daniel had fainted, the angel could not make the meaning of this long period clear to the prophet, and therefore Daniel did not understand it.** From Daniel's statement that he did not understand it, it is clear that the commission the angel had been given to make him understand was not yet completely fulfilled, and we shall certainly expect the angel to return and accomplish this unfulfilled commission. In obedience to God's command, he will surely make Daniel know the meaning of this long period of time. (Haynes, 1930, p.47)

**Daniel evidently fainted when Gabriel reached the fourth part of the vision about the 2300 days.** (Daniel 8: 27) Hence the angel could not then explain this period of time to him. (Schuler, 1923, p.14)

Gabriel began to explain "the evenings and the mornings," but **broke off his explanation because Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days"** (King James Version). (Cottrell, 1963, p.302)

Smith, though giving weight to the impact of the calamities, takes a different view. He sees that Daniel aborts the mission because it was the *length* of the oppression and calamities that triggered Daniel's illness:

"The vision of the evening and the morning" refers to the period of the 2300 days. **In view of the long period of oppression, and the calamities which were to come upon his people, Daniel fainted** and was sick certain days. He was astonished at the vision, but did not understand it. Why did not Gabriel at this time fully carry out his

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<sup>1</sup> Maxwell has extended himself further than the text would allow him. There is no indication about Daniel's quandary over Christ's ministry in verse 27 at all.

instructions, and cause Daniel to understand the vision? Undoubtedly because Daniel had received all that he could bear. Further instruction is therefore deferred to a future time. (1944, p.191)

According to this position, we would expect to find Daniel fainting immediately after the mention of the time period.

The *SDA Bible Commentary* sees the trigger differently. It was due to the fact the ultimate end of the indignation would in the far distant.

**27. I Daniel fainted.** Daniel was doubtless deeply concerned about the events that had been revealed to him. Instead of predicting an immediate end to the indignation, Gabriel informed the prophet that the ultimate end would be many years in the future. (Nichol, 1976, p.847)

He fainted away when the angel informed him that the vision was to be for “many days” (Dan.8:26). (Nichol, 1976, p.851)

### c. The Command to “Shut the Vision” causes him to faint.

Branson takes a different position from all of the above. He sees the trigger of Daniel’s illness as Gabriel’s command to Daniel to shut up the vision, even *before* Gabriel has explained the start of the 2300-days. In his view, Gabriel never intended to explain the start of the 2300-days at that time anyway. And it is this that triggers Daniel’s illness.

Daniel heard from the lips of Gabriel the announcement that at the end of a 2300-day period the sanctuary would be cleansed. At that time, part of the vision was not clear to him. He was unable to comprehend its meaning. No details concerning it had been given. He had no starting point to enable him to reckon the time.

Gabriel had said: “The vision of the evening and the morning [the part that pertaineth to time – days] ...is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.” Daniel 8:26/

**When told that this part of his vision was to be “shut up” and that no interpretation of it was to be given, it was more than the prophet could stand. Of this experience he says : “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, but none understood it.” Verse 27. (1950, p.288)**

Interestingly for Branson, Daniel’s sickness DOES NOT abort Gabriel’s explanation. Gabriel chose not to explain it then. Gabriel said only meant to say what is recorded and then commanded Daniel to shut up the vision. In Branson’s words, “the startling announcement concerning the 2300-days and the cleansing of the sanctuary was still a dark, deep mystery. This was the part that had been ‘shut up,’ because, said the angel, ‘it shall be for many days.’” (Ibid, p.289) This decision of Gabriel not to explain it then to Daniel was the trigger to Daniel’s illness. For Branson, the illness is the one recorded in v27.

According to Branson’s position then, the command of Gabriel should be emended to say: “shut the vision of the evenings and the mornings, which was spoken, for it shall be for many days.”

### ***Assumptions in these statements***

From these statements above a number of assumptions can be gleaned:

- Daniel fainted due to the horrible events he saw regarding the persecution of God's people. (White, SDABC, SDA Ministerial Association etc).
- Daniel fainted because of the 2300 days. This is either:
  1. Due to the lack of explanation regarding it (J. White, et al).
  2. Due to the length of it (Smith).
  3. Due the fact that the its end was so far in the distance (SDABC)
- Daniel fainted when told to shut the explanation of the 2300 days.

## **PART II**

### **When did Gabriel decide to abort the explanation?**

This is the second point that is under dispute in this paper. It consists of two points:

- Gabriel, in fact, aborted his mission.
- Gabriel did not complete conveying the information necessary to Daniel.

We need then to look at the evidence for both these assumptions, and determine exactly where in the text the decision to abort occurs. It should be acknowledged from the outset that there is no statement in the text stating the departure of Gabriel. It is understood but implied. The issue must be decided by the weight of evidence related to other factors in the argument.

The nexus of the issue here is the reason why Gabriel left. Is it because he had completed his explanation, or is it because Daniel was overcome for some particular reason and was unable to continue receiving this explanation?

I will show there is more evidence that the explanation was complete; and that the SDA historicist's position involves a chain of assumptions to prove their point.

#### ***a. Gabriel aborted his mission.***

The only evidence that Gabriel has left from the presence of Daniel, is the fact that Gabriel is the speaker in v.26 but in v.27, Daniel is the speaker. We assume from this that Gabriel has left. Whether his departure is because his mission is aborted or completed is not addressed by the text. It has to be deduced. Examples of SDA

historicists' statements concerning Gabriel's premature departure are given under the next point, since in the same statement, they also say that Gabriel did not complete conveying the information to Daniel.

***b. Gabriel did not complete conveying the information necessary to Daniel.***

Here are some samples from SDA historicists:

God commissioned the angel Gabriel to make Daniel “ ‘understand the vision’ ” (Dan. 8:16). But its impact was so shocking that Daniel became ill and Gabriel had to discontinue his explanation. At the close of the chapter Daniel remarked: “I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it” (Dan.8:27, RSV). Because of this interruption, Gabriel had to delay his explanation of the time period – the only aspect of the vision he had not explained. Daniel 9 describes his return to complete this responsibility. Daniel 8 and 9, then, are connected, the latter being the key to unlocking the mystery of the 2300 days. ([Ministerial Association, 1988](#), p.323)

Gabriel began to explain “the evenings and the mornings,” but **broke off his explanation because Daniel “fainted, and was sick certain days”** (King James Version). ([Cottrell, 1963](#), p.302)

**As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision**, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel “fainted, and was sick certain days.” “And I was astonished at the vision,” he says, “but none understood it.” ([White, 1888](#), p.325)

Because of Daniel's sudden illness as the vision of chapter 8 was being explained to him, Gabriel had been unable to explain this remaining time feature – the 2300 days of verses 13, 14 and 26. **The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet suddenly to faint and become ill** (verse 27). So the explanation broke off precipitately at that point. ([Seventh-day Adventists, 1957](#), p. 269)

How can one prove that Gabriel's mission was aborted prematurely? This could be done only if we could prove there were things still needing to be explained. And this can only be proved if we assume that the information of the start of the 2300-days was not given ([Assumption 3](#)). This in turn, depends on the assumption that the question of verse 13 refers to the whole vision, rather than vs. 9-12 ([Assumption 2](#) and 1).

***List of Assumptions used***

As we can see, the following assumptions are present in the above reasoning of the statements by these historicists. They include the assumption that Daniel fainted before the explanation of Gabriel's is completed also believes that a starting date for the 2300-days was not given in Dn8 ([Assumption 3](#)). This, in turn, assumes that the word vision to which the 2300-days apply means vs 2-12 and not vs9-12 ([Assumptions 1 and 2](#)).

## Problems with the Method of this Assumption

In this section I wish to look at the problems with the SDA historicists' presentation of this assumption. This section will examine problems of the two points outlined above and then present other textual evidence that creates further obstacles for this assumption. The two points covered above include:

- Daniel could not endure any more revelation from Daniel (either because of the terrible persecution outlined; because of the length of the calamities; or because of the command to shut);
- Gabriel decided to stop the Revelation (either *before* Daniel fainted or *after* he fainted).

### The Problems Part I - Why Daniel Could Not Endure any more Revelations

The first point under dispute is the assertion that because he could bear no more revelation, he fainted. It is interesting to see what SDA writers explain is the trigger for this fainting. What was it that "overloaded" him causing him to faint. SDA historicists propose three reasons: he can no longer endure any more revelations concerning the persecution of God's people, nor is he able to endure the revelation that this will continue for 2300 years: and secondly, he is unable to endure the fact that Gabriel would not explain the 2300 day period to him.

#### *a. Is Daniel not able to endure any more revelations concerning the persecutions of God's people?*

There is absolutely no evidence in support of the argument that Daniel could not bear any more information about the terrible persecution to come upon God's people. The persecution of God's people is mentioned in vs.9-12 and again at vs.24-25. We would expect to read something about Daniel's inability to cope at v.25 or at least next in v.26. If that were the case, we would have to emend the text to go something like this:

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

26 **And I Daniel was feeling faint and could no longer listen to the man Gabriel. As the man Gabriel saw that I was faint, he said,**

27 The vision of the evenings and the mornings are true. Wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days

28. And I Daniel fainted, was sick *certain* days, afterward I rose up, and did the king's business and I was astonished<sup>2</sup> at the vision, but none understood *it*. K.J.V.

As can be seen in this variation there is the texts which deal with the oppression of God's people and according to the theory, we should see at that point either an indication that Daniel was about to faint, and so Gabriel shortens his statement to two short phrases and then leaves for the time being.

On the other hand, we could have Daniel faint then and there like this:

- 24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.
- 25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

**26 And when I heard this, I Daniel fainted. When the man Gabriel saw that I had fainted, he said to me while I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground,**

27 The vision of the evenings and the mornings are true. Wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days

28. And I Daniel was sick *certain* days, afterward I rose up, and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it*. K.J.V.

In this version, we have got Daniel actually fainting when he hears about the oppression of God's people. This would be the text if we were to follow the comments of Ellen White. Notice her statement again. "As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days." (White, 1888, p.325) The text she uses, verse 27, has no direct connection with the terrible persecution outlined in vs 24-25. One has to believe in her insight as an inspired commentary on the Bible to make the leap of faith and connect v.27 with vs.25-26a. There are at least three things interposing themselves between the persecuting of God's people in v.24 and the statement that Daniel fainted in v.27. It could be the long period involved – the position of Smith – that he fainted. It could be because of the command to shut the vision, and not tell Daniel the rest of the information – the position of Branson.

### ***b. Did he faint because of the long period involved?***

Smith asserts:

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<sup>2</sup> RSV, NIV-"appalled."

“The vision of the evening and the morning” refers to the period of the 2300 days. **In view of the long period of oppression, and the calamities which were to come upon his people, Daniel fainted** and was sick certain days. He was astonished at the vision, but did not understand it. Why did not Gabriel at this time fully carry out his instructions, and cause Daniel to understand the vision? Undoubtedly because Daniel had received all that he could bear. Further instruction is therefore deferred to a future time. (1944, p.191)

Of course, one can only make that conclusion if all the baggage that Smith brings to the interpretation of that text can be accepted as valid. We can only make that connection if the period of time mentioned covers a long period like 2300 years. And that can only be gained if Daniel understood the year-day principle, which is not proven.

The *SDA Bible Commentary* sees the trigger differently. It was due to the fact the ultimate end of the indignation would be in the far distant future.

**27. I Daniel fainted.** Daniel was doubtless deeply concerned about the events that had been revealed to him. Instead of predicting an immediate end to the indignation, Gabriel informed the prophet that the ultimate end would be many years in the future. (Nichol, 1976, p.847)

He fainted away when the angel informed him that the vision was to be for “many days” (Dan.8:26). (Nichol, 1976, p.851)

The position of the SDABC cannot be proven. Agreed Daniel was deeply concerned about the events that had been revealed to him. But as to his expectations that the end of the indignation ending soon after it started, we have again to interpose the idea of the year-day principle. And there is no evidence for Daniel understanding the time period.

### ***b. Did he faint because Gabriel had shut the book without giving the information on the 2300-days?***

Says Branson:

Daniel heard from the lips of Gabriel the announcement that at the end of a 2300-day period the sanctuary would be cleansed. At that time, part of the vision was not clear to him. He was unable to comprehend its meaning. No details concerning it had been given. He had no starting point to enable him to reckon the time.

Gabriel had said: “The vision of the evening and the morning [the part that pertaineth to time – days] ...is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.” Daniel 8:26/

**When told that this part of his vision was to be “shut up” and that no interpretation of it was to be given, it was more than the prophet could stand. Of this experience he says : “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, but none understood it.” Verse 27. (1950, p.288)**

Branson’s position assumes there was more information to receive from Gabriel. He puts expectations in the mind of Daniel we cannot see in the text. His assertions are based on the assumption that the starting date was not given in Dn8. This is why the

prophet was anticipating more information. When it was not forthcoming, the disappointment of these expectations caused Daniel to faint. As is readily noticeable, this can only be answered by addressing the assumption that the starting date was not given in Dn8. This is done in my paper on [Assumption 3](#). This in turn assumes that the question in verse 13 addresses the full vision in vs3-12 and not just the vision of the little horn (Assumption 2 and 1).

Branson's position has other complications. If he says that **“that this part of his vision was to be “shut up” and that no interpretation of it was to be given,”** this means of course that no interpretation was to be given until “the time of the end” judging from Dn8:26, 27. This then means that either the explanation of Dn9 is not the supplement of the explanation in Dn8, or secondly, that the time of the end began in the first year of Darius' reign. This is because Branson points out that the command to “shut” the vision, means the explanation of the 2300 days would not be given. But since the vision, according to verse would be shut for “many days,” These “many days” in the SDA schema actually means until the “time of the end.” Branson says, “No details concerning it had been given. He had no starting point to enable him to reckon the time” (ibid), and indeed, would not have one until the “vision” was no longer “shut.” According to SDA historicism, this would not be until after 1798 AD. According to this theory, if Daniel 9 is the explanation of Dn8, then William Miller should have been visited by Gabriel and shown the vision of the seventy weeks, since it was only then that the world would be able to understand it and the 2300 years of Dn8. Dn9 then must be out of place where it is at present in the book of Daniel.

### ***Evidence confounding these three positions.***

#### ***a. The vision is finished***

The simplest answer to this issue is the clear evidence that the vision is over. The last statement of Gabriel is to commit the vision to writing and preserve it for posterity. And then it closes. We do not see Daniel in verse 27 in vision still. He is back in a real world with a real physical condition, a real sickness, a real bed to lay on until he recovers and real tasks to do for the king. After the vision, it left him depleted. The statement of the feelings of Isaiah may well be applied here: “Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” (Isa 6:1, 5)

A similar experience is described in Dn7:28 where he describes the results of the revelation on himself: “My cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.” Looking at the NIV it says, “At the end of the matter, I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”

The truth of the matter is that Daniel fainted, not because he could no longer bear any more revelations, but because his source of strength to survive this painful experience was gone. It was the strength of the heavenly beings that empowered Daniel and lifted him above his mortality and weakness. The converse of that must also be

true. It was the absence of the strength of the heavenly beings that caused Daniel to faint on each occasion in chapter 8. By the association of that evidence with the end of chapter 8, which intimates (and SDA writers also endorse) Gabriel is no longer present, we can conclude with a good deal of reliability that this fainting is due to the absence of that strength that had sustained him throughout the ordeal. The withdrawal of this energy left him with the effects of the experience on his mortal strength, in a similar way to the effects of the experience in Daniel 7.

In the words of Leupold:

The recipient of the vision had already in vv. 17 and 18 been overcome by contact with heavenly beings and supernatural revelation and had required strengthening before he was able even to receive what was to be communicated. It need not seem strange that at the close of this particular revelation his earlier weakness should again befall him – “I was exhausted” – and that a further reaction should set in the form of a temporary sickness “for several days.” It is because of the frailty of man that God does not appear to him directly or reveal himself to man more directly. Daniel records this part of his physical reaction especially, for it is of moment in establishing the sin-weakened state of man. (1949, p.371)

### ***b. Revelation is given regardless of the strength of the prophet!***

It will be noticed from Dn10 and Dn8 that fainting does *not* provide a dilemma for the heavenly visitor, because, in the case of Dn10 Daniel faints, not once but *twice*. One would expect on the SDA explanation of Dn8 for Gabriel to go away till Daniel recovers. But not so. He strengthens Daniel and continues on again. Daniel no sooner recovers than the mere appearance of these holy creatures are enough to lay Daniel flat again. The angel does not flinch. He just strengthens Daniel with a touch of the hand and he continues on as though nothing happened.

Furthermore, even if Daniel fell faint and was sick in chapter 8 before Gabriel was finished, this too, as in the situation in chapter 10, would not have posed a problem for Gabriel. Notice when this so-called “sickness” came over Daniel in vs17-19 of ch8, the record simply says in v18, “he touched me, and set me upright.” Gabriel’s touch gave Daniel the supernatural strength to endure the uncomfortable revelation. Surely, Daniel’s supposed sickness before the revelation was completed, would have been eliminated by a similar touch from the divine being?

Again, notice Dn10:

8. Therefore I was left alone and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness [margin: vigour] was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

9. Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

10. And behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.

11. And he said to me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

Here we find Daniel unable to cope with the revelation encountered by him. Did the angel therefore leave him until he was able to cope with such things? Because of Daniel's human nature, he would *never* be able to cope with such supernatural revelations. It is significant that when Daniel (and other prophets such as Isaiah and Ezekiel) are overcome with the things revealed in vision, the angel's response is not to say that they'd leave and come back another day but rather, they either command the prophet to be strong, or to touch the prophet (cf., Isa6)

For those who argue that Daniel's fainting is different in Dn8:17-19 and 10:8-11 is different from that of Dn8:27, let me remind them that Ellen White specifically says in reference to the proposed interruption of Gabriel's explanation in Dn8: 27, "physical strength gave way." (1888, p.325) The condition of Daniel in 8:27 is identical to that of 8:17-19 and 10:8-11. It is a physical issue.

Notice carefully Dn10:15-19:

15. And when he had spoken such words, I set my face towards the ground and I became dumb.

16. And behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spake and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the visions my sorrows are turned upon me, and **I have retained no strength.**

17. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? For as for me. Straight way **there remained no strength in me**, neither is **there breath left** in me.

18. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man and he strengthened me.

19. And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, **I was strengthened**, and said Let my lord speak; for **thou hast strengthened me.**

The simple command and/or touch enabled the angel to supernaturally strengthen the prophet so that he could receive the full communication. The argument that the angel had to abort his mission because of Daniel's inability to cope with the revelation just does not hold any plausibility. Notice in Dn10:11 that when the angel is sent to convey certain information, the employment of supernatural powers to help complete that task is justified:

Understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.

If Daniel had this fainting in Dn8 before the mission of Gabriel was completed, then Gabriel would have been justified in using his supernatural powers to finish his task. Examine Dn8: 17, 18. Here is Daniel overcome physically with fear, but did Gabriel go away and come back when he was feeling better? No! He had a message to communicate and he used his supernatural powers to ensure that Daniel was able to

receive it. There is no reason why the magic touch could not be given again. Dn10 indicates that there was no health risk involved in giving him a second zap!

Another point to consider is that in the historian's argument, Dn9:24-27 is the conclusion to the explanation given in Dn8:15-26. Yet there is nothing in Dn9 that would further burden the prophet. Rather, if this completes the explanation as the SDA historicists say it does, the additional 90 seconds it would have taken Gabriel to convey the information would not have been too insuperable a task for Gabriel to achieve. His powers would have extended Daniel's strength for that small amount of time. The extra information would have relieved Daniel from his so-called perplexity. SDA authors say it was due to the terrible persecution and oppression against the people of God that caused him to take ill. But there is little in Dn9:24 -27 that gives more explicit information about this persecution. So, rather than encumbering Daniel's soul with more heaviness of spirit, which he would have carried with him for the next 10-16 years in the intervening years until Gabriel would return and finish the communiqué, it would have answered (in the SDA's view) the questions about the start of the 2300 days and his mind would have been eased.

The SDA argument is that the fainting and illness explained at verse 27 is the one that forced Gabriel to abort the explanation. They say, had Daniel not succumbed to that unfortunate response when Gabriel unfolded to him the terrible persecution of God's people, then the explanation of the start for the 2300-days would have been given then and there. It would have ran something like this:

15 And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gà:briel, make this man to understand the vision

17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

18 Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright

19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.

20 The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

21 And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

- 25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.
- 26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true.
- 27 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
- 28 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
- 29 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
- 30 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.
31. Wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. And was sick certain days, afterward I rose up and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

As is patently obvious in this simple exercise, assuming for the moment that the explanation in Dn9 does give the start for the 2300 days, there is nothing in this extra 60 seconds of revelation that could further burden the prophet concerning the terrible oppression against the people of God. Unless Gabriel's batteries were in need of a recharge, there is no absolutely no reason why he could not recharge Daniel again and give him a healing touch that would last until the message was completed. There is no reason why he could not have touched Daniel and said: "Understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent." I assert, in coincidence with the evidence from other texts in the book of Daniel, that Daniel fainted, not because he could no longer bear any more revelations, but because his source of strength to survive this painful experience was gone. Gabriel had left because his mission was accomplished and the communication was finished.

Daniel says in Dn10 that the reason his physical strength gave way was that he was in communication with one so holy. Unaided by heaven, he would *never* have the strength to survive this, as long as he was a mere mortal. Notice this text, "For how can the servant of this, my lord, talk with this my lord?" Dn 10:17. Or in the words of the NIV., "How can I your servant, talk with you, my lord?" Daniel was struck by the mere presence of these heavenly beings: "I said to the one before me, 'I am overcome with anguish, because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless.'" (Ibid) The sight of these heavenly persons overcame Daniel. It is the same in Dn8:16. "As he [Gabriel] came near where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate..."(NIV.) It was the strength of the heavenly beings that empowered Daniel and lifted him above his mortality and weakness. It was the strength of the heavenly beings that empowered

Daniel to listen to Gabriel without falling down every few words, as Gabriel endeavoured to convey this last revelation to him. The converse of that is also true. It is the absence of the strength of the heavenly beings that caused Daniel to faint on each occasion. By the association of that evidence with the end of chapter 8, and the evidence in 8: 26-27, which intimates Gabriel is no longer present, that we can conclude with a good deal of reliability that this fainting is due to the absence of that strength that had sustained him throughout the ordeal. The withdrawal of this energy left him with the effects of the experience on his mortal strength. And why is the energy withdrawn and Gabriel departed? Because the vision was finished when Gabriel told him to close the vision. Gabriel had finished with the statement that the 2300 days were true. That was the final statement. Gabriel need say no more. Accordingly, he said to Daniel, since I have closed the explanation, you close the writing of this revelation because it relates to the distant future. Clearly, this is the end of the revelation. Verse 27 is Daniel talking without the companionship of Gabriel. Daniel is no longer in vision. He is back in Babylon. The Susa vision is over. The ending of chapter 8 is as identical an ending as that found in chapter 7. Daniel 7 is completed with the statement that his thoughts troubled him greatly. Similarly in Dn8, Daniel is again troubled and does not understand.

***c. Daniel faints because of the holiness of the Messenger, not because of the Message.***

a. Daniel 8

In Daniel 8: 17, the fainting is not connected with the details of the vision or the lack of explanation in relation to the terrible persecution of God's people at all. It is directly related to the coming of Gabriel toward him. Gabriel comes toward him; Daniel is afraid and falls to the ground. That is the correlation Daniel wants us to see. It is the nature of the person who approaches that creates the response from Daniel. Daniel cannot help himself, his reaction to the presence of this person is autonomic and entirely without any volition. It is the strengthening given by this supernatural being that enables Daniel to endure his presence and I assert it is the converse of this – the absence of his presence that withdraws the strength from Daniel so that he becomes faint and ill for some days.

b. Daniel 10

In Daniel 10, Daniel presents the same correlation as that in Dn8:16-19: he sees a vision of an incredible heavenly visitor; hears him speak and he immediately faints and remains unconscious on the ground: “[I] saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.” Dn 10:8,9

Clearly then, from the evidence, Daniel's fainting *always* has to do with the presence of the messenger and NEVER because of the message he is given. This being the case, it is obvious that Daniel would NEVER be able to have the strength to endure the presence of these holy beings. Thus, it is absurd for Gabriel to delay the giving of

the explanation if Gabriel is the source of his lack of strength. Gabriel could wait 50 years –100 years and Daniel’s reaction would still be the same, despite the wisdom he might gain in the intervening years. It is human nature that recoils away from the sight of these holy beings. It had nothing to do with age or knowledge or experience. It is an automatic response from a mortal human. There are many examples of the same automatic reaction to the presence of holy beings. When Isaiah saw the Lord “high and lifted up,” his response was “Then said I, ‘Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.’” (Isa 6:1, 5)

Another classic example is that of Ezekiel when he was given a vision of the likeness of God. He says:

**1.28** This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

**2.1** And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

**2.2** And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

**2.3** and he said unto me, Son of man I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

It is important to note here that Ezekiel causally links “spirit entered me” to the act of standing up. It was not Ezekiel who put himself on his feet. The text says that he was “set” upon his feet. This is passive tense. The action was done by God. It was God who had to put Ezekiel on his feet. Why was that? It was because he saw the “appearance of God.” And when he saw it, he fell on his face. This was not an action of worship; it was an automatic response from being in the presence of holiness. The necessity of God’s assistance to place Ezekiel back on his feet testifies of this. Says the SDA Bible Commentary on Eze 2:

**Stand upon thy feet.** The vision of the glory of God had prostrated Ezekiel. In a similar manifestation of the power of God, Daniel declared, “There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength” (Dan. 10:8). In the call to divine service these prophets were led first to feel their own weakness. Then divine power came and activated them, restoring to them physical strength and enabling them to receive the heavenly communication. (Nichol, 1977, p.580f).

The SDABC definitely points out the similarity of experiences between Ezekiel and Daniel and the necessity of divine power to vitalise the prophet in the presence of a divine manifestation. Keil also endorses this view:

Having, in the feeling of his weakness and sinfulness, fallen to the ground before the terrible revelation of Jehovah’s glory, Ezekiel is first of all raised up again by the voice of God, to hear the word which calls him to the prophetic function. (Keil, 1978, p.46)

Leupold says on Dn10:7, 8:

Even he [Daniel] was greatly affected by what he saw, for it somehow affects grievously those who are marked by sin when they come into direct contact with that which emanates from the holy God. Many of God's saints of the Old Testament and the New Covenant expected death when such a manifestation came to them. Never did they perceive more truly and correctly than when such feelings took possession of them. Daniel describes in detail what his reactions to the great visions were. Not only in the eighth and the ninth verses make this evident, but throughout the rest of the chapter there are instances of weakness and the removal of weakness. It must have been in part the directness of the revelation that came to him that affected him so strongly. ..Therefore there also had to be successive impartations of strength to carry God's servant through the experience that he was undergoing.

First of all a feeling of utter impotence overpowered Daniel: "there was no strength left in me." ..Daniel felt all strength departing from him. He realized besides that whatever appearance of health and of strength he may have had left him. The Hebrew uses an almost untranslatable mode of statement which reads thus: "My glory or healthy, glowing color was changed upon me unto destruction." That is much more intense than becoming pale as a ghost. It would have involved serious impairment of health had not the Almighty neutralized these disastrous effects. Since the feeling of overpowering weakness was so strong upon him, he reiterates in another form the thought expressed a moment before by saying, "I retained no strength at all." It must be due to the fact that there are not many who could endure revelations of this sort and survive, that God does not grant them to many. Even a spiritual giant such as Daniel was almost perished under the impact of these divine revelations. Very few have a very deep sense of the damage that sin has actually done to them, and how utterly devastating. (1949, p. 451f.)

In conclusion, then, it is obvious from ch.8 and ch.10 that Daniel's weakness is due to the presence of the messenger, not the content of any message. Daniel had not, at this stage in Dn10, even been given a message. That came later. The same can be said of ch.8. Daniel does not faint after seeing the action of the little horn in vision against the people of God. Instead, he seeks answers (v.15). He has the alertness to pursue a quest for knowledge. It is only when a certain person approaches him that he faints. Daniel writes his experience in such a way to make it absolutely clear that it was the messenger that made him faint, not the vision he had seen previously, because the vision did not make him faint when he had seen it.

It is their presence that knocks Daniel to the ground. It is *never* the revelation in itself. Not that every time Gabriel presents himself he knocks people to the floor with his presence. He did not do it to Zacharias at the conception of John the Baptist;<sup>3</sup> he did not do it to Mary, when he visited her.<sup>4</sup> He did not do it to Daniel in chapter 9. He presents himself in the manner he chooses to suit his own designs.

Daniel would never have *started* to listen to the interpretation of the vision in chapter 8 if he was not strengthened by Gabriel. It is Gabriel's strength that supports him. To say that *Daniel never had the strength* to endure any more revelation is to say *Gabriel's strength was insufficient* to support Daniel for the duration of the

<sup>3</sup> This is using the EGW belief here that it was Gabriel who visited Zacharias – EGW comments on Luke 1:5-17( [Nichol, 1956](#), p.1114).

<sup>4</sup> See Luke 1:26 "And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth." NIV

explanation. It has nothing to do with Daniel's strength.<sup>5</sup> During the explanation he is not operating under his own strength; it is all Gabriel's strength, Gabriel's support; Gabriel's encouragement. So to say Daniel's strength gave way, while receiving the explanation from Gabriel is preposterous. Gabriel's support of Daniel would be sufficient for as long as needed, and more, if it come to that.

The facts of the book of Daniel indicate that the supernatural strength given to Daniel would enable him to endure whatever he needed to be given for however long it took. There was no timer associated with the gift of this strength; it was available as long as the angel provided the support. Notice the length of the revelation in chapter 11. It is the longest revelation in the whole experience of Daniel and it was accomplished only by the divine strength given to Daniel. He had fainted twice and had to be strengthened three times even before the revelation began. That indicates at least that either the revelation was worse than the one in Dn8 or that Daniel was in a worse physical condition in Dn11 than in Dn8 (he was close to 98years old by this time). So for him to need such support and yet endure a longer revelation, puts paid to the argument that the strength given to Daniel was not good enough to help him survive the information that needed to be given to him.

Furthermore, it is obvious that Daniel would NEVER be able to have the strength to endure the presence of these holy beings. Thus, it would be absurd for Gabriel to delay the giving of the explanation if Gabriel is the source of his strength. Gabriel could wait as many decades as necessary and Daniel's reaction would still be the same, despite the wisdom he might gain in the intervening years. It is human nature that recoils away from the sight of these holy beings. It had nothing to do with age or knowledge or experience. It is an automatic response from a mortal human.

There is more evidence in Daniel 8: 25, 26 that Daniel's fainting was not due to his inability to bear the revelation.

#### ***d. Gabriel elsewhere talks with Daniel after he has fainted.***

The SDA historicist's position ignores another position clearly supported in Dn8. Even when Daniel faints *and* is in a "deep sleep," the heavenly being *still continues to talk* to him, and Daniel is able to remember it enough to write it down later. The angel does not consider unconsciousness as a reason for a break. He expects Daniel to keep on listening, learning and remembering.

Notice Dn8:16-18:

**16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gà:briel, make this man to understand the vision

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<sup>5</sup> Cf Keil: "The angel touched the prophet, who had fallen dismayed to the earth, and placed him again on his feet (ver. 18), and by means of this touch communicated to him the strength to hear his words." (1978, 312) Why would the angel only want to communicate strength for 70% of the words? The idea is bizarre! -FB

**17** So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

**18** Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright

The NIV version says for verses 15 and 16:

**17** As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end."

**18** While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet.

This is perhaps the most damning evidence against the SDA historicist's position on this argument. If Gabriel can talk to Daniel while he is "in a deep sleep" on the ground, then in what way does fainting hinder the completion of the explanation at the end of chapter 8? The angel is not bothered in verses 16 and 17 by the fact that Daniel is unconscious. He just keeps on talking. Doesn't he know? Can't he see? Daniel is out to it. Apparently, that did not mean a thing to the angel. Conscious or unconscious, it makes no difference to Gabriel. He had the power to talk to Daniel in such a way that Daniel could not only hear it while he was still unconscious, but also to remember it long enough to be able to recall it afterwards when he was writing of the experience!

I will take the liberty here and emend the text so that we can see how the text would have looked if Gabriel had continued with the so-called explanation of the 2300-days with Daniel unconscious:

**15** And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

**16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gà:riel, make this man to understand the vision

**17** So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

**18** Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright

**19** And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.

**20** The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

**21** And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

**22** Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

- 23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.
- 24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.
- 25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.
- 26 And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true. Wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days
- 27 And I Daniel fainted and I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground and he said to me while I was in a deep sleep:
- 28 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
- 29 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
- 30 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
- 31 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.
- 32.. And I was sick certain days, afterward I rose up and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

The SDA historicist's reason for the delay of the explanation has dissolved!!! Their argument is that Daniel fainted. Well, so what? Gabriel could just kept on talking, like he did before the explanation started and, "Hey Presto!!" Daniel would be able to remember it and write it down just like he did with the first "transcendental" message. Our limitations are not Gabriel's !! , He can handle any situation with dispatch, whether it be dream; or vision; whether it be when the prophet is awake; or asleep; whether it be when he is conscious or unconscious.

Gabriel *started* the explanation with Daniel being unconscious. He spoke to him while still in "a deep sleep" and told him "Understand O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision." (v.17) It is no great deal then, if need be to *finish* the explanation to Daniel while he was unconscious again. But that never happened. Therefore, Gabriel did not need to say anything more. He had completed his explanation. Daniel fainting then, was not during the explanation, but after the revelation had finished.

Therefore, given then that Gabriel does not need to interrupt Daniel in his fainting state and say anything more past what he has said in verse 26, it is obvious that *he has finished his explanation*. This means we can take the statement in v.26 just as it reads – “shut the vision” – Gabriel had finished his explanation at that point, and when Daniel had written up to that point, he could indicate the end of the explanation. This also means that *the start of the 2300-days is given in Daniel 8*. Consequently, the answer to the start of the 2300-days *does not lay* in the revelation about the 70 weeks.

## The text of Dn8:18

The text from BHS at Dn8:18 says this:

עַל־פְּנֵי וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי הַבֵּן בֶּן־אָדָם כִּי לְעֵת־קֵץ הַחֲזוֹן: 18 וּבְדַבְרֵי  
 עַמִּי נִרְדָּמְתִּי עַל־פְּנֵי אֶרֶץ וַיִּנְעֵ־בִי וַיַּעֲמִידֵנִי עַל־עַמֻּדַי: 19 וַיֹּאמֶר  
 הַגִּבּוֹר מוֹדִיעֵךְ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַזְּמַן כִּי לְמוֹעֵד קֵץ:<sup>20</sup>  
 הָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־רָאִיתָ בְּעַל הַקְּרָנִים מֶלֶךְ מִדְּרִי וּפָרַס: 21 וְהַצִּפּוֹר

The first prepositional phrase in v.18 literally translated means “in his speaking” (“with me”).<sup>6</sup> This phrase is a temporal clause indicating the time at which he was talking with Daniel. And when was he speaking with Daniel? The next clause answers that, literally translated “I was in a deep sleep, towards/upon my face, towards the ground.” Therefore, it is quite obvious that it is during this unconscious state that the angel is speaking to him.

The text does not say, “after he spoke to me” I fell asleep. The message and the unconsciousness occur together. “While he was speaking to me, I fell into / was in a deep sleep;” Another quite legitimate translation could be “As/When he spoke to me, I fell into / was in a deep sleep.” A third way to render it may be, “In his speaking to me, I was / fell in a deep sleep.”

## Non SDA commentators on this verse

### Archer:

**15-18** These verses describe the awesome confrontation between Daniel and the angel Gabriel, who is here named for the first time (v.16). Some other heavenly being, not otherwise specified, commissioned Gabriel – who later appeared to the Virgin Mary

<sup>6</sup> The preposition “b” here can quite rightly indicate “when” (see BDB under B° number V, discussing use of b° followed by an infinitive to form a periphrasis for a gerund, “though in the English it is commonly to be rendered by a verb and a conj.” (1983. p.90)) I have chose the conjunction “while” thus “while he was speaking with me...” as translated by the NIV.

Notice also the comments of Kautzsch (§164 g) on Temporal Clauses. When discussing the use of “b” he says “the infinitive construct governed by a preposition (§114 d e) is very frequently used as the equivalent of a temporal clause; the infinitive with b° may usually be rendered by *when, as* or *whilst*... (1909, p.503)

to announce the coming of Jesus – to explain the meaning of the vision to the swooning prophet (v.17). Gabriel was instructed to identify the coming world empires and the climactic events of the “time of the end”...The overwhelming splendor of Gabriel’s presence affected Daniel somewhat as John on Patmos was to be affected by the angelic appearance (Rev 22:8). Daniel was rendered completely helpless and unable even to speak 9v.18). Yet the angel’s transforming touch restored Daniel to consciousness. (1985, p.105)

### Young:

For the translation *swooned*, I am indebted to M [ontgomery-FB]. Because of fear at the Angel’s speaking, Dan. completely lost consciousness and fell on his face. (1949, p. 176)<sup>7</sup>

### Keil:

As commanded, the angel goes to the place where Daniel stands. On his approach, Daniel is so filled with terror that he falls on his face, because as a sinful and mortal man he could not bear the holiness of God which appeared before him in the pure heavenly being. At the appearance of God he fears that he must die...But to mitigate his alarm, calls him to take heed, for the vision relates to the time of the end. (1978, p.309)

SOMETHING MISSING IN THIS QUOTE BEFORE “BUT TO MITIGATE...”

### Leupold:

Leupold sees it differently from the other commentators. He wants to advance the concept that Daniel had not lost consciousness, because Daniel understood “the first cue.” But this does not prove his point. He merely asserts it. He cannot see Daniel understanding the cue to understand unless he is conscious. But the text says differently. The temporal clause and the unconsciousness go together. Not only does Daniel become unconscious, he hears the whole of the command, whether he be dropping into unconsciousness or totally unconsciousness AND furthermore, he remembers all of it when he comes to committing it to writing later.

**17, 18 So he came near the place where I stood; and as he approached, I was overcome by fear and fell face downward. And he said to me: “Understand, O mortal, that the vision pertains to the time of the end.” And as he spoke with me, I fell into a swoon to the ground face downward; and he touched me and set me upon my feet where I had been standing.**

Direct contact with a heavenly being has always wrought great fear and dread to the heart of mortals...With good reason men feared that death might overtake them, for the full sense of one’s sinfulness comes home to one under just such circumstances...Yet Daniel had not lost consciousness, nor did this fear prevent him from understanding the first cue to the vision he had seen. For he is told that “the vision pertains to the time of the end.” (1949, p.360f)

### Porteous:

Daniel is represented as falling into a trance state from which he has to be raised by the angel. (1965, p. 128)

<sup>7</sup> The SOED definition of “swooning” is “to fall into a fainting fit; to faint.” Onions, 1980, p.2217)

**Baldwin:**

The inappropriateness of *deep sleep* for the reception of an angelic message seems to be insisted upon (*cf.* 10: 9; Rev. 1: 17). The recipient must not only be awake but standing ready to obey orders (*cf.* Ezek. 2: 1-3). (1978, p. 159)

**Walvoord:**

Although Daniel apparently had been awake in the earlier part of the vision, we now learn that, as Gabriel was speaking, Daniel had fallen into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. Montgomery translates *I was in a deep sleep* as I swooned.” In any event, it is not a natural sleep but the result of fear described in verse 17. (1971, p.191)

In summary, Gabriel is asked to talk to Daniel when he is in a fainting state. Therefore, the argument that Gabriel has to stop in v.27 is not upheld by other textual considerations.

### **Summary of this evidence for Part I.**

We have examined three reasons why Daniel fainted:

1. He fainted due to his inability to endure any more revelations concerning the persecutions of God’s people.
2. He fainted because of the information that the oppression of God’s people would go on for so long a time.
3. He fainted because he was not given the information on the 2300 days.

I then presented information showing that

1. Daniel’s ability to see any of the vision was supernatural rather than natural.
2. Gabriel was able to strengthen him until the explanation was complete.
3. Gabriel is able to finish the explanation even if Daniel was unconscious, let alone feeling unwell.
4. The vision is complete since Gabriel hands responsibility over to Daniel; indicating that Gabriel had acquitted himself of his responsibility.

This information shows cogently that the SDA historicists’ position on the matter is fatally flawed.

### **The Problems Part II -When did Gabriel decide to abort the explanation?**

The second part of the issue in this assumption is an examination of the text in relation to the question as to when Gabriel actually aborted the explanation. We need to see this in the text explicitly. Some SDA historicists say that Gabriel decided to abort the explanation *just before* or *as* Daniel fainted. Others argue Gabriel decided to abort

the explanation *after* Daniel fainted. So then the question needs to be addressed as to the precise incisive place in the text where SDA historicists understand the fainting occurs. Is it mentioned in scripture? Is the fainting just assumed to have occurred before the final fainting at the end of the vision? Or is the fainting recorded in v.27 the actual fainting they are referring to?

There are clues in SDA writings to indicate how they understand when the fainting took place. *Questions on Doctrine* argues that this illness does not appear either to Gabriel or to Daniel until verse 27. For them it is *sudden and rapid*: “The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet *suddenly* to faint and become ill (verse 27). So the explanation *broke off precipitately* at that point.” (*Seventh-day Adventists*, 1957, p. 269) Notice also in this statement that SDA historicists locate the dislocation of the explanation at verse 27 – “at that point.”

For Nichol, it was only after Daniel experiences the illness referred to in verse 27 that Gabriel decides to withdraw and come another day: “The prospect of terrible persecution during the course of the 2300 ‘days’ (Dan8: 10-13, 23-25) proved more than the aged Daniel could bear and as a result he ‘fainted, and was sick certain days.’ (ch 8:27; GC: 325) Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time” (*Nichol*, 1957, p.850). Nichol uses verse 27 as the text referring to the fainting spell that interrupts the explanation. Following Nichol’s thought then, since v.27 is the first indication that something is wrong, verse 26 was stated by Gabriel without any expectation that he would have to abort in the next few seconds. Gabriel’s statement in verse 26 is then, not a summary of what he would have said if but had to shorten it because he saw Daniel was going to faint, but is in fact a part of it.

Haynes takes a similar position. “Because Daniel had fainted, the angel could not make the meaning of this long period clear to the prophet, and therefore Daniel did not understand it.” (*Haynes*, 1930, p.47) For Haynes, the lack of understanding referred in v27 is because of the information that Gabriel could not convey to Daniel. In turn, Gabriel could not convey that information because Daniel had fainted. So Haynes uses verse 27 as the indicator about Daniel’s illness.

Smith takes a similar view. He sees verse 27 as the marker for Daniel’s fainting:

Gabriel was commanded to make Daniel understand the entire vision. But at the conclusion of the chapter, Daniel says, “I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.” So far, therefore, as the record of the eighth chapter is concerned, Gabriel had not then fulfilled his mission. The point left unexplained was the 2300 days. Why did not Gabriel continue his instructions till this point also was made clear? – Because Daniel had heard all he could endure, and “fainted and was sick certain days.” But Gabriel must somewhere explain this matter of the time, or prove disobedient to his instructions. (1898, p.168)

Daniel’s fainting in verse 27 is for Smith is the interruption of Gabriel’s explanation. Therefore, since Gabriel has been interrupted without any chance to say anything more, Gabriel “must explain this matter” somewhere else.

Therefore, returning to the original question, in the SDA historicists view, Gabriel did *not* know at verse 26 that Daniel was to faint in the next few seconds. This

leads us on to the natural outcome of this exercise: **The command to shut is in the wrong position.**

Assuming for the moment Gabriel saw Daniel getting sick *before* he makes the comment in v26, and decides only to give a summary of what he wanted to say, and so he changes his message at this point, there should be some clue to indicate that Daniel was about to faint and that the angel changes his explanation at that point. The text would read something like this:

**26 And I Daniel was feeling faint and could no longer listen to the man Gabriel. As the man Gabriel saw that I was faint, he said,**

**27 The vision of the evenings and the mornings are true. Wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days**

**28. And I Daniel fainted, was sick *certain* days, afterward I rose up, and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it*. K.J.V.**

The command to shut the vision because it pertains to the distant future is a command that indicates the end of Gabriel's commission. It is his proper conclusion. It is the proper thing to say at the end of the revelation.

If, as SDA historicists say, Daniel was sick at verse 27 and it is *then* that Gabriel realises that he has to abort his mission, then the command to shut the vision, is out of place. This command should be placed *after* Daniel had fainted in verse 27.<sup>8</sup> The text should read like this:

**26 And the vision of the evenings and the mornings are true.**

**27. And I Daniel fainted, and so the angel said to me, Wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days .**

**28 And I was sick *certain* days, afterward I rose up, and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood**

This is how we are told by the SDA writers to believe it happened.

1. Daniel fainted.

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<sup>8</sup> This assumes that the command to shut up the vision is the natural conclusion to the vision. There is no reason to doubt this. The command to shut the vision can only be obeyed by finishing using the writing implement. In turn, the writing implement can only be put down when there is no more to write. The fact that Gabriel says it is time to put down the pen / stylus, and close the vision indicates that in Gabriel's view there was no more to be written. This is the marker to indicate that the record is to be finished. So if Gabriel used this statement as a signal to Daniel, then we are safe in judging it thus as well. Furthermore, he says this, in the SDA view, BEFORE he knows Daniel is going to faint. Therefore, it is not a summary, it is not a rushed ending, it is a proper conclusion. This justifies it being used as a final marker in these emendation exercises.

2. That was then a cue that the portion that related to the last days would not be explained, so Gabriel tells him to “shut up” that part of the vision, until the time of the end.<sup>9</sup>
3. Then Gabriel leaves (assumed),
4. Daniel is ill for some days, and then gets up to attend to his duties.

As the reader can immediately see, SDA historicists have a problem, since this is *not* how the text actually reads. The statement of Gabriel’s to shut the vision comes at the *wrong place*. SDA historicist scholars do not see Gabriel *finishing* his explanation of the start of the 2300 days at the end of verse 26<sup>10</sup>. They do not even see him thinking of being interrupted at that juncture. The statement to shut the vision comes at the *introduction* of this explanation,<sup>11</sup> together with the phrase that the vision of the evening and the morning is true. Notice this comment from Maxwell:

he naturally desired an explanation. **Gabriel started to provide one, but** what he said about the beasts and horns and their effect on Christ’s heavenly ministry and on the people of God so overwhelmed Daniel that **he fainted before Gabriel could deal specifically with verse 14** (1981, p.179)

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<sup>9</sup> Readers are referred to [Assumption 8](#) where detailed information on references to this sense of the text is dealt with until the heading, “**Only Part of the Vision is Referred to in Dn8:26.**” Suffice to say that the *SDA Bible Commentary* sees the statement “to shut up the vision,” as implying a break in the explanation: “In v.26 Gabriel mentions the time element, but breaks off his explanation before saying anything further about it... Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time.” (Nichol, 1976, p.850) As is clearly seen here the statement, “the vision of the evening and the morning is true,” is the part of v.26 they refer to as “the time element,” and unless they are arguing for an assumed break in v.26 that is not marked by any text, then we can only conclude that the statement – “but breaks off his explanation before saying anymore about it” –can only refer to the very next part of verse 26 which says “But shut up the vision...” It was at this time – after saying the first half of verse 26 – that “the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision.”

<sup>10</sup> As can be seen from the comments of the *SDA Bible Commentary*,. (Nichol, 1976, p.850) in the previous footnote and ([Seventh-day Adventists, 1957](#), p. 269) listed at the start of this paper, there is a deal of uncertainty on this matter. The SDA official documents indicate TWO places where the break comes. The former sees it at the middle of verse 26, whereas the latter indicate it comes in vers 27. I have taken verse 27 as the majority position. However, the *SDA Bible Commentary* itself has a *dual* position on this. On the very same page quoted above, they use verse 27 as the marker for the interruption: “The prospect of terrible persecution during the course of the 2300 “days” (Dan8: 10-13, 23-25) proved more than the aged Daniel could bear and as a result he “fainted, and was sick certain days” (ch 8:27; GC:325). Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time.” They are saying here by quoting verse 27 in the brackets that verse 27 is the marker for this fainting. Undoubtedly, their answer to this embarrassment is to say that it is both! The interruption was seen as imminent by Gabriel in the middle of verse 26 and so he cut short the explanation, and Daniel fainted in verse 27. Simple!! Readers who understand the material in this paper will see a multiplicity of reasons why this position cannot hold either. The burden of proof is on them to prove this double interruption.

<sup>11</sup> “In v.26 Gabriel mentions the time element, but breaks off his explanation before saying anything further about it... Accordingly, the angel discontinued the explanation of the vision at this time. (Nichol, 1976, p.850)

Thus the comment to shut up the vision should be also a part of the beginning of the explanation of verse 14. To my mind that is not only contradictory, it is nonsense. Rather than being the *introduction* to anything, Gabriel's command to Daniel to "shut the vision" is the *conclusion*, it is the most obvious indicator that the message of Gabriel is completed and that before he leaves, he gives Daniel direction for the preservation of the vision. We do not hear anything from Gabriel after this statement nor does Daniel mention him. It is understood. Just as at the end of Daniel chaps. 7,9, and 12, we are not told of the departure of the heavenly visitor; it is understood. And we are lead to believe in those chapters that they are complete too, because nothing to the contrary is said.

Thus, this phrase "shut the vision" undoes the arguments of SDA historicists concerning the abrupt interruption at verse 27. Gabriel concludes his remarks in preparation to leave in verse 26. He deals with the custodial issues relating to the book and is gone. That is how the text presents it. SDA historicists have committed themselves to saying that verse 26 is *not* a part of this interruption. And by saying that, they have destroyed their own argument. In the *normal* course of Gabriel's explanation, he winds it up by saying the evil will be destroyed (v.25); the vision is true and will occur (v.26); and so, shut up the vision because it relates to the distant future (v.26). Gabriel is not being rushed here; he is not quickly summarising because Daniel's physical strength has given way or looks as though it might. No! That does not occur at this point. He is saying what he needs to say. And what does he say? "Good will triumph in the end! The vision of the two people talking about the 2300-days is no fable, it's the truth! Preserve it for posterity!"<sup>12</sup> In those statements, he acquits himself of his commission given to him in verse 16 and leaves. When he leaves, the vision is ended, Daniel faints, and becomes ill.

If, as SDA historicists say, Daniel interrupted the explanation, then they would have to change the text as indicated above and this they cannot do without any precedent for those textual emendations. Therefore, as long as Gabriel's parting command is recorded in verse 26, we can safely say that the explanation is completed at verse 26 and that the experience of Daniel recorded in verse 27 is Daniel's reaction after the angel had finished his commission and the vision had past.

We need to look closer at the statements at the end of the Gabrielic visitation in Dn8, and see their intent from a different perspective to that usually presented in SDA explanations of these texts.

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<sup>12</sup> Gabriel had been given a commission to make Daniel understand the vision. Gabriel, at the end of his explanation in verse 26 acquits himself of his commission but passes on the commission to Daniel. It is now Daniel's turn to make those who will live in the distant future to understand it, by shutting it up and preserving it for them. This command of Gabriel is a clear indication that Gabriel's commission is complete. To paraphrase it. "I have given it to you, now you preserve it for them because it is designed for them, not you."

***a. The third-last and the penultimate statements in v.25 and v.26 are conclusions***

Consider the following statements of Gabriel:

- i. **The little horn will be broken without hand.** This statement goes further than the information in the vision. There is no overt mention in the vision of the downfall of the little horn power. This statement in verse 25 rounds off the explanation by bringing the activities to the little horn to its deserved outcome—broken by an unseen hand. This is a conclusion. It is the final word on the activities and destiny of the little horn power. Clearly, the action against the people of God is over at this stage. Justice has prevailed, and retribution given. This statement is a clear marker of a wind-down in the explanation towards the end.
- ii. **The discussion you heard about “the vision of the evening and the morning which was told” is correct.** This statement is defined as the part of the vision “which was told” (conveyed by speech). This clearly refers to vs.13 and 14 Daniel just says that the information in the conversation Daniel overheard is correct—those things will continue for the 2300 evenings mornings. In this statement, there are no indications that the start for this period has or has not been explained. It merely asserts the validity of the length of this period. There is no pressure here of anything needing to be explained about the period. There is no evidence here that there are unanswered questions still in Daniel’s mind. He merely confirms the period. This is the second generalised statement and again is another signal that we are reading the conclusion of the explanation.

***b. The last statement in v.26 refers to the final act in the revelation***

**The command is given from Gabriel to Daniel to “shut the vision.”** This command is given without any pressure to wind up the explanation because Daniel was going to faint. The text does not allow it, and SDA historicists put the “abrupt” interruption AFTER this statement.<sup>13</sup> Gabriel then makes this statement without any pressure from time or circumstance. For him, it is the right thing to say next. The command to “shut the vision” means that the explanation is now ready to be “shut.” There are a couple important implications of this statement:<sup>14</sup>

- i. **The command to “shut the vision” indicates that the message is complete.** Regardless on what type of medium Daniel was going to write his experience

<sup>13</sup> “The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet suddenly to faint and become ill (verse 27). So the explanation broke off precipitately at that point.” (*Seventh-day Adventists*, 1957, p. 269)

<sup>14</sup> For a fuller treatment on the nature of the writing mediums available and the options open to Daniel for shutting and archiving the document, see the [appendix in Assumption No.8](#) entitled, “What Medium would Daniel have written on?”

of the vision, the action of shutting it indicates that the use of the writing implement has finished and now it is time to do the next step with the document. Regardless of which option he chose, if the document was destined for people living after Daniel was dead, the usual practise would be to archive the document with the temple, or in this case, the Jewish synagogue, for safe keeping.

If he was writing on clay, the act of shutting the vision refers to the act of enclosing it in a clay envelope, and then archiving it; If he were going to write on parchment or leather, it would refer to the act of rolling the scroll up and putting it in its cover, then having it archived. If he were going to use papyrus, he would roll the scroll up tightly and tie it closed with some string, and archive it. (Sealing the string with clay pressed into it with Daniel's stamp seal impressed in it was the next step in securing them. But God did not say "Seal it," and this may have implied that more was to be added to it at a later date. When the end of Daniel's revelations did come, he is told then to "seal the book.")

Another method of shutting the vision, as well as doing the above was to add an element of cryptography to the text – a practise used on a daily basis in Babylon. This is the act of rendering it beyond the understanding of the uninitiated. They would need the key to unlock its mysteries. This system of mystery writing was ubiquitous throughout Babylon, being used by tradespersons of all types. (See more on the use of cryptography in my paper on [Assumption 8](#))

Perhaps Daniel closed the book by rendering the revelation in Hebrew. He is not told to close the books he wrote in Aramaic. The key to unlocking the cryptography in the book of Daniel was to be initiated into the covenant with Israel's God and learning the language of the covenant people. This alone would give you the needed background knowledge in the Israelite religion to make of any significance the important texts in vs. 9-14. The choice of Daniel to put the vision into Hebrew may highlight his way of rendering it a secretive document to the casual observer, but to the Hebrew reader, it is open and full of instruction. Like the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast, it was only cryptography to the uninformed.

- ii. **The responsibility for the vision has shifted from Gabriel to Daniel.** Gabriel's commission to Daniel indicates that it is Daniel's turn to receive a commission. This commission is to "Shut the vision." The shifting of the onus in regards to the stewardship of this vision indicates that Gabriel had acquitted himself of the commission, to make Daniel to understand the vision. This is the first incidence of the imperative tense of a verb since Gabriel was told Daniel to understand the vision in v.17. The text since then was a narrative. But now, at the end of v.26, *Gabriel changes his stance before Daniel, and instead of being the messenger, he becomes the commander. He becomes the giver of a commission rather than the obedient performer of a commission. There is a change in relationship between Daniel and Gabriel at this juncture.* I assert this is brought about by Gabriel having finished divulging all the material needed to be added to the document. Gabriel's work is complete.

- iii. **The SDA meaning of the command to “shut the vision” makes a mockery of their intelligence** when considered for a minute. Their definition of what was to be “shut” in response to this command was *not* the vision, like the text says, but only those parts of the vision that apply to the time of the end. This is covered extensively in [Assumption 8](#), but for convenience I will quote some SDA historicist writers to confirm that this is their position:

Compare the similar admonition in regard to Daniel’s earlier vision (ch. 8:26). This instruction did not apply to the whole of the book of Daniel, for a portion of the message has been understood and thus been a blessing to believers for centuries. It applied, rather, to that part of Daniel’s prophecy that dealt with the last days (AA 585; DA 234). Not until that time was reached could a message, based on the fulfilment of these prophecies, be proclaimed (see GC 356). Compare the “little book open” in the hand of the angel of Rev. 10:1,2 (see TM 115). (Nichol, 1976, p.879)

This is normative of most other SDA historicists on the topic. For example, notice this comment by C. Mervyn Maxwell:

[Dan.12:4 quoted] It is very likely that the visions could have ceased at this point; but Daniel appears to have been startled at being told to “shut up the words.” He wanted eagerly to “understand,” and in his visions he had frequently been encouraged to do so. Now he learns that something has to remain locked up until almost the end of the world.

Gabriel cannot have meant that all the information in the book of Daniel was to be “shut up” until the time of the end. The identity of the head of gold as Babylon and of the ram as “Media and Persia” and of the goat as Greece is stated explicitly within the book, beyond all doubt or mystery. But Babylon, Persia and Greece were empires which ruled in Daniel’s own day and in his immediate future. The events to be “shut up” were only those that would occur near the end. (1981, p. 301)

And from the SDA Bible Commentary on Revelation 10:

Daniel had been instructed to “shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end” (Dan.12:4). This admonition applies particularly to the part of Daniel’s prophecies that deals with the last days (see on ch. 12:4), and doubtless especially to the time element of the 2300 days (ch.8:14) as it relates to the preaching of the first, second and third angel’s messages (Rev. 14:6-12). Inasmuch as the message of the present angel [this quote is from the section in Rev.10 which sees an angel standing on the earth and the sea— FB] deals with time, and presumably with events at the time of the end, when the book of Daniel was to be unsealed (Dan.12:4), it seems reasonable to conclude that the little book open in the hand of the angel was the book of Daniel. With the presentation to John of the little book open, the sealed portions of Daniel’s prophecy are revealed. The time element, pointing out the end of the 2300-day prophecy, is made clear. Consequently the present chapter focuses upon the time when the proclamation of vs. 6, 7 was made, that is, during the years 1840 to 1844”... (Nichol, 1957, p. 797)

Having established the validity of my assertion that the SDA historicist’s position is that the thing to be shut up by Daniel in response to the command of Gabriel was not the whole vision, as the text clearly says, but just the explanation of the 2300-days, the next point highlights the utter embarrassment of this position. SDA writers say that v.26 was a normal part of Gabriel’s explanation. He was cruising along nicely explaining all

these things to Daniel, including the comments in verse 26 and was about to give Daniel the starting date for the 2300-days when Gabriel is “precipitately” and “abruptly” interrupted by Daniel fainting, and so Gabriel could go no further. He departs and comes back a decade later.

“Well,” Mr. Historicist may say, “What is wrong with that interpretation?” The problem is that it is a sheer contradiction of terms. In the normal course of the explanation, Gabriel tells Daniel, “Shut up that portion of the vision that I do not explain, until the time of the end” when he had no intention of leaving anything unexplained. Was he going to leave it unexplained until the “time of the end?” His very next intention is to explain the starting date of the 2300-days. This means that this was a silly command of Gabriel’s because *there would have been nothing left unexplained*, in the SDA historicist’s view. According to SDA historicists, he had no idea that Daniel was going to faint when he gave this command. We are led to believe that the angel is caught completely unawares by the fainting of Daniel. So why would he say, “Close up the vision about the two people discussing the 2300days if I do not explain it,” when in fact, according to the SDA position, his very next sentence was going to be an explanation of the start of the 2300-days. He was planning to explain it all at *that* time. So, the command to “shut the vision:,” coming in the middle of the explanation is totally nonsensical, if one takes the SDA historicist’s meaning of it.

Seeing the embarrassment of this position, Mr Historicist might change his position and say, “Well, v.26 clearly shows that Gabriel saw that Daniel was about to faint, so he said those things in v.26 quickly before Daniel did faint.” The problem with this, apart from a serious change in position from what the church has presented, is that there is no evidence to support it. To make that change in belief, you would need to do some serious emendations to the text, [as demonstrated earlier](#).

### ***c. Gabriel finishes at v.26. Daniel takes up at v.27***

Gabriel had been speaking up to verse 26. Passing the torch of responsibility onto Daniel in the latter part of verse 26, having completed his explanation and consigning it to Daniel’s care, is an obvious signal that Gabriel had finished his commission. Consequently, in verse 27, the speaker changes from Gabriel to Daniel. This is further confirmation that the work of Gabriel was finished. With the implied departure of Gabriel having finished the explanation and giving instructions regarding Daniel’s treatment of it, the strength that Gabriel had given him dissipates, and Daniel has a counter-reaction. He returns from being supernaturally supported to depending on his own strength. Notice carefully Leopold’s comments in the same vein on Dn8:27:

The recipient of the vision had already in vv. 17 and 18 been overcome by contact with heavenly beings and supernatural revelation and had required strengthening before he was able even to receive what was to be communicated. It need not seem strange that at the close of this particular revelation his earlier weakness should again befall him – “I was exhausted” – and that a further reaction should set in the form of a temporary sickness “for several days.” It is because of the frailty of man that God does not appear to him directly or reveal himself to man more directly. Daniel records this part of his physical reaction especially, for it is of moment in establishing the sin-weakened state of man. (*Ibid*, p.371)

For Leupold, Daniel was first overcome by contact with the heavenly beings and the supernatural revelation; but the weakness returned after the explanation of the vision; and that his frailty was due to Daniel's sinful nature being exposed to the holy nature of the supernatural.

#### ***d. Summary of my conclusions on this from Assumption 8.***

In explaining the command to "shut the vision" in verse 27, the SDA historicist's view is that the full vision in vs. 3-14 is not to be shut, but only the parts of the vision that pertain to the last days. In essence, this means the start date for the 2300 days is shut until 1798 A.D. This means that the only part of the vision not explained was to be shut until the time of the end, when it would be opened or unsealed, and a true explanation of it would be given. This is ridiculous of course, because, if Dn9 explains the only unexplained part of Dn8, then it was given, not after 1798, but a little over a decade after the revelation of Daniel 8.

In my paper on [Assumption No8](#), I show the error of the SDA historicist's position. The text says that the whole vision is to be shut. This command confirms the view that the explanation was complete and that the generalised statement that the time involved was true would be a natural summation before Gabriel told Daniel to write it down and keep it secure and confidential until posterity would need it.

Therefore, this statement is a natural conclusion to a complete revelation. Not that everything has been revealed. Assumption 2 lists the items that are not explained in the vision of Dn8, even after Dn9. Even at the end of Dn12, Gabriel indicates there is a limit to the extent of the revelations allowed. But that does not mean the revelation as a unit is not complete or cannot be further amplified later. When Gabriel decides everything has been explained, it is complete. That is what Gabriel decided in verse 26. Many commentators see a natural development from Dn2 through to Dn12 of progressive revelation. This, however, does not imply that Dn2 or Dn7 or Dn8 are unfinished as revelatory units.

#### ***e. The so-called beginning of the explanation of the start for the 2300-days***

SDA writers say the statement in verse 26 is the beginning of the explanation of the starting point of the 2300 days. Typical of this is Ellen White:

**As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet's vision,** physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days." "And I was astonished at the vision," he says, "but none understood it." ([White, 1888](#), p.325)

That however, is not the case. Why would Gabriel start into an explanation of the time period and then tell Daniel to close the vision? Daniel never fainted at this stage. There is no reason to shut the vision at this time. Daniel is O.K. There is information to be given about the start of the 2300 days. Therefore, the command to "shut the vision" is entirely out of context. There is no break between this statement and

the next statement to indicate that any explanation had been aborted. The text continues naturally. From a penultimate assurance of validity, custodial issues are addressed so that the message may be cared for in a way so that the validity of the revelation can be tested by those who live through the awful events depicted in the vision.

If Gabriel were going to launch into an explanation of the 2300-days, he would not have moved onto discussing the commission of Daniel to close the vision. There was no indication at this stage that Daniel was going to faint. There was no hurry. He could have started explaining the start of the time period then. The command to shut the book would best be located *after* Daniel fell faint. The word of Ellen White is “suddenly” and that occurs in v27 – “at that point” [Seventh-day Adventists, 1957](#), p. 269). This indicates that we should not look for any change in the flow of Gabriel’s thinking at verse 26. He is not hurried or distracted by Daniel here. He is focused on completing his commission. This he does after he tells Daniel that the vision about the 2300-day period is true. He then moves into delivering a commission to Daniel.

Since the SDA historicist’s theory does not fit the context here, it should be disregarded as lacking credibility and support from the text. There is no abortion of an explanation due to an illness of Daniel. There is no interruption of the explanation of Daniel. That explanation is finished at the end of verse 25. Verse 26 contains his last closing remarks and custodial issues. Verse 27 reintroduces Daniel after he comes out of the vision, in much the same manner as he recorded in Dn7:28: “I Daniel was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself” (NIV). Nothing more can be deduced from those texts. Let the text say what it says.

## Summary of Evidence for Part II

Part II looked at the question as to when Gabriel decided to abort the explanation of the vision. The SDA historicist’s rationale fails on a number of fronts:

- They have the reasoning incorrect in relation to the text, and the text would have to be emended to accommodate their views, for which, at present, there is no justifiable reason;
- The statements as the end of v25. and those in v.26 are conclusions, indicating that Gabriel was bringing his explanation to a close, before there was any so-called hint of Daniel going to faint;
- There is a change of role in Gabriel in v.26, from a servant carrying out a command, to one who issues commands to Daniel. This is indicative of the completeness of his mission to give the explanation to Daniel;
- The SDA explanation is self-contradictory.

## Conclusions

The topic of this paper has been the assumption that Daniel was sick before the Gabriel’s explanation to Daniel was completed. My conclusion is that apart from the

use of assumptions as its basis, there are major problems with the logic of this assumption.

### **1. There is no evidence that Gabriel was interrupted in his message. The evidence is that Gabriel had completed the message**

Daniel has shown us his style in incorporating human-interest material in his narrative. This is confirmed by lengthy commentary by him in both chapter 8 and 10. These lead us to expect that for such a *crucial* moment as the abortion of the explanation of the time period, we would expect some commentary by Daniel on this matter. Considering the heightened importance that SDA historicists give to this point of the prophecy in the mind of Daniel, this drastic (supposed) illness is really on a par with the events of 8:15 f. and should have received some attention. That is not what we find. All we get is the statement that Daniel fainted. Then comes the statement that he was ill. If the fainting of Daniel stops Gabriel from saying any more during the explanation, and then he leaves, there is no evidence to support it. I have given various emendations of the text to indicate what the SDA historicists are forcing the text to say. This is the only way they could justify their arguments – by changing the text from what it appears now.

### **2. There is no evidence that Gabriel cut short anything he was to say. The evidence is that he said entirely everything he was going to say**

His commentary in Dn8:15-26 comes to a natural climax saying that the “baddies” will be dealt with. It is a story with a good ending. But there is a lot of content in the unfolding drama that does not sit well with Daniel. After explaining the climax to the explanation, it is fitting that Gabriel then rounds the whole excursus up with a reassurance or perhaps better, a warning that the vision of the 2300-days is true and will occur. Daniel is not surprised by the details of the events up to the vs9-11 because he had seen most of it some years before, in the revelation recorded in Dn7. What shocks him in this vision is the material that is new. It is my belief that it is the new information Gabriel has to assure Daniel that it is correct, and will occur under the providence of God.

The statement made in Dn8:26, therefore, is not the *beginning* of the explanation of 2300-days, but rather an affirmation of the validity of the information given. It is the *end* of the message. This fits perfectly with the next statement to Daniel to shut up the vision. The proper meaning of to shut is to close, or in the case of documents to finish them and archive them for preservation and security reasons so that the vision will still be in existence when these things occur. For a career bureaucrat like Daniel, this is as specific a statement as one would expect about drawing a closure on the revelation.

In the very next verse, the speaker has changed from Gabriel to Daniel. I assume that Gabriel is not longer present. So do most other writers. The vision has finished. Daniel is back in Babylon, no longer at Susa, and he is not well. The vision left him poorly, moreso than the one recorded in chapter 7.

To reaffirm, Daniel was sick **AFTER** the explanation by Gabriel was finished and Gabriel had departed, having completed his commission and having left *Daniel*

with a commission to ensure that the information Gabriel unfolded during the execution of *his* commission would be preserved for those who would really need it.

### **3. Daniel 8:18 proves that the prophet is unable to continue without divine support.**

Daniel does not faint because he cannot endure any more information regarding the terrible persecution of God's people. There is no evidence for that. The text would need to be emended to justify this conclusion. He does not faint because of the long period of the 2300-days. There is no evidence to support this conclusion either. He does not faint because it will be a long time before the end of the indignation. There is no evidence of that. There is no evidence to support the conclusion that Daniel fainted because he was told to shut the vision, and so left the explanation incomplete.

Daniel faints because the source of his divine strength during the revelation has gone, the vision is over, finished, and he is left with only his frail, elderly physical frame. The fainting was a physical reaction because it develops into a physical condition that demands some rest and recuperation before he has the strength to attend to the king's business.

### **4. The command to "Shut the Vision." Indicates the vision was complete and finished**

The command to shut the vision is made by Gabriel without any pressure from Daniel about to faint. He said this in the normal course of the conversation and coming as the last thing said by Gabriel is a natural and fitting way to complete the explanation. This statement is a significant one because it passes the torch of responsibility from Gabriel to Daniel. The angel has completed his commission and now gives Daniel a commission to preserve the information that Gabriel divulged in the process of fulfilling his commission.

Further evidence that the vision is complete, is the next verse. Gabriel is not present; we can assume he had departed and Daniel is no longer in a visionary state and ; he is now weak and emaciated from the experience.

### **5. Gabriel could continue the explanation even if Daniel was unconscious**

Daniel 8:17-18 clearly shows that fainting was no barrier stopping Gabriel from continuing to relay information to Daniel. He could talk to Daniel regardless as to whether Daniel was conscious or unconscious. Therefore, the argument that Gabriel had to stop halfway through an explanation due to Daniel fainting is the mere fabrication of a fertile imagination. There is no evidence for it. But there is evidence for Gabriel continuing his commission regardless of the conscious state of the prophet. Therefore, given then that Gabriel does not need to say anything more past what he has said, it is obvious that *he has finished his explanation*. This means we can take the statement in v.26 just as it reads – "shut the vision!" Gabriel had finished his explanation at that point, and when Daniel had written up to that point, he indicates the end of the

explanation by writing in this commission as Gabriel's last word.<sup>15</sup> This also means that *the start of the 2300-days is given in Daniel 8*. Consequently, the answer to the start of the 2300-days *does not lay* in the revelation about the 70 weeks.

## 7. General Comments

The most casual perusal of the closing verses of Dn8 reveals the following sequence:

1. Gabriel completes his message to Daniel (v26: "shut up the vision.")
2. Daniel then "fainted and was sick certain days." (v.27)

There is no "abrupt" break in Gabriel's communication to Daniel. There is no statement to the effect that the angel was cut off in his efforts by Daniel's sickness, and consequently had to leave him. Verse 26 is as clear a conclusion to a revelation as can be found. It is far more complete than either Dn7 or Dn9; both chapters that SDA historicists consider complete. Its completeness is on a par with chapter 12.

In Daniel 8 the angel himself announces the completion of the revelation in the statement to "shut the vision for it shall be for many days." In Dn7, no such announcement comes from the person who was explaining the vision. Daniel appears to be the person announcing the "end of the matter," yet we consider Dn7 to be a completed revelation, and one that was to be preserved for posterity up to the "time of the end."

The fact that there is no mention as to whether the angel in Dn8:27 left Daniel before he became faint and sick or whether he left after the onset of this, is no evidence in favour of the argument for an interrupted explanation. It is an argument from silence. And in any case, this occurred after v26 where the vision is completed and subsequently shut. The "completed" revelations in chs7, 9, and 10-12 likewise have no mention regarding the timing of the departure of the messenger.

It is in complete disregard for the explicit statements in vs26, 27 and their sequence that any one could assert that Daniel was sick before the explanation by Gabriel was completed.

Furthermore, even if Daniel fell faint and was sick before Gabriel we would expect, in common with his style already evident earlier in ch8, for Daniel to have recorded the fact that he could no longer stand any more revelation and Gabriel's response stating that he would come back another. (Cf., ch 8:16-19, and compare the

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<sup>15</sup> By including this command in the text, Daniel is also indirectly passing his commission on to those who care for the sacred documents held in trust at the synagogue. He wants them to know that Gabriel is interested in the preservation of the document, and so any efforts on their part after Daniel's demise to ensure the longevity of the manuscripts is, in effect, cooperation in Daniel's stead, to ensure the fulfillment of this commission for Gabriel, on behalf of those who shall live at the time of the end.

consistency with 9:20-23, 10-11). If the angel can spend the time explaining his delay in ch10, and Daniel thinks it important enough for the human-interest side of the story to include it, how much more so here a few words about the interruption of Gabriel's explanation would have been appropriate.

But in any case, Dn8:26, 27 shows that Daniel fainted and was sick only after the strength received from the presence of the heavenly messenger had diminished with the implied departure of the angel.

Although these arguments pose difficult problems for those trying to defend the assumption that Daniel was sick and faint before the explanation by Gabriel was complete, the clear facts of the text are the exact reverse of the proposals of this assumption. Daniel is given a complete explanation of the vision which he is then commanded to shut – a fitting command at the completion of such an exercise, and then afterwards, Daniel is faint and is sick certain days. (It is interesting to compare similar experiences by EGW after she had been given a vision by God.) Daniel was sick because the angel is no longer there to strengthen.

Notice Daniel says in 8:27 that he understood “none of it.” Even SDA scholars admit that this statement does not relate to the actual details in the vision. It refers to more than that. According to SDA historicists, he understood *all of it* except the starting point. What is the correct position? What *did* he know? The fact that Gabriel had explained many things to him that he now understood means that this statement of Daniel and his colleagues of not knowing at all is not to be taken literally.

Needless to say, the position of the SDA historicists on this assumption is without support. It tries to use vs 26, 27 as the basis for its defence but it does not rely on the factual matters in the Scripture of vs 26 and 27. Those problems have been highlighted and addressed in this paper.

Beside the assumptions related to the Daniel's illness, this assumption, however, has a more fundamental premise associated with it. It is that the start for the 2300 days is not given in Dn8 ([Assumption 3](#)); which in turn depends on the assumption that the question in Dn8:13 asks how long shall be the full vision?" rather than "How long will be the vision of the little horn's activities against Israel's sanctuary and its sacrifices, and its people?" ([Assumption 2](#)); and finally, associated with this assumption is the argument put up by SDA historicists that the words for "vision" have a meaning which supports the SDA historicist's application of that meaning to the choice of the word for "vision" used in v.13 to the full vision ([Assumption 1](#)).

## Appendix

### Appendix 1. Other non SDA Authors do not see an interruption at the end of Dn8.

For a person not looking for the particular things at the end of ch8 concerning the interruption of the explanation, it is not found. There is no fainting before the angel

can finish his explanation, there is no abrupt interruption of the angel's message; there is no unfinished business at the end of Dn8.

To survey some non-SDA commentators, the following table indicates whether they see Daniel's fainting happening after the explanation had finished or during. The second column looks at the issue as to whether they saw the explanation of Dn8 abruptly interrupted or not;

IT WOULD BE BETTER TO QUOTE THE WRITERS THEMSELVES.

Author	Sick-Before, During or After?	Explanation Complete or Interrupted
<b>Baldwin</b>	After	No Interruption
<b>Walvoord</b>	After	No Interruption
<b>Porteous</b>	After	No Interruption
<b>Leupold</b>	After	No Interruption
<b>Young</b>	After	No Interruption
<b>Nichol</b>	After	No interruption

So from a list of the commentators no one has seen any hint at all in the text, that there was an abrupt interruption to Gabriel's explanation, and none have seen that Daniel's sickness occurred during the explanation. One would think that if there were details in the text itself to hint of these things, at least a few of them might pick them up. But that is not the case. The reason for this is that there is nothing in the text to hint that either the explanation was interrupted or that Daniel's sickness occurred before the end of Gabriel's explanation. As Leupold has so ably said earlier, it is the strength given by the angel that enabled Daniel to endure conversing with one so holy. And with the implied departure of Gabriel, there is an implied departure of that strength with him, with all that that meant to Daniel's well-being.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> SDA students need only read random experiences of Ellen White to see that she experienced a similar phenomenon. Notice this one from one of her early visions. She starts her first vision with supernatural support: "The power of God came on me as I never had felt it before..." At the end of the vision, she says, "After I came out of vision a gloom was spread over all I beheld. Oh! How dark this world looked to me." (1958, pp. 30, 35) Granted the gloom she experienced was not a sickness, but the absence of the strength and light she enjoyed during the vision made a contrast that weighed heavy on her heart.

Reading the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* at Dan8:24-27, there is no place in the text where the commentary can find that the angel had to interrupt his explanation. There is no place where Daniel gets sick during the explanation. (Nichol, 1976, p.846f.)

## **Appendix 2. Daniel's Inclusion of human-interest material in his writings**

### ***2A. The Precedence in Dn8:15-19.***

If Daniel did in fact interrupt Gabriel's explanation, as SDA historicists want us to believe, then there should be some clue to indicate that Gabriel had to abort his mission and had to stop talking to the prophet. Daniel has given us a precedent to expect such material. In Dn8: 15-18 we read this:

**15** And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

**16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gà:riel, make this man to understand the vision

**17** So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

**18** Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright

**19** And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall

When Daniel is writing up the vision after the event he gives us some idea of his style as to how he describes interruptions in the flow of the events. Notice the sequence of events:

#### ***2A.1 List of the Sequence of Human-Interest Items***

1. After hearing and seeing the vision, and Daniel seeks for meaning, a man comes and stands in front of Daniel
2. Daniel then heard the voice of a certain person and knew where he was standing;
3. He tells Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision; we assume from this that Gabriel is the person near him;
4. In response to the command, Gabriel changes position and comes towards Daniel.

5. There is specific detail of this movement of Gabriel;
  - a. As Gabriel is coming toward him,
  - b. Daniel details his feelings and emotions, Daniel becomes afraid;
  - c. Daniel falls on his face.
  - d. While he is on his face, Gabriel speaks to him.
6. Here we see a deliberate attempt to describe the position of Daniel in relation to Gabriel when he heard the next thing;
7. He goes into greater detail by explaining that
  - a. while he was on the ground,
  - b. hearing what Gabriel was saying,
  - c. he was in a deep sleep;
  - d. Being in that state, his face was toward the ground;
  - e. Yet at the same time, he heard the statements of Gabriel;
  - f. And he understood the speech of Gabriel since he was able to write it down;
  - g. Now even though he was in that mental condition of a deep sleep,
  - h. and a physical position with his head facing the ground,
8. He then tells us how the angel aroused him. There were two actions involved by Gabriel:
  - a. Gabriel touched Daniel;
  - b. Gabriel set Daniel upright.
9. Gabriel then begins to explain matters, "I will make thee know..."

### ***2A.2 Human Interest Matters***

The detail included in the text about the human-interest side of the story makes it a significant part of the narration. There is the specific detail categorised for clarity:

#### **.a Auditory Detail:**

1. Daniel then heard the voice of a certain person;
2. He tells Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision;

3. While he was on the ground, he was hearing what Gabriel was saying;
4. Gabriel then begins to explain matters, "I will make thee know.

**b Tactile Detail:**

1. Daniel falls on his face;
2. Gabriel touched Daniel;
3. Gabriel set Daniel upright;

**c Relational Detail:**

1. A man comes and stands in front of Daniel;
2. In response to the command, Gabriel changes position and comes towards Daniel;
3. Daniel falls on his face;
4. While he is on his face, Gabriel speaks to him;
5. While he was on the ground, he was hearing what Gabriel was saying

**d Visual Detail:**

1. After seeing the vision;
2. The voice of a certain person who was standing on the canal;

**e Cognitive Detail:**

1. Daniel seeks for meaning;
2. He understood the speech of Gabriel;

**f Psychological Detail:**

1. While he was on the ground,
2. He was hearing what Gabriel was saying while in a deep sleep

**g Emotional Detail:**

1. Daniel becomes afraid;

**h Detail of Actions:**

1. A man comes and stands in front of Daniel;

2. Daniel falls on his face;

### i Summing up these observations.

Clearly then, we can see from Dn8, a precedent in the type of detail we would expect from Daniel, if the explanation would be interrupted due to some psychosomatic illness of Daniel's.<sup>17</sup>

From what the SDA historicists want us to believe about the end of chapter 8, it is such a serious event, probably more so than the one recorded in verse 15f, that one would expect as much detail as that verse. We should expect to find a statement to indicate that Gabriel saw that Daniel was about to faint or had fainted and so he suspends his explanation. We would naturally expect some detail on the winding up of the explanation and that it would be incomplete and that Gabriel would return to complete it later. Verse 26 is ruled out as saying this because in the SDA view, there is no indication at that stage that Daniel was going to faint.

Reconstructing the end of the chapter the way the SDA church would like it to read, we should have the following emendation:

26 *And the vision of the evenings and the mornings are true. Wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days*

27 *And I Daniel fainted. As the man Gabriel could no longer talk with me, he left.*

28. *And I was sick certain days, afterward I rose up, and did the king's business and I was astonished<sup>18</sup> at the vision, but none understood it. K.J.V.*

## 2B The Precedence of Dn10.

If the evidence from Dn8:15-19 is not damning enough against the assertion that Gabriel was interrupted by Daniel's fainting, further evidence on Daniel's literary style in these human interest matters from chapter 10, augurs even more for some mention of the details around the so-called interruption at the end of Dn8. With such a drastic event as fainting right on the crucial moment of vital concern for the prophet, one would expect that he would use the same style with human-interest material as he does elsewhere. Let us examine his style in chapter 10.

The pertinent text is as follows:

4 And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel<sup>19</sup>;

5 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Ophaz:

<sup>17</sup> Ford: "Verse 27 is a good example of a psychosomatic illness." (1978,p.192)

<sup>18</sup> RSV, NIV-"appalled."

<sup>19</sup> That is, the Tigris River.

6 His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

7 And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision, but a great quaking fell upon them so that they fled to hide themselves

8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

9 Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

10 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.

11 And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

12 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set shine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

14 Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

15 And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb.

16 And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.

17 For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.

18 Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me

19 And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.

20 Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee?

### ***2B.1 List of the Sequence of Human-Interest Items***

1. Standing by the Tigris River v.4;
2. Saw a man clothed in linen ( he noticed and remembered his appearance too) v. 5, 6;

- Loins girt with gold
  - The gold was like the gold from Ophaz;
  - His skin was like beryl;
  - His face was like lightning;
  - His eyes were all aglow like lamps in the night;
  - His arms and feet were like polished brass;
  - His voice was as resonant as a large crowd;
3. Had some people with Daniel v.7;
  4. His companions did not see the vision v. 7;
  5. Companions were afraid v.7;
  6. They went and hid v.7;
  7. Daniel was left on his own v.8;
  8. He lost his strength v.8;
  9. He felt very sinful v.8;
  10. He heard the words of the man and then fainted v.9;
  11. While he was unconscious, he was face down v.9;
  12. He was touched by a hand v. 10
  13. He set Daniel on all fours v.10
  14. He heard him telling him to understand what he was going to tell him and told him to stand up v.11;
  15. When the man had said that Daniel stood on his feet but he was trembling v.11;
  16. The angel explained to him why he was late v.12-14
  17. When Daniel had heard this he fell on his face and was dumb v.15;
  18. Another person came and touched his lips v.16;
  19. Daniel then explained why he fell v. 17-18
  20. A person who looked human touched Daniel again and told him to be strong v.19;

21. Daniel found that the man had made him strong v.19;

### **a Oral /Auditory Detail**

- He heard the words of the man in linen spoken to him;
- He hears the man tell him to understand the things he is about to tell him;
- He then tells Daniel to stand up;
- The man explains why he is late;
- Daniel cannot talk while he is laying on the ground;
- Daniel explains why he keeps falling down;
- Tells the person to start talking because Daniel is strong enough;

### **b Tactile Detail:**

- Fell to the ground with his face to the ground;
- He was touched by a hand'
- Falls face-down on the ground;
- Another person touches Daniel's lips;

### **c Relational Detail**

- he was standing by the Tigris River
- He noticed he was alone when his companions fled;
- Fell to the ground and while there his face was face-down;
- Daniel is told to stand and he stands on his feet;
- It was a different person who touched his lips and told him to be strong and get up;
- It is this person who launches into the intended revelation;

### **d Visual Detail**

- Saw a man clothed in linen. He noticed all the other details about his appearance as well;
  - Loins girt with gold
  - The gold was like the gold from Ophaz;

- His torso skin was like beryl;
- His face was like lightning;
- His eyes were all aglow like lamps in the night;
- His arms and feet were like polished brass;
- His voice was as resonant as a large crowd;
- He saw that his companions did not see the man in linen
- He saw that his companions were afraid;
- He watched his companions run away;
- He noticed that his companions hid;

#### **e. Physical Details**

- He lost his strength the first time;
- He fainted and fell to the ground, with his face to the ground;
- Touched by a hand and set up on all-fours;
- He stands on his feet;
- When he stands on his feet, he is trembling;
- Falls face-down on the ground for the second time;

#### **f. Cognitive Detail: / Psychological Detail:/ Emotional Detail:**

- He felt sinful
- He became unconscious due to the sorrows and turnings of his heart within him (overcome with anguish –NIV);;
- Stands trembling when told to stand;

#### **g. Detail of Actions:**

- Standing by the Tigris
- Standing with companions;
- Companions run off and hide in a safe place and probably watch from afar;
- Daniel faints;

- He is revived by the man and is spoken to;
- He faints again and again is revived;
- He is touched by another person and strengthened;
- He stands upright and begins to receive the revelation from this person;

#### h. Summing up these observations.

As can be seen from these simple exercises with Dan.8 and 10, there is a wide range of different details included in the human-interest aspects of Daniel's story. These include oral / auditory details; tactile details; relational details; visual details; physical details; cognitive / psychological / emotional details; and the actions. On examination of this content in Dn10, one can see quite clearly Daniel's style when it comes to this type of supernatural experience. To be consistent then in Dn8, if there was an interruption by Daniel fainting, then there would be some clue at least that Gabriel was interrupted in his explanation. The comparison of Dn8:27 with Dn7:28 leads us to believe these are similar formula for completing the writing, by adding his own name as would a scribe at the end of a document, and then a small note, in these cases a statement of how he felt after the revelation was over. There is nothing in Dn8:27 outside of this to indicate that Gabriel was interrupted.

### Appendix 3. The verb *rdm* in Dn8: 18 –“to be in a deep sleep.”

#### *Wigram's Concordance*

The following references from Wigram indicates the usage of the verb in the Old Testament. Translation is the NIV:

7290	<p>רָדַם [rāh-dam'].</p> <p>* NIPHAL.—Preterite. *</p> <p>Jud. 4:21. he <i>was fast asleep</i> and weary.</p> <p>Dan 8:18. I <i>was in a deep sleep</i> on my face</p> <p>NIPHAL.—Future.</p> <p>Jon. 1: 5. and he lay, and <i>was fast asleep</i>.</p> <p>NIPHAL.—Participle.</p> <p>Ps. 76: 6(7). the chariot and horse are cast in <i>dead sleep</i>.</p> <p>Pro.10: 5. <i>he that sleepeth</i> in harvest</p> <p>Dan10: 9. then was I <i>in a deep sleep</i></p> <p>Jon. 1: 6. What meanest thou, O <i>sleepers</i>?</p>
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These are the texts involved. Notice that they all occur in the Niphal tense:

**Judges 4:21** But Jael, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay **fast asleep**, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died. (NIV)

**Comments** :Our usage of the word “fast” here to describe “fast asleep” is interesting. It implies an intensification of the word “sleep.” Not just

a light sleep; not just a doze; but rather, “fast” asleep. The SOED says of “fast asleep”: :Of sleep: Deep, sound, unbroken.”<sup>20</sup> (Onions, 1980, p.729)

Tregelles definition “to sleep heavily” is very fitting in this verse.”

**Jonah 1:5,6** But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and **fell into a deep sleep**. The captain went to him and said, “How can you **sleep**? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish.”

**Psalm 76:6** At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both horse and chariot **lie still**.

**Comments:** BDB indicates that this is a figure of speech in this text for death. Certainly a deep sleep.

**Proverbs 10:5** He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who **sleeps** during harvest is a disgraceful son.

**Daniel 10:9** Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I **fell into a deep sleep**, my face to the ground.

**Comments:** The same unconsciousness that came on Daniel in ch.8 comes on him again in ch.10.

### *Brown, Driver and Briggs Lexicon*

The following is their entry for *rdm*

7290<sup>†</sup> [רָדַם] vb. Niph. be in, or fall into, heavy sleep (NH *id.*; cf. Ar. رَدِمَ stop up (door, gap, etc.), whence perh. be deaf (stopped up) to sounds, etc.);—Pf. 3 ms. נִרְדַּם Ju 4<sup>21</sup>; 1 s. נִרְדַּמְתִּי Dn 8<sup>8</sup>; Impf. 3 ms. יִרְדָּם Jon 1<sup>5</sup>; Pt. נִרְדַּם Pr 10<sup>5</sup> + 3 t.;—be or fall fast asleep: Ju 4<sup>21</sup> Jon 1<sup>5</sup> (after נִשְׁכַּב), v<sup>6</sup> (pt., Ges<sup>§120b</sup> Da<sup>Synt.</sup> §70<sup>(a)</sup>); pt. as subst. נִרְדָּם בְּקִצְרֵי Pr 10<sup>5</sup>; of sleep of death ψ 76<sup>7</sup>; stunning effect of awe and dread Dn 8<sup>18</sup> 10<sup>9</sup> (both + אֲרָצָה [וַיִּפְּנֵי] [וַיִּפְּנֵי]).

Some of BDB’s comparisons with cognate languages here are informative. An equivalent in Arabic indicates that it is used to describe when one stops up a door or a gap etc to stop things entering (or leaving); then by extension to apply to the stopping up of the ears so that no sounds may enter. The basic concept here that is of interest to us is the common idea in these cognate words of the imperviousness of the situation: the deaf ear is impervious to sound; the stopped gap or door is impervious to the entry of the thing stopped out. Thus, in sleep, it is an impervious sleep. Nothing can arouse it. Naturally a fitting choice of word for death in Ps 76, or the sleep of an exhausted man Jdg 4:21 or Jonah 1; or the totally lazy sleep of a sluggard that nothing can stir Pro 10.

<sup>20</sup> Under the entry Fast a. (i.e., adjective)

Thus in the instances in Daniel, the sleep here is not some trance, contra [Porteous](#), but a *deep* sleep, from which it is hard to be awoken. This is the state of consciousness of Daniel and, though nothing else could penetrate his sleep, the voice of the angel does. As [Baldwin](#) says, a deep sleep is no state to be in when spoken to by an angel. Daniel is not only to be conscious, but standing. There is protocol to follow. Daniel the public official would understand that. And the angel expects no less of him even under these circumstances. But the angel provides the strength to carry out the protocol.

And referring to Dn8:18 and Dn10:9, BDB uses the concept of being “stunned” into a deep sleep by the “effects of awe and dread.”<sup>21</sup>

More importantly, BDB sees the verb as meaning both **being** asleep or **falling** into slumber. The text in Judges 4:21 clearly indicates that he was asleep. Jonah indicates that he *fell* into a sleep. Daniel 8 could be translated either way, as could Dn10.

### *Tregelles Gesenius Lexicon*

The following is his entry for this verb:

**רָדַם** not used in Kal, pr. TO SNORE, TO SLEEP HEAVILY, an onomatop. word. Compare Gr. *δαρ-θάνω, δέρω* (to snore), and the Lat. *dormio*.  
 NIPHAL **רָדַם**—(1) *to sleep heavily*, Proverbs 10:5; Jqn. 1:5, 6.  
 (2) *to fall down astounded*, Dan. 8:18; 10:9; Ps. 76:7. Compare Jud. 4:21.  
 Derivative, **רָדַם**.

Tregelles choice under (2) to explain the meaning as “*to fall down astounded*” is *very interesting and quaint*. According to the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, “*astounding*,” back in the days of Tregelles was just dropping its archaic sense of “to deprive of consciousness, stupify,” a sense of the word we do not certainly use these days. Since that time, it has fallen completely into disuse. But this explains the choice of words by Tregelles, and the meaning certainly fits the sense of the Hebrew. To confirm this sense, Tregelles’ use of Judges 4: 21 as an example signals there is more than just falling down astounded (in our understanding of “astounded.” If he sees Judges 4:21 in the same category as Dn8 or Dn10, then by association of these texts he indicates that Dn8 was an experience of deep, heavy sleep as it was in Judges 4:21.

<sup>21</sup> See also Jay Green’s translation of this text, “So he came beside my place. And when he came, I feared and fell on my face. But he said to me, Discern O son of man, for the vision (is) for the time of the end. And while he was speaking with me, I was stunned on my face toward the ground. But he touched me and set me upright. (1978, p. 2060)

### ***Conclusion.***

The translator's of the verb as "deep sleep, or heavy sleep" in Dn8 are quite correct. Daniel was totally out to it; as unconscious as a deep sleep can render one.

### **Appendix 4 The Daniel of vs3-26 is not real, he is imaginary, in the mind of the real Daniel who is dreaming /seeing this.**

Another point to consider is that it was the Daniel-in-the-vision who was in conversation with Gabriel. The real Daniel was asleep having this revelation on his bed (v.1) and was in Babylon, as verse 27 indicates, and is endorsed by Jeffrey, Porteous and others. Therefore, being the Daniel-in-the-vision that experiences the events of vs3-26, there is no way that this imaginary Daniel had reached the limits of his physical strength, since he is just a creation of God in Daniel's mind during the revelation. This imaginary Daniel is able to endure whatever he is needed to endure, since he is not bound by the limits of human nature. Granted he acts as a human, as verses 15-18 indicate, but that does not make him real; he is imaginary.

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