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TYPOLOGICAL READING OF THE APOCALYPTIC VISION OF DANIEL 7 & 9

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A Dissertation  
Presented to the Faculty of  
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Exegetical Theology  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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By  
Timothy A. Prince  
February 2024

Approved by:	Dr. David Adams	Dissertation Advisor
	Dr. Paul Raabe	Reader
	Dr. Joel Okamoto	Reader

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To the Saints of the Most High in the Messiah Prince Jesus. Here is the patient endurance and the faith of the saints (Rev 13:10).

With thanksgiving to God for the support and patient endurance of my wife,  
Michelle, a chosen lady.

לִיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה

“The Dominion belongs to Yahweh”

Ps 22:28 [ET 22:29]; Obad 21

“And the seventh angel sounded his trumpet,  
and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,  
‘The kingdom of the world has become  
the kingdom of our Lord (Yahweh) and of his Christ,  
and he will reign forever and ever!’”

--Rev 11:15

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,

Have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy.

Thou only art the LORD.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,

Art Most High in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

—“Gloria in Excelsis,” *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941)

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy dwelling of the Most High.

God is in her midst; she will not waver;

God will help her when morning dawns.

Nations rage, kingdoms waver;

he utters his voice, the earth melts.

Yahweh [the God] of hosts is with us;

our fortress is the God of Jacob.

Come, perceive the works of Yahweh,

which he has set as desolations on the earth....

***“Relax and know that I am God.***

***I will be exalted among the nations,***

***I will be exalted in the earth!”***

Yahweh [the God] of hosts is with us;

our fortress is the God of Jacob.

—Ps 46:4–8, 10–11

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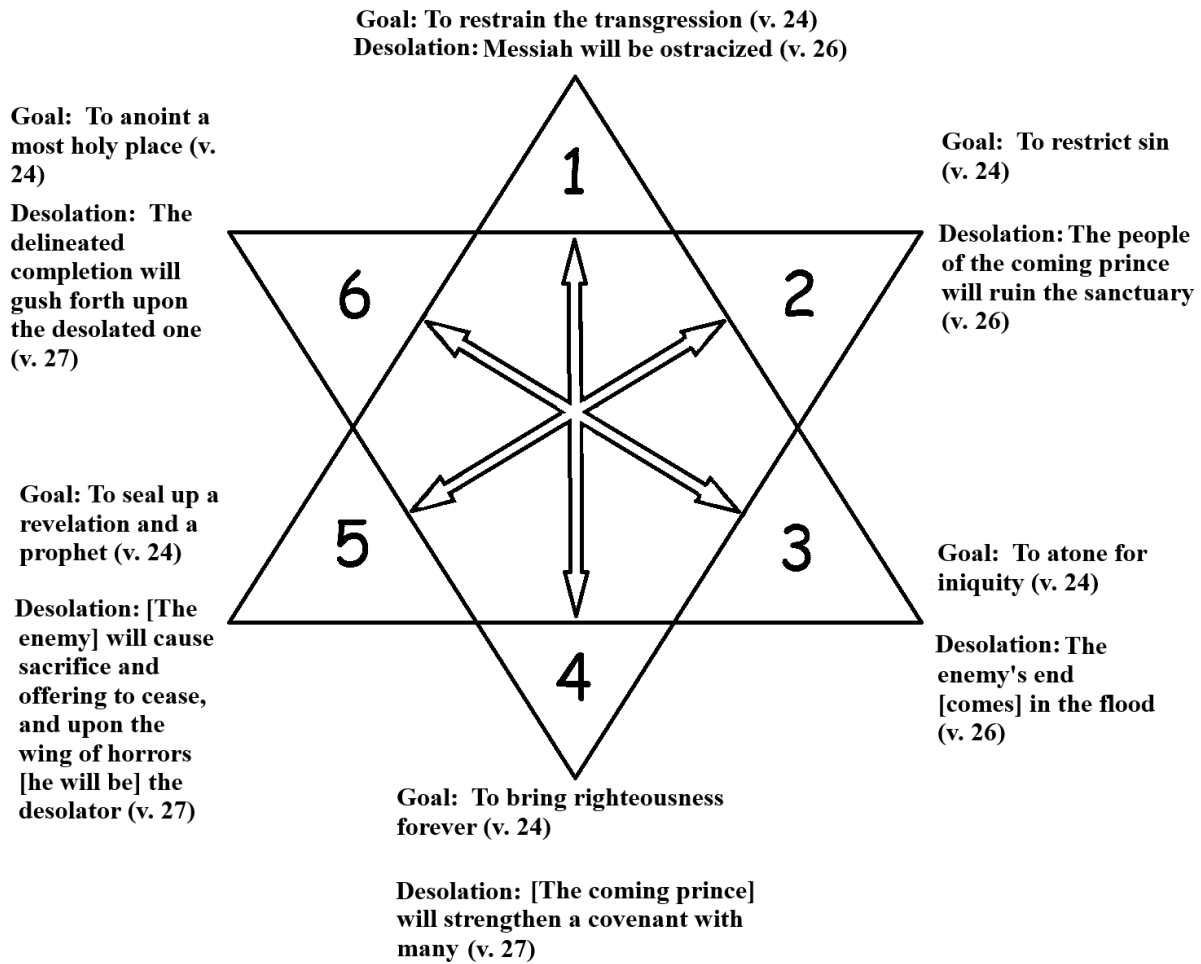
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Figure 1. The Symmetry of the Seventy Sevens.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Dr. Paul Raabe at whose feet I have sat for some 30 years, who agreed to serve as my first advisor for this project and who, when learning that I was interested in eschatology, strongly asserted, “Someone’s got to do some work with the ‘Seventy Sevens’ of Daniel 9!” Once I got into the research on the passage, I came to realize that Dr. Raabe was correct. But then the inevitable choice presented itself because of the immensity and challenge of the task: either he set me on this journey maliciously to ruin me, or he was putting a huge trust into my hands with every confidence that God would guide me in the narrow way by the light of His Word through this “dismal swamp.” I could only proceed trusting the latter to be the case. Dr. Raabe’s trust in God and in the faithfulness of God’s Word have been a faithful example to guide me in doing the slow but steady work of exegesis. It has always been true of his work, and I pray that I am learning the same.

I am also very grateful to Dr. David Adams, upon whom I was “thrust” during a time of shortage in Concordia Seminary’s Exegetical department. Once again, it was the guidance of the Holy Spirit to give me a brilliant and faithful Pentateuch scholar to help give depth of insight, as well as honing of my thinking and use of my skills.

God has given keen intellect to Dr. Joel Okamoto who asks the deeply probing questions to help get to the bottom of an issue. I thank him for agreeing to serve as a reader for this project.

I thank Dr. Beth Hoeltke and Dr. Kevin Armbrust who, as directors of the grad school, have helped in many ways to facilitate and keep the project moving forward.

I could hardly express enough thanks to God for my wife Michelle who has supported me in every way possible and endured many lectures on Daniel, eschatology, and apocalyptic literature. She has been behind me to give me a push all along the way.

## ABBREVIATIONS

70x7s	Seventy Sevens
ANE	Ancient Near East
BDB	Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon
ET	English Text
HALOT	Koehler & Baumgartner's <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
MT	Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Scriptures
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
SBL	The Society of Biblical Literature
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
TWOT	Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

## ABSTRACT

Prince, Timothy A. “Typological Reading of the Apocalyptic Vision of Daniel 7 & 9.” Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2024. 311 pp.

As a response to Daniel’s prayer for the restoration of God’s city and sanctuary, “The Seventy Sevens” oracle of Dan 9:24–27 gives further details of the overarching apocalyptic vision of ch. 7. After establishing how the canonical apocalyptic visions of Daniel and Revelation constitute a unique genre that gives a teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective, this study demonstrates how a typological reading of the text best perceives the revelation and interprets the message presented in Daniel’s apocalyptic vision. The vision and oracle together depict God’s eschatological agents of judgment and salvation. The one like a son of man, the Messiah Prince, is given all authority, power, and the eternal kingdom. The “Seventy Sevens” oracle, as the only Old Testament passage to depict two comings of the Messiah, puts greatest emphasis on the time between his comings for the building of God’s eternal kingdom-city. After God’s eternal kingdom-city is built up and expanded throughout the world, God initiates desolations of judgment, first by withdrawing the reign of the Messiah, and then by allowing a “prince to come”—the eschatological enemy, the “little horn” of ch. 7 and “desolator” of ch. 9—to cause further desolations, even giving the saints of the Most High into the enemy’s hand for “times, time, and half a time.” After the necessary desolations God will bring final judgment on the desolator himself and fulfill his eschatological goals to consummate the restoration of his creation.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The Lord shows to Daniel in ch. 7 an overarching vision of his eschatological plan of judgment and salvation. Later, when Daniel prays for the restoration of God's city and sanctuary, the LORD sends his angel Gabriel to give an outline in 9:24–27, the oracle of the “Seventy Sevens,” of the eschatological restoration God has planned for his city and sanctuary, indeed, his entire creation. This study will demonstrate that the overarching vision of ch. 7 serves as the framework for understanding its explanatory oracle of the Seventy Sevens (70x7s) and that a typological perception provides the most consistent interpretation in light of the vision's apocalyptic perspective.

The vision of Dan 7 is the singular overarching apocalyptic vision that gives perspective to all the visions presented in the book. While the visions of chs. 8 and 10–12 prophetically envision God's working in and through the events of history, the overarching vision, together with its explanatory oracle of the 70x7s (9:24–27), gives a trans-prophetic and trans-historical view of the inauguration, building, and conferral of God's everlasting kingdom, established in earthly history but continuing to eternity. Central to the vision is the exaltation of “one like a son of man” (7:13–14) to whom is given complete dominion over the eternal kingdom to inaugurate, establish, and build up the kingdom, which is to be given to the “saints of the Most High” (7:18). This ultimate kingdom of God is further described in 9:24 as the ultimate goal of the seventy sevens.

However, the most significant and essential purpose of the oracle of the 70x7s is to “zoom in” on the vision of ch. 7 to show the sanctuary, city, and people of God in the *interval* between the first coming of God's Messiah Prince, which inaugurates the kingdom-city, and his second

coming, which consummates God's judgment by the overwhelming of his enemies and the vindication of his people in giving the eternal kingdom. During this interval period and shortly before the final consummation, the rule and reign of Messiah will be removed and the eschatological enemy, revealed in ch. 7 as a "little horn" (7:8, 11, 20–22, 24–26), will engage in warfare against the saints of the Most High and God's sanctuary and city, but such warfare ("desolations," 9:26–27) will be cut short (7:26; 9:27) by the reappearance of Messiah (7:22), through whom the saints will inherit the eternal kingdom (7:27) and "everlasting righteousness" (9:24) will be fulfilled.

### **The Thesis**

The three most common ways of reading Daniel treat it as prophecy in the narrow sense, and thus focus on determining the circumstances of its fulfillment. This presupposition has led to interpretations of the 70x7s that have become both collectively predominant and individually irreconcilable. In the light of those circumstances, the goal of this dissertation is two-fold: (1) to articulate the difference between an interpretive approach that reads Daniel as prophecy in the narrow sense and one that reads it as eschatologically oriented typology; and (2) to demonstrate how a typological reading of Daniel would understand this key vision of the book. Such a typological interpretation was initially offered by earlier interpreters but has not been given serious consideration by scholars since. This work will add exegetical detail and substance to what was previously a vaguely worked out suggestion. It will strengthen understanding of the nature, purpose, and perspective of the genre of biblical apocalypse and show how it reveals typological refractions in history. By comparison and contrast to a prophetic perspective, it will demonstrate how apocalyptic eschatologically oriented typology functions differently to depict God's eschatological work in, with, and under the events of history to "unroll a panorama of

history that is without parallel even in the sacred [OT] Scriptures” to serve as “one of the grandest revelations made in the prophetic Word.”<sup>1</sup> By placing the interpretation of the 70x7s in the broader context of the overarching vision of ch.7, this thesis will bring new insights and stronger contextual support for a typological interpretation of this difficult passage.

### **The Current Status of the Question**

The “Seventy Weeks” or “Seventy Sevens” oracle of Dan 9:24–27 has been widely acknowledged to be “one of the most difficult and enigmatic portions of the OT.”<sup>2</sup> So contested has been its interpretation that the history of its exegesis has been dubbed “the Dismal Swamp of OT criticism.”<sup>3</sup>

Jacques Doukhan captures both the difficulty and the importance of the interpretation of this prophecy:

The problems regarding the exegesis of Dan 9:24–27 are of two kinds. They have to do with (1) the difficulty of the text and (2) the multiplicity of interpretations raised. As for the first problem, the density of the passage, the extreme singularity of its words and expressions, and the complexity of its syntax constitute rather serious obstacles... From a theological, literary, and even linguistic point of view, this prophecy is one of the most important foci in the book of Daniel.<sup>4</sup>

If indeed the passage is a metaphorical dismal swamp through which navigation is difficult, key signs in the passage become most important for navigation. The course of direction will be delineated by how one understands not only the context of Dan 9, especially God’s response to Daniel’s prayer for God’s mercy and forgiveness upon his people and his holy city (9:4–19), but

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949), 376, 403, 405. Notice Leupold’s emphasis of the latter assertion by stating it twice in nearly identical wording.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Steinmann, *Daniel*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 451.

<sup>3</sup> James Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1964), 400.

<sup>4</sup> Jacques Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Dan 9: An Exegetical Study,” Andrews University Faculty Publications. Paper 79, 1979, 1, 3.

also the context of the whole book of Daniel. How one navigates this swamp depends upon how the interpreter answers several critical questions: (1) whether the holy city Jerusalem is literal, i.e., the geophysical city, or symbolic or typical, i.e., representative of God's kingdom (reign and rule) in the world; (2) whether the sanctuary refers to the second Jerusalem temple, or archetypically, to the locus of God's presence among his people; (3) whether the people of God of whom the angel Gabriel speaks are the citizens of Judah returning to their homeland or can also be a broader spiritual nation; and (4) whether there is/are one or two key agent(s), the "prince" or "princes," whose actions will affect the life of God's people.

### **The Typological Interpretation Over Against the Mainstream Interpretations**

Among the myriad interpretations of the 70x7s of Dan 9:24–27, a majority fall into one of three majority schools of interpretation. They are briefly summarized as follows. (1) The Historical-Critical interpretation, also called the Antiochene (referring to Antiochus IV "Epiphanes") interpretation, views the passage as non-christological, concerning historical geophysical Jerusalem and culminating in the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV "Epiphanes" in the mid-second-century BC. (2) The "First Coming of the Messiah" interpretation also views the passage as concerning historical Jerusalem, but views the prophecy's culmination in the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth and its fallout in the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70. (3) The Parenthesis or Dispensational interpretation sees partial fulfillment of the first 69 sevens of the prophecy in the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth but perceives a "gap" of indefinite time between that event and the final seven, which will see the appearance of an eschatological enemy of God who will gain control over God's people until the parousia of Christ and the enemy's overthrow.



This study seeks to defend a fourth approach, a minority view, commonly called the Typological interpretation. Although perhaps a more precise name could be given this perspective, such as the Apocalyptic interpretation, this study will retain the name commonly used. Reading through the eyes of (canonical) apocalyptic vision, it perceives typological “refractions” in history that heighten and culminate in a second coming of the Messiah and the consummation of God’s eschatological judgment and restoration of the creation. This view sees both BC and AD referents in the persons, places, and things portrayed in the oracle. Many aspects of the oracle seem to point to BC referents like the city of Jerusalem or the temple, but the prophecies are proleptically fulfilled, awaiting consummation, even as the Dispensational interpretation recognizes. However, the oracle looks ultimately to the end times to see eschatological fulfillment in ways that transcend the BC referents. So also, the oracle speaks of “Messiah Prince,” apparently about God’s ultimate agent of sanctification of the saints of the Most High. His work of atonement and sanctification is also proleptically fulfilled, awaiting the consummation of God’s complete program of judgment and restoration (“everlasting righteousness,” 9:24), but only after God’s decreed desolations (9:26–27).

The current study seeks to show that a coherent reading of Daniel’s work requires that the “Seventy Sevens” oracle be read and interpreted within the broader framework established by the vision of ch. 7, of which it is a sub-vision. After firming up the foundation of the nature and functions of biblical apocalyptic vision as a separate species of prophecy, as well as typology functioning as “refractions” of the vision and oracle, it will demonstrate how a Typological reading best perceives their message. Examined alongside the overarching vision, the 70x7s reveal the fulfillment of a cosmic eschatological restoration of God’s sanctuary, city, and people, although only through desolations that God has delineated.

Specifically, this study will demonstrate the following points: (1) A Typological interpretation is more consistent with the nature of Daniel as literature (specifically apocalyptic) and theology than the alternative interpretations; (2) a Typological interpretation of the oracle of Dan 9 is more consistent with the message of the book of Daniel than the alternatives; (3) a Typological interpretation is able to deal with the individual interpretive problems left unaddressed or poorly addressed by the other approaches; and (4) a Typological interpretation, with its eschatological focus, is more consistent with the treatment of Daniel in the NT than other approaches.

The Typological interpretation, which this study will defend and expand, was first set forth by Theodore Kliefoth in 1868.<sup>5</sup> Kliefoth shows the interpretation of Dan 7 in relation to ch. 2, which he later applies also to the 70x7s in ch. 9. Young calls this Typological interpretation “The Christian Church Exposition,”<sup>6</sup> since it recognizes the main focus of Daniel’s prayer in ch. 9 as well as God’s response of the 70x7s as centering around God’s “sanctuary and city,” seeing a fulfillment first in the AD Church of Jesus Christ, which grows to fill the entire earth as God’s holy mountain and becomes the eschatological city of God’s presence. It interprets the vision in light of the entire messianic age from the Messiah’s first coming, through the building and expansion of his eternal kingdom in the world, to his ultimate coming and the consummation of God’s eschatological plan of judgment and salvation.

Proponents of a Typological interpretation, beginning with Kliefoth, perceive a major part of the message of ch. 7 and the 70x7s focusing on the identity of the “little horn” of ch. 7, who is

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<sup>5</sup> Theodor Kliefoth. *Das Buch Daniels*. Schwerin: Sandmeyer, 1868.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 193.

depicted as the eschatological enemy, and its relationship to the “little horn” of ch. 8, by seeing these in light of the unity of Daniel’s vision:

Daniel directly describes the Antichrist in ch. 7, but depicts it in ch. 8, presenting Antiochus as a forerunner and as a historical type of the Antichrist, and accordingly also treats Antiochus like the Antichrist.... This earlier, lesser, historical enemy of the people of God will be a type for the most serious end enemy. In what Antiochus will be and do, one will be able to see in some measure what the Antichrist pushes to be and do. Concerning this laid enemy and Antichrist, we don't just hear from ch. 7, but also hear about him in ch. 9. Ch. 7 has shown us his relationship to the fourth world empire, and thus to the world power in general, but ch. 9 will show us how he will relate to the people and kingdom of God....

Ch. 8. shows us how Antiochus, as the model of the Antichrist, will position himself among the people of God, introduces it, prepares what the following chapters have to say about the Antichrist and thus about the outcomes of the kingdom of God.... The whole development of the third world empire in its relation to the kingdom of God will be a foreshadowing, a historical and therefore weaker model of the developments of the fourth world empire in its relation to the kingdom of God. And the parallel holds true. Then it pictures the decline of Israel, its testing and purification through the persecutions of Antiochus, the appearance of Christ, judgment on the unbelieving Jews, the incorporation of believing Jews into the Christian kingdom, the kingdom of grace of the written church; and contrast with this: the great apostasy of Christianity, the testing and purification of it through the persecution of the Antichrist in the time of the great tribulation, the reappearance of Christ, the judgment placed on the unbelievers and apostates, the salvation of the believers from the world, and the kingdom of glory.<sup>7</sup>

Four years later in 1872, Carl Keil reiterated Kliefoth’s Typological interpretation in his Daniel commentary in the seminal commentary series with Franz Delitzsch.

The likeness which the enemy in Dan. 8, i.e., Antiochus Epiphanes, in his rage against the Mosaic religion and the Jews who were faithful to their law, has to the enemy in Dan. 7, who makes himself like God, limits itself to the relation between the type and the antitype. Antiochus, in his conduct towards the Old Testament people of God, is only the type of Antichrist, who will arise out of the ten kingdoms of the fourth world-kingdom (Dan. 7:24) and be diverse from them, arrogate to himself the omnipotence which is given to Christ, and in this arrogance will put himself in the place of God....

The sameness of the designation given to both of these adversaries of the people of God, a “*little horn*,” not only points to the relation of type and antitype, but also, as

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<sup>7</sup> Kliefoth, *Daniels*, 233–34, 238, 271. [Author’s own English translation.]

Kliefoth has justly remarked, to “intentional and definite” parallelism between the third world-kingdom (the Macedonian) and the fourth (the Roman)....

The giving of the kingdom to the Son of man goes before the appearance of the great adversary of the people of God represented by the little horn—the adversary in whom the enmity of the world against the kingdom of God reaches its highest manifestation....

In order to establish this promise, so rich in comfort, and firmly to ratify it to Daniel he unveils to him (vv. 25–27), in its great outlines, the progress of the development of the kingdom of God, first from the end of the Exile to the coming of the Messiah; then from the appearance of Christ to the time far in the future, when Christ shall be cut off, so that nothing remains to him; and finally, the time of the supremacy and of the victory of the destroyer of the church of God, the Antichrist, and the destruction of this enemy by the irrevocably delineated final judgment....

Also regarding the second long period which passes from the appearance of the Messiah to his annihilation (*Vernichtung*), i.e., the destruction of his kingdom on the earth, little is apparently said, but in reality in the few words very much is said: that during this whole period the restoration and building shall proceed amid the oppressions of the times, namely, that the kingdom of God shall be built up to the extent delineated by God in this long period, although amid severe persecution. This persecution shall during the last week mount up to the height of the cutting off of Christ and the destruction of his kingdom on the earth; but then with the extermination of the prince, the enemy of God, it shall reach its end.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Keil shows that the escalating fulfillments in Daniel’s vision and oracle, in which are seen types and antitypes, is at work in the concepts and images of the person of the “little horn,” the sanctuary, the city of God, and of exile of God’s people. These concepts are most faithfully viewed in light of how they are developed in the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Prophets and with a view toward the eschatological hope of God’s ultimate fulfillment of his promises. The fulfillment God will bring about by the work of his Messiah will build upon that which the Lord began among his people in BC times but will be fulfilled and consummated on a larger, cosmic scale. Jesus affirmed that “Salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22), which is a reflection of the “missionary” vocation of Israel to be God’s light to the nations (Isa 42:6). This goes back to what

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<sup>8</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1877), 260–61, 275–76, 375.

God said in Exod 19:5, that Israel would be a people chosen to be a kingdom of priests (i.e., intermediaries between God and his creation), which in turn recalls the promises to Abraham that through him all nations of the world would be blessed (Gen 12:2–4). In the same way, the people’s relationship with God, their sanctification, their worship life, and even their Babylonian exile would be types of greater fulfillments on a world-wide scale.

The increasing popularity of the Historical-Critical interpretation toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, and the subsequent rise of the Dispensational interpretation combined to push the Typological approach of Klieforth and Keil into obscurity. As a result, it was dismissed for nearly 80 years.<sup>9</sup> The Typological interpretation was resurrected, however, by Herbert Leupold in 1949. He summarizes its biblical viewpoint:

King Antiochus is seen to be a kind of OT antichrist like unto the great Antichrist; the overthrow and defilement of the sanctuary shall correspond to similar experiences of the church; the suffering of the holy people corresponds to suffering in the last great tribulation. When this is borne in mind, the chapter loses its isolation from present-day events and is seen to be typical in a very definite sense....

Necessary as it may be to prepare God’s people for trying times that must be encountered when Antiochus is ruling, there are more important revelations than these, revelations that reach all the way to the final consummation of all things, when all that is evil will be overthrown, never again to rise, and when all that is good and righteous shall be established, never again to be overthrown. That glorious victory should be in the forefront of the thinking of God’s people. Chapter 7 alluded to it with predominant emphasis on persecutions that were to precede the glorious consummation. Though already then, the note of victory was struck very decidedly, there were things of a very glorious sort that were yet to be revealed, and they are the things that are predominant in our chapter [9]. They are given in a setting which unfolds God’s entire plan of development from Daniel’s day to the end of time. They unroll a panorama of history that is without parallel even in the sacred Scriptures. This revelation was the glorious answer to Daniel’s humble prayer that the Omnipotent might bring his promises to pass. Since the things that were about to happen in Daniel’s time were to be of so very humbling a sort that the courage of

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<sup>9</sup> For example, in defending the First-Coming Messianic interpretation, Edward Young contends: “The view of Keil and Kliefoth is that the seven sevens extend from Cyrus to Christ. There is nothing inherently objectionable in this except that v. 25b is then made to extend from the first advent of Christ to the consummation, and this is contrary to the Messianic character of v. 24” (Young, *Prophecy*, 205). It is only contrary to the messianic character of v. 24 if one limits the messianic character to the person of the messiah rather than to the age of the messiah.

many a saint might well have failed him, God reveals the glories that a more distant future has in store.<sup>10</sup>

Since Daniel's prayer in ch. 9 is for the restoration of God's sanctuary and city, and since Gabriel is sent to Daniel to reveal God's plan for ultimate restoration of "your [Daniel's] people and your holy city," the question of the nature of the "Jerusalem" (9:25) of the oracle goes a long way toward shaping how one interprets the entire passage. Those who understand the text to be speaking only about the geophysical city of Jerusalem, its rebuilding after the exile, and its inhabitants will read it as if it is telling of events in the near future, up to 490 years. Those who deny the passage as prophecy also tend to date the writing of the passage, as well as much of the book of Daniel, as after the fact (*vaticinium ex eventu*) of the historical events the passage claims to predict. Even those who recognize the passage as genuine prophecy may interpret it within the chronological framework of some 490 (70 times seven) years, if indeed the passage regards the geophysical Jerusalem. By contrast, those who see the words of the oracle as apocalyptic vision, addressing a wider scope than even Daniel predicts, with a figurative rather than definite chronology, see it as eschatological, i.e., describing events up to the consummation of the age.

Likewise, the identification of the key character or characters of whom the oracle speaks is critical to understanding both the oracle and the overarching vision. The "Messiah" ("anointed") appears two times, the first time identified also "Messiah Prince," and the second time to tell what will happen to him. The title "prince" also appears a second time in the oracle, whether the same as "Messiah Prince" or another, and remains the subject of the rest of the oracle. Is the latter "prince" the same person as the former "Messiah Prince"? Are these two different characters, or one? If the "Messiah Prince" is christological, then the entire prophecy is

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<sup>10</sup> Leupold, *Daniel*, 361, 375–76.

christological. If the latter “coming prince” is a separate person, is this prince anti-christological? If the passage is christological while also describing an enemy who seeks to hinder God’s plan, then is the oracle reaching into eschatology, extending until the end of the age? If the “messiah prince” is not christological, then the prophecy might address only the Babylonian exile, return, and a subsequent persecution and restoration, possibly all within a BC time period.

The epicenter of this oracle is the prophecy that “the anointed one will be removed and there will be none to [or for] him” (9:26). This heart and center serves as a crossroads from which all diverge. How one navigates from this crossroads, of course, will be governed by the bearing one had chosen going into the “dismal swamp,” as well as by decisions about the four key considerations listed above. Most importantly, all these bearings affect how one will understand the prince or princes that the oracle addresses as well as the identity of the enemy who appears in 9:26–27. Thus the angel Gabriel cautions Daniel to “consider the word and understand the vision” (9:23). He refers to “the vision” (“at the first,” 9:21) that he began to interpret for Daniel when it was shown to him in ch. 7, which the following oracle in 9:24–27 will explicate further. Thus, Daniel has already been given “bearings” to understand the oracle of the 70x7s in light of the overarching vision of ch. 7.

Daniel’s overarching vision of ch. 7, together with the explanatory oracle, represent the same revelation given to King Nebuchadnezzar in ch. 2, but reveal the vision from the perspective of God’s throne room in heaven. The vision of ch. 2, given first to the king and then also to Daniel, gives a historical perspective “from below,” concerning the flow of political dominance by various kingdoms until God reveals his eternal kingdom to override and shatter them all and to grow and fill the earth. Even Daniel’s God-given interpretation of the vision only explains that the “fifth” kingdom depicted in the vision is God’s kingdom “that will never be

destroyed nor shall be left to another people... It will stand forever” (Dan 2:44). No further details are given about the establishment of the kingdom or about the people who will be a part of it. On the other hand, the central features of the vision of ch. 7 and the oracle are the dominion of the "one like a son of man," the "little horn's" rebellion against the Most High and his warfare against the saints, and the (simultaneous) destruction of the enemy and the giving of the kingdom to the saints. The vision gives a heavenly perspective *with respect to* or *with implications for* the presence of the eternal kingdom inaugurated on earth in history.

This Typological understanding of the 70x7s passage (Dan 9:24–27) sees first Yahweh’s human agent, “The Messiah Prince” (מְשִׁיחַ מְלִיכָה, 9:25) as the archetypal Davidic Messiah (7:13–14; 9:25–26), who is endowed with God’s own dominion, glory, and kingdom (7:14). This eschatological agent of Yahweh, however, will be opposed by a “prince who is to come” (הַכֹּהֵן הַבָּא, 9:26), who is an eschatological enemy of Yahweh, of his Messiah, and of his people. This enemy will arise at a time delineated by Yahweh himself, when his Messiah will “be removed (יִכָּרֵת),<sup>11</sup> and there will be nothing/no one for him [namely, on his side]” (9:26), meaning that he will lose all power and influence in the world as Messiah. As a result of the cutting off of “the Messiah Prince,” the people of “the coming prince” will ruin the city and sanctuary of God and his people, bringing corruption, violence and abominations for a limited time, as part of God’s eschatological plan (9:24), until the delineated end of the eschatological enemy and his people.

This minority Typological view seeks not to calculate chronology as such, but to comprehend the 70x7s as undisclosed periods of time. The angel Gabriel gives the interpretation

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<sup>11</sup> Although the “*karath*” penalty in Israel’s history occasionally included the death penalty, such is not necessarily the case. To jump immediately to the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth is an unwarranted leap. Here, as in common OT usage, כָּרַת should retain its ordinary usage as “remove.” Nor should it automatically be equated with the כָּרַת of Isa 53:8. See interpretation below as well as the Excursus “The Verb ‘*Karath*’ in Biblical Hebrew,” pp. 195–200, regarding the interpretation of this verb.



of these symbolic time periods: (1) the BC period (“seven sevens,” 9:25) from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem after the exile until the coming of Yahweh’s Messiah; (2) the AD period (“62 sevens,” 9:25), during which time the archetypal eschatological “city and sanctuary” of God and his people, namely, the AD Church of Christ, is being built “broadly but within limits” (רחוב וְתִהְיֶה, 9:25), though in a “troubled time” (Dan 9:25); and (3) the end times, represented by the final “seven” (9:26–27), during which time “the Messiah Prince” will be cut off, removed, losing his power and influence as Messiah, and the appearance of “the coming prince,” whose “people” will ruin or corrupt God’s city and stop the worship of God with desolations (שְׁמֹמֹת, 9:26) until “the decreed end is poured out” (9:27) on him to his destruction.

Thus, this Typological interpretation sees both agents called “prince” (נָגִיד), the same title Yahweh gave to David (1 Sam 25:30; 2 Sam 5:2; etc.), as eschatological human agents with opposing agendas, one sent with the dominion of the Most High and the other working against the Most High as a usurper, working in the last days of God’s complete plan for earthly human history. Each “prince” represents a distinct “kingdom,” the first as leader of the restored city-kingdom of God and the second as the leader of forces of rebellion that seek to ruin the city.

Leupold’s *Exposition of Daniel* became well used in the decades to follow, but the Typological interpretation of Daniel’s visions never took hold among the mainstream schools of interpretation. It has to this day remained little more than a footnote in most commentaries on Daniel. James Hamilton, however, is one of the few interpreters allied with Kliefoth, Keil, and Leupold for the Typological interpretation in his 2014 book *With the Clouds of Heaven*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> James Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 32 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014).

The Typological interpretation has been deemed unworkable by the majority schools of interpretation. Andrew Steinmann summarizes the problems that those of the majority First

Coming of the Messiah interpretation see with the Typological interpretation:

The typological interpretation has some advantages but also suffers from some weaknesses... [It] requires that 'Jerusalem' in 9:25 and 'the city' in 9:26 all of a sudden become references to the church without any contextual clues to this change... It requires the destruction of the city and the holy place (representing the church) to be only partial or incomplete, although the text does not qualify the destruction as partial or otherwise less than complete.... The text of the vision indicates full destruction, something the typological interpretation and its understanding of Jerusalem as the church cannot admit, since the NT clearly indicates that the church will never be completely wiped out like an uninhabited or deserted city.<sup>13</sup>

This study will address those issues, showing how the apocalyptic view of the vision and oracle, rather than reading them as mere prophecy, reveals not only the second-century BC fulfillments stressed by the Historical-Critical view, but also the AD first-century fulfillments stressed by the First Coming interpretation, and further, the eschatological end times fulfillments seen as necessary by the Dispensational view. The Typological view is not an "all of the above" view, but rather, according to the nature and function of apocalyptic vision, perceives God's work not simply in, with, and under the various events of history, but especially behind the events. As God's plan of judgment and salvation unfolds, there are fulfillments along the way, but they point to an ultimate consummation. This may be understood like refractions of a rainbow as each fulfillment builds up progressively to bring to completion and consummation his plan of judgment and salvation, the rainbow itself. While all the forementioned fulfillments can be seen, each school of interpretation is partially correct. The Typological interpretation, as a necessary implication of the apocalyptic perspective of the vision given to Daniel, sees the consummation

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<sup>13</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456–57.

of all the fulfillments as yet to come, as is the Messiah who will bring with his (second) coming the “delineated completion” (Dan 9:27) of judgment on his enemies and the giving of the everlasting kingdom to his saints (Dan 7:27). Not only is a Typological reading called for by the text, but it brings together the aspects about which the mainstream schools of interpretation are correct. It does so by perceiving what the other interpretations have not, namely, that the apocalyptic vision to Daniel reveals not just one, but two comings of God’s Messiah, and the focus on the intervening time period during which God’s people will be persecuted and the forces of rebellion against God will rise to their full maturity. But the comfort for God’s people, like bookends, is the dominion and reign of their Lord Messiah that will never be destroyed and the city of God built for their habitation now and forever.

However, for now, the disparities between the majority interpretations and the minority approach are apparent, and they reveal the need for some further clarity to strengthen the voice of the Typological approach as the most faithful to the biblical text. To understand the typology of Scripture, especially as it is functioning in the visions of Daniel, it is helpful to understand the genre in which they present themselves.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE APOCALYPTIC FRAMEWORK FOR INTERPRETING DANIEL'S VISION

#### Recognizing the Genre of Apocalyptic Literature and Its Rhetorical Purpose

There has been much debate about the existence and identification of “apocalyptic literature,” and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this study. However, two important preliminary points should be noted. First, the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) gathered wide agreement around the work of its Apocalypse Group of the SBL Genres Project in *Semeia 14* to give a general definition of apocalyptic literature. The definition was drawn up by P. Vielhauer and K. Koch, and here is restated by G.K. Beale,

“Apocalyptic” [refers to] the revelation of secrets concerning future events of history or other hidden information about the divine operation of the cosmos.... This external apocalyptic form usually contains such characteristic elements as: (1) a vision which often comes (2) at night or in one’s sleep and is accompanied (3) by forms of ecstasy or fear; (4) the seer then reflects on the vision and (5) either has it interpreted by God or an assisting angel or he interprets it himself.<sup>1</sup>

In this sense, apocalyptic literature appears to be conceptually related to the form of Jewish interpretation known as “*peshet*,” in which the hidden mysteries (רְזֵי)² of how God is at work behind the events of history are revealed.

Second, there is widespread agreement that, whatever is debated about deuterocanonical or extracanonical “apocalyptic” writings and different classifications thereof, it is widely agreed that Dan 7–12 and the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (Revelation) are clearly the only two *canonical* specimens of apocalyptic literature. It is generally agreed that certain other passages are proto-apocalyptic, such as Ezek 38–39 and Zech 1–6. John Collins, who has made

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<sup>1</sup> Beale, G.K. *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 6–7.

<sup>2</sup> רְזֵי “Mysteries” is an important word in the book of Daniel (occurring seven times in ch. 2 as well as 4:9), referring to the knowledge and plans of God, which he may or may not (or only partially) reveal to humans.

considerable contributions to the study of the genre of “apocalyptic,” if such can be argued to exist, expresses the surprising consensus:

There has been a remarkable degree of agreement on a core group of apocalyptic texts and their general characteristics. In this respect, the occasional attempts to discredit the word apocalyptic by denying that it has clear reference are quite unjustified. The degree of scholarly agreement is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the texts in question were not clearly labeled [as “apocalyptic” or a similar categorization] in antiquity.<sup>3</sup>

Starting with this “remarkable degree of agreement” about the existence of a genre best named “apocalyptic,” even despite considerable disagreement from that point onward, this chapter of the study will delineate the defining characteristics and perspective of biblical apocalyptic literature as a framework for interpreting the vision of Daniel.

This is a legitimate approach, as John Collins indicates,

There is a general consensus among modern scholars that there is a phenomenon which may be called “apocalyptic” and that it is expressed in an ill-defined list of writings which includes (on any reckoning) the Jewish works Daniel (chaps. 7–12), 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch and the Christian book of Revelation.... By listing the prominent recurring features in these works it is possible to assess the extent of the similarity between them.... The defining characteristics embrace both the manner or form of revelation and the content of the things revealed. The significant recurring elements constitute a paradigm which shows... the persistent similarities which run throughout.... The primary apocalyptic texts [of Daniel and Revelation] have received only sporadic attention and are often avoided or ignored by biblical scholarship.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, this study will limit itself to the canonical apocalypses, namely, Dan 7–12—and specifically to its overarching vision of ch. 7 together with the explanatory oracle of ch. 9—as the first and definitive work of this genre of apocalypse, together with the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (Revelation) as it presents the same vision from the same teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic heavenly cosmological perspective. As Collins assesses, examination of the

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<sup>3</sup> John Collins, “Apocalyptic Genre and Mythic Allusions in Daniel,” *JSOT* 21 (1981): 83.

<sup>4</sup> John Collins, “The Jewish Apocalypses,” *Semeia* 14 (1979): 3, 5, 11.

“significant recurring elements,” “the persistent similarities which run throughout,” and the “significant cluster of traits”<sup>5</sup> will distinguish the paradigm of what this study will call “canonical apocalypses.” Unlike many other studies, however, this study will further distinguish the features peculiar to Daniel and echoed in Revelation from the deuterocanonical and non-canonical apocalyptic literature. It is also important to consider along the way how Daniel (and likewise Revelation) draws upon the rest of the existing scriptures, especially its prophecies, to point to the fulfillment of all God’s promises and plan at the consummation of the age.

Particular characteristics of the strictly canonical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation, in addition to those enumerated by the SBL’s definition, include

- (6) a universal (cosmic, eschatological) scope,
  - (7) a particular reckoning of time,
  - (8) an artistic presentation utilizing symbolic imagery to depict archetypal persons or things,
  - (9) a dichotomy of the godly versus the rebellion (evil), and most importantly as the quintessential elements of the canonical apocalypses,
  - (10) a focus on the rule, reign, and salvation of God through His Messiah (Christology),
- and
- (11) an ecclesiology of the people (saints) of God, attacked and harassed by the forces of evil in the world but victorious heirs of God’s kingdom until its consummation.

Henry Swete discusses the common apocalyptic perspective laid out especially in Daniel and Revelation, but also employed by Paul in his epistles:

St Paul uses the noun [*apocalypse*] in reference both to the gift of spiritual vision and to its results; the gift is a πνεῦμα ἀποκαλύψεως [“spirit of revelatory unveiling”], and

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<sup>5</sup> Collins, “Jewish Apocalypses,” 12.

its exercise is an ἀποκάλυψις [“revelatory unveiling”]. The gift of revelation took its place as an instrument of edification by the side of the gift of prophecy; it was in fact a particular manifestation of the prophetic Spirit, in which the spirit of the prophet seemed to be carried up into a higher sphere, endowed for the time with new powers of vision, and enabled to hear words which could not be reproduced in the terms of human thought, or could be reproduced only through the medium of symbolical imagery. While the prophets normally dealt with human life in its relation to God, reading and interpreting the thoughts of men, and thus convicting, exhorting, or consoling them according to their several needs, he who ‘had an apocalypse’ strove to express his personal realization of the unseen or of the distant future.... The Revelation of John is the only written apocalypse, as it is the only prophetic book of the Apostolic age.... But it is in the book of Daniel that the later conception of the literary apocalypse is first realized.<sup>6</sup>

Thus Swete defines apocalyptic literature as “a particular manifestation of the prophetic Spirit” using “the medium of symbolic imagery” as “an instrument of edification.” This definition encompasses also the last two criteria above as most important for the canonical apocalypses: Christology, as “the prophetic Spirit” always points to Christ, and ecclesiology, in that it is for the “edification,” the building up of God’s people in Christ.

John Stephenson summarizes well the place of apocalyptic in the canon: “Acceptance of the full canonicity of this writing nevertheless involves explicit recognition of its nature as apocalyptic literature, whose aim is to edify and encourage much more than to offer a detailed timetable of the events preceding the Last Day.”<sup>7</sup> Stephenson correctly emphasizes that apocalyptic literature is recognized as such by its purpose of building up believers in their faith in Christ. This is a recognition of the hallmarks of the canonical apocalypses, Christology, then ecclesiology, which is the life of believers under Christ within the kingdom of God.

The (canonical) apocalyptic perspective is best thought of, as Collins agrees with Klaus Koch, as a *Rahmengattung* or “generic framework.” He admits that “apocalyptic” may not

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1908), xviii.

<sup>7</sup> John R. Stephenson, *Eschatology* (Fort Wayne, IN: Luther Academy, 1993), 92–93.

necessarily to be thought of as a metaphysical entity *per se*, but along with E.D. Hirsch, Jr., concurs:

Understanding depends on the listener's or reader's expectations. These expectations are of a *type of meaning* rather than of a unique meaning, because otherwise the interpreter would have no way of expecting them. Consequently, utterances must conform to typical usages if they are to be intelligible at all. Even the unique aspects of a text (and every text is unique in some respect) can only be understood if they are located relative to conventional signals.... There can be no understanding without at least an implicit notion of genre. The generic framework involves a conceptual structure or view of the world.... Specifically, the world is mysterious, and revelation must be transmitted from a supernatural source, through the mediation of angels; there is a hidden world of angels and demons that is directly relevant to human destiny; and this destiny is finally determined by a definitive eschatological judgment. In short, human life is bounded in the present by the supernatural world of angels and demons and in the future by the inevitability of a final judgment.... If we say that a work is *apocalyptic* we encourage the reader to expect that it frames its message within the view of the world that is characteristic of the genre.<sup>8</sup>

Collins is saying that it is important to understand the worldview of an apocalypse within the conceptual structure it lays out. From within that worldview and structure, the reader is guided in how to interpret the text. More than that, Collins had also asserted,

The paradigm [of apocalyptic literature] is internally coherent. The common elements singled out in the comprehensive definition of apocalypse are not random but constitute a kernel to which the other elements are integrally related. The formal derivation of revelation from an otherworldly source complements the contentual [sic] emphasis on transcendent eschatology and the supernatural world.<sup>9</sup>

Although Collins does not believe that the vision of Daniel as a canonical apocalypse is genuinely prophetic (but rather written after the events to which it points as *ex eventu* pseudo-prophecy), his contribution to the study of the genre of apocalypse has been invaluable and lays a foundation for understanding the “framework” or “paradigm” of the apocalyptic perspective. He lays out the challenge that if one could demonstrate the “kernel” made up of “significant

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<sup>8</sup> John Collins. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 13–14.

<sup>9</sup> Collins, “Jewish Apocalypses,” 12.



recurring elements” and “persistent similarities,” one could reveal an internally coherent “paradigm” under which the apocalyptic writings together operate and press upon the reader.

This scriptural framework of teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic thought is essential for understanding the visions of Daniel. The images and words all function as scriptural allusions to the history and theology of the Pentateuch, the writings, and the prophets. The apocalyptic cosmological vantage sees all these allusions as pointing to a common goal, the rule and reign of God, his eternal kingdom established in history to be consummated for the age to come. The eschatology of the Scriptures is always oriented toward this “goal.” Gerhardus Vos illustrates this perspective in the Psalms when he observes,

There is much material in the Psalms which it requires the large impact of history to bring to our consciousness in its full significance.... To the vision of faith, that which Jehovah will do at the end—his conclusive, consummate action—must surpass everything else in importance.... Where religion entwines itself around a progressive work of God, such as redemption, its general responsiveness becomes prospective, cumulative, climacteric; it gravitates with all its inherent weight toward the end. A redemptive religion without eschatological interest would be a contradiction in terms.<sup>10</sup>

The Psalms especially give an overview of salvation history for God’s people while giving an eschatological perspective that always encourages believers to “hope in / wait for Yahweh” (Ps 27:14) and his everlasting salvation.

A complete survey of the history of understanding the apocalyptic mindset, especially since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, has been covered in books dedicated to the subject.<sup>11</sup> However, a few key theologians provide helpful guidance in understanding concepts revealed in Daniel’s visions. Gerhard Cloege<sup>12</sup> was groundbreaking in perceiving the scriptural eschatological-apocalyptic

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<sup>10</sup> Gerhardus Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 324–25.

<sup>11</sup> For example, George Ladd in *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 4–42, gives an excellent history of the progress in understanding apocalyptic thought.

<sup>12</sup> Gerhard Cloege, *Das Reich Gottes im Neuen Testament* (Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1930).

framework of thought in Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God to understand the transcendence of God's rule and reign as present in time and history. He speaks about the kingdom of God being, by definition, not the eschatological realm of salvation, i.e., only the age to come, but as a *framework of thought* about God's royal rule, his kingly activity, active in history among humans for their redemption. God's kingdom is eternal, but it is revealed in time and in history. The kingdom as God's rule and reign is present in the person and work of Jesus the Messiah, but its full consummation awaits Christ's second coming. Cloege recognizes that the present rule and reign of God's kingdom in Christ obviously demands both a Christology and an ecclesiology, because it defines and establishes who are God's people who belong to the kingdom.

John Knox built upon a view of God's kingdom as outside of time and yet having come in time and history. "The Kingdom of God is always at hand, not as a future event, perhaps, but in the profounder sense of an ever-present reality, both within our life and above it, both immanent and transcendent."<sup>13</sup> Rudolph Otto especially emphasized Jesus' role in the reign of God as he famously says, "It is not Jesus who brings the kingdom ... the kingdom brings him with it." God's transcendent rule and reign is already breaking into the world through Jesus the Messiah. Although Knox speaks of Jesus becoming the heavenly Son of Man in the future, the apocalyptic perspective rather sees the future breaking into the present, so that believers can know that Jesus is already ruling and reigning as the ascended and glorified Son of Man depicted in Dan 7:13–14.

The essential feature of the apocalyptic framework and perspective is the here-and-now of God's transcendent rule and reign in and through his Messiah for the benefit and salvation of his people. F.C. Grant expressed the idea in saying that the Scriptures that are "eschatologically

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<sup>13</sup> John Knox, *Christ the Lord: The Meaning of Jesus in the Early Church* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1945), 30.

conditioned” deal with the “supra-historical; not so much ‘beyond history’ (after the end of the present age) as ‘above’ history, outside time and place, in the ever-present ‘now’ of eternity—in the Mind of God.”<sup>14</sup> The purpose for this perspective, as the vision of Daniel 7 depicts, is to understand the working of God’s dominion in human history within the kingdoms of the earth.

It is important therefore to understand the unique perspective of apocalyptic literature over against prophecy, with which it is often confused. On the one hand, prophecy interprets the events of history as directly revelatory, i.e., God’s plan revealed in, with, and under the events of history. Apocalyptic, on the other hand, treats the events of history as indirectly revelatory, i.e., that God is at work behind (besides being in, with, and under) the events of history.<sup>15</sup> For apocalyptic, the events of history are “mysteries” whose significance can only be understood by an interpretive revelation (Dan 2:18–19, 27–28; Rev 10:7). Thus, both prophecy and apocalyptic view history in a revelatory manner, but from different perspectives. George Ladd posits, “One might say that the historical is realized eschatology, and the eschatological is consummated history.”<sup>16</sup> It is common to confuse a historical-prophetic view from an eschatological-apocalyptic view because, as Ladd further notes, “Both the historical present and the eschatological future are visitations of the same God, manifestations of the same divine rule to accomplish the same redemptive purpose.... For the God who was acting in history through the person and mission of Jesus will act at the end of the age to manifest his glory and saving power.”<sup>17</sup>

This distinction is what Collins is talking about when he explains:

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<sup>14</sup> F.C. Grant, *An Introduction to New Testament Thought* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1950), 206.

<sup>15</sup> Thanks to David Adams for this insight.

<sup>16</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 146.

<sup>17</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 147, 172.

The different elements which make up our comprehensive definition of the genre are not associated at random but are integrally related by their common implications. The key word in the definition is *transcendence*. The manner of revelation requires the mediation of an otherworldly being, i.e., it is not given directly to the human recipient and does not fall within the compass of human knowledge. The manner of revelation then already asserts the reality of another world, superior to our own in knowledge, even in the knowledge of human affairs and destiny.... Human life is set in a context which is shaped by this otherworldly, supernatural dimension. Finally, the transcendent nature of apocalyptic eschatology looks beyond this world to another.... Both the manner of revelation and the eschatological content point beyond this world to another, which is at once the source of revealed knowledge and of future salvation. There is, then, an intrinsic relation between the revelation which is expressed in an apocalypse as a whole and the eschatological salvation promised in that revelation.<sup>18</sup>

Collins is indicating that *transcendence* is a hallmark of the apocalyptic worldview that differentiates it from a historical-prophetic viewpoint.

Still, it is difficult to see a distinction between “prophetic” and “apocalyptic” perspectives.

Ladd has given a helpful summary:

The “prophetic” hope is rooted in history. God is the Lord of history and will bring history to a consummation on this earth. The kingdom will be achieved within history by historical events which will see the rise of a Davidic king who will rule over a restored Israel, bringing peace to all the earth.... For clarity’s sake, we shall... consider a proper eschatology those prophetic views which conceive of the final consummation of God’s salvation within the framework of history.... [However,] there is a question of whether or not the Kingdom of God is to be conceived within history or beyond history.... If the Kingdom of God can be achieved only by God breaking into history from outside history, then history itself really has no goal.... The hope of a kingdom which would issue in a renewal of the world and which could be introduced only by supra-historical forces, i.e., the direct act of God, is firmly rooted in the pre-exilic prophets. This may be called a truly eschatological hope, for it will mean the Eschaton—the age of the consummation of God’s redemptive purpose.<sup>19</sup>

Ladd is correct in that the biblical worldview is that God accomplishes his saving acts on the stage of history and in the lives of his people, all the way up to the consummation of the age. The eternal kingdom of God in Daniel is inaugurated and ruled by his Messiah, whose coming will

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<sup>18</sup> Collins, “Jewish Apocalypses,” 10, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 53–57.

initiate the building of the eternal kingdom as a restoration of God's holy city Jerusalem, which is also called God's holy mountain Zion. The building of this city-kingdom happens in history but will continue forever into the age to come. This illustrates the apocalyptic perspective in that, on the one hand, it is historical, but on the other hand, it reveals the transcendent presence, power, and (consummate) salvation of God.

The problem with the historical-critical (from which Collins comes), the dispensational, and the traditional "First Coming" interpretations of Daniel is that they each attempt to interpret Daniel as prophecy rather than apocalyptic. Thus, their focus is on the events of history rather than what God is doing behind the events of history. For example, "First Coming" interpreters read the vision of Daniel, especially in the 70x7s, as relating only to the atoning work of the Messiah by His death and the destruction of Jerusalem soon thereafter, focusing on the events of history, while the oracle in its apocalyptic perspective looks behind and above history to the consummation of God's eschatological judgment and salvation, i.e., the building of the new "Jerusalem," which is God's kingdom among his sanctified people inaugurated on earth, and the conferral of that eternal kingdom to his saints for the age to come. But Ladd captures the difficulties of understanding:

Here is the mysterious fact about the Kingdom. Its blessings have entered the old age [in history], introducing a new order of life which nevertheless does not bring the old order to its end for all men. The new order is not the age to come, the Eschaton, but is a new order hidden in the old age. However, the new order, hidden as it [is], [brings] salvation to its recipients but judgment to those who [reject] it (Matt 11:20–24)... To submit oneself to God's reign meant to receive the Kingdom of God [Dan. 7:18] and to enter into the enjoyment of its blessings. The age of fulfillment is present, but the time of consummation still awaits the age to come.... The mystery of the Kingdom is the coming of the Kingdom into history in advance of its apocalyptic manifestation. It is, in short, 'fulfillment without consummation.'<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 204, 217, 222.

Ladd differentiates fulfillment, manifestation, and consummation, which are all different aspects and stages of God’s plan of judgment and salvation. The tension for human understanding lies in the “now and not yet” character of the eternal kingdom and the relationship of the eternality (i.e., outside of time) of the kingdom and its presence in history. Daniel’s use of the word עולם (“eternal”; 2:44, 7:14) refers to the eternality—present already and continuing beyond history forever—of this kingdom conferred upon God’s Messiah and to be given to his saints.

A scriptural example of the contrast between the earthly and heavenly perspectives (the latter of which apocalypses provide) is presented in Ps 2, which presents a scene very similar to apocalyptic vision and will prove helpful to understand the perspective of Daniel’s apocalyptic vision. As Timothy Saleska points out, Ps 2 teaches us to see that, from the earthly (historical) perspective,

political or economic displays of power done without regard for Yhwh’s rule or in service to another god are rebellion against Yhwh and his anointed king.... [On the other hand, we are taken] to the other side of the battle line, to the heavenly throne room, unseen by earthly kings. Freed of the restraints of space and time, the speaker sees a reality that we at ground level do not. From our perspective, human power looks overwhelming, but the reality is quite different: Yhwh laughing and mocking human pretensions to power. The shift in perspective assumes that there is a much more important realm to consider. “Above” the created world is an all-powerful one we cannot now see—a divine power that is real but not visible.... But in Ps 2:6 when Yhwh finally speaks, his announcement is anticlimactic and enigmatic: “But I—I hereby consecrate my king on Zion, my holy mountain.”... There is a mystery, a gap between what seems and what really is, that matches the contrast between power of earthly kings and Yhwh’s king on Zion.... The reality that Jesus is the anointed king who reigns over all things is still to be revealed in its fullness.... The “today” [of Ps 2:7] of Christ’s return and the day of the resurrection of all flesh, when his Father will put all things under his feet, the day when Jesus will ask and the Father will give him all things that he may reign eternally in glory, is still to come (1 Cor 15:20–28; Phil 2:5–11; Rev 20–22).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Timothy Saleska, *Psalms 1–50*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2020), 152, 153, 157, 158.

Saleska echoes the point emphasized by the preacher to the Hebrews (4:7) that the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic space-time gives the perspective from God's "today," his judgments for both the salvation of his people and the overthrow of his enemies. God's "today" is always present to him, and always applicable to humans' "today" in history. The teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic view from within history is that "today" always points and is oriented toward the eschaton. Apocalyptic's perspective of eternity views history as working together toward a goal (eschatology).

Daniel 7–12 in general, and more specifically for this study, chs. 7 and 9, employ many of the general categories the SBL agreed upon for recognizing apocalyptic literature. (1) Daniel sees "a dream and visions of his head" (Dan 7:2) (2) while he was sleeping in his bed (7:2). The vision is (3) both frightening (7:15, 28) and exciting (7:27); (4) the seer then reflects on the vision (7:16) and (5) has it interpreted by an assisting angel (7:16). Despite a lack of agreement in the actual interpretations of the visions of Dan 7–12, scholars of every school of interpretation have agreed that its numerous similarities with the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (Revelation) compel them to categorize Daniel's visions together with Revelation within the genre of *historical* apocalyptic literature. Further, the vision of Daniel also presents (6) a cosmic, eschatological scope, starting from the Babylonian kingdom and viewing all of history until the final consummation of the age. It (7) uses a particular reckoning of time with phrases such as "a time, times, and half a time" and "seventy sevens." It gives (8) an artistic presentation utilizing symbolic imagery such as fantastic beasts, depicting archetypal persons such as the "one like a son of man" or the "little horn." (9) It reveals a dichotomy between the Ancient of Days who sits on his throne in judgment and who gives divine dominion to the "one like a son of man" to reign over the eternal kingdom versus the "little horn" (also called "the desolator") who would lead a

rebellion against God, his order of creation, and his saints. But most importantly, the categories most central and important to both Daniel and Revelation that overarch all previous categories are that it (10) envisions the Ancient of Days conferring all authority and dominion to the “one like a son of man” to rule and reign over his eternal kingdom; and finally, that it (11) depicts an ecclesiology of the people of God as “saints,” sanctified by God to be his holy people and to inherit the eternal kingdom, inaugurated and constructed on earth and continuing into the new age.

In order to recognize or identify a genre to guide the reading of the book of Daniel, especially the visions of the second half, the best methodology is to note the characteristics, the structure, and the major themes and emphases, as well as the perspective in which they are presented. Then these can be compared to other works in the canon to identify similarities. Daniel, while displaying many similar characteristics and themes common to the Pentateuch, the Psalms and Wisdom literature, and the Prophets, seems to present them in a unique perspective. If BC believers perhaps considered Daniel as a hybrid genre or in a class of its own, then only when another writing with similar characteristics, themes, and perspective was accepted into the canon, e.g., the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (Revelation), then the similitude of both illuminated what was already recognized as unique to Daniel. Only then could a “genre” be identified.

As the book of Daniel was written as the first specimen of canonical “apocalyptic” literature (a name to be given to the genre much later), it was perhaps difficult to classify it into a “genre” in comparison to other books of the canon; it seemed unique. That may explain why it was placed in the Hebrew Bible with the *Ketuvim* (“[Literary] Writings”) but placed in later Christian collections with the *Neviim* (“Prophets”), between the “major” prophets and the “minor” prophets. However, after accepting John’s Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (Revelation), the



similarities between it and the visions of Daniel brought to light Daniel's own features and perspective and illuminated both books in the light of one another to such a degree that the title of the latter book, "The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ," was seen as an apt description of Daniel's vision. Thus, people began to speak of Daniel, especially his visions of chs. 7–12, as "apocalyptic," as in "Apocalypse-like" or "Revelation-like."

The term "apocalyptic" is seen as problematic by many scholars today simply because Daniel and Revelation are often indiscriminately categorized together with the intertestamental works of so-called "apocalyptic" literature. However, the term "apocalyptic" need not be discarded, but rather must be defined more clearly as relating to the title of the last book of the Bible as it shares the features and perspective of its first specimen, Daniel, over against the non-canonical works.

Brighton distinguishes Revelation from other apocalyptic literature (as it shares Daniel's apocalyptic perspective) in three crucial characteristics: (1) It is *not* anonymous; both Daniel and John identify themselves as authors. (2) It is *Christocentric*.

While the person of Christ acts under the authority of God the Father and frequently uses angels to mediate the revelation, it is quite clear that he dominates the entire prophetic message as to its origin and purpose—hence the book's first words, 'revelatory-unveiling of Jesus Christ' (Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:1) and also its final promise, 'Yes, I am coming quickly' (Ναί, ἔρχομαι ταχύ, 22:20).<sup>22</sup>

And (3) it is *prophetic* in intention. "The author of Revelation is conscious of his role as prophet... His purpose is not primarily to reveal secrets to God's people, but rather to call them to repentance and faith, and to worship—to the blessedness of faithful service in the confidence of God's love and care."<sup>23</sup> Note that "prophetic intent" is not the same as a "prophetic

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<sup>22</sup> Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 5–6.

<sup>23</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 6.

perspective.” The prophetic calling of the people to repentance, faith, and worship is accomplished by giving them an apocalyptic perspective of their Savior and of their place as his people, his saints.

Brighton also describes the *content* of the revelation (that Daniel and the Apocalypse both envision) that centers around

two ongoing phenomena: (1) the terrifying sufferings and horror on earth, and (2) the reign of Jesus Christ as Lord in his heavenly exalted glory.... Despite all human efforts and ambitions, human life here on earth in this present age will *not* improve into a happy state. Nor is the kingdom of the enthroned Christ a kingdom of this world.... Therefore, the visions of heaven inspire Christians to gaze steadily in faith at Christ and the glory that awaits them while they suffer through the tribulations on earth. Also, these heavenly pictures of the coming eternal glory encourage the believer, through his sufferings here on earth to witness to the victory of Christ.... This is the faith and comfort of the church: her Lord rules over all history, all events, over sin and evil, the devil, suffering and death and hell. He governs everything... [until] the Lord Christ will come.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, the apocalyptic visions of Daniel and Revelation are first and foremost Christocentric, and as a necessary result, also ecclesiological, describing the life and times of God’s eternal kingdom ruled by his Messiah and of his people (saints) who submit to his reign.

Further, Daniel builds upon the history that God has established his kingdom among his people by his covenants through Abraham, Moses, and David. God’s people who participate by faith in his covenants enjoy his blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation even now, despite the keen awareness and the constant pressure of the evil all around in the world. Therefore, God’s people look forward to the day when they will participate in his presence without the pressures from without.

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<sup>24</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 7–8.

There is a striking similarity between the structure of Revelation and of the second half of Daniel. In each there is an introductory vision that overarches and dominates the entire book (Dan 7, supplemented by 9:24–27, and Rev 4–5, supplemented by ch. 7). Brighton explains,

The prophetic message is introduced by a vision of God’s throne and glory in heaven, together with angels and the saints of God, and of the exaltation of the victorious Christ, depicted as a Lamb (Rev 4:1–5:14). This vision of God’s heavenly glory and of the exaltation of the Lamb not only introduces the prophetic message of Revelation but also dominates and controls it.<sup>25</sup>

With the exception of depicting the Christ particularly as a Lamb, Revelation’s overarching vision presents a practically identical scene and message to that of Daniel’s overarching vision of ch. 7 that depicts the Ancient of Days on his throne, the presence of angels, the saints of the Most High, and especially the “one like a son of man” as the possessor of dominion over God’s eternal kingdom to be given to the saints (Dan 7:9–10, 13–14, 18). Similarly, the “heart of Revelation” is a “cosmic vision”<sup>26</sup> (chs. 12–14) of the dragon (the eschatological enemy of God and his people) who, in rebellion against God, attempts first to destroy the Messiah, but when unable to do so, then pursues the woman (representing the saints) to make warfare against her. This vision “reveals the cause of all the tribulations and sufferings on earth and the final triumph of Christ’s church.”<sup>27</sup> This cosmic vision at the heart of Revelation is a clear reiteration of Daniel’s vision of the “little horn” (7:8, 21–22, 25) who becomes a “desolator” (9:27) in his attempt to defy the Most High and make war against the saints of the Most High, but who is destroyed by the re-assertion of the dominion of the Messiah Prince who has given the eternal kingdom to his saints (7:26–27; 9:27). Daniel’s “little horn” and “desolator” correspond to the beasts of Revelation 13 who are agents of Satan, the dragon of Rev 12.

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<sup>25</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 11.

<sup>27</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 11.

Therefore, the two most defining characteristics of the two canonical apocalypses are the final two regarding the centrality of *Christology* and *ecclesiology*. The apocalyptic perspective that spans and bridges between heaven and earth reveals the implications and ramifications of its Christology for the ecclesiology of the people (saints) of God. George Ladd explains this very important application of biblical apocalyptic eschatology:

The church, as has often been said, is a people who live ‘between the times.’ They are caught up in the tension between the kingdom of God and a sinful world, between the age to come and the present evil age. The church has experienced the victory of the kingdom of God; and yet the church is, like other men, at the mercy of the powers of this world. The church is a symbol of hope—a proof that God has forsaken neither this age nor human history to the powers of evil. The kingdom of God has created the church and continues to work in the world through the church. This very situation creates a severe tension—indeed, acute conflict; for the church is the focal point of the conflict between good and evil, God and Satan, until the end of the age. The church can never be at rest or take her ease but must always be the church in struggle and conflict, often persecuted, but sure of the ultimate victory.<sup>28</sup>

Ladd aptly describes the life of God’s saints in between the conferral of the everlasting kingdom to God’s Messiah and its ultimate consummation through judgment of his enemies and the salvation, that is, giving the eternal kingdom to the saints. The “in between” time will be depicted as “sixty-two sevens” (Dan 9:25) and a final seven (9:26–27) in the oracle, a time of “warfare, [that is,] determined desolations” (9:26).

The single most difficult emphasis of the apocalyptic perspective is the “now and the not yet” character of the intersection of heaven and earth. God’s everlasting kingdom is present already in the person and reign of his Messiah and his saints are already gathered and sanctified to be citizens of the kingdom. But the kingdom itself cannot and will not be consummated until God’s plan of judgment and salvation is ultimately consummated. That is not to say that none of God’s promises are fulfilled before the end, but the tension lies in between the “first” coming

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<sup>28</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 338.

and “second” coming of the Messiah. The oracle of the 70x7s of Dan 9 focuses on that “in between” time with its “sixty-two sevens”—significantly longer than the “seven sevens” preceding the Messiah’s first coming and the “final seven” before the consummation—for the building of God’s kingdom-city as the restoration of the sanctuary and of the entire creation.

That is the eschatological hope shared in the Scriptures of the prophets and in Daniel. A necessary characteristic of the canonical apocalypses lacking from the SBL description is the apocalypses’ holistic and overarching perspective, viewing the big-picture, cosmic history of God’s relationship with the world and understanding things to come as fulfillment of past, present, future, and ultimate events. It does so by gathering together holistically the theology of the Pentateuch, the writings, and the prophets into an overarching and encompassing view of history oriented toward its ultimate goal(s) and consummation. A comparison of Daniel and Revelation reveals this mutual perspective, as Martin Franzmann (speaking on Revelation) recognizes:

Apocalyptic itself drew heavily on the Old Testament; John draws even more heavily. No other New Testament book can compare with it in the number of allusions to the OT; Revelation is saturated with the OT. In fact, it is the OT itself and not apocalyptic [tradition] that constitutes the immediate background and the richest source for Revelation. Revelation is at bottom much more deeply akin to the OT than it is to the apocalyptic [literature] which it resembles so strongly on the formal side.... If apocalyptic may be termed literary meditation on prophetic themes, Revelation is genuine prophecy, a prophecy which uses apocalyptic motifs and forms insofar, and only insofar, as they are legitimate explications of OT prophetic themes and are genuine to its own thoroughly Christ-centered proclamation. The peculiar advantage or virtue of utterance in this form lies not in the precision and clarity with which the utterance can be made, but in the power with which the thing can be brought to bear on the whole man—on his mind, his imagination, his feelings, his will. His whole inner life is caught up in the moving terror and splendor of these visions; and the course and bent of his life are determined by them as they could hardly be determined by any other kind of communication.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Martin H. Franzmann, *The Word of the Lord Grows* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1961), 272–73.

Franzmann points out how apocalyptic literature appeals to human imagination, not to imagine whatever it will, but to give it a vision to stir and guide its feelings and will. It draws upon the biblical myths and alludes to every other part of the Scriptures knowing that the reader's imagination will fill in gaps that words alone cannot do. Collins calls this "the apocalyptic imagination," and explains it this way:

While prophecy may indeed be the single most important source on which the apocalyptists drew, the tendency to assimilate apocalyptic literature to the more familiar world of the prophets risks losing sight of its stranger mythological and cosmological components.... Paul Ricoeur has rightly protested against the tendency to identify apocalyptic symbols in too univocal a way. This tendency misses the element of mystery and indeterminacy that constitutes much of the "atmosphere" of apocalyptic literature. In short, Ricoeur suggests that we should sometimes allow several concurrent identifications play and that the text may on occasion achieve its effect precisely through the element of uncertainty.... The symbolic character of apocalyptic language is shown especially by its pervasive use of allusions to traditional [biblical] imagery; ... the apocalypses constantly echo biblical phrases.... This allusiveness enriches the language by building associations and analogies between the biblical contexts and the new context in which the phrase is used. It also means that this language lends itself to different levels of meaning and becomes harder to pin down in a univocal, unambiguous way.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, a key feature of apocalyptic is its use of allusion and intentional ambiguity. Much like with the parables of Jesus, there are boundaries within which to understand the message (in light of the rest of the Scriptures, i.e., the rule of faith), but within those boundaries is freedom to perceive and associate the words and images with other biblical images or concepts.

To understand the new "apocalyptic" perspective, George Ladd explains the difference between the vista of Daniel and later intertestamental apocalyptic literature.

In its view of history, Daniel is close to the prophets. The first part of the book stands entirely apart from later apocalypses because it relates to... God's care for his servants in history. The God of Daniel is both the God of history and the God of consummation.... The [intertestamental] apocalyptists reflect pessimism about this age. The blessings of the Kingdom cannot be experienced in the present, for this age is abandoned to evil and suffering.... Daniel stands apart from the later apocalypses

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<sup>30</sup> Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 17–18, 19.

in that this pessimistic note is strikingly absent. If the focus of the last half of the book is the coming of God's Kingdom, it is not because the author despairs of God's acts in history.... God never abandons the stage of history; He remains Lord of all. Indeed, it is because he remains the Lord of history that he will finally establish his Kingdom on earth.<sup>31</sup>

While this eschatological perspective is the keystone to the canonical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation, the apostle Paul and the author of Hebrews employ similar rhetoric to bring along the hearers to participate on earth in the heavenly realities. Similarly, the prophets have long employed this kind of rhetoric, sometimes identified by elements or "building-blocks" of apocalyptic, as presenting teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic vision into which they call God's people to participate in the heavenly realities, revealing how God is working behind the events of history to comfort and strengthen them for the harsh realities of life in the world. This study views this as the rhetorical purpose of so-called canonical "apocalyptic." The genre, if that term can be usefully applied, can best be described as John Kleinig sums up the rhetoric of the author to the Hebrews. "This *appeal to imagination* is meant to produce a vision of the invisible world that encompasses the hearers, as well as their invisible participation in the heavenly service"<sup>32</sup> (present author's emphasis). The essential point is how the inspired biblical authors employ "cultic imagery"<sup>33</sup> to draw believers into God's heavenly realities at work behind history. Cynthia Westfall likewise could just as well be describing the visions of Daniel as she describes how in Hebrews the people of God are brought to participate in heavenly realities as "the author

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<sup>31</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 95, 97, 98.

<sup>32</sup> John Kleinig, *Hebrews*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 14.

<sup>33</sup> Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 15.

depicts the readers as located spatially in a heavenly location in the presence of the heavenly hosts, the faithful [saints], God the judge and Jesus the mediator and sacrifice.”<sup>34</sup>

However, Kleinig urges caution against how Scott Mackie and Jody Barnard understand the congregation of God’s people having access to God in the heavenly realm by means of a mystical, visionary experience in which the author serves as a mystagogue who leads the congregation in a mystical encounter with the exalted Lord Jesus. They do this by engaging the hearers imaginatively with the OT Scriptures to produce a similar mystical experience. Much of the intertestamental literature classified as “apocalyptic,” such as 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch, employ descriptions of a heavenly journey or angels to produce such a mystical experience. This is contrary to the purpose of the canonical apocalypses. Mystical visionary experiences are meant to be intensely private and personal, while the canonical apocalyptic perspective is always public and communal, as in those of Daniel or the apostles Paul and John.

Swete explains the relationship of Daniel and Revelation to the other Scriptures as well as their differentiation with the intertestamental apocalyptic literature:

The apocalyptic portions of Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel are continually present to [John’s] mind [as he writes Revelation]; and though it is less certain that he made use of Enoch or any other post-canonical apocalypse, he could scarcely have been ignorant of their existence and general character.... Whatever view may be taken of his indebtedness to Jewish sources, there can be no doubt that he has produced a book which, taken as a whole, is profoundly Christian, and widely removed from the field in which Jewish apocalyptic occupied itself.... The Christ of the Christian apocalypse is already victorious, ascended, and glorified. Thus the faith and the hope of the Church have diverted apocalyptic thought into new channels and provided it with ends worthy of its pursuit.... It is marked with the sign of the Cross, the note of patient suffering, unabashed faith, tender love of the brethren, hatred of evil, invincible hope; and, notwithstanding the strange forms which from time to time are seen to move across the stage, the book as a whole is pervaded by a sense of stern reality and a solemn purpose.... The Apocalypse of John is differentiated from the Apocalypse of Baruch or of Ezra just as the Book of Daniel is differentiated from the

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<sup>34</sup> Cynthia Long Westfall, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 280.



Book of Enoch. However the fact may be explained, the two canonical apocalypses possess the notes of insight and foresight which suggest inspiration; the attentive reader becomes conscious of something in them both which is better than the unchastened imaginings of the mere mystic who conceives himself to possess a key to the secrets of life.<sup>35</sup>

Herein, Sweete captures the essence of why believers kept the book of Daniel intact (without its several later additions) and, together with Revelation, then recognized both the common elements and message of the two as well as the divine inspiration of both. Early Christians recognized the apocalyptic framework of thought evoked by these books as built solidly of “building blocks” from the rest of the scriptural canon. The two most important elements emerged as Christology and ecclesiology. Swete further explains:

Behind the veil of phenomena the human life of Jesus Christ was believed to be enshrined in the glory of God. To reveal this hidden life, to represent to the imagination the splendour of the Divine Presence in which it exists, to translate into human words or symbols the worship of Heaven, to exhibit the ascended Christ in His relation to these unknown surroundings: this would be the first business of the Christian seer. But a second great theme is inseparable from it. With the life of the glorified Lord the life of His Body, the Church, was identified in primitive Christian belief.... It is an apocalypse of the glory of the exalted Christ; it is also an apocalypse of the sufferings and the ultimate triumph of the militant Church.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, these key elements of Christology and ecclesiology that are central to Daniel’s vision are hallmarks by which and through which the apocalyptic “framework of thought” is gathering together every part of the Scriptures in an eschatological cosmic vista that encompasses heaven and earth and draws humanity into its world.

The rhetorical purpose of Daniel as he relates his eschatological vision of ch. 7 and its interpretive oracle in ch. 9 is to draw God’s people into participation in the heavenly realities they depict, which are the underlying foundation of God’s purpose and plan for judgment against

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<sup>35</sup> Swete, *Apocalypse*, xxv.

<sup>36</sup> Swete, *Apocalypse*, xxvii.

sin and the restoration of his creation. Daniel presents his theophanic vision of the Ancient of Days and of the “one like a son of man” of ch. 7 as a message for all God’s people of every time and place, since “all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him” (7:14). In ch. 9, Daniel’s concern was that the sanctuary had been desolated because of the sin of God’s people, and he prays that God would remove his anger, wrath, and desolation (9:16–17). Notice Daniel’s only petition implying “restoration” is for God to “make your face shine upon your sanctuary” (9:17). He refers to the sanctuary as the locus of God’s judgment (as in both Shiloh and Jerusalem in 587 BC) and salvation (restoration). Daniel had seen and heard the interpretation of the vision of ch. 7 of God’s judgment upon the kingdoms of the world and especially the leader of all those who rebel against God’s dominion (7:26). He had also seen God’s agent to whom was given the dominion over all creation, whose everlasting kingdom will be the restored kingdom of God and his people (7:27).

The oracle of the 70x7s is God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer, that he will make his “face shine” by anointing a new kind (apparently) of “most holy place” (9:24). It will be nothing short of the eternal kingdom of 2:44 and 7:14 and 27, depicted as a “rebuilt” city “Jerusalem,” which must grow to fill the entire earth (2:35) and encompass “all peoples, nations, and languages” (7:14). The life of God’s people would still be in “Jerusalem” (9:25) and “city and sanctuary” (9:26), but they will be of a different nature as they are fulfilled eschatologically in a “most holy place” (9:24) in which they will participate in “everlasting righteousness” (9:24).

The message of the prophets is the perspective of God’s actions in history as two-fold: first, regarding the salvation of his people, including the blessings of his presence here-and-now; and second, regarding judgment against sin and rebellion, to restrain them here-and-now by his laws and boundaries for the protection of life, but ultimately to remove the sin and rebellion from the

world for eternity. Daniel is told in Dan 9:24 that these are God’s goals for “his city and sanctuary” forever. Daniel’s message in the whole book, whether in the narratives of the first half or in the prophetic visions of the second half, is all about the God who exercises dominion over heaven and earth specifically by his actions in history on behalf of his people. And yet more specifically in Daniel, God does not rescue his people *from* evil and oppression, but he saves them *even through the midst of* evil and oppression. Daniel’s normative perspective for apocalyptic literature is that God does indeed have a plan to save his people *for* an eschatological future—which is the *goal* of life in his presence—even as God himself is present with his people here and now in the city he is preparing for them. His holy city will be complete and fulfilled when he has gathered all those who will come from among the nations of the world, and then only after he has put all his enemies under his feet (i.e., under his dominion).

#### Typology as a Species of Divine Revelation

A key feature of the canonical apocalypses by which and for which they are saturated with every part of the OT Scriptures is their use of *typology*. Typology is a necessary function of the “now and not-yet” eschatology of the Scriptures. Central and crucial for the salvation of God’s people is the saving work (the death and resurrection) of God’s Messiah. And yet, even this salvation awaits consummation. Perhaps the most striking and important feature of Daniel’s overarching vision of ch. 7 and its interpretive oracle of the Seventy Sevens is its pointing beyond a “first coming” of God’s Messiah to what is commonly called his “second coming,” an ultimate fulfillment and consummation of his saving work—in short, “to bring in everlasting righteousness” (Dan 9:24). As Oscar Cullmann asserts,

If the death and resurrection of Christ are not to be consummated in the future, they cease to be the central event in the past, and the present is no longer located in the space between the starting point and the consummation of Christology. There is one important difference between these two acts of God’s kingdom. In Jesus, God acted

in history. The consummation of the kingdom, although breaking into history, will itself be beyond history, for it will introduce a redeemed order whose actual character transcends both historical experience and realistic imagination. However, its coming is inseparable from what God has already done in history. Therefore, even though the goal of history is beyond history, it nevertheless means the redemption of history, when history is transformed into a new and glorious mode of existence.<sup>37</sup>

Cullmann famously explained the inauguration of the kingdom of God by making an analogy to D-Day and V-Day in *Christ and Time*. The decisive event has happened (D-Day); the end is in principle now. But the final rest of victory remains in the future. However, we are past the “midpoint” of history.

It simply is not true that Primitive Christianity has the same eschatological orientation as does Judaism. To be sure, it has also an eschatological orientation. The Jewish expectation concerning the future retains its validity for Jesus and throughout the entire New Testament, but it is no longer the center. That center is the victorious event which the historical Jesus sees is being fulfilled in the exercise of his calling: “The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached” (Matt. 11:5). For the Primitive Church after the death of Jesus, the crown act of this work is the mighty fact of the resurrection of Christ.... The primary thing is not the eschatological expectation, but this conviction concerning the resurrection.<sup>38</sup>

So Cullman pinpoints the resurrection of Christ as the event in which the eschatological consummation breaks into the present. But for followers of Christ, it is “not yet.” George Ladd and Carl Michalson also develop this idea.<sup>39</sup>

The essence of the apocalyptic perspective is to reveal God’s judgment and salvation, which originates from outside of history and will be consummated “beyond” history, speaking to those within history for the comfort of God’s people in the afflictions of the “between” times, in the “now and not yet.” But God’s ultimate salvation of the eschaton breaks into the present

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<sup>37</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 337.

<sup>38</sup> Oscar Cullman, *Christ and Time* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1962), 85.

<sup>39</sup> See Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, and Carl Michalson, *The Hinge of History* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1959).

through the rule and reign of his Messiah to whom he has given the dominion and the eternal kingdom. A necessary implication is that God's people will have "now" some of the comfort and assurance of the reign of Messiah and the presence of the kingdom already being built up on earth but will at the same time suffer many "not yet" afflictions as the enemies of God carry on their rebellion. Daniel's apocalyptic vision relates both the present victory of the Messiah (together with the eternal kingdom which he is giving to his saints) and the warfare that the saints must endure as they await the consummation of God's judgment and salvation. In the meantime, the rainbow of the promised consummation produces refractions in history, reminders and portents of the greater things to come. Ladd insightfully calls the "types" seen throughout the Scriptures as "fulfillment without consummation."<sup>40</sup> Typology perceives these refractions and relates them to the as-yet-unseen or only-partially seen rainbow that produces them, that is, the ultimate fulfillment of God's complete judgment and salvation.

Richard Davidson gives a thorough and accurate definition of typology:

Typology ... may be viewed as the study of certain OT salvation-historical realities (persons, events, or institutions) which God has specifically designed to correspond to, and be prospective/predictive prefigurations of, their ineluctable (*devoir-être*) and absolutely escalated eschatological fulfillment aspects (Christological / ecclesiological / apocalyptic) in NT salvation history.<sup>41</sup>

Davidson's book, *Typology in Scripture*, focuses primarily from a NT perspective looking back to the OT, which is certainly applicable for believers today. However, it should be noted that typology occurs within the OT itself, i.e., OT fulfillments of OT types. But the most important thing about typology is that the ultimate fulfillment (indeed, consummation) of every true

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<sup>40</sup> Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 114–21.

<sup>41</sup> Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 405–6.

biblical type is found first in the *inaugurated* rule and reign of the Messiah (by his first coming) and ultimately in the *consummated* eternal kingdom of God (by his second coming).

Horace Hummel further explains the Christian exegete's understanding of typology:

'Typology' is a near synonym of 'prophecy,' accenting prophetic events more than just words. It always involves both continuity and discontinuity, that is, it is neither mere analogy nor simple repetition (which, if we are speaking of history, is impossible). The 'antitype' or fulfillment is a 'recapitulation' (there is no adequate term for something miraculous) on a higher level of the implicit intent of the 'type.' One fulfillment often becomes a sort of springboard for still further 'recapitulation' until the 'consummation' is finally achieved. (This understanding of typology was advocated already by Irenaeus)... NT precedents mandate that the Christian exegete factor in the climactic event—Christ's death and resurrection—although, in this interim between his first and second advents, we too await a consummation at the end of time, all while receiving and celebrating [proleptically] the benefits of the divine action in Christ.<sup>42</sup>

Hummel points out that Christian interpreters, beginning with the apostles in the NT and continuing through the fathers such as Irenaeus, followed the tradition of God's faithful people since BC times. The gospel-writer Matthew consistently demonstrates a typological perspective *par excellence* throughout his gospel saying phrases like, "This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet." When Matthew quotes Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I called my son," he recognizes that God speaks not only of the Exodus event, calling Jacob/Israel "my son" as the "type" representative and namesake of God's people, but now recognizes that the events of Jesus' life—escaping the deadly rage of King Herod to Egypt and returning to Israel—become a heightened fulfillment ("antitype") as Jesus "my [God's] son" represents all God's people in receiving God's salvation and returning to the homeland after a exile in a foreign land.

Hummel lays important groundwork for understanding the "teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic" perspective of the scriptures ("to be used with due caution"),<sup>43</sup> in his treatment of

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<sup>42</sup> Horace Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2005), 605.

<sup>43</sup> Horace Hummel, *The Word Becoming Flesh* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1979), 182.

the prophets. Isaiah engages the “apocalyptic imagination” (à la Collins) with his “symphonic structure” employing an overture and themes. Isaiah’s perspective, however, becomes instructive for the interpretation of Daniel, who writes with the same perspective. In Isaiah, Hummel notes,

The historical return to Jerusalem after the Edict of Cyrus (538) is not only *depicted* in eschatological and cosmological colors, but the two are totally fused: the historical event is a type, “sacrament,” anticipation and proleptic realization of the “restoration of all things.” Neither has the preceding judgment and suffering been only a bad dream, but in the light of, and in connection with the cross, it too was eschatologically redemptive.<sup>44</sup>

God reveals “visions” to his prophets, depictions of his acts of judgment and salvation in history, which, when understood in light of God’s goals to be accomplished, view the events of history as working together and building toward those goals to a final consummation. Each event of history itself has meaning and purpose and their theological significance is best perceived not simply one-by-one, but as building blocks that are forming a larger structure.

For example, Daniel’s vision reveals the Ancient of Days crowning a human king (“one like a son of man,” Dan 7:13–14) to reign over his eternal kingdom. This coronation builds upon blocks already set in place, especially God’s promise to David to establish the throne of David’s descendant forever (2 Sam 7:12–13). Indeed, God’s eschatological king must be the son of David and fulfill the visions depicted in Pss 2 and 110. Yet, the inauguration of this king in Dan 7 is not the end goal, but a step toward it. His reign over the kingdom will be in the world, in history, for the sake of a people, “the saints of the Most High” to whom he will give the kingdom for eternity (Dan 7:18). In the meantime, the building of the kingdom in the world will be plagued by warfare from a rebelling eschatological enemy (7:21, 25), but by God’s dominion be brought to its goal nevertheless (7:22). The oracle of the 70x7s depicts these same themes within a relative

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<sup>44</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 215.

(symbolic) time frame, relating that God's king, now called Messiah Prince, will come into the world after seven sevens, will inaugurate and begin building the eternal kingdom, depicted as "restoring the city Jerusalem," continuing to build the city-kingdom over 62 sevens even through distressful times (9:25). The rebuilding of Jerusalem after the exile in Babylon is a building block that contributes to a larger building, God's eternal kingdom-city, a detail that is perceived when the oracle is understood in light of the overarching vision of ch. 7. After the building of the kingdom-city will be a final period (a single "seven") of heightened "determined warfare" (9:26). The oracle gives further details about desolations that will occur during that final seven, which are the "warfare" spoken of in 7:21 and 25 that will come about as a result of the temporary withdrawal of the reign of Messiah (9:26). Individual "desolations" in the form of battles, such as "[the enemy] will strengthen a covenant with the many" and "will put a stop to sacrifice and offering" (9:27) will be iterations of a collective larger "warfare." These will suddenly come to an end ("in the midst of the week," 9:27) with the reappearance and reassertion of the dominion of the Most High in the ultimate judgment and destruction of the enemies ("the determined completion," 9:27). Along the way, Daniel is given a sub-vision in ch. 8 of a different "little horn" enemy who will rebel similarly against God and inflict similar persecution on God's people, but points to a greater enemy to come before the final consummation. The teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective does not overlook or discount any individual "battle" event of history, but rather perceives each one as building together toward a heightened ultimate warfare leading up to the final consummation at the reappearance of Messiah.

Thus, it would be short-sighted to look at a particular battle of the collective "warfare" and single it out as fulfillment of the 70x7s. Seeing each battle as important, the vision's perspective points farther toward the ultimate consummation. The Historical-Critical interpretation proves



short-sighted in reading Daniel's "vision" as merely a commentary on second century BC persecution of the Jews. The First Coming of the Messiah interpretation sees Daniel's vision as focusing on the crucifixion of Jesus and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The Dispensationalist interpretation likewise sees the focus on Jesus' crucifixion, but another "later" focus on the end times battles before the Messiah's second coming. The Typological interpretation recognizes these other foci but shows by a grander perspective how they work together to be about the in-between time of the "sixty-two" sevens, and how the building of the kingdom-city is the beginning of the fulfillment of the eschatological goals of 9:24 to be consummated in the determined completion.

Gerhard von Rad explains how this Scriptural perspective derives from the past and projects into the future.

The old traditions said that Yahweh led Israel into her land, founded Zion, and established the throne of David, and this was sufficient... The prophets [proclaimed]...on an ever-widening basis that salvation comes in the shadow of judgment. It is only this prediction of a near divine action, with its close relation to old election traditions and its bold new interpretation of them, which can properly be defined as eschatological... They take as their basis the 'No' pronounced by Yahweh on the Israel of their day, her relationship to Yahweh which had for long been hopelessly shattered. They were sure, however, that beyond the judgment, by means of fresh acts, Yahweh would establish salvation; and their paramount business was to declare those acts beforehand, and not simply to speak about hope and confidence.<sup>45</sup>

Von Rad captures the true spirit of apocalyptic prophecy. Eschatologically speaking, Yahweh's saving acts in history are, as Von Rad explains:

all points of departure into a new form of Israel's existence, and all from the very start contained far-reaching divine promises. As we have seen, however, in the predictions of the prophets, some of them were, as archetypes of mighty predictions, projected into the future. Israel's expectations thus continually grew wider. It is amazing to see how she never allowed a promise to come to nothing, how she thus swelled Yahweh's promises to an infinity, and how, placing absolutely no limit on

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<sup>45</sup> Gerhard Von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 154.

God's power to fulfill, she transmitted promises still unfulfilled to generations to come.<sup>46</sup>

Von Rad and Hummel are simply recognizing the ways the Scriptures speak and reveal the divine perspective for biblical interpretation.

The second half of the book of Daniel gives this perspective by way of visions that God gave to the seer. These visions, however, gather the perspective, the vocabulary, and the images of all the OT in way that seems to constitute a new genre of literature, as it were, of "apocalyptic literature."

### **Apocalyptic Eschatology as Goal Beyond "End Times"**

Biblical eschatology, especially as understood in the canonical apocalyptic-prophetic framework, is not simply about "end times," contrary to many popular views. Rather, it is about the fulfillment and consummation God's goals of judgment and salvation.

This perspective segments future time. It looks at the future as delineated by God and arranged into distinct epochs or eras as paralleled in Revelation. The length of each segment should be understood in relative terms rather than specific terms. In the oracle of the 70x7s, Gabriel reveals the first period of time ("seven sevens," 9:25) from Cyrus' decree to the first coming of the Messiah. Then there is the second longer period of time ("62 sevens," 9:25) when the eschatological Jerusalem will be built, beginning in this age but continuing to eternity. After that longer time of the building of the city, there is the very short third period of time (a single "seven," 9:26–27) when the Messiah loses influence and the eschatological enemy is revealed, who persecutes God's people. This time period will be cut short by God's overwhelming overthrow of the enemy (9:27), after which God will complete the goals of his salvation

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<sup>46</sup> Von Rad, *Message*, 283.

according to 9:24, inaugurating a final age of eternity, his eternal kingdom (2:35; 7:27). All of these epochs or eras are delineated by God and under his governance and control. The future is not in the hands of the nations or rulers of the nations but in God's hands and delineated by him. This is not only the central theme of the book of Daniel, but it is fundamental to the historical apocalyptic perspective.

The biblical perspective reveals that eschatological history with respect to God's plan of judgment and salvation speaks of God's actions in cosmic, earthly, historical time and space, but creates and inaugurates a new reality that transcends time and space, in which God's people of every time and place are invited to participate.

According to the NT, the "end times" were inaugurated with the first advent of Christ. Their fulfillment begins in these NT times—also called the messianic age or Age of Fulfillment (as indeed Christians dubbed it *Anno Domini*, "the Year of Our Lord")—although the time shortly before Christ's parousia is truly the climax of the age. Nevertheless, time is not the emphasis of eschatology. Christians have not used the Greek ἔσχατος ("end, goal") to focus simply on the furthest distant time or "end" of something *per se*, but the "end" regarding a purpose and goal.<sup>47</sup> In the same way, biblical eschatology is properly about the study of God's *goals* accomplished through past, present, and future salvation history until "the end," that is, when history climaxes in the reaching of God's goals in this age. These goals in Daniel's 70x7s to be fulfilled in "the end" are brought about in four significant time periods. (1) The goals are inaugurated with Christ's first advent (marking the first "seven sevens," 9:25) and made valid and complete by his work of atonement in history.<sup>48</sup> (2) The goals are in the process of being

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<sup>47</sup> BDAG, s.v. ἔσχατος, 3a and 3b.

<sup>48</sup> Details of the atonement of God's people are not specified in the 70x7s, but taken as a "given"; Rev 1:5–6; 5:9–10; 7:14; 14:4–5; 22:14.

distributed and executed in the world by the power and authority of the ascension and reign of “the one like a son of man” (Dan 7:13–14) and the expansion (“building”) of the kingdom of Messiah Prince (the “62 sevens”).<sup>49</sup> (3) The goals will seem to be put on hold or even thwarted with the withdrawal of the Messiah’s reign and the subsequent reign of horrors of the eschatological enemy during the final “seven.”<sup>50</sup> (4) The fulfillment of the goals will be made possible only with the second advent (reappearance) of the Messiah<sup>51</sup> and the overwhelming removal of the enemy’s dominion and presence forever.<sup>52</sup>

Therefore, apocalyptic eschatology (1) is grounded in God’s saving actions and events in history; (2) receives proleptically many of the benefits of God’s salvation accomplished by his Messiah; (3) and looks to the final consummation of the age which culminates in God’s vindication of his saints as well as judgment and destruction of his enemies. Naturally, the end times are climactic for eschatology, but the goals are most intrinsic. These goals—or perhaps a single sixfold goal as enumerated in Dan 9:24—when finally accomplished, will remain in effect forever. Such is the focus of all eschatology, to the consolation of God’s people. The goals, accomplished in history, create a new reality, i.e., the kingdom of Yahweh and of his agent who is “like a son of man” (Dan 7:13), for whom, by whom, and into whom the “saints of the Most High” are sanctified (Dan 7:18).

James Hamilton shows well how the book of Daniel fits into the BC context and furthers the salvation history.

The book of Daniel makes historical, prophetic, and apocalyptic contributions to [the Bible’s] forward-looking historical narrative... The OT sketches in the contours of

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<sup>49</sup> Dan 9:25; Rev 12:6, 14; 20:4–6.

<sup>50</sup> See Rev 2:10; 6:8, 11; 11:2, 7–10; 12:12–13, 17; 13:1–18; 15:8; 17:10, 12–14; 17:17; 20:3, 7–9a.

<sup>51</sup> Dan 7:22; Rev. 1:7; 11:15; 16:15; 19:1–21; 22:7, 10–12; 22:20.

<sup>52</sup> Dan 7:26; 9:27; Rev 6:15–17; 10:7; 11:18; 12:10; 14:8–11; 18:1–24; 19:1–2; 20:9b–10; 21:8.

the history and future of the world... [and] answers major worldview questions... The OT's answers to these questions are the intellectual matrix in which Daniel writes... to map the highway of God's purposes in salvation history, the causeway that begins at creation and continues to new creation... Daniel intends to connect his story to the Law and the Prophets, and then... makes significant contributions to the future of salvation history, taking his readers all the way to the grand consummation of all things...

The first part of Dan 9 thus builds an interpretive bridge between the Law and the Prophets. Jeremiah had connected Lev 26, Deut 4, and 1 Kgs 8 (cf. Jer 25:11–12; 29:10–14). Daniel built on these connections by adding to Jeremiah's prophecy his own perception that Jeremiah's prophecy was being fulfilled. He then received a revelation that, like other revelatory material in Daniel, points forward to the consummation of all things.<sup>53</sup>

Notice Hamilton's description of the OT as "sketching" the contours of the history and future of the world. Daniel sees in his vision only "sketches" or "shadows" of persons and things to come, the details of which later events of history and writings of God's servants will fill in. A clear example is the person "like a son of man" in 7:13. Daniel must have a good idea who that is, because he does not ask the heavenly interpreter about that person. However, the more symbolic "little horn" seems a little too abstract for Daniel, so he asks specifically about it. This pattern of an initial "sketch" and later filling-in is a metaphor for the ways the Scriptures speak typologically, as the writer to the Hebrews acknowledges in 11:19.

The focus on the goal of salvation, the consummation of all things, defines the prophetic apocalyptic eschatology. Keeping in mind its essential foci of Christology and ecclesiology, this eschatology becomes a framework of understanding and serves as the key characteristic of the biblical historical apocalypse.

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<sup>53</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 41-42, 48.

## **The Apocalyptic Framework for the “Typological Interpretation” of Daniel 7 & 9**

Even as the apocalyptic visions of both Daniel and John in Revelation are governed by overarching visions (Dan 7 and Rev 4–5) that dominate the message of the rest of the books, so also the apocalyptic perspective becomes a mindset to govern the understanding of the visions. Eschatology should not be thought of as the *content*, but rather the *framework*, structured to point to a goal. The *content* of the canonical apocalypses shows God’s goals to be accomplished through his Messiah (Christology) for the salvation and life of the saints (ecclesiology), as God’s eternal city-kingdom will ultimately encompass and incorporate the entire world (missiology).

It is also important to keep in mind that the overarching vision given to Daniel in ch. 7, together with its explanatory oracle (the 70x7s) of 9:24–27, gives a view with a different scope than the visions of chs. 8 and 10–12. The latter serve as sub-visions which focus on particular time periods within the overarching vision. Each one “zooms in” on a period of time. On the other hand, the 70x7s, also a sub-vision or explanatory oracle, encompass the same big-picture, all-of-history perspective, and perhaps even more so, than the overarching vision of ch. 7. The 70x7s give the same “zoomed out” perspective as the vision. In its teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective the overarching vision of ch. 7 spans the entire time period from Daniel’s time until the inauguration of the new age. The 70x7s also show a cosmic perspective of God’s city, sanctuary, and people in a much broader view than even Daniel himself can comprehend.

The difficulty in interpretation of the 70x7s oracle as a subset and expansion on ch. 7 is understanding the faithful canonical perspective, as summarized helpfully by Ron Haydon.

Haydon comments on a point by Brevard Childs and applies it to this passage:

Childs writes, “[T]he canon functions truthfully and authoritatively in all its frailty.” By this, he does not mean Scripture is brittle or subject to error but is *subtle* in the various ways it makes its theological sense. Strategic vagueness—or leaving a

meaning open-ended—is one of these modes. An in-depth reading of Dan 9:24–27 has already revealed points in which the text is not explained in full (the holiest object, the “anointed,” the implied punctuation of 9:25, etc.), allowing for many interpretive possibilities. Most interpreters would not readily identify this openness as a trait of the final form. However, it is a powerful tool that enables the text to speak to more than one audience while honoring the proximity of the historical situation...[It] is a misconception that a text with multiple interpretive possibilities is an unintentional flaw, or the product of historical gaps in the knowledge of the author...[T]he author writes with Yahweh’s people in mind—a people making up many, many generations.... A canonical approach to Dan 9:24–27 is not ahistorical, but *all*-historical.<sup>54</sup>

Haydon is commenting on a good point by Childs, but Childs makes a larger point as well: “[The apocalyptic nature of the text brings out the] peculiar relationship between the text and the people of God which is constitutive of canon.”<sup>55</sup> Childs indicates that the relationship between the text and the people of God is, like the entire canon of the scriptures, a reflection of God’s relationship with His people. That is to say, God’s people have recognized Daniel’s visions as “scripture” because of their unity with the rest of the OT in reflecting the relationship of God and His people. Accordingly, its perspective is from “the beginning” (Gen 1) to eternity (Rev 22).

Haydon stresses the importance of literary crafting to shape the message, which directs the reader to consider genre within the context of the canon to guide interpretation.

To encounter the interpretive possibilities woven into Dan 9:24–27 is also to encounter yet another facet of God’s own mystery and revelatory character, both of which he divulges in his freedom, mercy and inclination to include the faithful reader. The theological message and application of Dan 9:24–27 is just as much contingent on its strategically crafted presentation as the content within the text.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ron Haydon, *Seventy Sevens Are Decreed : A Canonical Approach to Daniel 9:24–27* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 123, 124, 127.

<sup>55</sup> Brevard Childs, *An Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 621.

<sup>56</sup> Haydon, *Seventy Sevens*, 129–30.

His point is that the 70x7s should not be interpreted as a standalone passage; it is placed in its unique position within the book of Daniel for a special rhetorical purpose. James Hamilton rightly points out,

The most striking feature of this revelation is that though Gabriel uses different language and imagery than the other revelations of the book, he tells the same story as he talks Daniel through the same period of time forecasted by the book's other visions. Point for point as we progress through Dan 9:20–27, we see kaleidoscopic refractions of other passages in the book of Daniel.<sup>57</sup>

Hamilton's "kaleidoscopic refractions" describe the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective of the Scriptures as they function similarly to fractals in geometry, which depict the same patterns when zoomed in or zoomed out. This is the foundation of the typology of the Scriptures. The book of Daniel and the visions the seer receives, especially about God's eschatological plan of judgment and salvation, can only faithfully be comprehended within the context of the prophets and of the OT as a whole, as it presents the same picture, even if "zoomed in" or "zoomed out" on particular patterns from their respective perspectives. This will be demonstrated in Daniel's use of vocabulary and images from the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Prophets.

Such is an important distinction when considering how best to interpret the visions of Daniel. Beale writes about how later Jewish apocalyptic texts use Danielic language or allusions, but the same can be said in reverse about Daniel's use of language, images, and allusions of BC (canonical) texts. Beale states,

First, the models [language, images, allusions, etc.] are used primarily as forms through which (immanent?) *future* eschatological fulfillment is understood and predicted. Second, the models are employed as a lens through which *past* and *present* eschatological fulfillment is understood... [They] are attracted because of their parallel themes or pictures, and are employed to expand the formative text in an interpretive manner... [They] can serve as hermeneutical "magnets" drawing in other

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<sup>57</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 109.



similar texts for interpretive purposes... Repeatedly the various [apocalyptic] authors have been shown to exhibit a strong tendency to respect the meaning of the OT context from which they draw allusions... [R]ather than studying an allusion or citation in isolation from its context in an apocalyptic work, one should be aware of the possibility of the reference being but part of a larger OT pattern which dominates the particular context of the apocalyptic work under consideration. It is important to keep in mind that broad OT contexts (and their themes) often play an essential role in the *formation* of whole sections in the apocalyptic literature.<sup>58</sup>

Indeed, integration with the message of the prophets and with the entire BC canon becomes an essential feature not only of apocalyptic literature like Dan 7–12 and Revelation but must remain a primary hermeneutical guide for these texts. Michael Fishbane well observes:

[Daniel] 9–12 ... presents an imposing concatenation of prophetic authorities... Certainly, a proclivity to compose such a prophetic patchwork attests both to a scholarly attentiveness to authoritative sources received in the prophetic *traditum* and to a sense of apocalyptic immediacy. And surely, just this is the desired impact of the concatenation upon the reader. By strategically and cumulatively assembling numerous prophetic pronouncements the author leads us into the mental world of wise believers, Daniel's ["wise ones"; Dan 1:4; 11:33, 35; and 12:3], and the tangle of authoritative texts which encoded their universe and provided an atmosphere of confidence in the inevitability of the apocalyptic forecast.<sup>59</sup>

Fishbane's vocabulary of "prophetic patchwork," *traditum*, and "mental world of wise believers" argues for a particular way of thinking and speaking that is shaped by the Scriptures. The very gathering together of vocabulary and images from the Scriptures in order to "paint a new picture" of the future is the *modus operandi* of the canonical apocalyptic texts.

One might argue that, since no true specimen of "apocalyptic literature" is recognized before Daniel, but only the building-blocks thereof, that the OT people of God would not have understood the worldview of Daniel's visions. However, Stephen Cook argues that one can indeed see in the OT prophetic texts a definite "apocalyptic imagination" which provides the

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<sup>58</sup> Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 319–20, 327.

<sup>59</sup> Fishbane, Michael. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1985), 493–94.

building blocks of what later would be recognized as a genre of apocalyptic. He summarizes its rhetorical purpose:

Consequently, a responsible approach to unearthing apocalypticism's roots must grant a central role to standard biblical images, values, and aspirations. Traditional images and symbols appear to be the basic building blocks of the apocalyptic imagination. It takes them up and rearranges them into a new, eschatologically charged vision of reality.<sup>60</sup>

By describing this "apocalyptic" vision of reality as being built from the "building blocks" of "standard biblical images, values, and aspirations," Cook shows agreement with Hamilton, Beale, and Fishbane. Nor are Daniel's apocalyptic visions simply "rearranging existing building blocks," but they rather express to the mind's eye the "apocalyptic imagination," also called the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective, laid down already by Moses and the Prophets.

Later, Cook also advises about interpretation of apocalyptic texts:

The allusive language and inner-biblical mode of expression of apocalyptic texts has signal implications for how to interpret the literature. Rather than viewing apocalyptic literature through a rational or historic lens, interpreters are more likely to access its literal sense by reading it in the context of the Bible's own inner world: its narrative assumptions, values, and aspirations. Close attention to inner-biblical cross-referencing gives the interpreter a vital framework for understanding apocalyptic writings.<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, Beale demonstrates that

[A]n author's unconscious selection of some texts may be controlled, guided and, perhaps, molded by a more conscious choice of [an]other text(s), theological (eschatological) pattern, or exegetical *Vorbild* ["model" or "type"] which governs the whole passage.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Stephen Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature* (Nashville: Abington, 2003), 35.

<sup>61</sup> Cook, *Apocalyptic Literature*, 64.

<sup>62</sup> Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 9.

These authors are in agreement that a Scripturally faithful reading of apocalyptic literature in general—and in this case, Daniel in particular—is to read it within the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic framework upon which the author calls, into which he places his writing. Into that world he calls upon his reader to enter as into the vision itself.

Daniel’s apocalyptic visions in their teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic framework draw upon the salvation history of God’s saving acts in the past as foreshowing God’s greater cosmic fulfillment of his promises for believers of all times and places. Horace Hummel describes such typology of the scriptures as “bringing Christ out of the remoteness of ancient history”<sup>63</sup> as it “speaks of the fulfillment of events, personages, and institutions which constitute history.”<sup>64</sup> It expresses “the unity of the two testaments”<sup>65</sup> whereby the OT is filled “with all the fulness of Christ.”<sup>66</sup> But Hummel cautions of the boundaries that hem in a biblically faithful typological reading. “Typological correspondents must be real, rooted in real, genuine history.... [There must be an] integral, internal connection between type and antitype, so that in, with, and under [this connection] lies the ultimate meaning.... Prophecy fulfillment is to [typology] as Word is to Sacrament... two ways of saying the same thing.”<sup>67</sup> Therefore, “All valid typology is both eschatological and Christological.”<sup>68</sup>

To illustrate a recognition of scriptural typology, Hummel gives an example which is instructive for the reading of Daniel’s visions:

In OT theology, as in the piety and religion of Israel viewed more historically, the importance of temple can scarcely be exaggerated. It overlaps to a large extent with

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<sup>63</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 443.

<sup>64</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 17.

<sup>65</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 16.

<sup>66</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 18.

<sup>67</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 17.

<sup>68</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 16.

theologies (and typologies) of the holy city (Jerusalem-Zion) and of the holy land. In fact, a sort of picture of concentric circles is helpful: from his real presence in the Most Holy Place, God's holiness 'radiates' outward into all the world; from there, as from his heavenly throne, he judges and rules all that is, and his conquest of the entire world looking toward the eschaton also follows that pattern. Christianity uses the same language to describe typologically the same procedure in the Incarnate One. It is especially important to emphasize the intimate interconnection of the temple-Zion complex with Davidic-Messianic themes and types. For all practical purposes, David and the Messiah cannot be discussed apart from the temple and Zion, any more than Christ can be considered apart from his body, the church.<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, Peter Gentry picks up on this typological understanding of "the unity of the two testaments" in connecting the major salvation events of the OT when he posits, "The prophets before Daniel saw an analogy between the exodus and the future deliverance that would free them from the shackles of the exile. In essence, the return from the exile would be a second exodus, a new exodus."<sup>70</sup>

Gerhard Von Rad goes further to explain how Daniel draws upon the whole eschatological expectation of God's BC people:

The characteristic feature of the prophet's message is its actuality, its expectation of something soon to happen. This should be the touchstone of the use of the term 'eschatological' ... [T]he prophetic vision has been described as 'the renewing act of the historical drama' ... [T]he new is to be effected in a way that is more or less analogous to God's former saving work.<sup>71</sup>

"Actuality," the reality of the present, and "expectation," the hope of the future, as Von Rad points out, are the key characteristics of the eschatological perspective of the Scriptures. James Hamilton also shows how Daniel incorporates this eschatological vision that draws from the past, addresses the present, and looks to the future.

With the opening statements of his book, Daniel has plugged his narrative into the broader biblical story, and in what the visions of his book reveal, that story is continued all the way to consummation. In the OT's story, the placing of Israel in the

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<sup>69</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 138.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Gentry, "Daniel's Seventy Weeks and the New Exodus," *SBJT* 14 (2010): 30.

<sup>71</sup> Von Rad, *Message*, 91, 93.

land parallels the placement of Adam in the garden of Eden, as the exile of Israel from the land parallels the exile of Adam from the garden. The latter-day restoration to which Israel's prophets point is a return from exile that is nothing less than a return to Eden. The events that take place around the first year of Darius, where Dan 9 is set, inaugurate that return from exile, but the revelatory visions of Daniel show that much suffering will be endured before the four kingdoms have had their day and the one like a son of man receives everlasting dominion.<sup>72</sup>

Jacques Doukhan, too, agrees that drawing the eschatological expectation into the realm of the historical is the rhetorical purpose of Daniel's entire book.

The whole book of Daniel follows a pattern. This observation not only testifies on behalf of its organic unity, but also indicates that the historical and the prophetic are deeply connected.... The historical chapters [2–6] are also eschatologically oriented just as the prophetic chapters [7–12] are also historically oriented.... Three theological motifs of judgment, waiting and war...characterize the whole book of Daniel.... On one hand the emphasis on history parallels a particular focus on the end. On the other hand the emphasis on the end goes along with the focus on human history. Therefore, the “eschatological” emphasis is not only designed to make one aware of the importance of the end, but also to understand its historical reality. The time of the end is not a vague theological concept, or, as some claim, a comforting thought invented by a suffering people. The time of the end is set up by Daniel in the reality of human history. Indeed, propelled by his vision beyond the centuries, the prophet dares to situate the time of the end with regard to the whole universal history.<sup>73</sup>

After all, “by faith” do the prophets, and Daniel no less, envision a consummation of all of God's promises. To see world history as a *Heilsgeschichte*, a “salvation history,” an unfolding story of God's relationship with humanity, broken but in the process of restoration, as progressing (even if at times digressing) toward a goal, is a matter of faith. The biblical worldview is this “by faith” worldview. It is biblical teleological-eschatological apocalypse that presents itself typologically.

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<sup>72</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 59.

<sup>73</sup> Jacques Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 5, 7.

## The Necessity of Juxtaposition of Daniel 7 & 9

The complete picture of God's plan is revealed when the overarching vision of ch. 7 governs the understanding of the oracle of the 70x7s which is given to further explain details of the former. Otherwise, the 70x7s appear simply to be an isolated warning foretelling future horrors without much comfort for the saints or any promise of eschatological fulfillment. It is important to understand that God has a plan to bring to completion his judgment and salvation and to bring his saints into "everlasting righteousness" (9:24). The "desolations" foretold in 9:26–27 are a necessary part of an entire plan that God has well "determined," as emphasized by use of the initial *קִטַּח* ("decreed," 9:24) and a thrice-repeated use of the related root *קִטַּח* ("determined," 9:25, 26, 27). Since the 70x7s are an explanatory oracle for the overarching vision of ch. 7, then to see the entire picture that is depicted one must examine both in light of each other.

Chapter 7 of Daniel presents the central, key, and overarching vision revealed to the seer regarding, on the one hand, the four beasts representing the four world-kings and periods of time that mark significant events in God's plan of salvation, preparing the way specifically for the climactic "little horn" who will arise from among the ten powers of the fourth beast (7:8) and come to lead an eschatological rebellion against God (7:25). On the other hand, the vision presents also, as an overarching image, "one like a son of man" who receives from the Ancient of Days "dominion, glory, and a kingdom" (7:14), the very things of which the "little horn" would like to deprive Yahweh's human agent and to usurp for himself or to destroy. The fact that the components of the vision in 7:9–14 are linked together in the same setting in the presence of the Ancient of Days reveals that both the visions of the "little horn" and the "one like a son of man" are set over-against each other and present a striking contradictory supplementarity. In v. 11 Daniel says that he was looking at the judgment scene, but that the sound of the little horn's

lordly, usurping and blaspheming words was still present. Perhaps Daniel was trying to focus his attention on the events of the heavenly courtroom scene over-against the little horn's blasphemies. This would also explain the curious non-chronological order in which either the vision appears to Daniel or that he reports to the readers, namely, to focus our attention on what is more important despite the distraction that, by its very nature, is meant to usurp and supplant what God is doing.

Later, in response to Daniel's fervent prayer recorded in ch. 9, Yahweh sends his herald angel Gabriel to comfort Daniel by means of an interpretation (9:22–23) to the overarching vision of ch. 7, which is given in the oracle in 9:24–27. Gabriel's presence itself suggests a recollection and juxtaposition of the vision of ch. 7, as Andrew Steinmann points out about Gabriel's appearance in 9:21,

[Daniel] identifies "Gabriel" as "the man...whom I had seen in the first vision" (cf. 8:1). His first vision was Daniel 7. After seeing the coming of the "Son of Man" (7:13), Daniel had approached an unidentified member of the heavenly court and requested an explanation of the vision (7:16). This reference seems to identify Gabriel as that angel who had explained the prior vision.<sup>74</sup>

Even though Gabriel is actually named for the first time in 8:16, Daniel is saying that he saw and spoke to Gabriel (without knowing his name) along with the first vision of ch. 7. James Hamilton agrees:

Daniel refers in 9:21a to 'the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at first.' Since Daniel's first vision was related in ch 7, this statement would seem to point to Gabriel being the 'one who stood there' (7:16), with whom Daniel spoke in ch 7. The formation rendered 'at the first' in 9:21 is also used in 8:1, and there too it seems to refer back to the Dan 7 vision.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 450.

<sup>75</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 110.

Both Gabriel as a contextual clue as well as key themes in ch. 9 point back to ch. 7, suggesting that ch. 9 is a further discussion of themes and events of the vision of ch. 7.

John Goldingay demonstrates the intentional and significant importance of ch. 7 in the book of Daniel. The vision's setting in the book makes it the book's central hinge. In language, it belongs with the preceding chapters, while structurally it rounds off a chiasm begun in chap. 2:

- 2 A vision of four kingdoms and their end (Nebuchadnezzar)
- 3 Faithfulness and a miraculous rescue (the three friends)
- 4 Judgment presaged and experienced (Nebuchadnezzar)
- 5 Judgment presaged and experienced (Belshazzar)
- 6 Faithfulness and a miraculous rescue (Daniel)
- 7 A vision of four kingdoms and their end (Daniel).<sup>76</sup>

Thus, the first half of the book relates key historical events to illustrate Daniel's overall theme of earthly dominion in service to God's ultimate dominion. They show God at work "in, with, and under" those events, much as prophecy does. But they also lead up to the pivotal chapter 7, whose vision will present the apocalyptic way of showing God at work "behind" the events of history past, present, and future. This chiastic structure also prepares the reader for the visions of the second half of the book by using the initial overarching vision of ch. 7, the "big picture" view of God's judgment and salvation, as a framework for understanding the subsequent visions, or properly, sub-visions, of chs. 8–12.

Andre LaCocque, also in agreement, further describes the vantage point of ch. 7.

From the outset of this new development [chs 7–12] of his work, the Author takes us to the summit of the mountain. For the vision reported in ch 7 is the most important one; it constitutes the veritable centre of the book. With it, the Holy Scripture reaches one of its highest summits. In this way, even from a purely literary point of view, the 'open-ended' conception of the Scriptures towards the future, characteristic of Jewish apocalyptic, is confirmed, for everything was not said in the past; events of decisive importance, defying all description, are yet to come. The *Endzeit* responds to the

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<sup>76</sup> John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30 (Dallas: Word, 1989), 157–58.



*Urzeit*, it assumes the same characteristics so that one vocabulary serves to describe them both.<sup>77</sup>

Scholars from various schools of interpretation find agreement that the overarching vision of Dan 7 is the central unifying chapter of the book of Daniel. However, a majority treat it as an independent vision to be considered as one of Daniel's many visions. Several scholars argue, on the other hand, of an "overarching" character to the vision of ch. 7, as if it provides a framework for understanding all the subsequent visions. Steinmann sums up observations by Collins, Patterson, and Raabe:

Daniel 7 does not only interlock the halves of the book in a general way, but more specifically it serves as a *middle point* or *hinge* which ties together the beginning and end of the book.... Chapter 7 recalls chapter 2. It is noteworthy that only in 2:21 and 7:25 is there reference to one "changing the seasons." God "changes the times and seasons" in 2:21, whereas the little horn intends "to change seasons and law" in 7:25. Chapter 7 expands on chapter two's vision by adding the following details among others: the little horn's persecution of the saints, his end, the judgment scene, and the eternal kingdom of God given to "the people of the saints." It is these added details which receive the focus of attention at the end of the book.<sup>78</sup>

The importance of Daniel chapter 7 should not be underestimated for understanding the entire book of Daniel, and indeed the entire eschatological outlook of the Scriptures. In essence, the vision of ch. 7 relates in pictures (even though it is written in words) cosmic history from a heavenly perspective—past, present, and future—to every observer/hearer/reader. It depicts the temporal dominion given to and removed from earthly kingdoms, a (or perhaps *the*) usurper and blasphemer of God's dominion, and the human agent to whom God gives dominion over the eternal kingdom. It also presents the victorious restoration and vindication of the saints who receive the eternal kingdom. These are important revelations that believers will need to keep in

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<sup>77</sup> André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, (London: SPCK, 1979), 122.

<sup>78</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 332. See also Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision*, 7–19; Richard Patterson, "The Key Role of Daniel 7," *Grace Theological Journal* 12.2 (1991): 245–61; and Paul Raabe, "Daniel 7: Its Structure and Role in the Book," *HAR* 9 (1985):267–75.

mind even despite coming “warfare” (7:21, 9:26) and “desolations” (7:25, 9:27) that they must endure in the meantime.

Given the centrality and rhetorical importance of ch. 7 and the direct connection made by the presence of and explanations by Gabriel in both the earlier vision of ch. 7 and the subsequent oracle of ch. 9, together with connecting themes, events, and persons, it follows that the vision of ch. 7 provides the framework within which one should interpret what follows, especially the oracle of ch. 9. In the oracle of the 70x7s Gabriel gives added details about specific parts of the overarching vision of chapter 7, and so the vision and oracle together encompass the themes and message of the entire book. Hamilton emphasizes:

The most striking feature of this revelation is that though Gabriel uses different language and imagery than the other revelations of the book, he tells the same story as he talks Daniel through the same period of time forecasted by the book's other visions. Point for point as we progress through Dan 9:20–27, we see kaleidoscopic refractions of other passages in the book of Daniel.<sup>79</sup>

Peter Gentry goes even further, correctly explaining the similarities in Daniel’s visions of chs. 2, 7, and 9. “Each successive vision is an enlargement of part of the previous vision, each provides greater and greater detail of the same scene.”<sup>80</sup>

The oracle of the 70x7s is justly deemed one of the most exegetically challenging passage of the Scriptures. True as that may be, reading the oracle as God’s interpretation of the vision of ch. 7 elucidates both visions while maintaining the rhetorical purpose of each within the book of Daniel. Juxtaposing the oracle of the 70x7s together with the overarching vision of ch. 7 unites the two as complementary views of a singular apocalyptic vision. As will be demonstrated point

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<sup>79</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 109.

<sup>80</sup> Gentry, “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks,” 28.

by point in this study, the vision of ch. 7 and its key themes makes possible a cohesive interpretation of ch. 9.

In both chs. 7 and 9, Daniel alludes to images, events, and persons from the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Prophets before him to reveal in summary God's plan of judgment against rebellion and the vindication (salvation, restoration) of his people. The interpretive oracle of the 70x7s focuses especially on the restoration and building, eschatologically speaking, of Jerusalem, and the final segment ("seven") before the "completion" (9:27) of God's judgment and restoration. Daniel's prayer of 9:1–19 is a fervent and repentant prayer for God to "make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate," and to "open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by Your name" (7:17–18). God's response in the oracle of the 70x7s reveals his plan of sanctification of his people, sanctuary, and city, restoring them—i.e., reversing desolation—in ways much bigger than Daniel can imagine, and only after further necessary ("delineated") desolations (9:26) because of the rebellion of the enemy, to make his final judgment to overwhelm his enemies like a flood (9:26–27).

Paul Ray recognizes how Daniel and Gabriel draw upon images from the foregoing prophets to foretell the removal of God's presence in desolation, which was also an essential part of his judgment that led to the Babylonian exile.

[T]he instruction to Daniel (9:24–27), involving a probationary period of 70 prophetic weeks following which the city of Jerusalem and its Temple were to be made desolate due to the abominations of the people, possibly triggered a thematic comparison to the current situation of Jerusalem (in 539/8 BC) about which he had been praying (9:3–19) at the time when Gabriel came to him. In addition, Daniel was familiar with the book of Jeremiah (9:2) and possibly the book of his other contemporary, Ezekiel, where further thematic comparison might have led him to note the parallel nature of the reasons for both the current desolation and the predicted one. It is also possible that he found in the scrolls of Jeremiah evidence of an even earlier parallel of God's retributive judgment on the Tabernacle at Shiloh... In each of these instances throughout the history of Israel, it was the Israelites who, through their continual abominations and refusal to repent, precipitated the destruction or desolation of their

city (Shiloh and Jerusalem) and Temple (or Tabernacle) through a power (Philistines, Babylonians, Romans [AD 70]) directed by God. Likewise, in each of these cases of divine retributive judgment, it was the removal of the presence of God, symbolizing the protection of his people, that was necessary for the destruction or desolation to be carried out.<sup>81</sup>

To be more precise, the presence of God does not simply “symbolize” (per Ray) the protection of his people, but rather *guarantees* it. But when God withdraws His presence, there is desolation. God withdraws his presence as a judgment against sin. At the time of the Babylonian exile, he withdrew his presence and Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. God’s sanctuary lay, as Daniel laments, “desolate” (9:17). But when Gabriel comes to give further details in the 70x7s, he describes first the building and restoration of God’s holy city, but then further desolations before the final overthrow of the enemies and the eschatological restoration of the city, sanctuary, and people. In other words, the withdrawal of God’s presence from the sanctuary and holy city (Ezek 10) that led to its destruction by Babylon also functioned as a foreshadowing, or type, of a greater desolation about which God is telling in the 70x7s.

Isaiah’s warning in 13:9 was that God’s judgment against the sin of the world would be desolation. “Look! The day of Yahweh is coming, cruel, and with anger and hot wrath, to destine the earth to desolation, and its sinners he will exterminate from it.” Isaiah then goes on to describe what such desolation looks like:

She will never be inhabited,  
and she will not be indwelt for generation after generation;  
and a nomad will not pitch a tent there,  
and shepherds will not make (their flocks) lie down there.  
But desert creatures will lie down there. (Isa 13:20–21)

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<sup>81</sup> Paul J. Ray Jr., “The *Abomination of Desolation* in Daniel 9:27 and Related Texts: Theology of Retributive Judgment,” pages 205–13 in *To Understand the Scriptures: Essays in Honor of William H. Shea* (Berrien Springs, MI: Institute of Archaeology, Siegfried H. Horn Archaeological Museum, Andrews University, 1997), 209, 212.

In Daniel's vision, the withdrawal of God's presence from the Jerusalem temple at the time of the Babylonian exile anticipates a greater fulfillment, the withdrawal of God's anointed servant by whom he sanctified his saints. The cutting off of the Messiah Prince (Dan 9:26), i.e., the withdrawal of his dominion to reign in the world, will be the first move to set in motion further desolations leading up to the final destruction of all rebellion against God, especially its primary and ultimate leader, "the prince to come" (Dan 9:26). These greater desolations will not be a judgment against the sin of God's people like the Babylonian exile, but here God's people are caught up in the desolation of the eschatological judgment upon the rebellion without being the cause of that judgment. These greater desolations will be a situation the saints must endure while God is fulfilling judgment on the sin and rebellion of the world.

However, the oracle also promises a restoration of city, sanctuary, and people that is greater than the initial "word to restore and build Jerusalem" (9:25). The message of the oracle of the 70x7s is the assurance that God will indeed restore his desolated sanctuary and city, building them up to fill the entire world, but that there will be further desolation of a different kind before the final vindication of the sanctuary, city, and saints. It serves as a warning for the saints of the Most High that they must endure through "warfare" (7:21; 9:26), and indeed they will even be delivered into the hand—the power—of the enemy for "a time, times, and half a time" (7:25). The good news is that through and after the desolations of judgment against the enemy, the saints will be vindicated (7:22) and inherit the everlasting kingdom (7:22, 27).

The complete picture of God's plan (as much as is given) is revealed by examining 9:24–27 in light of the overarching vision of which it gives details. Together, both present comfort for the saints as well as the hope of eschatological fulfillment of their inheritance of the eternal kingdom.

## **Major Themes of Daniel's Overarching Vision and Its Interpretive Oracle**

Because the complete picture presented by the vision and oracle is comprised of many elements interwoven from—and with concepts and visions from—the Pentateuch, Psalms, and major prophets, it is helpful to overview the entire apocalyptic framework that gives structure to the vision. Since the primary goal of this study is to understand the specific emphases of the oracle of the 70x7s, these will be discussed first in order to see how they hang from the depictions and concepts of the overarching vision. The oracle begins with God's entire eschatological plan of judgment and salvation (9:24), which is indeed a broad picture encompassing "70 Sevens" of time, all to accomplish a specific purpose: the consummation of God's promises concerning his "people" and "holy city." The oracle then "zooms in" on a central idea of the "city" as the center around which all the parts of the plan come together. There are three particular stages of the plan in relation to the city, each with its own purpose. First, the coming of "Messiah Prince" (after "seven sevens," 9:25) will inaugurate and lay the foundation of the city. Then for "62 sevens" the city (new Jerusalem) will be built up to be a place for God's people with Messiah Prince reigning among them. But then "after the 62 sevens, Messiah will be removed" (9:26) and desolations (warfare) will follow (9:26–27) as God's enemies overtake and corrupt the holy city and oppress God's people. But the desolations will culminate in God's final overthrow of the enemy (9:27) and conferring of the kingdom-city upon the saints (7:18, 27). Since the "city" is the focus around which the stages of the plan come together, it is appropriate to start with the view of the city, especially as it is for the people an intersection of heaven and earth, as the Scriptures depict God's dwelling on earth among his people.

This picture starts with the garden in Eden where Adam and Eve walked and talked with their creator. But because of sin (a rebellion against God), they were expelled from the garden, with the promise that the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the deceiving serpent and

undo the power of death (Gen 3:15). But if the humans could have any fellowship with God outside the garden, then God would have to sanctify a sanctuary in which he would be present and his people could come and be sanctified, and so fellowship with him. The earthly sanctuary would be a little intersection of heaven and earth.

This idea is furthered with the heavenly dream-vision shown to Jacob in the form of a stairway or ladder connecting heaven and earth (Gen 28). While not traditionally labeled as “apocalyptic,” Jacob’s vision does in fact lay a “building block,” foreshowing and revealing the rhetorical purpose of later biblical apocalyptic passages by “pulling back the veil” to reveal what is happening behind the stage of history in the divine realm.<sup>82</sup> Jacob showed that he rightly perceived the message of the vision by naming that geophysical location Bethel, “The House of God.” God makes a way, a connection, between heaven and earth. The idea of a “house of God”—whether an altar at Bethel, a tabernacle in the wilderness, or a temple in Jerusalem—as the connecting point between heaven and earth anticipates both Ezekiel’s vision of the new city and temple (named *Yahweh Shammah*, “Yahweh Is There”) and Daniel’s understanding of “sanctuary” and “city.” And so throughout the Bible, the sanctuary “grows” from Jacob’s stone (that he used for a pillow) to a tabernacle-tent in the wilderness, to the grand temple of Solomon (later destroyed and rebuilt), to what the oracle of the 70x7s depicts as a new Jerusalem built up over time to fill the entire earth.<sup>83</sup> This “city” will be ruined for a short time of desolation (Dan 9:26) but will be vindicated and restored in the end (9:27) to truly be the new Jerusalem as a gathering place of all nations coming to dwell with their God and he with them.

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<sup>82</sup> The prophet Isaiah participates in an apocalyptic vision in ch. 6 as he finds himself before the throne of Yahweh of hosts, whose angel touches Isaiah with a hot coal from the altar to signify the man’s purification and atonement. Having received this divine revelation, Isaiah volunteers to be an earthly messenger of the divine words and works of Yahweh. The prophet Ezekiel likewise receives many apocalyptic visions.

<sup>83</sup> This is the initial revelation God showed both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, as summarized in Dan 2:35.

The point is that on earth God gives his sanctuary, an earthly copy of his heavenly dwelling, which becomes a space intersecting heaven and earth, where God is present with his people. The “people” are earthly but made holy as “saints” (7:22), who commune with the heavenly through divine service—both the “regular/continual offering” (הַתְּמִידָה, 8:11,12,13; 11:31; 12:11) and the all-encompassing “sacrifice and offering” (זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה, 9:27)—in the context of the “sanctuary” and “city.”

The presence of God, namely, his promise to make his name dwell there (1 Kgs 8:23 // 2 Chr 6:33), made the temple to be God’s house. The presence of the temple in the city made the city to be “the holy city.” But the geophysical city of Jerusalem alone did not constitute the exclusive locus of the “city of God,” but rather the “city” must include, according to God’s promise (Neh 1:9), all the tribes and locations where God’s people were living and serving in the land he gave them, and ultimately from the entire world (Isa 2:3 // Mic 4:2). Whether God’s sanctuary is portable as in the tabernacle or is fixed in a geophysical locus like the temple, God’s people gather around the sanctuary. The gathering of the people then intersects the outside world in which the people live and interact. For instance, the Psalms teach God’s people to think of God’s presence with them in the world as “the city of God... God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her,” Ps 46:4–5; “In the city of our God ... is the joy of all the earth.... Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress,” (48:1–14). The gathered people intersecting with the world is the “city” of God *coram mundi*, from the historical perspective. This “city” during the exodus and settlement periods was understood in an earthly sense as the encampment of God’s people in a certain time and place around the tabernacle. The “sanctuary” would later broaden out to be established in the temple in Jerusalem, with the people of God camped, that is, living and serving, in the tribal allotments of Israel around the city of



Jerusalem. The city of the people of God included all of the “encampments,” that is, villages and towns, of all the tribes of Israel settled in the entire land God promised to Abraham. The temple in the midst of all the lands of the tribes was simply a larger scale of the encampment in the exodus wilderness. Those who were living outside of Jerusalem would travel to the sanctuary in Jerusalem for festivals and worship but lived and worked in surrounding towns and villages many miles away. The even larger scale of the eschatological picture the prophets give is that the new Jerusalem will be God’s “holy mountain” city to which all nations come from the entire earth.

Regarding specifically the “house” in which God’s name will dwell (and therefore, God himself will dwell with his people), God promised David, “I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” (2 Sam 7:12–13). The “kingdom” of the promised descendant of David, which will be God’s eternal kingdom, will be the “house” of God that the Son of David will “build.” This “building” will be depicted in 9:25 in the building of God’s “city.” Thus, God’s “house” is his kingdom-city.

In summary, then, as “sanctuary” is an extension of God’s divine realm (“kingdom”) onto the earth among God’s people, “city” is an extension of the “sanctuary” into the world as God goes with his people everywhere they are. It becomes God’s pan-geographical presence with his people gathered in faith, sharing in the blessings of his salvation. “Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising... they shall call you the City of Yahweh and the Zion of the holy one of Israel” (Isa 60:3, 14). Micah also parallels Isaiah in prophesying, “Many nations shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’ For out of

Zion shall go forth teaching, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem” (Mic 4:2 // Isa 2:3).

God’s presence draws all nations to become a part of this people and city. The visions of the eschatological city of God given to Ezekiel (chs. 40–48) and the apostle John (Rev 21–22) also illustrate this.

Apocalyptic vision reveals the invisible divine realm more fully so that its reach into the history of the world can be seen more clearly, especially God’s works for both salvation and judgment. The book of Daniel reveals in its visions that God’s kingdom is above all and encompasses all kingdoms of the world, and that in the end, his anointed Prince (Messiah) will rule the kingdom forever, which he will also confer upon the saints of God (Dan 7:27). God gives this revelation first to Nebuchadnezzar in ch. 2 with a focus on its political facets in the earthly realm. In ch. 7, Daniel tells of a vision given to him of the same revelation, but now with a focus on spiritual facets in the divine realm, and most especially focusing on the eschatological. The central and foremost sight of the vision is God’s everlasting kingdom, given first to the “one like a son of man,” and then through him to the saints of the Most High. This is the indestructible, everlasting kingdom revealed in 2:44. Then in ch. 9, Gabriel lays out first God’s establishment of that everlasting kingdom in the world, but then some of the earthly effects of the desolations that must occur as a result, affecting both God’s people and his enemies, as God executes and fulfills his eschatological plan of judgment and vindication. The presence of God’s rule and reign, His kingdom, must necessarily separate His followers (the saints) from the sinful rebellion of those who reject God’s dominion and reign. God’s eschatological plan will ultimately bring down his enemies and bring salvation to his saints to enjoy in his presence in the everlasting kingdom.

The numbers of Daniel's visions are to be taken symbolically. In the days of creation, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day as holy, a day for rest (Gen 2:2) and restoration (Ex 31:17) of the body. When someone buys a slave, the slave will work for six years and be set free at the beginning of the seventh year (Ex 21:2). Similarly, even the seventh year is for the rest and restoration of the land after six years of planting and harvesting (Ex 23:11). After a complete set of seven sevens ( $7 \times 7=49$ ), then complete restoration for all would come in the year of Jubilee. In Daniel's prayer of ch. 9, he knew that Jeremiah prophesied that the time of service to Babylon would be 70 years (Jer 25:11; 29:10 refers to *restoration* after 70 years). The Chronicler recognized and recorded Jeremiah's sabbatical theology in 2 Chron 36:21, that the exile would serve "to fulfill the Word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years." After the seventy years would come God's restoration (Jer 29:10).

There is much debate about computing the beginning and ending of the "70 years" in question. Leupold gives a summary of the most convincing alternatives.

Now it is well known, according to one mode of computation, that the actual first return of captives occurred in 538 BC. Many others, however, give this date as 536 BC. In that event we have an exact figure for the years in question:  $606-536=70$  years. [Daniel begins his book in 1:1-2 citing that Nebuchadnezzar had made an initial deportation of captives and of Temple vessels in the third year of Jehoiakim, 606 BC.]

Others prefer to use 586 BC as a starting point in their computations, the year of the *destruction* of Jerusalem. Certainly, the "desolation of the city" can very correctly be said to date from this year. However,  $586-70=516$ , the date of the completion of the second Temple. Now it is without a doubt not improper to regard the city of Jerusalem as being desolate as long as not even the Temple is restored. So this computation has its justification.

Since Daniel himself begins his book in 606 BC (the "third year of the reign of Jehoiakim," 1:1), he seems to be taking that as the starting point of the "seventy years." However, the argument about the Temple being completed exactly 70 years after the destruction of Jerusalem is also

relevant to the discussion of ch. 9, as Daniel's prayer is, on the one hand, in concern about "the city that is called by [Yahweh's] name" (9:18), but with a most specific petition about restoration of the "sanctuary, which is desolate" (9:17). Both perspectives summed up by Leupold have their merits, one "political" (in concern for people and city) and one "spiritual" (in petition for the sanctuary). Perhaps both perspectives are in mind and combined in God's answer, spoken by Gabriel, of the 70x7s, which are "concerning your people and your holy city" (9:24) but with special mention of the "sanctuary" (9:26).

In Dan 9:24, the angel says that there will be another period of 70, besides the "70" Daniel has in mind from Jeremiah, only this will be 70 "sevens" until the very end. While critical and messianic scholars alike extend Daniel 9's "sevens" to "weeks of years,"<sup>84</sup> the symbolic nature of the number seven and its unique usage here of "sevens" indicates that the text does not intend to specify a number of years. Gabriel is taking Daniel to the ultimate end of the clock, not simply to the first coming of the Messiah. "70 sevens" symbolically (and not literally) means the entire future course of human history.

The future is divided up into four segments: 7 sevens (9:25), 62 sevens (9:25), a final seven (9:27) characterized by two parts, and the consummated everlasting kingdom (7:27). The first number seven symbolizes the time set aside for God to build again David's geophysical Jerusalem and bring into Israel's history the Messiah, which will happen within "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4). The number seven is readily understood as symbolical, based on the sabbatical system of seven days and seven years. But its concrete roots in "literal time" (days and years) do not preclude a symbolic meaning. Skipping (for the moment) to the last "single" seven, this is also symbolical, and is a very short time. Given that there is a total of 70 sevens, and that 8

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<sup>84</sup> E.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 109, 352.

sevens (the first “7” and the last “1”) are already accounted for, that leaves 62 sevens. The number 62 is not itself symbolical having its own meaning; it is simply the remainder of 70 minus 8. In short, 70 is symbolical; 7 is symbolical; 1 is symbolical; but 62 is not symbolical, rather, just part of the math.

To see such theological significance in history is a perspective “by faith.” The biblical writers do not see this “by faith” perspective as artificially “reading into” history, but rather recognizing patterns of the fulfillment of God’s promises (called typology) that are already a part of God’s working in history.

### Setting the Scene: “The Big Picture”

The vision of ch. 7 begins with four beasts which (Daniel will later learn) represent four kings and kingdoms. These are earthly dominions under the all-encompassing dominion of the Most High God. But a fifth earthly dominion is revealed to Daniel, the giving of God’s divine dominion to “one like a son of man,” whose dominion and reign will be that of the Most High in the world for (as 9:24–27 will indicate) the building and expansion of the everlasting kingdom, established on earth but continuing for eternity. This kingdom is given in victory to the saints of the Most High. Thus, in ch. 7, in the midst of the appearance of the four bizarre and formidable beasts is the establishment of God’s own dominion through a human agent, and the eternal kingdom is presented as foremost. That victorious vision of the eternal kingdom must now overarch everything else to be revealed for good or bad.

In that light, an enemy is revealed concurrently, though only properly pictured underneath the dominion of the one like a son of man. This enemy speaks against the Most High and makes warfare against his saints (7:21, 25). This eschatological enemy seeks to hinder and destroy any and all of God’s goals at the verge of their fulfillment. The enemy will resist and rebel against

God's dominion (7:25), especially as it is given and exercised in the person and work of Yahweh's agent "Messiah Prince" (9:25), to bring to (apparent) naught Messiah's work to fulfill the eschatological goals.

Chapter 8, a vision given to Daniel at a later time than ch. 7, focuses on the political-religious situations leading up to an initial enemy, a type of the greater future enemy (of ch. 7) of God and his people. Even though this "little horn" of 8:9 is described with similar language to the "little horn" of 7:8, it belongs to the third of the four kingdoms prophesied, showing that these events are precursor to the eschatological events to come (those of the "fifth kingdom," the kingdom of God). The vision of ch. 8 is therefore simply a zooming in on 7:4–6. This type of a future greater enemy of God and his people is an important example of the kind of "distress of times" (9:25) that will intensify as the restoration and building of the new Jerusalem comes to full maturity. A typological understanding within the biblical apocalyptic-prophetic framework helps make sense of the confusion from what may look like a single "little horn" in both chapters.

Then in response to Daniel's prayer for restoration of God's sanctuary and city, God sends Gabriel to show Daniel the oracle of the Seventy Sevens, a sub-vision of the overarching revelatory apocalyptic vision of ch. 7. The 70x7s address Daniel's petition to "shine your face upon your desolated sanctuary" (9:17) by revealing the ultimate restoration of the sanctuary, the true intersection of heaven and earth, through fulfillment of God's plan of judgment and vindication, a fulfillment much bigger and more complete than Daniel could see or imagine. However, the caveat of the 70x7s is that this fulfillment can come only through and after desolations that God will initiate and the enemy will execute until God destroys the enemy. The restoration of the city and sanctuary require first the withdrawal of the reign and influence of

God's Messiah and the revelation of the "prince to come," whose warfare and apparent domination of the saints will cause desolation in the sanctuary and city. But the enemy's days are cut short and the destruction of his reign of terror are at hand.

### Greater City, Greater Exile

Thus, God's answer to Daniel's petition to restore the sanctuary desolated by the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of his people is that the seventy-year Babylonian exile (about which Jeremiah prophesied) is actually a *type* of a greater exile to come, one multiplied by seven, as it were. The Seventy Sevens as epochs of history will serve to fulfill God's gracious promise to multiply the people by the building up of a new and expanded holy city. But the caveat is that it will be "in distress of the times" (9:25). The desolations God will bring about for the ultimate judgment against sin and for the purification of the people, city, and sanctuary will also be multiplied even to the "extreme of horrors" (שְׁקוּצִים, 9:27). The desolations God brought upon his people through Babylon for their cleansing would be multiplied seven-fold through a "new Babylon," the rebellion of the "little horn" prince to come and the people in covenant with him, bringing about a greater exile of God's people as they are "given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time" (7:25). The restoration of God's people, however, is even greater as it includes the final overthrow of the rebellion and all sin in the flood of God's judgment and the ultimate establishment of everlasting righteousness, which are the eschatological goals of 9:24.

The oracle of the Seventy Sevens indicates a greater exile of God's people by a greater "Babylon." Babylon (בְּבֶל) has been the symbolic name of earthly dominion over against God's dominion since the attempt to build the city and tower in Gen 11:4. Daniel 9, however, depicts God's city over against the rest of the world. The saints may be exiled away from God's holy

city, and each exile is an apparent temporary victory of the powers that oppose God, but each in turn is overthrown by the ultimate victory of the kingdom of God. The vision given to Daniel goes beyond his requested relief of the suffering of the sixth-century BC Babylonian exile and extends to the removal of the source of all the suffering of the people of God. But this final destruction of the enemy desolator will be preceded by a time of even greater suffering for the people of God.

The Seventy Sevens of 9:24 encompass the whole time until that final destruction, in which a suffering greater than the Babylonian exile will come upon the people of God, and in which atonement for iniquity will occur, perpetual righteousness will be ushered in, and the prophetic vision will be sealed up (fulfilled). As a part of this the Messiah Prince<sup>85</sup> will come (9:25), whose work, unspecified in the oracle, will provide for the purification of the people to be “saints,” to begin his reign over the eternal kingdom (7:14), and to inaugurate the building of the city of God, the new Jerusalem, so that over a period of 62 sevens it will be built up and expanded.

The new city of God’s people, the new Jerusalem, will be built over a relatively long period of time (“62 sevens”), with the warning that it will be “in distress of times” (9:25). It is interesting to note that BHS gives the Syriac’s alternate reading of this phrase as (in Hebrew) םיִּהְיֶה ׀ הַיָּמִים, noting that it also places the phrase as the beginning of v. 26, so that it would read, “In the end of times, after the sixty-two sevens, messiah will be removed and there will be none for him.” While conservative scholars seek to understand the MT as it has been meticulously handed down and avoid any unnecessary emendation of the text, the Syriac’s reading would clarify that the time-period in question, “after the sixty-two sevens,” refers to “the end of times.” However, this study will consider the Syriac’s emendation as a helpful footnote for the text to help clarify

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<sup>85</sup> See below, “Messiah Prince,” pp. 121–30.



the time-periods in question, but will read with the MT's "distress," as it is contextually understandable without the emendation.

The "distress of times" is explained in vv. 26–27, reflecting the rebellion of the little horn in 7:25 who rebels against God and wages war against the saints. The distress and the subsequent desolations are instigated after "messiah will be cut off and there will be none for him" (9:26). In the "beginning of the end," Messiah will be "cut off," that is, his reign and dominion will be withdrawn (since according to 7:14 it is an eternal dominion "that cannot be destroyed").<sup>86</sup> God will remove the influence and power of his Messiah from the world in the same way that the OT depicts the removal of the presence of God from the temple that led to the destruction of the city and the people. Only this time, to initiate the "end times," God's judgment is no longer against his people, but against all who are rebelling against his dominion. As a judgment, God will withdraw his dominion exercised by his agent Messiah, thereby setting off a series of desolations. These desolations are the "determined warfare" (9:26) of the rebelling little horn who is also called "a coming prince" (9:26), who will attack the saints of the Most High and "prevail over them" (7:21) and even "wear them out" (7:25). Thus, the cutting off of God's Messiah proves to be a pivotal event in the prophecy, and indeed, serves to initiate the events of the climax in God's eschatological plan, that is, the transition from the 62 sevens of building God's city-kingdom to the final seven of warfare. It is as if God makes a move in a chess match, withdrawing a key piece that opens up a new strategy for the opponent, who moves in to make his "kill." However, though the enemy will indeed cause much damage (to be precise, *corruption*), God will make the final move to finish off the enemy with an unexpected and finishing blow.

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<sup>86</sup> See excursus, "The Verb *Karath* in BC Scriptural Usage," pp. 195–200.

## The Desolations of God

The cutting off or removal of the Messiah causes (or makes possible) the revealing of the eschatological enemy already revealed in the vision of ch. 7. As Gabriel lays out God's eschatological goals, he shows how the agent revealed in the heavenly revelation, the "one like a son of man" of 7:13, is also going to be opposed by the eschatological enemy, the "little horn" of 7:8, 20–26. This "little horn" signifies the earthly representative of the power that opposes God in the divine realm (as ultimately does anyone/thing described by the NT as "anti-Christ," e.g., 1 Jn 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 Jn 1:7). This enemy will be the agent of further desolations. After the withdrawal of the dominion of Messiah, the "people of the coming prince" will corrupt the city and the sanctuary in a greater way as part of the suffering of the people of God to come. "His people will ruin the city and sanctuary" (9:26), corrupting it to the point of interrupting or pausing the physical worship of God's people (9:27). Such ruining or corrupting of the primary function of the city, rendering it "desolate" or uninhabitable for God's people, can only be limited to the earthly realm of history (but not the divine realm), even as "the prince to come," who is the "little horn" of ch. 7, is only given earthly power for "a time, times, and half a time" (7:25). That is to say, the enemy can only stop the worship of God in history on earth, not in heaven. Such a desolation, however, will serve even as part of the restoration of "God's people," even though it is a removal of the earthly worship by God's people for a time. Gabriel is quick to interject a reminder that "his [the eschatological enemy's] end will be in a flood," that is, the flood of God's judgment (see Ezek 13:13), but the angel warns that "until the end will be delineated warfare, [that is,] desolations" (9:26) by which God's saints "will be given into [the enemy's] hand" (7:25). The fulfillment and eschatological consummation will come only after a time of distress in the form of these "desolations" (9:26; see Ps 46:8) that God will initiate as part of his judgment and finishing of sin. This "warfare" (9:26) is part of God's "decreed desolations"

(9:26), which also include the enemy's making a covenant with the many (people of the world) and a ceasing of the divine service. God's final desolation will be on the desolator himself, cutting him off and his reign of terror by the sudden removal of his dominion (7:26) by God's judgment against him and in vindication of his saints (7:22). These devastations will affect the "many" of the world as well as the people of God, and finally, the desolator himself, who is the executor of some of the desolations upon the world, until God executes the final desolation upon him.

This oracle, although revealing devastating horrors (9:27), is meant for the comfort of God's people, that in the end, God will fulfill his goals despite the raging of enemies attempting to do their worst and to undo, if possible, God's work of salvation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### EXEGETICAL STUDY OF THE TEXTS

#### Translation of Daniel 7:1–27

<sup>1</sup> In the first year of Balshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions in his head upon his bed. Then he wrote down the dream; he told the main idea.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel responded and said, “I was looking in my vision with the nighttime, and behold, the four winds of the heavens were churning the great sea.

<sup>3</sup> And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, differing one from another.

<sup>4</sup> The first was like a lion, and it had wings of an eagle. I was looking as its wings were plucked off and it was lifted from the earth, and on feet like a man it stood, and a human heart was given to it.

<sup>5</sup> And behold, another beast, a second, was like a bear, and it was raised up to one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth. Thus, it was told, “Arise, eat much flesh!”

<sup>6</sup> After that I was looking and behold, another like a leopard, and it had four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

<sup>7</sup> After this I was looking in visions of the night and, behold, a fourth beast, frightening and terrible and surpassingly mighty, with great teeth of iron, eating and shattering, and trampling the rest with its foot. But it was different than all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

<sup>8</sup> As I was pondering about the horns, behold, another horn, [a] small [one], came up between them, and three of the previous horns were uprooted from before it. And behold, eyes like the eyes of a human were in this horn, and a mouth speaking lordly things.

<sup>9</sup> I kept looking until thrones were set and the Ancient of Days was seated, his garment white like snow, and the hair of his head pure like wool, his throne of flames of fire, his wheels of burning fire,

<sup>10</sup> a river of fire flowing and coming out from before him. A thousand thousands were serving him. A myriad myriads were standing before him. The court was seated and the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup> I was looking thereupon more [intently] than [paying attention to] the sound of the lordly words that the horn was speaking. I was looking until the beast was killed and its body was destroyed and it was given over to burning with fire.

<sup>12</sup> As for the rest of the beasts, they took away their dominion, but a prolonging of life was given to them for a season and a period.

<sup>13</sup> I was looking in visions of the night and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a son of man was coming, and when he reached the Ancient of Days, they presented him before him.

<sup>14</sup> And to him was given dominion and honor and a kingdom, and all the peoples, the nations, and the language-groups paid reverence to him. His dominion is an eternal dominion that will not pass away and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

<sup>15</sup> I was distressed in spirit, I, Daniel, in the midst of the sheath [body], and the visions in my head alarmed me.

<sup>16</sup> I approached one of those standing there, and I wanted to seek verification from him about all these things. And he spoke to me and made known to me the interpretation of the matter.

<sup>17</sup> These, the noble beasts—of which they are four—the four are kings. They will arise from the earth.

<sup>18</sup> But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom, and they will take possession of the kingdom to eternity, and forever and ever.

<sup>19</sup> Then I desired to be certain about the fourth beast which was different than all of them, extremely frightening, its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, devouring, crushing, and trampling the rest with its feet,

<sup>20</sup> and concerning the ten horns which were on its head, and the other one that came up so that three fell from before it. That horn had eyes and a mouth speaking lordly things, and its appearance was greater than its peers.

<sup>21</sup> I was watching, and that horn waged war with saints and defeated them,

<sup>22</sup> until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the appointed time arrived, and saints took possession of the kingdom.

<sup>23</sup> Thus he said, “The fourth beast is the fourth kingdom [that] will exist on the earth, which will differ from all the kingdoms and will consume all the earth, and it will trample it and crush it.

<sup>24</sup> As for the ten horns, from it, the kingdom, ten kings will arise. But another will arise after them and will differ from the previous ones. And he will humiliate three kings.

<sup>25</sup> And words alongside the Most High he will speak so that  
he will wear out the saints of the Most High.

And he will intend to alter times and decree,  
and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

<sup>26</sup> Then the court will be seated, and they will take away his dominion, to desolate [him] and to destroy [him] until the end [i.e., forever].

<sup>27</sup> But the dominion and the power and the greatness of the kingdoms under all the heavens will be given to the people who are the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and all powers will serve and obey him.”

<sup>28</sup> Thus far was the end of the discourse. I, Daniel, was alarmed with many thoughts, and my disposition changed, but the discourse I kept in my heart.

### Philological Notes on Daniel 7:1–28

7:1

וְחִזְוֵי רֵאשָׁה עַל־מִשְׁכְּבָה “Visions of his head upon his bed.” A repeated phrase in Daniel; see also Dan 2:28; 4:2, 7, 10 [ET 4:5, 10, 13]. The prepositional phrase qualifies the genitive construct, indicating the circumstances, namely, that the visions occurred at night while he was in bed. Although the phrase is preceded by “Daniel saw a dream,” the word “visions” qualifies that Daniel was seeing revelatory visions in his “mind’s eye” rather than merely dreaming a nonsensical dream of his own imagination.

רֵאשׁ מְלִין “the head of matters” suggests “the main idea or concept of the matters,” that is, a recapitulation or summary, “the sum of its parts.”

7:2

עָנָה דָּנִיֵּאל וְאָמַר “Daniel responded and said.” Here translated word-for-word, but the phrase is a common Hebrew hendiadys for a person’s verbal response to a situation.

בְּחִזְוֵי עִם־לַיְלָא “In my vision [that came] along with the night.” This phrase further qualifies what kind of vision that Daniel is seeing, that it is not an ordinary dream. It happened to occur at nighttime, coming “along with” the night. Compare to the similar phrase in both 7:7 and 7:13, בְּחִזְוֵי לַיְלָא, “in my visions of the night,” in which the genitive means “at” or “during” the

nighttime. The slightly different phrase here in 7:2, especially the עם, “together with,” slightly de-emphasizes the fact that it was nighttime in order to emphasize the “beyond normal” quality of the dream, so that the reader will not dismiss the vision as merely a nonsensical dream of Daniel’s own random imagination.

וַאֲרוּ “Behold!” A dramatic, attention-drawing interjection that Daniel uses five times, all here in ch. 7, not counting the four instances of the bi-form אָלוּ in Dan 4:7, 10 and 7:8 (twice). He uses it here especially to draw attention to key elements of the vision.

אָרְבַּע רוּחֵי שָׁמַיָא מְגִיחִין לְיָמָא רַבָּא “the four winds of the heavens were churning the great sea.” Steinmann’s suggestion seems convincing that this Haphel participle, מְגִיחִין, from גִּיחַ, likely has a transitive, causative sense of “churning” (per HALOT, b), and that the לְ is a direct object marker,<sup>1</sup> “churning the great sea.”

7:4

נֶשֶׁר “Eagle.” The noun technically can refer to any large bird of prey, but an eagle is the most common English gloss.

וּלְבַב אָדָם יְהִיב לָהּ “And a human heart was given to it.” The word for “heart” is commonly translated in English as “mind,” since the heart in Hebrew usage is the organ of thought as well as emotions. This translation uses “heart” simply to be more literal.

7:5

וּתְלַת עֲלָעִין בְּפִמָּהּ בֵּין שְׁנַיָּהּ “And three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth.” Martin Luther follows an interpretation that understands these ribs as large teeth signifying the most important Medo-Persian kings,<sup>2</sup> but since the literal word “teeth” is used in the same phrase, it is unlikely

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<sup>1</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 337.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, Vol. 35: Word and Sacrament I*, Electronic ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 35:299.

that the ribs represent teeth. Since the beast is told in this verse to “eat much flesh,” then the ribs are a remnant of one such eating.

הַקִּמַּת “It was raised up.” Tanner observes, “Although BHS shows the form הַקִּמַּת (rather than הַקִּימַת, the expected form for the Hup’al perf., as in v. 4), a close look at the Leningrad codex (B19<sup>a</sup>) reveals that the text has הַקִּימַת with the ם partially rubbed out. Goldingay’s comment (144) that L’s reading is ‘apparently another mixed form’ stands corrected.”<sup>3</sup>

אָמְרִין לָהּ “they said to it.” Since the subject is unspecified, it is here taken as impersonal, and thus translated with a passive, “it was told,” especially since the following phrase is also impersonal. Steinmann notes, “Biblical Aramaic frequently uses plural forms that are impersonal (with no stated subject) but that imply God as the ultimate cause of the action. Usually they are best translated as passives.”<sup>4</sup>

7:6

וְשִׁלְטֹן יְהִיב לָהּ “And dominion was given to it.” The noun שִׁלְטֹן denotes “dominion, sovereignty, kingly rule” more than “realm of kingdom.” Both here and in v. 14, the giving and taking away of dominion happens with impersonal passive verbs.

7:7

הִזְוֵה הַגִּוִּית בְּחֻזְנִי לַיְלִיָּא “I was looking in visions of the night.” The revelation to Daniel seems to be presented to him in episodes or scenes, or at least in Daniel’s “looking” in his mind’s eye he focuses on different aspects of the vision. So also, the phrases in 7:8, מִשְׁתַּבֵּל הַגִּוִּית בְּקַרְנֵיָּא וְאַלֹּי, “as I was pondering about the horn, behold,” and in 7:9, 11, 13, and 21, הִזְוֵה הַגִּוִּית, “I was looking.” These indicate either episodes or scenes of the vision, or again, different foci of Daniel’s paying

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<sup>3</sup> J. Paul Tanner, *Evangelical Exegetical Commentary: Daniel* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2020), 402.

<sup>4</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 338.



attention, as each reveals different things or events. Similarly, in 7:1, *גראש מלין*, “the sum of the matters,” may refer to the overall coherence of the vision.

*ברגליה* “With its feet.” The Qere corrects this singular form to the plural *ברגליה* “with its feet,” since this is most likely an orthographic variant to be understood as a plural even without the *yodh*.

7:8

There are Qere suggestions for both *ביניהן* and *אתעקרה*, both offering feminine forms rather than the Ketiv’s masculine forms. Since they both refer to the *קרן* “horn,” the question is whether “horn” is masculine or feminine. Both BDB (1111) and HALOT (1973) list it as a feminine noun. The adjective *קדמיתא* that modifies (the masculine-looking) *קרניא* is also feminine. So at first glance it would seem that the Qere readings should be accepted. For these reasons also in v. 26 the BHS editor suggests a feminine suffix rather than the masculine suffix on *שקטנה*. (At this point of the narrative, note that Daniel is receiving further information about the “little horn” of v. 8). However, since the “he” to which the masculine suffix on *שקטנה* in v. 26 refers is the masculine human personage that the “little horn” symbolizes, explicitly called *הוא* “he” in v. 24, then the masculine suffix on *שקטנה* in v. 26 is clear. These later masculine references support the Ketiv readings back in v. 8 with masculine suffixes. The confusion initially lay in a feminine noun serving as a symbol for a masculine person. Changing the forms to feminine seems grammatically correct in v. 8, but the reader should be aware that a masculine enemy is being indicated. The biblical writers, Daniel notwithstanding, are often fluid in matters of gender. For that very reason, there is no need to emend the Ketiv of the MT, since it is understandable as is.

*רב רבון* From the adjective *רב*, this form is the feminine plural with reduplication (to make it superlative) used substantively. In its most basic usage, it generally means “very great.”

Although “great things” or “great words” here makes sense, more specificity seems in order. Since Daniel uses several forms of the masculine noun רַבְרָבִין in chs 4–6, referring to lords and nobles, such usage can lend specificity to the substantive adjective here, “lordly things,” which also more clearly brings out the theme of the book of Daniel and of this vision of ch. 7, that dominion belongs to Yahweh alone and to those to whom he gives it. The little horn speaking “lordly” things would be a challenge to Yahweh’s dominion, which would be troubling to Daniel to witness.

7:9

וְעַתִּיק יוֹמִין This noun, עַתִּיק, of the Aramaic portions of the Scriptures, is used only here in Dan 7. BDB gives the verbal root of this word the basic meanings “move, proceed, advance.” Of the few occurrences of the root עתק in Hebrew, it also gives the basic sense of “advance(d).” In some cases, the word may imply “old,” but several usages suggest “advanced” in the sense of “surpassing,” such as Prov 8:18 (of wealth), Isa 23:18 (of clothing), and Isa 28:9 (of children having advanced beyond breastfeeding). “Ancient of Days” has been retained in this translation because of traditional usage; however, more specifically, the sense here is “eternal,” that God is the One who “surpasses” all time.

לְבוּשָׁה כְּתֹלַג חֹנֶר וּשְׂעָר רֵאשָׁה כְּעֶמֶר נָקֵא “his clothing was white as snow and the hair of his head was pure as wool.” These grammatically parallel phrases are best rendered in English as grammatically parallel, that is, “white as snow” and “pure as wool.” Although “pure wool” is also a valid translation, it is preferable to keep the poetic parallelism with the understanding that “pure wool” is in mind in the phrase “pure as wool.”

כְּרֹסְיָהּ שְׂבִיבִין דִּי־נֹר גְּלִגְלוּהִי נֹר דְּלֵק “His throne was flames of fire; its wheels burning fire.” Unlike the similes of the preceding phrases “white as snow” and “pure as wool,” these two

construct chains are unlikely to be metaphors, but instead indicate that the throne and wheels appeared to be actually made of fire or an ethereal substance like it.

7:10

אֲדִינָא Here, and again in v. 26, Daniel uses the word as a collective as in “court,” informed by the plural כְּרִסְוֹן “thrones” in the previous verse.

7:11

הַזֶּה הַגִּיט בְּאֲדִין מִן־קֶל מְלִיא רַבְרְבָתָא דִּי קִרְנָא מְמַלְלָה The מִן can show comparison,<sup>5</sup> to indicate that Daniel was paying more attention to the heavenly courtroom vision “rather than” or “despite” the distraction of the sound of the little horn’s lordly words, which were meant to draw attention away from the scene to the little horn himself.

7:12

הֶעְדִּי “They removed.” The subject of this third person plural Haphel form of עִדָּה is implied, but the context of the vision suggests that the antecedent is the collective אֲדִינָא, “the court,” representing the members of the judicial assembly of v. 10.

זְמַן וְזְמַן “a season and a time.” BDB posits that זְמַן is probably a loan-word from Persian,<sup>6</sup> but HALOT provides several suggestions for its origin, leaving the question open. Daniel often uses it as a synonym for עֶדְוָה, but uses both terms together in 2:21, 7:12, and 7:25. The first two uses are in a context of the determination and plan of the God of heaven. 7:25 is less definite, but its usage there correlates well to those of 2:21 and 7:12.

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<sup>5</sup> Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1968), §80.

<sup>6</sup> BDB, s.v. זְמַן, 1091.

7:15

בְּגוּא נְדָה “In the midst of the sheath.” BDB and HALOT both suggest that this *hapax legomenon*, נְדָה, is probably a loanword from the Persian, “sheath,” and is probably an idiomatic metaphor for the body. The BHS editors suggest that it should probably read בְּגִין דְּנָה (“on account of this”) along with the LXX which renders it ἐν ταῦτοις, perhaps taking the Aramaic as בְּגוּ דְּנָה. HALOT confidently asserts that “in the sheath” is correct (along with NRSV), and that the alternate readings are unnecessary conjecture.<sup>7</sup>

7:17

רַבְרָבָה Similarly to רַבְרָב in 7:8, here the basic meaning “very great” is qualified especially by the predicate noun מְלָכִין, so that “lordly” or “noble” specify what sort of “greatness” is meant here.

7:18

קְדִישֵׁי עֲלִיוֹנִין “Saints of the Most High.” Interpreters have proposed a few different explanations of the plural עֲלִיוֹנִין. The most common view is to take it as a plural of majesty. Goldingay argues that when an expression as a whole is plural, there are occurrences when both words in the construct are written as plural,<sup>8</sup> although this argument does not seem convincing. A third approach is to understand “Most High” itself as plural, i.e., that there is more than one. Since in v. 14 the dominion, glory, kingdom, and worship of the “Ancient of Days” was conferred upon the “one like a son of man,” the latter now is made one in dominion, glory, kingdom, and worship with the former. In effect, “Most High” may also refer to the “one like a son of man” as well as the “Ancient of Days.”

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<sup>7</sup> HALOT, s.v. נָה, 1926.

<sup>8</sup> John Goldingay, “The Holy Ones on High in Dan 7:18,” *JBL* 107 (1988): 495–97.

7:19

קִלְהִין “of them.” Instead of the Ketiv’s masculine plural form, a feminine plural would normally be expected (thus the Qere כלהון), since the referents are the חַיִּוִּן “beasts” of v. 3. However, as also in v. 20, from this point on, the beasts that have been revealed to represent מַלְכִין “kings” (masculine plural) will be called by masculine terms. The Ketiv readings are intentionally counter-grammatical and should be retained.

7:20

וּנְפְלוּ “and they fell.” Yet again, the Qere suggests reading feminine plural (וּנְפְלוּהָ), since the referent is “horns,” a feminine plural. But since they represent masculine plural “kings (מַלְכִין, v. 17), then the Ketiv continues to use masculine plural forms where feminine plural would be expected.

7:24

מִנָּה “From it.” The feminine singular antecedent is the מַלְכוּת (“kingdom”) of the previous verse.

יְהַשְׁפֵּל “He will suppress.” The subject of this verb, the אֲחֵרֵן (“another”) earlier in the verse, is spoken of as a person, as the next two verses confirm. The Haphel of the verb שָׁפַל means to humble, to bring low.

7:25

וּמַלְיִן לְצַד עֲלִיא The lexical data given by BDB and HALOT indicate that Daniel alone uses the word צַד in the Aramaic, although he may be using it the same as the often-used Hebrew צַד, meaning “side.” HALOT indicates that צַד is used in Imperial Aramaic, Jewish Aramaic, the Targum, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and Syriac to refer to something being “at the side of” or

“near,” In 6:5, Daniel seems to be using the word to mean “alongside of” or “concerning.” Here, “words alongside of the Most High” seem to suggest “in the place of” implying “equal to.”

וּלְקַדְיִשֵׁי עֲלִיוֹנִין יִבְלֵא “So that the saints of the Most High he will wear out.” The initial *waw* is resumptive,<sup>9</sup> indicating result. The Aramaic verb בלא is used equivalently with the Hebrew cognate בלה, and in the Pael (or Piel) means “to wear away” or “wear out,” the implication of which is to do so by continual harassment (per BDB). HALOT also compares the Arabic *balā(w)*, “to put to the test” or “to torment.”

וַיִּסְבֵּר “And he will consider / intend.” This imperfect form seems to be iterative<sup>10</sup> (a.k.a., frequentive, customary, or habitual), i.e., that the little horn’s constant efforts are what will “wear out” the saints.

לְהַשְׁנִיחַ The Aramaic verb שָׁנַח is equivalent to the Hebrew שנה, here in the Haphel “to change” or “alter.”

זְמַנֵּי וְדָת “Times and decree.” Daniel uses the same vocabulary in 2:21, וְהוּא מְשַׁנֵּחַ עֲדָנֵיָא וְזְמַנֵּיָא, in which Daniel himself confesses the God of heaven, “But he [alone] changes the appointed times and the seasons.” Daniel in 7:25 uses the former word, זְמַנֵּי, like Ezra, not simply as a general word for “time,” but with an emphasis on a fixed or appointed moment with liturgical or sacred importance (see Ezr 5:3; Dan 3:7, 8; 4:33; 7:12, 22).<sup>11</sup> This understanding is reinforced by the second word, דָּת, which is the same in Hebrew but is a loanword from the Persian *dāta*,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ronald J. Williams, *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), §440.

<sup>10</sup> Williams, §168.

<sup>11</sup> HALOT (p. 1866) cites Otto Plöger (KAT xviii: 103), who shows that the expression “dates and law” are to be understood differently, that what is meant are the dates in the cultic calendar. It also cites J.C.H. Lebram, [VT 25 (1975), 745]: “We must not think that ‘times and law’ refers literally to the Torah of Moses, but rather to the regular timings of the cosmos, which were of fundamental importance for the effective implementation of cultic practices.”

<sup>12</sup>HALOT, s.v. דָּת, 1855.

meaning “decree, law, or commission of a king,” as in Ezra 8:36; Est 1:13; 2:8, where it refers to a permanently valid and applicable law.

עֵינַיִן The editors of BHS recognize that it is a plural form as in Dan 4:13 MT, but suggest reading it here as a dual without providing any reason or textual evidence. This seems arbitrary and unnecessary. BDB suggests following S. R. Driver, A. A. Bevel, and Herman Gunkel,<sup>13</sup> who read it as a dual to support interpreting this phrase in Dan. 7:25 as “3½ times.” HALOT refers the reader to Hans Bauer and Pontus Leander’s, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen*, p. 306, in which the authors argue that sometimes a plural ending is used on body parts where a dual ending might be expected, as in the עֵינַיִן (“eyes”) of the little horn in 7:8. However, although Daniel says “like the eyes of a man,” he does not necessarily say that the little horn has only two eyes. More relevant, perhaps, is their example of the “ten horns” (עֲשָׂרִים קַרְנֵי) of 7:7, pointed with an unexpected dual ending. This singular such usage could serve as an example of a dual ending being used for a plural (in this case, ten horns), but does not prove that the plural form עֵינַיִן (“eyes”) in 7:8 must refer to two eyes and not more. Since Daniel is describing strange visionary beasts, one may not necessarily expect what is considered “normal” for humans.

7:26

לְהַשְׁמָדָה וּלְהוֹבִדָה “To desolate and to destroy.” These two Haphel infinitive constructs have an active meaning, whose object is the noun וְשִׁלְטָנָה, the little horn’s dominion, expressing the purpose of the verb יִהְיֶה עָדוֹן, that “they will remove his dominion, in order to annihilate [it] and to destroy [it] to the end.”

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<sup>13</sup> Herman Gunkel, *Shöpfung und Chaos Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung Über Gen. 1 und Ap Joh 12* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895), 201.

7:27

לְעַם קְדוֹשֵׁי עֲלִיּוֹנִין “To the people of the saints of the Most High.” This phrase is an unusual usage. The first noun, “people,” is indefinite. The second noun, “saints of the Most High” is definite. This favors reading the entire phrase as a construct. Collins argues that “people of” is a possessive genitive, so that they are the people pertaining to or under the protection of the holy ones.<sup>14</sup> Collins then suggests that “holy ones” (another valid translation for קְדוֹשֵׁי) are angels. Such a possessive sense is certainly the vast majority of uses in the OT, but usually “people of” a land or nation or “people of God.” Another option, accepting the entire phrase as a construct, is to read it as adjectival rather than possessive. This would be similar to “a people of unclean lips” in Isa 6:5, as if to say, “unclean-lipped people.” This phrase in Dan 7:27 would come out like “saints-of-the-Most-High people.” While the Isa 6:5 usage seems natural, this adjectival sense from two nouns in construct seems unnatural. As a third option, Steinmann points to the *tiphhah* accent on לְעַם as disjunctive, putting “saints of the Most High” in apposition to “people,” signaling reading the genitive as epexegetical, i.e., “the people who are the saints of the Most High.” Goldingay also reads the phrase this way, “a people consisting in holy ones who are on high.”<sup>15</sup> Support for this third option is found in Daniel’s usage of the phrases “the saints of the Most High” (7:18, 22, 25) or simply “the saints” (7:22). The usages, all before 7:27, guide the reader to understand “the people of the saints of the Most High” as definite. However, to say “the people of the saints” introduces the new idea of “people,” perhaps to qualify “saints” not simply as angels or other heavenly creatures, but as humans.

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<sup>14</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 318.

<sup>15</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 146. He also cites an example of the description of Israel in 1QM 10.10 as עַם קְדוֹשֵׁי בְרִית “the people of the holy ones of the covenant” (p. 182).



7:28

מִלְתָּא “The discourse” or “the matter.” The Aramaic מִלְתָּא “word,” appearing twice in this verse, is used similarly to the Hebrew דְבָר “word” to also mean in some contexts “conversation” or “subject matter.” A translation of “discourse” here indicates that Daniel had been discussing the vision with the heavenly interpreter to gain understanding of what he was seeing.

### Translation of Daniel 9:24–27

<sup>24</sup> [Gabriel said:] “Seventy Sevens are determined concerning your people and concerning your holy city to restrain the transgression, and to restrict sin, and to atone for iniquity; and to bring righteousness forever, and to seal up a revelation and a prophet, and to anoint a most holy.

<sup>25</sup> You should know and understand: From the issuing of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem until Messiah, a Prince, [will be] seven Sevens. And for sixty-two Sevens it will be built again broadly, though delimited, but in distress of the times.

<sup>26</sup> Then after the sixty-two Sevens, Messiah will be removed and there will be none for him. As for the city and the sanctuary, the people of the coming prince will ruin [it],

but his end is in the flood. Until the end [will be] delineated battle, desolations.

<sup>27</sup> He [the coming prince] will strengthen an alliance with many during a single Seven; and for half of the Seven he will cause sacrifice and offering to cease, and upon the wing of horrors [he will be] the desolator; even until the determined completion will gush forth upon the desolated one.”

### Philological Notes on Daniel 9:24–27

9:24

The unusual construction of the word שְׁבַעִים, “seven-ed things” or for simplicity, “sevens,” is given the masculine plural ending where a feminine plural (forming the word “weeks”) might be expected. This unusual construction, a *hapax legomenon* (though used in this passage four times), calls for understanding apart from a common use of the word. The word appears to be

functioning as a substantive of a passive participle. A group of units “sevened” from a whole, a “heptad,” worded simply as a “Seven,” here capitalized to show the unique and intentionally ambiguous sense in which it is used.<sup>16</sup>

לְכַלֵּא The Ketiv uses the *Piel* infinitive construct of the verb כָּלַא (“restrain”), retaining the final א. The Qere suggests reading this verb as from the root כָּלַה (“to complete”). However, כָּלַא does not always default to כָּלַה, as is seen in Isa 42:22, כָּלְאֵיִם “confinement.” Another example is Ps 40:12, “You will not withhold your compassion from me” (לֹא־תִכְלֵא רַחֲמֶיךָ מֵמִנִּי).<sup>17</sup> Carl Keil validly reasons, “Since כָּלַה occurs frequently in Daniel, always with ה (cf. v. 27, Dan. 11:36; 12:7), and generally the roots with ה take the form of those with א much more seldom than the reverse, on these grounds the reading לְכַלֵּא thus deserves the preference.” The more unusual and/or difficult Ketiv reading of כָּלַא (“restrain”) most likely has been transmitted with particular care and need not be corrected. Herbert Leupold argues,

No *Piel* forms are found elsewhere, but כָּלַא is plainly *Piel*. Consequently, most lexicographers suggest that this must be a *Piel* of כָּלַה, a verb ending in *h*, [which] means “to make an end of, to finish.” It is very true that these verbs rather frequently exchange forms. Yet the safer course is to let each verb retain its native sense if possible. So we [could] retain the consonants and point them לְכַלֵּא, or we [could] retain the vowel points of the Masoretic text and call this the only instance on record of the *Piel* of the verb with the intensive meaning “to restrain completely.”

While it seems more satisfying to read this infinitive with other OT usages rather than admit a *hapax legomenon*, Keil and Leupold present a compelling case for maintaining the Masoretic *Ketiv* in trust that the text has been preserved and handed down very carefully.

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<sup>16</sup> For discussions on translation of this word, see Kliefoth, *Daniels*, 293–94; Keil, *Daniel*, 338; Leupold, *Daniel*, 409–10; Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 584.

<sup>17</sup> Other examples in which כָּלַא cannot mean “put an end to” include Ps 59:14 [ET 59:13], כָּלַה בְּחֵמָה כָּלַה וְאֵינָמוּ (“Hold back in rage; restrain so that they will be nothing”), which is qualified by v. 12 [ET v. 11], אַל־תִּהְרַגְם פֶּן־יִשְׁכַּחוּ עַמִּי (“Do not kill them, lest my people forget”), and informed by v 13 [ET v. 12], וְיִלְכְּדוּ בְּגֵאוֹנָם (“And they will be seized in their exaltation”). See also Jer 5:4, in which the rebels in question remain alive; and 2 Sam 21:5, in that Saul may have wanted to kill the Gibeonites, but they remained alive to report to their king, so here it must mean that Saul restrained or hindered them.

Keil goes on to show the interpretive significance:

The explanation: to finish the transgression and to make full the measure of sin, does not accord with what follows: to pardon the iniquity; and the thought that the Jews would fill up the measure of their transgression in the seventy year-weeks, and that as a punishment they would pass through a period of suffering from Antiochus and afterwards be pardoned, is untenable, because the punishment by Antiochus for their sins brought to their full measure is arbitrarily interpolated; but without this interpolation the pardon of the sins stands in contradiction to the filling up of their measure.

Thus, a translation of “to restrain [completely]” best fits the context of the goals “to forgive (atone for) sin” and “to bring in everlasting righteousness.” If the restraining of the sins of unbelievers is equally in mind, then restraining of unbelievers’ sins would be retaining of sins as part of God’s judgment against them.

וּלְקַחֲתָם The Qal infinitive construct of the Ketiv comes from the root חָתַם (“seal up”) and may be understood here in the same sense as its usage in Job 14:17, “my transgression is sealed up (i.e., confined) in a bag,” as also in Song 4:12, “my bride is... a sealed fountain” (i.e., chaste). Here in Dan 9:24, taking the object “sin” (Ketiv, חַטָּאוֹת) would be blocking up sin for the purpose of restricting and limiting its damage, implying a not-yet-accomplished goal of removing it altogether. The Qere suggests the Hiphil infinitive construct of חָמַם (“to complete”), וּלְקַחֲתָם, to the effect “to reach full measure” or “to do something completely.” The two alternatives, Ketiv and Qere, are, in a sense, polar opposites, whether to “block up sin” (Ketiv) or “to bring (or to allow to come) to a maximum limit” (Qere). BHS notes that many manuscripts as well as Theodotian’s LXX, the Syriac, and the Vulgate use the Qere וּלְקַחֲתָם, while Symmachus’ LXX retains the Ketiv וּלְקַחֲתָם. Here again, assuming that the *Ketiv* of the MT has been transmitted with particular care, this study will retain the *Ketiv* whenever it can be understood as written, as there is no need to emend.

If the *Ketiv* is followed and understood in the sense of “seal up,” it may parallel usage of the same root **התם** later in this verse, used in the *Qal*, with the common usage of affixing a seal for the purpose of fastening an object. The most frequent act of sealing was for documents, serving the dual purpose of closing the document and, if sealed with an official signet, validating its source. Other items might receive a seal not simply to “close” them as with a document, but certainly to validate them by a known authority. This second usage, **וְלִהְתֶּם קִוּוֹן וְנִבְיָא** “to seal up revelation and a prophet,” would then suggest sealing them, whether to keep them safe until a more relevant time; to “close,” that is, to put a temporary or permanent stop to revelation and prophecy; or to validate or confirm. Perhaps a deliberate contrast is intended with the two different senses of the same word **התם**, first, in the *Hiphil* with an *undesirable* object for the purpose of “closing up” and “restraining” of sin, and second, in the *Qal*, with a *desirable* object for the purpose of “preserving” vision and prophet. If one argues for the *Qere* reading in the earlier phrase “to complete sin,” then usage of **התם** would parallel it to mean “put a stop” to vision and prophet. Reading the *Ketiv* as written would suggest “sealing” for preservation. This latter sense seems to be the command given to Daniel in 8:26 using a different verb: “Seal up (**סָתַם**) the vision, because it pertains to many days [from now].” Daniel is told to preserve it for a later time when it will be especially relevant. This idea from 8:26 might also be the sense here in 9:24.

**וּלְכַפֵּר עֲוֹן וּלְהַבְיָא צְדָקָה עַל־מִיָּם** The adjectival phrase **קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים**, “holy of holies,” here without an article, is taken as “most holy” as in Ex 29:37, 30:10, et al. throughout Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, as differentiated from **הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים** with the article on the second word, which means “the most holy place” or traditionally “the holy of holies.” Num 18:9 specifically uses both phrases, each in its distinct sense (definite and indefinite, although there the antecedents are

specified before the indefinite phrase). Here in Dan 9:24, the adjectival phrase is used substantively as it does not specify what noun it modifies. Therefore, a precise translation should leave the phrase substantive without inserting a noun, i.e., “a most holy” or “a holy of holies.”<sup>18</sup> The oracle’s explanation in the next two verses will indicate to what it refers.

9:25

מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד “An anointed one, a leader.” The two titles juxtaposed, each with no article, both absolute in form (ruling out a construct chain), indicate that the second title is in apposition to the first. This translation recognizes that the juxtaposition of the two titles forms a definite hendiadychic title that specifies one particular human being. See the interpretation of the passage on why this phrase must be understood as definite.<sup>19</sup>

שִׁבְעִים שִׁבְעָה “Seven Sevens.” By the *athnach*, the Masoretes suggest that the sentence should be significantly divided after the phrase “seven Sevens.” While Masoretic markings are not part of the inspired text itself, this translation agrees with the placement of the *athnach*, even over against the reasoning of the Masoretes. See the interpretation below for more information.

וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁשִׁים וּשְׁנָיִם “And for 62 Sevens.” The *waw* is disjunctive, so it may be translated “then” as an adverbial phrase indicating duration of time.

וְהָשִׁיב וְלִבְנוֹת “To restore and to build,” because, as Goldingay argues, “‘to rebuild’ (cf. Vg.; RSV) would require emending להשיב to לשוב (BHS) since שׁוּב is always in the Qal when it is used in coordination with another verb to indicate repeating an act (*Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 120d).”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, one must ask why the Ketiv has been transmitted so carefully in this form.

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<sup>18</sup> On translating this phrase, see Kliefoth, *Daniels*, 307; Keil, *Daniel*, 347–49; Gentry, “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks,” 40.

<sup>19</sup> A quick summary (after much analysis) of the word נָגִיד, especially as instituted in 2 Sam 7, is given in Donald Murray, *Divine Prerogative and Royal Pretension* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 301.

<sup>20</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 229.

Perhaps the apparent redundancy is for emphasis, drawing attention to the “restoration” aspect of God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer.

תשוב וְנִבְנְתָה Goldingay compares תשוב with the earlier הָשִׁיב, and suggests that “the usage in v. 25a suggests that תשוב is quasi-passive of הָשִׁיב, as נִבְנְתָה is passive of בָּנוּת.”<sup>21</sup> He translates this phrase, “it will be restored and rebuilt.”

רחוב Per BDB, רחוב is a broad, open place. According to TWOT, רחב ...

is used to describe the breadth or expanse of land or the width of an object. The root often occurs in descriptions of the spaciousness of the land of Canaan (Gen 26:22). It is the root of the place name, *Rehoboth* in the same context. It is repeated in reaffirmations of the extent of Israel’s promised inheritance both during and after the conquest of Canaan (Ex 34:24; Deut 12:20; Isa 54:2).<sup>22</sup>

In the context of a city, the word is most commonly used as a noun for an open space such as a plaza, such as in Neh 8:1, 3, 16 (two times).

On the common translation “with street and moat,” James Montgomery posits, “As ‘street’ stands for the interior of the city, so ‘moat’ for the line of circumvallation, and the two items present a graphic picture of the complete restoration.”<sup>23</sup> However, “street” and “moat” are both conjectures as to how these two words are functioning here, since their syntax here in 9:25 is unusual, and since חָרוֹץ is a *hapax legomenon*. Also, moats were not used in biblical Israel as a defense for a city, not even in Jerusalem. Inscribed stones, on the other hand, were common boundary markers in the ANE. BHS apparatus suggests a fossa, a “cut” drainage/sewer ditch that are common in most every ANE city. This would indicate that the restored city is a desirable and healthy place to live, even in times of distress. For רחוב, “plaza” is closer to the basic meaning of

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<sup>21</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 229.

<sup>22</sup> William White, "רחב", in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris et al.; electronic ed.; (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 840.

<sup>23</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 380.

“open space,” but even so, קרוץ “cut, delineated, delimited,” then seems paradoxical. An examination of the latter word forming an apparently deliberate paradox seems necessary to understand how the former word is functioning.

TWOT says of קרוץ, “Basic to the meaning of קרץ are the concepts ‘to cut or sharpen’ and ‘to decide.’”<sup>24</sup> In the context of this verse, especially in contrast to the basic meaning of רחב, קרוץ seems to indicate a limitation or boundary, a “delimiting” of the breadth or expansion of the city.

Carl Keil suggests a sensible translation:

The words רחב וקרוע plainly go together, as the old translators have interpreted them. Now רחב does not mean properly street, but a wide, free space, as Ezra 10:9, the open place before the temple, and is applied to streets only in so far as they are free, unoccupied spaces in cities. קרוץ, that which is cut off, limited, forms a contrast to this.... It is better to interpret them, with Kliefoth, as “wide space, and yet also limited,” according to which we have the meaning, “Jerusalem shall be built so that the city takes in a wide space, has wide, free places, but not, however, unlimited in width, but such that their compass is measured off, is fixed and bounded.”<sup>25</sup>

A suggestion in the BHS apparatus is to read קרוץ with Jer 5:1 and 9:20, which occurs in the same context as רחב and would give a sense of “outdoors” or “(wide) streets.” However, this seems as much of a stretch as seeking to understand the Ketiv as written without emending it.

Taken together, רחב וקרוע seems to indicate a broadness while paradoxically being delimited with boundaries. This translation reads these adjectives functioning as adverbs rather than as substantive nouns, indicating the manner in which the city will be built.

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<sup>24</sup> Harris, R. Laird; Harris, Robert Laird; Archer, Gleason Leonard; Waltke, Bruce K.; Harris, Robert Laird; Archer, Gleason Leonard; Waltke, Bruce K.: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1999), S. 326.

<sup>25</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 731.

9:26

יִכָּרֵת מָשִׁיחַ See the interpretation of this passage and the excursus “The Verb ‘*Karat*’ in OT Usage” for an extensive word study of the verb כרת. In short, this Niphal imperfect is translated with its most common usage, “Messiah will be removed.”

וְאֵין לוֹ “And there will be none to him.” Williams discusses the negative particle אֵין, saying, “[it] denies the existence of the thing represented by the following word, phrase, or clause.”<sup>26</sup> Whether the לוֹ is functioning as a dative of [dis]advantage,<sup>27</sup> which is more likely here, or as a possessive,<sup>28</sup> the meaning comes out the same. The phrase is intentionally ambiguous. That absolutely nothing is specified following אֵין is the point exactly, that there will be no assets, “nothing,” or no people, “no one” at all to the advantage of or belonging to the person in question.

וְהָעִיר וְהַמִּקְדָּשׁ “But as for the city and the sanctuary.” Here the disjunctive waw indicates a change of subject.<sup>29</sup>

יִשְׁחָת A word study of שחח reveals that its usages in the Qal and Piel are most often to “spoil, ruin” and “pervert, corrupt”<sup>30</sup> in a moral or spiritual sense, more than indicating “destruction” in a physical sense. In the Hiphil, the sense is sometimes understood as “destroy” because it is a spoiling or damaging, a corruption so that the object is no longer fit to serve its intended purpose, and in some cases “demolishing.” However, there are a number of clearer verbs available if complete physical destruction (as in dismantling, decimating, or demolishing)

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<sup>26</sup> Williams §407a.

<sup>27</sup> Williams §271a.

<sup>28</sup> Williams §270.

<sup>29</sup> Williams §573c.

<sup>30</sup> BDB, sv. שחח, 1007–8.



were in mind, so the translator must bear in mind the “moral corruption” usage that this verb may also be suggesting.

וְקִצּוֹ “As for his end.” Another disjunctive *waw* indicating a change of subject.<sup>31</sup> The nearest antecedent for the third person masculine singular possessive suffix is נָגִיד הַבָּא, “the prince to come” which immediately precedes the word. It is unlikely that the third person possessive suffix refers back to “the city and sanctuary,” especially in the context of a passage about their restoration. This noun, coming from the root קָצַץ, “to cut off,”<sup>32</sup> unlike כרת, when used of a person means by implication “end of life” or “time of final punishment.”<sup>33</sup>

וְעַד קֵץ “And until an end.” The disjunctive *waw* separates this phrase from the previous phrase, וְקִצּוֹ בְשֹׁטֶר, despite the repetition of קֵץ. This phrase is strongly paralleled near the end of v. 27 with וְעַד-כֵּלֶה וְנִתְקַצָּה (“and until the delineated completion”) and seems to form an *inclusio*. An *inclusio* would mark the beginning and ending (namely, from here until the end of v. 27) of the description of the “delineated warfare” (see next phrase).

מִלְחָמָה נִתְקַצָּת שְׂמִמּוֹת “Delineated warfare, [namely,] desolations.” Verse 27 also uses the participle נִתְקַצָּת similarly, to indicate God’s unequivocal decision that such things must happen. Cf. also Dan 11:36 and Isa 10:23, 28:22. נִתְקַצָּת agrees in gender and number (feminine singular) with the preceding word, “warfare” (מִלְחָמָה), so most naturally modifies it, while the following plural noun, שְׂמִמּוֹת, stands in apposition. A majority of translators take the plural “desolations” (שְׂמִמּוֹת) as a collective singular concept, and so take the singular “delineated” (נִתְקַצָּת) as modifying it, but it seems forced to put the singular adjective with a plural noun, when it clearly and naturally follows a singular noun. The meaning comes out similarly either way. The

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<sup>31</sup> Williams §573c.

<sup>32</sup> TWOT, “קָצַץ”, 2:2062.

<sup>33</sup> BDB, s.v. קָצַץ, 893.

“warfare” consists of “desolations.” Another way to render the phrase would be to recognize שְׁמָמוֹת as an adverbial accusative, “warfare is decreed [unto] desolations.” While it may look like שְׁמָמוֹת is dangling unattached at the end of the verse (if not modified by נִהְרָצָת), it seems to connect v. 27 as a continuing qualification of what the “warfare” or “desolations” entail. שְׁמָמוֹת is most often translated “desolations” and is always used in the sense of things “lifeless,” cut off from life, either physically (as a land lacking in water and, therefore, of vegetation, usually as a result of disaster) or spiritually (as in separated from God by divine judgment).<sup>34</sup> Isa 62:4 gives implications of both senses of the word.

9:27

וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית לְרַבִּים “He will strengthen a covenant with the many.” The only available antecedent for the unspecified subject of the verb is the “coming prince” (נָגִיד הַבָּא) of the previous verse, which is also the antecedent of “his end.” The “coming prince” will continue to be the subject in the next phrase, “he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.”

וְהָצִי הַשְּׁבִיעַ “And for half of the week.” Goldingay suggests that “הָצִי” could denote *duration of time* (‘for half of,’ so RV, strongly Keil; cf. *Gesenius*, 118k), but *point of time* reads better (so LXX; NIV; strongly Doukhan, *AUSS* 17 [1979] 13; cf. *Gesenius*, 118i). While one would expect ב “in” before הָצִי, cf. the absolute use of הָצִי in Ps 119:62; Job 34:20.”<sup>35</sup>

זָבַח וּמִנְחָה This phrase, “sacrifice and offering,” is a *hendiadys*, two words commonly used together to express a single idea, here functioning as a metonymy for the entire worship life of God’s people. For other examples of the use of this hendiadys, see 1 Sam 2:29, Ps 40:6, Isa

<sup>34</sup> TWOT, s.v. שָׁמַם, 2:2409.

<sup>35</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 230.

19:21, and Amos 5:25. The phrase gives emphasis to the physical aspects of the people's worship, especially offering of gifts to God.

וְעַל כַּנְף שְׁקוּצִים מְשֻׁמָּם “And upon the wing of horrors [he will be] the desolator.” Since שְׁקוּצִים is absolute and not construct, the participle מְשֻׁמָּם (about which see the next note) is appositional, restating the continuing referent in the sentence, the antecedent “prince to come” (נְגִיד הַבָּא) of the previous sentence. כַּנְף “wing,” when not used of a bird, is used metaphorically. In Dan 9:27, the context seems to suggest a power which gives impetus. Another similar usage may be found in Isa 8:8, where the invading king of Assyria is described metaphorically as a flooding river whose extremities (כַּנְפוֹת, “streams” or “wings” or “fingers”) fill the entire land of Immanu-El. A majority of interpreters translate כַּנְף in Dan 9:27 as “wing” but connect it with the temple,<sup>36</sup> but this seems like unnecessary conjecture. Here the “wing of horrors” seems to be the power that extends the influence of the desolator, similarly to that of the typical enemy of ch. 8, who will “in rebellion cast truth to the ground, and will act and advance” (8:12).

שְׁמָם / מְשֻׁמָּם It is debated whether מְשֻׁמָּם is a Poel (passive) participle or Qal (active) transitive participle, although the meaning works out the same in either case. BDB lists the root שְׁמָם in the Qal as “to be desolated,” that is, cut off from human contact because of deprivation or affliction, or alternatively “to be appalled, awestruck,” with a note that a connection between the two meanings is unclear.<sup>37</sup> The TWOT, however, offers a suggestion that may bridge the two meanings, “devastated,”<sup>38</sup> which can refer to both places and things as well as to people. The verb expresses the action either as passive, “to be devastated, appalled [by someone or

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<sup>36</sup> Note the translations in the LXX, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν, and the Vulgate, “et in templo.” English translations following this include NJB, HCSB, NIV, TNIV, and JPS Tanak.

<sup>37</sup> BDB, s.v. שְׁמָם, 1031.

<sup>38</sup> TWOT, s.v. שְׁמָם, 2:2409.

something],” with the transitive act of devastating having already been done upon the subject. In other words, the person, place, or object that ends up in the condition of devastation has been subjected to such a condition by an outside source or circumstance. However, the verb may also express a transitive active action by a subject, that is, ravaging or causing devastation. The Poel can reflect either the transitive passive or transitive active meaning, whether passively “to be appalled, awestruck,” or, similarly to the Hiphil, actively “causing” such conditions. HALOT suggests that the second participle of Dan 9:27, שָׁמַם, might be a shortened form (as in also Dan 8:13 and 12:11) of the former שָׁמַם and thus be a Poel participle, but can also be read as a Qal transitive [active] participle, “devastator, desolator.”<sup>39</sup> Steinmann reasons that it “has the same meaning and referent as the Poel participle שָׁמַם in the preceding clause.”<sup>40</sup> However, uses of the verb in the Qal express either a stative meaning, “to be desolate,” or a transitive meaning, “to desolate,” and so if שָׁמַם is read as a Qal participle, then it could refer to the state of desolation as in “the desolated one.” In the context, since the enemy in question is being overwhelmed in the flood of God’s judgment as “his end,” then “desolated one” would make sense for שָׁמַם. Otto Plöger, for example, shows that he is reading the two participles in different senses as he translates first, “den, der verwüstet,”<sup>41</sup> and later, “ein Verwüstender.”<sup>42</sup>

כָּלֵה וְנִחְרָצָה seems to be a direct quote from Isa 10:23 and 28:22, a hendiadys serving as a promise of final judgment upon the enemies of Yahweh, and so may be translated as a definite “the delineated completion.” Language from Isa 10:22, especially כָּלֵה וְנִחְרָצָה, “A completion is delineated, flooding [overflowing] with righteousness,” is also clearly echoed here

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<sup>39</sup> HALOT, s.v. שָׁמַם, 1564.

<sup>40</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 449-50.

<sup>41</sup> Otto Plöger, *Kommentar zum Alten Testament—Das Buch Daniel* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1965), 133.

<sup>42</sup> Plöger, *Daniel* 135.

in Dan 9, with the “decided completion / finishing off” of the enemy coming as a “flood of righteousness” to overwhelm the enemy and to deliver God’s people. The phrase וְעַד־כְּלֵהּ (“and until a completion”) on the one hand recalls both the וְקִצּוֹ (“and his end”) and the וְעַד קֶץ (“and until an [his] end”) of v 26. However, by the use of a different noun, כְּלֵה, this phrase indicates the specific act of “finishing off” of the implied object, the נְגִיד הַבָּא.

וְתִתֵּן “Will gush.” The feminine singular subject of the verb is the closest feminine singular noun, כְּלֵה “completion.” This completion harkens back to the beginning of the sentence, “and until [his] end,” which was a carry-over from the end of the previous sentence, “and his end will be in a flood.” The “completion” of v. 27 is, in fact, “the flood” of v. 26, so its “gushing” is an overwhelming finishing.

עַל־שָׁמַיִם “Upon the desolator (or desolated one).” See discussion of מְשַׁמֵּם and שָׁמַם above. If this participle is read as a Qal participle in the stative sense, then the sense here would be “one cut off from life,” since God’s desolation is now coming upon the one who had until now caused desolation, so that the desolator himself is now the desolated one, cut off from life. If the participle is read in a transitive sense, then it is simply the same “desolator” as in the Poel participle. Since both of these “upon the desolator” phrases refer to the same definite person, all the nouns become definite even though anarthrous.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EIGHT INTERPRETIVE PROBLEMS OF THE SEVENTY SEVENS

#### The Problem of the “70 Sevens”

The time period Yahweh establishes for the purpose of sanctifying his people and his holy city is a symbolic “seventy sevened-things,” “seventy groups of seven,” or simply “seventy sevens” (שְׁבַעִים שְׁבַעִים, 9:24). A similar construction is perhaps seen in Ex 34:7, where “thirds” (שְׁלִישִׁים) and “fourths” (רְבָעִים) indicate groups of descendants to come. While it is clear that this unusual plural form שְׁבַעִים is not the expected שָׁבָעוֹת, “weeks,” and although Steinmann suggests that the best translation is “weeks” (with the caveat that the word is used in a symbolic sense), the present study will avoid the word “weeks” to preserve its apparent intended symbolic usage as disassociated with specific time referents. Since “seven” is not a noun, then to call the periods of time “sevens” as a nominative reflects the intentional ambiguity of the oracle. Further, Edward Young also points out the unusual usage of the masculine gender: “What led Daniel to employ the masculine instead of the feminine however, is not clear unless it was for the deliberate purpose of calling attention to the fact that the word sevens is employed in an unusual sense.”<sup>1</sup>

Many gallons of ink have been applied to explain and translate this time period of “seventy sevens” into definite, earthly days or years. This distinctive usage suggests that the text remains a cryptic designation meant not to spell out exact earthly chronology, but simply to represent a fairly broad and complete period of time, though not indefinite, but rather limited according to God’s plan. The chronology is intentionally ambiguous from a human perspective. Thus, the phrase, although used somewhat irregularly in 9:25, seems to clue the hearers of the oracle that a theme-concept of “broadness within limitation” seems to pervade the vision and oracle. As will

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<sup>1</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 195.

be discussed, God's city to be built during the period of 62 sevens is described as being built רחוב וְהָרִיז (9:25), within his established boundaries (הָרִיז) and yet so widely (רָחֹב) that it (eventually) will fill the entire earth (cosmos).

The Historical-Critical school of interpretation leans heavily on the sabbatical theology of Lev 25–26, applying its jubilee of “seven Sabbaths (weeks) of years, forty-nine years” (שְׁבַע שָׁנָה וְאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, Lev 25:8) to the 70x7s of Dan 9:24, interpreting them as ten jubilees, or 490 years. While the “seven Sabbaths” of the sabbatical theology does correlate to God's restoration of creation, such sabbath restoration is temporary and needed to be repeated indefinitely, while in Daniel God promises an eternal restoration. Even if the historical critics were viewing the oracle of the 70x7s as prophetic of historical events, a literalistic computation of 490 years proves to be problematic, as has been observed, and cannot be worked out to point to Antiochus IV without serious concessions. It also begs the question of why Gabriel does not simply say, “weeks of years” rather than the oddly specific and vague form of “sevens.” The cryptic symbolism is one indicator that a different perspective is being revealed, the trans-historic apocalyptic perspective.

John Goldingay sums up the objection of First Coming of the Messiah interpreters to an attempt to identify “seventy sevens” as a literally specific period of time, whether 490 years or otherwise.

The critical view has usually been that the seventy sevens extend as one sequence from some point in the sixth century to the period of Antiochus Epiphanes. Dan 9 is then an overestimate and Daniel is faulted for its “wrongheaded arithmetical calculations” (Porteous). A fundamental objection to such attempts either to vindicate or to fault Daniel's figures is that both are mistaken in interpreting the 490 years as offering chronological information. It is not chronology but chronography: a stylized scheme of history used to interpret historical data rather than arising from them, comparable to cosmology, arithmology, and genealogy as these appear in writings such as the OT.... None of this background suggests that either the total period of 490 years or its subdivisions are to be expected necessarily to correspond numerically to

chronological periods. Our attempt to link them with such periods is to be made on the basis of exegetical considerations as these arise from the passage, not of actual chronology.... Verses 25–27 subdivide the seventy sevens into 7, 62, and 1; vv. 26–27 focus on the last. Chronologically, v. 24 describes what will have been achieved by the end of vv. 25–27; within vv. 25–27, matters are treated in chronological order [against Payne, *JETS* 21 (1978), 97–115; Doukhan, *AUSS* 17 (1979), 12–15)].<sup>2</sup>

Goldingay seems to reflect the point that apocalyptic vision, rather than “prophecy” in the strict sense, calls for a figurative reading of the “sevens.” Interpreting the text as prophecy, it would be appropriate to look for fulfillment in terms of years specified. He asserts that the text itself does not intend to make outright literal chronological references (e.g., numbers of years), and says the exegesis of the passage calls for general chronological identifications of the “sevens.” Within the 70x7s, the groups of “sevens” do indicate a chronological order, but they are to be understood figuratively and relative to one another (e.g., seven sevens are “short,” sixty-two sevens are “very long,” and a single seven is “very short”).

This study rather finds agreement more specifically with Herbert Leupold (in agreement with the interpretation of Theodor Kliefoth and Carl Keil), who lays out the theological reason to understand this cryptic “seventy sevens” phrase.

Since there is nothing in our chapter that indicates a “heptad of days” as a meaning for *shabbu'im* or a “heptad of years,” the only safe translation, if we do not want to resort to farfetched guesses, of this fundamental expression is seventy “heptads”—seventy “sevens”—seventy *Siebenheiten*.... Now, since the week of creation, “seven” has always been the mark of divine work in the symbolism of numbers. “Seventy” contains seven multiplied by ten, which, being a round number, signifies completion, perfection. Therefore, “seventy heptads”—7x7x10—is the period in which the divine work of the greatest moment is brought to perfection. There is nothing fantastic or unusual about this to the interpreter who has seen how frequently the symbolism of numbers plays a significant part in the Scriptures... “[S]eventy heptads” is designed to describe all future time from the days of Daniel unto the end of time, the time fixed in God’s councils for perfectly achieving his holy work as 7x7x10 suggest symbolically—God’s program for all the ages.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 260.

<sup>3</sup> Leupold, *Daniel*, 409, 410.



Young also voices his agreement with this view: “[An] appeal to the years of Jeremiah does not prove that weeks of years are intended, and in fact, there is no satisfactory proof of this position. Keil, therefore, correctly, I believe, follows Kliefoth in the assumption that the reference is to ‘an intentionally indefinite designation of a period of time measured by the number seven, whose chronological duration must be delineated on other grounds.’”<sup>4</sup>

Joyce Baldwin further elaborates on this theological significance that the numbers recall: “Seventy years was the fixed term of divine indignation (Zech 1:12)... This ritual understanding of the term takes it beyond the merely numerical into the theological and ethical realm.... Seventy years had a symbolic significance, and so the new term [“seventy sevens”] may be expected to have an element of symbolism, to be taken into account in any attempt at interpretation.”<sup>5</sup> The “symbolic significance” of seventy as a “fixed term of divine indignation” is seen in many other passages as well.<sup>6</sup> Baldwin’s phrase “ritual understanding” is in agreement with John Collins’ concept of “apocalyptic imagination,” that in the larger context of the prophetic Scriptures and their collective vision, certain repetition of symbols builds a framework for understanding even cryptic images and words of heavenly visions. Canonical apocalyptic literature, including Daniel’s visions, builds upon this framework that is structured around the collective imagery and imagination of prophetic vision.

The use of the ‘seventy sevens’ as a temporal structure for talking about the unfolding of the Age of the Fulfillment—and in particular the fact that it should not be taken as a period of ‘490 years’—is similar to Matthew’s theological temporal structure of his genealogy of the Messiah in ch. 1. The evangelist constructs a genealogical schema of three sets of 14 generations

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<sup>4</sup> Young, *Prophecy of Daniel*, 196.

<sup>5</sup> Joyce Baldwin, *Daniel*, TOTC 23 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 164, 168.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Chron 36:21; Isa 23:15, 17; Jer 25:11–12; 29:10; Zech 7:5.

that is not ‘historically accurate’ according to the Tanakh. This is not an historical mistake or a reflection of the evangelist’s ignorance of the OT record. This literary device was never intended to be taken as a strictly historical genealogy. What Matthew creates is a symbolic structure in the form of a genealogy in order to communicate the message that the birth of Jesus is the culmination, or the “full-filling,” as it were, of the Age of Promise (the OT) and the inauguration of the Age of Fulfillment (the NT). Similarly, the Seventy Sevens is not intended to represent a specific chronological period but a symbolic chronological schema that presents an overview (or map) of how the Age of Fulfillment will unfold.

### **The Problem of the Identity of “Messiah Prince”**

The oracle of the 70x7s is an explanation of aspects of the overarching vision of ch. 7, central to which is the vision of the “one like a son of man” who receives the divine dominion to rule over God’s kingdom and ultimately to confer the kingdom upon the saints of the Most High. In the oracle of ch. 9, reference is made to the coming of “Messiah Prince” as if Daniel and his reader should know who that is. The identity of “Messiah Prince” would be most unclear if this character had not already appeared in Daniel’s visions. But contextual clues point to the fact that this person has already been revealed not only in Daniel’s vision, but also in the Scriptures previously written. Since the overarching vision is given first to Daniel, it is appropriate to examine the central figure to that vision to understand to whom the oracle is later pointing backwards and identifying as “Messiah Prince.”

### **“One Like a Son of Man”**

Central to chapter 7, the second climactic sign of the revelation that Daniel sees is a being “like a son of man” coming “with the clouds of heaven” and into the presence of the Ancient of Days. In this overarching vision, the coming of the “one like a son of man” with the clouds to

מָצָה, “to reach/attain/arrive up to (עַד) the Ancient of Days” (7:13) gives a sense of arriving to the place or level of the Ancient of Days, certainly in a spatial sense, but perhaps metaphorically to the exalted position of authority and dominion of God. In the following verse this person in fact receives the divine dominion. This suggests that the placing of “thrones” (plural) in v. 9 was for that very purpose. Andrew Steinmann correctly observes:

Already in ancient times, Rabbi Akiba explained the thrones as “one for him [the Ancient of Days] and one for David.” This has a definite messianic coloring and implies that the Son of Man (7:13) is the coming Davidic king who will occupy a throne beside God the Father. This is already promised in Ps 110:1, where David says, “Yahweh/the LORD said to my Lord, sit at my right hand.”<sup>7</sup>

This concurs also with what John Goldingay notes, “‘Thrones’ כְּרִסְוֹן is plural; an interesting parallel is Ps 122:5 [‘There thrones for judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David.’]... [I]t suggests the exalted, glorious throne of David.”<sup>8</sup>

Collins is incorrect when he maintains that “there is no clear reference in Daniel to the restoration of the Davidic line.... There is no unambiguous reference in the book to a restored Davidic king.... There is no reason, then, to call the future kingdom messianic.”<sup>9</sup> On the contrary, the fact that the person who is “like a son of man” receives dominion to rule over God’s everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:14) can only refer back to God’s promise to David in 2 Sam 7:12–13, “I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” The promise to David and the conferral of everlasting dominion are unequivocal. Therefore, the one “like a son of man” must necessarily be the descendant of David whose kingdom God established forever.

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<sup>7</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 350.

<sup>8</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 165.

<sup>9</sup> John Collins, *The Scepter and the Star* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 37.

To the “one like a son of man” “is given dominion, honor, and a kingdom, so that all the peoples, nations, and languages [of the world] should worship him” (7:13). His dominion and kingdom, according to v. 14, are eternal and indestructible. The entire book of Daniel teaches that all true dominion, honor, and kingdom belong to God the Most High alone (Dan 2:44–45; 6:27; 7:27). By syllogism then, Daniel and his reader now come to understand that (1) since to God alone, the “Most High,” belong the eternal kingdom and dominion, whom alone all the earth must serve and obey; and (2) since all dominion, honor, and the eternal kingdom (2:44, 7:27) are given to the being “like a son of man,” so that all peoples of the earth should serve (i.e., worship)<sup>10</sup> him (7:13); therefore, (3) the being “like a son of man” is equal in worthiness, authority, and right to the “Most High,” so that he may legitimately receive dominion, glory, kingdom, and the worship of all peoples, nations, and languages. In terms of Christology and the New Testament, this means that all dominion and glory and kingdom were given to the Messiah according to his human nature, since according to his divine nature he has it from eternity by definition. The New Testament repeats this point in many places.

The significance of the vision is readily recognized, as Goldingay also shows:

The humanlike figure [in contrast to the animals from the sea] ...comes unequivocally from heaven, and as a human figure is also implicitly destined to exercise authority over the animals (Gen 1; cf. Jer 27:6; Dan 2:38; 4:17–19[20–22]). In contrast to the eagle-lion become human, [the figure] is inherently humanlike. In contrast to the leopard, the authority it is given is lasting, royal, and glorious. In contrast to the small horn, its humanlikeness is genuine, not contrived, and its heavenly glory is given, not seized. Of the figure’s identity, beyond its heavenly origin, the vision initially offers no indication. The point about it is the good news its coming implies. History neither continues as the distressing tale of terror at best, blasphemy at worst, nor does it simply break off in judgment and cataclysm. The pretense to heavenly authority yields to the earthly reality of heavenly authority. The grasping of the king symbolized by the small horn has paved the way for an endowment of supernatural power to be exercised on earth and recognized on earth.

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<sup>10</sup> Although the verb פלח in Hebrew is rendered according to the primitive root “to cleave,” and by extension “to cleave [plow, till] the earth, to work, to serve,” in the Aramaic texts of the OT it is used exclusively “to serve” God/a god in worship. See Ezr 7:20; Dan 3:14, 17, 18; 6:16. BDB, s.v. פלח, 1108; TWOT, s.v. פלח, 2:2940.

Ruling God's world on God's behalf, the humanlike figure fulfills the role once given to humanity as a whole at creation (Gen 1–2) and later bestowed on the king of Israel in particular (e.g., Ps 2). The realization of God's creation ideal comes not through the world's becoming more human but through God's gift of this humanlike person.<sup>11</sup>

Goldingay captures the essence of significance of the vision for the rhetorical purpose of the entire book of Daniel. God's dominion is his rule over his creation, with which he originally commissioned Adam and Eve to serve as his representatives to reign. When the humans sinned, however, "the realization of God's creation ideal" could not be possible without judgment and restoration. "God's gift of this humanlike person" is his agent to rule by God's dominion for the restoration of the creation, that is, all who will submit to his dominion. However, as will be seen, the "little horn" and all who rebel against the God-given dominion, attempting to side-step or usurp it, will face judgment and destruction (7:11, 26).

Thus, the revelation of the "one like a son of man," with characteristics both human and divine, is central to the overarching vision of Dan 7 and to the entire book of Daniel. As Eric Heaton says, "All that goes before leads up to this passage and all that comes after flows from it. Set over against the destructive beasts is the power and purpose of God, who, as in the beginning, will in the end subdue all things to himself (cf. 1 Cor 15:28),"<sup>12</sup> as Daniel says, "[for the purpose] that all peoples, nations, and languages serve him [i.e., the one like a son of man]" (7:14).

The person in question, called one "like a son of man" as one who appears in the form of a human, recalls the prophet Ezekiel, who, representing the people of God, is called the Hebrew equivalent of "son of man" 93 times. However, this "son of man" of Dan 7 may represent humanity but does not equal them, "the people of the saints" (7:27). Rather, he is "like a son of

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<sup>11</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 190.

<sup>12</sup> Eric Heaton, *The Book of Daniel*, Torch Bible Commentary (London: SCM Press, 1956), 178.

man,” but reigns with the authority and dominion of the Most High, whose kingdom is later given to the saints of the Most High as an inheritance (7:18).

John Collins, presenting a Historical-Critical interpretation, comes very close to the recognition of “the one like a son of man” in 7:13–14 in a way that might seem amicable to Messianic interpreters.

We are ... given no identification of the Ancient of Days by the angel. It is highly significant that the “one like a human being” is not interpreted either. He is associated with “the holy ones of the Most High,” insofar as they too are said to receive the kingdom, but there is no one-to-one equation, such as we have with the beasts and kings. If an argument is to be drawn from the nature of the symbolism, then it should favor the view that the “one like a human being” is a symbol of the same order as the Ancient of Days—a mythic-realistic depiction of a being who was believed to exist outside the vision.<sup>13</sup>

He also recognizes God’s eschatological kingdom in ch. 7.

The indestructibility of the kingdom recalls that of 2:44 but more particularly the sovereignty attributed to God in 3:33; 6:27. The first, Babylonian kingdom, provides the main standard of glory, which the *eschatological* kingdom will surpass.

But then, however, Collins evades a christological interpretation by concluding,

The conclusion that the holy ones are angelic beings supports the view that the “one like a human being” should be identified with Michael, the leader of the heavenly host. The specification of an individual angel does justice to the symbolism of the human figure in the vision. That the kingdom is variously given to an individual, to the holy ones, or to the people of the holy ones is analogous to the vacillation that we find between kings and kingdoms in the interpretation of the beasts.<sup>14</sup>

Collins’ rather arbitrary identification of the “one like a human being” with Michael the archangel evades the theological necessity of man’s relation to the creation as the image of God, as God’s own representative (אֱלֹהִים, Gen 1:26) over the creation, and puts an angel (or angels) in man’s place. This not only contradicts Ps 8:5–6, but also is the very evasion of God’s order of creation which are the intentions of the “little horn” enemy himself in 7:25. Collins shows that he

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<sup>13</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 305.

<sup>14</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 318.

means to replace Adam (humanity) with angels as the agents of God's dominion when he asserts, [T]he divine sovereignty is implemented by the holy ones [angels]. In Dan 7, likewise, the 'one like a son of man' and the holy ones mediate the sovereignty of God in the final, everlasting kingdom."<sup>15</sup> Thus, also, Collins places an angel as the object of worship in Dan 7:14, if indeed God's agent is an angel rather than the divine human. It leaves Michael as the one forever reigning over the everlasting kingdom and being worshiped in God's place (7:27).

James Montgomery identifies "the one like a son of man" to be a symbolic personification of the Israelite nation,<sup>16</sup> but Robert Thomas refutes this interpretation, asserting,

Dan 7:21–22 distinguishes between the saints and the Son of Man. On earth they suffer defeat at the hands of the little horn before receiving the kingdom, but in heaven the Son receives power to rule the whole earth without any prior warfare. Note also that the followers of the Son of Man are 'the saints, the people of the Most High,' indicating the equivalence of the Son of Man with the Most High.<sup>17</sup>

Steinmann agrees with Thomas, "The implication of the text could well be that the Messiah himself receives the kingdom for the sake of the saints and then gives it to them. Moreover, the saints are a separate entity from the Son of Man."<sup>18</sup> He goes on to conclude,

However, the context also clearly signals that he is much more than a human. In fact, since he possesses an eternal kingdom (7:14), he is God, who alone has a kingdom that does not end (2:44–45; 6:27; 7:27)... Thus the portrayal of the Son of Man in 7:13–14 is of a Messiah who is both human and divine.<sup>19</sup>

Further, Steinmann goes on to examine Dan 7 as an enactment of the enthronement of Yahweh's Messiah in Ps 2 and 110, concluding, "While not every element in Daniel is present in these two

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<sup>15</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 319.

<sup>16</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 319.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Thomas, "The Mission of Israel and of the Messiah in the Plan of God," *TMSJ* 8 9 (Fall 1997): 201fn46.

<sup>18</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 356.

<sup>19</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 358–59.

psalms, nor is every element in the psalms present in Daniel, these three passages present complimentary pictures of the enthronement of the Messiah.”<sup>20</sup>

In choosing the language that he does, Daniel is consciously drawing upon these traditions, especially as articulated in the kingship theology of the psalms and, to a lesser extent, Ezekiel.

Interpreters of various schools find common agreement on the convergence in the vision of Daniel 7 with wider biblical resonance of the eschatological imagery and hope of the OT.

Hamilton enumerates:

Daniel seems to have recognized wider biblical resonance in the symbols of the dream he recounts in ch 7, and he seems to have intended his audience to discern that resonance as well...the way that dominion over the beasts was given to the man in Gen 1:26–28. The Hebrew phrase ‘son of man’ would have evoked that first man... [T]he combination of ‘son of man’ and ‘dominion’ and ‘kingdom’ in the context of the OT canon immediately calls to mind Psalm 8, where David (see the superscription to Ps 8) styles himself a new Adam (cf. Ps 8:6–9 and Gen 1:28), a son of man (Ps 8:4) exercising dominion (Ps 8:6) over the beasts (Ps 8:7–8) in the kingdom God has promised to him and his seed (cf. Ps 2:5–12; 2 Sam 7:9–16).<sup>21</sup>

The psalms to which Hamilton refers point to the significance of the conferral of God’s dominion upon a human anointed agent. Daniel and his reader cannot help but recall that in Ps 2, anyone who resists God’s authority conspires עַל־יְהוָה וְעַל־מְשִׁיחוֹ (“against Yahweh and against his anointed one [Messiah]”), and that Yahweh’s Messiah is the only one who could stand on the same level as Yahweh and share his authority / dominion. In Ps 110:1–2, David gives a striking revelation,

The declaration of Yahweh to my Lord:  
‘Sit at My right hand  
until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet.  
Yahweh will send out the branch of Your might from Zion.  
Subdue from the center your enemies!’

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<sup>20</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 359.

<sup>21</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 90, 56–57, 94.



Paul Raabe captures the significance of the scene:

David refers to another human as ‘my Lord.’ God exalts and honors this human messianic King by inviting him to sit at God’s right hand. This is a figure of speech. It pictures God the Father as sitting on his heavenly throne where he rules over all things. Of course, there is no literal wooden chair where God the Father sits. Nor does God the Father have a physical, literal right hand or right side, since he is incorporeal. It is a figure of speech, depicting the First Person of the Trinity as a ruling Monarch. God exalts the human messianic King to God’s right hand, thereby exalting him to the highest place of honor and installing him into God’s universal rule over all nations and powers. God promises to place all the messianic King’s enemies under his feet so that they will all be subjugated and subject to the human King. In other words, God the Father will now rule over all things through this human messianic King... Christ’s ascension to the right hand means, first of all, Christ’s exaltation above all other powers and authorities.<sup>22</sup>

Psalms 110 then corresponds to Ps 2:6, “As for Me, I have consecrated My King upon Zion, My holy mountain,” in what Christopher Barina Kaiser aptly calls a “kyriocentric vision” of the OT’s throne theophanies.<sup>23</sup> Christopher Maronde lays out the significance of the messianic King in Ps 2:

First, there is a close connection throughout the text between YHWH and his King. Verse 2 links them together as a common enemy of the kings of the earth, and in v. 3, the bonds are “their” bonds. The use of the possessive pronoun also emphasizes that this King is “My” King, in other words, intimately tied up with YHWH. In Ps 2, YHWH’s own reign cannot be separated from the reign of the anointed King. Second, there is in this psalm a convergence of three titles: ‘anointed one,’ ‘king,’ and ‘son.’... Third, the narrative structure should be noted.... Opposition to YHWH and his King [is countered by] enthronement [of YHWH’s King] and the declaration that the King is God’s ‘son.’ The anointed King is then given authority to rule over those same kings who had opposed him, and those rulers are called upon to give obedience to the ‘son.’ The pattern is opposition by the enemies—enthronement of the ‘son’—subservience of the enemies.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Paul Raabe, “Christ’s Ascension and Session” *CJ* 45, no. 4 (2019): 73, 74.

<sup>23</sup> Christopher Barina Kaiser, *Seeing the Lord’s Glory: Kyriocentric Visions and the Dilemma of Early Christology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014).

<sup>24</sup> Christopher Maronde, “‘You Are My Beloved Son’: The Foundations of a ‘Son of God’ Christology in the Second Psalm,” *CTQ* 85 (2021): 313–40.

Psalm 89 also makes clear that the King who receives the everlasting kingdom is David's offspring. "Once for all I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before Me. Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies" (vv. 35–37). Therefore, the "one like a son of man" can only be David's promised offspring and no other; the alternative is that God is a liar.

A clear connection for readers of Daniel is found in Ezek 8:2, about which Hummel explains,

Ezekiel describes the same human, yet also supernatural, form of Yahweh's Glory he had perceived at the end of the inaugural vision (1:26b–28). This is no angelic messenger or interpreter as in chapters 40–48, but clearly Yahweh himself in a form "like a man" (דְּמוּת כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם, 8:2). *This is another appearance of the preincarnate Christ* [Hummel's own emphasis].<sup>25</sup>

One cannot help but think of this appearance and Ezekiel's language of "likeness of the appearance of a man" or "form / type" (תְּבִנּוּת, 8:3) in comparison to Daniel's description of the "one like a son of man" in 7:13. As Hummel also notes about Ezekiel's descriptions, "Here we have the same 'groping for vocabulary.' Not to say that Ezekiel's vision verifies Daniel's vision, but a clear exegetical and theological connection is established between the two."<sup>26</sup>

James Hamilton also recognizes parallels in Ezekiel for readers of Daniel:

The strong overtones of the Ezekiel 1 vision in Dan 7:9–10 increase the likelihood that Daniel intended his audience to recall Ezekiel as his role as suffering prophet who identified with his people when he used the phrase 'one like a son of man.' Ezekiel was himself an installment in the pattern of the righteous sufferer (a pattern abundantly attested in the Psalms)... As the son of man, Ezekiel was a prophet like Moses who was a suffering representative and substitute, all of which interfaces with Davidic hope and informs the reference in Dan 9:26 to the Messiah being cut off and having nothing.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 246.

<sup>26</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 246.

<sup>27</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 151.

Many suggestions<sup>28</sup> have been put forth for the identity of the “one like a son of man” of Dan 7:13, from mythic character to an angel to Yahweh’s Messiah. Chrys Caragounis maintains a healthy balance of what is said and inferred in Dan 7 contrasted with speculation:

The attempts to interpret the Danielic ‘SM’ [Son of Man] with the help of various Near Eastern reconstructions of possible backgrounds are shown to be unsuccessful and lacking in credibility.... A careful exegesis of Dan 7 reveals that the Son of Man is portrayed as a heavenly Being with honors and powers normally predicated of God, and is... identified with the *Elyonin*. This Figure is distinguished from the Most High, which is another name for the Ancient of Days or God. The ‘SM,’ as a Figure alongside the Ancient of Days, may have been suggested by the concept of the Messiah as God’s vicegerent on earth, but is quite different from this latter concept and... is dictated by Daniel’s dynamic conception of history and of the human situation (so-called apocalyptic), in which the concept of the traditional messiah is deemed insufficient and must, therefore, be superseded by a new conception of the Agent of God’s Kingdom and the Vindicator and Leader of God’s people. The nationalistic horizons are unable to bound the new ideas, whose perspective is universal, indeed, cosmic.<sup>29</sup>

Although Caragounis hesitates to identify this “one like a son of man” with the Davidic Messiah, he recognizes that the humanlike figure indeed rules by the authority of God as “the Agent of God’s Kingdom and the Vindicator and Leader of God’s people.” The perspective is cosmic.

The fact that the “one like a son of man” comes “with the clouds of heaven” identifies him with Yahweh who “makes the clouds his chariot” (Ps 104:3; cf. Jer 4:13). Clouds are a key component of the dwelling place of God (Ps 97:2), representing the “height” of his majesty. In Isa 14:13–14, the usurping enemy seeks to “ascend to the heavens” and “ascend above the elevations of the cloud” to make himself “comparable to / like the Most High.” The “one like a son of man” comes “with” the clouds (in contrast to an enemy who would exalt himself “above” the clouds) and “attained to the Ancient of days,” that is, he came onto the same “level” together with the Ancient of Days. All interpreters who view this passage christologically must agree with

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<sup>28</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 304–10; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 168–72.

<sup>29</sup> Chrys Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 82–83.

Edward Young who goes so far as to assert, “It is a divine Being which sits on the throne of judgment, and it is a divine Being who comes with the clouds of heaven in great majesty....

These facts compel us to acknowledge that here is an adumbration of the doctrine of the Trinity later to be revealed in its fulness.”<sup>30</sup> But even the interpreter who will not go that far with Young is compelled by further evidence in Dan. 7 and 9 which reveal the identity of this person “like a son of man.” Daniel was describing his vision and saying that “this figure looks like a human, not like an animal.” In terms of Christology, the phrase refers to the Messiah as true man, “son of man.”

While the vision given to Daniel of the person “like a son of man” receiving from the Most High God divine power and authority is unique in the OT, the overall genre of the vision with its symbolic language incorporates many features of the eschatology of the Major Prophets.

Hummel demonstrates the hermeneutical significance of the “Son of Man” as a person and of the vision in Dan 7 in tying together scriptural eschatology:

[I]n general, the Son of Man complex employs other symbols than the royal ones of Messianism (in the narrow sense). Nevertheless, the figure is as “Messianic” as can be, as the NT makes plain.... As even radical [historical] criticism recognizes in its perverse way, there is little doubt that “Son of Man” was designed by the Holy Spirit as a major magnet around which...the other component parts of OT prophecy were attracted (eschatological prophet, priest, and king, as well as Suffering Servant). This “Son of Man” capstone to all of apocalyptic’s relative novelties thus well summarizes the pivotal hermeneutical significance which apocalyptic plays in a unified and genuine “Biblical Theology.”... Likewise, precisely because the NT to a large extent finds access (if you will) to the OT through apocalyptic, it also serves as the conservative’s major key to the proper understanding and exposition of the older covenant.<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, Hummel can hardly be clearer or more emphatic, and correctly so, about the identity of the “one like a son of man” of Dan 7:13–14.

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<sup>30</sup> Edward Young, *Daniel’s Vision of the Son of Man* (London: Tyndale, 1958), 22.

<sup>31</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 558.

While the heavenly apocalyptic vision given to Daniel in the sixth century BC seems to be quite explicit in the identity of the “one like a son of man,” at the same time it precludes any attempts to identify him as a particular historical person (other than the promised Offspring of David). By nature, the vision into the throne room of the Most High God is outside of time and space.

It is curious that no interpretation is given to Daniel regarding the “one like a son of man” in ch. 7, nor does Daniel ask the interpreter for more information about him. Could this matter be like the “thrones set up” (7:9) with no occupants of the thrones identified? Those details are left “blank” for now and are reserved for filling in later. However, such does not mean that this figure is either without precedent or without later “filling in” in the Scriptures. It only means that the identity of the “one like a son of man” is withheld from Daniel for the purposes of this vision.

John Goldingay asserts,

The grounds for identifying the humanlike figure as the Davidic anointed are circumstantial ones. There are no direct pointers to this in the text, though as the one whom God commissions to exercise his kingly authority, the humanlike figure fulfills the role of the anointed one, whether or not he is actually an earthly Davidide.... Chap. 7 invites us to focus on the humanlike figure’s role rather than its identity.<sup>32</sup>

Goldingay has a good point about the humanlike figure’s “Davidide” role, but may be overstating the case to say that the evidence to identify him as a Davidide is merely “circumstantial,” since the images and themes in Daniel’s vision point to the dominion of the Most High conferred upon a human agent in agreement with God’s promises to David, whose descendant would reign over the eternal kingdom (2 Sam 7:12–13). Again, the connection with Psalm 89 to this humanlike figure in Dan 7 is more than circumstantial.

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<sup>32</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 170, 172.

Interpreters of various schools are hard-pressed to agree on the identity of the “one like a son of man,” notwithstanding that the seer Daniel himself knows not the specific identity of the person nor at what time in history this person will be revealed. The vision seems to call for Daniel and his reader to be content with a “sketch” for the present, which will be “filled in” later.

Daniel the seer was troubled and confused about the vision (7:15), and apparently about the contradictory and contrasting signs of the “little horn” who was blaspheming God and of the “one like a son of man” to whom was entrusted God’s authority. So, a heavenly interpreter explains that the four beasts Daniel saw in the vision are “four kings” (7:17), but that the most important thing about the vision is that “the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and possess it forever” (7:18). Paul Raabe asserts that the positioning of vv. 16b–18, which is the angel’s brief interpretation of the vision in the center of the chapter’s chiasmic structure, reveals its significant role to serve as a brief, all-inclusive interpretation of the whole vision.<sup>33</sup> He lays out the chiasmic structure thus:

vv. 1–2a . . . . .	Prologue
vv. 2b–14 . . . . .	Vision
vv. 15–16a . . . . .	Seer’s request for clarification
vv. 16b–18 . . . . .	Angel’s brief interpretation
vv. 19–20 . . . . .	Seer’s request for further clarification
vv. 21–22 . . . . .	Vision
vv. 23–27 . . . . .	Angel’s longer interpretation
v. 28 . . . . .	Epilogue

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<sup>33</sup> Raabe, “Daniel 7,” 270.

The vision makes immediately clear that the receiving of authority to rule, i.e., dominion and kingdom, is an overarching theme. The angel's "brief interpretation" points to the beasts of the vision, representing earthly kings who may receive dominion for a time and/or be made to surrender dominion. However, ultimate dominion, i.e., the everlasting rule and reign of God, is given first to the being "like a son of man," and will later be given, in a manner not yet revealed, to "the saints of the Most High."

Daniel 7:18 cuts to the chase of the purpose of the eternal kingdom, that the saints of the Most High may receive the kingdom and possess it forever and ever ("to the [new] age and to the age of ages"). That is why Daniel does not need to ask about the "one like a son of man" further in ch. 7. But Gabriel will in fact "fill in the blanks" in the interpretation in 9:25, not so much about the specific identity of the "one like a son of man," but with details about the *work* he will accomplish by the dominion, rule and reign of the Most High.

#### "Messiah Prince"

While it is true that it is impossible to identify this person "like a son of man" as a specific historical human being from the evidence of Dan 7 alone, this identification is made clear with the juxtaposition of the supplementary oracle of the 70x7s in 9:24–27. In the latter, the same person (as will be demonstrated by the wording and logic of the texts) is called "Messiah Prince" (מָלְאֲכִים נְגִידָה). The placing of these two titles put together into one requires three necessities: (1) it must refer to a human being in history; (2) it must indicate only one particular human being as Yahweh's agent of Psalm 2 and 110; and (3) it must refer to the "one like a son of man" of Dan 7:13–14. These necessities come together not only in the person of the Messiah Prince, but especially in his work.

That work of God's agent Messiah is seen, as Jeffrey Gibbs stresses, by two important points in Jesus' own interpretation of Psalm 110 that are unique over against the scribal tradition of the day, or lack thereof. First, "The voice of the Father in Ps 110:1 speaks to the Messiah, inviting him to the place of highest conceivable honor and repose and vindication, while his enemies are subjected and disgraced under his feet."<sup>34</sup> True as that is, to which even the Jewish teachers may have consented, Jesus further shows that the Messiah of whom Ps 110 prophesies must be, in particular, God's own son. The identity of the Messiah as God's Son is crucial because it establishes him alone as the one who can accomplish the *work* of his reign as Messiah. Gibbs rightly asserts, "To confess that Jesus is God's perfect and unique Son declares *what he will do*—the shape of his ministry and the purpose of his coming to Israel and the world. His purpose will be to *act* as the Son, to obediently serve his Father and enact the Father's scriptural will."<sup>35</sup> By that will, the Scriptures would be fulfilled that the Messiah would accomplish his atoning work of sanctifying the people of God to be "saints" and for the ultimate purpose "to bring in everlasting righteousness" (9:24).

Richard France also stresses that the title "Messiah" is more about his *mission* than his identity. Peter confesses Jesus to be the Messiah (Matt 16:16), "the one climactic figure in whom God's purpose is finally being accomplished. In that he has made the crucial breakthrough."<sup>36</sup> He alone by his identity is qualified for the mission, but the mission itself is the work of sanctifying God's people and reigning over the eternal kingdom he is building and growing. That is why Jesus responds to Peter's confession, "And on this rock I will build my church" (Matt 16:18). The how, why, and when of the building of his church Jesus gives at his ascension into heaven,

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<sup>34</sup> Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Matthew 21:1–28:20*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2018), 1166.

<sup>35</sup> Gibbs, *Matthew 21:1–28:20*, 1169.

<sup>36</sup> R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 618.



“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, as you go along,<sup>37</sup> make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19).

This work of the Messiah in building the eternal kingdom-city is laid out in the oracle of the 70x7s. The first epoch delineated, seven sevens “until Messiah Prince” (עַד- מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד, Dan 9:25) is kept broad in reference, referring neither to the year of the Messiah’s birth nor to any other specific year or day of his lifetime. The main point is the *coming* of “Messiah Prince.” He is recognized as God’s agent of salvation because his *coming* initiates or inaugurates the restoration and rebuilding of God’s holy city during the next “62 sevens” (9:25). The coming of this person is not simply the culmination of the first “seven sevens,” but it is what makes possible the subsequent restoration and building in the next “62 sevens.” God’s eschatological plan of judgment and salvation could not continue without this crucial inaugural event.

The juxtaposition of two titles, “anointed (Messiah)” and “Prince” seem cryptic, leading James Montgomery to assert, “Both terms are ambiguous, and their combination does not assist identification.”<sup>38</sup> However, it is important to remember the key purpose of the overarching vision of ch. 7, namely, to show Daniel and all the world that the “one like a son of man” is the one to whom God gives the ultimate divine dominion, which properly may only belong to God alone, who alone is to be worshipped (1 Sam 7:3). And yet now, this “one like a son of man” is given that very dominion and honor, so that all of the creation should now worship and honor him as they should God himself (and him alone). The titles point to his unique identity in relation to the Ancient of Days. But just as important is the purpose, the work God commissions him to do. His possession of the divine dominion also indicates that he is God’s chosen agent, “Messiah,”

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<sup>37</sup> Gibbs, *Matthew 21:1–28:20*, 1623.

<sup>38</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 379.

“anointed one” in every antitypical sense, the agent through whom the Ancient of Days himself will carry out both his judgment against sin and rebellion and his salvation, which is the sanctification of his saints (“sanctified ones”) (Isa 52:13–53:12). Daniel and his reader are prompted in 9:25 to think of “Messiah Prince” as a specific anointed man, and in the context of Dan. 7 and 9, both a priest of “the Most High” (7:27), since he makes holy a people (קדוּשׁוֹ עַל־יוֹנִין, “saints of the Most High”), and king, having received dominion and the eternal kingdom from the Most High (7:14). He is called a “prince” (נָגִיד 9:25, “literally *one in front, front-runner, leader*”<sup>39</sup>) in the same way that Saul and David were Yahweh’s chosen leaders (“front-runners”) of his people. This anointed one is qualified as a prince, “one in front,” because (and only because) Yahweh put him in such a position, as is exclusively the case with anyone Yahweh calls נָגִיד.<sup>40</sup> This is another crucial point both for the vision and for the book of Daniel. The anointed agent, the one “like a son of man” (7:13), to whom the Most High gives dominion and glory and the eternal kingdom (7:14), is the One God has “put forward,” establishing as King on his holy hill (Ps 2:6).

A word study of נָגִיד reveals the root idea of “prominence.”<sup>41</sup> The verb נָגַד means to “to put in front, tell, make known, make prominent, reveal.” נָגִיד is an adjective, here used substantively to refer to a person who is made prominent, as in an office-bearer. Throughout the OT as well as other ANE literature, the king was the agent of God (or the gods), generally to maintain the order of the “human cosmos,” as the gods did the “broader cosmos.” This included (and perhaps primarily so) the maintenance of justice and the social order of community. TWOT summarizes

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<sup>39</sup> BDB, s.v. נָגִיד, 617.

<sup>40</sup> Donald F. Murray, *Divine Prerogative and Royal Pretension* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 301.

<sup>41</sup> TWOT, s.v. נָגִיד, 2:1289.

the scriptural usage that “divine glory (Ps 19:1 [MT 19:2]; 97:6) and righteousness (Ps 50:6) are made known and brought to prominence by the visible creation.”<sup>42</sup>

To understand “Messiah Prince” in Dan. 9:25, it is especially important to note the connections of the title מָלִיךְ with God’s covenant promises. God makes a promise to David (as מָלִיךְ) to make David’s descendant rule on the throne over God’s people forever, according to 2 Sam 7:8–16.<sup>43</sup> David later calls this an “everlasting covenant, arranged in everything (עֲרוּכָה בְּכֹל)” in 2 Sam. 23:5. In Isa 55:3–4, Yahweh firmly promises this “everlasting covenant” to his people, specifying it as the very covenant he made with David, who is “a witness to the peoples, a prince (מָלִיךְ) and commander for the peoples” (Isa 55:4). Here מָלִיךְ is intimately connected with David and the everlasting covenant, which is “an everlasting sign that will not be cut off” (יִכָּרֵת, Isa 55:13), reminding God’s people to be strong in hope in this context of the promise of eschatological restoration. The people were to look to David’s Offspring, the Child who in Isa 9:6–7 would be the bearer of God’s dominion, whose “princedom” (הַמְּשָׁרָה) will be the everlasting reign of “the throne of David.” Reed Lessing recalls, “Yahweh’s commitment to the house of David stands forever. This is demonstrated through [Isaiah’s] Suffering Servant (Isa 52:13—53:12).”<sup>44</sup> Thus, God’s people are to think of God’s eschatological restoration in the context of his covenant with David, especially the promise of the “son of David” to rule the everlasting kingdom, which God also connects to his law and order of creation, as He says in Jer 33:20–21: “Thus says the LORD: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne.” The

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<sup>42</sup> TWOT, s.v. מָלִיךְ, 2:1289.

<sup>43</sup> See also 2 Sam 23:5; Ps 89:4, 29, 35 [ET 89:3, 28, 34]; Jer 33:21; 2 Chron 13:5.

<sup>44</sup> Reed Lessing, *Isaiah 40–55*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2011), 652–53.

hope of eschatological restoration of God's sanctuary and city is made firm through God's covenants both with "day and night" and with David.

The concepts of the dominion of Yahweh over his creation, the godly king who exercises that dominion (reigns) over and among God's people, the city and sanctuary where God's people interact with the godly king and Yahweh himself, and the promise of the eschatological city Zion/mountain of God are intimately connected throughout the prophets and come together in Dan. 7 and 9. The dominion of the divine agent, the "one like a son of man" who is given eternal dominion over the indestructible kingdom of the Most High God, can be none other than the fulfillment of God's covenant with David, "I [made you] prince (מֶלֶךְ) over My people... And I will appoint a place for My people Israel... Yahweh will make a house for you... I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam 7:8–13). In Dan 7, the "one like a son of man" is given dominion over the everlasting kingdom, so he may properly be called "son of David." In Dan 9, this same person, called Messiah Prince, will inaugurate the building of God's kingdom-city, much as the offspring of David in 2 Sam 7 will "build a house for [Yahweh's] name." Thus, God's covenant with David becomes a key link in the inextricable connection between Dan 7 and 9, which also illuminates the role(s) of the "one like a son of man" who is Messiah Prince. He will build a house—indeed, restoring God's sanctuary and city—in the building of the new Jerusalem.

Jason Soenksen recognizes this inextricable linking also in the prophecies of Micah 4–5 (among other prophets):

Micah predicts that Yahweh will reign on Mount Zion (4:7). Though he never stopped reigning, there is going to be something unique about his reign in the future. he will reign "from now until eternity" (4:7). At the same time, Micah also predicts that "the former rule" and "a kingdom" will come to Zion (4:8). This rule, as most

commentators recognize, is to be understood as the rule of a coming David. It is the kingdom of the Ruler described in [Mic] 5:1–3 [ET 5:2–4]). . . . The coming of the Ruler in David’s line is not a rule that competes with Yahweh but is actually Yahweh’s way of ruling. The Ruler comes forth for Yahweh (5:1 [ET 5:2]). He shepherds by Yahweh’s strength and in the majesty of the name of Yahweh (5:3 [ET 5:4]), even as Micah describes Yahweh as “the Lord of all the earth” (4:13). Psalm 2 conveys both the distinction in the divine Persons and the personal relationship between Yahweh and “his anointed,” “his Christ” (Ps 2:2), when he installs “My King” on Mount Zion (2:6) with the final declaration “You are My Son” (Ps 2:7; cf. “Father” and “son” in 2 Sam 7:14). . . . The people demanded a human king, but God would send them a King who was true man but also true God, God incarnate in human flesh (Jn 1:1, 18; Rev 17:14; 19:16). His rule is a return of the direct divine monarchy, but a monarchy held by a man, the perfect representative and regent over the people, and it is at the same time the arrival of the former kingdom promised to David.<sup>45</sup>

While it is clear that the “one like a son of man” of Dan. 7:13 must necessarily be the promised “son of David,” it is not as obvious that the person “Messiah Prince” (מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד) in Dan 9:25 is to be identified as the same person. John Oswalt maintains in a bold unequivocal assertion that “Messiah Prince” in 9:25 is the only unambiguous reference to God’s eschatological anointed one in the entire OT.<sup>46</sup> As J. Paul Tanner summarizes,

First, מְשִׁיחַ was only rarely used as a term to designate a high priest and was not used of a priest after Moses’ day (confined to Lev 4:3–5, 16; 6:15). Second, in the few cases where it was used of a high priest, it always occurred in the format הַכֹּהֵן הַמְשִׁיחַ, “the anointed priest.”<sup>47</sup>

Archer agrees, asserting,

Since this pair of titles is hopelessly vague and indefinite, applying to almost any governor or priest-king in Israel’s subsequent history, it could scarcely have furnished the definite *terminus ad quem* the context [of Dan 9:24–27] obviously demands. It is therefore necessary to understand each of these terms as exalted titles applying to some definite personage in future history. In Hebrew proper names do not take the definite article, and neither do titles that have become virtually proper nouns by usage. . . . We therefore conclude that “Messiah the Ruler” was the meaning intended

<sup>45</sup> Jason Soenksen, *Micah*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2020), 350, 351.

<sup>46</sup> John Oswalt, “מְשִׁיחַ” in *New International Dictionary of OT Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2:1126.

<sup>47</sup> J. Paul Tanner. “Is Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy Messianic? Part 2.” *BSac* 166 (July–Sept 2009): 321–22.

by the author. The word order precludes construing it as “an [or ‘the’] anointed ruler,” which would have to be מָלִיךְ מְשִׁיחַ.<sup>48</sup>

Oswalt, Tanner, and Archer argue that the two titles “Messiah” and “Prince” should be recognized as in apposition not only by word order but by their parallel grammar as substantive adjectives. These two titles in apposition may only apply to one person in history, Yahweh’s anointed agent of whom Ps 2:2, 6–7 speak, namely, the king Yahweh himself has installed as “my king on Zion, my holy hill” (Ps 2:6), about whom he also says, “You are my son” (Ps. 2:7). He can only be the king whom he also calls “priest forever” in Ps 110:4. Thus, “Messiah” and “Prince” as titles used together for a singular person must identify the person “Messiah Prince” in 9:25 with the “one like a son of man” in Dan 7:13–14. Understood in light of the vision of ch. 7, this person is the one to whom the Most High gives dominion. Within the context of the entire book of Daniel, absolute dominion belongs only to the Most High God (Dan 4:2–3, 34, 37; 5:18–19; 6:26), and those to whom he gives dominion-rule by his authority. The vision of Dan 7 makes clear that the person “like a son of man” receives such authority from the Most High, and absolutely so (7:14), not for the rule of a mere locality as an earthly king, but over the entire earth. Therefore, he alone can be the ultimate מְשִׁיחַ (“Yahweh’s anointed”) of Ps 2:2 and the eschatological Messiah Prince of Dan 9:25.<sup>49</sup>

The word “Messiah” means “Anointed One.” In Dan 7 he is compared to a “man,” in contrast to the devouring “beasts” of the other kingdoms. He will not be “like a lion, bear, leopard, or terrible beast” but “a human.” Daniel 7 uses the word “like” because he is describing what he saw in his dream, as if to say: “One figure looks like a lion/bear/leopard . . . but that

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<sup>48</sup> Archer, *Daniel*, 119–20n25.

<sup>49</sup> For a good survey of the OT on the coming of the anointed Davidic King, see Andrew T. Abernethy and Gregory Goswell, *God’s Messiah in the Old Testament: Expectations of a Coming King* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020).

figure looks like a human, a son of man.” Chapter 7’s “one like a son of man” echoes Psalm 8 (and its Hebrew equivalent,  $\text{בֶּן־אָדָם}$ ) in that he is a representative human.

And so Daniel sees the paragon son of man “coming with the clouds” (Dan 7:13), which indicates a heavenly origin and identifies him with Yahweh himself. For this human being to “reach” or “attain” ( $\text{הִשָּׁג}$ , Dan 7:13) as far as ( $\text{כַּעֲשֵׂרֶשֶׁת}$ ) the Ancient of Days shows that he is worthy to sit on a throne at his side (7:9). And yet he is “brought near” by others, showing that he comes before the Ancient of Days as a servant would before a king.

In Dan 9:25 this same Servant is called “Messiah Prince.” In its context, especially following God’s eschatological plan of judgment and salvation (9:24), this title “Messiah Prince” can only refer to a single person in heaven and earth, who is the “one like a son of man” of ch. 7. He alone can and will accomplish the complete restoration of the sanctuary and city and indeed all of God’s creation.

Various schools of interpretation disagree on the purpose of Messiah Prince in the 70x7s. Historical-Critical scholars view “an anointed one, a leader” as simply someone whose death serves as a chronological marker. First-Coming interpreters generally agree that Messiah Prince is to be identified with the “one like a son of man,” but see his purpose in the 70x7s primarily as an atoning sacrifice by his crucifixion, which sanctifies God’s people, sanctuary, and city (though the sanctuary would be destroyed in the final seven with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70). Thus, for them, the scope of the 70x7s ends in AD 70. The Typological interpretation, on the other hand, maintains that the 70x7s speak of Messiah Prince’s coming as the inauguration and commencement of the building of the city (9:25) over a relatively lengthy period, and although desolated (again, but now in a greater eschatological way than the Babylonian Exile), will be restored as the eternal kingdom to be conferred upon the saints of the

Most High (7:22). It recognizes that, according to the Scriptures, “the deepest motivation of the Messianic conception lies in the absolute, concrete, palpable assurance it affords of Jehovah’s permanent presence among his people as the supreme bliss of the future. He is sacramental in the profoundest sense of the word.”<sup>50</sup> The Typological interpretation fits best with the eschatological scope of the overarching vision of ch. 7 as well as the goal of the conferral of the everlasting kingdom (depicted as the new Jerusalem in ch. 9).

Putting both Dan 7:13–14 and 9:26 together means that the coming “one like a son of man” will be the antitype Davidic Prince (מֶלֶךְ) anointed with the Holy Spirit and reigning as the divinely appointed King over Yahweh’s own eternal kingdom. However, the two chapters also give paradoxically contrasting pictures. In ch.7 the coming Messiah will be exalted and given the kingdom in glory. He himself does not experience any persecution in ch. 7, but his saints do (7:21–25). In ch. 9 the coming Messiah will be removed and have no influence or power or glory at all. The persecution of the saints, then, is the persecution of the Messiah on a worldwide scale (in all times and places). Chapter 7 gives Messiah’s ultimate glorification, but ch. 9 gives the preceding persecution he will undergo (together with his saints) before the final judgment and the consummation of the kingdom of God. In heaven (7:13–14) he is glorified and brings the salvation of God’s people, but on earth (9:26) he is rejected and persecuted by the rebellion of “the coming prince” and “his people.”

### **The Problem of the Transfer of Dominion and Kingdom**

A key theme in the book of Daniel—the ultimate, absolute, and eternal dominion of the Most High God—is gradually built up through the experiences of King Nebuchadnezzar in the

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<sup>50</sup> Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, 355.



first four chapters, until he testifies in 4:3 and 4:34, “[The Most High’s] kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation.” The interpretive problem then introduced in the vision of ch. 7 is the idea that a human being could possess divine dominion. Ch. 7 presents not only the “one like a son of man” being given divine dominion to reign over the eternal kingdom of the Most High (7:14). This transfer of dominion suggests that a human being could stand in the place of the Most High God and wield the dominion that God alone should possess. Further and accordingly, this human being will be worshipped by all the peoples of the world as God alone should be worshipped (7:14). These are the indictments against the enemy in 7:25 that he will seek to usurp the dominion of the Most High God and put himself in that place. For a human being to seek to replace God is unthinkable according to the Scriptures. Additionally challenging is the notion of the ultimate goal that “the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people [who are] the saints of the Most High” (7:27 ESV).

One clue as to how this transfer of dominion is possible, how a human being can stand in the place of God, lies in Daniel’s instructive use of the title “Most High.” James Hamilton lays out a cogent discussion of the use of two distinct terms for “Most High” in Dan 7. Daniel normally uses the Aramaic adjective ܡܠܝܫܐ substantively to mean the Highest One or Most High. By contrast, ܡܠܝܫܐܐ is an honorific plural or plural of majesty of ܡܠܝܫܐ, the Hebrew adjective for “highest” plus the Aramaic plural ending. Daniel uses the two distinct terms side by side in 7:25 in an apparently deliberate attempt “to draw some distinction between a divine figure associated with the saints and yet perhaps distinguished from Yahweh in some way.”<sup>51</sup> Hamilton concludes with Gentry:

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<sup>51</sup> Quoting Peter Gentry in “The Son of Man in Dan 7,” 73.

Because of the similarity of the statements in Dan 7:14 and 7:27, we can be certain that the Most High referred to with  $\text{עֲלִיּוֹנִין}$  and associated with the saints in the phrase ‘saints of the Most High’ is the ‘one like a son of man’... Daniel used the Hebrew adjective with the Aramaic plural ending ( $\text{עֲלִיּוֹנִין}$ ) to refer to the ‘one like a son of man’ as Most High, distinguishing him from the Ancient of Days, for whom he used the normal Aramaic expression  $\text{אֱלִיִּם}$ ... By using these distinct forms for ‘Most High’ consistently, Daniel identified both the Ancient of Days and the one like a son of man as the Most High, even as he distinguished them from one another. Daniel communicates that the one like a son of man will be enthroned alongside the Ancient of Days, that he comes with the clouds as Yahweh does elsewhere (e.g. Pss 18:10; 97:2; 104:3, etc.), that he receives service and worship—described with terms only elsewhere used for describing obeisance done for deity, and that he will receive the everlasting kingdom which shall not pass away, which is exactly how God’s kingdom is described.<sup>52</sup>

Hamilton’s analysis of Daniel’s usage fits the themes of Dan. 7 well. The “one like a son of man” comes with the clouds and “attains” to the Ancient of Days, that is, the “humanlike” figure comes to his place on the same level, of co-equal majesty, as the Ancient of Days. On the one hand, he is of co-equal majesty as the Ancient of Days, and on the other hand, he is human and receives all dominion from the Ancient of Days. Because the Ancient of Days is “Most High,” the “one like a son of man” is equally “Most High.” As Daniel reveals both Yahweh God as Most High as well as his “one like a son of man” vicegerent as Most High, the latter is revealed to be God’s eschatological king of the eternal kingdom. This is an interpretive clue for identification of the “one like a son of man” as divine.

This identification sheds light on the identities of both the “one like a son of man” as well as “the saints of the Most High.” The saints are the holy people of *both* the “Most High” God and of his “Most High” vicegerent “like a son of man.” The dominion of the Most High God over all the earth is fundamental to the book of Daniel. The overarching apocalyptic vision is no less centered around the absolute and eternal dominion of the Most High. The biblical teaching on

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<sup>52</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 151–53.

dominion reaches as far back as the creation of the universe. The creator naturally has dominion over his creation. However, subsequently also in Gen 1, God gives the dominion to rule over the earth to Adam and Eve (Gen 1:26). This God-given dominion is for the purpose of being “representatives” (צִלְמֵי, Gen 1:27) to reign in God’s stead for God’s purposes of care and structuring (לְעֵבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה) “to work the ground,” Gen 2:5) of the creation. Even though this care and structuring of the creation ideally should be done according to God’s good purposes, God knows that human dominion instead will be more like “subduing [by force, if necessary] and subjugating (trampling)” (וַיִּכְבְּשֶׁהָ וַיִּרְדֶּהָ, Gen 1:28) a resistant creation. The God-given human dominion will be exercised more by force than by God’s loving care in a creation corrupted by sin.

The kingdoms of the world symbolized by the four beasts from the sea in Daniel’s vision are each given provisional dominion for their time and place. When their time of dominion is finished according to God’s plan, their dominion is taken away (7:12). The “little horn” enemy, however, attempts to seize more than God-given dominion; he seeks to usurp God’s ultimate dominion by seeking to put himself in the place of the creator. His exercise of his God-given dominion will be to attempt to push beyond its limits, making “warfare with the saints and prevailing over them” (7:21). His usurping is the basis of the chief indictment against him in 7:25, “he will speak words against the Most High, and will wear out the saints, and will seek to change times and decree,” the very order of creation God established. The seriousness of this crime is revealed in 7:26 with the pronouncement of judgment upon him, the removal of the temporal dominion given to him, and the sentence “to desolate [him] and to destroy [him] until the end.”

According to the overarching vision of ch. 7, the eschatological fulfillment of God's plan of judgment and salvation is the conferral of the "kingdom, and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven ... to the people of the saints of the Most High" (7:27). This is to happen through the dominion and reign of the "one like a son of man" whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom (7:27). This understanding will guide the interpretation of the eschatological plan of judgment and salvation in the oracle of the 70x7s in five key aspects of the vision:

- (1) the nature and purpose of the reign of the "one like a son of man" and of the kingdom itself;
- (2) the nature of the warfare which the "little horn" enemy will inflict upon them (7:21), and in turn revealing the "delineated warfare" foretold in 9:26;
- (3) in what sense the enemy will "prevail over them" (7:21), which will give clues to the interpretation of the "desolations" enumerated in 9:27; and
- (4) what God's "judgment in favor of" them will entail (7:22) with the accomplishment of the eschatological goals of 9:24 and the ultimate destruction of the desolating enemy (7:26, 9:27).

A majority of critical scholars today identify "the saints of the Most High" as angels or heavenly beings, as first proposed by Otto Procksch and Martin Noth. John Collins argues that in Dan 7:18, "the holy ones of the Most High" who "will receive the kingdom and possess it forever" are angels.

In the realm of nature, God's sovereignty is often mediated by angels in this period [of the second century BC].... In the Qumran *War Scroll* [1QM], however, divine sovereignty is also mediated by angels in the political and military realms.... Here the angelic holy ones help Israel in order to make the glory of God's kingdom effective on earth.... This is seen most clearly in [Dan] ch. 10, where angelic 'princes' are said to rule the various nations. In the terminology of ch. 10, the kingdom of the holy ones

means the rule of Michael and his angels is extended beyond Israel to include the realms of the other angelic princes.<sup>53</sup>

Collins asserts that in Psalm 89:6, 8 [ET 89:5, 7], the *קהל קדושים* (v. 6 [ET v. 5]) and *סוד-קדושים* (v. 8 [ET v. 7]) are “members of the heavenly council” and refer to angels, citing Canaanite and Phoenician texts, 1 Enoch 14:23, and *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* from Qumran which also call angels *קדושים*.<sup>54</sup>

However, as Steinmann notes, “the heirs of God’s kingdom [in all the Scriptures] are always God’s people”<sup>55</sup> Indeed, the use of *עם קדושי עֲלֵיוֹנַיִם* “the people of the saints of the Most High” (Dan 7:27) is a unique usage, not only in the book of Daniel, but in all the OT Scriptures. Collins finds three passages in Qumran texts using *עם* in construct with a plural substantive of *קדוש*,<sup>56</sup> but admits that in only one verse, identification of *עם* with angels is “ambiguous”<sup>57</sup> at best. The most significant aspect of this phrase is the introduction of the new word, “people,” since “saints of the Most High” have been referred to already three times in Dan 7 (7:18, 22, 25). The import of *עם* “people” is key, since it is a term that is used throughout the Scriptures for humans (especially *עם-הַקִּדְּוֹשׁ* “holy people” in Isa 62:12 and *עם-קִדְּוֹשׁ* “your holy people” in 63:18) and never for angels. Note that “holy ones” in Dan 4:10, 14, and 20 refer to the “watchers,” presumably angels, but they are not called *עם* “people.” Daniel’s only other usage of similar wording, *עם-קִדְּוֹשׁ* “holy people” (12:7), says, “for a time, times, and a half, when the end of the shattering of the hand [power] of the holy people comes, all these things will be finished.” Dan 12:7 uses the word *מוֹעֵד* “appointed time” rather than *עֵת* “time” in 7:25, but by *similar*

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<sup>53</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 319.

<sup>54</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 303.

<sup>55</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 369.

<sup>56</sup> 1 QM 12:7–8; 1 QM 10:10; 1 QH 11:11–12.

<sup>57</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 315.

vocabulary (cf. also יד “hand”) and similar unique syntax (“a time, times and half”), clearly refers to the same “holy people,” who in ch. 7 are “the saints of the Most High” who will “be given into [the enemy’s] hand for a time, times, and half a time.”

David referred to God’s people as “saints” in his prayer and psalm as recorded in 2 Chron 6. Of particular note are David’s themes, similar to Daniel’s prayer of ch. 9, of a holy city, God’s house (temple), God’s anointed as king over God’s people, forgiveness of the sin of God’s people, and God’s presence in the city and temple for the sanctification of his people.

God’s people are referred to as “saints” most often in the Psalms, and they are further identified in Ps 16:3 (“As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight”) and Ps 34:9 (“Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack!”). Carl Keil summarizes the scriptural identification of the saints of God:

“The saints of the Most High,” or briefly “the saints” (vv. 21, 22), are... as we argue from Ex 19:6, Deut 7:6, the true members of the covenant nation, the New Testament Israel of God, i.e., the congregation of the New Covenant, consisting of Israel and the faithful of all nations; for the kingdom which God gives to the Son of man will, according to [Dan 7:]14, comprehend those that are redeemed from among all the nations of the earth.<sup>58</sup>

The final judgment includes both the removal of the little horn’s power/dominion (שִׁלְטָנָהּ, 7:26) and judgment in favor (i.e., “vindication”) of the “saints of the Most High” (קְדוֹשֵׁי עֲלִיוֹנָיִם, 7:22). Who, then, are these “saints of the Most High”? Since God alone is holy, these are clearly creatures, whether heavenly or earthly, who must necessarily have been or will be made holy as in Lev 11:45, “I am Yahweh... You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” However, in Dan 7:22, they are holy ones “of the Most High,” a possessive genitive, with the understanding that since the Most High has made them holy, they now belong to him. Therefore, he himself, the

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<sup>58</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 649.

Most High, together with his co-regent agent, the one “like a son of man,” already seen to be equal in holiness and authority, are holy in themselves and able to make others holy. Although Collins insists that these “holy ones” are angels,<sup>59</sup> the goals laid out in 9:24, as these two passages interpret one another, emphasize the removal of sin and the bestowal of righteousness on “your people and your holy city” (9:24), which clearly refers to humans.

How are these holy ones, saints of the Most High, to be given “the kingdom and dominion” (7:27) if such authority has already been given to the one “like a son of man”? The latter must give it to the saints, when or after he sanctifies them. Even after the kingdom and the dominion are given to the saints of the Most High, the same kingdom, the everlasting kingdom, still belongs to the Most High (7:27), indicating that his saints will now share his kingdom together with him.

The actual conferring of the kingdom upon the saints of the Most High is not revealed in the visions to Daniel, but only the results. The result of receiving the kingdom will be the accomplishment of God’s eschatological goals in 9:24, with the abolition of sin and rebellion and the establishment of everlasting righteousness.

The conferral of the eternal kingdom to the saints is the consummation of the eschatological goals of Dan 9:24. Thus, the great celebration in heaven in Rev 11, as Brighton explains,

The heavenly host sings in celebration (Rev 11:15) because “the kingdom of the cosmos has become [their] Lord’s and his Christ’s.” Saints and angels celebrate the fact that the entire creation of God, because of Christ’s redemptive and reconciling victory, has now become God’s again (see Rom 8:18–25; 2 Pet 3:11–13; Rev 21:1, 5). The ‘world-empire, once dominated by a usurping power ... has now at length passed into the hands of its true Owner and Imperator’<sup>60</sup> (cf. Ps 82:8; Dan 2:44). As was promised in Ps 2:4–9 and in Zech 14:9, the Lord Yahweh through his Anointed

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<sup>59</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 317–20.

<sup>60</sup> Per Swete, *Apocalypse*, 142.

One will become King of the earth, and on that day when it happens, the whole earth will acknowledge that there is but one God, whose name is Yahweh, and only one anointed King through whom he saves and through whom he is known (cf. Acts 4:10–12). However one interprets “cosmos,” at the End it belongs to God and to the one who won it back for him, the Christ... *At the End in the final display of the victory of Christ, God will openly claim all of his creation as his own, in particular that part of creation that was once under the prince of darkness. God will publicly display his reign over all his creation as he lays claim to that realm of his creation that has been restored through Christ’s redemption.* Thus, God in his Christ will gloriously demonstrate that he is once again the Lord of all creation and alone its sovereign Lord.<sup>61</sup>

The essential point, as Brighton indicates, is God reclaiming his creation, reasserting his dominion through his Messiah, overthrowing all usurping powers, and applying the Messiah’s redemptive and reconciling victory to the saints, his people.

Further, the consummation of the reign of God and his Messiah in the eternal kingdom-city is ‘the reward’ he gives to ‘his saints’ as Rev 11:18 indicates. Siegbert Becker observes, “The article with ‘reward’ is a deictic article, which refers to a reward that was well-known to John’s readers.”<sup>62</sup> After all, God had promised in Isa 40:10, “Behold, the Lord Yahweh comes with might and his arm rules for him. Behold, his reward (שְׂכָרוֹ) is with him, and his wages (וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ) before him.” His “reward” and “wages” are described in the next verse as caring for his flock like a shepherd (Isa 40:11). Of course, “reward” and “wages” are also words of judgment and salvation, depending on the recipients. His payback for “those who fear his name” (Rev 11:18) is their place in his eternal kingdom. His payback for enemies will be eternal destruction. “The fact that the pagan nations ‘were destroying the earth’ (Rev 11:18) is a descriptive way of saying that they were participating with the devil and all evil forces in their attempt to usurp the power of God and take over his reign.”<sup>63</sup> “The beginning of the visible reign of God over the earth means

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<sup>61</sup>Brighton, *Revelation*, 308.

<sup>62</sup> Siegbert W. Becker, *Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song* (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1985), 177.

<sup>63</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 309.



that they will no longer be able to carry out their plans and see the world governed according to their desires.”<sup>64</sup> The consummation of God’s reign and kingdom-city sees the eternal destruction of the enemy and ‘his people’ (Dan 7:26; 9:26, 27).

Thus, the overarching vision of ch. 7 gives a vision of the accomplished goals enumerated in 9:24, while at the same time, the latter help to interpret what is happening in the vision in terms of who are the persons involved, what are the actions being done, and what are the eschatological goals driving those actions.

### **The Problem of the Division of the 70 Sevens**

In order to understand the ultimate goal of conferral of the eternal kingdom to the saints (7:14, 18, 22, and 27), the oracle of the 70x7s lays out specific steps for how it will be accomplished. Thus, in these details the oracle “fleshes out” the outline of ch. 7.

The proper *terminus ad quem* of the 70x7s, i.e., of God’s eschatological plan consisting of six goals, is the transfer of the kingdom to the saints of the Most High (7:27). Therefore, no numerical or chronological rendering of the 70x7s to determine prophesied persons or events within known history can encompass the fulfillment of the entire scope of the sevens, which pertain to events “to the end” (וְעַד קֵץ, 9:26), that is, “until the completion” (וְעַד כְּלָה, 9:27). The fulfillment of prophecy is not simply the establishment or inauguration of the messianic kingdom (with the messiah’s first coming, i.e., after the first seven “sevens”), but by the revelation of that everlasting kingdom (at the consummation, after the final “seven”), the “new heavens and new earth” (Isa 65:17), which is a heightened fulfillment of the earthly messianic kingdom.

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<sup>64</sup> Becker, *Revelation*, 176.

A challenge to a christological interpretation of the 70x7s appears in 9:25 with a debate over how to punctuate the verse. Many scholars have debated much about the divisions of the “sevens” in 9:25, whether the Masoretic *athnach* should be placed where it is and whether or not the “seven sevens” and “sixty-two sevens” should be taken together as a singular period.

Many First-Coming scholars agree with the Sabbatical use of the 70x7s and attempt to reckon the *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* of a 490-year period,<sup>65</sup> while some recognize a figurative or non-chronological use of the phrase. The First Coming of the Messiah interpretation invariably views the time between the return from exile until the time of Jesus as “7 sevens and 62 sevens.” The final seven would then include Jesus’ crucifixion up to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

John Collins gives some history of the debate:

The MT places an *atnach* between the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks. Theodotion, however, reads “seven weeks and sixty-two weeks,” so that sixty-nine weeks would elapse before the coming of the anointed prince. This understanding of the passage was followed by Jerome and became a mainstay of the [First-Coming] messianic interpretation, as it allowed the identification of the anointed one of v. 25 with the one in v. 26. There can be no doubt that the MT punctuation is correct. There is no other reason for dividing the period into seven and sixty-two. The MT understanding of the passage is well attested in early Christianity before Jerome, as well as in Jewish tradition.<sup>66</sup>

The assumption on all sides of the argument has traditionally been that it is necessary to group the first seven Sevens and the 62 Sevens together as a single epoch in order to arrive at the AD first century for the coming of Jesus Christ. Both First Coming and Dispensationalist

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<sup>65</sup> “Yet those who argue for a symbolic understanding of the seventy weeks of years are overlooking the obvious... Daniel hoped that Jerusalem’s desolations would be complete with Babylon’s downfall, but the Lord showed him that seventy *sevens of years* would still be needed for her desolations to be fulfilled. Since the latter was established on a foundation of seventy literal years, logically the extended period should be viewed as literal as well” (Tanner, “Seventy-Weeks,” 332). “The ‘seventy sevens’ chronography is probably best understood against the background of Jewish sabbatical years, and the Jubilee year in particular” (Williamson, “Sealed,” 174). Gentry agrees with Williamson’s hypothesis (Gentry, “New Exodus,” 34).

<sup>66</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 355.

interpretations take this view. Those who generally avoid a christological interpretation of the passage maintain a separation of the “seven” and the “sixty-two” to keep the passage focusing on purely BC events.

Edward Young admits the challenge for a First-Coming interpretation,

The *terminus ad quem* of the 69 sevens is clearly stated, namely, an anointed one, a prince. No such *terminus ad quem*, however, is given for the 70 sevens themselves. It would seem, therefore, that the *terminus ad quem* was not regarded as possessing a particular importance or significance. No single event is singled out as marking the termination. All schools of interpretation, therefore, are faced with the difficulty of determining what marked the close of the 70s sevens.<sup>67</sup>

Those who seek to prove the Christology of the oracle generally argue against the MT placement of the *athnach* after “seven weeks” and favor placing a period after “62 weeks,” to indicate a total of 69 weeks. Calculating them as year-weeks would yield 434, “in the ballpark” of arriving at the time of Christ from the end of the exile.

This view, then, recognizes no special significance to the number 70, only that it is a round number to roughly include the aftermath of Jesus’ crucifixion, including Rome’s destruction of Jerusalem. The oracle may just as well have been about “69 Sevens” rather than “70 Sevens.” To counter this view, the typological interpretation understands that the last phrase of Dan 9:27, “even until the delineated completion will gush forth upon the desolated one,” which parallels 7:26, namely, the ultimate destruction of the eschatological enemy, is a very definitive *terminus ad quem* for the 70x7s. The reason the angel says “70” is based on the “70 years” mentioned in Jeremiah, which Daniel was studying (Dan 9:2). The angel says that 539 BC, the first year of Darius=Cyrus and his decree, will as the end of the Babylonian exile not be the very end and goal of all things, but there will be another period of 70 until the ultimate end and goal.

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<sup>67</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 220–21.

Young “painfully” (in his words below) demonstrates the difficulty represented in the placement of the *athnach*, i.e., the division of the sevens. He demonstrates<sup>68</sup> that, reading with the *athnach*, the following must be concluded:

*Terminus a quo*                      -----                      *Terminus ad quem*  
 Going forth of a word ← 7 sevens → an anointed one, a prince

Young agrees with Keil and Kliefoth about the *terminus a quo*, that the seven sevens start with the edict of Cyrus, but he proceeds to reject the Typological interpretation on the assumption that v. 26, specifically that “Messiah will be cut off,” must necessarily refer to the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth<sup>69</sup> as the complete fulfillment of the goals of v. 24, which crucifixion, in his view, must be the *terminus ad quem* of the “62 sevens.” He therefore reluctantly concludes,

It is best, therefore, to understand (though I am painfully aware of the difficulties) the text as stating that between the *terminus a quo* and the appearance of an anointed one, a prince, is a period of 69 sevens which is divided into two periods of unequal length, seven sevens and 62 sevens.<sup>70</sup>

J. Paul Tanner sums up this widely held First-Coming of the Messiah interpretation and gives the reasons, in agreement with Young, why it is seen as necessary:

Dan 9:25 indicates that it would be a total of sixty-nine ‘weeks’ from the going forth of the word to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Ruler. Exactly how one is to calculate this time span has been the great enigma for commentators throughout the centuries.... [My] proposal is based on three critical presuppositions: (1) The seventy ‘weeks’ must be taken literally. (2) The reference to *mashiach* should be understood as the Lord Jesus Christ. (3) Any proposed interpretation for the time span “until Messiah the Ruler” must be in harmony with the fact that Jesus was crucified in AD 33.

Thus, Young and Tanner, as representing the vast majority of First-Coming interpreters, demonstrate that the First-Coming interpreters are reading the oracle as prophecy rather than

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<sup>68</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 207.

<sup>69</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 207. “The old evangelical interpretation is that which alone satisfies the requirements of the case. The ‘anointed one’ is Jesus Christ, who is cut off by his death upon the Cross of Calvary.”

<sup>70</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 205.

apocalyptic vision and are therefore seeing it as pointing to specific events, especially and necessarily the crucifixion of Jesus. This perspective sees the crucifixion of Jesus as the ultimate event that brings fulfillment of the 70x7s.

Fulfillment is God's promise, to be sure, but ultimate consummation is a longer-distant goal. When the 70x7s are read typologically, then Jesus' first coming (after "seven sevens") that culminates in his atoning crucifixion is that which lays the foundation for the subsequent "62 sevens" for building of the city-kingdom of God, which is Christ's kingdom-city, a.k.a., church. When that building process reaches its climax after the "62 sevens," then the "Messiah will be cut off" in a different and escalated way (than crucifixion) to bring about the final "seven" that will lead to the final consummation of the age. In other words, the First-Coming interpretation may be called such because it sees the first coming and crucifixion of Jesus as the fulfillment of the goals of the 70x7s, ushering in the end (goal) of the age. That is a correct understanding. However, if one stops there as the message of the 70x7s, then one misses a greater promise of a consummation to come. A typological reading of this passage sees the oracle pointing forward even farther than the AD First Century. It is true that the atoning work of the Messiah Prince in his first coming is about, on the one hand, sanctifying the "people of the saints of the Most High" (7:27). However, the purpose of that sanctifying, on the other hand, is that the holy city-kingdom (new Jerusalem) may be built up and brought to consummation after "determined desolations" (9:26) and the "determined completion" of the destruction of the enemies of God and his saints (9:27). Jesus' first coming brings a new "age of fulfillment," but his second coming brings the new "age of consummation." An interpretation of Daniel's visions cannot be complete without two comings of the Messiah.

The ultimate goal according to Dan 7:27 is that the saints of the Most High are given the eternal kingdom, which is depicted as “the city” and “Jerusalem” in ch. 9. As important as Jesus’ crucifixion is, the oracle does not speak directly of it, but rather emphasizes that the coming of Messiah Prince (after seven sevens) inaugurates and makes possible the building of God’s holy city, new Jerusalem (during 62 sevens). Thus, a typological reading will best focus on the greater eschatological fulfillments to which the text points.

If the text of Daniel, as it has been handed down to the present time, is allowed to stand on its own, with or without the Masoretic *athnach*, the text reads, שְׁבַעִים שְׁבַעִים וְשִׁבְעִים וְשָׁנָיִם, “seven sevens and sixty-two sevens,” a period of time divided into two distinct blocks. First-Come interpreters who view 9:24–27 as messianic, insisting that “Messiah will be cut off” must refer to Jesus’ crucifixion, encounter difficulties with the division of the sevens into “seven and 62.” The problem for them is, “What to do with the 62?” If all the “sevens” (except the last one) must lead up to the crucifixion of Jesus, then why should the text say “seven and sixty-two” rather than simply “69”?

Roger Beckwith argues<sup>71</sup> that the Masoretes deliberately placed the *athnach* in its current position for the very purpose of preventing a messianic interpretation of the passage, since they knew that it would be possible to argue a time period of “69 weeks” (weeks of years) to arrive somewhere around the first advent of Jesus Christ. First Coming of the Messiah interpreters invariably take the 7 and 62 together as a single time period, following the tradition of the LXX, Theodotian, Symmachus, and the Syriac Peshitta. Those who follow this line of interpretation must be able to provide coherent answers to two questions: (1) why did the author unnecessarily

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<sup>71</sup> Roger Beckwith, “Daniel 9 and the Date of Messiah’s Coming in Essene, Hellenistic, Pharisaic, Zealot, and Early Christian Computation,” *Revue de Qumran* 40 (1981): 521–42.

distinguish the seven from the 62; and (2) if “Messiah will be cut off” must refer to Christ’s crucifixion, then how can one account for the phrase, “after the 62 sevens” of v. 26? They have failed to provide clear answers to either of these problems.

This is the crossroads junction from which a multiplicity of interpretations diverges. The interpretation of “Messiah will be cut off [removed]” will affect determination of the *termini*, the beginning and end, for all of the seventy sevens, as seen in the premature assumption that it must necessarily mean crucifixion.

Interpreters seeking to *disprove* any christological interpretation of the passage (like Collins above) generally agree with the Masoretic placement of the *athnach* after the “seven weeks” so that the “weeks of years” would not be seen as leading up to the time of Jesus. None (apart from Typological interpreters) consider “seven sevens” to be a sufficient amount of time to arrive at the coming of the Messiah. However, if the entire timespan of the 70x7s points beyond the AD first century to “the end,” God’s “delineated completion” (9:27), then yes, “seven sevens” are a relatively short time period until the coming of Messiah Prince and “62 sevens” are a fairly long period for the building of his kingdom-city.

The division between “seven sevens” and “62 sevens” stands, not merely as a matter of Masoretic punctuation (which are a non-inspired later addition to the text), but in the words of the text itself. The words of the text say, “seven sevens *and* sixty-two sevens” rather than “sixty-nine sevens,” calling Daniel and his reader to “consider the matter and pay attention to the vision” (וּבִין בְּדַבָּר וְהִבֵּן בְּמַרְאֵהוּ, 9:23). The repetition of the “sixty-two” in 9:26 confirms that the division of the “seven” and the “sixty-two” should be kept intact and understood as two distinct periods.

Rather than supplying or assuming a “69” that the text does not mean to indicate, it is most appropriate to examine each time period in turn: “seven sevens,” “62 sevens,” and a final “seven.”

The first division of seven sevens indicates the period *מִצֵּאת דְבַר לְהָשִׁיב וּלְבַנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַד־ מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד* (“from the going out of the word to return and to build Jerusalem until Messiah Prince”). To which decree of which earthly ruler does this refer? The debate on the *terminus a quo*,<sup>72</sup> whether it is a decree of Cyrus or Artaxerxes or someone else, entirely misses the point of the vision and of the book of Daniel. Reading the oracle as prophecy (rather than apocalyptic vision) severely limits the scope and message of the vision. Yahweh is the One to whom dominion belongs, and all kings and nations and peoples must honor and submit to his authority. The simplest understanding of the phrase then would be the command of Yahweh himself that the exile of his people, about which Daniel prays, is finished. After all, this is the promise out of which Daniel’s prayer flows, as he says in 9:2. If an historical event is indicated, the scriptural witness of Ezra 1 begins the post-exile story with Cyrus’ edict. Yahweh’s command is executed through the reign of Cyrus (Isa 44:28) whom God called as his “anointed” (*מְשִׁיחַ*, Isa 45:1) and used for that special purpose.

For this reason, the epochs delineated in the 70x7s are kept more intentionally broad, neither mentioning Cyrus nor a specific year. Additionally, “until Messiah Prince” (*עַד־ מְשִׁיחַ נָגִיד*, Dan 9:25) is equally broad, referring neither to the year of the messiah’s birth nor to any other specific year or day of his lifetime. Rather, “seven sevens” is simply to be understood as a relatively short period, and the main point is that this first set of “sevens” leads to the coming of

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<sup>72</sup> For a good summary of the view of the *terminus a quo* of each interpretive school, see Feinberg, “Exegetical,” 191–95; Collins, *Daniel*, 356; and Montgomery, *Daniel*, 391.



“Messiah Prince.” He is recognized as God’s agent of salvation because his coming initiates or inaugurates the restoration and rebuilding of God’s holy city during the next “62 sevens” (9:25). The coming of this person is not simply the culmination of the first “seven sevens,” but it is what makes possible the subsequent restoration and building in the next “62 sevens.” God’s eschatological plan of judgment and salvation could not continue without this crucial inaugural event.

Although most First Coming of the Messiah interpreters count “seven sevens and sixty-two sevens” (9:25) as a single epoch leading to the coming of the Messiah, during which the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt after the Babylonian Exile, there is a very good reason why they are given as two different time periods. The seventy Sevens begin from the starting point of “the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem.” Indeed, that is the goal which will require all 70 of the Sevens. “Seven sevens until Messiah Prince” indicates the time period starting from Cyrus’ proclamation that the people of Judah may return to Jerusalem “to build the house of Yahweh” (Ezra 1:1–3) “until the coming of Messiah Prince.” Without going into specifics, the oracle is indicating that the person and work of Messiah Prince will be the necessary step to inaugurate the next time period, which will be “for sixty-two Sevens it will be built again” in a different way, in a way that is unlike the physical building and restoration of the city that began under Cyrus. The person and work of Messiah Prince will enable a new kind of building, which will progress over the longer period of 62 Sevens.

Indeed, the first iteration of the apocalyptic vision, given to Nebuchadnezzar in ch. 2, revealed the beginning and source of God’s eternal kingdom as “a stone not cut by human hand” (Dan 2:34) that then becomes “a great mountain that filled the whole earth” (2:35). The stone is the beginning and source of the mountain, a symbolic depiction of God’s eternal kingdom-city

that will eventually fill the entire earth. This is the ultimate fulfillment of the prayers of Daniel and God's people that God would restore his sanctuary and city, but the restoration will be on a cosmic scale. The oracle of the 70x7s indicates and looks to this cosmic scale as the eschatological restoration of sanctuary, city, and people in the six-fold goal of 9:24 over a period of "70 Sevens." Per Nebuchadnezzar's vision in ch. 2, given also to Daniel for interpretation, the stone "not cut by human hand" is what grows to become the mountain, the eternal kingdom of God. In 9:24–27, it is the person and work of Messiah Prince that is the beginning and source of this new and eschatological restoration, "to restore and build Jerusalem" in a heightened way, reading typologically.

Understanding the vision of the stone that grows into a mountain to fill the earth should not be surprising to God's people. They have prayed Psalm 118, confessing that the "gate of Yahweh through which the righteous shall enter" (v. 20), namely, "my salvation" (v. 21), is "the stone the builders rejected [which] has become the cornerstone" (v. 22). This language of "stone," "builders," and "cornerstone" is here brought to mind in the "building" motif of the 70x7s. The building can only begin with the laying of the cornerstone and be built upon it, and such becomes the "gate through which the righteous may enter" (Ps 118:20) to access the resulting city. The eternal kingdom of God will be "built" by the person and work of Messiah Prince who is the "one like a son of man" to whom the Ancient of Days has given divine dominion to establish and reign over the eternal kingdom of God. The building process, however, will continue over a period of 62 Sevens, initiated and inaugurated by the coming of Messiah Prince.

That building of the kingdom-city, indicated by the longest period of "62 Sevens," is given prominence in the 70x7s. However, "after the 62 Sevens," the final Seven contains the most striking and dramatic events leading up to the end, the "determined completion" (9:27). This

final seven will be discussed in further detail under “The Problem of the Warfare of Desolations Before Restoration.”

### **The Problem of the Nature of the City, the Sanctuary, and the People**

Many First-Coming interpreters posit that Jerusalem in the 70x7s must be the geophysical city. For instance, Steinmann asserts, “Throughout Daniel, ‘Jerusalem’ refers to the physical city... [and] the text of the vision indicates full destruction.”<sup>73</sup> These assertions are problematic on both counts. First, to speak of the usage of “Jerusalem” “throughout Daniel” is misleading, since the first four occurrences are in the first six “narrative” chapters of the book, so naturally, these would refer to the geophysical city. However, the remaining five occurrences are all within ch. 9. It is without question that Daniel would have the geophysical city in mind when he speaks of Jerusalem, and of course he would love to see the city rebuilt and the people restored by God’s grace. But notice that when he comes to the actual petitions of his prayer starting in 9:17, he uses more general terms “your sanctuary” (9:17), “the city that is called by your name” (9:18), and “your city and your people” (9:19), as well as in his narrative verses, calling it “the holy hill of my God” (9:20). He initially uses the proper name, Jerusalem, but is then referring to the city’s identity in relationship to God. And so, Daniel’s one and only petition is, “O Lord, make your face shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate” (9:17). The identity and purpose of the city come from God’s sanctuary in the midst of it. The final usage of “Jerusalem” is in 9:25. In a context in which Gabriel is laying out God’s goals of eschatological restoration of “your [Daniel’s] people and your holy city,” God promises “to atone for iniquity [once and for all] and to bring in everlasting righteousness,” thus making it clear that he is speaking of a restoration of

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<sup>73</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456.

the people and city not simply in a geophysical sense, even if that is the extent of Daniel's prayer, but in an ultimate eschatological sense. Therefore, God cannot be speaking only of the geophysical city that was destroyed by the Babylonians, or even about the rebuilt city destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans. The city to be "built again" in Dan 9:25 will be a construct of the coming of Messiah Prince, and when "messiah will be removed" (9:26), that will allow "the people of the coming prince [to] ruin (יִשְׁחִיתוּ) the city and the sanctuary" (9:26). But even as the messiah who will be removed must return, since "his dominion is an everlasting dominion" (7:14), so also the "ruining" of the city and sanctuary cannot be complete destruction, since "his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed (לֹא תִהְיֶה הַמְּלָכּוּת) (7:14). At the very least, the יִשְׁחִיתוּ ruining of the city in 9:26 cannot equal the תִּהְיֶה הַמְּלָכּוּת destruction of 7:14 that "shall never happen" to the kingdom of the king of kings. The "city and sanctuary" indicated in the 70x7s is the everlasting kingdom over which the "one like a son of man" is given dominion, which in turn will be conferred upon the saints of the Most High (7:22). Geophysical Jerusalem's rebuilding beginning with Cyrus' decree points to a larger building and restoration of a greater (eschatological) Jerusalem, that is, new Jerusalem.

"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede," (9:1) Daniel, perceiving that the time is nigh for restoration of God's people and holy city after the exile, prays specifically for restoration of God's desolated holy sanctuary (9:17). He prays to God for that restoration to be fulfilled soon. Notice Daniel's prayer is not for the city or people directly. His main petition is, "Make Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary, which is desolate, for the sake of the Lord (יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ)" (Dan 7:17). One might expect Daniel's prayer to be that of Psalm 80, with its refrain, "Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!" (Ps 80:3, 7, 19). However, Daniel prays regarding God's "sanctuary." The implication is that the city and people

will then be restored through the presence of the sanctuary, i.e., the presence of God himself among his people. This is in line with the rhetorical lesson of the entire book of Daniel as revealed in the overarching revelation, together with the book's other prophetic visions, including that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 2), that the divine realm of God's kingdom overarches but reaches into all the earthly realm of history.

Daniel's prayer in 9:4–19 climaxes in a single petition in 9:17 to “make Your face shine upon Your sanctuary, the desolated [place].” In the Aaronic Blessing, God commands the priests to bless the people by saying, “Yahweh make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you” (Num 6:25). In Ezek 39, we see the opposite, when Yahweh “hides his face,” then his people go into captivity and are given into the hand of their enemies (v. 23), “dealing with them according to their uncleanness and rebellion” (v. 24). But his gracious promise is that, after he restores his people, “I will not hide My face anymore from them, when I pour out My Spirit upon the house of Israel” (v. 29).

Daniel expands his petition in 9:18 to pray that God would “see our desolations,” which are epitomized in “the city called by Your name.” He further qualifies in 9:19 the object of his petition, that he prays about “Your city and Your people called by Your name.” And finally, in 9:20, he says that his petition was “concerning the holy mountain of my God” (also in 9:16). In each successive verse from 9:17 to 9:20, he qualifies and equates the terms “Your sanctuary,” “Your city (called by Your name),” “Your people (called by Your name),” and “the holy mountain of my God.” All these phrases equate, even as in the prophetic Zion theology, to the union of heaven and earth by God's presence among his people in his city eschatologically called “Yahweh is There” (Ezek 48:35). Leslie Hoppe gives an excellent overview of the city of God in the OT, and makes a good point relevant to Dan 9:25,

Psalm 147 celebrates Yahweh as the Restorer of Jerusalem ... [T]he restoration of Zion is just as much the result of God's power alone as are the creation and sustenance of the world ... Zion became a metaphor for the people of Israel, since the fate of the Temple, city, and people were woven together ... '[I] say to Zion: You are My people' (Isa 51:16).<sup>74</sup>

John Goldingay stresses the implications of Zion being "called by Yahweh's name" in Isaiah:

Yhwh wipes out its rebellion and declines to think about its failures "for My own sake" (Isa 43:25), because of My identity as One who carries people's wrongdoing and of My desire to safeguard My good name.<sup>75</sup>

The character of Yahweh is reflected in his relationship with the city.

Reed Lessing indicates the implications for the people to be called by Yahweh's name as he comments about Amos 9:12,

Those called by Yahweh's name are part of his kingdom, possession, and people; indeed, they are part of his spiritual temple.... Faith is the characteristic of those who are called by the name of Yahweh.... Amos declares that in the coming day(s), all who repent and believe (represented by the 'remnant of Edom') will have equal status with Israel. The NT affirms that this promise has now been fulfilled in the church of Christ (e.g., Rom 1:16; 10:12; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).<sup>76</sup>

With such a well-developed Zion theology in the prophets, it is most likely that, besides geophysical rebuilding, Daniel has in mind God's greater restoration of sanctuary and people to dwell in God's presence forever. The eschatologically restored city will be the eternal kingdom of God.

Jerusalem, as throughout the psalms and prophets, is a synecdoche representing Yahweh's earthly presence among his people, and by extension, it represents the holy people herself, since

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<sup>74</sup> Leslie J. Hoppe, *The Holy City: Jerusalem in the Theology of the Old Testament* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 40, 41.

<sup>75</sup> John Goldingay. "The Theology of Isaiah" in *Interpreting Isaiah*, ed. David G. Firth and H.G.M. Williamson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 176.

<sup>76</sup> Reed Lessing, *Amos*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2009), 589–90.

Gabriel has made clear that the oracle concerns “your people and your holy city” (9:24), after Daniel has prayed for “Your city and Your people called by Your name” (Dan 9:19). It is also called “the holy mountain of Yahweh” (e.g., Isa 2:2–3; 11:9; 56:7; 57:13; 65:25, et al.). Although Daniel does not employ the name Zion, it is clear that the oracle of the 70x7s as given in light of the overarching vision of ch. 7 speaks of the sanctuary and city in a broader way than simply the geophysical city of Jerusalem. Hummel’s description for understanding for Isaiah must also be applied to Daniel:

It is important that ‘Zion’ (the eschatological city of God, already proleptically and sacramentally ‘incarnate’ on earth) be distinguished (although not divorced) from the earthly Jerusalem, or Isaiah and the other prophets will soon be embroiled in the crassest contradictions. The theme of the ‘inviolability of Zion’ is close to constitutive of Isaiah’s message, but, of course, the earthly Jerusalem is doomed to destruction. The ‘gates of hell’ cannot prevail against Zion (the church), and after the earthly holocaust it will rise as the center of the eschatological, Messianic kingdom, the joy and desire of all the earth (cf. Isa 2:1–4). Isaiah describes and celebrates the beginning of the realization of those promises, and the New Testament proclaims their fulfillment in Christ’s kingdom (yet with a consummation in the kingdom of glory still awaited).<sup>77</sup>

This perspective of the prophets for God’s holy city can be described as apocalyptic, properly understood, in that it looks behind the events of history and the geophysical city to the very mystery of God’s presence among his people and the “kingdom” that his reign is building.

God’s “sanctuary and city” are properly understood as his presence among his people (1) beginning on earth in history, as typified by the tabernacle, temple, and city of Jerusalem; (2) fulfilled in the reign of his Messiah Prince and in the gathering of all nations to his city; and (3) finally consummated with the overthrow of the corrupting enemies (Dan 9:27) and the bringing of everlasting righteousness (Dan 9:24).

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<sup>77</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 198–99.

It is enough for Daniel to call the city “Jerusalem.” The restoration for which he prays may be for the physical rebuilding of houses and temple, but the “desolation” which currently characterizes the city is more than fallen buildings. What is more, Daniel knows that his petitions for God to “turn away his anger and his wrath” (9:16) and to “forgive” (9:19) relate to past sins. But regarding the present and the future, his petition is for God to “open Your eyes and see,” “hear,” “forgive,” “give attention” and “act [now], don’t delay!” (9:18–19). To do what? Again, the singular overarching petition of Daniel’s prayer is for God to “make Your face shine (קָאֵר) upon Your sanctuary” (9:17).

The promise of the eschatological restoration then is that the city in question will “again be built” (תְּשׁוּב וְנִבְנְתָהּ), similar to the usage of the same verbs earlier in the verse, “to restore and to build” (תְּשׁוּב וְלִבְנֹת). Daniel’s prayer for God to “make his face shine upon [his] sanctuary,” forgiving the sins of the past and bringing his people out of desolation (9:17–18) and into life, is a prayer to make God’s city and sanctuary, even the people gathered around God’s presence, to be made holy and restored beyond her previous sinful and rebellious state for which God sent her into exile. The accomplishing, or at least inauguration, of the eschatological goals enumerated in v. 24 is that the “people and city” will be removed of (atoned for) iniquity and enjoy everlasting righteousness.

Daniel surely knew the prophecies of Isaiah, and the centrality of the theme of God’s city (a.k.a., “God’s holy mountain”). Goldingay gives a helpful summary:

Isaiah 1–12 closes with a linked declaration that the whole world is to know of Yhwh’s deeds in restoring Zion (12:3–6) [both from the prophesied exile and eschatologically]. Isa 40–55 develops that theme. At the rise of Cyrus, the nations panic (41:1–7); but the object of Yhwh’s action is that people in general may see and acknowledge that Yhwh has acted (41:20). They are destined to learn about the way Yhwh exercises authority in the world (42:1–4), to have their eyes opened, their imprisonment ended (42:5–9). They are therefore summoned to give praise to Yhwh



(42:10–12). They will bring their wealth to Jerusalem in connection with recognizing that Yhwh, the only God, is there (45:14–17; 60:1–22).<sup>78</sup>

Isaiah speaks of the restoration and the role of Zion, God’s holy mountain, to which all the world will come because of the presence of Yahweh and the life that he gives his people. Daniel knows, as he prays his prayer, that the city called by Yahweh’s name (Dan 9:18) is the place where Yahweh has promised to be present with his people, beginning on earth in history and continuing into eternity. Whether he calls it “Jerusalem,” or along with Isaiah, “Zion,” he knows that God’s promise of restoration is more than geophysical.

The true eschatological “sanctuary” and “city” must be, as Yahweh says to Ezekiel in 20:40–42, “on My holy mountain,” that of which He speaks in the same language in Is 25:6–8. It must be a new “Jerusalem,” like that which He commands Ezekiel to measure and describe in chs. 40–44. Hummel aptly describes the city this way:

It is the site of God’s ‘incarnational’ presence on earth. Located there is as much of paradise restored as is possible until the new creation, in which its worshipers already participate. It manifests a transcendence of all earthly desires (Ps 42:2-4 [English 42:1-3]; 122:1; cf. Ezek 24:21), a transcendence that Christian worship replicates in its antitypical way.... ‘There the *whole* house of Israel will worship Me—all (כָּל) of it’ (Ezek 20:40) appears to say that a complete restoration of right worship will only be accomplished when all the people will have been restored, that is, when all who shall be saved will be gathered in at the final judgment... As Ezekiel describes the ultimate normalization of all covenant relationships—God, nation, land/mountain—he inevitably predicts the future through his OT lens, the future in terms of his present.<sup>79</sup>

God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer is about a larger restoration, that of the fully restored (entire) creation, complete with the total binding and removal of rebellion and sin and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, as stated in the six-fold goal set forth in 9:24. These are the characteristics of the promised eschatological city of God, the new Jerusalem, as Yahweh

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<sup>78</sup> John Goldingay, *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 181.

<sup>79</sup> Hummel, *Ezek 1–20*, 609.

himself describes in Isa 65:17–25, where he says, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth ... for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people.” This is also the city, the new eschatological Jerusalem, God bids Ezekiel to measure in Ezek 40–48. Not only do the goals in 9:24 point to complete and ultimate removal of sin, but also the bringing in of complete “everlasting righteousness,” which must extend to all God’s faithful people in all the earth. These are the “all peoples, nations, and languages” who serve the “one like a son of man” in 7:14.

In this way the “sanctuary” about which Daniel prays is redefined and expanded as the kingdom of God given first to God’s human agent, the “one like a son of man” (7:14) and then to his sanctified people, his saints (7:27). The designations “your people and your holy city” (עַמְּךָ וְעִיר קֹדֶשְׁךָ, 9:24), “most holy” (קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים, 9:24), “Jerusalem” (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, 9:25), and “the city and the sanctuary” (וְהָעִיר וְהַמִּקְדָּשׁ, 9:26) within the oracle of the 70x7s all refer to the objects of the restoration by the six-fold infinitives of 9:24. As a result, these referents should be viewed as greater than and anti-typical to their geophysical types, because the vision has significance for God’s people in all times and places and thus is eschatological and cosmic, revealing God’s plan of judgment and salvation until the end (עַד קֵץ, 9:26). The argument for this position is rooted in the apocalyptic nature of the visions of Daniel as discussed above in ch. 2.

The angel Gabriel relays an oracle that spans a time period consisting of “seventy sevens,” the period God has delineated for the fulfillment of his plan to “do” or “accomplish,” which was Daniel’s petition וְעַשֶׂה in 9:19. Daniel had prayed for “the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, who are near, and who are far off, through all the countries where you have driven them” (9:7), but God’s answer will be concerning God’s people of all times and places. Since that which Gabriel lays out in 9:24 details God’s eschatological plan of judgment

and salvation for all people in all the earth, “your people” must now be considered eschatologically, encompassing all nations of the earth, “all the peoples, the nations, and the language-groups” (כל עַמְמֵי אֲרֻמֵי וְלִשְׁנָיָא) of 7:14, which must also fulfill God’s promise to Abraham for “all the families of the earth” (כָּל מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה) in Gen 12:3, the “all nations” (כָּל-גּוֹיִם) of Ps 86:9 (“All nations which You have made will come and will worship before You, O Lord”), and all those to whom Yahweh refers in Isa 43:6–7, “I will tell the north, ‘Give them up!’ and tell the south, ‘Don’t hold them back! Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth—everyone who is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yes, whom I have made.’” Indeed, as Yahweh speaks to the prophet in Isa 49:6, “I will also give you for a light to the nations, that you may be my salvation to the end of the earth,” his eschatological plan of salvation must encompass all for whom Daniel prays as well as all those who will come to the light of God’s people and city (“Nations shall come to your light,” Isa 60:3). Micah would later show this understanding in Mic 4:2, “Many nations will go and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh.’” “Your [Daniel’s] city,” which is also God’s city, thought of eschatologically—that is, encompassing all of God’s plan of salvation—is now pictured accommodating people from all nations.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, the context calls for understanding not only about the BC referents for whom Daniel prays, i.e., Jerusalem and the second temple to be built, but also eschatological fulfillment-referents, i.e., the whole people who will come to the city’s light.

This would still be consistent with the scriptural use of Zion with which Daniel would be familiar—incorporating city and people as one concept—with the sanctuary being formative and

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<sup>80</sup> Per Ps 48 and Ps 87; later to be echoed in Zech 8:22–23, “Many [רַבִּים] peoples and numerous/strong [עַצְוֹנִים] nations will come to seek Yahweh [the God] of armies in Jerusalem.”

definitive of both the city and the people. In other words, “city” and “people” are holy because of the sanctuary and God’s presence in their midst.

However, the answer to Daniel’s prayer is larger than Daniel imagines. By “desolated sanctuary,” Daniel would certainly have in mind the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 BC. The oracle gives a more eternal perspective, recalling Isaiah’s prophecy of Yahweh’s Servant in Isa 61, “anointed” with the sevenfold Spirit of Yahweh. In Isa 61, the response to his restorative work is that “they shall build the eternal [eschatological] ruins; they will raise up the first desolations; they will renew the ruined cities, the desolations of all generations” (Isa 61:4). This passage refers to more than the geophysical city of Jerusalem alone, but to a city grows to fill the entire world, like the stone in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream-vision (2:35), or rather, that all the world comes into it (Isa 60).

The promised restoration concerns not just the people but even especially the place. Horace Hummel explains the typological understanding of the “land” as part of the covenants with God’s people, the paragon of the land being God’s holy city with the sanctuary of his presence among his people.

The greater fulfillment of [God’s promise of an inheritance, including the land] came with the first advent of Christ, who, through his death and resurrection, leads all who believe into his “land”—the church, the body of Christ. Yet even his first advent is not the end of the story. The final fulfillment or consummation will not be realized until his second advent, whereupon God will create the eternal “land,” the new Jerusalem, where there will be no need for a temple, “for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb” (Rev 21:22). That is the glorious, definitive antitype of the temporary sanctuary of Yahweh’s presence that he promised the exiles.<sup>81</sup>

Hummel’s point is that the “land” in the Tanakh is the place where God will dwell with his people. Once Israel has fulfilled its function of delivering the messiah, in the age of

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<sup>81</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 321.

consummation the “land” will continue to be the place where God dwells with his people, but wherever they are to the ends of the earth. This is Nebuchadnezzar’s (and Daniel’s) vision of the stone, the eternal kingdom, becoming a mountain and filling the earth (Dan 2:35, 44) to stand forever.

Reed Lessing discusses the centrality of the motif of “city” in the Hebrew Scriptures. “The biblical narrative begins in a garden (Gen 2–3) and ends in a city with Edenic garden imagery (Rev 21–22). . . . Some of Yahweh’s most spectacular promises are for this eschatological city (e.g., Isa 54, 62; Ezek 40–48; Rev 21–22). Even though the earthly city would be destroyed in 587 BC and the exiles would be scattered far away in Babylon, Yahweh promises a new Jerusalem.”<sup>82</sup> Ultimately, “new creation,” “new land,” “new Jerusalem,” and “new Temple” are all part of a single theological motif, that of the restoration of all things in the age to come.<sup>83</sup> The salvation-history of God’s people points to God’s goal to restore his creation not simply to its original design in the beginning, but that the “garden” would grow and be developed and become a “city.”

Donald Gowan shows how, in the eschatological vision of the prophets, the Babylonian devastation of Jerusalem, as well as thoughts about the holy city, were transformed.

As [the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC] drew near, both Jeremiah and Ezekiel [had] condemned the popular faith in God’s everlasting presence in Jerusalem and the consequent belief in the invulnerability of the city. . . . That should have been the end of Zion theology (cf. Lam 1 and 2). . . . If anything was to come out of that devastating experience [of Jerusalem’s destruction], presumably it ought to have been a theology and practice that de-emphasized Jerusalem, since it had been the site of their greatest failure, both of obedience and of understanding. Yet the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel also contain passages that speak of a new Jerusalem, to be established by God after the time of judgment has passed. . . . Instead of repudiating Zion theology, exilic Judaism had corrected it, had eschatologized it, had found a way to take account of

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<sup>82</sup> Lessing, *Isaiah 40–55*, 132–33.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. the Hebrew shorthand phrase, though not commonly used, is *shuv sh ’vuth*; Greek ἀποκατάστασις, Acts 1:6 and 3:21.

judgment and to express their hope for a divinely accomplished future that would take all they had once believed to be present-tense truth about Jerusalem and make that, and more, come true in the days that are coming.... That continuing potency of the concept of the city of God as an eschatological symbol, throughout history to our own day, is another reason for emphasizing Zion as the center of Israel's hopes.<sup>84</sup>

Gowan thus points to how the prophets, rather than de-emphasizing Jerusalem in embarrassment over its destruction, instead capitalize on its destruction to rebound the hope of its restoration by emphasizing their Zion theology in a new and different way, eschatologically. Gowan also goes on to explain,

[In] Isa 49:14–26... a new element is the tendency to personify Jerusalem.... By this time [mid-sixth-century BC in Babylonia] it has become possible for that city to be used as a symbol for the people of God, so it is beginning to transcend its spatial origins. Note that Zion is metaphorically the mother of Israel.... Since Zion has become a symbol for the people themselves, the prophet's impressive assurances of the intimate relationship that exists between God and his city represent another way of promising a permanent relationship between God and his people in the days to come.... The symbol has become more than merely spatial, but it has not lost its original significance; for Zion is also a real city.... [This passage] develops with fervor and imagination a single theme, that of the restoration of Zion, which will be combined elsewhere with all the expected transformations we call 'eschatological.'<sup>85</sup>

Since, as Gowan points out, the eschatological restoration of Zion is so central in Isaiah, it is no wonder that Jeremiah and Ezekiel looked toward that eschatological restoration all the more in the context of the exile. Likewise for Daniel, although he confesses on behalf of all of God's people their sin for which they deserved exile, he does not view Jerusalem as irreversibly desolated. Rather, as Daniel and all the people pray for restoration to God's favor by the forgiveness of their sins, they also look to a restored new Jerusalem in which they would dwell in God's presence in grace.

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<sup>84</sup> Donald Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 7–9.

<sup>85</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology*, 14.

Gowan gives a good demonstration of typological reading to illustrate the fundamental nature of apocalyptic vision. Apocalyptic is not about prophesying specific events, it is about “looking behind the curtain.” While it “sees” specific events, those events are pointers to the greater (eschatological) reality that is its fundamental concern. Prophecy looks at the events of history; apocalyptic looks through them to see what is behind (or above) them. This is not an allegorical reading but an eschatological one, for the events of history do not represent abstract concepts disassociated with the historical reality but rather the culmination to which the specific instance in history points. Apocalyptic thus brings eschatology and typology together.

The vision and oracle reveal to Daniel and his reader that a greater restoration is in mind, and that a heightened, enlarged perspective on “Jerusalem” is the new vision to understand. Now in Dan 9:24 God is speaking of the restoration of the entire creation, of which Jerusalem stands as the center from which God’s restoration flows.

The second and longest epoch of the 70x7s, “sixty-two sevens,” is characterized as a period “when it [Jerusalem] will again be built, broadly though delimited (רְחֹב וְתָרִיץ),”<sup>86</sup> with the caveat that such will happen “in distress of times” (9:25). The work of Messiah Prince, whose coming is the transition from the “seven sevens” to the “sixty-two sevens,” will begin the restoration of God’s holy city. The angel Gabriel gives a description of *how*, that is, *with what qualities*, the city will be built.

The phrase רְחֹב וְתָרִיץ is challenging because of its unusual syntax. With the first word usually denoting “broadness or expansion,” and the second word “delimited or bordered,” the two words together perhaps suggest a delineated, decided plan that is large-scale, but within set boundaries. God alone decides what is “inside” and what is “outside.” Why would such

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<sup>86</sup> See philological notes on this phrase.

“delimiting” be necessary unless רחוב here indicates an unusual “broadening”? This also would fit the description of the “stone” in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of ch. 2, which Daniel interprets to represent everlasting kingdom of God (2:44), first growing to become a mountain and finally growing to fill the entire earth (2:35).

Isaiah 33:20–21 demonstrates the “broadness” of God’s holy city,

Behold Zion, our appointed meeting place! Let your eyes see Jerusalem, a habitation at ease, a tent not-for-travelling [i.e., permanent], whose stakes will not be pulled up forever, nor will any of its cords be pulled off, because there majestic Yahweh will be for us a place of streams the broadness of hands (רַחְבֵּי יְדַיִם) [i.e., “spacious streams”].

Alec Motyer also recognizes the huge scale that God’s eschatological city in Isaiah will exhibit:

Jerusalem is not the literal city but the city of Gal 4:25–26; Heb 12:22; [and] Rev 21. Exactly so, but for Isaiah, not privileged as we with hindsight, it was a vision of staggering proportions. Somehow in relation to the Lord’s new-creation purposes for Zion, it would devolve upon those who were already its citizens to gather in from the whole world those who would be co-equal with themselves in citizenship and privilege in the day when Jerusalem would be the pilgrimage centre for all creation and when every opposing factor and person would be a thing of the past.<sup>87</sup>

This eschatological promise of God becomes the very hope of his people. After all, the welfare of God’s holy city is a reflection of God’s relationship with his people and demonstrates his mercy and loving-kindness. An essential point is the scope of the promise, “broad” in several ways: geographically, encompassing the whole earth; politically, including believers from all the peoples, the nations, and the language-groups; and temporally, that is, extending into eternity.

The prophet Micah will also speak of the eschatological city of God (“the mountain of Yahweh”) in similar ways in Mic 4:1–5. In his description of the eschatological restoration, he promises “A day to build (לְבִנוֹת) your walls [is coming]; that day the boundary (חֵק) will be extended (יִרְחַק, but not רָחַב)” (Mic 7:11).

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<sup>87</sup> Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 540.



Since the root חרץ appears several times in the oracle of the 70x7s, including נְחַרְצֶת in 9:26 and 27, a clear emphasis seems to be on God’s “cutting out” and arranging, planning and definitively deciding for the purposes of the goals of the previous verse (9:24). Understood in this way, the import of נְחַרְצֶת in 9:25 would point to the fact that there is an “inside” and an “outside” to God’s kingdom, in sharp distinction. Since the picture evoked by this kind of usage clarifies the purposes laid out in this passage, the best sense of this phrase in 9:25 seems to be “expansively, but delimited [according to God’s plan].” To translate “with square/plaza and moat” (as metaphors) may be understood in a similar way, but “expansively but delimited” gives a more explicit sense and recalls the themes of God’s kingdom filling the earth as well as his sovereign dominion in ordering and arranging his creation, especially his eternal kingdom established and inaugurated on earth in history but continuing forever.

This is a key point Paul Raabe emphasizes in Isaiah.

To understand Isa 24–27, we must think spatially. Inside of Zion is eternal life and joy for all Gentiles (25:6–7), but outside of Zion all ‘inhabitants of the earth’ will perish.... It is a contrast between every city of the world and the city of God.<sup>88</sup>

Alec Motyer concurs about the city in Isaiah.

The context requires that the locus of this worship [of Yahweh] is the new Jerusalem. That “all flesh” could come to the city shows that Isaiah is running beyond the concept of a single location. This is the world city of the redeemed which we met in chapters 25–26 following the fall of the world city of meaninglessness (24:10). Just as the latter described the whole world organized around humankind and excluding God, so the former, the new Jerusalem, is the new creation organized as the “city” where the Lord dwells among his people, open and available to them in holy fellowship.<sup>89</sup>

It is a welcome promise, because outside the walls of God’s city, “The earth will be a desolation (לְשִׁמְמָה) because of its inhabitants, as a fruit of their actions” (Mic 2:13). This is a clear echo of

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<sup>88</sup> Paul Raabe, *Isaiah 13–27*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2023), 458.

<sup>89</sup> Motyer, *Prophecy*, 543.

the desolation Isaiah describes in ch. 24 as the earth is corrupted by the sin of its inhabitants. And yet within, against, and despite the desolation on the outside, the faithful people of God are sheltered by his presence within the boundary (קִוּי) of his protection. It is a decree that stands as a boundary that God alone delimits, to separate, for example, sea from land (Job 38:8–10; Prov 8:29; Jer 22:5), or what is outside his will from what is inside. This idea is central and critical to the prophets' Zion theology. In Mic 7, “inside” is God’s city of his presence; “outside” is desolation. Micah 7 is a meditation on the hope God’s people have even while sitting in desolation, despite the corruption and upsetting of God’s order of creation (seen in familial relations in Mic 7:6) and the enemies rejoicing and taunting for a time (Mic 7:8–10), God’s people still look to God’s gracious rebuilding and restoration (7:11) of his city, of life in his presence. This is also the picture in Isa 16 as the remnant of Moab, those who seek shelter in Zion, are to be welcomed into God’s holy city. And in turn the remnant of Moab serves as a metaphor for all the nations of the world streaming to Zion in the eschatological day. God has delineated boundaries “inside” of which is his presence and care, and “outside” of which can only be desolation, being cut off from life. And so the celebration when God accomplishes his salvation is, “You have added to the nation, O Yahweh,... You have expanded (רָחַקְתָּ) all the borders of the land!” (Isa 26:15).

Throughout the Scriptures God’s people are called to be the holy people that God is making them to be. They are not to seek to be like the other nations around them or to capitulate to their idols or worldview. Rather, the vision God gives is that “from Zion will go forth the teaching (Torah) of Yahweh, and the Word of Yahweh from Jerusalem” (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2), and as a result, the nations will stream toward and into God’s holy city. But a key point is that, even

though God's city, i.e., his holy mountain, is (or will be) filling all the earth, there is an "inside" and an "outside" to it.

This seems to be the best sense in which to understand the *קָרְוֵן* of Dan 9:25, whether one translates as "with a moat" or "delimited." God's city will on the one hand be build "broadly," indeed to fill the entire earth, but on the other hand in a "delineated" and "delimited" sense with boundaries. God "determines" and delimits what is "city" and what is "outside." The city will fill the earth, but not all the earth will be the city.

Jason Soenksen expounds upon the Zion theology of Mic 4 as a parallel to Isa 2, the prophecy of "the mountain of the house of Yahweh" (Mic 4:1 // Isa 2:2) or simply "the mountain of Yahweh" (Mic 4:2 // Isa 2:3). Nebuchadnezzar's (and also Daniel's) vision of the stone that becomes a mountain that fills the entire earth (Dan 2:35) is the same "mountain of Yahweh." The "city and sanctuary" of Dan 9 are the manifestations of that mountain which represents the everlasting kingdom, the rule and reign of Yahweh in the world. Soenksen explains about Mic 4:

In the future, the mountain of the Lord's temple would be highly exalted (4:1). The text does not speak about a reconstruction of the temple, but rather speaks in hyperbolic terms of something greater that would replace what was lost (3:12). The elevation of the mountain is metaphorical, signifying the importance of the location. The mountain is exalted because of the divine, salvific activity connected with it, the message that goes out from it and draws many nations to the one true God.... But the place where the nations come to meet with Israel's God is where the Word of God about the Word made flesh is taught. Thus, the location is not limited to one place.... In the nearer future, the nations would stream to Jerusalem to overwhelm the fortified city with their might. But later many nations would stream to the exalted mountain of Yahweh's temple, not to trample it, but to be taught to walk in a different way, according to the paths of Yahweh.... The nations cannot seek him in his omnipresence, but rather where he locates himself... He has graciously made himself accessible not just to Israel but to all nations. He accessibility in his own appointed way reveals his desire to be known.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Soenksen, *Micah*, 296, 297–98, 299.

This illustrates the sense of the רחוב, the “broadness” of Dan. 9:25, whether one translates “with squares” or “with broadness;” it is the “accessibility” of Yahweh in his holy city by his presence with his people whom he gathers there. But there is also a limitedness, in that people may only find Yahweh where he has promised to locate himself—inside his kingdom-city, and not outside of it.

In Dan 9:24, the restoration of the holy city involves the “anointing” (לְמַשָּׁח) of “a most holy” (קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים), but it is difficult to determine the referent the phrase. Lev 7:6 epitomizes the Pentateuchal usage of this phrase in two different senses, both with and without the article: בְּמִקּוֹם הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשׁ כִּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ כִּי קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים הוּא (“in the holy place, because it is most holy [holy of holies]”). With the article, הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים (“the Most Holy,” Ex 26:33, 34, et al.) throughout the Pentateuch refers generally to the holy sanctuary of the tabernacle as it serves as a type and representation of God’s heavenly sanctuary.<sup>91</sup> Without the article, קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים (Ex 29:37, 30:10, et al.) is adjectival, describing a place, thing, or person as “most holy.” Here in Dan 9:24, with no noun is given as the object of לְמַשָּׁח (“to anoint”), taking the adjectival phrase as a substantive, “a holy of holies,” would suggest that some specific person or thing is in mind. If that is the case, the usage would be anarthrous, even if the referent is not the *debir* of the Tabernacle/Temple. Since Gabriel says that these six goals of 9:24 are “concerning your people and your holy city,” it is natural to connect קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים with the people and the city, especially in light of those called (in Aramaic) קְדוּשָׁי עַלְיוֹנִין (7:18, 21, 27). A singular קֹדֶשׁ can arguably be understood as a collective singular for the “people,” but the very construction of the phrase suggests that there is one “holy” over many

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<sup>91</sup> In Lev 21:22 the phrase with the article is used for the ‘most holy’ things as opposed to the merely ‘holy’ things. In Num 4:4 it refers to the whole Tent of Meeting, not just the *debir*. Outside the Pentateuch, in Ezek. 42:13, it is used twice to refer to offerings. In Neh 7:65 it refers to food offerings, and in 2 Chr 31:14 it appears to refer to offerings in general.

“holies,” making it “most holy.” But if the “people” belong to the “city,” then the anointing of the city would include, or at least have effects upon, the people.

Keil argues that קִדְּשׁוּם קְדֹשׁ does indeed refer to “city” rather than “people.”

The words under examination say nothing of the people and the congregation which God will gather around the place of his gracious presence, but of the objective place where God seeks to dwell among his people and reveal himself to them. The anointing is the act by which the place is consecrated to be a holy place of the gracious presence and revelation of God. If thus the anointing of a most holy is here announced, then by it there is given the promise, not of the renewal of the place already existing from of old, but of the appointment of a new place of God's gracious presence among his people, a new sanctuary.<sup>92</sup>

Keil's argument is against interpreting “a most holy” as the people of God, or even as a singular person, which could only be “the Most High” by whom they are the “holy ones [saints] of the Most High” (7:18, 21, 27).

Rather, it is the new temple of the new Jerusalem that Ezekiel sees that God calls “the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place” (מִקְדָּשׁ קְדֹשׁ קְדֹשִׁים, Ezek 45:3). After all, as Kliefoth argues, “The Most Holy, and the temple, as far as it has a Most Holy Place, is not the congregation's place where it comes to God and is with God, but, on the contrary, is the place where God is present for the congregation and reveals Himself to them.”<sup>93</sup> The new Jerusalem and new sanctuary are God's holy city and the place of his abode because it is there that he promises to dwell with his people forever.

Horace Hummel explains the relationship of the temple and the holy city in God's eschatological plan of the restoration of all creation:

The tabernacle and its ritual are a ‘reflection,’ a miniature, a copy of the heavenly temple. There is God's eternal throne (ultimately the entire universe), but God must become ‘incarnate’ in a special dwelling place among mankind because of its alienation in sin. The same language and conceptuality is applied to the tabernacle's

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<sup>92</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 345, 346, 348.

<sup>93</sup> Kliefoth, *Daniels*, 307.

successor, the temple (and by extension the entire holy city, Zion) as well as to Christ, both His incarnation, and the fulfillment in Him of God's eternal purpose for the temple of the entire cosmos (Hebrews, Revelation, etc.)... The temple was indeed a miniature, a reflection, a microcosm of the heavenly temple (ultimately the universe), and what was done there was, as it were, also done in heaven. At the same time, the uniquely biblical accent is on the horizontal connection with *Heilsgeschichte*: God temporarily and 'incarnationally' takes up residence with His elect people, as he guides them, together with all of nature and history, to the temple not made with hands, the new Jerusalem, yes, the 'new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells' (2 Peter 3:13), which, under God, is the eschatological goal of all of history.<sup>94</sup>

Here Hummel shows that first, on earth and in history, the temple served to be a connection between heaven and earth, between God and His people, but that this connection through God's incarnational presence would ultimately grow to fill the entire cosmos as his new Jerusalem. This is the vision of the city and temple given to Ezekiel, about which Yahweh asserts, "Son of Man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever" (Ezek 43:7).

Not only do the OT tabernacle and temple serve as a connection between heaven and earth, but the Scriptures often indicate a connection with the entire creation. Reed Lessing stresses that, "The thematic and verbal links between Gen 1–2 and the building of the tabernacle (Exod 25–31; 35–40) imply that the worship of Yahweh at the tabernacle is a world-creating activity, a God-given way for the community of faith to participate in Yahweh's ongoing re-creation of a new world."<sup>95</sup>

The purpose of "sanctuary" as Daniel prays for restoration is for God's people once again to fellowship with God and to participate in his ongoing restoration of the entire creation. Levenson describes this new creation as an "ordered, supportive, and obedient environment... a

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<sup>94</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 76–77, 137.

<sup>95</sup> Lessing, *Isaiah 40–55*, 324.

place in which the reign of God is visible and unchallenged, and his holiness is palpable, unthreatened, and pervasive.”<sup>96</sup> In their respective studies, Lessing and Levenson show how God’s sanctuary serves as an Eden-like place where God and humanity can fellowship and dwell together and how God’s sanctuary anticipates God’s restoration of the entire creation in the age to come.

A majority of First Coming of the Messiah interpreters read the phrase “to anoint a most holy” (9:24) as pointing to a specific person, as Steinmann summarizes:

No anointed is ever mentioned in connection with Solomon’s temple. Neither is there any mention in the OT of anointing for the second temple, rebuilt after the exile (Ezra). Moreover, 1 and 2 Macc say nothing about anointing the second temple when it was rededicated by Judas Maccabaeus (164 BC). Therefore, the fulfillment of Dan 9:24 must be the anointing of the Messiah, not any anointing of the second temple. It is clear in Dan 9:25–26 that the “Messiah, Anointed One” is a person, and the phrase “most holy” is applied to a person at least once elsewhere in the OT (1 Chron 23:13).<sup>97</sup>

The argument assumes that it is the intention of 1 Kings 8 // 2 Chr 5–7 to give complete details of the ceremony, and that therefore, since the anointing is not mentioned, it did not happen. This is the sort of assumption that critical scholars often make when reading the Pentateuch, and for which conservatives regularly chide them. Jacques Doukhan gives another argument on the basis of usage in the Pentateuch:

It is highly significant that the same association of these three notions—atonement (*kaphar*), anointing (*mashach*), and holy of holies (*qodesh qodashim*)—is found in Exodus 29:36–37, the only other biblical reference to use these three expressions in conjunction. This passage deals with the consecration of Aaron and his sons to their high priesthood (the earliest consecration of an Israelite priesthood)... We may now see the relationship expressed in the parallelism between atonement and the anointment of a “holy of holies,” i.e., the consecration of a new high-priesthood.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 86.

<sup>97</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 467.

<sup>98</sup> Doukhan, “Seventy Weeks,” 11-12.

However, the fact that the referent in Exod 29:37 is the altar, rather than the priesthood, proves Doukhan to be wrong.

The First Coming interpreters rightly want to make an essential connection between the restoration of the sanctuary and city with the person and work of the Messiah Prince, and so they understand “a most holy” to be a person rather than a place. However, understanding it as a place, or rather as a metonymy for the intersection of heaven and earth, provides the same essential connection between sanctuary and the Most High who sanctifies his people.

The beginning of the restoration of sanctuary, city, and people starts in the first “seven sevens” with the “coming of Messiah Prince.” However, nothing more specific is said of the coming of Messiah Prince, except that his coming will inaugurate the building of the city in the next set of 62 sevens. That is to say, the coming of Messiah Prince is a significant milestone in God’s plan, which is the culmination of the first seven sevens, but the oracle now looks to the “62 sevens” the rebuilding of the city as an integral process of its restoration, as well as to the desolations of the final “seven” that lead up to the ultimate, everlasting fulfillment.

The “sanctuary,” so intimately connected to the city (9:26), about which Daniel prays and Gabriel prophesies, cannot exist or function as such outside of God’s presence in the rule and reign of his Messiah Prince over the eternal kingdom. His dominion includes the right that “all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him” (7:14), that on earth, in history, he will be worshiped as God alone must be worshiped, and that true worship of God must be given to him. Three facts demonstrate that the intersection of heaven and earth occur in the human flesh of this person because (1) he “comes with the clouds of heaven;” (2) he receives divine dominion, glory, and kingdom; and (3) he is to be worshiped by all peoples of the earth.



Desmond Ford connects the prophesied restoration of the city and sanctuary with the promise of the eternal kingdom of ch. 7:

The promise of the restoration of the sanctuary was a promise of the messianic kingdom.<sup>99</sup> The temple was a microcosm of the kingdom of God. There were the emblems of his government and covenant. Skillfully the writer has interwoven repeated references to the sanctuary as background to the promises of the establishment of Yahweh's kingdom of glory. These references occur in both the narrative and prophetic sections of the book. The sanctuary with its abiding Shekinah indicated Yahweh's will to dwell with his people. The writer of Daniel pledges that the shadow is soon to give place to the substance. A new sanctuary is to be anointed as transgression is finished, sin atoned for, and everlasting righteousness brought in."<sup>100</sup>

Thus, Ford equates the vision of the "one like a son of man" in Dan 7:13–14 as the very fulfillment of the promise of the restoration of God's city and sanctuary in 9:24–25 and the goals enumerated. As the oracle of the 70x7s unfolds, the interweaving of chs. 7 and 9 in its themes of the building and expansion of the eternal kingdom of the "one like a son of man" and the opposing warfare of the eschatological enemy of God and his people becomes more apparent.

Since God's eternal dominion is given to his anointed agent (Dan 7:14), this building of the holy city is a clear step in establishing that eternal reign among his people, which is the primary connection linking this Messiah Prince of 9:25 to the "one like a son of man" (7:13–14) of the overarching vision. The building of the city should be understood as the new Jerusalem, the antitype of the first Jerusalem, the eschatological city of God.

The antithesis to the promised eschatological restoration is the "desolation" under which Daniel and all God's people currently see the city. Daniel surely cannot help but think of the destroyed city of Jerusalem "back home," but he also knows that Jerusalem represents the entire

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<sup>99</sup> Here Ford is restating F. Buhl in his article "Daniel," in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, III. [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1949-55], 349.

<sup>100</sup> Desmond Ford, *The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1979), 136.

“nation” of God’s people, and “city” represents the relationship between God and his people. “Desolation” means that the city has been made uninhabitable for its intended purpose(s). It is “ruined” in the sense of “corrupted.” Although  $\text{חָרַב}$  in the Hif’il in some contexts may be translated “ruined” as in “destroyed,” here in Dan. 9:26 it is not simply about physical buildings being broken apart. It is about rendering the sanctuary and city “uninhabitable” by God’s people, since this is one of the “desolations” the oracle indicates. On the one hand, desolation at the time of the Babylonian exile had served as a punishment because of the sins of God’s people (9:16), Daniel’s visions on the other hand foresee desolations from the corruption of the sanctuary and city by foreign invaders, first (chronologically) in the “little horn” type of ch. 8, and (later but more importantly) in the heightened fulfillment of the “little horn” of ch. 7. This will be the “desolation” that the “people of the coming prince” will bring to the city and sanctuary, to “ruin” ( $\text{יִשְׁחָרְבוּ$ ) it. This “ruining” may include physical destruction, but since the “building” of the city in 9:25 has a spiritual emphasis, the “ruining” in 9:26 likely is an attempt to counteract the “building” which was made possible and inaugurated by the coming of Messiah Prince, and was continued throughout the 62 sevens by his reign. The “ruining” will be accomplished because of a withdrawal of the Messiah Prince, thus separating the people from his presence, but it will not be entirely the doing of the rebellious people. It is allowed as part of God’s “delineated desolations,” which he himself set in motion at the proper time by the removal of the reign of Messiah.

The promise, however, is that the corruption can be removed, and the city and its people restored and given everlasting righteousness (9:24). Then it will again serve as God’s sanctuary, no longer desolated, but where “Yahweh Is There” (Ezek 48:35). That is the true eschatological fulfillment of Daniel’s prayer to “make Your face shine upon Your sanctuary” (9:17).

Within this typological framework of understanding, it becomes clearer how God's answer in the oracle of the 70x7s actually addresses Daniel's petition to "make your face shine upon your sanctuary" (9:17). The prayer certainly includes a rebuilding of the temple, which then would become the heart of the city of the people of God, but it must include (or at least lead up to an eventual) eschatological restoration of God's holy mountain, Zion, which by God's presence will become the life of the entire earth. Geographical restoration of the people to the promised land and geophysical restoration of the city and temple would indicate at least the beginning of God's restoration that will be made complete with the fulfillment of all of God's promises. Ultimately, God would defeat all his (and his people's) enemies and establish everlasting righteousness and peace. Therefore, Gabriel comes to Daniel and begins to speak "concerning your people and your city" in terms of eschatological restoration.

### **The Problem of Identifying the Little Horn**

In order to understand the "little horn" enemy in the overarching vision of ch. 7, it is important to identify whether a "little horn" that appears in ch. 8 refers to the same person. The argumentation of a majority of Historical Critical interpreters is that, if indeed the "little horn" of ch. 8 can be shown to refer to Antiochus IV "Epiphanes," then perhaps by similarities between the "little horn" of ch. 7 and that of ch. 8, it can be argued that they refer to the same person. If that is the case, then ch. 7, and subsequently, ch. 9, must refer to the events of the second century B.C. From there, they then posit that the book of Daniel was written after those second-century events, and so cannot be considered prophetic in the true sense.

In the vision of Dan 7, the third beast (7:6) is of particular importance because of the "dominion given to it" (7:6), although nothing further is said of that beast in ch. 7. The third

beast in the progression of the four points forward so that it serves as a precursor and example of the greater fourth beast (and its little horn) to come.

There are three reasons why the little horn of ch. 7 and the little horn of ch. 8 are to be identified as two separate persons. (1) The little horn of ch. 8 comes from Greece, but the “horn” of ch. 7 comes from a time after the Roman empire. (2) The end of the ch. 8 enemy is not the end of history. However, the end of the enemy of ch. 7 is the ultimate finale to history. (3) The angel reveals to sixth-century BC Daniel both the future (to Daniel) type and the future (to all God’s people) antitype.

Gabriel explains in 8:20–26 that the vision of 8:2–12 deals with the ram, representing the kings of Media and Persia (8:20), and with the goat, representing the king of Greece (8:21), with one horn to represent “the first king” (8:21), then four horns for kingdoms that will arise out of that nation, and out of one of them a “little horn,” a “king of fierce face” (8:23 ESV). Steinmann asserts, “There is agreement among all scholars that the male goat of Dan 8 and the kingdoms mentioned in 11:3–4 represent the Greeks, beginning with Alexander the Great (the single horn and the mighty king). Therefore, the third kingdom of Dan 7 represented by the leopard must also be the Greeks.”<sup>101</sup> The four wings and four heads of the “leopard” beast in 7:6 correspond with the four horns that arose upon the goat (8:8, 22).

Steinmann also gives a thorough summary of “The Four Kingdom Schema in Daniel”<sup>102</sup> and specifically, of the reasons the interpretations of the third and fourth of the four beast-kingdoms of Daniel 7 are important for the interpretation of Dan 7–9. “The Greek View,” espoused especially by Historical-Critical interpreters, identifies the four beast-kingdoms as

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<sup>101</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 151. See also Steinmann’s entire excursus, “The Four-Kingdom Schema in Daniel,” pp. 144–57.

<sup>102</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 144–57.

Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. Since they deny any true predictive prophecy in Daniel, instead claiming that the book was written *ex eventu* during the Greek period, Rome could not yet be in sight. This point is crucial in their arguments about the 70x7s, namely that the “little horn” from the fourth beast (7:8) is the same as the “little horn” depicted from the Greek empire in 8:9, and must represent Antiochus IV “Epiphanes.” This also would, in their view, make it impossible to identify any “anointed one” as in 9:25 with anyone later than the Greek empire. The Roman View, on the other hand, accepted by both Jews in antiquity<sup>103</sup> and Christians, has been “the only view among Christians until the rise of historical criticism.”<sup>104</sup> It identifies the four beast-kingdoms of Dan 7 as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Since God’s everlasting kingdom (the “fifth” kingdom in Dan 2 and 7) through the dominion of the “one like a son of man” comes after the fourth beast-kingdom, and since Christians believe the coming of the Messiah Prince (according to Dan 9:25) was in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (and Jews believe that Messiah has not yet come), then traditional Christianity sees the fulfillment of the “fifth” kingdom of God inaugurated in the Roman period. Edward Young quips, “Luther was probably guilty of overstatement when he said, ‘In this interpretation and opinion, all the world are agreed, and history and fact abundantly establish it.’”<sup>105</sup> Young is correct, but Luther’s point was, in his time, that the matter was hardly debated. This demonstrates the predominance of the Roman View over against the more recent Greek View that only came to prominence beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

As seen in ch. 7, the “little horn” of that chapter is an eschatological enemy who, after waging war and prevailing against the “saints of the Most High,” will be “completely destroyed

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<sup>103</sup> Josephus. *Antiquities*, 10.276.

<sup>104</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 144.

<sup>105</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 275.

forever” (7:26). Then the everlasting kingdom will be given to the saints of the Most High who have been sanctified and ruled by the dominion of the “one like a son of man.” Chapter 8, however, introduces another similar but separate “little horn.” Kliefoth explains the traditional Christian view: “The prophecy sees in Antiochus the outermost peak.... As the antichrist will come forth from the great apostasy of the last time, so did Antiochus from the apostasy that appeared in the people of God at that time.”<sup>106</sup>

The male goat in ch. 8 initially had a single “notable” (קְרוֹן, 8:5) horn, which was broken and replaced by four notable horns (8:8, 22). Then in 8:9, “from one of them came forth a little horn” (קְרוֹן אֶחָד מִצְעִירָה). The similarity of Aramaic and Hebrew vocabulary prompt the reader to compare this horn appearing in 8:9 to the little horn of 7:8, “another horn, a little one” (קְרוֹן אֶחָד אֲחֵרִי) (קְרוֹן אֶחָד אֲחֵרִי). Do the two phrases refer to a single enemy or two separate enemies with similarities?

BDB and HALOT give the most basic meaning of צָעַר (to describe the horn of 8:9) as “lowly, insignificant,” which may refer to physical size, e.g., “small(-er, -est),” or to age, e.g., “young(-er, -est).” TWOT reasons that according to scriptural usage, מִצְעִירָה “connotes last born and/or insignificant.”<sup>107</sup> Similarly, the Aramaic קְרוֹן אֶחָד אֲחֵרִי (to describe the horn of 7:8) appears to be equivalent to that Hebrew cognate. Therefore, etymology of these words cannot establish any basis for identification of the “little horn” of ch. 7 with the “little horn” of ch. 8. To determine if these two “little” horns are to be equated, relevant factors are the origin and timing of each one’s appearance, predications and actions of each, and the end of the power of each.

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<sup>106</sup> Kliefoth, *Daniels*, 278. “Die Weissagung erblickt im Antiochus die äußerste Spitze.... Wie der Antichrist hervorkommen wird aus dem großen Abfall der letzten Zeit so der Antiochus aus dem in dem damaligen Gottesvolke hervorgetretenen Abfall.”

<sup>107</sup> TWOT, s.v. צָעַר, 2:1948.

The origin of the little horn of ch. 8 is given in 8:9. Unlike the previous four “conspicuous” horns, which “came up” (וַתֵּצְלֶנָה) from the goat to replace the great broken horn and which extend “toward the four winds of heaven,” the little horn later “comes out from one of them,” וּמִן־הֶאֱחָת מֵהֶם יֵצֵא. However, it is unclear to what מֵהֶם (“from them”) refers. Seventh Day Adventist scholars such as Pfandel, Hassler, and Shea, see the little horn coming out from one of “the four winds of heaven,” a closer antecedent in v. 8 than “horns.” This would also reiterate the pattern of geographical origin begun with the ram and the goat. Mark Hassler notes, “Such an interpretation would obviously leave the little horn unattached to a creature, which sometimes happens in scriptural symbolism (e.g., Zech 1:18–19). The little horn need not be Grecian.”<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, the majority of commentators take “one of them” to refer to one of the “notable four [horns]” of the previous verse, in which case the little horn must necessarily come from among the kings of the Greek empire, since it is a given that, according to Gabriel in 8:21, the goat is the king of Greece. If that is the case, then the “little horn” of ch. 8, arising from the Greek empire, with its similar hostility to the people of God, appears as a type of a later enemy to arise from among the 10 horns of the fourth beast (kingdom) of Dan. 7.

The הָזוּת (“striking”) of 8:8, which is functioning adjectivally according to Steinmann,<sup>109</sup> often translated “conspicuous,” is certainly contrasted by the מְצַעֲרָה (“little”) of the singular horn of v. 9, perhaps lending a connotation of “inconspicuous” to its “insignificance.” Whatever the exact connotations of מְצַעֲרָה, whether “young/recent” or “insignificant,” this little horn instead increases (וַתִּגְדַּל) in size and influence (8:10). The “little horn” here becomes significant as to its impact in the history of God’s people.

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<sup>108</sup> Mark Hassler, “The Identity of the Little Horn in Daniel 8: Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Rome, or the Antichrist?” *MSJ* 27 (Spring 2016): 36.

<sup>109</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 395.

Daniel 8:23 gives the timing of the appearance of this little horn type: וַבְּאַחֲרֵית מַלְכוּתָם כְּהֵתֵם (‘‘And in the latter [time] of their kingdom, as the rebels [become] complete,’’ 8:23). If הַפְּשָׁעִים (‘‘And in the latter [time] of their kingdom, as the rebels [become] complete,’’ 8:23). If וַבְּאַחֲרֵית is to be understood, as is often translated, ‘‘in the latter days of,’’ then מַלְכוּתָם (‘‘their kingdom’’) would qualify the earlier ambiguity of מֵהֵם (‘‘from them’’) in 8:9 and must necessarily refer to the four conspicuous horns of 8:8. This would also definitively establish the little horn of this chapter to be Grecian. On the other hand, if וַבְּאַחֲרֵית is used in a sense like Ps 37:37 and 38, אַחֲרֵית refers to a future<sup>110</sup> extending beyond what can be seen and could extend beyond the days and dominion of the Grecian kings. The phrase in 8:23, כְּהֵתֵם הַפְּשָׁעִים (‘‘when the rebels become complete’’), may perhaps be eschatological. Steinmann suggests that God is the implied subject of the Hiphil infinitive כְּהֵתֵם and that this is a similar phrase to Yahweh’s eschatological goal of 9:24,<sup>111</sup> לְכַלֵּא הַפְּשָׁע (‘‘to put an end to the rebellion’’) (see also discussion below). These uses of פֶּשַׁע (‘‘rebellion’’) in both ch. 8 and ch. 9 seem to point not just to any transgression or rebellion, but to a certain definite, perhaps eschatological rebellion. Gabriel emphasizes three times in 8:17, 19, and 26, that the vision is eschatological, viz., ‘‘Understand, son of man, because the vision is for the time of the end’’ (וְהָבֵן בְּוֶן־אָדָם כִּי לְעֵת־קֵץ הִתְחַוֶּה, v. 17), and ‘‘for the appointed time of the end’’ (כִּי לְמוֹעֵד קֵץ, v. 19). In the third saying (v. 26), if it is not explicitly eschatological, it refers at least to many days in the future to Daniel, ‘‘because [the vision] is to many days’’<sup>112</sup> (כִּי לְיָמִים רַבִּים). To limit this vision to a historical figure in the past for present readers, even if future to

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<sup>110</sup> BDB, s.v. אַחֲרֵית, 31.

<sup>111</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 410.

<sup>112</sup> The preposition לְ here is temporally terminative, much like the common usage of לְעוֹלָם (e.g., 2 Kgs 5:27), Williams §266b.



Daniel, such as Antiochus IV, as Historical-Critical scholars invariably do,<sup>113</sup> would be to reduce the scope set by the messenger angel, for the vision “is to the appointed time of the end” (8:19).

The use of עצום (“great”) in 8:24 is difficult because, even in its other uses, it can be understood to indicate either quantity or power or both, e.g., Joel 2:11, “for very many are his [Yahweh’s] forces, for powerful is the doer of his Word” (פִּי רַב מְאֹד מִמְּהַרְוֹ פִּי עֲצוּמִים עֹשֶׂה דְבָרוֹ) and Isa 53:12, “Therefore I will apportion to him with the many, and with the powerful [or numerous] he will apportion booty” (לָכֵן אֶחְלֶק־לוֹ בְּרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יִחְלַק שְׁלָל). In both examples, עצום is coupled with a form of רב, suggesting a strong connection to “large quantity,” but also perhaps as an expansion thereof, such as “mighty or powerful *because of* vast quantity.” This may give insight to the first phrase of 8:24, “his strength will be vast, but not by his strength...” (וְעֵצָם כָּחוֹ וְלֹא בְכָחוֹ). Whatever power this enemy may possess comes from the large quantity of people he is able to influence and corrupt. The little horn’s work in 8:24, “and surpassing/extraordinary ones he will ruin” (וְנִפְלְאוֹת יִשְׁחִית) and “he will ruin numerous/powerful ones and holy people” (וְהַשְׁחִית עֲצוּמִים וְעַם־קִדְשִׁים) illustrates the use of שחח (“ruin, corrupt”) not as complete annihilation, as discussed regarding 9:26 and 27 below, for whatever one may contend about the identity of this enemy, the holy people of God, whether in Daniel’s time or future thereto, must remain until the end, even if only as a remnant, since God’s goal is for them to inherit the kingdom (7:22, 27). They cannot be totally annihilated. Both terms, נִפְלְאוֹת (“surpassing/extraordinary ones”) and עֲצוּמִים (“numerous/powerful”), if intended quantitatively, indicate that this corruption by the enemy is nevertheless quite comprehensive. The idea of “numerous” would correlate to the work of the enemy in 9:27 strengthening “a covenant with *the*

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<sup>113</sup> E.g. Collins, *Daniel*, 357; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 393; Tim Meadowcroft, “Exploring the Dismal Swamp: The Identity of the Anointed One in Daniel 9:24–27,” *JBL* 120 (2001): 433; Paul Redditt, “Daniel 9: Its Structure and Meaning,” *CBQ* 62 (2000): 246–47; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 267.

many.” If these terms are intended qualitatively, then the most powerful will be ruined, with the implication then that the less powerful would certainly not be able to escape.

The end of the little horn of ch. 8 is that *וּבְאֶפְסֹד יִשָּׁבֵר* (“and without [human] hand he will be broken,” 8:25). This indicates some sort of earthly defeat, clearly according to the power and plan of Yahweh, but not by any human agency. The phrase does not necessarily preclude an eschatological judgment of this little horn, but simply a breaking of his earthly power and possibly life. Kliefoth asserts, “But here, too, a difference immediately comes alongside this equality [of the two “little horn” persons] because the personal end of the Antichrist is, according to 7:11 and 26, eternal damnation, and the end of Antiochus is, according to our verse, a bodily death which is caused by the hand of God.”<sup>114</sup> Kliefoth’s point is that Antiochus is a type of the Antichrist to come, and this difference in the “end” of each indicates that the “little horn” of ch. 7 and the “little horn” of ch. 8 are not to be identified as the same person, but that the latter is a type of the former.

The little horn of ch. 8 serving as a type of the little horn of ch. 7, i.e., the eschatological enemy of the Most High, illustrates in an earthly example the kind of abominations the eschatological enemy will bring about on a larger scale. This is key.

Gregory Goswell demonstrates why the vision of ch. 8 is different than that of ch. 7.

[O]ne immediately noticeable variation compared to the vision in Dan 7 is that the seer in Dan 8 is located (in vision) in an identifiable geographic location, “Susa, the capital” (8:2)... The name “Ulai” (*אֵילַי*) is a wordplay on the word “ram” (*אֵיל*), to which animal we are shortly to be introduced (8:3). This hints that the vision of chapter 8 will concern the fate of the Persian Empire and suggests that this vision, unlike the previous one, will feature kingdoms known to history.... Chapter 8 has the character of an allegory or even of a political cartoon, so that the mode of the vision encourages the reader to connect the animals with particular empires.... However, in this chapter the reader views normal animals, not the bizarre hybrids of Dan 7.... The

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<sup>114</sup> Kliefoth *Daniels*, 279. “Dieser Gleichstellung tritt aber auch hier sofort eine Differenz zur Seite denn das persönliche Ende des Antichrist ist nach 7:11,26 die ewige Verdammniß und das Ende des Antiochus ist nach unserem Verse ein leiblicher Tod dem man die Hand Gottes ansteht.”

historical transparency of this vision is in marked contrast to the more cryptic presentation of Dan 2 and 7.<sup>115</sup>

This view corresponds to the majority First Coming of the Messiah interpretation summed up by Edward Young.

Certainly there is no association in the destruction of the he-goat and the horn of ch. 8 as there is of the “little” horn and the nondescript beast in ch. 7. It would appear therefore that the “little” horn of ch 7 and the horn of ch. 8 are not to be identified.<sup>116</sup>

James Hamilton agrees and goes one step further to show the typology of the two “little horns.”

Why is there such similarity between the little horn of the third kingdom and the little horn of the fourth? It would appear that a pattern is being repeated. In this pattern the kings of the earth exalt themselves against God and his people, persecuting the saints; then, through the defeat of the arch-enemy, God’s people are delivered. The repetition indicates that Daniel means to depict this “type” of thing as happening through the course of history until the pattern culminates and is fulfilled in the final instance of the typological pattern.... The self-exaltation and programme of persecution pursued by the anti-christ of kingdom three seems to point forward to what the Antichrist of kingdom four—the Antichrist—will do.<sup>117</sup>

Horace Hummel illustrates the typological-illustrative purpose of ch. 8 despite possible confusion over two different “little horns” in light of the rhetorical purpose of the book of Daniel.

[T]he conservative might be embarrassed to try to explain why the book... spends as much time on Maccabean history and events leading up to it as it does; it is precisely because this crisis was such a lucid transparency or miniature, yes, a type, of future tribulations of the church, partly in connection with Christ’s first advent, but especially in the last days of all human history.... In the Biblical view, history is always typical of metahistory and of eschatology (even if the details elude us); just as the little horn (Antiochus) of chap. 8 appears to have some typological relation to the little horn of chap. 7 (Antichrist), so we should read here not only predictions of Maccabean history (suffering, but ultimate deliverance), but also intimations of the church’s experience in the time of *the* end. It, of course, is as characteristic of

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<sup>115</sup> Goswell, “Visions of Daniel,” 139, 140.

<sup>116</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 278.

<sup>117</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 52–53, 55.

apocalyptic as of classical prophecy to mingle what will be fulfilled sooner and later in one prospect.<sup>118</sup>

In this light, the coherence of the relationship between chapters 7–12 of Daniel is summed up by James Hamilton.

All of these descriptions of the time of the end [8:17, 19; 11:27, 29, 35, 40; 12:6–7, 9] appear to pertain to the third kingdom... Since the book of Daniel presents a fourth kingdom after the third, and since we have seen parallels between the third and fourth kingdoms, it would seem that here again the destruction of the third kingdom, which simultaneously results in deliverance for God's people, is pointing forward to the fulfillment of these patterns in the final, fourth, kingdom, as described in Dan 7 and 9.... The strong connections between these visions has me convinced that they should be interpreted in the light of one another ... [F]irst, in all these visions God is giving understanding and wisdom to Daniel. Secondly, those who would endure the persecution are to be made wise by the revelations given to Daniel.<sup>119</sup>

Even though the “little horn” of ch. 8 serves as a type of a greater “little horn” of ch. 7, it is nevertheless important to recognize its significance as a type, and its ramifications for the farther future of God's people.

The sub-vision of ch. 8 is pointing to a future enemy of God's people who serves as a type pointing even farther into the future to a greater eschatological enemy. That is the typology of chs. 7 and 8. Two enemies were being predicted. This “little horn” of ch. 8 predicts Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” but points to a greater “little horn” to come, the eschatological enemy of 7:21, 25. Since Dan 8 then expounds on 7:5–6 only, it must be understood as preparatory for the subsequent revelations of the ch. 7 vision, and as such, ch. 8 is recognized to be only prelude and supplementary for the focus of the present study on chs. 7 and 9.

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<sup>118</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 592, 581–82.

<sup>119</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 56, 110, 112.

Chapter 8 depicts a little horn who will be a threat to God's people. But the story does not end there. Nor does the book of Daniel end there in the time of that enemy. No, ch. 8 has presented a vision of events that are building toward a greater climax.

Chapter 9, on the other hand, looks to an ultimate fulfillment and consummation. Beginning with Daniel's fervent prayer to God for the restoration of his holy city and sanctuary, God sends his messenger Gabriel to give an explanatory oracle that elucidates the primary revelations of the overarching vision: the coming of Messiah Prince (who is the "one like a son of man"), the exercise of his dominion during which the eternal kingdom (depicted as the city Jerusalem) is built and expanded, the withdrawal of Messiah's reign that initiates warfare-like desolations, and the final destruction of the enemy by the reappearance and re-assertion of Messiah's dominion, at which time the eternal kingdom-city will be given to the saints.

### **The Problem of the Warfare of Desolations Before Restoration**

The eschatological restoration of God's city and sanctuary is the focus of the 70x7s oracle; however, the promise comes with a caveat. It will happen only "in distress of times" (9:25). As John Goldingay correctly observes: "[O]ne may grant that the terms used to describe these troubles are theologically freighted. The crisis is an anticipatory embodiment of the last great battle, a historical embodiment of the first great battle between the forces of chaos and the forces of order."<sup>120</sup> The original sin and rebellion of Satan against the Creator's dominion continues and grows to a final cosmic battle encompassing the earth, in which even God's saints will be caught up and worn out (7:25). This is the story of the Bible and entire salvation-history in which God's people find themselves. It is not a dualism of God versus Satan, of good versus evil, but a

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<sup>120</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 261.

lopsided rebellion of creatures rebelling against their creator and their futile attempt at a coup to usurp the dominion of the Most High God. The final battle “to the end” is simply the climax and fulfillment of what began in the beginning. This indeed is the *Urzeit gleicht Endzeit* theme of apocalyptic vision, that the end of the age mirrors the beginning of the age. The “delineated battle” is the power struggle of the rebellion, the little horn “coming prince” who is revealed at the proper time to serve as part of God’s judgment on the world before the enemy himself (and “his people” with him) is overwhelmed by the flood of God’s judgment against him.

First, however, God’s everlasting kingdom is established on earth, built over a period of 62 sevens, where his people proleptically and temporarily enjoy the dominion and benefits of the reign of the Most High which will continue into eternity, when suddenly the rest of ch. 9 takes an unexpected turn. “Distress of times” (צוֹק הָעֵתִים, 9:25) will occur all the while the city is being built during the 62 sevens, although the saints will be sheltered and cared for within the city and sanctuary, which are their very *raison d’être* (Isa 66:10–13; cf. Rev 12:6, 14). Nevertheless, the “distress of times” will escalate with the revelation of the “coming prince” who, with his people, will cause of “desolations” (שְׁמָמוֹת, 9:26) that God himself will set into motion by “the cutting off of Messiah” (9:26).

John Price correctly observes that the eschatological enemy’s act of desecration and desolation of God’s sanctuary (and thus also the city) is reserved for the end of the age in Dan 9:27.<sup>121</sup> However, to be more precise, v. 26 speaks of desolations in general, rather than one final “abomination of desolation” (Dan 11:31; 12:11), calling them “delineated warfare” over a period of time, and v. 27 spells out more specifics of the desolations.

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<sup>121</sup> John Price, *The Desecration and Restoration of the Temple as an Eschatological Motif in the Tanach, Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and the New Testament* (Ph.D. diss, University of Texas at Austin, 1993), 510.

Verses 26–27 give the three desolations in parallel (for a total of six), all of which will be explained in more detail below. But first, an introductory overview will be helpful. In v. 26, the first desolation, “Messiah will be removed and there will be none for him” is paralleled by v. 27, “He [the coming prince] will strengthen a covenant with the many.” The parallel is a great contrast: Messiah will lose all influence and followers, while “the prince to come” will gain and strengthen a following of many.

The next desolation is that “the people of the coming prince will corrupt the city and the sanctuary” (v. 26), paralleled in v. 27 by “for half of the Seven he will cause sacrifice and offering to cease.” This cessation of sacrifice and offering would be understood by Daniel as bad news, the end of public worship. God’s people will not have access to the sanctuary nor in any part of the city be able to participate in the public divine worship which is central to the sanctuary and city. Nor will an unbeliever, even if he should desire, have access to the sanctuary and city. The “day of salvation” has come to an end. This is the state of “desolation,” that the city and sanctuary are no longer fitting or hospitable to the key purpose for which they are created. Such desolation is the eschatological enemy’s key purpose in seeking to change the times and decree (וַיִּסְבֵּר לְהַשְׁנִיחַ זְמַנּוֹ וְדָתוֹ, 7:25), that is, the order of creation that God has established. The enemy will believe that he has rid the earth of the dominion of Yahweh through his Messiah.

The third desolation is “upon the desolator [himself]” (v. 27) that “his end [will come] in the flood” (v. 26), paralleled in 9:27 by, “until the delineated completion will gush forth upon the desolated one.” This final desolation qualifies the ultimate way in which God plans “to restrain the transgression and to block up sin” (9:24), that is, “to annihilate [it] and to destroy [it] until the end” (Dan 7:26).

Therefore, v. 26 is most fittingly concluded with a colon to draw the reader into the specifics of the desolations in v. 27 that parallel and expound those of v. 26.

Notice especially that the desolation, “cutting off from spiritual life,” will be done to a narrowing number of victims. First, “the many” will be desolated by allying with the enemy; secondly, God’s people will be apparently cut off in their worship of God through the actions of this enemy (as in Lam 1:13 and 3:11); and thirdly, “the desolator” himself will finally be the one cut off in final judgment.

See Figure 1, “The Symmetry of the Seventy Sevens.” The number of desolations (two parallels of the three) also parallel the two sets of three of God’s eschatological goals in v. 24, showing that the desolator will indeed attempt to cut off the dominion of the creator from the creation and ruin and corrupt the creation over against (if indeed possible) its restoration by the creator. Thus, one sees the parallelism and unity of the entire oracle of the 70x7s. First, the eschatological goals are laid out as two sets of three, with the first and fourth corresponding, the second and fifth, and the third and sixth. The antitheses of the goals are the desolations of vv. 26–27, two sets of three, with the first corresponding to the fourth, the second to the fifth, and the third to the sixth. However, the six-fold goals will be accomplished in the end, but only after the six-fold desolations.

Joyce Baldwin correctly recognizes that “war *to the end* implies continuing conflict between a powerful enemy and God’s cause till the end of the seventy weeks.”<sup>122</sup> Daniel’s “delineated warfare” refers to the contrary actions of the enemy before his end in judgment, represented in the epitomizing word, “desolations” (שְׁמֹמֹת), as well as the “in distress of the times” (וּבְצֹק הַעֲתִידִים) of v 25. This war, conflict, and distress clearly reveal the presence of an

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<sup>122</sup> Baldwin, *Daniel*, 171.



enemy “coming prince” (נְגִיד הַבָּא) who works against the “anointed prince” (מְשִׁיחַ נְגִיד), especially to hinder or reverse the latter’s goals of 9:24.

Cook recognizes the necessity of this warfare as part of God’s eschatological plan to restore his creation:

[The author of Daniel becomes] progressively more concerned with honestly revealing that God’s reign will not come without horrible birth pangs. But it will come. A terrifying state of chaos preceded God’s original creation of the cosmos. This chaos would reassert itself in the end times, but only to pave the way for God’s new, re-creative work.<sup>123</sup>

Although Cook may be overstating the state of chaos by saying “terrifying,” nevertheless, he makes a valid point about chaos being the antithesis to God’s creative order.

The warfare that must begin when the dominion of Messiah is removed and the eschatological enemy is revealed is specifically described as נְקַרְצָת, “delineated.” Notice this is the same root, קרץ, “to cut, sharpen, decide, determine,” like the *hapax legomenon* קָרַץ in v. 25 that seems to be adverbial in “how the city will be built.” In v. 26, the warfare is “cut out,” “sharply divided,” “delineated” according to a plan. It is part of God’s plan and completely within his control.

The “delineated warfare” is further called “desolations.” What has already occurred in 9:26, beginning with Messiah being removed, followed by the people of the prince to come attacking the city and desecrating it, are the “desolations” the oracle is warning about.

John Geyer gives an excellent exposition on why desolation is a necessary part of God’s plan:

Desolation...is a recurring theme. The relevant passages are: Isa 13:20–22; 15:6; 17:1b–6, 9, 11; 18:6; 19:5–7; Jer 46:19; 48:28; 49:17–18; 50:12–13; Ezek 29:5, 8–12a; 30:12; 32:11–15.... Part of the programme is to purge the world of what is evil so that there may be a firm foundation on which to build the future. When the laws of

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<sup>123</sup> Cook, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 147.

the Creator are negated [by every form of rebellion], the earth ceases to be fruitful. Famine and disease follow ... [T]he fundamental issue is humanity's proper place within the cosmos.<sup>124</sup>

A state of desolation over against the blessings of life in everlasting righteousness is the very distinction between the “inside” of God’s holy city and being “outside” it. To be sure, the city is built so broadly that all peoples of the earth have access to it, and yet in the end, the distinction will be revealed between the “inside” and the “outside” of the city. This is the reason for the careful and definitive “delineation” of God’s judgment.

It is also important to note that, as far as the saints are concerned, the desolations caused by the desolator are desolations *with a remnant*, rather than complete destruction, since the vision foretold that “this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them” (קַרְנָא דַּפְּנֵי עֲבָדָה קָרַב עִמָּהּ) (ולקדישי עליונין) (Dan 7:21), that “he will wear out the saints of the Most High” (יַבְלֵא, Dan 7:25), and that “they will be given into his hand [power] until [the passing of] a time, times, and half a time” (וְיִתְּנֵהֶבּוֹן בְּיַדָּהּ עַד־ עֶדְוֹן וְעַדְנִיָּין וּפְלַג עֶדְוֹן) (Dan 7:25). Clearly, the saints come through the desolations without being destroyed, so that they may inherit the kingdom (7:18). Whether the eschatological enemy “prevails over them” to the point of killing some (or all) of them, or simply “wears them out” or harasses them continually (as BDB suggests),<sup>125</sup> God will vindicate them in the end. Therefore, a key point is that the *שחח*, ruining, that the enemy will do to the city and sanctuary will not happen to the saints.

So, to translate *שִׁמְמוֹת* as “destructions” as some do, even HALOT,<sup>126</sup> seems both premature and inconsistent with the lexical data of *שִׁמַּם*. Steinmann, while admitting that the three uses of *שִׁמַּם* in 26–27 may not mean utter destruction of God’s city and sanctuary but rather desolation in

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<sup>124</sup> John Geyer, “Desolation and Cosmos,” *VT* 49:1 (1999):63.

<sup>125</sup> BDB, s.v. *שִׁמַּם*, 1084.

<sup>126</sup> HALOT, s.v. *שִׁמַּם*, 1564.

the sense of “uninhabited or deserted,” does not see the latter as viable since the rest of this vision of Dan 9 indicates “full destruction.”<sup>127</sup> However, this assumption can only be based on the use of *תָּשַׁח* in v. 26, as discussed above, a verb that means primarily to ruin or to corrupt, and not necessarily to cause utter destruction,<sup>128</sup> and is used especially in the Hiphil to mean “to ruin deliberately, wish to destroy, be able to destroy,”<sup>129</sup> whether or not the desired intent is actually accomplished. This would indicate that the enemy would very much like to completely destroy the sanctuary, city, and people of the saints, but he will be unable to finish the job before being cut off by the flood of God’s judgment. The city and sanctuary are ruined, ravaged, and desolated, but per God’s promises, not completely destroyed. The ruining of the city and sanctuary leave it spiritually uninhabitable for the saints, to be sure, and so these places can no longer serve as a refuge for the saints and must now be deserted. The holy people, the saints of the Most High, will not have an earthly, geophysical city or sanctuary, but the prophecy does not say that the faithful themselves will cease to exist or perhaps even fall away from the faith.

In Isa 54:16, Yahweh says, “I created the destroyer [*מִשְׁחִיתָה*] to ruin [*לְהַבֵּיל*].” Note that Isa 54 is a context of eschatological restoration of Yahweh’s people. “‘In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,’ says the LORD, your Redeemer” (Isa 54:8). God is assuring his people that they have nothing to fear. He says that even though he “created the destroyer to ruin,” his people will remain under his protection. As for the destroyer, though, Goldingay points out, “As Yahweh’s creation, each destroyer is under Yahweh’s authority and on its way to its own destruction when it exceeds its

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<sup>127</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456.

<sup>128</sup> BDB, s.v. *תָּשַׁח*, 1007-8.

<sup>129</sup> HALOT, s.v. *תָּשַׁח*, 1470.

limit or begins to act as if it is its own authority.”<sup>130</sup> This is the point demonstrated about Gog in Ezek 38. While מְשֻׁחָת in Isa 54:16 certainly seems to be a synonym referring to the same sort of מְשֻׁחָת / מְשֻׁחָת person in Dan 9:27, the use of the infinitive לְהַבֵּל in Isa 54:16 further qualifies the purpose of this agent of Yahweh as well as the sense of the action of שָׁחַת for which he sends this agent “destroyer.” BDB identifies הִבֵּל as a newer Hebrew word deriving from the Arabic *ḥabila* (to be deranged) and *ḥabala* (to corrupt or render unsound) and the Ethiopic *tahabala* (to be arrogant, audacious).<sup>131</sup> Raabe poetically translates this verb in Isa 13:5 as “execute a Babylon-like ruin.”<sup>132</sup> Theologically speaking, these concepts correlate to the aspirations and actions of the eschatological enemy as described in Dan 7, and thus show how the verb הִבֵּל is closely related to שָׁחַת and may help to qualify the kinds of “ruin” it depicts here in Dan 9.

From an earthly perspective, these “horrors” (שְׁקוּצִים, 9:27) summed up in the word “desolations,”<sup>133</sup> spell out trouble and hindrance of God’s people and his earthly city-kingdom. Here Gabriel is spelling out for Daniel and his reader what it meant in his original overarching vision that first, “this horn [the eschatological enemy] made war with the saints and prevailed over them” (7:21); and second, that “the saints will be given into his [the enemy’s] hand for a time, times, and half a time” (7:25). The two descriptions in 9:26, “delineated battle” and “desolations,” stand in apposition as one set of definitively decided (נִתְּרָצָת) events to be a part of the Lord’s eschatological plan, a point strongly reflective of Isa 10:22–23, “For though your people, Israel, will be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of it will return. An annihilation is

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<sup>130</sup> John Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55: A Literary Theological Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005), 541.

<sup>131</sup> BDB, s.v. הִבֵּל, 287.

<sup>132</sup> Raabe, *Isaiah 13–27*, 88.

<sup>133</sup> cf. Ps 46:8, “Come witness the works of Yahweh who sets [in motion] desolations on the earth.”

delineated (קרוץ), overflowing (שוטף) with righteousness. For the Lord, Yahweh [the God] of Armies, is making a delineated completion (כִּלְהָ וְנִקְרָצָה), in the midst of all the earth.” The identical vocabulary here in Isa 10:22–23 is striking, as Yahweh’s judgments are קרוץ (“cut out” or “delineated”) and כִּלְהָ וְנִקְרָצָה (“a/the delineated completion”), key words also in the 70x7s oracle. The uses of the latter phrase, כִּלְהָ וְנִקְרָצָה, both in Isa 10:23 and Dan 9:27, seem to form now a recurring hendiadys, “delineated completion.” The word קרוץ in relation to נִקְרָצָה in these contexts indicates that although Yahweh’s judgments may be questioned by his creatures, they are sharply and precisely “cut out” to be exactly what justice requires for each situation and delimited to only that justice. The city of God will be so קרוץ (“cut out” or “delineated,” 9:25), “bordered” by God’s wisdom and providence, that it serves as a comfort to God’s people. The word נִקְרָצָה makes clear that Yahweh in his wisdom and justice has “cut out” or “delineated,” as only he can do, what must, i.e., is necessary to, happen. This is the clear emphasis intended by the repetition of נִקְרָצָה in Dan 9:27, as also seen later in Dan 11:36, “for what is delineated will be accomplished” (כִּי נִקְרָצָה נִעֲשֶׂתָהּ). The root of these words, קרץ, is used in all these cases to indicate that the things prophesied are literally “sharply,” or “definitively,” delineated as part of God’s plan.

Therefore, Daniel and the saints of the Most High need not fear (again, cf. Ps 46), for future distress, corruption, war—in short, “desolations”—cannot put the holy people or the holy city beyond Yahweh’s restoration any more than these desolations already had seemed to do in the Babylonian exile. Even if complete destruction from an earthly perspective is indicated of the earthly city, nevertheless Yahweh is promising restoration, sanctification, and everlasting dominion to his people, a promise the hope of which must trump any distress or despair.

The *שִׁמּוֹת*, “desolations,” are more than simply “shockers” or “stunning things,” but that which actually devastate and cut off from life, whether physical or spiritual.<sup>134</sup> The devastating events that follow in vv. 26–27 then will follow from the first desolation, the ostracizing of Messiah.

### Messiah Being Cut Off

The most common assumption about the phrase “Messiah will be removed” by both the First Coming of the Messiah and Dispensational interpreters is that the verb *כרת* in Dan 9:26 must somehow be used to indicate death, since, according to their interpretations, *mashiach* must refer to Jesus of Nazareth as God’s promised Savior who was killed by crucifixion. In every case, invariably, they connect the verb *כרת* in Dan 9:26 with the verb *גזר* in Isa 53:8 ( *כִּי נִגְזַר מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים*, “because he was cut off from the land of the living”).<sup>135</sup> In fact, Edward Young considers this the only point of contention to prevent him from agreeing with Kliefoth and Keil in their Typological interpretation. Since Young agrees that Dan 9:25a refers to the first coming of the Messiah, he also assumes that 9:26a, “Messiah will be cut off and there will be none for him,” refers to the death of the Messiah and so is a part of the work of the Messiah at his first coming. Therefore, he concludes, “Verse 25b is then made to extend from the first advent of Christ to the consummation, and this is contrary to the Messianic character of v. 24.”<sup>136</sup> In other words, Young is associating the death of the Messiah as the climax of his first coming with the removal of sin and bringing in of everlasting righteousness, the goals enumerated in v. 24. He does not see how

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<sup>134</sup> See philological note on BDB, s.v. *שִׁמּוֹת*, 1030–31; HALOT, s.v. *שִׁמּוֹת*, 1563; and TWOT, s.v. *שִׁמּוֹת*, 2:2409.

<sup>135</sup> Doukhan, “Seventy Weeks,” 17; Menn, *Biblical Eschatology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 398; Tanner, “Messianic, Pt. 2” *BSac* 166 (July–Sept 2009):334; and Paul Feinberg, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Daniel 9:24–27,” pages 191–95 in *Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg*, ed. John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg. (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 202.

<sup>136</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 205.

“Messiah will be cut off” could mean anything else or how 62 + 1 more “sevens” could follow after that event.

But what if “Messiah will be cut off” does not refer to his death? That would pull the rug out from under both the First Coming and the Dispensationalists’ interpretations. An in-depth study of the verb כרת is in order.

The word study in the following excursus, “The Verb כרת,” demonstrates the usage of כרת as a *separation* rather than as *death*. Daniel’s use of the verb קטל (“to kill”) in 7:11 (as the fate of the fourth beast) shows that Daniel is well aware of the differences of קטל and כרת and deliberately chose the latter (reporting the words of the angel) over against the former.

### *Excursus: The Verb Karat (כרת) in Biblical Hebrew*

An overview of all the scriptural uses of כרת reveals that the verb primarily refers to some kind of separation, and usually of the separation of an individual from a community, as G. Thomas Hobson lays out extensively in his dissertation on the subject.<sup>1</sup> When it is used for putting someone to death, it is used with a qualifying phrase to indicate that death is intended.<sup>2</sup>

Hobson gives a helpful summary of lexical data of Scriptural usage:

Between these two meanings of כרת [“spatial separation” and “destruction”], the meaning “spatial separation” or “removal” fits well within the context of the *kareth* penalty. The uses of כרת in 1 Kings 9:7 and Zechariah 14:2 are the closest parallels to its use in the *kareth* formula, both cases of which clearly refer to geographic expulsion. Sometimes the meaning “removal” is confirmed by contextual synonyms, such as the use of the verb נחש in the parallel to 1 Kings 9:7 in 2 Chronicles 7:20, the use of כרת and הָסִיר interchangeably in Exodus 8:4–5 and in 1 Samuel 28:3–9, and כרת in parallel with העבר “to remove” in Zechariah 13:2. The “non-removal” formula in passages such as Joshua 9:23 also supports the “removal” meaning for the *kareth* formula, as does the Aramaic translation found in the Samaritan and Jewish Targumim. Although the LXX translation reflects the same interpretation of כרת as “extermination” that came to dominate rabbinic Judaism, the LXX also preserves traces of a “separation” meaning for כרת, especially in 1 Samuel 20:15–16, 1 Kings 9:7, and Proverbs 2:22.<sup>3</sup>

If the means of accomplishing the “separation” is not expressly qualified, e.g., “by death,” it may be clearly implied (e.g., “never again shall [the life of] all flesh be cut off by means of the waters of a flood,” Gen 9:11). A land may be “cut off” from life by means of a famine (e.g., Gen 41:36, “The food will be for a store to the land against the seven years of famine, which will be in the land of Egypt; that the land may not be cut off by means of the famine.”). In Oba 9 “every man from Mount Esau will be cut off by means of slaughter.” Notice that in these usages, when כרת is

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<sup>1</sup> G. Thomas Hobson, “Cut Off from One’s People: Punitive Expulsion in the Torah,” PhD diss., Concordia Seminary, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> BDB, s.v. כרת, 503–505; TWOT, s.v. כרת, 1:1048.

<sup>3</sup> Hobson, *Cut Off*, 67–68.



connected with death, even though “the life of” is implied as the object being cut off, nevertheless the agent or means of the cutting off is always clearly given (“by the waters of a flood,” “by a famine,” or “by slaughter”). Occasionally, the verb is expressly coupled with a verb meaning “to destroy or kill” (e.g., in Josh 11:21, Joshua “cut off” the Anakim from the hill country [here it implies “removed from the hill country”] *and* devoted them to destruction; a similar use occurs in 1 Sam 2:33).

When the Scriptures speak of נָפֶשׁ (“life, soul, individual”) being “cut off,” Hobson’s analysis of its 60 uses in Leviticus (and elsewhere in the Scriptures) demonstrates that “the probability is that כרת is being used to mean ‘individual’ wherever it is used in the *kareth* penalty.”<sup>4</sup> Kleinig in *Leviticus* describes this “cutting off” as excommunication, and in some cases extirpation (the Latin word meaning literally “rooting out,” i.e., removal) of the person and his or her family.<sup>5</sup> Does this mean death? Perhaps in some cases, but certainly not all. Three consecutive verses in Lev 20:15–17 illustrate how Yahweh delineates the penalties for various offenses:

“If a man lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. If a woman approaches any animal, and lies down with it, you shall kill the woman, and the animal: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. If a man takes his sister, his father’s daughter, or his mother’s daughter, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness; it is a shameful thing; and *they shall be ostracized* (וְנִכְרְתוּ) in the sight of the children of their people: he has uncovered his sister’s nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.”

An examination of the whole chapter of Lev 20 reveals that in the verses preceding these three, seven offenses warrant the penalty “they shall surely be put to death” (using מות and הרג) in vv. 9–16, and that Yahweh does not hesitate to repeat with the exact same words, very

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<sup>4</sup> Hobson, *Cut Off*, 66.

<sup>5</sup> John Kleinig, *Leviticus*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 163.

specifically to the point of redundancy, the same penalty for all seven offenses, interrupted only by one offense that warrants “they shall be burned with fire” (v. 14). Therefore, if the offense in v. 17, sexual relations between siblings, warrants the penalty “they shall surely be put to death,” Yahweh would not hesitate to repeat the same words. However, he commands rather that “they shall be ostracized in the sight of the children of their people.” “Cut off” here cannot mean the same thing as putting to death. Those committing the offense of v. 18 bear the same “cutting off.” The next three offenses warrant “bearing their sin/iniquity” and/or “being/dying childless,” again, differing from the death penalty—they must remain alive to “bear their iniquity” (Lev 20:19–21).

It appears that כרת most often refers to a separation of something or someone to displace the thing or person from its/his/her normal place of thriving or usefulness, so that it/he/she is rendered useless or outcast.<sup>6</sup> Notice how this correlates to the dichotomy of *shalom* vs. desolation; that is, life and peace in God’s presence versus separation from God’s presence in a lawless, lifeless existence. The *karat* penalty is a subjection of a person to separation and consequently, desolation, with the hope that it will only be for a time leading to repentance and restoration. For many, excommunication from the community of Israel or from God’s holy presence in tabernacle or temple.

To give weight to the view that the “cutting off” of *mashiach* in Dan 9:26 refers to putting to death, many scholars<sup>7</sup> claim a parallel usage, albeit using a different Hebrew verb, in Isa 53:8,

“He was taken away by oppression and judgment;  
and as for his generation,  
who considered that he was *cut off* (קָטַעַ) out of the land of the living  
and stricken for the disobedience of my people?”

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<sup>6</sup> Hobson, *Cut Off*, 212. See Hobson’s entire study for a thorough treatment of the כרת penalty.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Steinmann, *Daniel*, 446; Feinberg, “Exegetical,” 202, 208; Payne, “Goal,” 108; to name a few.

The assumption is that perhaps גָּזַר or its root גזר is a synonym for כָּרַת to illuminate possible meaning for Dan 9:26. The verb גזר is used most commonly “to separate, cut, or divide.”<sup>8</sup> In the Niphal it may mean “to be cut off” (from life),<sup>9</sup> or separated or excluded from [something].<sup>10</sup> Examining the uses of the verb, Hab 3:17 seems to use it similarly to כָּרַת in Lev 26:22, where Habakkuk says he will rejoice in Yahweh even “though ... the flock be cut off (גָּזַר) from the fold and there are no (וְאֵין) cattle in the stalls.” Perhaps there are no sheep in the fold or cattle in the stalls because they are all eaten in the famine, or simply because they were unable to reproduce for lack of food and water and died. This use of גזר does not necessarily mean “killed” or “destroyed,” although such are possibilities. The qualifying phrase, “there is/are no” (וְאֵין), just like in Dan 9:26, suggests the simple understanding that the point is the fact of their absence, not the cause of their absence. Ps 88:3–7 illustrates a similar usage of גזר:

For my soul is full of troubles.  
 My life draws near to Sheol.  
 I am counted among those who go down into the pit.  
 I am like a man who has no help,  
 set apart among the dead,  
 like the slain who lie in the grave,  
 whom You remember no more,  
 for they are *cut off* (גָּזַרְתָּ) from Your hand.  
 You have laid me in the lowest pit,  
 in the darkest depths.  
 Your wrath lies heavily on me.  
 You have afflicted me with all your waves. (ESV)

The relevant question here for understanding the verb גזר is not, “Are these people dead?” or “Were they killed?” They are called “the dead” and “the slain” (v. 5); therefore, such details are understood. Rather, one is prompted to ask, “What *new* information does ‘they are cut off from

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<sup>8</sup> BDB, s.v. גזר, 160; HALOT, s.v. גזר, 187; TWOT, s.v. גזר, 1:340.

<sup>9</sup> HALOT, s.v. גזר, 187.

<sup>10</sup> BDB, s.v. גזר, 160.

your hand' give?" The one who prays this prayer says, "I am counted among" them who are "cut off," while the "wrath of God lies heavily upon me" (v. 7). Later, in v. 18, this state is further qualified, "You have put lover and friend far from me, and my friends into darkness" (ESV). To be in such a state of being "cut off" is a state of *desolation*, that is, separated as in Isa 53:8 "from the land of the living." Clearly, to be in such a state is separation from life and from God in death and in Sheol, so that *without intervention from Yahweh himself* (the petition in Ps 88:13–14), all hope and life are lost. On the contrary, by petition to Yahweh, whoever prays this psalm is begging for restoration to life. Only Yahweh is the Giver of life and the One who restores from desolation.

Such is certainly illustrated well in the use of גזר in Ezek 37:11 as the dry bones, representing the "whole house of Israel," cry out, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off (גִּזְרֵנוּ)!" A theme that repeats through uses of this verb is that, although it seems that life and hope are cut off (in the state of desolation)—even as the prophet says in Lam 3:53–56, "They have silenced my life in the dungeon, and have cast a stone on me. Waters flowed over my head; I said, 'I am cut off (גִּזְרֵתִי)!' I called on your name, O Yahweh, out of the lowest dungeon. You heard my voice"—those who call upon the name of Yahweh can expect to be heard even in death, but those who will not look to him remain with no life or hope. The presence and saving action of Yahweh brings life and *shalom*, but being "cut off" from his presence brings desolation. In its context, Ezekiel's vision is addressing those who are in exile, with death being used as a metaphor for exile. Resurrection serves as a metaphor for the return from exile. This vision uses the double entendre of גזר to connect the two parts of the metaphor, life and death, exile and return.

Looking back at Isa 53:8, then, as a possible parallel to Dan 9:26, while the reader observes the two passive verbs, לָקַח “to be taken” and נִגְזַר “to be cut off,” together with the phrase מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים (“from the land of the living”), it appears that the usage of גִּזַּר is similar to that of the גִּזַּר passages examined above. The servant of Yahweh is “taken away” and “cut off from the land of the living” to Sheol, or away from the presence of Yahweh, without life or hope unless rescued by Yahweh alone. נִגְזַר does not specify the means or manner of the servant’s “removal,” only that he is “taken away,” and so in Isa 53:8 should not be translated “killed.” Nevertheless, since גִּזַּר and כָּרַת are used in multiple senses, Isaiah’s use of גִּזַּר in 53:8 does not speak to Daniel’s (or Gabriel’s) use of כָּרַת in 9:26. The most common usage of כָּרַת suggests that he is separated from the community of the people of God, most likely even with physical life still intact.

In Dan 9:26, the phrase “Messiah will be כָּרַת” does not specify the type of “cutting” or “separating,” nor is the phrase qualified by any agent or means who will “do” the verbal action. This verse does, however, give another qualification, וְאֵין לוֹ, “and there will be none [or no one] for him.” Since the passive verb יִכָּרַת (“will be cut off”) does not specify who is actually doing the “cutting off”—whether God himself, his enemy or enemies, or the people of the enemy—the point in this verse is to emphasize the subsequent state of Messiah, a state of separation from his expected community, i.e., his lot or vocation in life as the anointed agent of God. He is separated from the community over which he was given dominion to rule and reign. It does not mean that he is dead, nor that the community is destroyed. What is specified in Dan 9:26 is that “there will be none for him.” Would it matter that there are “none” or “nothing” to or for him if he is dead? Who or what could be “for” a person who is dead? If the entire phrase, “Messiah will be cut off and there will be none for him,” speaks of one who is dead, this seems at best redundant and at worst nonsensical.

That definite qualification given for “messiah will be cut off,” namely that לֹא יִצְיָן לוֹ, “there will be none for him” (Dan 9:26) might suggest a rejection by the world (or a large majority). Common uses of the preposition לְ in this context would indicate either possession (i.e., “his”) or advantage (i.e., “to his advantage” or “on his side”). Daniel uses the same kind of construction in 11:17, לֹא תִהְיֶה לוֹ ( “and she will not be for him”), where “to his advantage” or “on his side” seems to be the sense. The context of Dan 9:26 does not make clear either possession or advantage; perhaps both can be possible. The preposition itself does not make the meaning of the phrase clear. However, coupling “messiah will be cut off” with the qualifying phrase “and there will be none for him” begins to shed light on the meaning of the whole sentence. The Messiah, as the anointed מְשִׁיחַ, the agent of Yahweh for the completion of the stated goals (9:24), will be “removed” as Yahweh’s Messiah, i.e., separated from his office or role for which God set him apart to serve, “and there will be none for him,” that is, no one on his side, no one who regards him as Messiah, no rights, privileges, goods, or service which would otherwise be due him as the anointed agent of Yahweh.<sup>11</sup>

Herbert Leupold sums up these two phrases:

This implies that he shall not have that which normally might be expected to fall to his lot such as followers, influence, and the like. If that is the case, then the preceding statement must have involved his being “cut off” in the sense of losing all influence and prestige that he ever had before men. The season of the successful building of the city and the sanctuary is at an end. As far as the world is concerned, Messiah shall be a dead issue. His cause will seem to have failed. God foresees and foreknows that this shall be one of the developments to be expected at the end of the program that God predicts for the world.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For detailed analysis and discussion of the “cutting off of Messiah,” see Kliefoth *Daniels*, 359-61, and Keil, *Daniel*, 361-2.

<sup>12</sup> Leupold, *Daniel*, 427.

In this sense it could be understood that the cutting off of Messiah involves rejection by the world that causes ostracization. This way of seeing Jesus' life, death, and resurrection does not pivot around his death as atoning, but around his rejection and exaltation—and his identification as “Son of Man.” Jesus himself predicted explicitly that he would be rejected (Mark in particular as he identifies him as “the Son of Man”) and he foretold this with the *Parable of the Wicked Tenants* (Matt 21:33–44) and his explanation, which includes Ps 118:22, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” This way of seeing what happened to Jesus fits the characterization of him as “friend of tax collectors and sinners,” as “a glutton and a drunkard,” and as one who cast out demons by the Prince of Demons. This is also how Peter in his messages in Acts 2 and 4 understand what happened to Jesus, and, as I read the pericope, Philip speaking to the Ethiopian eunuch. Furthermore, when Jesus is on trial, Jesus uses Daniel: “you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand...” The fulfillment of this is reflected in Christ's resurrection and ascension (Acts 2:34–35, quoting Ps 110:1). To be sure, the rejection of Jesus by his own people and by the world is undeniably foretold by the Scriptures and unfolded in history.

The apocalyptic perspective of the 70x7s sees Jesus' rejection as Messiah relating not only to his first coming but also as a precursor of God's final judgment upon the rebellion of the world. That is why Gabriel foretells, “After the sixty-two sevens Messiah will be cut off and there will be none for him” (9:26). It is important to understand the sequence of the 70 as “seven” and “sixty-two” and “one,” and the relative timeframe and purpose of each. To say “after the sixty-two” is to indicate a time after the building of God's city-kingdom founded upon the first coming and work of the Messiah. That is to say, as a precursor to the final seven of the sequence. This “end time” ostracization of the Messiah will be for a different purpose in the

scheme of the 70. As v. 26 and the rest of the oracle continue, the clues will give light to that purpose.

In the following phrase in 9:26, וְהָעִיר וְהַמִּקְדָּשׁ יִשְׁחָתוּ עִם נֹגִיד הַבָּא, “but as for the city and sanctuary, they will be ruined by the people of the coming prince,” another way to understand the initial *waw* (besides disjunctive) is as explicative, e.g., “that is, the city and the sanctuary the people of the coming prince will ruin,” or to render in more natural English, “that is, the people of the coming prince will ruin the city and the sanctuary.” This would give a further qualification, or at least a key result, of the cutting off of Messiah with none for him. “There will be none for him” because his city and sanctuary over which he was given dominion will be ruined, which (again) is only relevant if he is still alive.

If one agrees with such an interpretation of the “Messiah will be removed,” the context would seem to suggest that God himself intends such a “removing” as an intentional action, since the “desolations” to occur are qualified at the end of 9:26 as “delineated warfare.” A removal of God’s anointed agent, the rightful Prince reigning in the world in the stead of the Most High (or indeed being equal to the Most High), would be tantamount to God’s own withdrawal of his presence from among his people and from the world at large.

See the Excursus of Chapter Six about how the apostle Paul is most likely reading Daniel this way from which he derives his teachings in 2 Thess 2.

Peter Gentry is a First Coming of the Messiah interpreter who seeks to fit the words וְאֵין לוֹ (“and none to/for him”) with the interpretation of יִכָּרֵת מְשִׁיחַ (“messiah will be cut off”) as the crucifixion of Jesus. He interprets וְאֵין לוֹ as “but not [dying] for himself,”<sup>13</sup> using the reasoning that וְאֵין is sometimes used as a simple negative, and that in this case, it is used to avoid the aural

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<sup>13</sup> Gentry, “Seventy Weeks,” 30.



confusion that would be caused by saying לֹא לֹא (“*lo lo*,” with each “*lo*” meaning a different thing).<sup>14</sup> This would emphasize the atoning work of the Messiah. However, Ronald Williams gives other options for simple negatives (besides לֹא) with use of the words אַל or בִּלְ, asserting that אֵין is always used either substantively to mean “nothing” or to deny existence of something. Gentry’s suggestion is invalid because the only way אֵין is used to negate an action or state is when used together with a participle,<sup>15</sup> which is not the case here in Dan 9:26. Gentry reasons that HALOT lists אֵין as sometimes functioning as a simple negative, but HALOT’s only two examples are Ps 135:17, in which it is used in its normal denying of existence, as qualified in redundancy, אֵין־שָׁׁ (“there is no existence of”); and Prov 5:17, יִהְיֶינָה לָּךְ לְבַדָּךְ וְאֵין לְזָרִים אִתָּךְ (“Let them be for you, you alone, so that [there will be] none for strangers with you”), which can also be understood as a regular non-existence. There is no need to argue a strange simple negative usage of אֵין. Gabriel’s use here in Dan 9:26 signals a regular usage of אֵין, and thus וְאֵין לוֹ qualifies what is meant by יִכָּרֵת מְשִׁיחַ. The sense is clearly “and [there will be] nothing [or no one] for him [or to him].” Whether it denotes “nothing” or “no one,” as well as whether it is “to” or “for,” the meaning comes out similarly. He will be without advantage. That is to say, quite literally, that he will no longer be “prominent,” נָגִיד—the leader, forerunner, Prince—that God gave him dominion and authority to be for the human race. His dominion, or at least the exercise of it in ruling and reigning among God’s people, will be removed from the earth.

Gleason Archer agrees to this sense of וְאֵין לוֹ. “This indicates that when Messiah is cut off, he will be bereft of followers... (Or else, if *’ên* here means ‘nothing,’ it suggests that he will die

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<sup>14</sup> Gentry, “Seventy Weeks,” 43n29.

<sup>15</sup> Williams, “Hebrew Syntax, §407a.

without any material wealth or resources).”<sup>16</sup> Archer, though, sees יְכַרְתֵּם referring to Jesus’ crucifixion.

However, Daniel’s לֹא יֵאָמֵן לוֹ is used differently than the examples seen in Isaiah relating to the suffering of Yahweh’s Servant. Isaiah uses the phrase וְאֵין אִישׁ (“and there is no one”) as a catchphrase in 50:2; 59:16; and 63:3 to indicate that Yahweh’s Servant took up his suffering on behalf of a people (all people) who could not provide atonement for themselves. The very point in Isaiah is that the Servant’s aloneness is because he alone is the One who could atone.

In Dan 9:26, there is “no one for him” because God will have purposefully withdrawn the dominion of the Messiah from the world as part of the desolations of judgment, to cut off access by all his enemies to the city and sanctuary of Yahweh’s presence. This recalls the banning of Adam and Eve from Eden, cutting off access to the Tree of Life, sending them out into a desolate world with only the hope of restoration to life.

The separation between “inside” and “outside” is necessary in judgment against sin and rebellion. The promise of salvation remains for those who repent and are drawn into the city of God’s presence and life (Zion), but for those who continue in rebellion, the desolation of lifelessness is all that remains in their “cut off” state. The people of the saints are safe and secure within the city, hedged in by the חֲרוֹץ (Dan 9:25, whether translated “moat” or “delimiting”) of God’s protection. If the Messiah is removed from the world, through whom alone access to the city of God is obtained, then the desolating judgment of God is closing the gate for any to enter the city. The time of the “62 sevens” is over; the nations have streamed into the city from the ends of the world. But now God is ending the “day of salvation” (Isa 49:8); the day of judgment has suddenly arrived.

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<sup>16</sup> Gleason Archer, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 113.

It can be understood why First Coming of the Messiah interpreters would be excited to find a reference to how God's anointed agent would accomplish the sanctification of his saints, since the accomplished deed is one of the primary eschatological goals of 9:24. However, the 70x7s do not supply that information. Rather, as Phillip Johnson observes well,

The basic questions of sin and righteousness were certainly settled when Christ hung on Calvary.... It is equally true that the results of Christ's redemption have not yet been fully applied in this world. If Daniel is speaking only of the provision made for sin and righteousness, the decisive act that will in time bring an end to the kingdom of Satan and of man, then indeed, this prophecy may be said to be fulfilled. But if his words are to be taken as referring to that actual restraint and judgment of sin and the ushering in of the righteousness of God which shall bring everlasting peace and blessing, then they still await their consummation in the return of the Lord.<sup>17</sup>

Since the 70x7s are an interpretation of the overarching vision given to Dan in ch. 7, and since the 70x7s begin by enumerating the goals of God's plan of salvation, then one would expect the 70x7s to span the entire time until eschatological, ultimate fulfillment of God's plan. This would truly answer Daniel's petition regarding the restoration of the sanctuary, city, and people of God.

### The Ruin or Corruption of the Holy City

As a result of the withdrawal of the influence of Messiah, his city and sanctuary will be exposed to ruin or corruption so that God's saints will by all appearances be separated from place and means for communion with God. This is the clear result of the וְיִתְּנֵהֶם בְּיַדָּהּ ( "they will be given into [the enemy's] hand," 7:25) of the overarching vision. God's people, his saints, will be subjected to the enemy "for [until the passing of] a time, times, and half-a-time" ( עַד־ עֶדְן וְעַד־נֶיִן ) ( עַד־ וּפְלֵג עֶדְן, 7:25).

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<sup>17</sup> Phillip Johnson, *The Book of Daniel: A Study Manual* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964), 71.

The title נָגִיד (“leader, prince”) appears a second time in 9:26, although only in the genitive portion of a construct chain, עַם נְגִיד הַבָּא, “the people of the coming prince.” To identify “the people” who are the subject of the clause, the “prince” himself must first be identified.

This נְגִיד הַבָּא, “the coming prince,” cannot be identified as the same as the “anointed one, a prince,” (מְשִׁיחַ נְגִיד, 9:25) or as “the one like a son of man” (7:13), as many First-Coming interpreters propose,<sup>18</sup> because “his people” will cause quite the opposite of the promised restoration of the city and sanctuary. The enemy to be revealed at the proper time is called “the coming one” because he is a person who has been foretold already in the Scriptures, so that Daniel and his reader should understand that warning has already been given about this coming enemy (7:25; 8:9–14), but he has not yet been revealed in the world. “The prince” enemy (to whom Paul refers in Eph 2:2, τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, “the prince<sup>19</sup> of [having] the authority of the air [the realm of demons],” the most direct NT reference to this enemy in the NT), who is the usurper of Dan 7:25 and the “desolator” of 9:27, will exert his earthly dominion (authority) to hinder, corrupt, and if it were possible, to destroy the sanctuary and city (kingdom) of God in the world. The enemy will see his authority as his own prerogative in direct defiance of God’s dominion over him (7:25).

The first “prince,” the one named in 9:25, is identified primarily as מְשִׁיחַ and only secondarily as נְגִיד. It is true that the *mashiach nagid* (“Messiah Prince”) as identified above, clearly connected with the “Most High” of ch. 7, is described as “coming” (7:13, “with the clouds of heaven was coming one like a son of man,” עַם- עֹנֵי שְׂמַיָא כְּבַר אֶנְשׁ אֶתְהּ הֵוָה). It is also

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<sup>18</sup> E.g., Young (*Prophecy*, 208–213), Payne (“Goal,” 106–12; “Interpretation by Context,” 35–37); and Meredith Kline (“The Covenant of the Seventieth Week” from *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. ed. by J.H. Skilton. [Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1974], 463–67.).

<sup>19</sup> Here, Paul is using the Greek ἄρχων as a direct translation of the Hebrew נְגִיד, literally “front-runner” or “leader.”

true that the lack of any other description or qualifier in 9:26 of “the coming prince” indicates that Daniel is expected to connect this “coming prince” with someone who has already been revealed to him as “coming” in the future, whether an agent of Yahweh or of an enemy. This is why many are tempted identify these two “princes” in 9:25 and 9:26 respectively to be the same person.

It may appear that the context of v. 26 within ch. 9 gives no further identification of “the coming prince,” but what is predicated of him in the following verse will clearly identify him as the enemy of which ch. 7 warns. Keil also gives a helpful analysis to identify this “coming prince.”

The מְבֹרָא with the article: "he who comes, or will come," denotes much rather the מְבֹרָא (which is without the article) as such a one whose coming is known, of whom Daniel has heard that he will come to destroy the people of God. But in the earlier revelations Daniel heard of two princes who shall bring destruction on his people: in Dan 7:8,24ff., of Antichrist; and in ch. 8:9ff., 23ff., of Antiochus. To one of these the מְבֹרָא points. Which of the two is meant must be gathered from the connection, and this excludes the reference to Antiochus, and necessitates our thinking of the Antichrist...whose end is here emphatically placed over-against his coming.<sup>20</sup>

Daniel has been warned about two enemy “leaders” or “princes”—whether thought of as “princes” or “kings” or “dominions,” it will be persons with earthly power. The actions of “the coming prince” in 9:27, however, will make it clear for Daniel and his reader that this enemy in ch. 9 is more than just a type or precursor. He is the one Daniel saw, heard and inquired about in ch. 7.

Desmond Ford points out the centrality in Daniel’s visions of “two opposing figures, central to the teaching of the book. The כְּבֹרָא אֲנֹכִי (7:13–14) is presented over against the “little horn” (7:8, 21). The two opposing figures are then presented in 9:25–27 as the מְבֹרָא מְשִׁיחַ

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<sup>20</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 362, 363.

(“Messiah Prince,” 9:25) over against the מְשִׁיחַ מְלִיכָה [Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11] or הַפְּשָׁע שֶׁמָּוָה [8:13]. The “people of the coming prince” (9:26), the enemy, will bring about the “warfare” (7:21, 25; 9:26) foretold about the eschatological enemy of God and his people. Thus Ford correctly recognizes these two opposing “princes” whose goals are diametrically opposite in relation to the city, the sanctuary, and the saints of the Most High. He summarizes further the actions of the enemy:

The מְשִׁיחַ מְלִיכָה represents the final threat to the pious remnant, the inaugurator of the greatest tribulation of all time. It is the final devastator of the divine worship, and the most dreadful temptation to apostasy [that] Israel has ever known. Its importance in the book is shown by the disproportionate treatment it receives in each of the visions [of chs. 7–12].... It is the precipitating factor of the great tribulation, and therefore the forerunner of the kingdom of God.... [But] the coming of the Son of Man is the answer to the מְשִׁיחַ מְלִיכָה and the great oppression of the saints.<sup>21</sup>

In pointing out the purposes and actions of the two opposing “princes,” Ford correctly connects all the major themes of Dan 7 and 9 and how God’s city and sanctuary will, according to his promise, be restored and vindicated, but only after warfare and desolation.

Jacques Doukhan agrees with Ford and recognizes a connection with Ezekiel’s prophecy:

The structure of the passage [Dan 9:24–27] suggests a relationship between the two *nagids* present in it,... a constant opposition between the *mashiach nagid* (“Messiah Prince”) and the *am nagid* (“people of a prince”).... The second *nagid* (or “prince”) comes against the first one—as his adversary, and also has his usurper. Indeed, he bears the same name and claims the same honor. It is significant that the term *nagid* is also applied to the leader of Tyre in Ezek 23:2 (the fact is striking that this is the only time that Ezekiel uses this term *nagid*; elsewhere he always uses *nasi* ’), the context of which partakes much in common wording and patterns of thought with Dan 9:24–27. In fact, the motif of a great conflict in Dan 9 between the two “princes” pervades the whole book of Daniel and belongs to its basic theology.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ford, “Abomination of Desolation,” 153–54.

<sup>22</sup> Doukhan, “Seventy Weeks,” 16.

Doukhan, in recognizing the place of the 70x7s within the unity of the book of Daniel, provides another essential point in the argument for the connection of Dan 7 and 9 as well as evidence for its coherence with the major prophets by the connection with Ezekiel's prophecy.

Gabriel's warning that "the people of the coming prince will ruin/corrupt the city and sanctuary" indicates a blasphemous action contrary to God's eschatological goals as laid out in 9:24. This is in line with the blasphemous words and intentions of the "little horn" in Dan 7:21 and 7:25 to make war with the saints and wearing them out by speaking words against the Most High and making every attempt to change "times and law." Indeed, as part of God's plan, the desolation of the holy city, what in NT terms is called the "Christian Church," is included in the prophecy that "they will be given into [the enemy's] hand [that is, power] for a times, time, and half a time."

The desolation of the holy city will happen through "people of the coming prince" (9:26). This may reflect a similar understanding as that of Ezek 38:2–6, which describes the seven evil allies of Gog, a type of the eschatological enemy of God's people. Yahweh tells Gog, "Many peoples are with you" (עַמִּים רַבִּים אִתְּךָ, Ezek 38:6). Hummel notes, "This common numerical symbol of completeness [seven] makes the point that no localized skirmish is in mind, but rather a *universal conspiracy against God's people*"<sup>23</sup> (present author's emphasis). The desolation they will cause is part of God's judgment, so it is God's own desolation carried out through the wicked intentions of the "people of the prince to come." Hummel emphasizes, "Yahweh is not merely allowing Gog to come, but summoning him as his agent."<sup>24</sup> Yahweh commands Gog,

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<sup>23</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48*, 1119.

<sup>24</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48*, 1122.

“Stand up and take your stand, you and all your assembly gathered around you” (Ezek 38:7).

Hummel quips,

Ironically, of course, Gog has no idea who is giving these commands; he thinks he is acting independently. Similarly in Isa 45:1–5 Cyrus is unknowingly led by God to conquer Babylon to fulfill God’s redemptive purpose.... This warfare is no punishment upon God’s Israel for disobedience (as the Babylonian captivity had been), but a malicious assault by the unconverted long after the return of OT Israel after the exile and then the dispersion of the new Israel throughout the world. This is consistent with the NT depiction of the church as God’s regenerated Israel... The great showdown battle is not at all at variance with the promise of ultimate restoration of Israel, although for a time [times, and half a time!] it might seem otherwise, just as the ongoing persecutions of the church cause her to yearn all the more for the final deliverance when her warfare shall have ceased.<sup>25</sup>

The prophecy in Ezek 38 refers to the same end-time warfare of which Gabriel warns in Dan. 9, and God summons the enemy “Gog” to do his worst, without Gog even realizing he is serving God’s purpose. The enemy cares only about carrying out his own desire and corruption. But unwitting though Gog may be, Yahweh is using him as an instrument of God’s divine judgment.

The enemy in Dan 9 is actually summoned, as it were, by God as part of his plan of judgment, as is seen with Gog of Magog in Ezek 38:14–16.

[In Ezek 38–39] Gog’s invasion occurs at the overt instigation of YHWH; he comes not only with YHWH’s permissive will, but as his agent.... Why would YHWH bring Gog against his own people after the covenant relationships had been fully restored? Because an element in the divine agenda, the universal recognition of his person, remains unfulfilled.<sup>26</sup>

By “universal recognition of his person” Hummel means that all, even his enemies, must recognize Yahweh’s dominion. The summoning of the enemies as God’s agents of judgment is different than when the prophet Joel speaks of the same gathering of the enemies of God and his

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<sup>25</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48*, 1119, 1122.

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Block, *Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2014), 112.



people in Joel 4 [ET Joel 3] to the valley of decision (עמק הַהַרְוִיץ, Joel 4:14 [ET 3:14]).<sup>27</sup> In Joel 4 [ET Joel 3], God is summoning the enemies to a place where he will bring his judgment upon them while showing that he is a refuge, stronghold, and vindicator for his people.<sup>28</sup> In Ezek 38–39, in contrast, God brings the enemies together as agents of his judgment upon the world.

Gustaf Wingren gives an excellent exposition on *Creation and Law*, especially how God works through human agency to accomplish his purposes of judgment and salvation.

This is the central point in Luther’s doctrine of the ‘earthly government’—... that in dealing with the world, God uses human beings in order to give good gifts to men or chastise them with his wrath. God is not bound or impeded in all his dealings either by knowledge or lack of knowledge of himself in his human instruments. To hold that God’s use of his instruments is conditional on the possession of knowledge about or insight into his revelation, is to obscure his sovereignty.<sup>29</sup>

What the people in Dan 9:26 will do to the city and sanctuary, שָׁחַת, here used in the Hiphil, which most often refers to physical ruin or destruction. However, since both “your people and your holy city” are the particular objects of God’s eschatological plan of salvation in 9:24, neither can be destroyed in the sense of complete annihilation,<sup>30</sup> since according to Dan 2:44, “the God of heaven will establish a dominion that for eternity *cannot be hurt/destroyed*” (יְקִים אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא מַלְכוּתָא דִּי לְעֻלְמִין לָא תִתְחַבֵּל; see also 6:27 and 7:14). The city and sanctuary are components of the eternal kingdom (see also Dan 7:18, 22, 27). The Hiphil form here may reflect the usage in

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<sup>27</sup> Notice the same “judgment” and “determination” of God with the use of the root הָרַץ as in Dan 9:25.

<sup>28</sup> Revelation 16:13–14 depicts a similar gathering together of the enemies of God. The “unholy trinity” of the Dragon, the beast from the sea, and the beast from the land summon the kings of the east for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Only, this is similar to Joel 4 [ET Joel 3] in that God is actually the one bringing them together to execute his judgment (and their destruction).

<sup>29</sup> Gustaf Wingren, *Creation and Law* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1961), 55.

<sup>30</sup> See also Dan 2:44, אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא מַלְכוּתָא דִּי לְעֻלְמִין לָא תִתְחַבֵּל, “the God of heaven will establish a dominion that for eternity *cannot be hurt/injured/destroyed*.” Every occurrence of the verb חָבַל in the Hithpael is located in Daniel (2:44; 6:27; and 7:14), all with the subject of the kingdom of God. BDB, s.v. חָבַל, 1091; HALOT, s.v. חָבַל 1868.

Gen 6:12, that “all flesh had corrupted (הִשְׁחִית) their way on the earth” (ESV),<sup>31</sup> or how in Jer 13:9 Yahweh says, “I will spoil (אֶשְׁחַד) the pride of Judah.” In Prov 11:9, a wicked man “with a profane mouth corrupts (יִשְׁחַת) his neighbor.” The essential point of the oracle of the 70x7s is that the city and sanctuary will be restored from desolation (9:24), even if corrupted or spoiled for a period of time.

Yahweh uses the word שחַת in Jer 5:10, threatening judgment on his unfaithful people, saying to an unnamed agent, “Go up through her fortifications and ruin/corrupt, but do not make a full end” (עָלוּ בְּשָׂרוֹתֶיהָ וְשַׁחְתוּ וְכָלָה אֶל־תַּעֲשׂוּ), reiterating eight verses later that even though he is bringing an enemy against them to cause desolation, “even in those days, declares the LORD, I will not make a full end of you.” Later, God speaks of the time after “I have forsaken my house; I have abandoned my heritage; I have given the beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies” (Jer 12:7), and he says, “Many shepherds have ruined (שָׁחַתוּ) my vineyard; they have trampled down my portion; they have made my pleasant portion a desolate (שְׂמִמָּה) wilderness” (Jer 12:10). Who are these “shepherds”? They are agents he also calls, “ravagers” (שֹׁדְדִים, v 12, another synonym to מִשְׁחִית and שָׂמַם), who are “all my [the prophet’s] evil neighbors” (כָּל־שָׂכְנֵי, v 14), the ravagers God himself summoned against his people. Again, the emphasis is that they bring ruin but not total destruction, since God’s purpose is to restore the faithful “so that they will be built up (וְנִבְנוּ) in the midst of My people” (Jer 12:16). But Yahweh teaches Jeremiah the theological sense of the verb and the rhetorical purpose for his people in Jer 18. At the house of the potter, Yahweh demonstrates that even though the clay vessel in the potter’s hand was perverted and spoiled (שָׁחַת; 18:4), the potter “reworked” it into another vessel. This should be understood as parallel to the restoration and “building up” of Jer 12:16. That’s the hope of the

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<sup>31</sup> See also Ezek 16:47 for a similar usage.

restoration Daniel for which Daniel prays in Dan 9. The “building up” is the opposite of the “ruining,” the Gospel counterpart to the Law, that God promises for his people, which is the Gospel in the Seventy Sevens. As such, the “ruining” that God brings about by his alien work (Isa 28:21) is never for the purpose of total destruction of his people or holy city. Notice that God threatens any people who do not listen to him, “then I will surely root out and destroy (יִאַבֵּד) that people” (Jer 12:17). There is no ambiguity about the total destruction meant with the verb אבד; no future “building up” could be intended after such destruction. The Law-Gospel dichotomy of “ruin/corrupt” and “build” is the very point and promise of the revelatory vision to Daniel, but with an eschatological horizon looking beyond the exilic perspective of Jeremiah, no longer as a punishment or judgment for the people’s unfaithfulness, but in judgment of God’s enemies and vindication for his people, the saints.

According to BHS, one Masoretic manuscript points the verb as a Niphal, יִשְׁחַת, also supported by the Syriac. Usage in the Niphal most often refers to the subject being *marred*, *spoiled*, *ruined* (with the possibility of repair), or *corrupted* morally or spiritually.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps using the Niphal pointing is a recognition that the sanctuary and city cannot be annihilated, but will be restored according to God’s plan. Nevertheless, it is not necessary to emend the MT vowel pointing, since other verses serve as evidence that the Hiphil form does not always indicate total annihilation.

Goldingay, representing the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation, favors “destroy” as in physical damage here, even though neither שחַת nor הבל necessarily imply utter destruction. One may well “destroy” something in a way that damages it severely but not utterly, either

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<sup>32</sup> BDB, s.v. שחַת, 1007–8; HALOT, s.v. שחַת, 1469. The Niphal reading is also supported by Payne, “Seventy Weeks,” 106, and Rosenberg, “The Slain Messiah in the Old Testament” ZAW 99 (1987):260.

physically or morally. Goldingay does recognize, however, that the same root in 11:17 could refer to moral/religious ruining rather than to physical damage.<sup>33</sup> Montgomery also, representing the Historical-Critical interpretation, recognizes the validity of “corruption” rather than “destruction”:

The word translated “destroy,” *יִשְׁחַח* is generally taken in the physical sense, so 8:24, 11:17, but there was little destruction effected by the Greeks in the Holy City; it may then be understood in its moral sense, “corrupt.”<sup>34</sup>

Hummel explains Yahweh’s purposes for a similar corruption of his holy city at the time of the exile,

[Ezek 8–11] relate how Yahweh’s “Glory” abandons the Jerusalem temple to destruction. The counterpart is the return of the “Glory” to the eschatological temple in Ezekiel’s vision in 43:1–4.... [They] are important in illustrating the “vertical typology” intrinsic in biblical thought... with human agents translating a prior heavenly reality into an earthly one.<sup>35</sup>

Hummel’s point is that Ezekiel’s book illustrates the typology of exile and return foreshowing a heightened fulfillment of the complete eschatological restoration of Jerusalem as the heavenly Zion of chs. 40–48. This includes and is accomplished by first the withdrawal of Yahweh’s glory resulting in destruction of the city, followed by the return of Yahweh’s glory for its eschatological restoration. Hummel later notes also that in these chapters of Ezekiel,

The promise of restoration and regeneration (11:14–21) that immediately precedes the Glory’s departure (11:22–25) indicates that the departure is not permanent but is a prelude to the restoration that is the focus of chapters 33–38 and especially to the return of the Glory to the eschatological temple in chapter 43.<sup>36</sup>

In the same way as seen in Ezekiel 43, in the heightened fulfillment of the “vertical typology” in Dan 9, the purpose of the removal of Yahweh’s Glory, that is, the dominion of his messiah, is no

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<sup>33</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 230.

<sup>34</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 383.

<sup>35</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 243.

<sup>36</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 312.

longer for the discipline of his people (as in Ezek 11 in reference to the Babylonian exile), but now allowing the coming prince and his people to carry out God's delineated warfare in the form of desolations.

“People” and “city” are connected, but not to be equated, and by extension, they should not be equated with “sanctuary” either. While the latter two terms have always represented the earthly places where God's people live (“city”) and worship (“sanctuary”), the “corruption” or “ruining” of these places in 9:26 does not refer to corrupting the people who are the “holy ones” or “saints of the Most High.” City and sanctuary are simply the saints' earthly-spiritual habitation, which will in fact be ruined or corrupted. The corruption or ruining of the city is spiritual, i.e., moral. This must be the same sense as in Ps 2, with the nations assembling against Yahweh and his Messiah, saying, “Let us tear off their restraints” (presumably, to do and to rule according to their own desires, very much like the “little horn” in Dan 7:25). The corruption comes from the blasphemy and idolatry—in short, the rebellion against the dominion of Yahweh alone. Micah also prophesies in 4:11 about the nations' attitude: “And now many nations are gathered against you [Zion], who are saying, ‘Let her be defiled (רָחַקָהּ), and let our eyes gaze upon Zion!’” Mic 4 describes the same time period (“in the latter days,” 4:1; “in that day,” 4:6) and situation as Dan 9:26. Therefore, the verb רָחַקָהּ in 4:11 can help inform the sense and interpretation of חָשַׁח in Dan 9:26. It is a “soiling,” a defiling, a moral corruption.

The desolations described in 9:27 can be seen as expounding upon or flowing from those in 9:26. A particular method of defilement about which Gabriel warns is that the “prince to come” (9:26) will “put an end to sacrifice and offering” (9:27). Such an act must involve ruining or corrupting the earthly institution of the Church, rendering it desolated or uninhabited, indeed, even giving the impression that (for a time) the gates of Hades have prevailed against the

kingdom of God. However, this is not the same as completely wiping out (utter destruction or annihilation) of all faithful believers in the true God, even as the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and AD 135 did not wipe out either the Jewish or the Christian believers.

In the time of the end, it is just as true of the heightened fulfillment as was true in Ezekiel's message at the time of the exile, as Hummel explains:

Yahweh's Glory, that is, his incarnational presence [in the Messiah] on earth in the midst of his people, now abandons his earthly 'house,' the Holy of Holies in the temple, and also the entire city as well. It is no longer 'Zion,' the elect holy city, inviolable because of the divine presence, as Isaiah had preached so forcefully a century earlier.... Isaiah had not proclaimed the inviolability of Jerusalem as such—merely another city—but the inviolability of Zion, the 'invisible church' of both Testaments, against which the gates of hell can never prevail (Matt 16:18).<sup>37</sup>

In Dan 9, when the desolations are set in motion by the ostracization of the Messiah, the city and sanctuary will be made vulnerable to the enemies who will pounce upon it (Dan 9:26). Since the city is the "holy city" of the people of God and the sanctuary is the "holy place" of Yahweh's presence, corruption or ruin by the enemy would leave these holy places uninhabitable for God's people, desolate in a spiritual and physical senses, if God has withdrawn his presence and allowed the enemy to cause corruption. This would also cause abandonment, not because one could not survive there, but because a faithful believer in God would find there horrors (שְׁקוּצִים) rather than sustenance.

A distinction is seen in Isaiah 24 in the contrast between the desolate "city of *formlessness*" (Isa 24:10, קְרִיַת־תְּהוֹ) and Yahweh's city, Zion. The הָרִוּץ (delineated structure) of God's city is for organization and purpose, in contrast to formlessness of the desolation outside the city. In the beginning, the cosmos was תְּהוֹ וְנִבְהוֹ ("formless and empty") before God began to establish his

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<sup>37</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 325, 256.

order by dividing darkness from light, sky from sea, sea from land, etc. Motyer makes the connection:

[The creation] did not contain inherently any meaning or purpose, nor any tendency toward them; it had no stability and no life; it was *tohu*. Jeremiah (4:23) had a vision of the world reverting to this state, deprived of what makes it inhabitable and meaningful, dark, unstable, empty of life and without a hint of purposeful activity. In a word, without what only God can provide. The “city of *tohu*” [of Isa 24:10] lives without the ordering, life-giving hand of God, opting for life on its own, within itself, depending on itself.<sup>38</sup>

Usage of the word *desolation* in Dan 9 seems to preclude life in God’s rebuilt city and sanctuary, existence apart from the presence and reign of Yahweh. The contrast of the desolation is Zion, the “city of strength” (Isa 26:1) with “salvation as walls and bulwarks” (ESV), where there is perfect peace because Yahweh has established its foundation (28:16; “a stone, a tested stone”) and its walls. Yahweh himself builds his holy city and promises to gather there all those who look to him, and peoples from all nations, tribes, and languages will come to find life in the city (Isa 2:2; 66:18–24; Mic 4:2). The picture in Dan 9 is an eschatological fulfillment for the goal of fellowship in the presence of God, beginning in history in God’s Jerusalem and continuing as his eternal rule and reign.

The enemy who is summoned (like Gog in Ezek 38) and revealed will thus bring about by God’s divine authority the “desolations” (שְׁמֹמֹת) in Dan 9:26–27, and act according to the title given to him, “desolator” (מְשַׁמֵּם), as part of Yahweh’s judgment against all apostasy-rebellion (עֲשֵׂה of 9:24). The desolations are manifestations of nothing less than the ostracizing of the Messiah to bring about the consequence of the ruining (הַחֲרָה) of the city and sanctuary of God as the main act of warfare against the Most High and his people.

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<sup>38</sup> Motyer, *Prophecy*, 201.

The phrase, “as for his end in the flood” (וְקִצּוֹ בַשֹּׁטֶף, 9:26) calls for the question, “To whom or to what does the third person masculine singular suffix refer?” See the philological note on 9:26 on why the suffix must refer to “the coming prince” rather than the city or sanctuary. “His end,” which coincides with “the delineated completion” (כְּלֵה וְנִתְקַצָּה, 9:27), suggests a judgment reserved for God’s eschatological enemy rather than simply for an ordinary wicked earthly ruler. It is also curious why Gabriel would use the definite article on בַּשֹּׁטֶף, causing Daniel and his reader to wonder if there is a definite “the flood” to which it is referring. Carl Keil asserts definitively, “The article shows that a definite and well-known overflowing is meant.”<sup>39</sup> He further argues,

We agree with...adopting the interpretation of שֹׁטֶף, *flood*, as the figure of the desolating judgment of God, and explain the article as an allusion to the flood which overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host. Besides, the whole passage is...to be regarded as a relative clause, and to be connected with אֵלֶּה: the people of a prince who shall come and find his destruction in the flood.<sup>40</sup>

A typological reading sees “the flood” of judgment that overwhelmed the Egyptian enemies pursuing God’s people as anticipating the greater “flood” when “with an overwhelming flood [God] will make a complete end” (בַּשֹּׁטֶף עֲבַר כְּלֵה יַעֲשֶׂה) of his enemies (Nah 1:8) on the day of his ultimate vengeance. In that sense, to say “the flood” with the article is to anticipate the final judgment.

Here again, one can hardly avoid recalling Isa 10:22–23, “delineated annihilation, a flood of righteousness” (כְּלֵיוֹן חֲרוֹץ שׁוֹטֶף צְדָקָה). The phrase “flood of righteousness” (שׁוֹטֶף צְדָקָה) is Yahweh’s judgment that overwhelms his enemies, a fearful end for the enemies and vindication and salvation for his people. Instructive also is Nah 1:8, “But with a covering [overwhelming]

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<sup>39</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 363.

<sup>40</sup> Keil, *Daniel*, 364.



flood (שָׁטַף) he [Yahweh] will make a completion (כָּלָה),” with its use of the same two words in apposition, שָׁטַף and כָּלָה, as here in Dan 9:26 and 27. The question whether the masculine singular suffix in Dan 9:26 on וְקִצּוֹ refers to the “coming prince” or to his “people” (עַם נָגִיד הַבָּא) need not be problematic, as the same judgment of Yahweh is reserved for both, which now comes crashing upon them to overwhelm them.<sup>41</sup> Additionally, Isaiah’s first two words of his phrase, “delineated annihilation” (כְּלִיּוֹן הָרוּץ), even though using slightly different vocabulary, seem to be echoed in Daniel’s phrase “delineated warfare, desolations” (מִלְחָמָה נְחָרָצֶת שְׁמָמוֹת), 9:26) even as Isaiah’s הָרוּץ seems to be echoed in the וְהָרוּץ of 9:25.

### The Strengthened Covenant with the Many

The beginning of 9:27 immediately raises a question for Daniel and his reader. Who is the subject of the verse’s first two verbs? Principles of ordinary Hebrew syntax would lead the reader, having only an unqualified third person masculine singular subject, to continue thinking of the last third-person masculine singular subject supplied. A difficulty here is that the previous masculine singular indicator, found in the second half of v. 26, is the masculine singular suffix of וְקִצּוֹ, “and his end,” a circumstantial clause as subsequence to the main preceding clause.<sup>42</sup> Going one step further back in the same sentence of the second half of v. 26, the third person masculine singular subject “people of the coming prince” (עַם נָגִיד הַבָּא), is explicit. עַם “people” is a masculine singular (collective) noun.<sup>43</sup> However, so is נָגִיד “prince,” which, although here is a genitive in a construct chain, it is technically the last masculine singular referent before the next

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<sup>41</sup> Montgomery agrees that the flood must be Yahweh’s judgment against an enemy “to come” rather than to the מְשִׁיחַ הַנְּגִיד, saying, “[T]he expression 'overwhelming' appears little appropriate to the fate of the Anointed, whereas it corresponds to the 'pouring out of a determination' against the sacrilege in v 27” (*Daniel*, 384).

<sup>42</sup> Williams, §495b.

<sup>43</sup> BDB, s.v. עַם, 766.

two ambiguous subjects, making  $\text{הַיְגִיבִיר}$  the most likely implied subject of v. 27. What is more, the subject of the verse is twice given a new title later in the verse,  $\text{הַמְשִׁמֵּם}$  and  $\text{הַמְשִׁמֵּם}$ , both of which, according to Steinmann, have the same meaning and referent,<sup>44</sup> “the desolator,” “the devastator,” or “the ravisher” (see discussion below). Sibley Towner agrees: “If ‘he’ refers to the last-named person, ‘the prince who is to come,’ the subject is the enemy of God’s cause,”<sup>45</sup> along with Montgomery and Price. Price asserts, “The subject [of *higbir*] may be inferred from the previous verse (9:26)...  $\text{הַיְגִיבִיר הַזֶּה}$  is the nearer antecedent, and therefore, grammatically preferable... It may also be the more suitable subject if it is identified with  $\text{הַמְשִׁמֵּם}$  /  $\text{הַמְשִׁמֵּם}$  (“the desolator”) in the present verse.”<sup>46</sup>

James Hamilton helpfully relates how the “prince to come,” as well as the fourth kingdom out of which he comes, can be identified by a typological interpretation:

[T]he people of the prince who was to come...in an installment in the pattern of the fourth kingdom activity, destroyed city and sanctuary. I put it in this way because the fourth kingdom is never identified as Rome in Daniel... This seems to leave the fourth kingdom open as a type, and the pattern receives installments from Rome and other wicked nations who engage in this kind of activity, awaiting fulfillment in Antichrist... The fourth kingdom is not one kingdom in particular but the wicked world system that has unified itself against God and his people.<sup>47</sup>

Hamilton here is recognizing that many First Coming of the Messiah interpreters, recognizing the Messiah Prince as Jesus of Nazareth, emphatically identify the fourth beast (kingdom) of Dan 7:7 and 7:23 with the Roman empire. Daniel the seer was most curious about this fourth beast and inquired especially about it, rather than about the previous three. It can be argued that

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<sup>44</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 449–50.

<sup>45</sup> Wayne Sibley Towner, *Daniel*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984), 144.

<sup>46</sup> John Price, *The Desecration and Restoration of the Temple as an Eschatological Motif in the Tanach, Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and the New Testament*, (Ph.D. diss, University of Texas at Austin, 1993), 374-75, in agreement with Montgomery, *Daniel*, 385.

<sup>47</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 132.

contemporary European and western nations or kingdoms are direct descendants of the Roman empire, representing its “ten horns,” so that this “fourth kingdom” can be said to continue to exist for the fulfilling of this vision and prophecy. However, the fact remains that, despite Daniel’s curiosity and inquiry, the fourth kingdom is not identified in the book of Daniel. Should Daniel’s reader seek to identify the fourth kingdom as Daniel himself could not, and as Gabriel would not? Hamilton’s point about intentional ambiguity for the purpose of typological fulfillment is well taken.

Montgomery, in giving the Historical-Critical interpretation, agrees that the person in question, the little horn arising from the fourth beast, i.e., “the coming prince,” is an enemy:

“A prince to come,” following Hengstenberg, must be a hostile prince... He is distinguished from the local 'Anointed-Prince' of v. 25 by the epithet “to come,” either as some new one or in the sense of invader, as the verb often implies, e.g., 1:11, 11:13, etc.<sup>48</sup>

John Price recognizes the necessity of a typological understanding of the “prince to come” as he posits,

In Daniel 9:26 the description is of an invasion of Jerusalem by a new leader (נָגִיד), whose people (i.e., army) (עַם נָגִיד) will destroy the Sanctuary as an act of war (מִלְחָמָה). However, the נָגִיד of verse 26 is said to be נָגִיד הַבָּא (“the coming leader”). If the intention had been that the נָגִיד of verse 26 was the immediate leader who desolated the Temple the text should have read לוֹ עַם (“his people”). The “coming leader” will be ethnically identified with the present עַם, but in verse 26, he serves only as a *type* of the eschatological Temple Desecrator (previously typified by cultic oppressors). The language of the text, therefore, reserves his act of desolation until verse 27, which we will argue is chronologically subsequent (although grammatically parallel) to verse 26.<sup>49</sup>

But notice Price reads the “leader” of v. 26 to be a type of the eschatological Desecrator to come in the end times. This is due, for him and other Dispensational interpreters, to the necessity of a

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<sup>48</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 383.

<sup>49</sup> Price, *Desecration and Restoration*, 357.

“gap” between the “cutting off of Messiah” (=the crucifixion of Jesus) and the end times. This interpretation only contributes to the confusion over who is the subject of the verbs of v. 27.

Part of the reason for the ambiguity of the first two verbs of v. 27, besides lack of stated subject, is the action similar to what might be expected of the “anointed prince,” i.e., “and he will strengthen a covenant with the many” (וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית לְרַבִּים). Arguments in favor of “the many” referring to the saints include Isa 53:11, “My righteous Servant will justify *the many*” (יִצְדִּיק צְדִיק (עֲבָדֵי לְרַבִּים), as well as what is subsequently spoken to Daniel by the “one with a human appearance” (כְּמֵרְאָה אָדָם, 10:18) in 11:33, “and the wise among the people will instruct *the many*” (וּמְשֻׁכְּלֵי עַם יְבִינּוּ לְרַבִּים). However, perhaps this use of לְרַבִּים “the many” in 9:27 is similar to that of Ps 71:7, “I am a portent to many” (כְּמוֹפֶת הָיִיתִי לְרַבִּים), where לְרַבִּים is qualified in v 10, “For my enemies say about me...” (כִּי־אָמְרוּ אוֹיְבֵי לִי). Though לְרַבִּים is without the definite article, in Ps 71 it refers to enemies rather than to the people of God, demonstrating that a scriptural usage of “many” does not always refer to the righteous. An argument to determine the use of לְרַבִּים in Dan 9:27, however, will not stand or fall based on this one word alone; other clues from the context must be considered.

One such clue is the parallelism with v. 26. “Messiah will be removed and there will be none for him” indicates a lack of influence and followers as Messiah. On the other hand, the “actor” in 9:27 “will strengthen a covenant with the many.” He will have a great following. These two events are polar opposites, so the subjects of each of them cannot be the same person.

Another clue lies in the words “and he will strengthen a covenant” (וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית). Why does the angel not use the expected verb, כָּרַת, “to cut,” which is how one normally initiates a covenant? Perhaps he uses a different verb to avoid confusion with the use of כָּרַת in the previous verse, and thereby to strengthen or confirm that usage in v 26. BDB asserts, “In all cases כָּרַת בְּרִית כָּרַת

is the technical phrase for making a covenant except Jer 34:10 (“they entered into a covenant,” *בָּאוּ בְּבְרִית*) and Dan 9:27.<sup>50</sup> The former example does not apply here, since in Jer 34:8 King Zedekiah made a covenant (*כרת ברית*) with the people, and in v. 10 the people are entering (*בָּאוּ*) into it. Therefore, this usage of *וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית* in Dan 9:27 is quite unique. Certainly, the hearer of this prophecy from Gabriel would understand that this is not a normal way of referring to Yahweh’s covenant with his people, nor even to his “new covenant” spoken through Jeremiah (31:31–34), in which Yahweh uses his standard vocabulary, *כרת ברית*. Therefore, if one is to understand the phrase “and he will strengthen a covenant with the many,” then the first word of the phrase must indicate any decisive clue that may be found. Biblical usage of Hiphil forms of *גבר* is limited to only two, not counting “conjectural” readings of the apparatus; therefore, the only other use of the Hiphil for this verb *גבר* occurs in Ps 12:5, “We will strengthen our tongues” (*לְלִשְׁנֵנוּ נִגְבִּיר*). This phrase is providentially instructive, considered in its context of Ps 12:2–6. In Ps 12, the faithful one (*קָסִיד*) cries out to Yahweh for salvation, for he is failing (*גָּמַר*) on account of the seeming success of the unfaithful who speak boastful things (*גְּדִלוֹת*, notice the similarity of the action of the enemy in Dan 7:8), asking Yahweh to cut them off (*יִכְרֵת*), because they say, “With our tongue we will prevail. Our lips are our own. Who is lord over us?” (ESV). They say literally, “to our tongue we will give strength” (*לְלִשְׁנֵנוּ נִגְבִּיר*). The “boastful” or “great” things they speak are words by which they would exalt themselves even to the place of, or to usurp the authority of, Yahweh. They will not have Yahweh as Lord over them but will only think of themselves as the lords. Meanwhile, the faithful one must endure devastation and/or ruin<sup>51</sup> (*שָׂד*, Ps 12:6), which is seemingly echoed by the *יִשְׁחִית* of Dan 9:26, along with groaning (*מֵאֲנָקָה*).

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<sup>50</sup> BDB, s.v. *ברית*, 136.

<sup>51</sup> BDB, s.v. *שָׂד*, 994.

While some of the vocabulary is slightly different, surely Daniel and his reader will be praying fervently Ps 12 after hearing the prophecy of Dan 9:24–27! Of the several prayers of the faithful for salvation from under the thumb of the insolent, the unique vocabulary connection and close contextual relations of Ps 12 would bring it to the forefront and strengthen the connection of these *only two uses of* *כָּבַד* *in the Hiphil*. At the very least, the Ps 12:5 connection lends a *negative* connotation to the concept of “strengthen a covenant” in Dan 9:27.

Hamilton also agrees that “he will strengthen a covenant with the many” refers to an action of the enemy:

Some suggest that ‘the prince who is to come’ in Dan 9:26 is actually the Messiah, with the Jews destroying the city and sanctuary in the sense that they provoked the Romans to do it (e.g., Gentry and Wellum 2012: 548–63; and Steinmann 2008: 447–48, 473–4). This could then lead to the attractive understanding that the ‘strong covenant with many’ refers to the ‘many’ of Isa 53:11–12 and the new covenant of Jer 31:31–34. For a number of reasons, however, this interpretation fails to convince. Most prominent in my view is the way this understanding would depart from the picture seen in Dan 7, 8, and 10–12, a picture not of the Jews causing their temple to be destroyed with sacrifice brought to an end [by Christ] but of a foreign attacker cutting off sacrifice and trampling the sanctuary. Another severe difficulty for this view is that, as noted, the Messiah has just been cut off in 9:26, so it is difficult to account for how, or why, his people would then destroy the city and sanctuary. The idea that Daniel meant to communicate that the Jews would provoke a foreign army to destroy the temple strains against the more natural reading of the text, the reading that matches what Daniel depicts elsewhere. Rather than understanding the first lines of Dan 9:27, then, as a fulfillment of Isa 53 and Jer 31, they seem to point in the direction of a satanic parody of those passages.<sup>52</sup>

Hamilton here demonstrates sound logic that the subject of the verbs in 9:27a is not the Messiah but an enemy. The very fact that this passage is a “satanic parody” of Isa 53 and Jer 31 is exactly the point. The eschatological enemy seeks to hinder and undo every one of God’s goals for the restoration of his creation and will do the opposite that Messiah was commissioned to accomplish.

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<sup>52</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 120–21.

The context of the Isaiah 28 passage corresponds strongly to the context of Dan 9:26–27. Isa 28:18 speaks of a negative covenant with an enemy, in this case death, which is the covenant Adam and Eve entered into unwittingly in the garden of Eden. The Isaiah passage also speaks of Yahweh’s judgment in the form of a flood: “Then your covenant with death will be atoned for, and the vision to you of Sheol will not stand; the scourge of the flood (שׁוֹטֵף), when it passes over, you will become a trampling for it” ( וְכַפֵּר בְּרִיתְכֶם אֶת־מִנַּת וְחַזוֹתְכֶם אֶת־שְׂאוֹל לֹא תִקּוּם שׁוֹטֵף כִּי ( יַעֲבֹר וְהָיִיתֶם לוֹ לְמַרְמָס ). This demonstrates that the people’s “covenant with death” is in fact a pre-existing covenant. In Dan 9:27, then, the action of the unnamed subject, that he will “strengthen a covenant,” may in fact be referring to that to which Yahweh refers in Isaiah. Against such a covenant Yahweh’s scourging judgment, his “alien work” ( נִכְרִיָּה עֲבֹדָתוֹ, Isa 28:21), comes as a flood (שׁוֹטֵף) to sweep it away. This judgment is the “decreed completion” (the hendiadys, קֵלָה וְנִחְרָצָה, of Isa 28:22 and Dan 9:27). The people of God are instructed to accept instruction and discipline from the Lord, even as herbs or grain are threshed or beaten, but not forever, and with a good purpose, which is his end goal of atoning for sin and bringing everlasting righteousness. When Daniel hears Gabriel use of much of the same key vocabulary as Isaiah’s prophecy in ch. 28, he would recognize the multiple connections between the revelation he is receiving and that of Isaiah’s prophecy.

“Your covenant of death” (Isa 28:15, 18) refers to the Fall into sin and death in Gen 3, because of which God promised that the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the deceiving serpent who would in turn crush his heel, a prophecy of the “atoning for” that God would accomplish by the “stone, a tested stone” (Isa 28:16) he has set or established. This is reminiscent of Ps 2, when Yahweh says to the kings of the earth, “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.” It is also the vision God gave to Nebuchadnezzar and its interpretation to

Daniel in ch. 2, that a stone struck the image of the four kingdoms and became a great mountain and filled the entire earth and will stand forever as an eternal kingdom. These images correspond to the vision of ch. 7 and can only refer to the person “like a son of man” to whom alone is given the eternal kingdom. The 70x7s, however, indicate a time when such an established “stone” will be removed so that the enemy may be revealed and do his worst. The enemy will strengthen the covenant with death for the many who will follow in the rebellion against God’s dominion and be deceived.

### A Stop to Sacrifice and Offering

The enemy “prince” (נְגִיד הַמֶּלֶךְ) next causes the cease of sacrifice and offering (וַיִּמְנָחֵהָ), another hendiadys that is a synecdoche for the entire divine service of God’s people (1 Sam 2:29; Ps 40:6; Isa 19:21; Amos 5:25), but in what manner he will accomplish this is not revealed here.

The First Coming of the Messiah interpreters generally understand this cessation as good news and the result of Good Friday, because Jesus’ crucifixion is a once-for-all sacrifice and offering. Thus, a “stop to sacrifice and offering” points back to “Messiah will be cut off” as Jesus’ crucifixion. Because of his atoning death, God’s people will no longer be required to offer sacrifices for sin. This is an essential point of the Messiah’s work as priest for his people in Heb 9:26 and 10:12, to be sure.

However, in the context of the 70x7s, while the atonement of Messiah Prince is a necessary implication for the phrase “the people [who are] the saints of the Most High” (7:27) and a clear goal of 9:24 (“to atone for iniquity”), the manner of such atonement is not specified. All that is indicated by the first coming of the Messiah is that it shall be after the first “seven sevens” (9:25). “He will cease sacrifice and offering” in 9:27 does not seem to be pointing to the sanctification of the people and their need no longer to sacrifice animals for their atonement.



Rather, the context suggests that within the kingdom-city founded by the atoning work of Messiah Prince, the people gathered around the Messiah will suddenly find him removed from among them (“Messiah will be cut off,” 9:26). Instead, they will find themselves surrounded by enemies (“the people of the coming prince,” 9:26) and in the midst of warfare (9:26). They will find a ruling prince (“the coming prince,” 9:26) strengthening his dominion over “the many” (9:27) outside the city who had not been gathered around the (now absent) Messiah in the built-up city-kingdom of the new Jerusalem. Further, the saints made holy by Messiah Prince will find the city-kingdom in which they had found shelter to be corrupted and ruined, so that it no longer can be such a shelter for them. Consequently, their public worship life, summarized as “sacrifice and offering,” will not be allowed to continue. After all, the (currently) ruling prince will suffer no rival in his dominion.

But notice the order of Daniel’s visions and the revelations therein. God has given a depiction of the victory of the saints, that is, the “end of the story” first. Daniel and his reader know how the story ends. This is an essential element in the canonical apocalypses. Things will look dark and bleak when it seems that the enemy is winning the warfare. After all, the vision foretold that “the horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them” (7:21) and “they shall be given into his hands” (7:25). But in Daniel’s overarching vision of ch. 7, the victory of the saints (sanctified people) of the Most High is given higher priority (i.e., mentioned first) over the judgment of the little horn in every reference to both, so that the saints may take comfort in the certainty of their vindication and inheritance. However, in the end, for God to withdraw the reign of the Messiah Prince, or to allow him and his “eternal dominion” to be removed from the world, is also to remove of the restraining power holding back the enemy’s rebellion, so that the “prince to come” may emerge and carry out the desolations, which he believes are his own in rebellion

against God, but in reality, are desolations of God’s judgment against all who follow in that very rebellion. God allows the desolations to be carried out through the enemy’s work, using them as God’s own instruments of his judgment. In 9:27, that will mean no less than delivering the saints “into [the enemy’s] hand” (7:25) so that he may engage in the “delineated warfare” against God with the saints (7:21) and even “prevail over them” (7:25) so that the enemy will “wear them out” (7:25). As a consequence of the ostracizing of Messiah and the corrupting of the city and sanctuary, the saints also will be “cut off” from the divine service of God (חָבַח וּמְנַחֵהָ, 9:27), but not from the victory in the end that God has already promised (7:27), namely, inheriting the everlasting kingdom of God.

For the saints of the Most High to be cut off from the sanctuary and from the divine service may seem like “horrors” for that “times, time, and half a time,” but they should not see it as having been abandoned by God himself. Daniel himself had to be keenly aware of what God’s people had had to learn in the exile, as Hummel explains:

That God was not imprisoned, as it were, in his temple and his land was, as such, not so novel a thought in the OT. After all, God had plainly been with the patriarchs and others long before he had given them the land, or before there was a temple or even a portable tabernacle. Faithful Israelites realized that Zion was not some intrinsically holy place by nature (as in pagan worship sites), but that God had elected or chosen Zion to be the place where he would “cause his name to dwell” (e.g., Deut 12:11) in a way not dissimilar from the way in which he had chosen Israel as his people (e.g., 1 Kgs 8)... In Ezek 11:16b Yahweh goes beyond merely affirming ancient biblical truth: “I will be for them a sanctuary for a little while in the lands to which they have come.”... God would be accessible to them in prayer even when they lacked the benefit of a temple.<sup>53</sup>

God himself, as he has promised, will always be with his saints, and his presence with them will be their “sanctuary” even if every earthly sanctuary is rendered desolate.

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<sup>53</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 320.

## The Idolatrous “Extremity of Horrors”

It is helpful to review the philological notes on the participles *מְשַׁמֵּם* and *שֹׁמֵם*. The *נֹגֵיד הַבָּא* (“coming prince”) of v. 26 is the *מְשַׁמֵּם* and the *שֹׁמֵם*, “the ravager, desolator,” of v. 27. Hamilton shows how the connection with ch. 7 demonstrates this:

Only in Dan 9:27 does ‘the desolator’ seem to be a person; the ‘one who makes desolate’ appears to be the ‘prince who is to come’ mentioned in 9:26. The time link between the two texts—7:25’s ‘time, times, and half a time’ being informed by the ‘half of the week’ in 9:27—argues that ‘the prince who is to come’ of 9:26, the ‘one who makes desolate’ of 9:27, should be identified with the little horn from the fourth kingdom whose activities are described in 7:24–25.<sup>54</sup>

Not only does Hamilton appropriately demonstrate reading ch. 9 in light of the overarching vision of ch. 7, he shows how such a reading enables the reader to see a single eschatological enemy through both vision and oracle. The enemy is never named with a proper name, but is identified metaphorically as “a little horn” in 7:8, “the coming prince” in 9:26, and “the desolator” in 9:27 who becomes “the desolated one.” The people of this *נֹגֵיד הַבָּא* will violate and corrupt the city and the sanctuary (thus ravaging and desolating it), which is an abomination consistent with that described in v. 27, i.e., putting to an end communal sacrifice and offering (the divine service of God’s people). These are parallel actions, which is shown also in the use of the vocabulary of *נִהְרָצָה* and *שָׁמַם* in both verses.

Therefore, the enemy, first called “the desolator” in v. 27, and then at the end of the verse called “the desolated one,” is clearly an eschatological enemy of God and his people, whose actions are directly contradictory to Yahweh’s eschatological goals stated in v. 24. His “coming” (*הַבָּא*) is, as many translate, “upon the wing of abominations” (*וְעַל כַּנְף שְׂקוּצִים*). *כַּנְף* is translated “wing or extremity,” and many scholars have taken either direction. Young, for instance,

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<sup>54</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 55.

wanting to import a reference to the Temple, has tried to relate כַּנָּף to a wing or pinnacle of the Jerusalem Temple; however, the text does not speak of a temple. Clearly, כַּנָּף, if referring to a “wing,” is used metaphorically. According to the word’s plainest sense, “wing” it could mean that which gives flight, i.e., metaphorically a means for arriving and/or exerting power. אֲשֵׁרוּצִים, “abominations” or “horrors,” are that which are detested because they are unclean, contaminated because they violate the holiness of Yahweh, usually by idolatry, i.e., any means of blaspheming or usurping the name, authority, and/or worship of Yahweh.<sup>55</sup> Whether כַּנָּף refers to this enemy’s appearance, exertion of power, or per its other meaning, the degree, the “extremity” of idolatry, it epitomizes the desolations that give him both his *raison d’être* and the means of hindering or undoing—so he believes—Yahweh’s eschatological goals of 9:24. The warring desolations described in 9:26–27 are consistent with the actions attributed to the eschatological enemy of ch. 7.

Another option this study proposes examines the word before (and governing) the phrase “wing of abominations” or “extremity of horrors,” namely, וְעַל. It is natural to see וְעַל כַּנָּף and read “upon a wing.” However, וְעַל can just as naturally mean “against” as it can “upon.” Either way, responsible exegesis must answer the question, “What to do with the *waw* in וְעַל?” A simple “and” is an easy answer. However, what relationship does this *waw* express? Considering that the first two clauses in v. 27 both begin with a *waw*, it is quite possible that the *waw* of וְעַל serves the same function as the previous two, linking all three clauses together as three items in a list. Since the logic of the passage so far, especially in the “desolations” ending of v. 26, it would be perfectly natural for these *waws* each to indicate an item in a list, namely, a list of the “desolations” so called at the end of the previous verse. Then v. 27 would read, “[One desolation

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<sup>55</sup> BDB, s.v. אֲשֵׁרוּץ, 1055; TWOT, s.v. אֲשֵׁרוּץ, 2:2459.

will be that] he will strengthen a covenant with the many; [another desolation will be that] in the midst of the seven he will put a stop to sacrifice and offering; [and another desolation] against the extremity of horrors, the desolator [himself], even until the delineated completion will gush forth upon the desolated one.” Note that, again, a similar difficult decision has to be made about the *waw* in  $\text{וַיִּשְׁלַח}$ . The final clause beginning with  $\text{וַיִּשְׁלַח}$ , however, is different than the first three clauses of v. 27 beginning with *waw*. The Hebrew  $\text{וַיִּשְׁלַח}$  marks either a temporal or spatial terminus as in “until” or “as far as,” or it can indicate the interim between termini, as in “during.” Here in v. 27 it is linked to the word “completion,” which definitely indicates a temporal terminus. This gives the  $\text{וַיִּשְׁלַח}$  a fairly clear meaning. The last *waw* clause tells how long the previous three will be in effect. The *waw* itself may then be translated “even” to naturally mark this temporal terminus.

Craig Blaising connects the “desolations” actions of the enemy of Dan 9 to the “day of the LORD” formulae in the prophets, especially Jeremiah, strengthening the support for a typological reading of the text.

[T]here is an intertextual basis for linking the typed pattern of the emergence, turmoil, and eventual destruction of the violent, oppressive ruler in Dan 9:27 to the day-of-the-LORD type in Jer 25. The Jeremiah prophecy against Jerusalem and the nations, fulfilled in the sixth century BC, carries over as a type intertextually to Daniel’s prophecy of a future destruction of Jerusalem and divine judgment on the nation(s) that will perpetrate its destruction. This parallels the prophetic extension of the day-of-the-LORD type to predictions of a future, postexilic aggression against Jerusalem followed by divine retribution and vindication. Even Daniel’s terminology of “end” and “time of the end” can be linked to the day-of-the-LORD pattern... The projection of this pattern parallels the projected expectation of an eschatological day-of-the-LORD yet to come, which means that its intertextual link is already typological.<sup>56</sup>

The desolations of Dan 9:27 are all God’s desolations as he determines, although he is using the desolator for God’s own purposes. Throughout the Scriptures, foreign armies come

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<sup>56</sup> Craig Blaising, “The Day of the Lord and the Seventieth Week of Daniel,” *BSac* 169 (Apr–Jun 2012): 136, 142.

against God's people as agents of his discipline. Here in Dan 9, however, God's people are depicted as victims of hostile enemies. The enemies' attack is not on God's behalf as discipline, but rather, in their rebellion against God they war against God's people. Nevertheless, the enemy's attack is part of God's "delineated warfare," as the Most High allows them to do their worst before meeting their judgment and overthrow.

Daniel Block makes a similar interesting point about Gog of Ezek 38 (especially vv. 14–23). Yahweh asks a rhetorical question in Ezek 38:17: "Are you [O Gog] he of whom I spoke in former days by My servants, the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them?" Despite "a 2,300-year-old interpretive tradition" that the answer to the question to Gog should be "Yes," Block contends that the answer is really a firm "No!"<sup>57</sup> He notes that God asks David the same kind of question in 2 Sam 7:5, "Are you the one to build Me a house to dwell in?," to which, Block asserts, the answer was indeed "No!" However, Block misses the typology inherent in the rhetoric of these questions both in Ezek 38 and 2 Sam 7. Reading typologically reveals that the answers are both "Yes" and "No." Or better understood, the answer to the question is, "Yes, but for a different reason than you think." Is Gog the "foe from the north" that Jeremiah spoke of in 6:22–23? As Block observes, Gog's self-understanding in his pride and YHWH's perception of him are quite different. Such an enemy may have selfish or prideful motivations for the desolations he may cause of his own volition and may even take pride if he were aware of being used as Yahweh's agent of judgment, although in truth the enemy seeks to fight against Yahweh and his people. Though the actions of the enemy are acts of defiance against Yahweh and are against his will, nevertheless, Yahweh is using the enemy's wickedness as a tool, a desolation, of his own righteous judgment. And after Yahweh has

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<sup>57</sup> Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 143.

allowed the desolator to do his worst, unwittingly carrying out Yahweh's own alien work, then Yahweh turns against the desolator himself, turning his judgment back upon the tool he used for judgment. Block seems to think that Yahweh would never do such a thing ("Whatever havoc they wreak on YHWH's people they do of their own volition, and not at the command of God"<sup>58</sup>). However, in Dan 9:27, that is exactly what God is doing, just like in the case of Gog from the land of Magog.

The prophet Joel also sees in ch. 4 (ET ch. 3) God mustering an army of the unbelieving nations of the world to attack his people as a prelude to Judgment Day, when he will condemn unbelievers to eternal punishment. Thomas Nass reports,

In [Joel 4:9–11 (ET 3:9–11)], God is clearly assembling people for the purpose of fighting, and we know from other Scripture passages that the enemies of God's people will oppress the church increasingly as the Last Day approaches—almost to the point of exterminating the church. But the battle itself is not elaborated on in Joel 4 (ET Joel 3), only the fact that the Lord is doing the gathering and that the Lord will judge the horde once they are assembled (see 4:2 [ET 3:2] and 4:12 [ET 3:12]).... Joel 4 (ET Joel 3) [sees] a climactic but unsuccessful assault on the church, which is terminated by the glorious appearing of Christ on Judgment Day. Such an interpretation is in harmony with the other prophets and with Christ Himself.<sup>59</sup>

The emphasis in Joel is that the nations of the world align themselves against God and against his people, and indeed God will summon them to gather together with their weapons fashioned from farm implements as if to be prepared to do their worst. However, instead of allowing them to further attack his people, God will execute his judgment against them.

Isaiah 13:4–5 is another example of God mustering an army, and as Paul Raabe points out, "Even without their knowledge they will function as Yahweh's weapons of indignation. His goal through them is to execute his 'indignation' and 'to execute a Babylon-like ruin against all the

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<sup>58</sup> Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 142.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas P. Nass, *Joel*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2023), 517, 485.

earth.”<sup>60</sup> In this particular example of Isa 13 of God’s judgment on Babylon, Raabe also explains,

The prophet can move easily between a limited territory and the entire earth. This oscillation is built into the prophetic perspective. What the God of Israel does to one nation is in principle what should and will be done to the entire earth. What God intends to do to the entire earth also applies to a given nation. Isaiah and the other prophets can move in both directions, from specific to general or from general to specific.... The particular and universal are envisioned together. The universal judgment facing all sinners is instantiated in one particular place, and what will happen to the city of Babylon is a harbinger of the coming universal judgment.”

This understanding is significant for the Typological approach in general and for understanding Dan 9 in particular in line with the unified message of the prophets. Daniel prays for the desolated sanctuary with Solomon’s temple in mind, no doubt, and for the ruined city of Jerusalem, that God would restore them according to his promises. God’s answer to Daniel’s “particular” prayer is for a “universal” restoration, quite literally. God’s eternal kingdom “localized” in his sanctuary and city will fill the entire earth, although under attack all the while (“in distress of the times,” Dan 9:25). But God’s promise is to bring a completion finally to all sin and rebellion and overwhelm them by the flood of his judgment and to accomplish everlasting righteousness. God’s “eternal” kingdom filling the entire world, and thus the cosmos, is the eschatological goal indicated not only throughout the book of Daniel (2:35, 44; 7:14, 18, 27; 9:24), but also throughout the books of the prophets.

The most surprising feature of the 70x7s oracle is the prophecy that the eschatological enemy will have success, as Yahweh determines, in limiting the work or even ostracizing the influence of Messiah Prince, corrupting or ruining the city and sanctuary of God, and dominating and suppressing the saints of the Most High and the divine service. In so doing, this enemy will

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<sup>60</sup> Raabe, *Isaiah 13–27*, 118.



serve as an unwitting agent of God’s own judgment against all those who oppose God. The eschatological enemy, however, only has power to affect things, events, or people of the present age until “the end,” and certainly not beyond, since “his authority to annihilate and to destroy will be taken away until the end” (7:26). On the other hand, what is delineated about Yahweh’s agent “Messiah Prince” is that “his kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and all powers will serve and obey him” (7:27).

As for the saints who wait upon God’s vindication, they must persevere under the “delineated warfare.” Yahweh exhorts his people in Isa 26:20 as they await his salvation, “Go, my people, enter into your chambers, and each of you shut your door behind you. Hide (O Jerusalem) for a little moment until indignation passes on by.” It is the night of the Passover, and the blood is on the doorframe. God’s judgment will pass over his people and strike the enemies in vindication. In Dan 9, God’s people must “hide” in the sense that there is no longer an earthly institution of “church” in which to take shelter, and so in such times, even as during the exile, God’s people must find shelter in God’s presence which goes with them and remains with them.

The actions of the eschatological enemy and his “people,” in rendering the city and sanctuary to be ruined and desolate, strengthening the covenant with death, as well as putting a stop to the saints’ divine worship of Yahweh, may all be a heightened fulfillment of Yahweh’s prophecy in Amos 8:11,

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD,  
“when I will send a famine on the land—  
not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,  
but of hearing the words of the LORD.”

The withdrawal of the influence and reign of the Messiah would certainly be a withdrawal of the Word of Yahweh. The horrors of the desolator may also include introducing and establishing false forms of worship, i.e., idolatry and blasphemy.

The 70x7s focus not on the atonement for the sins of God's people but on a different time-period, the end times, when the sanctification of God's people will be made complete by the removal of sin and rebellion and the ultimate destruction of God's enemies is carried out. The desolations that God will bring upon the earth begin when the Lord's Messiah with his overarching dominion and reign will be "removed" and withdrawn from the world for "a time, times, and half a time." If this phrase indeed can add up to "three-and-a-half," that time period is symbolic. First, three-and-a-half is simply half of 7. Second, the strength of the enemy grows and increases. One plus two plus... one would think four. But that would be reaching the level of God and the Holy Sabbath. Instead, he is cut short and only reaches a half. Three-and-a-half recalls Elijah at the brook Cherith (a name that means "Cut Off / Removed," 1 Kgs 17:1-5), who was withdrawn (cut off) from the society of God's people during a three-and-a-half-year drought (that is, a desolation), in order to reveal the glory and work of God. In the same way, the desolations that God will bring upon the earth (Ps 46:8) will serve the purpose of revealing the eschatological enemy to come, who will do his worst as an agent of God's judgment for a limited time before his own destruction.

Daniel and his reader should not be surprised by the suffering God's people must endure.

As Reed Lessing summarizes about the message of the book of Amos,

[God promises everlasting, eschatological restoration,] but first, there will be no everlasting joy without temporary sorrow, no homecoming without exile and sojourn, no joyous victory without the scars of cross-bearing. The believing remnant will have

to endure war, splintered relationships, and a broken world before they live in a land where they will never be uprooted again.<sup>61</sup>

As long as the eschatological enemy is able and permitted, indeed even “delineated” (גְּרָרְצָה), 9:26–27) by the Most High to accomplish the desolations prophesied in this vision, he will do so.

Properly speaking, the 70x7s recognize that the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah Prince is already accomplished and cannot be nullified. The atonement is central to the eschatological goals of 9:24, but the 70x7s treat it as a given. The “cutting off” of the Messiah Prince serves even as a type of a more widespread suffering of all of God’s people, the suffering of desolations that must be brought about to fulfill the rest of God’s eschatological goals. The oracle addresses Daniel’s prayer about the Babylonian exile but speaks of a greater exile, of an exile of the kingdom of God in history until its final vindication. The ruining of the city and sanctuary (i.e., the persecution of the Church in the tribulation in NT terms) are prophesied as the eschatological fulfillment and antitype of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple at the time of the exile. But God’s people have the peace and assurance that God has first given his kingdom to his Messiah Prince, who, even after being withdrawn out of the way for a period of time, will finally come with the clouds of heaven to overthrow his enemies and bestow that kingdom to his faithful saints whom he himself sanctified.

Majority conservative scholars are correct to see Christology in the 70x7s, but the point is that the *tertium quid* of the type and antitype is *suffering and persecution*, not the punishment of sin. The punishment of sin, the atonement and sanctification of the saints of the Most High, has been accomplished by the (here unspecified) sanctifying work of the Messiah Prince (9:24) and is considered a “given” in the 70x7s, but the *suffering and persecution* of the people of God

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<sup>61</sup> Lessing, *Amos*, 594–95.

remains a reality until the great eschatological enemy is finally defeated. Therefore, the persecution is mentioned twice in the overarching vision in 7:21 and 7:25, specifically as the work of the “little horn,” the eschatological enemy of God and his saints. However, it cannot be stressed enough that the reason why such suffering and persecution of the saints is not discussed until the end of ch. 7 is to place special emphasis on the dominion and victory of the “one like a son of man,” which will be given also to his saints, a revelation so important, and indeed overarching, that it is spoken three times (7:18, 22, 27).

### God’s Final Desolation: The Flood of God’s Judgment

The repetition of נִהְרָצָה stresses the certainty and immutability of Yahweh’s will and plan. While this enemy’s success may spell seemingly horrifying news for God’s people (to see his city and sanctuary corrupted and ruined), the saints of the Most High have his unshakable promise of comfort and hope, that one final desolation is reserved for the desolator himself, that the flood of God’s final judgment “will gush forth upon the desolator” (9:27), and that God will fulfill the promise of the overarching vision that “the dominion and the power and the greatness of the kingdoms under all the heavens will be given to the people who are the saints of the Most High” (9:27), וּמַלְכוּתָהּ וְשִׁלְטָנָא וְרַבּוּתָא דִּי מַלְכוּת תְּהוּת כָּל־ שְׁמַיָּא יְהִיבָת לְעַם קַדִּישֵׁי עֲלִיּוֹנִין (9:27), a promise which stands to the end.

The eschatological enemy, the Desolator, will render desolate, uninhabitable, the city of God and sanctuary, the earthly manifestations of God’s eternal kingdom, by putting a stop to the divine service of Yahweh by the saints and waging war against them. However, now God turns the tables against the Desolator and the language of 9:27 shifts, so that now the Desolator (מְשַׁמֵּם) becomes the Desolated One (מְשֻׁמֵּם) as the flood of God’s judgment accomplishes the “delineated

completion.”<sup>62</sup> This is the final judgment St. Paul has in mind when he tells the Thessalonians, “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming” (2 Thess 2:8). Although Gabriel does not explicitly tell Daniel that the enemy must be destroyed only by the reappearance of the Messiah Prince, reading with Dan 7:26–27 indicates that the temporary dominion given to the “little horn” Desolator will be “taken away,” “to desolate [him] and to destroy [him] until the end [i.e., forever]” (7:26). Then, with v. 27, “the dominion and the power and the greatness of the kingdoms under all the heavens will be given to the people who are the saints of the Most High (His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and all powers will serve and obey him)” comes the reassertion of the dominion of the Most High. The dominion of the Most High will be reasserted by the reappearance of the Messiah Prince, by which the enemy is finally overthrown and destroyed, as Paul says in 2 Thess 2:8, and then once the enemy (and all who followed him) are destroyed, then the dominion will once again return to the Ancient of Days who gave it to the “one like a son of man” (7:13–14), to which Paul refers in 1 Cor 15:24–28:

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

In this and many other passages, Paul’s eschatology about the coming—or more properly, “appearance” (always *παρουσία* throughout his epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians)—of Jesus Christ closely follows the revelation to Daniel of both the first and second “comings” of the Messiah.

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<sup>62</sup> See philological note on 9:27 regarding the phrase translated “delineated completion.”

God turning the tables on his enemies is a frequent motif in the Scriptures. In Isa 25:8, Yahweh will complete on his holy mountain the “swallowing” or “devouring” of death forever. The “shroud” and “sheet” of the previous verse imply that death had been “swallowing” all peoples and nations continually up to the end. But now “on this mountain” God will swallow up the swallower and devour the devourer. This echoes the idea in the previous chapter in Isa 27:7 that Yahweh will strike the one who struck Israel. And so the striker is stricken, the killer is killed.

This “completion” of 9:27 fulfills the first three “negative” goals of 9:24 and removes any obstacle to the fulfillment of the final three goals, summed up by “everlasting righteousness.” Thus, the everlasting kingdom will be given (תִּהְיֶיבָת) to the saints of the Most High (Dan 7:27) and they will “hold it firm,” “possess it” (הִקְסִיגוּ), or “hold it in occupancy” (ESV) so that it can never be taken away. It is God’s holy city (9:24) which will have begun to be built with the first coming (after “seven sevens,” 9:25) of Messiah Prince, built and expanded over “sixty-two sevens” (9:25), and consummated after the withdrawal of the dominion of Messiah and the “determined warfare, desolations” of the enemy and his “people” (9:26–27) by the reappearance and reassertion of the dominion the Most High (9:27; 7:26–27).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE TYPOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION IN RELATION TO THE MAINSTREAM VIEWS

As has been seen in the history of interpretation of the 70x7s since the 1880s alone, a great multiplicity of interpretations has most often muddled understanding of the oracle of Dan 9:24–27.

#### Focus on the Historical-Critical Interpretation and Its Weaknesses

The Historical-Critical interpretation given by critical scholars such as John Collins, James Montgomery, Philip Davies, Benjamin Waters, Paul Redditt, John Fitzmeyer, and Tim Meadowcroft, et al., sees the rhetorical purpose of Dan 9:24–27 as an epitome of events and details regarding only the geophysical city of Jerusalem, its BC inhabitants, and a singular “little horn” enemy. This interpretation identifies “the prince to come” in 9:26 as the “little horn” of 7:8 and the same “little horn” of 8:9–12. It reads the report in 1 Maccabees 1:54 that Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” “constructed an abomination of desolation on the altar,”<sup>1</sup> compares its similar language to that of Dan 11:31 and 12:11, and applies all three passages to Dan 9:26–27 based on similarity of vocabulary, concluding that Dan 9 is a warning about the desolation that Antiochus will cause.<sup>2</sup> Critical scholars invariably treat the passage as *vaticinium ex eventu*,<sup>3</sup> written not in

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<sup>1</sup> βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον.

<sup>2</sup> In fact, Montgomery asserts that 1 Maccabees 1:54 is an outright interpretation of the prophecy in Daniel and calls this interpretation the earliest of all the schools of interpretation on this passage, which ended up passing “into oblivion, not to be taken up again until modern times” (Montgomery, *Daniel*, 396).

<sup>3</sup> “The critical consensus on the book of Daniel has been for some time that it was produced in the second century to encourage its audience to persevere just a bit longer before the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the arrival of God’s kingdom.” Benjamin Waters, “The Two Eschatological Perspectives of the Book of Daniel,” *SJOT* 30, 91.

“According to nearly every modern commentator, the tales of ch 1–6 are originally products of a Jewish community in a Gentile environment, whose concerns were rather different from those of Jews who read these tales

the sixth century BC but by a redactor or redactors in the second century BC after the desecration of the Jerusalem temple by Antiochus. John Collins traces the development of the Historical Critical interpretation: “Porphyry was the first to expose the pseudonymity of Daniel and to argue that the book was written after the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes, which it purported to prophesy.”<sup>4</sup> Collins cites Maurice Casey, about whose work he says, “Casey correctly notes<sup>5</sup> that Porphyry’s interpretation requires that the book be written after the persecution, rather than during it.” He goes on to explain, “Porphyry rejected the identification of the fourth kingdom with Rome in order that the words which were written: ‘a mouth uttering overweening boasts’ might be considered as spoken about Antiochus instead of about Antichrist.”<sup>6</sup>

By continuing Porphyry’s skeptical view of the book of Daniel, Historical Critical interpreters make clear that they are dismissing the Seventy Sevens as prophecy, regarding it as merely an after-the-fact historical account, and intentionally working backward in time, beginning in the mid-second century and using events of that time to read into Dan 9.

Collins further points out how Historical Critical interpreters approach the visions of Daniel:

The predictions of Daniel, like the stories about the past, are shaped by the literary conventions of the Hellenistic age, not by any deposit of revealed information. The time-bound character of the book cannot be evaded by vague statements that it is “a

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in Palestine in the Maccabean period; the visions, which were written during this period, are of a different genre, ‘apocalyptic’” Philip Davies, “Eschatology in the Book of Daniel” *JSOT* 17:33; “This is... an OT passage dating from the second quarter of the second century BC.” Joseph Fitzmeyer, *The One Who Is to Come*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 62; “Dan 7...presupposes actions by Antiochus IV against Jerusalem such as 1 Macc 1:29–40 describes... Its date is thus mid–167 BC.” Goldingay, *Daniel*, 157; “This study...will show that Dan 9 was an expression of the self–understanding of the [...second–century community...] group standing behind the book of Daniel.” Paul Redditt, “Daniel 9: Its Structure and Meaning” *CBQ* 62:236).

<sup>4</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 114. Porphyry was a third-century (AD) neoplatonic philosopher who was very hostile to Christianity. None of his work survived except what Jerome relates in his commentary on Daniel.

<sup>5</sup> Casey, P. Maurice. “Porphyry and the Book of Daniel,” *JTS* 27 (1976):15–33.

<sup>6</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 114.



true witness to the end of the age” [per Childs, *Introduction*, 619] that fail to explain how its witness is true.... Its witness, however, is largely in the language of legend and myth, which appeals to the imagination rather than to the rational intellect.<sup>7</sup>

Conservative interpreters chide Critical scholars for treating the sacred writings with the intellect rather than by faith, placing themselves, as it were, above the text. To understand the message of Daniel’s visions, one must receive them in the spirit by which they are given. It is understandable, however, that studies of so-called apocalyptic literature including deuterocanonical books have muddled the reception and understanding of the canonical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation. The canonical apocalypses, when studied in light of their reception by the people of God and the christological and ecclesiological message by which they bring comfort and hope, have proven themselves to be exactly what believers see in them—the Word of the Lord. It is for good reason that Daniel was canonized but other Jewish apocalyptic writings were not. The important question to ask is: What does Daniel bring over against the pseudonymous writings? The answer cannot lie in specifics of content, but rather in the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic framework of understanding that is coherent with the rest of the canonical scriptures. The book of Daniel is presented and calls for a reader who will receive and understand it in this light, as Gabriel commands and prefaces the oracle, “Consider the Word and understand the vision [of ch. 7]” (9:23). To approach the book as an *ex eventu* fiction is a mistake by which Critical scholars will fail to see the vision given to Daniel.

Critical scholars also categorically limit the scope of the “vision” to 490 years to culminate in the reign of Antiochus, even while admitting with Montgomery, “ a similar objection may be made against our identification of the final Week of the Seventy with the period of Antiochus’ tyranny, for the 62 weeks would then take us down some 65 years too far. We can meet this

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<sup>7</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 123.

objection only by surmising a chronological miscalculation on part of the writer.”<sup>8</sup> Collins amends this idea by suggesting, “In view of the schematic character of the seventy weeks and of the dating of the reign of Darius the Mede, the figure should be considered a round number rather than a miscalculation.”<sup>9</sup> This interpretation tries to have it both ways, insisting that the chronology of the 70 Sevens adds up to 490 years, and yet, when the chronology does not quite fit its assumptions, it dismisses the chronology as miscalculated.

Montgomery’s summary of the last week of the seventy presents the purpose of this *terminus ad quem* for the historical-critical interpretation:

The last Week is introduced by the “cutting off of an Anointed,” the destruction or depravation of city and temple, accompanied by an unholy “league with the majority”; for the (last) Half-Week there is to be cessation of the Jewish cult and its replacement by Pagan abominations.... The whole argument points to the Antiochian persecution and it can be claimed that no period in Jewish history so neatly fits the cryptic allusions of our passage. We may satisfactorily identify the “Anointed” with the high priest Onias III, who was foully murdered when guest at the court of Antioch (2 Mac. 4:7–38).... We may respect the spiritualizing exegesis which can find fulfilments of the striking figure of the Abomination of Desolation in many a subsequent act of sacrilege, the attempted profanation by Caius, the destruction of city and temple by Rome, the erection on the temple site of Hadrian’s Pagan shrine, but this natural process of thought should not interfere with our recognizing the primary and most obvious interpretation of the passage as one with a contemporary bearing which was intelligible to its age despite its cryptic phraseology.<sup>10</sup>

Notice that by “contemporary bearing” and “intelligible to its age” Montgomery reflects the belief that the book of Daniel, put together in the late-second century BC, is recounting recent events that occurred by the hand of Antiochus IV.

The Historical-Critical interpretation’s *terminus ad quem* of the second century becomes its beginning for interpretation; in other words, the interpretation sees first a fulfillment and then

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<sup>8</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 393.

<sup>9</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 356.

<sup>10</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 393, 394.

works backwards in time to determine the starting point 490 years earlier. This method seeks evidence in the intertestamental literature of the LXX and of Qumran, considering it as contemporary to the Dan passage in question. Collins asserts, “A division of history into ten ‘weeks’ or seventy periods was characteristic of the early Enoch literature.”<sup>11</sup> He therefore uses many passages in the intertestamental apocalyptic literature as evidence for interpreting the 70x7s as weeks of years to total 490. Critical scholars identify varying persons and events in the sixth- and second- centuries BC respectively to space out the *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* to span the “seventy weeks,” which must necessarily total 490 years, or as close as possible. They identify the prophecy that “an anointed one will be cut off” (יְקַרֵּת מְשִׁיחָא, Dan 9:26) with a particular priest being killed, the identity of whom varies depending on what event they identify as the *terminus a quo* of “the going-out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem” (9:24). Therefore, “an anointed one will be cut off” serves in this interpretation not as an epicenter, but as an incidental side note to serve as a timestamp.

Central to the Historical Critical interpretation is the argument that only one enemy of God and his people are spoken of in the visions of Daniel. The “little horn” of chapter 8 is to be identified by the “little horn” of chapter 7. John Collins reasons, “If even a Christian interpreter such as Hippolytus granted that the horn referred to Antiochus in ch. 8, why should the same symbol not have the same referent in ch. 7?”<sup>12</sup> In the vision of ch. 7, the four beasts help identify the little horn that arises from among the horns of the fourth. And yet, according to Collins, while the vision of ch. 7 leaves the identity of the little horn unknown, he admits the eschatological character of this “little horn.” He puts forward that both the beast of Rev 13 and

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<sup>11</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 352–53.

<sup>12</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 116.

the “man of lawlessness” of 2 Thess 2 draw upon the words and depictions of the “little horn” of Dan 7–12,<sup>13</sup> which Collins believes to be all about a single person.

The approach of the critical interpretation is to use identifiers from ch. 8 to make ch. 7 more clear. This seems reasonable according to accepted rules of exegesis but, since it rejects the whole idea of prophecy, it misses the fact that the Scriptures often give typological iterations that have increasing degrees of fulfillment. Critical scholars recognize an eschatological character to their singular “little horn,” but cannot see how it could refer to more than Antiochus IV. The Typological interpretation addresses this issue and demonstrates that, in fact, two “little horns” are shown, the first being a type of the second, the antitype.

A weakness of the historical critical approach is that these interpreters rule out the possibility of predictive prophecy,<sup>14</sup> even though Gabriel introduces the oracle by telling Daniel, “[U]nderstand the vision. Seventy sevens are decreed about your people and your holy city” (9:23–24). The ideal reader must believe by faith, like Daniel the seer, that God is actually showing and giving a glimpse of his plan of salvation and judgment for the world. They are “the intentions of his mind. In the latter days you will understand this,” Jeremiah assures his reader (30:24). If God is not revealing these things to Daniel, then all Daniel could understand is that he had a dream. Why should it “mean” anything at all?

Collins sums up the conclusions reached by the Historical Critical method about both the 70x7s passage and about the whole book of Daniel:

In the twentieth century, the great debates about universal history, the identification of the Antichrist, and millennial expectation are no longer taken seriously in academic biblical scholarship.... Daniel is not a reliable source of factual information

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<sup>13</sup> Collins, *Daniel* 108.

<sup>14</sup> “In the case of the category ‘prophetic,’ we agree with Davies that it should not be applied to Daniel as a generic label. There is, however, considerable continuity between Daniel and the prophetic tradition” (Collins, “Apocalyptic Genre” *JSOT* 21 [1981]: 89).

about either the past or the future.... Viewed in its historical and literary context, Daniel emerges as a religious document that is more akin to poetry than to historiography or futurology.... Its witness, however, is largely in the language of legend and myth, which appeals to the imagination rather than to the rational intellect.<sup>15</sup>

So according to their view, Daniel is to be read as fiction and nothing more. It is certainly from the same vantage point that Montgomery concluded:

The history of the exegesis of the 70 Weeks is the Dismal Swamp of O.T. criticism... [T]he trackless wilderness of assumptions and theories in the efforts to obtain an exact chronology fitting into the history of Salvation, after these 2,000 years of infinitely varied interpretations, would seem to preclude any use of the 70 Weeks for the determination of a definite prophetic chronology. As we have seen, the early Jewish and Christian exegesis came to interpret that datum eschatologically and found it fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem; only slowly did the theme of a prophecy of the Advent of Christ impress itself upon the Church, along with the survival, however, of the other earlier themes.<sup>16</sup>

Montgomery cynically says, in effect, that the history of interpretation of Daniel's 70x7s is so muddled that it is pointless even to try to "study" it for any value. Conservative believers must disagree with him and argue that Daniel's visions cannot be dismissed as unintelligible fiction. Of course, Montgomery is wrong to say "only slowly did the theme of a prophecy of the advent of Christ impress itself," since christological interpretations of Daniel in rabbinical writings existed already before the advent of Jesus Christ. The earliest written (extant) Christian interpretation of Daniel was by Irenaeus, who interpreted typologically, in the AD second century.<sup>17</sup>

The Lord also spoke as follows to those who did not believe in Him: "I have come in my Father's name, and you have not received Me: when another shall come in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43) calling Antichrist "the other," because he is alienated from the Lord. This is also the unjust judge, whom the Lord mentioned as one who feared not God, neither regarded man (Luke 18:2), etc., to whom the widow fled in her forgetfulness of God—that is, the earthly Jerusalem—to be

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<sup>15</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 123.

<sup>16</sup> Montgomery, *Daniel*, 400–401.

<sup>17</sup> Hummel, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 605. See also Tanner, *Daniel*, 547.

avenged of her adversary. Which also he shall do in the time of his kingdom: he shall remove his kingdom into that [city], and shall sit in the temple of God, leading astray those who worship him, as if he were Christ. To this purpose Daniel says again: "And he shall desolate the holy place; and sin has been given for a sacrifice, and righteousness been cast away in the earth, and he has been active (*fecit*), and gone on prosperously" (Daniel 8:12). And the angel Gabriel, when explaining his vision, states with regard to this person: "And towards the end of their kingdom a king of a most fierce countenance shall arise, one understanding [dark] questions, and exceedingly powerful, full of wonders; and he shall corrupt, direct, influence (*faciet*), and put strong men down, the holy people likewise; and his yoke shall be directed as a wreath [round their neck]; deceit shall be in his hand, and he shall be lifted up in his heart: he shall also ruin many by deceit, and lead many to perdition, bruising them in his hand like eggs" (Daniel 8:23), etc. And then he points out the time that his tyranny shall last, during which the saints shall be put to flight, they who offer a pure sacrifice unto God: "And in the midst of the week," he says, "the sacrifice and the libation shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation [shall be brought] into the temple: even unto the consummation of the time shall the desolation be complete" (Daniel 9:27). Now three years and six months constitute the half-week.<sup>18</sup>

Conservative interpreters point out other pitfalls of the Historical Critical approach.

Stephen Cook warns:

History has *disconfirmed* any prophecy of the world's end with the Hellenistic kingdom of Antiochus. Daniel's vision, under this interpretation, is blatantly false prophecy. No group would treasure such a false prophecy as Scripture.<sup>19</sup>

Cook's point is that Daniel has been preserved in the canon because believers have maintained quite the opposite value that Historical Critical scholars give to Daniel. They have believed it to be true prophecy.

Horace Hummel offers advice from the conservative perspective:

[T]he conservative will want to stress the extent to which critical dissections of the prophetic literature nourish the critical dogma of prophetic-apocalyptic disjunction. Passages in the prophetic books which stress themes or use language considered "apocalyptic" are regularly declared "ungenuine" and later additions; hence, of course, with such materials eliminated from consideration, the critical notion of the

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<sup>18</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, V.25.4.

<sup>19</sup> Cook, *Apocalyptic Literature*, 142.

genuinely “prophetic” is also easily upheld. A better—and more fateful—example of critical argumentation in a circle can hardly be found!<sup>20</sup>

A historical critical approach would defeat what other interpreters agree to be the rhetorical purpose of the book of Daniel, i.e., to assert the power and sovereignty of Yahweh over against any other god or earthly ruler. As James Hamilton points out, Yahweh’s reputation is at stake.

If some Maccabean-era author is making fraudulent claims, if these are fictional deliverances and not future predictions but recitals of what has already happened presented *as though* being predicted by Daniel, then there is no real proof that Yahweh can either deliver from death or predict the future. This means that there is no proof that he is any better than the false gods who can neither predict the future nor deliver their worshippers, which is exactly what the book of Daniel claims Yahweh can do, especially by means of the revelations in Daniel 2 and 7–12...<sup>21</sup>

If the visions of Daniel merely point inaccurately to past events that they falsely purport to prophesy as future, then the Historical Critical view would render the entire book of Daniel of little actual theological truth or spiritual comfort. What purpose would its inclusion in a canon provide for believers other than to serve as a curiosity of fiction?

Another weakness of the Historical Critical approach addressed by conservative scholars is that in approaching the 70x7s oracle, critical scholars typically deal with lexical and exegetical challenges by deferring to the LXX or amending the Hebrew text.<sup>22</sup> Leupold’s caution, on the other hand, defends the MT of Daniel to speak for itself.

When the [exegetical] difficulties are manifestly many, *there is every reason for believing that the text has been transmitted with more than usual care*, and that,

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<sup>20</sup> Hummel, *Word Becoming Flesh*, 552–53.

<sup>21</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 32.

<sup>22</sup> “The translation offered here is suggested by analogy with the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in Dan 11:45: וַיִּצְרֹף עֹזְרָאֵל לֹ. The Hebrew of 9:26 may be either defective or an elliptical allusion to the isolation of the murdered high priest... It is possible that the words גְּהַרְרִצֹת שְׂמִימֹת are introduced here [in 9:26] by confusion with the end of v. 27” (Collins, *Daniel*, 357). “The Hebrew text [of 9:27] reads ‘on the wing,’ but the Greek versions have ‘on the temple’ and can scarcely have read כַּנְּה.... The best solution is to emend the text to כַּנְּה עַל, ‘in their place’ (i.e., the place of sacrifice)” (Collins, *Daniel*, 358).

therefore, attempts at modifying the text should not be resorted to without very good reason—a caution that is always in place.<sup>23</sup>

When answering the question, “What does the book of Daniel say?”, one must first examine the Hebrew and Aramaic MT of Daniel and make every effort to understand the words written rather than departing from it to another translation, e.g., the LXX or Vulgate, or to outside writings such as Qumran texts, which cannot answer the question.

McComiskey gives a good summary and analysis of why also the Historical-Critical interpretation is lacking:

The view that holds that this figure [*mashiach*] is Onias III and that the *nagid* [*habbah*] is Antiochus Epiphanes has several weaknesses. The most significant is that Antiochus did not fulfill the total range of the prophecy. J[oyce] Baldwin notes, “Commentators who argue that Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled this prophecy are at a loss to account for the fact that he destroyed neither the Temple nor the city of Jerusalem, though undoubtedly much damage was done (1 Macc 1:31, 38).” And J[ames] A. Montgomery, who holds this view, acknowledges, “To be sure, a similar objection may be made against our identification of the final Week of the Seventy with the period of Ant[iochus]’s tyranny, for the 62 Weeks would then take us down some 65 years too far.” However, he meets the objection by positing “a chronological miscalculation on part of the writer.” The “strong covenant” of [9:]27 has always been difficult to find within the scope of Antiochus’ political activity. And, the ultimacy of such statements as “to put an end to sin” and “to bring in everlasting righteousness” [9:24] seems to strike a discordant note when one places them against the background of the Hasmonean struggle.<sup>24</sup>

McComiskey, along with Baldwin, recognizes correctly that the 70x7s oracle speaks of larger fulfillments than the tyranny of Antiochus IV.

All this is not to say that the Historical-Critical approach has no merit, nor that the events of Maccabean times are not instructive for the message of Daniel. Historical-Critical

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<sup>23</sup> Leupold, *Daniel*, 417. Present author’s emphasis.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas McComiskey, “The Seventy ‘Weeks’ of Daniel against the Background of the Ancient Near Eastern Literature” *WTJ* 47 (1985): 31; quoting Baldwin, *Daniel*, 171; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 393.



interpretation demonstrates many valuable insights as to how Daniel’s visions point more immediately to Antiochus IV who serves as a type of a greater eschatological enemy to come.

### **Focus on the First Coming of the Messiah Interpretation**

The First Coming of the Messiah interpretation given by conservative scholars, e.g., Edward Young, Paul Feinberg, J. Paul Tanner, Jacques Doukhan, Peter Gentry, J. Barton Payne, David Lurie, and Benno Zuiddam, et al., stems from majority agreement among early Church fathers including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen. This majority interpretation of conservative Christianity sees the 70x7s oracle as prophesying about the death of Jesus Christ. Edward Young summarizes, “This view was stated in its essentials by Augustine.... It regards this passage as a prophecy of the first advent of Christ in the flesh, the central point of which is his death, and it speaks also of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.”<sup>25</sup>

This view, like the Historical Critical interpretation, invariably takes the “seven sevens” and “62 sevens” together in one 69-sevens period, which spans the release of the people of Israel and Judah from exile until the first coming of Jesus Christ. This view recognizes that the prophecy’s epicenter, “the messiah will be cut off” (Dan 9:26), is more than a mere point of interest. Rather, it is indeed the heart of the prophecy. Using Isa 53:8, “he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people” (גִּזֹּר מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים מִפְּשַׁע עַמִּי נִגַּע לְמוֹ),<sup>26</sup> and wishing to maintain the christological nature of the vision, they assert its fulfillment in the AD first century with the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. The subsequent events of 9:26 then refer to the Fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. The enemies to “destroy” the holy city are the Roman armies, and the “prince to come” is the future Roman Emperor Titus. He is the only “enemy” to

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<sup>25</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 192.

<sup>26</sup> Although note the different verb Isa uses, גִּזֹּר, compared to Dan’s כָּרַת.

which this passage refers. Jesus the Messiah is the subject of the actions in Dan 9:27a, as he establishes a covenant of grace with “the many” and “puts an end to sacrifice and offering” by his own once-for-all sacrifice on the cross.

While all First-Coming interpreters recognize the Christology of the 70x7s, most do not see an eschatological enemy depicted in the oracle. This is a point of failure of their interpretation since the enemy plays a significant role in Daniel. They understand the event when “the people of the prince to come will ruin [the city and sanctuary]” as the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70. That their interpretation is delineated by their understanding of “Messiah will be cut off,” in their interpretation, “killed / crucified,” however, is shown by Steinmann’s unequivocal assertion,

“Eschatologically, [the prince to come] could refer to the Antichrist, who wars against the church in the end times. However, 9:26a refers to the first advent of the Messiah (only at his first coming was Christ ‘cut off,’ crucified), so the implication of 9:26a *must be* that the destruction happens at the time of the first advent of the Messiah”<sup>27</sup> [*present author’s emphasis*].

Steinman insists that  $\text{תָּבֵר}$  must necessarily mean “destruction,” and that “the text does not qualify the destruction as partial or otherwise less than complete.”<sup>28</sup> The assumption that total destruction is in mind would only be true if the word otherwise always implies total destruction, which it does not. However, a greater assumption is that “Christ cut off” must necessarily mean “crucified,” which it does not.

Furthermore, according to this First-Coming interpretation, Jesus is the actor in 9:27a who will strengthen God’s covenant with his people. Because of Jesus’ death, sacrifice and offering will no longer be necessary and will cease since Christ made sufficient atonement for sin. After

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<sup>27</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 448.

<sup>28</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456.

all, as Steinmann points out, “The advent and atonement of the Messiah toward the end of the seventy weeks will bring an end to the temple and its system of sacrifices instituted by Moses.”<sup>29</sup> This approach indeed champions the Christology of the 70x7s but makes it ever and only about Jesus’ crucifixion. It answers the question of the sanctification of God’s saints and provides for the eschatological goal of “everlasting righteousness,” to be sure, but it does not fully address the removal of evil (the rebellion) or sin. Yes, Jesus’ death atones for the sin of the world, but why does evil remain in the world, and how will it be dealt with? The judgment of God falls upon the Messiah on behalf of his people, but what about the restoration of the sanctuary and city about which Daniel prays? If the 70x7s address only further destruction of geophysical Jerusalem, then the oracle doesn’t really answer Daniel’s concerns and prayers. Instead, Jesus’ death makes the sanctuary (temple) and (geophysical Jerusalem) city no longer needed or relevant.

The central goal in the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation is to view Christ’s atoning death as the ultimate and complete fulfillment of the prophecy of God’s eschatological goals (9:24). The prophecy of the 70x7s, therefore, becomes “the prophecy to end all prophecies.” Young demonstrates the view:

The two words [in Dan 9:24], vision and prophet, therefore, serve to designate the prophetic revelation of the OT period. This revelation was of a temporary, preparatory, typical nature. It points forward to the coming of him who was the great Prophet (Deut 18:15). When Christ came, there was no further need of prophetic revelation in the OT sense... When sin is brought to an end by the appearance of the Messiah, so prophecy, which predicted his coming and his saving work, is no longer needed. It has fulfilled its task and is therefore sealed up.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 466.

<sup>30</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 200.

Young's view fails to account for the fact that prophecy does in fact continue after the death and resurrection of Jesus, as is clear both from the Acts of the Apostles, a few references in Paul's letters, and specifically in Revelation.

According to the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation, the 70x7s cannot be viewed as eschatological in any sense beyond Christ's crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. This interpretation does recognize the goals of 9:24 themselves to be eschatological, but sees (at least initial) fulfillment in the crucifixion of Jesus (to say nothing of his resurrection) and destruction of Jerusalem. For them, however, this passage cannot speak of ultimate fulfillment, despite its language of "the end" (9:26).

J. Barton Payne validly asserts that 9:24 presents, rather than six separate goals, a single six-fold goal.<sup>31</sup> But Payne is determined to find fulfillment of the goal only and completely in the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, and accordingly arranges the chronology to fit into that scheme. In fact, he goes on to find 9:25–27 so christological that he sees no enemy threatening the holy city or God's people except the desolator in v. 27, who he claims is Titus, destroying Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, for Payne, 9:24–27 is completely about the coming of Jesus, his crucifixion, and its aftermath up to AD 70.

Peter Gentry, similarly to Payne, also attempts to fit the events described in the prophecy into the circumstances surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus. He subscribes heavily to the chronology of seventy sabbaticals, but must concede that there are "sixty-two sabbaticals in which nothing noteworthy or remarkable happens in relation to the purposes specified in this vision."<sup>32</sup> Nor is Gentry's explanation of this seeming arbitrariness helpful when he says, "There

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<sup>31</sup> Payne, "Seventy Weeks," 97.

<sup>32</sup> Gentry, "New Exodus," 34.

is *good* reason, then, for dividing the sixty-nine weeks into seven and sixty-two weeks: in the sixty-nine weeks to the time of Messiah, active reconstruction of the city and the temple occupies only the first seven weeks,”<sup>33</sup> without any further qualification of why such a division is good rather than simply arbitrary.

The question of the “69” being divided into “62+7” is important, however, for another crucial reason. The oracle of the 70x7s seems to be the only passage in the OT where there is a clear indication of two “comings” of the Messiah and of a purposeful “gap” between those comings. First Coming interpreters do not see the gap if the passage depicts first century AD events.

Even the “desolator” of 9:27 and the desolations described are attributed to the Romans in their destruction of Jerusalem. Steinmann asserts, “Gabriel warns of an overwhelming force that will inundate (‘with a flood,’ 9:26) Jerusalem and warns of war ‘until the end’ of the seventy weeks, references to the Roman legions that twice conquered Jerusalem,”<sup>34</sup> although he also admits, “The abomination of Roman (Gentile) defilement and destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 (and of the city in AD 135) serves as a kind of pattern of the Antichrist attacking the church.”<sup>35</sup> Steinmann recognizes typology in the passage, but does not see an antitypical enemy in ch. 9. In his view, the final judgment prophesied in 9:27 refers to the fall of the Roman Empire.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Gentry, “New Exodus,” 37.

<sup>34</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 473.

<sup>35</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 474.

<sup>36</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 476.

Young is correct to object to any emphasis on the making of a new covenant, since “he will strengthen a covenant” implies a pre-existing covenant;<sup>37</sup> however, he cannot see what earthly “prince” could be the subject of this covenant-strengthening, since he must be “not a prince of the historical Roman empire but of a future, revived Roman empire,”<sup>38</sup> which, Young already admitted, is an attribute of the “little horn of ch. 7.”<sup>39</sup> He dismisses any attempt to identify any other “prince” than the Messiah, who will confirm and fulfill the covenant of grace with Abraham and those of his faith. However, perhaps Young is too quick to dismiss some evidence, since even he himself summarizes from the view of Gaebelein, that this covenant in 9:27 “is said to be a covenant with death and an agreement with hell, Isa 28:15, 18.”<sup>40</sup>

Thus, the majority conservative First Coming of the Messiah interpretation sees the 70x7s as addressing Daniel’s prayer and concerns by fulfilling God’s plan of salvation through the crucifixion of Jesus, and that the destruction of Jerusalem will be the judgment on the unbelieving Jews. However, this view fails to recognize God’s answer to Daniel’s petition “to make Your [Yahweh’s] face shine” upon his desolated city and sanctuary (7:17). If God’s answer were only about the coming of Messiah and his atoning death, followed by additional destruction of the holy city, then the “answer” to Daniel’s petition would address the sanctification of the saints, but not fully address the issue of the restoration of God’s city and sanctuary, and certainly not on a cosmic scale as the prophets envision.

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<sup>37</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 209.

<sup>38</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 211.

<sup>39</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 210.

<sup>40</sup> Young, *Prophecy*, 210.

### **Focus on the Parenthesis or Dispensational Interpretation**

The Parenthesis interpretation set forth by dispensational scholars and some in agreement with their chronological view, e.g., John Walvoord, William Shea, Richard Hess, and Gleason Archer, et al., takes the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation one step farther. The epicenter of “the messiah will be cut off” (9:26) brings initial fulfillment in the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth at the end of 69 sevens. However, they see final fulfillment of the seventieth seven not merely in the Fall of Jerusalem but, recognizing the eschatology that reaches to the end time, they postpone the final “seven” to eschatological events near the parousia of Christ. The enemy of 9:26b and 9:27 is an eschatological enemy of God who will seek to supplant worship of God and overthrow his kingdom.

Recognition of eschatological events in 9:27 began as early as with Irenaeus in the AD second century. Irenaeus’ disciple Hippolytus expounded the view that the events of the final seven will take place at the end of the age, shortly before Christ’s return. The Parenthesis interpretation admits that postponing the final seven must break the continuity of the 70x7s, and they concede that a gap in the prophecy is necessary for the 70x7s to reach to the end of the earthly age. For them, “messiah will be cut off” must necessarily mean the crucifixion of Jesus in the AD first century, but the events to occur in the final “seven” must necessarily be eschatological. Therefore a gap is the only answer.

The Parenthesis interpretation stems from the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation. Harry Ironside, the first to expound this view in his *The Great Parenthesis* (1943), recognizes that the goals of 9:24 were not fulfilled at Christ’s first advent, since “Israel did not recognize their Messiah. They did not yet know him as their Sinbearer. Their transgression has not been

finished.”<sup>41</sup> Thus, he concedes that the 70<sup>th</sup> seven has been postponed by God himself who, in his forbearance, wishing all to be saved, is waiting both for the Gospel to reach the ends of the earth and for the transgression to be made complete by all who refuse to recognize Jesus as God’s Messiah.

Richard Hess points to Cyrus Scofield’s *The Scofield Reference Bible* as the first definitive exposition of the dispensationalist understanding of the 70x7s. Scofield sums up:

Within these "weeks" the national chastisement must be ended, and the nation re-established in everlasting righteousness (v 24). The seventy weeks are divided into seven = 49 years; sixty-two = 434 years; one = 7 years (vv 25–27). In the seven weeks = 49 years, Jerusalem was to be rebuilt in "troublous times." This was fulfilled, as Ezra and Nehemiah record. Sixty-two weeks = 434 years, thereafter Messiah was to come (v 25). This was fulfilled in the birth and manifestation of Christ. Verse 26 is obviously an indeterminate period. The date of the crucifixion is not fixed. It is only said to be "after" the threescore and two weeks. It is the first event in verse 26. The second event is the destruction of the city, fulfilled AD 70. Then, "unto the end," a period not fixed, but which has already lasted nearly 2000 years. To Daniel was revealed only that wars and desolations should continue (see Mt. 24. 6–14.).<sup>42</sup>

Hess adds, “The notes further assert that the present ‘Church age’ would be followed by the final week of years. This is identified with the 7 years of the great tribulation of Matt 24:15–28.”<sup>43</sup>

Walvoord asserts that the commentators who see the second half of the book of Daniel as pointing to the Maccabean revolt fail in these final verses of ch. 9 because not all the events it describes yet come to pass.<sup>44</sup> If the prophecy is seen to reach to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, a “gap” between Jesus’ crucifixion and 70 AD is necessary if it is a consecutive chronology. The

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<sup>41</sup> Harry Ironside, *The Book of Daniel: Mystery of Prophecy* (Zeeland, MI: Reformed Church Publications, 2017), 15.

<sup>42</sup> Cyrus I. Scofield, ed. *The Scofield Reference Bible*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1917), 914.

<sup>43</sup> Richard Hess, “The Seventy Sevens of Daniel 9: A Timetable for the Future?” *BBR* 21 (2011): 322.

<sup>44</sup> John Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), 201–37.



final seven “years” are best postponed to a future time shortly before Christ’s second coming and the consummation of the age.

The “gap” which this interpretation sees as necessary is the age of the NT times, the Christian Church. Since the Jews rejected Jesus and put to death God’s Messiah, they must remain in their unbelief for a time until they, or at least a remnant, will return to the true faith and believe in Jesus as God’s Messiah. The “gap” in the meantime is to fulfill God’s promise to bring all the Gentile nations into the kingdom, so that that “all peoples, nations, and languages should serve [Christ]” (Dan 7:14). But in the last days, a remnant of Israel (the Jews) will come to recognize Christ as Savior and be reincorporated into the everlasting kingdom for the eternal new age.

In this dispensational view, the last “seven” of the prophecy deals with a seven-year period of tribulation, during which Christ’s eschatological enemy will arise. Dispensationalists “equate the final half of the week in Daniel with the time period in Rev 11:2–3; 12:6, 14; and 13:5. However, they believe this time period did not begin in the apostolic age. Rather, it still lies entirely in the future.”<sup>45</sup>

The Dispensationalist interpretation sees many of the end times eschatological events but is distracted by the gap between the 69th and 70th seven or “week.” Archer summarizes the reasoning for the necessity of a gap:

The reason for our detailed discussion of the six goals of v. 24 is that the *terminus ad quem* of the seventy weeks must first be established before the question of the seventieth week can be properly handled. If all six goals were in fact attained by the crucifixion of Christ and the establishment of the early church seven years after his death, then it might be fair to assume that the entire 490 years of the seventy weeks were to be understood as running consecutively and coming to a close in AD 37. But since all or most of the six goals seem as yet to be unfulfilled, it follows that if the

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<sup>45</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 457.

seventieth week finds fulfillment at all, it must be identified as the last seven years before Christ's return to earth as millennial King.<sup>46</sup>

He goes on to explain further:

In the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:7–22) [Christ] stated that hardships, suffering, and war would continue right up to the end of the present age, culminating in a time of unparalleled tribulation. It is important to observe that this entire intervening period is referred to *before* the final or seventieth week is mentioned in v. 27. It is difficult to explain why this is so, if in point of fact the entire seventy weeks are intended to run consecutively and without interruption. It seems far more reasonable to infer that a long period of time of war and desolation is to intervene.<sup>47</sup>

John Price identifies the “coming leader” in v. 26 as a type of the desolator in v. 27<sup>48</sup>

because he is interpreting the events of v. 26, with Messiah being “cut off” as the crucifixion of Jesus and the “destruction of the city” being the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. However, Price also recognizes the desolations of v. 27 to be eschatological, and so attributes a “gap” to explain the apparent “interval” between v. 26 and v. 27.

Scholars of other schools of interpretation thus see the Parenthetical view as violating the integrity of the 70x7s, as it separates the final seven to the far future. This “gap” is the only problem with which those of the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation take issue, since they too recognize the abominations of Dan 9:27 as eschatological but call them first-century types. First Coming of the Messiah interpreters, seeking to maintain the integrity of the 70x7s, therefore see the Parenthetical interpretation's necessity for a gap as too large of an obstacle to reconcile. Certainly, the prophecy would have mentioned some sort of gap or call them “sixty-nine sevens plus one final seven.” Instead, they “downgrade” the passage from eschatological to types of the eschatological.

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<sup>46</sup> Archer, *Daniel*, 113.

<sup>47</sup> Archer, *Daniel*, 116.

<sup>48</sup> Price, *Desecration and Restoration*, 357.

For Dispensationalists, the 70x7s comprise a single period; the parts make up a unified whole. The plural “seventy sevens” is followed by a singular verb ‘is decreed,’ which indicates the unity of the time period. Dispensationalists even argue vigorously against allowing a gap in the midst of the seventieth “week,” in that the week is one. However, they see the necessity of such a gap between weeks 69 and 70. Thus, Kim Riddlebarger criticizes Dispensationalism, saying, “The insertion of a gap of at least two thousand years between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week is a self-contradictory violation of the dispensationalist’s professed literal hermeneutic.”<sup>49</sup> Riddlebarger makes a valid point—if the Dispensationalists insist on literal interpretation, why should “seventy Sevens,” without any need for a “gap,” not be literal as well?

Jonathan Menn adds a further critique of the Dispensational interpretation. “[Furthermore,] Dispensationalism sees the church as a parenthesis when, in fact, the church is the culmination of God’s purpose in Christ.”<sup>50</sup> Menn gives perhaps the most relevant argument. Daniel’s prayer in ch. 9 is about God’s community of believers, which, according to the prophets, will include all nations joining together with BC Israel into one holy city. The Dispensational interpretation would divide God’s intentional unity asunder, providing one (provisional) way of salvation for the nations and another way for the AD Jews, or at least a remnant that will finally come to believe in the Messiah before the end.

Thomas McComiskey argues for the necessity of a better interpretation than the Dispensationalist’s “gap,” and he sees the possibility in the apocalyptic nature of Daniel’s vision.

[T]hese clauses that express the purpose of the seventy weeks must be understood as characterizing the whole span of time from the beginning of the exile [in Babylon] to the end of Jerusalem’s desolations, an event that becomes a reality only when Antichrist is destroyed... The weeks span the period from Cyrus to Antichrist. Since

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<sup>49</sup> Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 153.

<sup>50</sup> Menn, Jonathan. *Biblical Eschatology*, 414.

there is no clear exegetical warrant for positing a gap within the structure [so as to place the final week in the eschaton, since those who posit such a gap also insist that the cutting off of *mashiach* must refer to the crucifixion of Jesus], we are warranted in asking whether the significance of “seven” and “seventy” may be found in apocalyptic symbolism rather than chronological exactitude.<sup>51</sup>

However, if the first *mashiach* (who appears after the seven) is not Cyrus, as McComiskey supposes, but rather the Christ, and the cutting off of *mashiach* refers to something other than his crucifixion, then no “gap” is necessary to understand the passage as both christological and antichristological, and the “seven” and “seventy” in their apocalyptic symbolism actually do bring history into the eschaton, which the Dispensationalists see as necessary.

This Dispensational interpretation does find much agreement with the Typological interpretation in seeing Antiochus IV as a type of the greater future enemy, and that the “little horn” of chs. 7 and 9 are in fact the eschatological enemy. It recognizes the warning of the 70x7s for believers to remain faithful through the tribulations to come. However, when it divides the 70 sevens into 69, then a “gap,” and then a final seven, it breaks the integrity of the 70 sevens and its cohesion with the eschatology of the prophets in their vision of the holy city Zion. Zion, as the non-geographical locus—as oxymoronic as that may seem—of God’s presence among his people must be an integral and indestructible kingdom that God has already established on earth in history and continue into eternity. “The Word of Yahweh will go out from Zion” (Isa 2:3) does not mean only the news of Jesus’ crucifixion, nor does it include a fundamental division of God’s people into a Jewish faction and a Gentile faction which will later be united. Rather, God’s people will be whole through the reign of God’s Messiah, even if persecuted and prevailed upon, and the city God is “building again” is their refuge even now, not simply a future gift. Nowhere do the Scriptures allow for two different “routes” of salvation for the saints—one for

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<sup>51</sup> McComiskey, “Seventy Weeks,” 34.

the Gentiles (through the “dispensation,” that is, exceptional situation, of the NT Church) and one for the Jews (through eventual belief in the Messiah without a need for a “church”).

While the Dispensationalist view finds much agreement with a Typological reading in the eschatology of the final “seven” of the oracle, the problem of the “sixty-two” seems more like a stumbling block, a “gap” in the seventy which must be rationalized. According to the Typological reading, the “sixty-two” is the very focus of the oracle. By the dominion, authority, and power of the Most High, exercised through his Messiah Prince, his holy kingdom-city will be built and expanded over those “sixty-two sevens,” which is the gift ultimately to be given to the saints of the Most High. The building of the kingdom-city beginning in history, in the world in this age, together with the promise of consummation at the end of the age, is the very restoration of God’s sanctuary for which Daniel prays. Thus, the NT church is not a separate dispensation or route of salvation different from that of the family of Abraham. The NT church as St. Paul says, is indeed the very family of Abraham by faith. The OT and NT are a single story and continuum of salvation through God’s Messiah Prince.

The cryptic crux of the 70x7s oracle, that “Messiah will be removed and there will be none for him” (9:26) has proven a challenge to the Dispensational interpretation. If it refers to Jesus’ crucifixion, then it becomes difficult to explain a “gap” between the first century AD and the final “seven” of eschatological warfare of desolations. However, if the ostracization of Messiah refers to the withdrawal of his dominion to initiate the period of the final “seven,” then the integrity of the 70x7s is kept intact and, indeed, the very purpose of the “sixty-two” is more clearly revealed.

## The Typological Interpretation Over Against the Majority Views

The three majority lines of interpretation today all reflect a common set of weaknesses: (1) they interpret the details of the vision apart from, and without regard to, the rhetorical function of the book Daniel as shaped by and reflected in its literary genre, thus failing to recognize the nature of apocalyptic as trans-historical and thus its prophecy as trans-prophetic; (2) they ignore the fundamental unity of the message of the book; (3) they depend too heavily on material from outside the book to explain the book's message; and (4) they limit the extent of time the prophecy may address, either believing prophecy not to exist (Historical Critical interpretation), to end completely with the first coming of Christ (First-Coming interpretation), or to be silent during a "gap" until the end times (Dispensational interpretation). Both the Historical Critical and the First Coming interpretations also fail to provide the basis for the NT use of Daniel in addressing the end times before Christ's second coming.

Paul Tanner discusses the history of interpretation of the 70x7s of the early church fathers, pointing out that a vast majority of them took a First-Coming of the Messiah viewpoint. However, Tanner indicates that "with Irenaeus about AD 180 is the first substantial discussion of Daniel's seventy-weeks prophecy"<sup>52</sup> and that Irenaeus advocated a typological "messianic/eschatological" position.<sup>53</sup> The typological interpretation is, if not the oldest Christian interpretation, at least the first officially published among the church fathers.

To be sure, the visions of Daniel clearly include warnings of an enemy against God and his saints as the one seen in the person of Antiochus IV "Epiphanes." But while the Historical-Critical interpretation asserts that Daniel's visions must refer only as far as Antiochus, the

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<sup>52</sup> Tanner, *Daniel*, 547.

<sup>53</sup> Tanner, *Daniel*, 548.

question becomes whether they, and especially the 70x7s, could also prophetically speak of a greater enemy in a time further in the future.

Cook helpfully shows how a more typological understanding refocuses and redirects the warnings about Antiochus.

Those who preserved Dan 7 as Scripture realized history would press on long beyond Maccabean times. They must have concluded that the book's apocalyptic scenario had received only preliminary, anticipatory fulfillment in the second century BCE.... The cosmic dikes had sprung a leak, but God had stepped in to postpone an ultimate flood of transcendent, apocalyptic chaos.

God's postponement of doomsday does not mean that Dan 7 failed its original audience. In retrospect, what the audience experienced was a microcosm of the ultimate, apocalyptic scenario—a close brush with God's termination of history. In their crisis with Antiochus, apocalyptic chaos temporarily “boiled over” into earthly experience and prefigured history's final hour.... Preserved as canonical Scripture, the vision would likewise help future readers understand repeat experiences of miniature apocalypses.<sup>54</sup>

Cook's analysis gives insight as to the purpose of Dan 8, which focuses on “the ram that you saw with two horns who are the kings of Media and Persia” (8:20) and “the goat [who] is the king of Greece” (8:21). From the kingdom of the latter will arise a formidable enemy of God's people who “not by his own power will cause fearful corruption and will advance and accomplish and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints” (8:24). Even as events in the history of the saints such as the exodus and the exile each serve as “a microcosm of the ultimate, apocalyptic scenario,” so also in the future does the success of the “king of bold face” (8:23) in his corruption. God sends his saints practice, as it were, contractions and birth pains (to which Paul alludes in Rom 8:20–23), to prepare them for the final birth of the age of ages. This example in Dan 8 invites the reader to view the entire vision typologically, as each successive beast of Dan 7:3–7 brings different and heightening horrors.

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<sup>54</sup> Cook, *Apocalyptic Literature*, 68–69.

This coil-like apocalyptic perspective depicts creation being restored not to its original condition of chaos but to a fulfilled condition of *shabbat*. However, leading up to that point, the cosmic struggle will emerge to threaten God’s plan, and in the process bring suffering upon the people of God. Apocalyptic literature aims, among other things, to prepare the people of God for that tribulation brought about by the ultimate rebellion of those that oppose God.

Many of the weaknesses of the mainstream interpretations arise from literalistic views of the city Jerusalem, the sanctuary, and the people of God. They focus on only the temporal referents of the city, sanctuary, and people, without considering a larger-scale referent of fulfillment that encompasses the entire earth and every nation of people in it, which, in the wider context of the book of Daniel, God promises to include in his eschatological plan of salvation. Even the view that “messiah will be cut off” must refer only to the crucifixion of Jesus fails to see a wider fulfillment in the messiah’s rejection not just by first-century-AD Jews, but by the entire world in its sinful rebellion.

Andrew Steinmann, while seeing some merit in a typological interpretation, says that a key weakness in it is that it fails to recognize that “throughout Daniel, ‘Jerusalem’ refers to the physical city.”<sup>55</sup> Even though he agrees with the many merits of the Typological approach, he insists that *שָׁחַת* in 9:26 must only mean total destruction, and so must refer only to the geophysical city and not to a spiritual city or kingdom of God.<sup>56</sup> However, since *שָׁחַת* does not primarily mean “destroy,” Steinmann’s reservation that the saints and the city, i.e., the NT Church, can never be destroyed need not be a concern here.

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<sup>55</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456.

<sup>56</sup> “The typological interpretation ... requires that the ‘destruction’ of the city and the holy place (representing the church) to be only partial or incomplete, although the text does not qualify the destruction as partial or otherwise less than complete.” Steinmann, *Daniel*, 456.



However, Steinmann himself argues the correct understanding of the sanctuary, the “Most Holy,” as typologically fulfilled in the Messiah:

We do not simply have to choose between either the temple or the [First Coming] messianic interpretation, since Jesus himself is the new temple, both destroyed and risen (Jn 2:18–22). He is where heaven meets earth, the abiding presence of God incarnate for and among his people (Jn 1:14). This concept of God as the temple for his people was already expressed about fifty years earlier by Ezekial, a contemporary of Daniel also in exile in Babylon. In Ezek 11:16 God promises to be his people’s sanctuary even while they are exiled among the nations, when no sanctuary remains in Jerusalem.<sup>57</sup>

Steinmann had already introduced major themes in Daniel, indicating that in ch. 9,

God had not only heard Daniel’s prayer, but his answer in the form of Gabriel’s depiction of the future of Jerusalem (9:25–27) focuses this worship toward the Messiah (9:25–26), which prepares for the NT emphasis on Christian worship in every place (Jn 4:20–26; 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Tim 2:8).<sup>58</sup>

After all, as Steinmann correctly points out, “This teaching about the kingdom in Daniel is always focused on the King.”<sup>59</sup> In other words, the purpose of the grand vision of ch. 7 is to show the conferral of the divine dominion and worship to the “one like a son of man,” and that through him the eternal kingdom would be given to the saints of the Most High. The worship of the Most High as well as God’s eternal kingdom, both on earth and in heaven, is focused and found exclusively in the “one like a son of man,” who must be identified also as the Messiah Prince of Dan 9:25. The city and sanctuary for which Daniel prays in ch. 9 are the *loci* of God’s presence among his people as they are “called by Your [Yahweh’s] name,” (9:18–19), which will also be located in the person of the “one like a son of man,” the Messiah Prince in the response to Daniel’s prayer, the oracle of the 70x7s.

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<sup>57</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 467.

<sup>58</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 34.

<sup>59</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 36.

John Goldingay, too, although arguing that the 70x7s refer to the Antiochene crisis, sees the value of recognizing the typology of the passage:

Yet its [the 70x7s] allusiveness justifies reapplication of the passage, as is the case with previous chapters, in the following sense. It does not refer specifically to concrete persons and events in the way of historical narrative such as *I Maccabees*, but refers in terms of symbols to what those persons and events embodied, symbols such as sin, justice, an anointed prince, a flood, an abomination. Concrete events and persons are understood in the light of such symbols, but the symbols transcend them. They are not limited in their reference to these particular concrete realities. They have other embodiments. What these other embodiments are is a matter of theological, not exegetical, judgment—a matter of faith, not of science. But if I am justified in believing that Jesus is God’s anointed, and that his birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and appearing are God’s ultimate means of revealing himself and achieving his purpose in the world, they are also his means of ultimately achieving what the symbols in vv. 24–27 speak of. It is this point that is made in traditional categories by speaking of a typological relationship between the events and people of the Antiochene crisis and deliverance and those of the Christ event and the End we still await. There is another aspect to the significance of Gabriel’s allusiveness. It accompanies an inclination to speak in the words of Scripture reapplied. Daniel is doing with Isaiah what subsequent exegetes do with Daniel.<sup>60</sup>

Goldingay expresses exactly the major tenets of the Typological perspective, although “archetypes” would be a more precise term than “symbols,” since archetypes are a reality (albeit trans-historical) and symbols are not reality. With that caveat in mind, Goldingay can be understood to be recognizing what John Collins and Stephen Cook call “the apocalyptic imagination,” which is built from the images, symbols, and hopes of the prophetic Scriptures.

As the Typological interpretation sees Jerusalem as the city of God and the sanctuary as God’s presence among his people in the Messiah, it also looks to greater fulfillments of both in the eschatological city promised in the prophets before Daniel (Isaiah’s “holy mountain” in 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20; Ezekiel’s city named “Yahweh Is There,” chs. 40–48).

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<sup>60</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 267–68.

Paul Feinberg poses several objections to the Kliefoth-Keil-Leupold Typological interpretation, first by insisting that the “cutting off” of Messiah must mean “a violent death” according to Lev 7:20 and Isa 53:8. This study’s excursus on *Karat* addresses why these passages cannot shed light on Daniel’s use in 9:26. Feinberg’s second objection is that the text gives no indication of a typical or symbolical meaning for the building of city and sanctuary. However, he does not account for how the city and sanctuary, as God’s eternal kingdom, corresponds to the “stone” that becomes a great mountain and fills the entire earth (Dan 2:35), or how the city relates to the eschatological vision of the prophets to incorporate all nations of the world. His third objection is that the events of 9:27, if indeed they are eschatological, must follow *after* those of 9:26 (since, in Feinberg’s view, the Messiah’s being “cut off” must be the crucifixion of Jesus), and so, like many others, he sees the necessity of a gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> periods).<sup>61</sup> This last objection, however, is addressed by the text in that the events of v. 27 are given after the events of v. 26 because they in fact do occur soon after them.

Conservative scholars correctly perceive the “Messiah Prince” of 9:26 to be God’s eschatological agent of salvation. However, the majority see the 70x7s focusing only on his atoning sacrifice (crucifixion) and events soon thereafter, up to the destruction of the geophysical city of Jerusalem (AD 70), rather than focusing on events shortly before Christ’s second coming, and so perceive the events and agents of the oracle to be only preliminary to (and perhaps typical of) much later end times.

Kim Riddlebarger, defending a First Coming of the Messiah interpretation, points out a shortcoming of the Dispensationalist’s “Gap” interpretation:

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<sup>61</sup> Paul Feinberg, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Daniel 9:24-27,” pages 191–95 in *Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg*, ed. John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 208.

[D]ispensationalists do not see covenant as an overarching redemptive-historical grid, and having inserted a gap between verses 26 and 27—because it is demanded by their hermeneutical presuppositions—they miss what appears to be the obvious meaning. As Meredith Kline points out, ‘The whole context speaks against the supposition that an altogether different covenant from the divine covenant which is the central theme throughout Dan 9 is abruptly introduced here at the climax of it all.’ This has nothing to do with Antichrist but with the coming Messiah.<sup>62</sup>

Riddlebarger recognizes the debate about the subject of the verbs in Dan 9:27a-b, agreeing with Kline that the subject is the Messiah. Proceeding in Dan 9:27, Riddlebarger, like nearly all First-Come interpreters, connects the stopping of the divine service of God’s people with Jesus’ death on the cross and the rending of the veil of the holy of holies, stating, “From that moment forward, the temple became desolate and acceptable sacrifice ceased.”<sup>63</sup> However, Riddlebarger fails to follow through with his own conviction that the prophecy of ch. 7 is of the eschatological “Antichrist” because he has disconnected the oracle of ch. 9 from the vision of ch. 7. Therefore, like many of the First Coming of the Messiah interpreters focused strictly on the first century AD with the crucifixion of Jesus, he finds it difficult to see how events of Dan 9:26–27 relate to times beyond the first century.

The most misunderstood tenet of the Typological interpretation is understanding of the phrase “Messiah will be cut off (removed) and there will be none for him” (9:26), especially that it refers not to Jesus’ crucifixion or first century events, but rather to the warfare preceding the last day of judgment. Placing the “desolations” of 9:26–27 as precursors to the final judgment, with the cutting off of Messiah to initiate them, the Typological interpretation views the events of 9:25 as the first coming of Messiah Prince and the building of the city-kingdom (as a metonymy for the NT church) over the whole period called “the new testament times.” This not

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<sup>62</sup> Kim Riddlebarger, *The Man of Sin: Uncovering the Truth about the Antichrist* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 54.

<sup>63</sup> Riddlebarger, *Man of Sin*, 56.

only includes the “gap” that Dispensationalists concede (but do not understand its significance), but it also makes the building of the city-kingdom the specific focus of the majority 62 of the 70 Sevens.

Historical-Critical critics tend to identify the Typological interpretation as simply a variation of the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation, since both see Jesus Christ as a fulfillment of the 70x7s. However, the Typological approach, albeit christological, does not find a prediction of Jesus’ crucifixion in the 70x7s, but rather refers to his first advent and work of atonement only in passing (“until Messiah Prince,” עַד־מָשִׁיחַ הַנְּגִיד, 9:25). The oracle does not focus on the atonement of God’s people. Rather, the 70x7s take the sanctifying work of the Messiah Prince as a given and focus instead on the building and restoration of the eschatological city and people of God until the end times before his second coming. This second coming will not happen until first the rebellion against God will reach its complete maturity on a cosmic level, when the eschatological enemy will be revealed, into whose hand God will deliver his saints for a time, times, and half a time (Dan 7:21, 25), who will suppress the divine service (worship) of God’s people until the time of God’s ultimate judgment. Therefore, the 70x7s oracle is given for the purpose of assuring and warning the saints that God will indeed restore his city and sanctuary, but that such restoration will not be fulfilled until after a time of “warfare” and “desolations” as delineated by God. When the “prince to come” arrives on the scene, when chaotic events ensue, they should not be a surprise to anyone. Nor should mention of a “covenant with the many” that harkens back to the initial rebellion and fall in the garden of Eden, a covenant with sin and death (Isa 28), be considered a new or abrupt invention, nor a stopping of the divine service of God’s people as they are “given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time” (Dan 7:25).

Steinmann correctly observes,

The typological messianic interpretation sees the detested thing of desolation (9:27; 11:31; 12:11) as the false religion and worship promoted by the Antichrist (2 Thess 2:1–12; Rev 13:11–18), whose destruction at the return of Christ marks the end of the seventieth week (Rev 19:11–21).<sup>64</sup>

These desolations are part of God’s final judgment on the rebellion against his dominion. The promised restoration is of the entire creation, which comes through and flows out from the sanctuary and city of God, Zion, which will endure into eternity.

Lutherans in the 16th century identified such “desolation” by referring to Daniel. “Daniel describes a vastly different desolation,” they assert, “ignorance of the Gospel,” which for the Lutherans became their accusation against the Roman Church of the day. “They horribly profaned the Mass and introduced much wicked worship into the churches. This is the desolation Daniel describes” (Ap XXIV 44–47)<sup>65</sup>.

The Typological interpretation, over against all the majority views, yields a surprisingly grim eschatology of an enemy who seems to overcome God’s plan of salvation, all but wiping out the influence of God’s anointed agent and the saints of the Most High. However, the abominations of the enemy are cut short. Though the eschatology of this revelation is ominous, nevertheless it leads to a more glorious Christology in the ultimate victory of Yahweh for his people over the rebellious power of evil on earth, defeating all his enemies, to give to the saints vindication and the everlasting kingdom.

Leupold defends the validity of this approach:

We would again call attention to the inferior close of the whole period which those interpreters arrive at who have the end of the sixty-ninth week marked by the death of Christ. All they have left for the last week and the consummation of the seventy year-weeks is an unimportant date seven years after Christ’s death, when something so unimportant happened that the commentators are at a loss as to what they should

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<sup>64</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 476.

<sup>65</sup> Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds. *The Book of Concord (New Translation): The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 266–67.

point to.... On the other hand, we feel that the interpretation we have offered, and which a number of very sober teachers of our church have freely accepted, by the very inner harmony that pervades it bears its chief recommendation upon its very face. Not the least of its merits is the fact that it refuses to make mathematical computations in matters of years of a type that the Scriptures nowhere encourage in any other passages.... We intimated in our interpretation of chapter eight that there were two statements that pointed to the fact that the Old Testament Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes, was a counterpart of the New Testament Antichrist. These statements were made in 8:17, 26. That was the factor that gave the eighth chapter a far-reaching scope, beyond what appeared on the surface. The ninth chapter gave us a rather comprehensive description of the New Testament Antichrist.... [T]he two Antichrists agree in work, method, seeming success, and final overthrow. The correspondence is striking.<sup>66</sup>

Foremost for the Typological interpretation are two key points. The first key is that a certain passage or prophecy should be read in widening circles of context—first its immediate context, then within its book of Scripture, then within the framework of its preceding and contemporary prophets, and finally within the theological framework of the entire Scriptures. The second key point is that a prophecy or prophecies within a passage may themselves have widening circles or patterns of fulfillment, usually growing in significance over time, and must find ultimate fulfillment in God’s eschatological-cosmic promises of sanctification of his people in Christ and restoration of his entire creation. That is not to say that every prophecy will deal with all these things, but each should be interpreted as fitting into its place in the cosmic eschatological plan. In the case of Daniel’s prophetic visions, the special genre of “apocalyptic” may be applied and understood, but only as these key points of typological interpretation govern its application.

One can see how James Hamilton applies such principles to the reading of Daniel:

Daniel followed Jeremiah’s lead in connecting key eschatological passages from the Torah. Building on Jeremiah’s interpretation of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, Daniel was given a more developed and nuanced revelation of how Mosaic prophecy would be fulfilled. The visions of Daniel reveal a series of four stylized kingdoms. The

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<sup>66</sup> Leupold, *Daniel*, 437, 440.

activities of the wicked ruler of the third kingdom will be typologically fulfilled in the activities of the wicked ruler of the fourth kingdom. Given the way that Nebuchadnezzar plundered the temple and exiled God's people (Dan 1:1–4), we can say that his activities also typify the little horns of kingdoms three and four. The pattern of activity of the archenemy of God's people includes vicious persecution, self-exaltation (and cf. Dan 4:30), and attempt to stamp out the worship of God, and the unexpected demise of the wicked king, through which God's people are saved.<sup>67</sup>

Hamilton demonstrates the Typological interpretation's emphasis on how Daniel is not creating some new type of literature *per se*, but working within the framework already constructed by Moses and the prophets.

The focus of the Typological interpretation is the rhetorical purpose of the entire ch. 9 of Daniel. Daniel's prayer is for the restoration ("Make Your face shine upon...") of God's city and sanctuary which currently, at the time of Daniel's prayer, were desolated. Jerusalem had been physically destroyed and must be rebuilt, but God assures Daniel that the "building again" will be a complete eschatological restoration by the expansion of God's eternal kingdom to fill the entire world (according to the vision of 2:35, "the stone ... became a great mountain and filled the whole earth"), complete with the destruction of all sin and of God's enemies.

The minority Typological interpretation best allows the words of the text to stand at face value, over against the Historical-Critical view that leans heavily on amending the MT with alternate readings. But it still maintains what Brevard Childs calls the open-endedness of the text, which allows it to speak typologically to people of different times in history, a technique that the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles also employ.

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<sup>67</sup> Hamilton, *With the Clouds*, 58.



## CHAPTER SIX:

### EXCURSUS

#### A CASE-STUDY OF A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF DANIEL IN 2 THESSALONIANS 2

In 2 Thess 2, the apostle Paul seems to be picking up on themes from the visions of Daniel. Although the passage is not identified as apocalyptic per se, many have recognized with George Milligan that “instead of conveying his warnings in a clear and definitive form, the apostle prefers to embody it in a mysterious apocalyptic picture, which has no parallel in his own writings, but is unlike anything else in the NT, unless it be certain passages in the Revelation of St. John.”<sup>1</sup> Paul’s apocalyptic images and themes have presented difficulties for interpretation. However, when viewed in the typological perspective of the canonical apocalypses, then certain details of Paul’s cryptic teachings become more clear. It also gives light to Paul’s rhetorical purpose, as Jeffrey Weima demonstrates, which is not to spell out a detailed “timetable of apocalyptic events,”<sup>2</sup> that is, “not to *predict* but to *pastor*.”<sup>3</sup> Paul’s goal, like that of apocalyptic literature, is to comfort the Thessalonian Christians by reminding them of the truths of Christology, especially the dominion of Christ, and reassuring them in an Ecclesiology of believers protected by God’s grace even during times of satanic warfare against the church with a focus on the goal of “obtaining/possessing the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 2:14).

Apparently, Paul had been teaching the Christians in Thessalonica about the reappearance of Christ and about the end times (“Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?” 2 Thess 2:5 ESV). The Thessalonians have not missed the reappearance of

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<sup>1</sup> George Milligan, *St. Paul’s Epistles to the Thessalonians* (London: MacMillan, 1908), 95.

<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 507.

<sup>3</sup> Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 494.

Christ, “For that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sets himself in the temple of God, indicating himself to be God” (2 Thess 2:3–4 ESV).

Gregory Beale correctly observes connections between Paul’s wording in 2 Thess 2 and the visions of Daniel.

The word ἀποστασία can refer to a political or religious crisis... and that is its meaning here. Such a meaning is apparent because of the immediate context of false teaching (2:1–2, 9–12) and the clear allusions to Daniel’s prediction of an end-time opponent who will bring about a large-scale compromise of faith among God’s people.... Paul’s use of “first” may mean that the apostasy will come before *the man of lawlessness*, but most agree that “first” probably applies to both events happening before Jesus’ final coming.... It is more probable that his coming will instigate the apostasy (see Dan 8; 11)....

In addition, the expression *man of lawlessness* echoes Dan 12:10–11, which is strikingly similar to Dan 11:29–34 and refers to the end-time trial as a period when “the lawless ones will do lawlessness, and the lawless ones will not understand” (i.e., they will mislead, be misled, or both)....

According to Dan 11:30–45, a final enemy of God will attack the covenant community.... This eschatological antagonist will appear openly before the community, “exalt and magnify himself above every god” (Dan 11:36), then meet his final end under God’s judicial hand (Dan 11:45). The parallels between Daniel’s prophecy and Paul’s teaching in 2:3–4 are clear.”<sup>4</sup>

Paul appears to be speaking of a human being who is acting in the spirit, as well as the actual person, of the desolator himself of Dan 9:27, who is the little horn of Dan 7. He is “the man of lawlessness” because he is a human being. He is “lawless” because he is the chief rebel against God’s dominion over his creation (Dan 7:25). As if he were not clear enough on the identity of this man, Paul even adds, “The coming of the lawless one is by the working of Satan with all power” (2 Thess 2:9 ESV). Paul’s use of ἡ ἀποστασία is similar to Daniel’s use of מְשִׁיחַ

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<sup>4</sup> Gregory Beale, *1–2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 203–4; 206–7.

in 9:24, which, with the article, could refer to “rebellion” in general, but might also have in mind the original rebellion of Satan, which will become the ultimate eschatological rebellion to which Paul seems to be referring (2 Thess 3:3, 9–10). F.F. Bruce suggests,

It appears more probable from the context that a general abandonment of the basis of civil order is envisaged. This is not only rebellion against the law of Moses; it is a large-scale revolt against public order, and since public order is maintained by the “governing authorities” who “have been instituted by God,” any assault on it is an assault on a divine ordinance (Rom 13:1, 2). It is, in fact, the whole concept of divine authority over the world that is set at defiance in “*the* rebellion” par excellence.<sup>5</sup>

Bruce is correct in light of Dan 7:25 in that the “little horn’s” warfare against God and his saints will be seen as he “speaks words against the Most High ... and shall think to change the times and law.” That is, the eschatological enemy will seek to usurp the very dominion and place of the Most High.

Beale brings out the fact that Paul is reading typologically with Daniel in his discussion of Paul’s use of “he sets himself in the temple of God” (2 Thess 2:4).

While this [the possibility that Paul speaks metaphorically of no particular temple] is possible, it is more probable that the temple is a more specific metaphorical reference to the church as the continuation of the true cultus. As argued... (1) the use of the phrase “temple of God” elsewhere in Paul without exception refers to the church; (2) the Daniel 11 prophecy and its initial fulfillments (with Antiochus IV Epiphanes and then the Romans) took place within the covenant community and revolved around the temple in that community; and (3) the “apostasy” and its uses elsewhere in biblical literature all have to do with a falling away by those within the community of faith from a former confession of loyalty to God. Accordingly, to “sit” in the temple of God is likely not a reference to antichrist’s literal positioning of himself in the center of a physical temple but to a figurative sitting, a ruling.... The point is that there are some ways that he sins so intensely that he is putting himself in the place of God. For example, he changes God’s laws in Scripture and teaches other laws that contradict divinely revealed truth (Dan 7:25; 8:11–12; 11:30–32).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> F.F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, WBC 45 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1982), 167.

<sup>6</sup> Beale, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 209–10.

This interpretation that reads “sets himself in the temple of God” as the Christian church began with John Chrysostom<sup>7</sup> and is widely held today.<sup>8</sup> It is closely related to the view that Paul is referring to the Jerusalem temple, but as a metaphor for God’s presence among His people. In Pauline epistles the “temple” is the church (e.g. 2 Cor 6). Marshall asserts:

Paul was using a well-known motif metaphorically and typologically. Taking up a motif derived from Ezekiel and Daniel and given concrete illustration in previous desecrations of the Jewish temple, both actual and attempted, he has used this language to portray the *character* of the culminating manifestation of evil as an anti-theistic power which usurps the place of God in the world.<sup>9</sup>

The reference to “the temple of God” as read typologically becomes a point less about the *location* of the eschatological enemy’s “sitting,” and more about the *character* of the enemy himself and of his usurpation. The nature of a typological reading is to acknowledge historical referents while also looking to the ultimate fulfillment(s) to which they point. Thus, Ridderbos concludes,

One must not, however, fail to appreciate the apocalyptic character of the delineation. That which is still hidden, which as future event is still incapable of description, is denoted with the help of available notions borrowed from the present. To sit in the temple is a divine attribute, the arrogating to oneself of divine honor. No conclusions are to be drawn from that for the time and place in which the man of sin will make his appearance.<sup>10</sup>

As in Daniel’s oracle of the 70x7s, Paul does not intend to give a specific timetable, only to depict the seriousness of the rebellion of the man of lawlessness and its implications for the unbelievers who will follow him and for believers who will suffer at his hands.

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<sup>7</sup> John Chrysostom, *Hom. 2 Thess.* 3.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., see Charles H. Giblin, *The Threat to Faith: An Exegetical and Theological Re-Examination of 2 Thessalonians 2* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967), 76–80.

<sup>9</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1983), 191–92. See also Gordon Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 284; Gary S. Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 284–85.

<sup>10</sup> Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 520–21.

Paul also adds the purpose for which God will allow the revelation and appearance of the lawless one “for those who are perishing, because they did not receive the love of the truth to save them; and because of this God is sending them a working of wandering so that they believe the lie, in order to distinguish everyone who did not believe the truth” (2 Thess 2:10 ESV). So, Paul puts this activity of the lawless one, i.e., the working of Satan through a human agent, under the authority of God for the purpose of his own separating of the faithful from the rebels, which are clearly the themes directly addressed in Daniel’s visions.

Notice how Paul carefully states that the lawless one must be revealed at God’s own proper time and not before (“to reveal him in his proper time [εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ]” 2 Thess 2:6; “And then the lawless one will be revealed [ἀποκαλυφθήσεται],” 2 Thess 2:8), in the language believers would normally use for the Messiah “being revealed” at his reappearance. In Dan 9:26, he is “the coming prince” who is to be revealed, but is never fully revealed in name or description in Daniel. Rather, the eschatological enemy remains veiled, a shadow, to be more fully revealed in his proper time. Paul refers to “his proper time,” but like Daniel cannot give further details of that revelation of the man before that proper time. Paul does assure the Thessalonians, however, that Christ “will make [the lawless one] powerless at the appearance of his [Christ’s] presence” (καταργήσει τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, 2 Thess 2:8). Paul’s emphasis here is that the reappearance of the Messiah will remove and make irrelevant (or no longer needed) the working of the lawless one.

The Messiah’s “presence” or “appearance” (παρουσία) is especially relevant, because before this appearance, He will seem to have disappeared from the world, not just physically, but in power and influence. Paul does not quote Daniel specifically but seems to be expounding an understanding of Dan 9:26 of the way that “Messiah will be removed,” and in such a way that his

dominion and influence to protect his people and to build God’s holy city will be withdrawn from the world so that the lawless one will be able to carry out the desolations God himself is allowing. Paul reflects this understanding when he says, “Even now you know the restraining [force], so that [the man of lawlessness] may be revealed in his proper time.... The restrainer alone [restrains] from now until he becomes out of the way (ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται)” (2 Thess 2:6–7).

Beale notes the challenge of interpreting Paul’s usages here:

Any identification faces the problem of explaining the change from referring to the “restrainer” with the neuter gender in 2:6 (τὸ κατέχον) to the masculine gender in 2:7 (ὁ κατέχων). Most of the proposed solutions attempt to isolate an impersonal force in 2:6 and then link it with a personal one in 2:7.

Beale goes on to give a helpful summary of common identifications of the “restrainer,” including (1) the Roman empire; (2) no specific empire but civil order of law; (3) God or (more specifically) the Holy Spirit; and (4) the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.<sup>11</sup> The Gospel of Christ for Paul, of course, is the good news of the reign of Christ, which is the kingdom of God and the essence of the church. Beale seems to most favor the final identification, as he notes:

At the very end of the age, God will remove the angel (or its restraining influence), and “all hell will break loose” (as described in 2 Thess 2:3-4, 8-12). This is further in line with Rev 20:1–9, where during the church age an angel restrains (literally “binds”) Satan’s power to decimate the church. Then, at the end of the age, the restraining power is removed, so that Satan unleashes against the church his antichrist, who will deceive and cause apostasy on a worldwide scale. When he is on the verge of destroying the covenant community, he himself will be destroyed at Christ’s final coming.<sup>12</sup>

Just as Paul’s use of ἡ ἀποστασία as perhaps rebellion in general but with a view toward the ultimate desolating rebellion, in line with Daniel’s typological perspective, so also his

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<sup>11</sup> Beale, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 214–15.

<sup>12</sup> Beale, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 216.

concept of “restraining [force]” and “restrainer” might also have a typological perspective. Earthly historical entities, especially the governing authorities God has put into place, as Paul elsewhere refers, certainly are part of the “restraining force.” But these earthly authorities are functions of God’s dominion and rule at work in the world, per the theme of Daniel’s book. The very fact that interpreters debate about to which “restraining” Paul is referring illustrate that a typological reading is called for, so that readers in every time and place may perceive the dominion of the Messiah at work in the kingdom of God in the world.

But to what does Paul refer when he says, “until he is out of the way”? Paul’s specialized usage of the phrase ἐκ μέσου is similar to the way he speaks of removing the immoral “from among” the Corinthians (1 Cor 5:2). For the dominion of God (“the restraining force”) in Christ (the “restrainer”) to “become decentered” (ἐκ μέσου γένηται), Paul must be referring, according to his other usage, to a removal or withdrawal of that dominion. Logically thinking, such would be the only way the man of lawlessness could be given the power and authority to carry out the desolations of which Paul speaks. The apostle knows that Christ has been present spiritually, that is, reigning and working among his people by his Holy Spirit, building his kingdom-city, the church. But he then speaks then of a removal of this reign and work at the appointed time to pave the way for the revealing and working of the man of lawlessness. Weima observes:

The subject of the verb almost certainly is ‘the one who is restraining now,’ and so the temporal clause refers to a future time when this figure will be removed and his present-day work of restraint will come to an end, thereby allowing the man of lawlessness to make his grand appearance.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 531.

Bruce and Green agree with Fulford that it seems like the “restrainer” is “retiring voluntarily from the scene of action” rather than being forcibly removed.<sup>14</sup> Paul, however, does not indicate the manner, but rather the fact of the removal.<sup>15</sup>

Reading with Daniel reveals that the dominion and influence of the Messiah at work in the world is the force that restrains the rebellion (indeed, Paul’s man of lawlessness) for the “62 sevens” during which time the “holy city is being built” (Dan 9:25) so that God’s people have a protected place within it. But “after the 62 sevens, Messiah will be removed and there will be none for him” (Dan 9:26). His dominion and influence will be removed, so that as Paul says, “He becomes out of the way”—that is, Christ’s reign as “Messiah” for the building of God’s kingdom-city in the world and for the gathering and refuge of his saints—will be taken out of the way and out of the world by God for the purpose of unleashing—no longer restraining—the lawlessness that must be allowed to rule the day. This will be part of God’s final judgment against unbelief and rebellion.

Weima reads the chapter in reference to Dan 10–12, and concludes:

The key to resolving the riddle of the restrainer lies in recognizing yet another allusion by Paul in this passage to the vision of Dan 10–12: just as (1) Paul’s use of the title “the man of lawlessness in 2:3b is likely influenced by Dan 12:10, with its description of the lawless conduct of individuals living in the last days, and (2) Paul’s description of the eschatological enemy in 2:4 parallels even more closely Daniel’s prophecy about a future king of the north who will “exalt and magnify himself above every god” (11:36) and desecrate the temple ([9:26, 27;] 11:31), so also (3) Paul’s description of the restraining entity here in 2:6–7 is similarly influenced by the role that Michael... plays. Eschatological tribulation will come upon God’s people only

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<sup>14</sup> H. W. Fulford, ed., *Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, and Titus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 41–42. See also Bruce, *Thessalonians*, 170; and Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 318.

<sup>15</sup> See James E. Frame, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912), 265; Milligan, *Thessalonians*, 102; Ernest Best, *Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Edinburgh: A&C Black, 1977), 295.



when Michael, the guardian of God’s people, ends his protecting and restraining work.<sup>16</sup>

Weima is on the right track but expanding the comparison to include Dan 7–9 would reveal a more accurate picture from Daniel that “Michael’s protecting and restraining work” is a function of the rule and reign of the Messiah over the eternal kingdom-city of God being built up in the world, which is depicted especially in the 70x7s (Dan 9:25). Since Michael is “the great prince who stands [in charge] over the sons of your people” (Dan 12:1), his charge is protecting and enforcing the dominion of the Messiah over his people. Weima’s perspective demonstrates a common recognition among conservative interpreters that Paul draws upon Daniel 10–12, while most do not connect it with the 70x7s (as also a key to the overarching vision of ch. 7) because the First Coming of the Messiah interpretation of the 70x7s is so widespread. If indeed Paul’s “restraining [force]” and “restrainer” refer to God’s dominion exercised by his Messiah, then reading in light of Daniel’s typological perspective would shed light upon Paul’s language of “removal” of the restrainer.

The withdrawal of the evil-restraining dominion and reign of the Messiah to give way for a temporary dominion of the eschatological enemy, however, is not a permanent surrender of Messiah’s dominion or a complete withdrawal of presence. Rather, Messiah will simply “disappear,” “cut off” (Dan 9:26) for “a times, time, and half a time” (Dan 7:25) so that the enemy will be revealed and allowed to carry out his divinely sanctioned work as part of God’s judgment (“determined warfare, that is, desolations,” Dan 9:26). The essential point in Paul’s argument is that suddenly Messiah will “appear” and destroy the enemy, or in Paul’s words, “kill...and make [him] powerless by the manifestation of his presence” (τῆ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς

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<sup>16</sup> Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians*, 532.

παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, 2 Thess 2:8). This is precisely the essential point of Dan 9:27 in the “determined completion,” the reappearance and reassertion of the Messiah’s dominion to the destruction of the enemy. Someone may argue that Paul is drawing these ideas from the teachings of Jesus, which is be correct, but nevertheless, those teachings are expositions of the revelation to Daniel (to which Jesus himself refers, Matt 24:15). In other words, the teaching is present already in Daniel in a more cryptic way and made more clear when Jesus teaches further on the subject.

John Stephenson sums up an important point in the NT perspective on this revelation from Daniel:

The sacred writers’ predilection for the word Ἀποκάλυψις and its cognates as synonyms for the parousia indicates that the “not yet” presupposes the “already” in such a way that our Lord’s return in glory consists not in his being catapulted from a state of absence into one of presence, but in the full unveiling and disclosure of what is already entirely present (Lk 17:30; 1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Pet 1:7).<sup>17</sup>

The apostles use the words παρουσία and ἀποκάλυψις to reflect the same revelation given to Daniel, namely, that the Messiah’s dominion and reign will always be in force, even when withdrawn for a time (Dan 9:26) and handed over so that the enemy may be revealed and do his worst (Dan 9:26–27). Jesus and the apostles sometimes speak of the “coming” of the Son of Man,<sup>18</sup> and indeed παρουσία can mean “coming” in a simple sense. However, the apostles use παρουσία in a more technical sense about the reappearance of Jesus. When used in some cases interchangeably with ἀποκάλυψις, these words seem to be used in a sense of “appearance” or “revelation” as specifically stressing a “making visible of what was present all along.”

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<sup>17</sup> Stephenson, *Eschatology*, 103. See also Albrecht Oepke, TDNT, s.v. ἀποκαλύπτω, Ἀποκάλυψις, 3:563–92.

<sup>18</sup> Matt 24:27, 30, 37, 39, 44 and parallels; 26:64; Luke 12:24.

This withdrawal of Messiah's restraining influence and the unleashing and "revealing" of the eschatological enemy corresponds to Rev 20, when Satan is released from his prison and is allowed to deceive the nations, namely, allowed to prevent the gospel from going out to all the nations. The man of lawlessness of 2 Thess 2 is allowed to work toward the end of time just as Satan's "little season" (μικρόν χρόνον, Rev 20:3). The withdrawal of Messiah's dominion in Dan 9:26 allows the further consequences (desolations) to begin as the "people of the prince to come" (who is the "little horn" of Dan 7 and the "desolator" of Dan 9) are enabled to ruin or corrupt God's city, the eternal kingdom-reign of Messiah (understood in NT terms as "church"). In turn, the enemy will "strengthen a covenant with the many" (Dan 9:27) by leading them astray with the lie that he himself is in the place of God (that is, that he has dominion over the world). Paul expresses his rebellion and tyranny in 2 Thess 2:4, "who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (ESV). This is an exposition of the abominations of Dan 7:25, "He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law," as well as Dan 9:27, "he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put a stop to sacrifice and offering." The removed influence of the Messiah, together with the corrupted church, allow for the enemy to "put a stop to sacrifice and offering," which is the divine service by which the saints participate in life with God. But the Messiah will make his reappearance, and as Paul says, "the LORD Jesus" (notice the title of divine dominion) "will take away [the lawless one] by the breath of his mouth and make [the enemy] powerless at the appearance of his presence" (2 Thess 2:8). This comes directly from Dan 7:26, "his [the eschatological enemy's] dominion will be taken away."

The emphasis that Paul brings out is the concept of dominion which gives place and purpose in the world. In Dan 7, the “one like a son of man” is given the divine dominion over the earth, “put in place” (“I have installed [יָרַדְתִּי] My King on Zion, my holy mountain,” Psalm 2:6) to reign as the Most High over the everlasting kingdom begun already on earth (Dan 7:13–14). However, the little horn will seek to usurp that “place,” “so that he sets himself in the temple of God, indicating himself to be God” (2 Thess 2:4), which is to claim the dominion of the Most High to himself, by which alone the man of lawlessness “shall seek to change times and decree” (Dan 7:25). Surprisingly, God in his wisdom withdraws the Messiah from his “place” (Dan 9:26) so that the eschatological enemy, “the coming prince” (Dan 9:26), can indeed take his usurping “place,” and so be the “lie” (2 Thess 2:10–12) to “strengthen the covenant” of death “with many” (Dan 9:27) and separate those who follow the rebellion from the saints who do have “the love of the truth to save them” (2 Thess 2:10).

Paul also reflects a Danielic typological understanding in how he views suffering as part of the work of the Messiah. In Col 1:24 he says, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I take my turn in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions on behalf of his body, which is the Church.” Paul is not suggesting that Jesus' sufferings for the atonement of the world were not sufficient to sanctify the people of the saints. Rather, in a typological sense he envisions the sufferings of the Messiah to be larger than the atonement alone. The Messiah suffered and died for the sanctification of his people, and as he himself announced, “It is accomplished!” (John 19:30). However, his “afflictions” (the plural of θλίψις) must continue in the world and be “filled up” by the saints in their turn. Paul here certainly recalls the prayer of Ps 89:49–51, “O Lord, where is Your steadfast love of old, which by Your faithfulness You swore to David? Remember, O Lord, how Your servants are mocked, how I bear in my heart the insults

of all the many nations with which Your enemies mock, O [Yahweh], with which they mock the footsteps of Your Anointed” (ESV). Paul also seems to be acknowledging the afflictions of the saints prophesied in Dan 7:25 that they must endure because of their allegiance and alliance with the Messiah. Paul may be recognizing the afflictions as part of the “delineated warfare” that must come upon the saints (Dan 9:26). The picture from Dan 7 and especially Dan 9 is that the Messiah must be rejected by the world (“Messiah will be removed,” and in turn the world, as “the people of the coming prince,” will corrupt God’s city and sanctuary (the Messiah’s church) and engage in war against the saints. Paul sees his own part in suffering on behalf of—as being part of—the church. The “sufferings” of the Messiah continue after his atoning work, “filled up” (ἀναπληρώω) as all his saints participate with him, as part of his proper work of salvation (sanctification of the saints) and alien work of judgment against sin and rebellion. In this way Paul sees typologically even the crucifixion of Jesus as a type of greater rejection and affliction by the entire world until “the full measure of their sins is filled up” (εἰς τὸ ἀναπληρῶσαι αὐτῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας, 1 Thess 2:16).

Gerhardus Vos speaks about Paul’s teachings on the “man of sin” in 2 Thess 2 and how they draw upon “technical terms of the Antichrist-tradition” which hovered “already in the background” of Jesus’ teachings and those of the OT:

Already there are things spoken of and not explained; there lies a world of not unknowable, and yet only half-known mystery behind what is disclosed. Thus, we are enabled to draw through the line from Paul to Jesus and from Jesus to Daniel and from Daniel to something already an object of knowledge, be it as of yet only vague, to an older generation.<sup>19</sup>

Even as many commentators point out the fact that contemporary readers of 2 Thess 2 are joining a conversation already in progress and that there is much that Paul previously taught the

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<sup>19</sup> Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, 96.

Thessalonians which he does not reiterate, so also Paul speaks of a subject matter of mysteries only partially revealed in the Scriptures. “βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι’ ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι” (“For now we see through a mirror in mysteries”) (1 Cor 13:12). He is admitting the necessity of God’s mysteries that must be revealed in their proper times, a prominent theme in the first revelation to Nebuchadnezzar and to Daniel (Dan 2:28, 29, 47).

Lutherans in the 16th century employed a typological understanding when calling the power and primacy of the bishop of Rome (the pope) “antichrist.”<sup>20</sup> Their accusation was that the pope’s abuse of power was similar to what Daniel’s visions describe, an enemy putting himself in the place of God and contradicting the very Word of God. “This teaching [the pope as head of the church] shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God.”<sup>21</sup> Such a usurping would indeed be a distress of and warfare against God’s holy people. This is the point about the transfer of divine dominion, that it can only be transferred by the Most High God himself upon his chosen one(s); it cannot be seized. To call the pope “the very Antichrist” does not deny other types of antichrist such as Antiochus IV, but Luther may have believed that a complete overthrow of the pope’s tyranny was unlikely before Christ’s second coming. The fact that Luther then points to 2 Thess 2 seems to indicate that he may have believed “the very Antichrist” was a sign that Christ’s coming was fast approaching and that only by the grace of God could faithful believers hold firm to the gospel.

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<sup>20</sup> See the *Smalcald Articles* II.4.10–14, in Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 309; and the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* 57–59, in Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 339–40.

<sup>21</sup> *Smalcald Articles* II.4.10, in Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 309.

In 2 Thess 2 Paul is not teaching the Thessalonians novelties but is faithfully bringing together the teachings of the Scriptures, similar to the apocalyptic vision of Daniel. Perhaps in the early prophets the concepts that serve as “building blocks” for the apocalyptic perspective of messianic dominion and salvation appear somewhat vague, but they are sharpened with further revelation, for which typology is a necessary function for perception. For instance, Daniel the seer and his BC readers can hear about “one like a son of man” or about “Messiah Prince” and understand the basics of what the vision is revealing from what they had learned from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other contemporary prophets, without knowing the name “Jesus of Nazareth” or the time of his coming. So also, Jesus can warn of the coming of “false christs and false prophets” (Matt 24:24) in the same way that the apostle John will later say, “as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come” (1 Jn 2:18). Seeing the fractal-like pattern in history, the teleological-eschatological-apocalyptic perspective, of which typology is a key feature, is to see the pattern that escalates and points to ultimate fulfillments of the things prophesied, even if the details are presented in an as-of-yet vague or cryptic way. Perhaps that is why many might describe Paul’s writing in 2 Thess 2 as apocalyptic-like.

In this way, Paul demonstrates a Typological reading of the texts from Daniel as he perceives the laying of the building blocks or puzzle pieces of the mystery in the writings of the prophets and evangelists (the teachings of Jesus) for the vision that God is showing his people. Paul himself doesn’t know all the details, but he has put together enough of the puzzle pieces to describe as much of the “mystery of lawlessness” as necessary to warn Christians of the withdrawal of the dominion of Christ, the revelation of the “man of lawlessness,” and the destruction of the enemy by the reappearance of Christ—the same revelation of which Gabriel speaks in the oracle of the Seventy Sevens.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION: HOPE IN RESTORATION TO SUSTAIN THROUGH DESOLATION

The message for Daniel and his reader(s) is a message of hope. Partly it was a call for patient endurance. Yes, Jeremiah's 70 years were at an end. The exiles would return to Jerusalem and rebuild. But that is not the ultimate end and goal. The people of God will have to go through another period of persecution just as they will go through during the Greek period (chapter 8), only this time it will be the antitypical time of persecution after the Messiah comes, under an end-time persecutor. Yet through the Messianic Davidic King of chapter 7 God will bring to consummation his eternal kingdom, which he will first establish and begin to build by his first coming and will finish the goals stated in 9:24 at the "determined completion" (9:27) with Messiah's return (reassertion of his dominion). So, Daniel and Daniel's people can be realistic about the future turmoil, but also have hope in God's promises which will indeed happen. The future history is under God's determination and governance, a period of 70 sevens. There will be no accidents in the ultimate sense. God foreknows the eschatological future, and it is under his governance. At no time should God's people think that God is not in control over the events of history or not protecting his people who trust in him.

The angel's message in Dan 9 is God's answer to Daniel's prayer of chapter 9. The oracle addresses Daniel's petitions and statements of confession and confidence with the assurance that, despite further judgments that God must execute on the earth, resulting in trying times even for God's people (indeed, warfare), the dominion of Messiah will protect his people, build his eternal kingdom-city, and finally overthrow the enemies and confer the eternal kingdom upon his saints in everlasting righteousness.



The message of hope for Daniel and his reader(s) seen through a typological reading of Daniel's visions perceives God's consummate restoration of his city and sanctuary, ultimately saving and sanctifying his people, in such a way as to fill the earth for eternity. The people of God can take heart, because, as Alec Motyer reminds believers,

As members of Zion here and now (Heb 12:22), we are to be fully involved in, and committed to, the whole life of the earthly church. Zion is looking forward to the blessings still in store; to *rejoice with Jerusalem* [Isa 66:10–11] is to share this forward look. To *love* her is to prize what she stands for: the city where the Lord dwells in holiness, mercy, and law. We are to live in the benefit of divine mercy, enjoy the richness of divine fellowship and fashion our lives in obedience to the divine Word. To *mourn over her* (cf. Ezek 9:4) is to lament the sins of the visible church, its shortcomings, its weaknesses and ineffectuality in the face of the world and the presence within of compromisers and apostates, but to do so as a fellow-sinner, longing for the blessings and perfection yet to come (cf. Isa 59:9–13). This identification with Jerusalem will issue in participation in the blessings concentrated in her, both present and eschatological.<sup>1</sup>

After all, the atonement of God's people is certainly important, but the 70x7s look forward to life in the presence of God forever in everlasting righteousness as the eschatological goal. The clear message of the prophets to that end is that God has prepared for his people a city. The view of history as progressing toward this ultimate goal is the view of the faith and hope of God's people. Carl Michalson makes this key point in his book *The Hinge of History*:

The God who is experienced as the absent God in existential history is experienced as the present God in the eschatological history which the Christian proclamation heralds. [His] reality is not simply *being* but *being there for us*; not simply an *ousia* but a *parousia*, a presence.... Eschatological history is the revelation to world history that history has a future, a hope, an ultimate meaning. Christian theology, therefore, is primarily an exposition of history in its eschatological dimension, history as it is brought to an end by the presence of God in Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Michalson draws attention to the fundamental teaching of the prophets which the visions of Daniel reveal—that the *parousia*, appearance and presence, of the Lord to his people, for his

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<sup>1</sup> Motyer, *Prophecy*, 537–38.

<sup>2</sup> Carl Michalson, *The Hinge of History*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 141, 148.

people, and with his people, is what makes them his people, makes the sanctuary a holy place where God and his people can fellowship, and what makes his city a place of refuge, peace, and eternal joy.

Jason Soenksen's summary of the message of hope in Mic 4 also reflects the rhetorical purpose of the book of Daniel, the visions of chs. 7–12, and especially the oracle of the 70x7s.

The great promise of peace is easy to lose sight of when war and violence fill our ears and eyes and the fulfillment of prophecy seems a faint and fading hope. The temptation is either to give up the hope offered in these words of Scripture or to try to resolve the tension by attempting to bring the future promise completely into the present rather than letting the future promise guide our present life. We are able to endure the sorrows of the present age because of the certainty of our hope.... There is a greater hope on the horizon than even Israel's return from exile and even than the security of salvation in which the church now lives between the first and second advents of Christ. There will be a time when such threats no longer exist.... The instruction (Torah) and the Word of Yahweh go forth from Jerusalem. Through these, Yahweh has spoken. Yahweh's act of judging and administering justice also fall under the Word which he speaks now, at the beginning of the new age, and they will usher in a new reality. Through Yahweh's act as cosmic Judge, ... [He reverses] the strife among the nations and remov[es] fear from the heart of every person. This is a new act of creation, a final "let there be," and there was," just as Yahweh spoke his creation into existence (Gen 1:3). To the reader in Micah's day, as for readers today, the words function as promises of what is as good as done. The Lord has spoken, and it will be. Such words of promise offer hope in the midst of realities that look far different than the prophet's vision. In the meantime, faith and sight must exist in tension. But hope of a different reality transforms life in the present, a token of the new creation that is yet to come (Rev 21:5).<sup>3</sup>

The "major" prophets as well as the "minor prophets," with Daniel in the midst of all now seeing the same revelation from Yahweh, speak to God's people and, as Soenksen says about Mic 4, "contrast between the present ('now') crisis and future hope ('will'). Micah begins with trial and ends with triumph."<sup>4</sup> The people of God situated between the first and second comings of the Messiah, during the "62 Sevens" of the building of the kingdom-city, find themselves in a time

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<sup>3</sup> Soenksen, *Micah*, 314, 317–18.

<sup>4</sup> Soenksen, *Micah*, 319.

of “now and not yet.” The “not yet” is necessarily full of enigmas, mysteries. About some of the mysteries God has given only partial clues. For some of them God gives repeating and escalating fulfillments. That is the typological perspective that the canonical apocalypses bid believers to see with eyes of faith. All will be revealed in its proper time, but in the meantime, believers are exhorted to “wait upon (hope in) the Lord” (Ps 27:14; 31:24; 37:9; Isa 40:31; Lam 3:5; et al.). “Wait / hope” (Hebrew *יָקַו*, Greek *ὑπομένω*) are hugely significant verbs that are perhaps the key response of faith in the “patient endurance” and “hope” of the saints who trust in God to bring to consummation all of his promises in his “determined” (*יָקַו*, a key word/root of the 70x7s) timing.

The presentation of Daniel’s book places in the heart and center the foremost, overarching vision of ch. 7, the conferral of dominion upon the “one like a son of man,” for the purpose and goal of giving of the eternal kingdom to the “saints of the Most High.” Daniel is shown first and foremost the complete dominion of the one like a son of man and the victory of the eternal kingdom as a sure and certain possession of the saints. In the midst of the threats of the beasts (representing temporary dominions of kings or kingdoms of the world) and finally in the midst of a blaspheming, usurping enemy (the “little horn”), and despite the caveat that the saints will be “given into his hand” and that “he will prevail over them” (7:21, 25), the promise made foremost will sustain God’s people through it all. Louis Brighton, in summing up the rhetorical purpose of the book of Revelation as apocalyptic literature, capably states that of Daniel as well:

Therefore, the visions of heaven [of the canonical apocalypses] inspire Christians *to gaze steadily in faith at Christ and the glory that awaits them* [e.g., the vision of Dan 7] while they suffer through the tribulations on earth [e.g., those described in the 70x7s]. Also, these heavenly pictures of the coming eternal glory encourage the believer, *through his suffering here on earth, to witness to the victory of Christ.*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Brighton, *Revelation*, 9.

After all, the most difficult part of understanding the biblical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation is not their symbolic imagery. Rather, it is the message of doom, judgment, warfare, and persecution through the whole time period of the building of Christ's church, that is, God's city-kingdom. But if believers are patient and accept it, God shows the glory of what awaits Christ's reappearance.

The "one like a son of man," the Messiah Prince, will exercise dominion and establish the reign of the Most High in all the earth, and that eternal kingdom-city established and built up on earth will continue for all eternity. All dominion and glory and kingdom were given to the Messiah according to his human nature, since according to his divine nature he has it from eternity by definition. The authority of Jesus as God's Messiah, given to Him by God the Father, is emphasized throughout the NT. In the Gospels, Christ is able by that authority to proclaim and teach the very Word of God (e.g., Matt 7:29; John 12:49), to forgive sins (e.g., Matt 9:6, 8) and to drive out demons (e.g., Matt 10:1; Mark 1:27). Jesus refers to Dan 7:13–14 to speak of himself as "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt 24:30; Mark 13:26). It was especially this claim that most incited Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin to condemn him of blasphemy (Matt 26:64–66; Mark 14:62). Despite their condemnation, and in fact using that very death sentence as the occasion for giving his life as an atonement for sin, Jesus underscores that such is by the authority given to him by the Father: "No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father" (John 10:18). Jesus also refers again to this authority in Rev 2:27. The apostle Paul bases the essence of the Christian faith on this authority given to the Messiah in Eph 1:19–22 and Col 2:10. Jude, too, praises Jesus because of his dominion and authority given by God from eternity to eternity (Jude 25).

Even though the Most High God, in his wisdom according to his plan, will withdraw the influence and restraining power of the Messiah from the world (9:26), allowing for the enemy prince's people to corrupt the city and render the sanctuary desolate (inhabitable), God's people still have a shelter and fortress in God's city built up for them (9:25), which is (even now) growing to fill the entire earth (2:35). And when the enemy has been allowed to do his worst, the Most High judge of all his creation will do his worst and destroy the power of the enemy forever (7:26; 9:27).

The message of comfort for the saints is that even though the Most High will deliver them over into the hand (power, dominion) of the enemy, they are still within the hand (power, dominion) of God against whose dominion the enemy rebels but nevertheless serves, as God uses their raging and turns against them with his overwhelming judgment.

The city that God has prepared for his saints derives its existence and life from God's holy sanctuary, from which flow the metaphorical light of God's Word shining and the water of life flowing to all the world, drawing all nations and peoples to the city Zion to participate in the life in the presence of the Most High God forever. This city is established in heaven by the dominion of the "one like a son of man," the Messiah Prince whose first coming began to build the city, broadly but within its borders (inside is "church," outside is desolation), as the reign of God's Messiah in the world, the kingdom of God. Although on earth this kingdom-city as an earthly fortress will be corrupted for a time by the people of the eschatological enemy and rendered desolate, uninhabitable, the saints will be kept secure by faith to be a remnant until the time when the city prepared for them will descend from heaven, together with God's final judgment and destruction of his enemies once and for all. And God's saints will be given the kingdom, the city prepared for them, where they will dwell in the presence of God Most High forever.

All these themes brought together in the revelation to Daniel, depicted again in the Revelation to John, emphasize the dual focus first on the Messiah Christ and second on his people, the “saints of the Most High,” those sanctified by him. His is the kingdom (dominion), power, and glory forever and ever, which is the glorious inheritance of the saints. God’s people are given the overarching message of comfort and assurance so that they may “hold fast and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever” (Dan 7:18).

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### **Previous Theses and Publications**

Prince, Timothy A. Review of *YHWH IS THERE: Ezekiel's Temple Vision as a Type* by Drew N. Grumbles. *CJ* 48:4 (Fall 2022): 74–75.

### **Current Memberships in Academic Societies**

None