# God On High Reveals the World’s Destiny to Daniel (7:1–28)

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On the four kingdoms, see also the chap. 2 *Bibliography*.

## Translation

*1In the first year of Bel’šaṣṣar,a king of Babel, Daniyye’l had a dream, ba vision which came into his head as he lay in bed.b He wrote the dream down. cThe beginning of the account.c 2Daniel averred:a*

*I watched in my vision duringb the night, and there before me were the four winds of the heavens stirring upc the Great Sea, 3and four huge animals coming up out of the sea, each differing from the others. 4The first was like a lion, but it had the wings of an eagle.a I watched as its wings were plucked off; it was raisedb from the ground cand lifted upd on etwo feete like a man, and a man’s mind was given to it.c 5Then there before me was a second animal, a differenta one, resembling a bear, but it was lifted upb on one side.c dIt had three ribse in its mouth, between its teeth. It was told, “Get up, eat lots of meat.”d 6After that I watched and there before me was anothera like a leopard, but it had four bird’s wings on its back.b The animal also had four heads, and authority was given to it.*

*7After that, as I watched in the vision during the night, there before me was a fourth animal, fearful and terrifying,a extraordinarily strong and with big iron teeth,b eating and crushing and trampling underfoot what was left: it behaved differentlyc from all the animals before it. It also had ten horns. 8As I looked at the horns, there before me another, small horn came upa among them, and three of the first horns were uprootedb before it. And there in this horn were eyesc like a man’s and a mouth dmaking great statements.d*

*9I watched as thrones were aset in placea*

*and one advanced in yearsb took his seat.*

*His clothing was clike white snow,c*

*the hair on his head like lamb’sd wool.*

*His throne was flashes of flame,*

*his ringse a blazing flame.*

*10A stream of flame was surging forth,*

*issuing from his presence.*

*Thousand upon thousand would minister to him,*

*myriad upon myriad would stand in attendance on him.*

*The court sat*

*and books were opened.*

*11a I watched then from the time when I heard the sounda of the great statements that the horn was making, watched as the animal was killed and its body destroyed; it was put binto fire for burning,b 12The rest of the animals—they hada their authority taken away, but they werea given an extensionb to their lives for a set period of time.*

*13As I watched in the vision by night:*

*There before me amonga the clouds of the heavens*

*one in human likenessb was coming.*

*He went toc the one advanced in years*

*and was presented before him.*

*14To him was given glorious kingly authority*

*so that people of all races, nations, and languages would honora him.*

*His authority would last for ever and not pass away,*

*and his kingship would not be destroyed.*

*15I, Daniyye’l—a bmy spirit was disturbed withinb at this. The visions that came into my head alarmed me. 16I approached one of those who stood in attendance so I might aska him the actual meaning of all this, and he told me he would explaina to me the interpretation of the matter.*

*17”These huge animals of which there were four: four kingsa will arise from the world, 18but holy ones on higha will acquire the kingship. They will take hold of the kingship for ever, until the very end.”*

*19Then I wanted to know the actual meaning of the fourth animal which differed from all the others, being extraordinarily fearful, with its iron teeth and bronze claws, eating, crushing, and trampling underfoot what was left; 20and of the ten horns on its head and the other one which came up and three fella before it, that horn which had eyes and a mouth making great statements, and which looked biggerb than its companions. 21I watcheda while that horn was making war on holy beings and overcoming them, 22as the one advanced in years came and judgment was givena forb holy ones on high, when the time came for holy ones to take hold of the kingship.23He said,*

*The fourth animal:*

*There will be a fourth kingship in the world;*

*it will differ froma all the other kingships.*

*It will consume the whole world,*

*trample it down and crush it.*

*24The ten horns:*

*From thata kingship ten kings will arise,*

*but another will arise after them.*

*He will differ from the ones before him;*

*he will lay low three kings.*

*25He will make statements hostile to the One On High*

*and oppressa holy ones on high.*

*He will try to change btimes set by edictb*

*and theyc will be given into his control*

*for a period, periods,d and half a period.*

*26But the court will sit and his authority will be taken away,*

*to be completely and permanently destroyed.*

*27The mighty kingly authority*

*of the kingships under the whole heavens*

*Will have been givena to a holy people on high,b*

*its kingship one that stands for ever.*

*To it every authority*

*will give honor and show obedience.”*

*28That is the end of the account. “I, Daniyye’l—I was very alarmed in my thinking, and my face turned pale, but I kept this matter in my own mind.”a*

## Notes

1.a. The spelling is as in 5:30. The form of the date using the preposition ל is a Hebraism (Mastin, “A Feature of the Dates in the Aramaic Portions of Ezra and Daniel”).

1.b-b. *Waw* explicative (see n. 6:28.a). The double description of the dream vision is characteristic of Danielic style (Plöger deletes the whole phrase); cf. esp. 4:5 2]. Hartman/Di Lella adds the verb יבהלנה (“alarmed him”), comparing 4:5, 22 [2, 19]; 7:15; but in those verses the references to the visionary being disturbed by his dream are also repeated, whereas there are no such references in 7:1. Dramatically, Daniel’s response is reserved for v 15. On pl. חזוי “visions” see n. 2:1.a.

1.c-c. ן י ל מ ראש and the equivalent phrase in v 28a open and close Daniel’s account of the dream (cf. JB). Thus the phrase does not mean “a summary of matters” (cf. OG). ר מ א “he said” which follows may be a gloss (G lacks), perhaps presupposing the alternative meaning of ן י ל מ ראש (cf. RV); or perhaps its redundancy relates to problems in v 2 (see n. 2.a). Th omits the whole phrase here but has the subscription in v 28; 4QDanb may not have enough room for the phrase (see e.g., Collins).

2.a. NEB omits ענה and ואמר and follows Th (cf. OG); but the Aramaic flavor of this phrase may suggest it is original (Montgomery).

2.b. Perhaps “through”: cf. עם in 4:3, 34 [3:33; 4:31]; Ps 72:5.

2.c. BDB, 1127 takes מגיחן as intransitive (cf. RV); more likely it is transitive (cf. instances of the qal in BH) and ל is the sign of the object, as often in BA (for “upon,” על would be more natural).

4.a. Perhaps “vulture” (Driver), but see BDB, 676–77.

4.b. See Rowley, “Composition of the Book of Daniel,” 274–76, against Ginsberg; also *DTT*.

4.c-c. Ginsberg moves these clauses to v 5 to follow “it had lifted up one side.” Cf. n. 5.d-d.

4.d. The form הֳקִימַת is surprising (cf. *GBA* 140); it may be a mixed form, the first vowel suggesting hophal, the י suggesting haphel (?impersonal);the translation is unaffected. It corresponds to the Arabic equivalent to hophal (BL 28s), but it would be the only such form in Daniel (Ginsberg, 2–3: he emends).

4.e-e. Whereas גַפִּין “wings” was pointed as pl., רַגְלַיִן “feet” is pointed as dual; in v 7 so are שִׁנַּיִן “teeth” (the reference being to two jaws) and קַרְנַיִן “horns” (because they usually come in pairs). In later Aramaic and Syriac the dual disappears, which has perhaps affected MT pointing in Daniel—that is, some MT plurals will originally have been dual.

5.a. Cf. JB (and the BH usage, BDB, 29). If אחרי simply means “another,” either it or תנינה “second” looks redundant; G, Syr have equivalents to only one of the two words. Perhaps MT conflates (Charles). For the translation that follows, cf. Muraoka, *Reader*, 64-65.

5.b. Ben Chayyim’s edition of MT (cf. BDB) points הֱקִמַת (haphel); but this involves taking חד לשטר “on one side” as direct object, whereas ל can hardly be object marker since the noun is absolute. L’s הֳקִמַת is apparently another mixed form (cf. n. 4.d.): hophal is easier, since here the verb cannot be impersonal. Cf. G ἐστάθη; but Syr has *qmt* (peal), Vg *stetit*. As in v 4, the verb must be taken in an aorist (or pluperfect) sense; it does not mean “it was in a state of having been lifted up” (see BL 83b).

5.c. For שׂטר, RVmg “dominion” presupposes שׁטר (cf. BH משׁטר); cf. Waterman, “A Gloss on Darius the Mede in Daniel 7 5.” It is doubtful if שׂטר can mean “end,” suggesting the bear lifting itself up on its hind legs (Hartman/Di Lella).

5.d-d. Ginsberg moves to v 4 (cf. n. 4.c-c); if this move “improves” the picture, that consideration does not make it original. The similarity between Ginsberg’s text and Rev 13:1 (Hartman/Di Lella) is not so marked that Revelation must presuppose Ginsberg’s text; the similarity reflects the fact that both are more naturalistic than Dan 7:4–5 MT (Coppens, *La relève apocalyptique* 2:29–30).

5.e. Forעלעין, JPSV “fangs” follows Vg *ordines* “rows [of teeth],” Ps-Saadia, and Arabic usage (and cf. BH מתלעות); see Frank, “The Description of the ‘Bear.’” But would עלעין have been understood here as “fangs,” given the usual meaning “ribs” in Aramaic (cf. BH צלע, and Saadia)?

6.a. Perhaps add חיוה “animal” (Kallarakkal, 72, following G, Syr).

6.b. Perhaps Q גבה is s. and means “back,” K גביה pl. and means “sides” (cf. JB). But Q regularly spells pl. suffixes defectively (cf. גפיה/גפה “its wings” in v 4, שניה/ שנה “its teeth” in v 5); thus גבה could also mean “sides.”

7.a. RV “powerful” implies a dubious Arabic etymology for the reading אמתני instead of אימתני (for which cf. BH אים) (Montgomery).

7.b. Dual: see n. 4.e-e.

7.c. משניה (pael: cf. Montgomery). Form and meaning are the same whether parsed as active or passive (*GBA* 67; *DTT*, 1605–6).

8.a. סִלְקָת seems to be a mixed form, a cross between perfect סִלְקַת (read by some medieval mss) and participle סָלְקָה. Participle appears in v 3 and might have been expected after אלו “there before me,” but perfect verb comes in v 20, and the following verb is also perfect; an original perfect might have been influenced by the participle in v 3.

8.b. אתעקרו: see n. 5:5.a.

8.c. עינין is pointed as pl. not dual, which might indicate that the horn had many eyes (cf. Ezekiel’s chariot wheels); but see n. 4.e-e.

8.d-d. ן רב רב ממלל (cf. v 20) is not explicltly negative, as EVV imply (contrast Th, Vg). OG adds an explicative phrase here, but MT withholds the explication until v 21 for dramatic effect.

9.a-a. RVmg “cast down” follows the more common meaning of רמא (cf. Ps-Saadia); but reference to the casting down of the animals’ thrones is out of place here. See BDB for the meaning “set.”

9.b. Lit., “days.” The phrase is a fairly straightforward one for someone of great age; cf. עתק “advance” in Job 21:7, מיםבי בא “gone [on] in days” in Gen 24:1, and the descriptions of God in Ps 9:7 [8]; 29:10; 90:2; also Sirach 25:4. Thus Saadia has prosaically “an old man” (and later “young man” for the “one in human likeness” in v 13), whileYephet translates more literally; both take the figure to be an angel.

9.c-c. Following MT accents and OG (contrast EVV “white as snow” [cf. Th]; next colon

נקא כעמר MT, G “clean as wool”). Cf. also the final two cola in v 9, which lack כ‍ “like/as” but are similar in structure.

9.d. Deriving נקא from נקי/נקא ii (*DTT*) with Sokoloff, “cămar nĕqē’”; “clean” (נקי/נקא i) (EVV) would be a Hebraism (though cf. *1 Enoch* 106.2; Rev 1:14; and Hebraisms are not out of place in Dan 7). See also n. 9.c-c.

9.e. גלגלוהי: whereas EVV have “its wheels,” in descriptions of God’s fiery throne the motif of the sun has a natural place (cf. *1 Enoch* 14.8–22); cf. Grelot, “Daniel vii, 9–10 et le livre d’Hénoch,” 80–81; Kearns, *Vorfragen* 3:179–81. But *OTP* 1:21 has “wheels” in *1 Enoch* 14, and Stokes (“The Throne Visions,” 341) has “wheels” in both texts.

11.a-a קל מן באדין הוית חזה raises three problems. (i) הוית חזה “I was watching” is repeated later in v 11; G lacks the repetition, but not Vg, and cf. the resumptive repetition in 9:1–2 (Driver notes also Lev 17:5; Judg 11:31; Zech 8:23). (ii) Elsewhere in BA באדין “then” always appears at the beginning of a sentence—though cf. 1QapGen 22.2 (Casey). (iii) מן could mean “from” (cf. JB) or “because of” (NRSV). But אדין מן “from that time” does occur once in BA, in Ezra 5:16, not at the beginning of the sentence, and followed by עד “until.” Apparently מן באדין here, followed by עד (in thie context translated “as”) has a similar meaning; cf. Montgomery’s comparison with BH מאז. The clause as a whole is thus unusual, but the text need not be questioned. Syr omits v 11a (homoioarkton?): see Kallarakkal, 52–53.

11.b-b. אשא ליקדת : “the burning of fire,” not, strictly, “burning fire.” Cf. Isa 64:11 [10]

אש לשרפת.

12.a. The first verb (NIV) or the second (Calvin) or both (Plöger) have been taken to be pluperfect, but this involves reading back from the interpretive vision or from the assumed historical reference.

12.b. ארכה: perhaps “limit” (Tg. Gen 6:3).

13.a. Cf. Th; Mark 14:62; Rev 1:7. עם could mean “in,” as in v 2 (cf. Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27). OG, Matt 24:30; 26:64 have “on”: Yahweh can be spoken of as “in” or “on” the clouds, so this hardly proves an original על—translations anyway vary in their rendering of prepositions and they are poor grounds for emendation. See Scott, “Behold, He Cometh with Clouds,” 128 (and for discussion, Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 224-28). Scott further (129–31) takes this phrase as qualifying “there before me” and thus as denoting the location of the whole scene described in vv 13–14 (cf. Ezek 1); he notes that ארו is elsewhere followed directly by its predicate (cf. vv 2, 5, 6, 7). On his own interpretation, however, v 13 is still unique, in following ארו with this qualifying phrase, which is not a predicate and hangs in the air. It is easier to understand “among the clouds of the heavens” as relating to the next clause which describes the coming of the one in human likeness.

13.b. אנש כבר “[one] like a son of man.” The BH equivalent אדם בן appears in poetic passages in parallelism with some other word for “man” (e.g., Ps 80:17 [18]; Job 16:21), but most commonly in Ezek to denote mere man (e.g., 2:1, cf. Dan 8:17). In later Aramaic אנש בר is a more prosaic term for “a man,” an alternative to אנש (v 4), though in a poetic context such as this verse it might add solemnity (Sjöberg, “אדם בן und אנש בר,” 105). It might originally have meant “a son of somebody,” i.e., a significant person (Haupt, “Hidalgo and filius hominis”); Kearns connects it with a different Semitic word for a vassal landowner, later provided with a false etymology (*Vorfragen*, Teil 1). Gerlemann’s proposal (*Menschensohn*, 1–13) that בר here means not “son of” but “set apart from [humanity]” seems implausibly imaginative.

13.c. Two of the three mss of OG (have ὡς “as” not ἕως (cf. Rahlfs; contrast Ziegler/Munnich, which has ἕως; see *The First Greek Translation of Daniel* in the Introduction to this commentary). This reading suggests an identification of the human figure and the one advanced in years. The reading has been seen simply as a slip (e.g., Montgomery, Collins) or as a pre-MT Hebrew text (e.g., Lust, “Daniel 7, 13 and the Septuagint”: but this makes poor sense of vv 9–14 as a whole) or as OG midrash (e.g., Bruce, “The Oldest Greek Version of Daniel,” 25–26) or theological interpretation (e.g., Stuckenbruck, “‘One Like a Son of Man as the Ancient of Days’”), perhaps subsequent to the main translation as a whole since OG elsewhere does not suggest that the human figure is divine (Pace, *OG Text*, 257–60). Hofius (“Der Septuaginta-Text von Daniel 7, 13-14”) rather understands “as one advanced in years” to be a resumptive description of the senior of the two figures, not a description of the humanlike figure.

14.a. Elsewhere BA פלח refers only to revering God, but outside the OT it denotes service more generally (*HALOT*, *DTT*).

15.a. The seer mentions himself as he comes to himself (Montgomery): cf. 7:28; 8:15, 27. Lit., “My spirit was disturbed, I, Daniel”: the pronoun referring back to the suffix is emphatic.

15.b-b. נדנה  בגוא. .. רוחי אתכרית “my spirit was disturbed in the midst of the sheath.” נִדְנֶה could be repointed נִדְנַהּ (Brockington); cf. the form of the phrase in 1QapGen 2.10, whose occurrence makes other proposed emendations (cf. BHS) less plausible.

16.a. Taking imperfect אבעא and יהודענני as not merely temporally consecutive in relation to the preceding verbs, but as indicating purpose and indirect speech respectively.

17.a. מלכין; the kings stand for their kingdoms (cf. NIV; 2:38; 7:23; 8:20–22). There is hardly need to emend the text to make the point explicit (against BHS, following G).

18.a. Cf. Calvin, Lacocque; GKC 124q for the use of a second pl. when the expression as a whole is pl. (and indeterminate: Ginsberg, 71); against the usual view that עליונין is pl. of majesty (see Goldingay, “‘Holy Ones on High’”). For “holy ones of the One On High” one would expect עליון קדישי as in CD 20.8 (*DSS* 1:578); cf. the use of s. עליא for “the One On High” in v 25. Burnier-Genton **(***Le rêve subversif d’un sage*) suggests “holy ones of the most high places.”The Hebraism occurs only in this phrase (cf. vv 22, 25, 27); perhaps it is an expression used among those for whom the book is written.

20.a. נפלו: see n. 5:5.a.

20.b. רב חזוה “its appearance [was] greater”: cf. expressions in 4:11, 20 [8, 17].

21.a. הוית חזה ; JB “I had watched” reflects the fact that this detail might have been expected to come earlier (thus some scholars see vv 21–22 as later expansion). But it is a standard phrase which more likely has its standard meaning.

22.a. יְהִב: BHS reports a variant reading יְהַב “he gave,” reflected in G, Syr, Vg.

22.b. ל; not “to” (G). The holy ones, whether supernatural beings or the people of God, do elsewhere share in judgment with God (cf. the allusion in Rev 20:4), but here the judgment is given on their behalf rather than exercised by them. God is the judge (vv 9–14). Ewald suggested that two words had been omitted and that the text should read יהב ושלטנא יתב ודינא “the court sat [cf. v 10] and authority was given [cf. v 27]”; cf. BHS).

23.a. תשנא; Th has ὓπερέξει “excel” as if from a different verb שנא (see Emerton, “The Meaning of *šēnā*’”); more likely the verb is שנא “change” as in v. 7 (also vv 3, 19, among others).

24.a. For this significance of the pronominal suffix, see BL 74a.

25.a. בלא (lit., “wear out”), cf. BH בלה in 1 Chr 17:9. There is thus no need to posit another בלא related to an Arabic verb “offend” (against Noth, “Die Heiligen,” 286 [ET 224–25]).

25.b-b. Taking ודת זמנין “times and edict” as a hendiadys, a frequent device in chap. 7. On דת, see n. 6:5.b (there translated “law”).

25.c. Presumably the times (so G), not the holy ones: the former is the antecedent and this understanding makes entire sense (see *Comment*).

25.d. עדנין should presumably here be taken as dual (see n. 4.e-e).

27.a. יהיבת; cf. Bevan for the future perfect translation, comparing נעשתה “will have been achieved” in 11:36.

27.b. Taking the construct chain as epexegetical throughout (“a people consisting in holy ones who are on high”) rather than possessive throughout (“a people that belongs to holy ones who belong to the One On High”—so that the One On High is then the possessor of kingship and the object of honor and obedience): see *Comment*.

28.a. בלבי suggests “to myself” (JB), the implication of the equivalent expression in *T. Levi* 6.2; 8.19 (and Luke 2:19?).

## Form/Structure/Setting

### Form

Dan 7 is the report of a dream or nocturnal vision (cf. chap. 2 *Form*). Characteristic expressions are verbs for “watch” (חזה, שכל), followed by temporal expressions such asדי עד (lit., “until”) or מן באדן “from the time when” or by the particle ואלו/וארו “and there before me” and the preposition כ‍ “like.” The opening half recounts a symbolic dream, set in a standard brief narrative context recording the date at the beginning and the dreamer’s troubled response at the end (vv 1, 15). An introduction using mythic motifs leads into a vision of four hybrid animals (vv 2–8, partly recapitulated and expanded in vv 19–21; the interpretation in v 17 will make explicit that it constitutes an allegorical periodization of history). It goes on to a judgment scene (vv 9–14), which incorporates descriptions of someone seated on a divine throne (vv 9–10) and of the appearing of a second heavenly figure (vv 13–14).[[1]](#footnote-1) The significance of vv 9–10, 13–14 is emphasized and their effect is heightened through their rhythmic, elevated style, with instances of the parallelism that characterizes OT poetry, and of simile and metaphor. The pattern of vv 8–11 (presentation of wrongdoing, judgment scene, implementation of punishment) recalls that of the secular/prophetic lawsuit.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The second half reports the interpretation of the symbolic dream. A standard brief narrative context tells of how the subject sought the interpretation (v 16) and of how he reacted to it (v 28). The initial interpretation is brief (vv 17–18); in response to the subject’s supplementary request (vv 19–22), a more detailed explanation of part of the symbolism follows (vv 23–27). Rhythm and parallelism reappear here at a further key point in the chapter, though with less consistency and less heightened effect than in vv 9–10, 13–14 (because of the more prosaic subject-matter?), and some interpreters treat vv 23-27 as prose. Rhythm, parallelism, and other rhetorical devices appear elsewhere in Dan 7;[[3]](#footnote-3) a division between poetic prose and prosaic poetry is hard to make. The interpretation of the symbolic dream takes place within the context of the dream. In this respect the vision compares with the nocturnal visions in Zech 1–6 and 2 Esd 11–13 (though there the interpreter is God himself) and with the vision in Dan 8. It contrasts with the visions in Dan 2; 4, where a human interpreter explains the dream after it is over. And there, the story in which the dream report is set has a significance in its own right that far exceeds that of the simple narrative framework of chap. 7; here the dream is everything.

The interpretation takes the form of political prophecies (vv 17, 23–25) that lead into prophecies about the final implementation of God’s reign (vv 18, 26–27). The combination of forms parallels that in the Animal Apocalypse, *1 Enoch* 85–90, which addresses the Maccabean crisis.[[4]](#footnote-4) Such parallels suggest that the political prophecies are quasi-predictions, not actual ones (see further chaps. 10–12 *Form*). The self-presentation formula “I, Daniel” supports this view; it is characteristically a formula of self-presentation by someone who cannot be seen or who speaks through someone else (e.g., a prophet who says “I am Yahweh,” or a messenger, or a medium). While the chapter as a whole has then been taken to be a literary creation not the report of an actual dream,[[5]](#footnote-5) this inference need not follow.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The dream involves myth, symbol, allegory, scriptural allusion, and revelation concerning things above and things future. It both reveals and conceals, by the interpretation (e.g., v 25b) as well as by the symbolic dream. The response it twice attributes to Daniel (vv 15, 28) is the response these elements seek to evoke in the reader.

Dan 7 uses symbolism in varied ways.[[7]](#footnote-7) Its symbols have been viewed as a code: e.g., lion = Babylon, leopard = Persia or Greece, small horn = Antiochus or some other historical or future person. Such identities can then be substituted for their ciphers without losing anything except a slight air of mystery, which might have enabled the author to escape the attention of the authorities. This view is an oversimple one.[[8]](#footnote-8) The symbols are not a random allegorical code speaking of realities that could just as adequately be referred to directly; they contribute to the text’s meaning. When vv 17–27 add a God-given interpretation to the God-given revelation in vv 2–14, some of the symbolism thus remains (e.g., v 26), and even where symbols are in some way interpreted by other terms, these “explanatory” terms may still not be straightforward (e.g., “holy ones”). Allusiveness remains.

Part of the symbols’ significance is that they function like similes. The entities described have features of the symbol: thus a horn suggests strength. There may be significance in the interrelationships of the symbols: for example, in the movement between the animal and the human. Beyond those features, individual symbols belong to systems and thus call to mind “numerous ideas, images, sentiments, values and stereotypes” which are (selectively) projected on the entity symbolized.[[9]](#footnote-9) They are symbols not merely signs,[[10]](#footnote-10) or they are tensive symbols not steno-symbols[[11]](#footnote-11) or ciphers. Further, they are symbols and not merely metaphors. The figures come from public usage rather than being an individual poet’s new minting, so that they bring with them the resonances and the hallowing of tradition, the more so where they come from the community’s sacred scriptures. They gain a further level of affect when they are mythic symbols that make it possible to refer to transcendent realities.

A number of influences and traditions may underlie the dream.[[12]](#footnote-12)

*(a) Earlier chapters of Daniel*. The motif of the symbolic dream goes back to Dan 2 and 4; the four kings/regimes motif takes up that of chap. 2. The description of the first animal parallels that of Nebuchadnezzar in chap. 4; the descriptions of the third and fourth animal parallel those of the corresponding regimes in chap. 2. Since the lion represents Babylon, the lion’s being the most “human” of the creatures corresponds to the Babylonian king’s position as world ruler in chaps. 2, 4, and 5, while the power given to the humanlike figure in relation to the power exercised by the animals is the power ascribed to the Babylonian king over the animals in 2:37–38; cf. 5:18–19.[[13]](#footnote-13) For particular phrases, see 2:1 (v 1, the date formula); 2:28; 4:5 (v 1); 5:19 (v 14, people of all nations, races, and languages); 2:44; 4:3, 34; 6:26 (vv 14, 26–27, the lasting reign); 2:1; 4:5, 19; 5:6, 9, 10 (vv 15–16, 28); 2:9, 21 (v 25, times set by decree); 4:16, 23, 25 (v 25, 3 1/2 periods).

*(b) Other parts of the OT*. Animals feature throughout the OT in metaphor, simile, and allegory, to portray God, Israel, leaders or nobles, and other nations. The particular sequence in this chapter recalls Hos 13:7–8 and Jer 5:6. The former likens Yahweh to a lion, a leopard, a bear, a lion (though see BHS), and finally “the creature of the wild”—unidentified, as in Dan 7.[[14]](#footnote-14) Jer 5:6 warns Judah of ravaging by a lion, a wolf (זאב, Aramaic דב; “bear” in Dan 7:5 is דב, suggesting a paronomasia to *Gen Rabbah* 99: see *DTT*), and a leopard. The characterization of Babylon as lion-eagle recalls Jer 49:19–22, though lion-eagle-human beings also parallels three of the creatures supporting God’s throne in Ezek 1:10. More systematic animal allegories appear in Ezek 17; 19; 29; 32. Lion and horn are common metaphors for violent and aggressive strength, exercised by Yahweh, by Israel, or by their enemies: Dan 7 pictures the gentile predators attacking God’s flock in light of psalms that protest such attacks, and it envisages the imminent fulfillment of the promise of deliverance from these creatures that features in psalms and prophets. The portrayal of the nations as hybrids, which transgress nature’s laws and threaten nature’s harmony, and as predators who are as such unclean, has part of its background in the Torah’s categorization of the animal world and its concern with preserving distinctions between species.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The broadest OT parallels to Dan 7 lie in Ps 2 with its account of nations and kings striving in rebellion against Yahweh and his anointed, and then of Yahweh calmly rebuking them and affirming the king’s destiny to crush them and/or rule over them (cf. Ps 110). Behind such psalms with their theology of kingship is an understanding of the king as one who represents the people as a whole, embodies their destiny, yet also mediates God’s rule to them.[[16]](#footnote-16) Dan 7 has more general parallels with other psalms that describe the nations attacking Israel, their kings flaunting their power, their apparent certainty of victory but then their defeat as God appears, to overthrow them (e.g., Ps 48); also with psalms calling for judgment on oppressors that are depicted as lions and horned animals (e.g., Ps 22; 75; 74, which has in common with Daniel reference to a חיה “animal,” to the devastation of the sanctuary, to blasphemy, and other motifs). Some of these psalms reassert affirmations of God’s victory over the powers of disorder represented by the sea or the sea monster, which God destroys (e.g., Ps 9; 29; 46; 93), or recall such affirmations in contexts like that of Dan 7 when the oppression of enemies made them questionable (e.g., Pss 74; 89).[[17]](#footnote-17) If the psalms reflect a festal celebration of Yahweh’s kingship and of the king’s triumph, then this festival lies further behind Daniel’s vision. Nearer to its day and to its purpose, however, is the reappropriating of such motifs in Israelite prophecy. This reappropriation sometimes explicitly addresses particular contexts where the chaotic sea (/monster) is embodied in historical realities; it sometimes more explicitly relates it to the day of Yahweh (e.g., Isa 17:12–14; 27:1; 29; 51:9–10; Ezek 29:3; 38–39; Joel 3 [4]; Zech 12–14; cf. also Job 26:12–13; 41:1-34 [40:25–41:26]; the rare verb גוח/גיח meaning “stir up,” which appears in v 2, appears in related contexts in Ezek 32:2; Job 38:8; 40:23). Like some of these prophets, Dan 7 functions as an answer to the appeal in such psalms for deliverance and vindication.[[18]](#footnote-18) The mythic pattern of God’s victory in conflict with the powers of disorder, which had been used to interpret Israel’s experience at the exodus and in the exile, is appropriated once again in the context of an equivalent experience of order collapsing.[[19]](#footnote-19)

The vision of God enthroned parallels especially Ezek 1:[[20]](#footnote-20) the stormy wind, the cloud, the four animal-like creatures with four faces and four wings emerging from them alongside the wheels with rims full of eyes, a mighty sound (see also Deut 33:2; 1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6; Jer 49:38; Ps 50; and for the background to the books that are opened, see *Comment*).

The phrase used to denote the humanlike figure in v 13, אנש בר (BH אדם בן ‍) is familiar from various OT contexts. Most commonly, it simply denotes a human being, especially when it is the term by which God addresses Ezekiel. In Ps 8 it suggests humanity as both weak and unimpressive, a common connotation, yet as endowed with splendor, honor, and authority in relation to the animal creation (cf. Gen 1:27–28, and Gen 1–3 as a whole, though the term אדם בן ‍itself does not appear). In Ps 80 it comes in the context of a description of Yahweh’s people as a vine ravaged by wild animals; it refers to Israel in general or to the king in particular (cf. Ps 146:3), who may be seen as the embodiment of humanity (as also in Mic 5?).[[21]](#footnote-21) God himself is described as humanlike (אדם כמראה דמות) in Ezek 1:26; the manlike person in Ezek 8:2 (איש כמראה דמות,[[22]](#footnote-22) however, may be a separate heavenly figure.[[23]](#footnote-23) The clouds that accompany the humanlike figure’s epiphany recall OT descriptions of God’s own coming (see BDB on ענן). The nations’ acknowledgment of the humanlike figure and the holy ones corresponds to their acknowledgment of Israel in Isa 49:23; 60.

*(c) Other Jewish writings*. The animal allegory in *1 Enoch* 85–90 also features predators symbolizing rulers or kingdoms, an animal transformed into a man, animals with horns of extraordinary size, a throne set up for God to sit in judgment as books are opened before him, and animals being destroyed by fire. In chap. 14, Enoch is carried by winds and clouds into the heavens, where he sees a throne from which flaming fire issues and on which God sits in a gown whiter than snow, surrounded by myriad upon myriad of attendants. Chaps. 46–48 and 71 also have parallels with the throne scene and the humanlike figure in Dan 7. There is disagreement over whether different parallels suggest Dan 7 is dependent on *1* *Enoch*[[24]](#footnote-24) or vice versa,[[25]](#footnote-25) or whether both are dependent on other sources.[[26]](#footnote-26)

*(d) Other Middle Eastern religions*. The existence of a wide and detailed Jewish background to Dan 7, near home for author and audience, makes appeal to foreign influence questionable where the material has Jewish parallels. Nevertheless, over the past century, scholars have studied parallels between Dan 7 and material from Egypt, Phoenicia, Iran, Babylon, and Canaan.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Egyptian influence has been seen in the parallels between the relationship of Atum and Re with that of the one advanced in years and the humanlike figure in Dan 7, and in the portrait of Antiochus as foe of godly order,[[28]](#footnote-28) but the evidence is hardly compelling. Nor is Morgenstern’s hypothesis of the influence of an equivalent Tyrian myth, which even he later abandoned.[[29]](#footnote-29) Nor is the more common belief that there is a connection between Daniel’s humanlike figure and Iranian figures who are the embodiment of humanity, who form one root of Near Eastern kingship ideology and thus relate to OT ideas of humanity noted above.[[30]](#footnote-30) Daniel’s allusive reference to a humanlike figure hardly justifies or requires such connections, and neither do parallels such as the stream of fire; it is in any case a problem that the Persian material is difficult to date, and parallels are rarely specific to Persia. The fourfold historical scheme (see chap. 2 *Form*) is the most plausible instance of Iranian influence on Dan 7.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Parallels between the Babylonian Adapa myth and the humanlike figure[[32]](#footnote-32) are again not compelling; nor are the incidental parallels between Dan 7 and an Akkadian dream-vision about hybrid beings.[[33]](#footnote-33) When the Babylonian myth *Enuma Elish* tells of rebellious monsters born from the primordial ocean, of the destruction of the sea monster, the embodiment of disorder, who is burst by the winds, and of the elevation of its destroyer as king and lord of heaven and earth,[[34]](#footnote-34) the points of connection with Dan 7 look more than coincidental. They are paralleled in the equivalent Ugaritic combat myth *Ba’al*, which has more links with Dan 7 and may be the less indirect background to it.[[35]](#footnote-35) Here, similarly, Sea tries to usurp the place of Ba’al, the son of the highest god, the venerable, gray-headed, and gray-bearded El. One of his titles, *’b snm*, might mean “father of years” and correspond to יומין עתיק “one advanced in days.”[[36]](#footnote-36) Before the assembly of the holy ones, Ba’al, rider on the clouds, is declared to be destined for an eternal kingship, and he duly kills Sea—later characterized as Leviathan, the seven-headed dragon. In due course El agrees to a temple being built as a palace for Ba’al, where he takes his seat as king over the earth. He is then overcome by Death, but Death is eventually defeated. In the OT, Yahweh effectively combines the positions of El and Ba’al, except in Dan 7, where the humanlike figure takes Ba’al’s position. In recapitulating this old pattern, Dan 7 may have its own links with these ancient myths, via learned circles in Judaism rather than because they lived on in the worship of the temple.[[37]](#footnote-37)

*(e) Other aspects of Middle Eastern life*. The animals in Dan 7 have been likened to Babylonian engravings, sculptures, and reliefs or to the sphinxes (see, e.g., *ANEP* 644–53),[[38]](#footnote-38) but the parallels are not close. The same applies to warnings in treaties of attacks by animals;[[39]](#footnote-39) though in any case these documents would surely have influenced Daniel only via passages such as Hos 13:7–8.[[40]](#footnote-40) Parallels with the animals in the zodiac[[41]](#footnote-41) are also imprecise.[[42]](#footnote-42)

Mesopotamian divination offers more promising background to vv 4–6. Divination was interested in anomalous human and animal births that might offer portents concerning the future of individuals or the state. The series *Šumma izbu[[43]](#footnote-43)* includes sheep born with some resemblance to a wolf, a lion, a fox, a tiger, or a human being, and animals with deformations such as a raised shoulder, lungs in its mouth, extra horns, multiple heads, or displaced eyes. These portend events such as a royal death, an enemy attack, conflict among rulers or a king enjoying a long and peaceful reign. Not all details in the omens are interpreted, and not all details in the interpretations connect with specific aspects of the omen. Also interesting is the custom of describing a king as having characteristics of various animals.[[44]](#footnote-44) In the Hellenistic period, on his coins Alexander wears a headpiece much like an elephant head, Antiochus III uses the elephant as a state emblem, and Hellenistic monarchs generally are often pictured as possessing horns, a common Semitic symbol for power: all this may lie behind the figure of the fourth animal.[[45]](#footnote-45) It is possible to link characteristics of individual creatures to those of empires they represent: for instance, the Medes might be seen as fierce and destructive (v 5; cf. Isa 13:17–18)—though it is not clear that they were more so than others.

*(f) Greek historiography*. The notion of a succession of world empires appears in Herodotus and Ctesias, and this feature arguably has more substantial parallels with the substance of the four-empire scheme in Daniel than the links in terms of symbolism which Daniel has in common with Middle Eastern material. The scheme sees the sequence of empires as Assyria, Media, Persia, and Greece, and thus in distinguishes between Media and Persia corresponds to Daniel’s scheme.[[46]](#footnote-46)

*(g) Conclusions*. Tracing the development of ideas and motifs in a text does not in itself explain their significance there, but it can add to our historical insight on the development of Israelite faith and thought, enable us to perceive more of the meaning and resonances that ideas and motifs had for author and audience, and explain tensions or other apparent problems in the text. Thus it is illuminating to imagine the author of Dan 7 combining the combat myth as adopted in the OT and as known in the learned tradition with the four-regimes scheme and the form of the dream from chap. 2, and developing these in light of second-century experience into a portrayal of Antiochus as the doomed embodiment of disorder and rebellion.[[47]](#footnote-47) Yet such pictures are hypothetical, and it remains difficult to evaluate the significance of parallels identified in connection with tracing the tradition-history behind Dan 7. When the evidence cannot prove a direct link, this shortfall does not mean there was no link. In other cases, the parallels are close enough to make a direct link seem likely, but coincidence is not impossible. Even where there are historical links, it is difficult to know how far the author was aware of the material’s original meaning or was influenced by it: we must beware of reading into Daniel too much of what went before or what came after.[[48]](#footnote-48) Even when the author was aware of the material’s background, the picture as a whole is not one received from existent sources; it is creative, imaginative, and original.[[49]](#footnote-49) Further, the significance of motifs in Dan 7 is their significance in its context, which may even contradict the significance they brought to it.

Investigating the background to the chapter may chiefly help to draw attention to what is different about Dan 7 itself; this process may enable us to perceive important aspects of the chapter even if the hypotheses that lead to these perceptions turn out to be mistaken. The framework of intertextuality may thus contribute more than the framework of background and development to the utilization of comparisons. The intertextual relationship between Daniel and the Middle Eastern texts is the kind of relationship that issues from readers putting texts together that may have had no direct link rather than the kind that issued from one author directly relating to the work of another.[[50]](#footnote-50) For us as readers, putting the texts alongside each other helps us to see the significance of the texts.

Thus, in *Enuma Elish*, the winds restrain the sea and its monsters; here they churn it up and generate the sea-monsters. In Ezek 1 the animals support God’s throne and serve his kingship; here they serve themselves and are judged.[[51]](#footnote-51) In Ps 2 the one enthroned is an actual king, whose people are unmentioned; here the bestowing of God’s rule is projected onto the future, and the one on whom it is bestowed explicitly represents a people; the dethronement of evil belongs not to the Beginning or to ever-repeated events in history but to the End.[[52]](#footnote-52) Nevertheless, the sea and the animals stand here not for otherworldly cosmic or cosmogonic forces of disorder but for historical ones; yet the animals stand not for forces ruling through all history as in *1 Enoch*, but only for the rulers of the Second Temple period. Whereas Marduk fought and killed the beasts, as does the humanlike figure in 2 Esdras, here there is no battle—all is determined by the word of God;[[53]](#footnote-53) the differences compares with that between Gen 1 and earlier myths. The humanlike figure has no explicit connection with creation, nor does he undergo suffering, or enter into conflict with the senior figure, or die, as Ba’al is commonly held to have done. Whatever temple background the chapter has, and despite the presence of the temple theme in *Enuma Elish*, it is striking that chap. 7 makes no mention of the temple.

### Structure

The chapter may be outlined as follows:[[54]](#footnote-54)

1–2a introduction

1a narrative preface

1b commencing formula

2a narrative opening

2b–14 vision report

2b–3 four creatures appear

4–6 the first three creatures

7 the fourth creature with its ten horns

8 a small horn on the fourth

9–10 a throne scene

11a the small horn

11b the fourth creature

12 the first three creatures

13–14 a manlike figure appears

15 visionary’s response

16–18 initial interpretation

16 visionary’s request for interpretation

17–18 framework for interpretation

17 the animals are kings

18 the new kingship

19–20 request for further interpretation

19 the fourth creature

20 the horns

21–22 further vision report

21 the small horn’s behavior

22a the judgment

22b the new kingship

23–27 detailed interpretation

23 the fourth kingship’s behavior

24–25 the new king’s behavior

26 his judgment

27 the new kingship

28 conclusion

28a closing formula

28b the visionary’s response

At a number of points, aspects of the vision are introduced by formulae:

v 2: “as I watched in my vision during the night, there before me . . .”

v 4b: “I watched as . . .” (cf. vv 9, 21–22; also 2:34)

v 5: “then there before me . . .” (cf. v 8b)

v 6: “after that I watched and there before me . . .”

v 7: “after that, as I watched in the vision by night, there before me . . .”

v 8: “as I looked . . . there before me . . .”

v 11: “I watched then . . . I watched as . . .”

v 13: “as I watched in the vision by night, there before me . . .”

The formulae comprise stock phrases used in varying combinations; further variants appear in 2:31 (= 4:10 [7]); 4:13 [10]; and (in Hebrew) 8:3, 5, 15. The phrases ending with the conjunctive expression די עד “as” are naturally followed by a verbal clause; they introduce an event. The phrases ending with the particles אלו/ארו “there before me” are generally followed by a noun clause; they introduce a new scene. There are partial exceptions in vv 8 and 13, where the particles introduce new scenes; but these involve events, expressed in verbal clauses (cf. the mixture of verbal and noun clauses in a comparable context after והנה “there before me” in Joseph’s dream report, Gen 37:6–9). The formulae introduce each element in the vision report in vv 2b–14 (and 21–22), except that vv 4 and 12 (both relating to the first three creatures) lack formulae, while a formula does appear in v 4b; some of the variation is of rhetorical significance. The vision report appropriately opens with a long formula, and the fourth creature is advertised to be of special significance by a particularly long and resumptive formula (v 7). The same effect is achieved for the small horn by the use of a different and stronger verb and a different particle, which is repeated (v 8). As the judgment presaged by vv 9–10 is awaited, v 11 uses a complex repetitive/resumptive version of the formula to heighten suspense. The final climax of the vision is marked by a further long and resumptive formula (v 13).

The variation in the use of formulae in vv 2–6 seems to be stylistic. Here and elsewhere the vision builds drama and impact through a number of other devices. The description of the first three creatures is heightened by the use of simile and concrete characterization. To us it is allusive and mysterious, and it may have been so for its original listeners. The relatively less colorful description of the third creature is counterbalanced by the use of one of the longer formulae to introduce it. The centerpiece and the final climax of the symbolic vision are marked by the use of poetic parallelism and rhythm, repetition, assonance, and hendiadys (vv 9–10, 13–14; see esp. the close parallelism in vv 9b, 9c, 10b, 10c, 14b). Considered in isolation, vv 9–10 at least might be seen as a self-contained piece of poetry,[[55]](#footnote-55) but in the context of Dan 7 as a whole with its movement into and out of a more rhythmic and poetic prosody, these verses represent one end of a spectrum of more poetic and more prosaic language.

In vv 13–14, the creatures coming from the sea are balanced by the human figure coming with the clouds of heaven; the two correspond to the characteristic OT and ancient Near Eastern antithesis between tumultuous waters/kings and heavens/Yahweh’s anointed. The gifts of humanness and authority (vv 4, 6) reach mature though transformed expression in the humanness and authority of the heavenly figure.

After this high point, the account of Daniel’s reaction and his request for interpretation increases suspense and focuses attention on what follows. This effect is furthered first by the provision of the merest framework of interpretation, silent on the details that most concern people in the second century (vv 17–18), then by the request for more interpretation, which itself unexpectedly provides further information on the symbolic vision itself (the bronze claws, v 19; the small horn’s larger appearance, v 20), then by a further vision report adding more such information (vv 21–22). The final section of the interpretive vision, vv 23–27, brings another climax with its most detailed and explicit portrayal of Antiochus and of the kingship of the holy ones, and it draws attention to its significance by using language elaborately rather than economically. It employs strings of terms of synonymous or overlapping meaning, and partly rhyming verbs (v 23), nouns (v 27), and purpose clauses (v 26), and building up a rhythm by sequences of clauses of parallel imagery, syntax, or language (vv 25a, 27b).[[56]](#footnote-56) Thus here, too, the lines can be laid out as poetry.

The vision’s contents and meaning are repeated four times, in vv 2–14 (symbolic vision), 17–18 (framework of interpretation), 19–22 (further symbolic vision material), and 23–27 (interpretation of that detail). Synoptically, they comprise the following elements:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | four animals/kings | 2b–3 | 17 |  |  |
|  | lion-eagle-man | 4 |  |  |  |
|  | bear | 5 |  |  |  |
|  | four-headed winged leopard | 6 |  |  |  |
|  | monster | 7ab |  | 19 | 23 |
| B | ten horns/kings | 7c |  | 20a | 24a |
| C | small horn/another king | 8 (11a) |  | 20–21 | 24–25 |
| D | divine judgment | 9–10 |  | 22a | 26a |
| E | fourth animal destroyed | 11b |  |  |  |
| F | small horn punished |  |  |  | 26 |
| G | first three animals deposed | 12 |  |  |  |
| H | human figure appears | 13 |  |  |  |
| I | new kingship of holy ones | 14 | 18 | 22b | 27 |

Despite the repetition, there is no interpretive comment on the first three animals, and no representation in the symbolic vision of the horn’s punishment. There is more symbolism than interpretation and more interpretation than symbolism; each stands on its own as a revelation. At the same time, the repetition and the elaboration show what the chapter regards as important, namely, the suffering and triumph of the holy ones:[[57]](#footnote-57) the four-empire scheme is there because of its traditional importance, and it is omitted in chap. 8.

A major tradition of scholarship, mainly European, has taken the view that the elements in the above pattern have accumulated through a more or less complex process of growth.[[58]](#footnote-58) While its representatives work out this approach in different ways, two tendencies characterize their work. One is to date material later the further right one moves across the columns: most, if not all, of the interpretation material is regarded as later than most of the vision material. The tendency is also (though less consistently) to date material later the further one moves down the columns, because dating follows the material’s historical reference. Thus A (vv 2b–7ab, at least) can be fourth century or earlier.[[59]](#footnote-59) BE (vv 7c, 11b) can be pre-Antiochene, and BE or ABE then handles the question of how long the fourth kingship will last. Vv 9–10, 13 (?14) may also belong to one of these stages, giving a more transcendent explanation of the expected act of judgment. C and the rest of the material in D, F, and I reflect the Antiochene crisis and may represent several stages in its development: e.g., vv 8, 11a its beginnings (c. 168 BC); vv 21–22, increasing pressures and hopes (c. 166 BC); vv 25–27, the depths of oppression and urgent need. Expressions used in the introduction and conclusion (vv 1–2a, 28) and within the vision (e.g., vv 4b, 14, 25) parallel expressions used in chaps. 1–6 and 8–12 (cf. *Form*), and these links might suggest the further possibility of recensional work on the chapter designed to connect it with this broader context.[[60]](#footnote-60) Scholars in this tradition ground their argument for the separate origin of different parts of the material on a number of literary, linguistic, and material features such as the varied introductory formulae and verbal forms, the movement into and out of more poetic form, and the chapter’s general lack of straightforwardness and its repetitions.

An alternative tradition of approach maintains the chapter’s unity, except perhaps for seeing vv 21–22 as an addition from later in the Antiochene period.[[61]](#footnote-61) The chapter’s stylistic and rhetorical features with their variations and unevennesses contribute to a coherent whole, and the view that repetition, unevenness, variation, and clumsiness of expression likely reflect the work of more than one hand is unargued. Even where variation does not function rhetorically, it may reflect random variation or variation for literary effect on the part of one hand; it is paralleled in other texts. A single author may construct the work in an awkward, uneven, or jerky way or may modify the presentation by means of an afterthought in the course of proceeding.[[62]](#footnote-62) In the history of forms, the simple often develop from the complex, and in the history of the text, emendations are usually designed to remove unevenness rather than to create it. So the simplified versions of a passage such as Dan 7 which source- and redaction-critics have offered are as likely to be secondary editions as to be primary ones.

### Setting

While Dan 7 presents itself as a dream experienced by Daniel in about 550, the beginning of the co-regency of Nabonidus and Belshazzar, its formal characteristics suggest that it derives from the period on which it focuses and to which it is especially relevant, the time of the king symbolized by the small horn. It presupposes actions by Antiochus IV against Jerusalem such as 1 Macc 1:29–40 describes, but it does not refer to the introduction of offensive forms of worship in the temple (contrast 8:13; 9:27; 11:31), and it implies that Jewish deliverance is still future. Its date is thus mid–167.

Unlike earlier parts of the book, the vision’s implicit social setting is not that of a minority community in a foreign country tempted to surrender faith and commitment in order to survive and succeed, but a people religiously affronted, threatened, and oppressed in their own land. Unlike groups that were open to cooperation with the Hellenistic world of which Jerusalem was now part, the Danielic group was a sect in the sense of a “self-distinguishing protest movement,”[[63]](#footnote-63)—though it was protesting against Antiochus in particular, not against Hellenism as such.[[64]](#footnote-64) Such movements may take a variety of attitudes to what is required in light of the institutions they confront: a change in human hearts; a revolutionary, transforming act of God; a withdrawal from the world (cf. Qumran); a new way of looking at the world; miraculous experiences; effort to reform the way the world works; revolutionary action to establish a new order.[[65]](#footnote-65) The last is the response adopted wholeheartedly by the Maccabees; Daniel’s stance is closer to the supernaturalist/revolutionary response.[[66]](#footnote-66)

The response is one that looks to the somewhat distant past and to the hoped-for future as the contexts of meaningful revelation, of experienced deliverance, and of political power. Deliverance and power are not present realities, as they are in the stories. We do not know what connection there was between the circles in which Dan 7 emerged and the circles that had generated the stories some time earlier. There is no specific reason to suppose that the connection is other than a literary one.

The vision’s setting in the book of Daniel makes it the book’s central hinge.[[67]](#footnote-67) 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)[[68]](#footnote-68)

This first vision of Daniel comes in a dream, which fits the chapter’s “pivotal position.”[[69]](#footnote-69) There are many Jewish works comprising stories or comprising visions; a work that combines the two is unique. So is a work that attributes visions to someone who is not a scriptural figure such as Enoch, Moses, Isaiah, or Ezra.[[70]](#footnote-70) In the case of the book of Daniel, the starting point of the visions in chaps. 7—12 is the vision attributed to Daniel in chap. 2—which might easily go back to a “real” Daniel. Its rhetoric continues to work not by argument but by revelation, and by describing the seer’s response to the revelation. [[71]](#footnote-71)

Like chap. 2, chap. 7 relates a symbolic dream and interprets it as referring to four diverse regimes. The first regime is particularly impressive, the second is less so, the third has parallels to the first, being endowed with special authority. Most attention is given to the violent fourth regime. It has an ironlike strength (פרזל) and crushing power (דקק), though it suffers from division and conflict. It is destined to be destroyed from the heavens; its power will be taken over by a regime instituted by God and destined to last forever.

The chapters differ in that Dan 2 relates a dream of the foreign king (when the Babylonian empire is at its height) whose interest focuses on the regimes themselves, while Dan 7 relates a dream of the Judahite counselor (when the Babylonian empire is declining) which is specifically interested in the suffering of his people and in their destiny to share God’s rule. In Dan 2 Daniel is actively involved as interpreter, providing his God-given insight; in Dan 7 he is a mere passive recipient of revelation, needing to be given his symbolic dream’s interpretation. Dan 2 sees the fourth regime as weak, but not as wicked, so that its destruction would be an act of judgment—as is the destruction in Dan 7. Whereas Dan 2 implicitly stresses God’s power in replacing the regimes by his own, Dan 7 at this point implicitly stresses God’s justice. The imagery of Dan 2 is simpler and relatively stately, that of Dan 7 more complex and fantastic. The outward impressiveness of the humanlike statue contrasts with the dangerous yet merely animalic sequence of creatures; the unimpressive rock that destroys the statue contrasts with the stately figure whose word brings the creatures’ judgment and the humanlike being whose rule replaces theirs. Further, Dan 7 has a different philosophy of empire. It thinks not in terms of one imperial reality but of a multiplicity of empires.[[72]](#footnote-72)

The features distinguishing Dan 7 from Dan 2 reflect the portrayal of empires in the intervening chapters.[[73]](#footnote-73) Dan 2 offered world rulers a vision of their position as a God-given calling. Dan 3–6 has portrayed them as inclined to make themselves into God; they are thus also inclined to put mortal pressure on those who are committed to God (chaps. 3; 6), but they are themselves on the way to catastrophe (chaps. 4; 5). These motifs are taken up and taken further in chap. 7. The tension between the human and the bestial that appeared in chaps. 4 and 6 becomes a key motif: bestiality is turned on God himself,[[74]](#footnote-74) but God puts an end to the reign of the creature and gives authority to a humanlike figure.[[75]](#footnote-75) As the real statue of chap. 3 follows on the dream statue of chap. 2, the dream animals of chap. 7 follow on the real animals of chap. 6. As people of all races, nations, and languages were called to bow before the statue (3:4; cf. 5:19), so now they honor the human figure of Daniel’s vision (7:14). Once Nebuchadnezzar testified to God’s lasting power (4:3, 34; cf. 6:26); now Daniel’s human figure has this power (7:14). Once Nebuchadnezzar’s humiliation was limited to seven periods of time (4:16); now the humiliation of the heavenly ones will be limited to 3 1/2 such periods (7:25). Once God demonstrated in history that as ruler in the earthly realm he could give royal authority to the most ordinary of human beings (4:17); now he gives it to a humanlike being at the end of the story of earthly kingdoms (7:13–14). Once Darius took hold of power (5:31); now the heavenly ones do so (7:18). Once Darius acknowledged that God’s rule would persist until the end (א פ ו ס עד ) (6:26); now the king symbolized by the small horn has his authority destroyed permanently ( סופא עד) (7:26). Dan 2–6 have affirmed that God controlled times and epochs, his decree being victorious over the decrees of kings (2:9, 13, 15, 21; 6:5, 8, 12, 15); now a king who thinks to control times set by decree will lose all power (7:25–26). Chaps. 3–6 indicate why the sequence of earthly regimes is destined to be brought to an end in the way chap. 2 describes. Chap. 7 combines the thrust of the preceding chapters as a whole, and puts them in a new perspective. Their theme of the history of the kingdoms and their appointed time and destiny is brought to its climax—though they still stand, and the chapters set before second-century readers implicit challenges and promises regarding their own lives.[[76]](#footnote-76) They are called not just to a passive, secret waiting for the End, but to an active, courageous, expectant, faithful, direct self-application.[[77]](#footnote-77)

As the hinge of the book of Daniel, chap. 7 also opens the way to the following chapters. With its concern for God’s reign it provides the broad context for their narrower focus; they provide further interpretation and detail in regard to its allusiveness and its broad brush strokes. Its opening verse begins a new chronological sequence, which will run through the visions, as an earlier chronological sequence ran through chaps. 1–6. Its closing verse opens the way to further material, which will elaborate on and clarify the sometimes mysterious contents of chap. 7. This series of Daniel’s further first-person visions will in different ways focus more sharply on the crisis that the fourth creature and its small horn bring to the people of God and their sanctuary. Chap. 7 brings not a change in attitudes to Gentiles[[78]](#footnote-78) but a change in attitudes to empires. It “turns the theological/ideological direction of the book as a whole in a dramatic, and darker, direction,” with its talk of struggle, warfare, and the exposure of the empires’ nature as beasts that arose out of chaos and evil.[[79]](#footnote-79) “Apocalyptic pulls away the façade of apparent benevolence that human governments like to construct and exposes the depths of evil, lies, corruption, and violence that lies behind the façade.”[[80]](#footnote-80)

## Comment

**1** Historically, Belshazzar’s first year will have been the first year of his regency in Babylon during the ten years Nabonidus spent in Tema (see Nabonidus’s Harran stelae, *ANET*, 562–63; cf. chap. 4 *Form*). This period would have begun in 550/549, the year of Cyrus’ decisive victory over Astyages, king of Media.[[81]](#footnote-81) Babylonian documents were not dated by Belshazzar’s reign but by Nabonidus’s, but Belshazzar had had the kingship in Babylon entrusted to him and it is natural enough for a Jewish story to be dated by his years. Suggestively, the visions in chaps. 7 and 8 come from the beginning of that ten-year rule which ends with the portent in chap. 5; Belshazzar is a king whose judgment foreshadows that of the fourth empire.[[82]](#footnote-82) But the structure of the book emphasizes rather the link between chap. 5 and the other narratives and the link between chaps. 7 and 8 and the other visions.

**2–3** Talk of four winds, heaving sea, and huge animals calls to mind mythic material from Babylon and Canaan reflected in earlier parts of the OT (see *Form*). For the mythic Sea, the OT elsewhere uses the more general term “the sea” (e.g., Isa 5:30; 27:1; Jer 51:42; Ps 74:13; 89:9 [10]; Job 26:12; Rev 21:1), or “the [Great] Deep” ([רבה] תהום) (e.g., Gen 7:11; Isa 51:10; Amos 7:4). “The Great Sea” is a standard title for the Mediterranean (see BDB, 410; in Aramaic, 1QapGen 21.16). But the Qumran *Levi Apocryphon* is an exception,[[83]](#footnote-83) and this vision trades on both possible significances: the Mediterranean becomes a symbol for the tumultuous mythic sea.

**4–8** The four creatures emerge from the ocean consecutively, not concurrently, though this in itself hardly excludes the possibility of understanding the kings they represent as contemporaries, with the consecutiveness being merely a feature of the presentation. Nor does it exclude the possibility of associating one creature with each point of the compass.

Each animal is fierce and dangerous. Each is also ominous in a narrower sense. The first three, at least, are anomalous creatures, resembling one species but also having features belonging to another or being deformed in some other way. In Babylonian lore such actual or theoretical anomalies were believed to portend specific historical events.[[84]](#footnote-84) In the context of the Torah, such hybrids imply a contravention of the prohibition on mating members of different species, behind which lies the emphasis in Gen 1 on species being created “after their kind.” In Hellenistic Palestine, hybrid creatures on charms and amulets symbolize demonic forces.[[85]](#footnote-85) While it is possible to link characteristics of each of the creatures with features of the kingdoms they may represent, the text does not point to such connections. It would make little difference to the vision’s meaning if bear and leopard exchanged positions in the vision or if the third creature were likened to a wolf rather than a leopard.

**4** The features of a lion to which the OT appeals are ferocity, strength, destructiveness, courage, rapacity, and fearsomeness; it can be used as a simile or metaphor for any nation or individual with such characteristics, and in particular to suggest kingship.[[86]](#footnote-86) The eagle’s key characteristics are speed and rapacity (Hab 1:8; Lam 4:19). The bird referred to is perhaps strictly the large and majestic, high-flying and swooping griffon vulture.[[87]](#footnote-87) Lion and eagle appear together to characterize Saul and Jonathan in 2 Sam 1:23, the unnamed northern foe in Jer 4:7, 13, and Nebuchadnezzar in particular in Jer 49:19, 22. Neither has a distinctive association with Babylon or with Nebuchadnezzar, though winged lions in relief decorated the Processional Way in Babylon.[[88]](#footnote-88) Lions and eagles are the leading animals and birds symbolizing the nations in *1 Enoch* 89–90. They appropriately symbolize the first king, whoever is referred to, like the gold in chap. 2.

In isolation, what happens to the lion-eagle might be read negatively: it is reduced from being able to soar above the earth to experiencing the limitations of mere humanness. The removal of the eagle’s wings, reducing the creature to a four-legged animal, could be an act of judgment paralleling the one Nebuchadnezzar experienced in chap. 4. There, however, coming to share the appearance of an eagle is an act of judgment; it accompanies coming to share the life of an animal as an aspect of Nebuchadnezzar’s being deprived of his humanity before he has his human sanity restored. More likely, having one’s feathered wings removed, being stood on one’s feet like a human being, and being given a human mind, are all blessings not deprivations. The movement from animal to human in chap. 7 compares positively with the movement in the Nebuchadnezzar story from human to animal and back to human.[[89]](#footnote-89) V 4 might then imply a positive assessment of the destroyer Nebuchadnezzar’s being succeeded by Nabonidus: Babylonian rule is humanized.[[90]](#footnote-90) The lion-eagle that becomes humanlike even anticipates or foreshadows the judgment of the creatures and the bestowal of their authority on the humanlike figure of v 13.[[91]](#footnote-91)

The positive description of the lion-eagle corresponds with the descriptions of the bear (which is encouraged to eat) and the leopard (which is given authority). But this first of the creatures is the most human, not necessarily m the sense that it behaves in a more human way, but in the sense that God appoints it to a humanlike position of honor, authority, responsibility, and care for the world (cf. 2:38; 4:20-22). It is given a role in the world with a significance like that of a *symbolic* human figure— which might imply a celestial being, as *1 Enoch* 89 portrays Noah’s becoming a man to undertake a supernatural task in building the ark.[[92]](#footnote-92)

**5** The second, bearlike, creature is introduced with the briefest of formulae (וארו, “and there!”), which could point towards a close association with the first creature; but there is no other indication of close association, so it is best taken as a mere stylistic variation.

Its size and strength make it a source of fear to human beings second only to the lion: see 1 Sam 17:34–37; Amos 5:19; Prov 28:15. Indeed, it comes before the lion in Lam 3:10; see also 2 Sam 17:8; Isa 11:7; Hos 13:8; Prov 17:2; and for a vivid instance of its dangerousness, 2 Kgs 2:24. The bear would be a fit simile for any king or empire; nothing specific associates it with any particular king or empire.

Both text and grammar (see *Notes*) and meaning and reference in its description are problematic. Being lifted up on one side might suggest that it was rearing up on its back legs, perhaps implying that it was half-human,[[93]](#footnote-93) or had one paw raised ready to strike, or was half-crouching ready to spring. The language might refer to Media as the referent of the bear: perhaps Media’s remoteness or the Medes’ perceived lack of historical achievements, which could be suggested by the bear’s clumsiness.[[94]](#footnote-94) More likely the description may point to the bear’s possessing a physical anomaly (cf. the parallels in *Šumma izbu* 14.10–11).[[95]](#footnote-95) One might less speculatively explain details in the vision from within Daniel: the one side (or ruler: see n. 5.c) could be Darius, the sole Median mentioned in the book.[[96]](#footnote-96) But the language is allusive.

If the bear had a large mouthful of ribs through having bitten them from a victim, one might expect it to be told to eat up and then take some more rather than simply being told to eat lots of meat. More likely this description, too, refers to an anomaly: the ribs are growing in the bear’s mouth. *Šumma izbu* 17.16 is a near parallel, referring to lungs in the mouth.[[97]](#footnote-97) The allusion to a deformity would follow on from the description of the bear’s being distorted on one side. Alternatively or additionally, the three ribs could be Babylonian kings (e.g., Nebuchadnezzar, Ewil-merodak, and Belshazzar) or other conquered kings[[98]](#footnote-98) or earlier empires[[99]](#footnote-99) or conquered cities[[100]](#footnote-100) or conquered peoples.[[101]](#footnote-101) If the three עלעין are rather tusks or fangs (see n. 5.e), the description would lead well into the exhortation to eat lots of meat, and the three could represent Median kings (e.g., Cyaxares I, Darius the Mede, and Cyaxares II).[[102]](#footnote-102)

**6** The leopard appears with the lion and other animals as a fearsome predator (Isa 11:6; Jer 5:6; Hos 13:7; Cant 4:8). Its distinctive features are its spots (Jer 13:23) and its speed (Hab 1:8). The Persians and the Greeks had speedy armies (Isa 41:3; Dan 8:5), but the text does not specify such an allusion. The four wings and four heads indicate that this creature, too, is not a real or ordinary leopard but a heraldic figure or more likely another anomaly. As a winged predator, it resembles the first creature. While four wings or heads could denote the four Persian kings of 11:2 or the fourfold Greek empire of 8:8; 11:4, four is a frequent indicator of totality or universal activity and extension (cf. Ezek 1:5–6), and the point here may simply be that the leopard can see and move quickly in any direction.

**7** The fourth animal is described without being named, like many of the anomalies in *Šumma izbu*.[[103]](#footnote-103) It has none of the dragon- or serpent-like attributes of Leviathan (the distinction between the dragon and the fourfold hybrid is still preserved in Rev 13:1–4). If it represents Greece (see v 17 *Comment*), then circumstantial factors suggest it is an elephant. The battle elephant was brought west by the Greeks and the elephant came to be a symbol for Alexander and for Antiochus III (see *Form*). Antiochus IV’s use of elephants was well known (e.g., 1 Macc 1:17; 3:34; cf. 6:28–47). The reason for its not being named is hardly to conceal the vision’s message from the authorities:[[104]](#footnote-104) it would hardly have done so. Nor is it because this withholding would have made it difficult to introduce the ten horns:[[105]](#footnote-105) the vision readily ascribes anomalous features to named animals. In not identifying the fourth animal, Dan 7 compares with Hos 13:5–6,[[106]](#footnote-106) and it is part of the difference in representation from that of the first three. The dream report has described them, in terms of their form and appearance, and it has reported what happens to them, by means of passive verbs. The use of these verbs implicitly put the emphasis on what God does to the animals, says to them, and gives them, though it also “renders the divine grammatically invisible as the doer of the action and thus somehat elusive as an agent within human history.”[[107]](#footnote-107) In a double contrast with the first three animals, the report does not describe the fourth animal’s form and appearance, which has the effect of giving it a touch of mystery and of suggesting that it is even less a mere earthly creature than its lionlike, bearlike, and leopardlike predecessors. And it characterizes the animal by means of active verbs, putting the emphasis on its own deeds; the report thus prepares the way for the action of God that directly confronts its self-initiated action.

The bear’s one side and three ribs/tusks and the leopard’s four wings and four heads are capped by the fourth creature’s ten horns. While there was a violent and destructive aspect to Alexander’s achievements, the portrayal here reflects the oppressiveness of subsequent Hellenistic rulers. Horns suggest strength for defense or attack; they are a symbol for a king, who needs to have strength in both connections (cf. v 24). Ten is a standard round number, here suggesting fullness.[[108]](#footnote-108) While the number might also take up the toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue (2:41–42), its having ten toes is not mentioned there. As likely is a connection with the ten generations/kings mentioned in other apocalypses in connection with four empires (e.g., *Sibylline Oracles* 4).[[109]](#footnote-109)

**8** While ten horns thus might not imply a literal number, there is less grounds for taking “three horns” non-literally. Their being uprooted before it does not imply that the small horn uprooted them; the passive again suggests the action of God (as in vv 4, 5, 6), who clears the way for the small horn by removing three others.

Like the first animal, the fourth animal’s small horn has an appearance suggesting it is more than a mere animal. Its human features point towards the right and responsibility to rule over God’s creation (see v 4 *Comment*). Reference to the look of the eyes can suggest people’s desires, their generosity or meanness, or their awareness (see BDB, 744). The most suggestive parallels are passages where the look of the eyes reveals a person’s self-estimate, the pride and arrogance (or humility) located in the inner person (in the “heart”): see Isa 2:11; 5:15; Ps 18:27 [28]; 101:5; 131:1; Job 22:29; Prov 21:4; 30:13, 17). People’s talk also reveals the pride and arrogance (or humility) located in the inner person (1 Sam 2:3; Ezek 35:1; Obad 12; Ps 17:10). Pride and arrogance express themselves in deceit and flattery: so in Ps 12:3-4 [4–5], where the phrase גדלות מדברת “making great statements” occurs (cf. Ps 31:18 [19]). An arrogant look and a lying tongue head the list of Yahweh’s seven hates in Prov 6:16–19. More significantly, arrogance of look and word characterized the king of Assyria (Isa 10:12–13),[[110]](#footnote-110) who had raised his voice and eyes against the Holy One of Israel (Isa 37:23), and who is also Daniel’s model for the northern king in 11:36–45. But the small horn is not here said to be arrogant in look and word, only to look like a man and to speak impressively. The wickedness of the looks and words will become explicit only in v 25 (cf. 8:23; 11:36; 1 Macc 1:24; Rev 13:5–6).

**9–10** A number of descriptions of God on his throne of fire surrounded by numerous attendants locate the scene in the heavens: see 1 Kgs 22:19–22; Ps 82; *1 Enoch* 14.18–22; 40.1; 60.1–2; 71; 91.15–16; Rev 4–5. Where it is specifically a matter of God judging, however, the scene is normally on earth: see Jer 49:38; Joel 3 [4]:1–2, 12; Zech 14:1–5; Ps 50; 96:10–13; *1 Enoch* 1.3–9; 25.3; 90.20–27.[[111]](#footnote-111) In Dan 7, Daniel has been watching a scene on earth, and the account gives no indication that the scene has changed. Rather, the opening phrase of v 9 implies a continuity of perspective: Daniel continues to look in the direction he had been looking. Setting up the thrones suggests an earthly location (in the heavens they are already set up), as does the later talk of the one advanced in years coming (v 22).[[112]](#footnote-112)

Plural “thrones” is unusual in the OT unless there are a number of kings to sit on them (Isa 14:9; Ezek 26:16). Ps 122:5 may use the plural for emphasis (see GKC 124def), to suggest David’s exalted, glorious throne, and here the plural could suggest “a huge throne.”[[113]](#footnote-113) Yet throne scenes in Middle Eastern myths portray a number of gods seated in counsel to make decisions about future events (e.g., *Enuma Elish* 1.33–34, 151–57; 2.126–27; 3.8–10 [*ANET*, 61–64]), and the NT makes a number of reference to thrones (Matt 19:28; Col 1:16; Rev 4:2; 20:4).[[114]](#footnote-114) Nevertheless, here plural thrones seem to be merely part of the furniture of the scene. When the court sits, it is only the one advanced in years who sits enthroned. All the focus is on him. His heavenly attendants stand; they do not sit on thrones.

The creatures are visually animals, but it will be explained to Daniel that they stand for kings and their domains (v 17), and this significance has exercised a retroactive influence on their portrayal as animals (e.g., vv 4b, 8). Similarly, the one advanced in years is visually a human being, but he stands for God; this significance, too, exercises a retroactive influence on the portrayal in the vision. Picturing him as an old man suggests someone august, venerable and respected, judicious and wise. There is perhaps an allusion to the notion of God’s existing from eternity (Isa 41:4; Ps 90:2; 93:2; 102:24–27 [25–28]; Job 36:26). The description of God as a senior figure, almost grandfatherly rather than fatherly, also fits the description of God in chap. 1—6 as wise as well as authoritative.[[115]](#footnote-115) Whereas it is sometimes said that ideas of God become more spiritualized during the OT period, the particularly explicit picturing of God in human fashion comes here in the latest work within the OT, and paradoxically, it is the human portrayal of God that captures God’s divine incomparability as a just and absolute ruler in contrast to the animal forms of the earthly kings/kingdoms.[[116]](#footnote-116)

Whereas white clothing (and hair) could suggest purity (cf. 11:35; 12:10; Isa 1:18; Ps 51:7 [9]),[[117]](#footnote-117) in the context, with its description of the flaming throne, more likely חור has its more basic meaning of brightness and luminosity, thus nobility and splendor (cf. the related description in *1 Enoch* 14.20; the use of חור in connection with royal clothing in Esth 1:6; 8:15; also Dan 10:5–6; Ps 104:1–2; 2 Esd 2:39–40; Matt 28:3; Mark 9:3.[[118]](#footnote-118)

There is an ambiguity about the OT’s frequent association of fire with God.[[119]](#footnote-119) While fire can be an encouraging image, associated with light, protection, and guidance, more commonly it suggests something transcendent and absolute, awesome and dangerous, mysterious and destructive. The imagery derived from a violent storm which can be used to describe God’s appearing often includes lightning that flashes with fire from the heavens: so in the Sinai story (Exod 19:16–18; 20:18; 24:17; Deut 4:36), and more generally in the apprehension of nature (Ps 104:4; 148:8). God’s splendor can also naturally be expressed by the fiery brightness of the sun: so the visions of Ezekiel (1:4, 13, 27; 8:2; 10:2, 6, 7) and *1 Enoch* (14.8–22); compare also Dan 10:5–6. The sensation of dazzling light or fire is a frequent aspect of visionary experience, which will have encouraged this more worrisome association. The destructiveness of fire makes it a natural symbol of judgment (Deut 4:24; Ps 18:8-13 [9–14]; 21:9 [10]; 50:3; 97:3). “The unapproachable holiness and terrifying power” of God made Israel see “as the appropriate symbol and speaking likeness of the divine nature that element distinguished above all others for the suddenness of its outbreaks and for the mockery which it makes of all human defences.”[[120]](#footnote-120)

The thousands and myriads of courtiers attend upon the one advanced in years (cf. Deut 33:2; 1 Kgs 22:19; Ps 68:17 [18]).[[121]](#footnote-121) It is not they who are to be judged (cf. also *1 Enoch* 1.9).[[122]](#footnote-122) They are God’s heavenly army, though their military role is not in focus here. The notion of books being consulted again has its background in the life of the royal court, which necessarily keeps records of events and decisions (Ezra 4:15; Esth 6:1). This feature of court practice is naturally included when the royal court image is used to picture the workings of heaven.[[123]](#footnote-123) God’s books sometimes record God’s purposes regarding the final issues of history or regarding particular segments of history (cf. the sealed books of 8:26; 9:24; 10:21; 12:4, 9). They sometimes record God’s expectations of human conduct and his intentions regarding the judgment of humanity in light of how far they fulfill these expectations, or fail to do so (e.g., *1 Enoch* 81; 93.1–3; 103.2; *Jubilees* 5.12–19; 16.9; 23.32). Any of these significances might be relevant in the present context; the idea of books that contain a citizen list, a list of the people who belong to God (12:1), or that record people’s deeds and afflictions seems less relevant here. The people whose names would be in God’s book have not yet come into focus in the vision, while the deeds that are to be judged are the ones before our eyes in the vision, not ones recorded in books. The scene is not a “great assize” when judgment is passed on all human beings individually.[[124]](#footnote-124)

**11–12** Execution by burning was a familiar idea (Gen 38:24; Lev 20:14; 21:9; Josh 7:15, 25; also Dan 3) and a common way of speaking of divine punishment (e.g., Isa 30:33; Ezek 28:18; 38:22; Ps 11:6). Other passages that speak of victory over the sea/dragon (e.g., Isa 27:1; 51:9–10) use different imagery to speak of the same judgment as is executed here. The destructive fire seems not to be identified with the theophanic flame of vv 9–10: the words are different, the stress there being on brightness. More significant is a more detailed judgment scene in *1 Enoch* 90.20–27, of parallel significance to Dan 7; it describes wicked stars, shepherds, and sheep being thrown into a fiery abyss. As with the books of v 10, a motif in Daniel is thus worked out in more detail in other apocalypses. While these parallels may help to illumine the allusion, their detail should not be read into it.

As the whole statue is destroyed at once in chap. 2, all four creatures lose authority together, though v 12b adds a nuance. It has been interpreted historically, of Babylonia, Media, and Persia keeping their identity within succeeding empires down to the Greek period, or being expected to regain independence on the dissolution of the Greek empire.[[125]](#footnote-125) But interpreting the words in this way is to allegorize. More likely, the vision is making a theological point, taken up in vv 14 and 27: the kingdoms submit to God and his people either in receiving judgment or in doing honor. It would be in keeping with vv 26–27 if the three are allowed to survive in order to serve the people of God, in accordance with promises in Isa 14:1–2; 49:22–23; 60:12,[[126]](#footnote-126) but the point is not explicit.

**13–14** The lengthy opening formula advertises that we are by no means yet through the awesome scenes in the vision. The formula resembles the ones in vv 2 and 7, which introduced the four animals and then the fourth in particular; the scene we are about to witness balances both.[[127]](#footnote-127)

Independently of their context in Dan 7, vv 13–14 might describe an ascent from earth to heaven, as in *1 Enoch* 14; 4 Ezra 13, or a movement within the heavens in which the whole scene is then set, as in the Ba’al myth; but in their context in Dan 7, they describe a movement from the heavens to the earth. The phrase “among the clouds of the heavens,” brought to the front of its clause despite its thereby separating ארו from its predicate, draws our attention away from earth where the vision has been located so far[[128]](#footnote-128) and towards the heavens, the position of the figure who is about to be described and who now moves towards the court. The description compares with the coming of God to earth in, e.g., Isa 19:1; Ps 18:9-12 [10–13].[[129]](#footnote-129) But the figure who comes is “one in human likeness.” As אדם בן literally means “a human being” (cf. 8:17), עולה בן “a wicked person,” and אנש יד “a human hand,”

אנש בר literally means “a human being.”[[130]](#footnote-130) “Son of man” is a literalistic Semitism.[[131]](#footnote-131)

אנש בר and אדם בן are always anarthrous in the OT: in other words, the term “the human being” (the son-of-man) does not occur. It does come to be a title for a particular individual in *1 Enoch* 37–71, 4 Ezra 13, the NT, and rabbinic writings. These works use the motif in varying ways, and even there it is doubtful whether we should think in terms of a “Son of Man concept” in Judaism. Still less is there evidence that in the second century BC the phrase is used as a title or alludes to a well-known concept.[[132]](#footnote-132) Nor is there indication of this idea in Dan 7:13–14, any more than is the case with expressions such as “a lion”—or “a man”—in v 4, “a leopard” in v 6, or even “one advanced in years” in v 9. In each case the terms are anarthrous; contrast “the Great Sea” in v 2, and “the One On High” in v 25.

אנש בר is qualified by כ‍ “like”: hence “one in human likeness,” or more literally “one like a human being.” The phrase “like a human being” formally compares with the earlier phrases “like a lion,” “resembling a bear,” and “like a leopard” (vv 4, 5, 6). Each of those phrases, however, was followed by a clause that qualified the description and explained how the creatures were “like” but not identical with these animals. In the case of the “one like a human being” there is no such qualification, unless it lies in the preceding phrase “among the clouds of the heavens.” The expression rather parallels the varied, though more complex, כ‍ phrases in 8:15; 10:16, 18. Like the figures who appear there, the one here entirely resembles a human being; it is not partly animal, like the sphinxes in Ezek 1.[[133]](#footnote-133) The כ‍ does add mystery to the description, in a way appropriate to a vision.[[134]](#footnote-134) In Dan 7, the four creatures together, the fourth creature, and the one advanced in years are described without כ‍; there is comparable variation within Ezek 1, and it would be hazardous to infer that this was more than a matter of stylistic flexibility. The idea is not that the creatures and the one advanced in years exist, in a sense in which the human being does not, though it might be that the preposition clarified that the “human being” is not actually human.[[135]](#footnote-135)

What are the implications of describing the figure as humanlike? Earlier verses in Dan 7 have used the motif of being human over against being animal to denote having a position of authority. That position was granted to the first animal and grasped for by the small horn (vv 4, 8). This connotation continues in vv 13–14. If there is a link with extrabiblical connotations of the description, it is that in some contexts both אנש בר and אדם בן can be lofty terms, to mean a “Somebody.”[[136]](#footnote-136) There are no grounds within Dan 7 for linking the humanlike figure with primal humanity concepts known from elsewhere (see *Form*). But אנש בר may—perhaps subconsciously—reflect the אדם בן of Ps 8:4-6 [5–7]; 80:17 [18]; Job 25:6, texts which overlap theologically with Dan 7:13–14, though the evidence is not compelling. Describing the figure as humanlike does not in itself indicate that it is a figure representing Humanity coming to be enthroned as king of the universe. Yet the humanlike figure does come in order to be invested as king (v 14). The sovereignty he is given is like God’s own (cf. 4:3; 6:26), the rule described in the first symbolic dream (2:44–45). He is given the power Nebuchadnezzar once exercised (2:37; 5:19; cf. 6:25). In serving him, people indirectly serve God, like the foreigners pictured as serving Israel in Isa 60:7, 10; 61:6.[[137]](#footnote-137)

In other contexts “a humanlike figure” could rather suggest the frailty of mere humanity (e.g., Ps 144:3–4; 146:3). A feeble human then stands over against the horned creature. The NT may have drawn the inference that the humanlike figure is himself someone who suffers, partly by associating the humanlike figure with the servant of Isa 52:13–53:12, but the inference is not drawn in Dan 7. The four creatures do not attack the humanlike figure, and the logic that has them do so is the logic of allegory. The picture is of conflict and victory rather than affliction and deliverance.[[138]](#footnote-138) The verses describe the appearing, presentation, and investiture of someone notable and imposing, not the exaltation of a previously lowly figure.

So the humanlike figure is a symbol for some entity given authority by God. But whom does he represent? What is the referent of the symbol? The symbolic vision does not make the answer explicit. This lack arises partly from the nature of such a vision. It will be the interpretive vision that reveals the referents of the symbols. Part of the point about a symbolic vision is to engage its recipients so as to draw them into the significances and value judgments it attaches to the referents while being discouraged from overtly focusing on what the referents are and therefore perhaps resisting the vision’s message. In studying the symbolic vision, a preoccupation with identifying the referent of the symbols is to miss its point. Nevertheless, a wide range of suggestions has been offered regarding the figure’s identity.

The expression “a human being” can denote a person such as Ezekiel or Daniel. Like Ezekiel, Daniel is addressed as אדם בן in 8:17, and in *1 Enoch* the visionary is identified by an equivalent to this phrase. Yet these data are hardly enough to make it natural to read 7:13–14 as referring to Daniel.[[139]](#footnote-139)

As the animals stand for gentile kings who also represent their peoples, the humanlike figure could refer to a leader of Israel who at the same time represents Israel as a whole, as happens in some other OT passages (see *Form*). On the basis of Deut 32:1–4, the humanlike figure has been identified as Moses, implying a promise that Moses will return to redeem Israel; but the pointers are scanty.[[140]](#footnote-140) It has been seen as a symbol for the Maccabean leaders on the way to the Davidic throne: compare the association of God’s kingship and those who are committed to him (חסידים) in Pss 145; 149 (cf. 1 Macc 2:42).[[141]](#footnote-141) More specifically, it has been identified as Israel’s actual leader whose rule followed that of Antiochus, Judas Maccabeus; the vision would thus mark God’s approval of the Maccabean victory.[[142]](#footnote-142) But this view presupposes that Daniel was written after the temple restoration; and there are no specific pointers to Judas, while in general the book’s sympathies within loyal Judaism are usually thought to be more with the strand that was looking for God to act than with the active resistance of the Maccabees (cf. 11:34?).

Jewish and Christian tradition has commonly understood the humanlike figure to be the hoped-for future Davidic king of Israel who would fulfill the hopes expressed in OT prophecy—the “Messiah.”[[143]](#footnote-143) One of the thrones mentioned in v 9 might then be meant for him, so that the scene parallels Ps 110:1; cf. 80:17 [18].[[144]](#footnote-144) For the Messiah to be a heavenly figure would be a novel idea; by definition, he is an earthly descendant of David. But the portrayal of him coming with the clouds of the heavens might simply signify that he comes by God’s initiative and as his gift, without suggesting that he is other than human. Ps 2 describes the anointed king as begotten by God and installed by God, without implying he is other than human. Nevertheless, if the humanlike figure is the Messiah, he has a transcendent dimension. If the idea of the Messiah moves between a God pole and a human pole, this humanlike figure is at the former.[[145]](#footnote-145) Seeing the humanlike figure as the fulfillment of Israel’s hopes of a coming king draws attention to links between Dan 7 and Dan 1–6 in the latter’s focus on God’s reign. 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 an earthly Davidide. Dan 7 is concerned with God’s reign in the world rather than with God’s temple in Jerusalem—a concern of chaps. 8–9. Whether or not the human figure is royal, he is not priestly.[[146]](#footnote-146) But the grounds for identifying the humanlike figure as the Davidic anointed are circumstantial. There are no direct pointers to this idea in the text. While Daniel later refers to an anointed leader (נגיד משיח, 9:25, cf. 26), that anointed leader is not a “Messiah” (see *Comment*).

The subsequent implied identification of the humanlike figure with the holy ones on high (v 18) leads to the alternative proposal that the humanlike figure denotes not the Davidic ruler in particular but the Israelite people as a whole. A British tradition of approach to Dan 7, chiefly among NT scholars, then associates this possibility with the motif of the attacks on the holy beings in vv 21–22, 25. These attacks signify the persecution of conservative Jews by Antiochus. The humanlike figure thus stands for the frail, afflicted, but faithful element within Israel, to be vindicated and given lasting kingly power.[[147]](#footnote-147) This people’s coming among the clouds would then suggest its coming by God’s initiative. The humanlike figure is a symbolic abstraction, like John Bull as a symbol of the English people.[[148]](#footnote-148) Some OT references to a human figure (אדם בן) may refer either to Israel or to the Israelite king: Ps 80 pictures the nations behaving like animals and prays for God to support and restore the human figure at God’s right hand.[[149]](#footnote-149) In Dan 7, where the humanlike figure balances the creatures, it would not be surprising if it had both individual and corporate reference, like them (in connection with a vision, there is no need for appeal to the idea of corporate personality in this connection).[[150]](#footnote-150)

Describing the figure as humanlike implies a contrast over against the four animals, but it need not imply that the figure is human, still less that its extra-visionary referent is human, any more than the animal figures refer to animals. In isolation from the context, v 13a would most naturally denote God himself: he characteristically appears with the clouds of the heavens (Ba’al’s entourage in myths) and characteristically appears humanlike (cf. Ezek 1:26). Thus the humanlike figure has been taken as a hypostatized manifestation of God like the figure of Wisdom in Prov 8,[[151]](#footnote-151) or as taking up the portrayal of God as humanlike in Ezek 1, a hypostatized image of God, embodying his lordship,[[152]](#footnote-152) or as a heavenly being with honors and powers normally predicated of God,[[153]](#footnote-153) or as standing for a divine figure who suggests the deification of Israel at the End.[[154]](#footnote-154) But it is a long step from a belief in a renewed and celestial Israel, such as the interpretive vision may envisage, to the deification of Israel, and given that the one advanced in years stands for God, it is difficult to attribute divine significance to this second figure.

The scene’s pointers towards the unlikely conclusion that it envisages two divine beings[[155]](#footnote-155) reflect its background in mythic material concerning the installation of a junior god by a senior god,[[156]](#footnote-156) and the OT often pictures the heavens as having the same hierarchy as the ancient Near Eastern material but with the place of lesser gods being taken by the one God’s heavenly but nondivine aides. Further, humanlike figures are regularly celestial beings in subsequent visions in Daniel (8:15–16; 9:21; 10:5 [?], 16, 18; 12:6–7). Human beings over against animals in apocalypses such as *1 Enoch* 89–90, too, suggest supernatural (but not divine) beings over against human beings. To speak of a scheme of symbolism in the apocalypses, whereby God is represented by light, fire, and cloud, celestial beings by stars or human beings, the righteous by clean animals, the wicked by unclean animals and predators, demons by hybrids,[[157]](#footnote-157) is to overschematize the presentation.[[158]](#footnote-158) But the parallels are suggestive, and they add to hints that the humanlike figure has a celestial rather than a human referent. Celestial beings other than God do not appear in or on the clouds of the heavens elsewhere in the OT; only God comes on the clouds (Isa 19:1; Ps 104:3). But it may then be significant that the humanlike figure comes with/among them, not on them. Moses enters the theophanic cloud in Exod 24:18, and the cloud comes to collect Moses in Josephus (*Antiquities* 4.4.48 [4.326]; cf. *b. Yoma* 4a; *Pesiqta Rabbah* 20:4), to collect Jesus in Acts 1:9, to collect believers in 1 Thess 4:17, and to carry Israel in targums to Exod 19:4.[[159]](#footnote-159)

The humanlike figure might thus be a celestial being who represents Israel in the heavens.[[160]](#footnote-160) Elsewhere in Dan 7 celestial beings appear simply as attendants and interpreters (vv 10, 16), but in v 13 one of them might have a more substantial function. Chaps. 8–12 portray celestial beings fulfilling various roles, and they offer several possibilities regarding the identification of the humanlike figure. He might be equated with the further unnamed awesome and mysterious man dressed in linen of 10:5–12:13, who is also described in quasi-divine terms, linking him with Michael and the Metatron of *1 Enoch*,[[161]](#footnote-161) though this identification seems to explain one enigma by another. A less opaque possibility is Gabriel, though he is supremely the heavenly interpreter (8:16–26; 9:21–27), and if he appears in chap. 7, it is as the one who fulfills this role in vv 16–23.[[162]](#footnote-162) The “coming” (אתה) of the humanlike figure might be compared with that of the heavenly lookout in 4:13-17 [10–14],[[163]](#footnote-163) though again the significance of the two comings—in the chapters as we know them—is rather different.

The role of the humanlike figure is closer to that of Michael himself in 10:13, 21; 12:1. Michael (מיכאל, “who is like God”) is an ordinary OT name (e.g., Ezra 8:8), but Michael, like Gabriel, is one of the senior celestial beings in *1 Enoch* (e.g., 9.1; 20.5; 71.9). In Dan 10—12 he is one of the supreme celestial leaders who is especially identified with Israel and is committed to standing by them and standing firm on their behalf against celestial leaders identified with other peoples.[[164]](#footnote-164) The authority he exercises in the heavens parallels that bestowed on the humanlike figure in 7:14, who appears at a similar moment to the one when Michael appears in chap. 12, the moment when evil power overreaches itself and God’s final intervention comes.[[165]](#footnote-165) The Qumran War Scroll (1QM 17.5–8) promises the overthrow of the leader of the wicked kingdom as the kingdom of Michael is exalted in the midst of the gods, and the realm of Israel in the midst of all flesh,[[166]](#footnote-166) though the humanlike figure is not a combatant in Dan 7 as Michael is in chaps. 10–12.[[167]](#footnote-167) But this difference may reflect the fact that the present scene takes place on earth; Michael’s battles take place in the heavens. That the same celestial person could have different roles in different contexts, as would be envisaged for Michael, is indicated by the portrait of Melchizedeq in 11Q Melchizedeq.[[168]](#footnote-168)

If the figure is Michael, or Gabriel, or any other specific individual, it is odd that he appears only here and not in vv 18, 22, and 27. Indeed, the humanlike figure’s failure to appear in the interpretive section of the vision might indicate that it is not a particularly important feature of the chapter.[[169]](#footnote-169) The suggestion that an earlier form of v 13 did name a particular celestial being[[170]](#footnote-170) highlights the lack of a name in chap. 7 as we know it. The figure (like the interpreter of v 16) is unidentified; this facet of the chapter is one which interpretation has to preserve. Here, too, later chapters must not be read back into this one.[[171]](#footnote-171) “The interpreting angel … does not show any interest in identifying the humanlike one with any specific leader of the holy ones” (or with anyone else). “Even if the humanlike one is originally a collective symbol for the angels, the subsequent visions in Daniel reinterpret this figure with increasing specificity, as leader of the host (8:11) and as Michael (10:21; 12:1).”[[172]](#footnote-172) Perhaps the people with whom the vision was shared had information that enabled them to discern this (or some other) reference of the image. Neverthless, chap. 7 invites them to focus on the humanlike figure’s role rather than its identity.

**15–16** While troubled perplexity is a response to which the chapter genuinely invites its audience, accounts of a symbolic vision commonly involve another being who explains the vision, as well as the visionary himself. This was so in chap. 2, where Nebuchadnezzar’s response on waking after his symbolic dream was described in terms similar to the ones used here of Daniel. Relating a mysterious vision which combines ominous and encouraging features yet which is not of wholly patent meaning creates a suspense that is heightened by the separation of symbolic vision and explanation. Alarm and encouragement are invited, but the basis for them is withheld. It will come with more force when revealed. So rhetorically, it is not so strange that the expert reader has become the baffled reader.[[173]](#footnote-173)

Chap. 7 resumes the pattern of symbolic visions elsewhere in the OT, the pattern where the interpretation is given within the vision. For pre-exilic prophets, God was the interpreter (Amos 7–8; Jer 1). In Ezek 40–48; Zech 1–6 God again appears, but his aides played the major interpretive role. In Dan 7, Daniel instinctively turns to one of the celestial attendants within his vision (apparently identified as Gabriel in 8:16). In Dan 8–12, interpretive revelations are given on heavenly initiative. The source of the interpretation guarantees that it comes from heaven, not from mere human insight.

**17** The initial interpretation of the vision in vv 17–18 is brief. It puts a focus on the central fact of a heavenly kingdom to succeed the earthly ones. It also increases suspense; by its omissions it draws attention to aspects of the symbolic vision that remain unexplained. The Great Sea in the symbolic vision stands for the world (etymologically, the “Mediterranean” is the sea in “the middle of the world”—though the name dates only from medieval times). The idea that the forces of disorder symbolized by crashing waters are embodied in the turbulent history of the nations perhaps underlies Isa 17:12–13; Jer 46:7–8, and the interpretation of the Great Sea here.

The four kings stand for their kingdoms (cf. v 23). Reference to both kings and kingdoms has already alternated in 2:37–45, and the animals in 8:20–22 will denote two entire lines of kings, while the buck’s large horn denotes one individual king. The identity of the kingdoms is only partly explained in 8:20-22, and it is not at all explained here. Rhetorically, then, the interpretive situation parallels that regarding the humanlike figure.

The four kingdoms could be taken as the four powers that divided Alexander’s empire among themselves.[[174]](#footnote-174) That the animals emerge from the sea one by one need not in itself rule out the kingdoms’ being concurrent, as the ten horns of v 7 appear together yet represent consecutive kings; the simultaneity is simply a feature of the visionary presentation to Daniel, like the fact that all four are pictured as future. The fourfold Greek empire does appear in connection with the four winds of the heavens (cf. v 2) in 8:8; 11:4. They could alternatively be taken as four second-century powers looked at from an eastern Mediterranean perspective (cf. v 2), Egypt in the south, Parthia in the east, Rome in the west, and Syria in the north.[[175]](#footnote-175)

The major obstacle to these theories is that they involve taking chap. 7 in isolation both from Dan 1–6 and from Dan 8–12. The four-empire scheme of chap. 7 need not be identical to that of chap. 2,[[176]](#footnote-176) but it does link with it in some way: chap. 2 explicitly refers to a sequence of kings beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, and the portrayal of the first animal in 7:4 takes up the portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar. Similarly, there may be differences of detail between chaps. 8–12 and chap. 7, but these visions again link with each other, and each of the visions in chaps. 8–12 begins in Daniel’s own time and offers a perspective on history from the Babylonian/early Persian period to the Antiochene period. When the interpreter in chap. 7 speaks as if Babylon as much as the succeeding empires is still future, the effect is to distance even the (implied) sixth-century reader from the sixth century context: we stand back from the total history of the kingdoms and survey it as a whole.

If we are to attempt to identify the four regimes in chap. 2, I have suggested that they are the regimes of the four kings who appear in Dan 1–6, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus. Nothing specific points to this understanding of chap. 7. If we are to attempt to identify the four empires in this chapter, its omitting to give any indication of their identity would permit the fourth empire to be Rome, as traditional Jewish and Christian interpretation has held.[[177]](#footnote-177) But the succeeding visions suggest that the four kingdoms span the period from Daniel’s lifetime to the Greek period, so one would expect the fourth kingdom in chap. 7 to be Greece, which fits the chapter just as well. Indeed, the portrait of the small horn in v 8 (cf. vv 20–21, 24–25) matches the portrait in 8:9–14, 23–25, which unequivocally denotes Antiochus. In chap. 7 the small horn seeks to behave in an impressive and humanlike way, comes to look bigger than the others, makes war on holy beings and prevails over them, makes statements hostile to God, and plans to change times set by decree, which are given into its control for a time limited to “three and a half periods” until its authority is taken away by God’s judgment.[[178]](#footnote-178) In chap. 8 the small horn grows in several directions, attacks the celestial army and overthrows some of it, grows within reach of the army commander, attacks the sanctuary itself and is given control of the daily offerings, for a time limited to 2,300 evenings and mornings, until it is broken by supernatural power. The interpretation further emphasizes the king’s trickery, power, and destructiveness. The features of the two portraits are similar: the small horn’s size and strength, its partially successful attack on the holy/celestial beings, its interference with God’s own realm, and the assurance that a limit is set to its power.

The different images and details complement each other. In chap. 8 the small horn emerges after the appearance of four earlier horns (8:8; contrast the ten here): in other words, it is given a connection with a group of four kings, not a group of ten. In chap. 8 it grows from one of the four existent horns, without harming any of them or increasing their number, whereas in chap. 7 it grows as an additional horn among the ten, three of which are uprooted. This difference follows directly from the focus in chap. 7 on the king’s relationship to other kings in his line, whereas chap. 8 focuses on the king’s relationship to the four “parent” post-Alexander kingdoms. The differences between the two chapters do not make the portraits of the small horn incompatible. While they could denote different kings, when they are juxtaposed in the same book this understanding is not the natural one.

The small horn in chap. 8 is Antiochus. The parallels just considered suggest that he is also the last king in chap. 7; within the OT period, he alone fits the portrait in v 8.[[179]](#footnote-179) Further, in 8:17 Daniel is told that his vision of the small horn relates to the time of the end; the Greek empire is the last empire. A similar perspective emerges in Dan 10–12. Daniel could hardly be told so if he had already received a vision that looked beyond the Greek period to another historical era, that of Rome.[[180]](#footnote-180) Antiochus’s being the small horn that appears after the others and displaces some of them (see on v 24) refers to his not being in line for the throne, being a younger son of Antiochus III (cf. 11:21).

The oldest allusion to Dan 7, in *Sibylline Oracles* 3.388–400, presupposes this same understanding. Possibly the main oracle there originally referred to Alexander,[[181]](#footnote-181) but vv 396–400 at least allude to Antiochus IV in terms that correspond to Dan 7:7–8 (ten horns and an extra horn). These verses presumably come from the second century, perhaps c. 140.[[182]](#footnote-182) Their understanding of Dan 7 is also presupposed by 2 Esd 12:10–12. It reappears in Porphyry (AD 233–304), in the fourth-century Syrian writers Aphrahat and Ephrem, and in later writings representing the “Syrian tradition.”[[183]](#footnote-183) *Sibylline Oracles* 4 also assumes a four-empire scheme culminating with the Greeks, but it adds Rome to the sequence, without explicitly bringing it into the scheme as a fifth empire.[[184]](#footnote-184) Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BC) treats Rome as the fifth in the traditional scheme, following Assyria, Media, Persia, and Greece,[[185]](#footnote-185) and Rome does feature in Daniel as a power rising in the west in the second century (11:30). In the context of contemporary expectation that Rome was destined to be the fifth empire (cf. Appian, *Civil Wars* 8.19 [132]), Daniel may be covertly denying it such a status. Daniel gives Rome no place in the scheme of empires. Subsequently Rome comes to be incorporated into the scheme in a different way, as the fourth and climactic power in the four-empire sequence.[[186]](#footnote-186) The small horn is then assumed to be Vespasian[[187]](#footnote-187) or, more commonly, Titus. That the Roman interpretation is a novel one unknown to Daniel is explicit in 2 Esd 12:10–12 (c. AD 90). Here God explains a vision that “Ezra” has seen: “the eagle you saw rising from the sea represents the fourth kingdom in the vision seen by your brother Daniel. But he was not given the interpretation which I am now giving you or have given you…” (God goes on to describe the Romans).

If we are to identify the empires in Dan 7, first is Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon, the fourth is Greece. There is less certainty the second and third kingdoms. Reading them in light of chap. 2 would suggest that they are the two regimes on which the stories majored after Nebuchadnezzar, those of Belshazzar and Darius.[[188]](#footnote-188) The description of the second creature with its voracious appetite then takes up the banquet theme of chap. 5, and the description of the third as given domain follows that of the worldwide authority attributed to Darius in chap. 6. Porphyry understood them as Medo-Persia and Alexander’s Greek empire, the fourth creature then representing the Seleucid kingdom in particular.[[189]](#footnote-189) But Dan 7 sees the fourth empire as stronger and more violent than the third: this estimate of the Seleucids in relation to Alexander is not the one generally suggested by historians or the one indicated by 8:22; 11:3–4.[[190]](#footnote-190) Further, Dan 8 seems to see the Seleucid monarchy as part of the Greek empire.[[191]](#footnote-191)

The “Syrian tradition” generally takes the intermediate empires to be Media and Persia, in line with the traditional scheme; so also nearly all critical scholars. Admittedly, Media and Persia are treated as two parts of one empire in chap. 8; compare the references to the [one] law of the Medo-Persian empire in 6:8, 12, 15 [9, 13, 16] and the prophecy that Belshazzar’s kingdom will be given to the Medes and Persians in 5:28. On the other hand, earlier chapters have portrayed the Babylonian empire giving way to rule by a Mede and then by a Persian (5:31; 6:28 [29]; cf. 9:1; 10:1), and historically Cyrus’ Persian Empire possessed an authority that Darius’s Median rule did not (cf. 7:5–6). Indeed, before Cyrus’ time Media had become *the* power in the Middle East.[[192]](#footnote-192)

There is little evidence to take into account in identifying the second and third kingdoms, and each interpretation gives a slightly artificial result. This reflects two facts. First, Daniel is not very interested in the second and third kingdoms, and perhaps had no opinion regarding their identity. Second, the four-empire scheme as a whole is more important than the identification of its parts. Dan 7 is applying a well-known scheme to a period that has to begin with the Babylonian period and end with the Antiochene crisis. As is the case with Paul’s horticultural analogy in Rom 11 (grafting branches out of a tree and then grafting them back), utilizing the four-empire scheme involves squeezing historical and theological material into a pre-existent mold that was not designed for it. We should not therefore allegorize the details. The phenomenon will recur with the 490-year scheme of Dan 9.

**18** Those who will “take over the kingship” (מלכותא קבל, the ordinary term for succeeding to the throne (cf. 5:31 [6:1]), when the regular sequence of kingdoms has run its course, will take over the same kingship held by the four preceding regimes. There is only one kingship, and this kingship which succeeds those other kingships is presumably, like them, a rule exercised in the world, as in earlier chapters. Yet it is a rule derived from heaven. As much has been implied by the earlier symbolism of the humanlike figure coming among the clouds of the heavens, but it is now explicit in the description of those who exercise this rule, עליונין קדישי (“holy ones on high”: see n. 18.a).

This phrase appears only in Dan 7:18, 22, 25, 28, though a near-equivalent in Hebrew,

עליון קדושי “holy ones of the One On High” occurs in CD 20.8. The word conventionally translated *holy*, קדוש, is not a moral term; it denotes the distinctive, absolute, transcendence of deity, though because Yahweh is *the* holy one and Yahweh is centrally characterized by moral qualities such as faithfulness and compassion, the word *holy* comes to have moral connotations. By extension, the term *holy* applies to other supernatural beings, to earthly entities associated with deity such as sanctuaries and their personnel, and to Israel as the people distinctively set apart by God. Further, the status of being קדוש implies a commitment to be קדוש in the way one lives. So the Israelites *were* holy people by virtue of being set apart by God; but in addition there would be people within Israel who were קדושים in the sense that they had accepted this commitment, and others who had not and were not. In principle, then, BA קדישין could denote supernatural beings, or the Israelites as a whole, or people within Israel who were faithful to God, or a sacral group within Israel such as the priesthood.

In the OT, קדושים most commonly denotes heavenly beings.[[193]](#footnote-193) This reference is clearest in Ps 89:5, 7 [6, 8]; Job 5:1; 15:15; see also Deut 33:2–3; Hos 12:1; Zech 14:5; Ps 16:3; Prov 9:10; 30:3. The usage is also common in other Jewish writings (e.g., Sirach 42:17; Wisdom 10:10; *Jubilees* 17.11; *T. Levi* 3.3; *1 Enoch* 12.2; 14.23; 1QapGen 2.1; 1QM 15.14). In the OT, only in Ps 34:9 [10] does the noun קדושים clearly refer to human beings (though the adjective has this reference in Lev 19:2; Num 16:3). In other Jewish writings that usage is more common (e.g., Tob 12:15; 1 Macc 1:46; *T. Levi* 18.11, 14; *T. Issachar* 5.4; *1 Enoch* 93.6 [*OTP* has a misprint here]; 1QM 3.4–5; 10.10). It can denote Israelites in general, the righteous on earth, or believers kept safe after death.[[194]](#footnote-194)

Many passages in the OT and in other Jewish writings are of uncertain reference. Some of this ambiguity may reflect a close association between the earthly people of God and God’s servants in the heavens. A suggestive passage is 1QM 12.8–9: “You, O God, are awesome in your kingly glory, and the congregation of your holy ones is among us for eternal help. We despise kings, we mock and scorn the warriors, for a holy one, the Lord, the glorious King is with us, a people of [עַם: but should it be pointed עִם, ‘with’?] holy warriors, and an army of aides is among our levy. The Mighty Warrior is in our congregation and the army of his spirits is with our infantry and horsemen.” In Dan 7, then, general Jewish usage would thus permit a reference either to supernatural or to earthly beings.

Whoever the holy ones are, the notion of their receiving permanent royal authority on earth is a new one in the OT, though not one without antecedents. Prophets envisage the world bowing down to Israel (e.g., Isa 14:2; 60:12), and this idea appears in later Jewish writings (cf. 1QM 1.5; 12.14–16 = 19.7–8). Wisdom 3:8 speaks of the righteous ruling over nations after their death (cf. 5:6; 6:20–21). Supernatural beings rule individual nations according to Deut 32:8 4QDeut, LXX (cf. Ps 82), while 1QM 17.6–8 refers to the princely authority exercised by Michael, though this is an authority in the heavenly realm.

Within Daniel itself, קדוש/קדיש regularly denotes a heavenly being (seven times in chaps. 4–5, also 8:13; 8:24 corresponds to the use of the expression in chap. 7 [esp. v 27] and its interpretation will follow from the interpretation of that occurrence). Conversely, the book has so far made no allusion to Israel and its destiny. Dan 2:34, 44–45 envisages a kingdom set up by God; Israel is not referred to. And to refer to the “saints,” to Israel or to the faithful within Israel, the author has available the term חסיד (*ḥasid*), familiar from the OT (Ps 30:4 [5]; 31:23 [24]) and in use in the second century (cf. 1 Macc 2:42; 7:13), or other expressions used in chaps. 10–12. On the other hand, references given above indicate that several documents (e.g., *1 Enoch*, 1QM) use terms such as קדישין to refer both to heavenly and to earthly beings, in different contexts. The use of קדושים to denote heavenly beings elsewhere in Daniel need not determine its meaning in chap. 7 ( קדש עם in 12:7 presumably denotes an earthly people).

Similar considerations arise when we move on to consider the word that qualifies קדישין, עליונין (“[on] high”; see n. 18.a). עליון “high” refers to Israel (as קדש עם, “a holy people”) in comparison with other nations in Deut 26:19; cf. 28:1; to the human ruler in Ps 89:27 [28], compare perhaps עליון בני “sons of the One On High” in Ps 82:6; and to the temple in 1 Kgs 9:8. Plural ונים עלי, however, commonly denotes heavenly beings in later Hebrew (so *DTT*: e.g., *Lev Rabbah* 9).

The compound expression could grammatically mean “the most holy ones among those on high” and thus designate a particular category of heavenly beings (cf. *1 Enoch* 14.23), but Daniel gives no indication elsewhere of thinking in terms of various groups of heavenly beings. Nor is there specific reason to understand the phrase to denote Israel or the faithful within Israel when they have been transformed into heavenly beings after death and join other supernatural beings, in rest in heaven or in ruling on earth, as in *1 Enoch* 90.38 and in later apocalypses (cf. *1 Enoch* 39; *T. Dan* 5.11–12).[[195]](#footnote-195)

The conclusion we reach regarding the “holy ones on high” is similar to our conclusion regarding the humanlike figure that this expression explains: the phrase is allusive, though marginally more likely to denote celestial beings than earthly ones.[[196]](#footnote-196) Again, however, we need a caveat: whereas v 17 explicitly indicates that the four creatures stand for four kings, v 18 does not explicitly say that the humanlike figure stands for the holy ones on high.[[197]](#footnote-197) Further the dichotomy between earthly and supernatural may be false. In 1QM celestial beings and glorified Israelites mingle, which suggests that קדישין in Dan 7 could embrace both.[[198]](#footnote-198) Admittedly, the double reference is rarer than either of the individual references and may be thought to have the advantage of neither, and if the heirs of God’s kingdom are to be a body that includes both celestial beings and faithful Israelites, this point ought to be said somewhere clearly.[[199]](#footnote-199) But the trouble with Dan 7 is that it does not say anything unequivocally about the holy ones’ identity: it is on this account that there is a scholarly argument over the expression. As is the case with the humanlike figure, Dan 7 is too allusive to enable us to decide with certainty whether the holy ones are celestial beings, earthly beings, or both.

The effect is at least to make clear that the vision does not imply that a supernatural people quite separate from Israel is to rule the world, an expectation that might not be an irrelevant one:[[200]](#footnote-200) it is an intelligible answer to questions about theodicy raised by the Antiochene crisis. But neither does the vision simply promise that the earthly Israel to which visionary and audience belong is to rule the world: that understanding underplays the supernatural overtones of “holy ones on high.” If v 18 refers to Israel at all, it is to Israel as a supernatural people. The vision hardly suggests a purely this-worldly, historical victory of a purely this-worldly, historical Israel over its purely this-worldly, historical enemies. Its hope is based on the fact that the attacks of Antiochus have as their object more than a merely earthly people. God’s own people, purpose, and authority are involved. He will see that a more-than-earthly victory is achieved in a situation where there can be no earthly hope. But the vision leaves unclear whether the holy ones who are destined to rule are Israel’s celestial protagonists, or their protagonists mingling among Israel, or Israelites who are dead but glorified, or living Israelites viewed as having supernatural significance now. Perhaps the visionary did not know.

Subsequent verses ask for and receive clarification on aspects of the outline interpretation in vv 17–18, but v 17 is elaborated more than v 18. In focusing our attention on the clarification of v 18, we divert from the vision’s agenda.

**19–22** The recapitulated description of the fourth creature in vv 19–20 adds that it had bronze claws, like the Babylonian *sirussu*, and that the small horn eventually looked bigger than its companions. In vv. 21-22, a more significant elaboration of vv 9–14 is signaled by the return to the report of the symbolic vision, with the resumptive הוית חזה “I watched.” The wickedness of the small horn becomes explicit. Can the small horn really be described as attacking and overcoming the holy ones if they are celestial beings?[[201]](#footnote-201) Yet this possibility is in keeping with 8:10–12, 24 (cf. earlier Isa 14:12–15), and the war imagery, not least in relation to celestial beings, is developed further in chaps. 10–12. Normally supernatural forces protected the temple; Antiochus’s violation of it implied that he had overwhelmed them.[[202]](#footnote-202)

**23–25** The further interpretation in vv 23–27 again largely repeats motifs from vv 7–14, 17–18, and 19–22. We cannot with certainty identify the ten kings arising from the fourth kingship, or the three who are overthrown. On the assumption that the chapter is fundamentally a unity (see *Structure*), the ten must be predecessors of the king symbolized by the small horn, and the three must be among the ten, not additional to them (cf. vv 7–8, 20). These assumptions exclude a number of theories. Ten might well be a round number that should not be pressed; three looks a more precise figure. The person responsible for overthrowing them seems to be Antiochus (see on v 17). We cannot press the symbolism of vv 7–8 to signify that the ten kings must be contemporaries, on the basis that the small horn appears among the ten horns as if they had grown simultaneously, any more than we can press the symbolism of chap. 2 to indicate that its four empires were contemporary, on the basis that the four metals appear simultaneously.

Various rulers might be seen as “uprooted” (v 8), “fallen” (v 20), and “laid low” (v 24) before Antiochus IV, including a number of foreign rulers, but v 8 seems to point to people who can be seen as Antiochus’s predecessors. Among these, the following have been suggested.[[203]](#footnote-203)

a. His father Antiochus III (223–187) met a violent end (Dan 11:19), and Antiochus IV may have been thought to have been in some way responsible. He was in Rome at the time.

b. Antiochus IV’s elder brother and predecessor, Seleucus IV (187–175), was murdered by his prime minister, Heliodorus. There is no evidence that Antiochus was behind the assassination (he was now in Athens), though he may have been behind it or may have been thought to have been behind it; certainly Seleucus’s murder opened the way to the throne for Antiochus.

c. Seleucus IV’s eldest son Demetrius I (who later ruled 162–150) was displaced by Antiochus in 175. He was in Rome as a hostage, having replaced his uncle Antiochus there.

d. Seleucus’s younger son Antiochus was proclaimed king and acted as co-regent with Antiochus IV for five years but was eventually killed, allegedly at Antiochus’s instigation.[[204]](#footnote-204)

e. Heliodorus had aspirations to the kingship and apparently hoped to rule the empire via the young Antiochus as puppet king; he was displaced by Antiochus IV.

f. Ptolemy VI, ruler of Egypt 181–146, was Antiochus IV’s uncle and had some claim to the Seleucid throne; Cleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII apparently ruled jointly with him for a period beginning in 170.[[205]](#footnote-205)Antiochus might be seen as having displaced him or them.

Seleucus IV, Demetrius, and the young Antiochus seem most likely to be the three referred to in vv 8 and 24:[[206]](#footnote-206) Antiochus III’s death is very distant to be relevant, Heliodorus was neither heir nor actual king, Ptolemy VI was not permanently displaced from his throne in Egypt nor certainly displaced from the Seleucid throne, to which he had less claim than Antiochus IV. But we do not know what precise information about events earlier in the century would have been available to an audience in the 160s and thus how they could have been expected to understand the allusion.

As for the ten kings, by Antiochus IV’s time many more than ten kings had arisen within the kingdoms into which Alexander’s empire had fragmented (see chap. 11 *Comment*). Which ten might v 24 denote?

a. Dan 11 refers altogether to twelve Seleucid and Ptolemaic kings who are there treated as relevant to the history of Palestine. This would be near enough to ten as a round number, but only two of the twelve (Seleucus IV and Ptolemy VI) could in any sense be described as overthrown by Antiochus.

b. It is possible to compile alternative lists of ten Seleucid and Ptolemaic kings who were relevant to the history of Palestine as rulers or would-be rulers there, and to include three overthrown by Antiochus, but it is impossible to know whether any one of these lists corresponds with the one envisaged by Dan 7.

c. Five Ptolemies and two Seleucids ruled Palestine from 323 to 200 and after 200 respectively. The list includes Antiochus III and Seleucus IV. The list can become ten adding (e.g.) Demetrius, the young Antiochus, and Ptolemy VI or Heliodorus, or by adding Alexander at the beginning and (e.g.) Demetrius and the young Antiochus at the end.

d. *Sibylline Oracles* 3.388–400 assumes that the ten are the Seleucid line, the most powerful continuing embodiment of a Greek empire in the second century,[[207]](#footnote-207) and this continues to be the most popular scholarly view. Again, Antiochus then had seven Seleucid predecessors, including Antiochus III and Seleucus IV, so that the list becomes ten by one of the devices just listed, or by adding Alexander I and Alexander II at the beginning and (e.g.) the young Antiochus or Demetrius at the end.

Antiochus’s distinctiveness (v 24) presumably lies in what is symbolized by the eyes and mouth of the small horn (vv 8, 20), which the end of v 24 and v 25 go on to interpret. The eyes suggest the covetousness and arrogance that issue in Antiochus’s forcing his way to the throne and in his attacks on the holy ones, while the great statements that come from his mouth now explicitly constitute expressions of enmity to God himself (see further on 8:10–12; 11:30–39). The times set by edict

( ודת זמנין) that Antiochus will attempt to change might refer to an attempt to replace the 364-day solar calendar by a 360-day lunar calendar. Calendrical questions were important in various circles in this period,[[208]](#footnote-208) but more detailed accounts of Antiochus’s interfering with Jewish religious affairs (8:11–14; 11:31–38; 1 Macc 1–4; 2 Macc 4–6) do not refer to calendrical changes, and it would be strange if conversely Dan 7 should single out this offence as the sole feature of Antiochus’s religious policy. More likely, “changing the times” has the same significance as in 2:21 (cf. also 2:9): it denotes taking decisions regarding how human history unfolds and in particular how one regime follows another. These are fixed by edict—God’s, not a human being’s (cf. the use of the word in 2:9, 13, 15).[[209]](#footnote-209) In forcing his way to the throne and bulldozing his way through history, Antiochus has defied the shaping of history otherwise laid out.

The question implicitly raised back at the end of v 7 is “How long will these things be allowed to go on?” (cf. the question “How long?” in the Psalms).[[210]](#footnote-210) The divine passive reappears; it “makes the divine the catalyst for history (though an invisible one) and reveals to the reading community that the little horn’s autonomy is more apparent than real.”[[211]](#footnote-211) The answer to the implicit question comes in the last words of v 25: Antiochus will be allowed to control events for a period, periods, and half a period. This answer has been taken as a cryptic way of saying 3 1/2 years (cf. the JPSV footnote). The time from the desecration of the temple on 15 Kislev in the 145th year of the Seleucids, 167 BC (1 Macc 1:54) to its rededication on 25 Kislev in the 148th year, 164 (1 Macc 4:52) was three years and ten days. The time of oppression is closer to 3 1/2 years if it is reckoned to begin with events earlier in the 145th year (see 1 Macc 1:20, 29–53) or if its end is reckoned to involve Antiochus’s death, which took place in the 149th year (see 1 Macc 6:16). But such observations rest on a mistaken premise. “A period, periods, and half a period” is not a cryptic way of saying 3 1/2 years, whatever the significance of later time references in 8:14; 9:27; 12:7, 11, 12. “Period” (עדן) is not simply a substitute for “year” (שנה) (G has καιρός, not ἔτος). A period could be a year long, but it need not be (see v 12, also n. 4:16.a). Nor is “a period, periods, and half a period” simply a convoluted way of saying 3 1/2 periods. It suggests a time that threatens to extend itself longer: one period, then a double period, then a quadruple period . . . but the anticipated sequence suddenly breaks off, so that the seven periods (in effect an eternity) that were threatened are unexpectedly halved.[[212]](#footnote-212) The king symbolized by the small horn has his time allotted; it is not without end. He himself is under control. The period he rules is a long one, but it is brought to a sudden termination. This way of speaking carried no implications for the chronological length of time that would correspond to these periods. V 25 is not an “attempt to calculate a definite period of time.”[[213]](#footnote-213)

If the earlier part of v 25 alludes more generally to the reign of Antiochus rather than to events after 168 in particular, the periods denoted here as likely began with his appropriation of the throne in 175, his encouragement of the Hellenistic reforms of Jason, who was his appointee as high priest, or his first desecration of the temple in 169 (1 Macc 1:10–28). Both the temple rededication and Antiochus’s death a few months later would constitute partial fulfillments of what is promised for the end of the time in vv 26–27.

**26** The death and destruction of the fourth creature (v 11) is effected through the utter destruction of the authority of the king symbolized by the creature’s small horn.

**27** Earlier references to a humanlike figure (v 13) and to holy ones (vv 18, 21, 22, 25) permit and perhaps point to the conclusion that the holy ones are in some way celestial yet are closely associated with earthly Israel. The same conclusion emerges from this last allusion. While “people” ( עם) may refer to a celestial army in 1QH 3.21,[[214]](#footnote-214) most editors understand there עִם “with” not עַם “people.”[[215]](#footnote-215) Similar uncertainty obtains with regard to 1QM 12.8. Even there, if עם means “people,” the construct may be possessive rather than epexegetical. And if that allusion fails, there is no passage in the OT or in the Qumran literature that uses עם to refer to celestial beings. In Dan 12:1, 7 Israel is described as “your [Daniel’s] people” and as “the holy people” (cf. 8:24, though the reference there is less clear); compare the description of Israel in 1QM 10.10 as ברית קדושי עם “the people of the holy ones of the covenant.” The holy people stands on earth; the earthly ones shine in heaven (12:1, 3, 7).[[216]](#footnote-216) Grammatically, the phrase could mean “a people of holy ones on high” (see n. 27.b) and be taken to refer to Israel as the people associated with the celestial beings. As Michael can be described as Israel’s lord (10:21), so Israel could be described as the supernatural beings’ people.[[217]](#footnote-217) But such an allusive, sudden reference in the last verses of the chapter would be odd; more likely all three varied expressions in vv 18, 21, 22, 25, and 27 have the same reference.

As the description of the humanlike figure (vv 13-14) did not point towards the idea that it stood for a hoped-for king, nothing in vv 17–27 suggests an individual messianic figure. There is messianic and non-messianic expectation in the OT, and Dan 7 is an instance of the latter. If anything, Dan 7 moves “from the Davidic to the Adamic.”[[218]](#footnote-218)

**28** For the closing formula, compare Jer 51:64; Qoh 12:13. The interpretive vision has not resolved the anxieties provoked by the symbolic vision (v 15); it leaves Daniel still concerned to discover what it meant.

## Explanation

**1** The nature of the Daniel scroll changes from exciting stories to esoteric visions. It’s been said that “the stories of the first half of Daniel have more appeal to lay people, while the visions of the second half are more intriguing to scholars.” [[219]](#footnote-219) The difference would reflect the more “scholarly” nature of the visions.[[220]](#footnote-220) To understand them, then, the layperson has to become a scholar.[[221]](#footnote-221) Yet the visions are not simply an exercise in scholarly theology, and studying them is not a mere academic pursuit. “In 167 BC when to be a practicing Jew meant that one might die under torture, that message became more than a philosophy of history.”[[222]](#footnote-222) And over recent decadesm as considerations such as the interest in narrative have generated more scholarly interest in the stories, the “Left Behind” series of novels have sold 65 million copies and evidence widespread interest in “apocalyptic.”

The book takes us back in the reign of Belshazzar, indeed to its beginning, which is also “the beginning of the end of the Babylonian Empire.”[[223]](#footnote-223) It thus takes us back to a point from which we can get a broader perspective on the disturbing tale of the abominations of Belshazzar in his last year, the apparent ousting of Daniel himself from the court circle, the portent that speaks of Belshazzar’s Babylonian regime yielding not to an Israelite kingdom but to a Medo-Persian one, and the realization of that yielding in the feeble but dangerous person of Darius. Chap. 7 offers a retrospective context for understanding those strange events, as chap. 2 offers a prospective one for the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

A perspective on history set in the reign of Belshazzar and following on the stories in chaps. 3–6 might be expected to have a more somber tone and to offer a gloomier picture of the world powers than the perspective suggested by chap. 2 at the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign. If the year when Belshazzar became regent was about 550, it was also the year that Cyrus, king of Anshan, took over the Median empire and signaled the chain of events that would lead historically to Belshazzar’s death and Babylon’s fall. In Isa 40—48 that development is proclaimed as good news. The perspective of Daniel’s vision is more like that of the book of Ezekiel, whose dates refer to slightly earlier years in the sixth century, but whose prospect includes a further crisis beyond the restoration of the Judahites to their land (see Ezek 38–39). History will continue to resemble a troubled sea. But God stills the roaring of the sea (Ps 65:8; cf. 93:4), and in the new heavens and the new earth, there is no sea.[[224]](#footnote-224)

Daniel’s notional audience continues to be Judahites living in the early years of the Persian empire, but the message for them now comes not from the recent past and from Daniel’s experiences at court, but from the broad span of the future. For the book’s implied audience in the second century, the message no longer comes simply from the distant past, but from a past that anticipated their present, and from their own actual future. It speaks not only of survival despite pressure but of deliverance from pressure; not only of life in history but of life at the end of history; not only of God’s past interventions but of his one final intervention; not only of past rebukes of human power but of a final numbering of its days.

Whence comes the visions’ perspective on the significance of the nations and the relationship of international politics to the rule of God? It reflects the imaginative intuition and insight of a visionary. “The figure of Daniel as expert, developed in the narratives, is used explicitly as a foil in the apocalypses, where the expert appears repeatedly baffled. *Esotericism replaces expertise as the model of knowledge*. Its otherworldly quality is emphasized… through the media of dream visions and angelic interpreters, as well as through the physically devastating effects of revelation.”[[225]](#footnote-225) Daniel has a dream, but his dream is God-given. His insight is received by revelation. This origin is even more explicit with regard to the dream’s explanation.

How does imagination operate, how is revelation mediated? The dream’s content hints that it operates through earlier scriptures, through the acts of God they reflect, through other traditions and imagery that the visionary is familiar with, and through the kind of experiences previous chapters have described. The point is clearer when we look at the dream in its second-century context, which implies that the dream is in part the fruit of reflection on events from the sixth to the second centuries. This history has become a means of revelation cast in the form of prophecy. Empire after empire has risen and fallen. If Antiochus rises higher, it will mean he falls harder.

History did not have to be read that way. The second-century crisis was unprecedented, and imagination and faith had to undertake a quantum leap in order to express what the vision declares. History becomes revelatory when it is viewed in light of the tradition of what God has said and done in the past, and in light of the word he is speaking now, both being suggestive of God’s promise about history which hope is invited to grasp despite the extent to which it contrasts with present experience.[[226]](#footnote-226) It looks in the face the realities of history since the Babylonian period and the darker realities of the second century, but insists on also gazing steadily at how the future must be, given who God is. In this sense, the vision’s perspective is the gift of revelation received by faith, which accepts the risk of its being the fruit of fantasy received in wishful thinking.[[227]](#footnote-227) The outrages of the present make it morally necessary for there to be judgment and reversal in the future: otherwise everything that people know about God and about Israel’s relationship to him is put in question. A crisis can deepen faith in the power of God rather than destroying it.

Earlier on, Judahites could hold out under the pressures of living under the Babylonians or the Persians or the Greeks. They could see (or envisage) God acting and making it possible for them to survive and even to triumph. They could believe that God’s sovereignty could be working through the sovereignty of Gentile monarchs. The pressures of living under Antiochus were of a different order. The enormity of his acts made it impossible to believe that God’s sovereignty was working through him. It required another understanding of the relationship between human sovereignty and divine sovereignty. The former would need to be replaced by the latter rather than being the means of implementing the latter.[[228]](#footnote-228)

For the first time in the book, a vision is written down. From time to time, the OT speaks of the messages of prophets being put into writing (Isa 8:1, 16; 30:8; Jer 30:2; 36:2; 51:60; Ezek 43:11; Hab 2:2). While the ministry of prophets was characteristically oral, writing made a prophecy more solid, concrete, and certain of fulfillment. Indeed, putting something into writing initiated its fulfillment. It also made prophecy, prophet, and God open to vindication: the written word was fixed and could be tested by events. A related conviction, which could even survive apparent disconfirmation by events, was the belief of a prophet and his associates that a particular prophecy was a word from God which needed to be preserved to allow it to continue to speak.

Writing was intrinsic to revelations such as the ones in Dan 7—12 (cf. 8:26; 12:4, 9; *1* *Enoch* 33.3–4; *T. Moses* 1.16; 2 Esd 14:42). While the same considerations apply as are relevant for prophecy, writing down was also logically necessary if the message set in the sixth century was to reach the audience whom it especially concerned, four centuries later. The literary and historical context of Dan 5–7 and 550–537 BC are only one level of the chapter’s reference, and (it will turn out) not the most significant. The chapters have most to say concerning events centuries ahead to a people yet unborn. In the literary form of a quasi-prediction, writing it down is the link between the named seer and his actual audience (thus writing things down in Rev 1:11, 19; 21:5 is rather different—in fact, it is as much like prophets writing things or Paul writing letters).

Theologically, narrating history as if it were prophecy affirms that the events that unfold have been within the control and purview of God: “all things past, present and to come are present unto God.”[[229]](#footnote-229) Beyond that device, the chapter achieves much of its effect by its use of symbolism (see *Form*). Even the later sections that “explain” the opening part of the vision still use symbols. The symbols make possible a way of speaking that communicates without removing all allusiveness; Dan 7 is the most allusive chapter in the book, and our explanation must preserve that feature rather than resolving it by reference to other chapters. Referring to historical realities by means of ciphers hints that they express something not quite straightforward, something mysterious. Representing them by means of metaphor and simile points indirectly to aspects of their inner meaning and of their transcendent significance, without quite making meaning and significance overt. Describing them by means of such figures of speech which are familiar from tradition and which interrelate within tradition (not least the sacred tradition embodied in Israel’s scriptures) brings to them resonances and power that newly minted simile and metaphor do not have. Portraying them by means of ancient mythical motifs that identify them as contemporary embodiments of primordial forces expresses and adds to their horrific aspect, yet also conveys the sense that they represent nothing novel or immune from judgment. Mythic motifs also make it possible to speak of realities that by their very nature cannot be depicted in another, more straightforward way. The vision’s coming by nightalso adds to its impact, though it does not in itself make it something terrifying, a nightmare: visions often happen at night (cf. the revelation in 2:19).

**2–3, 17** Churning winds, heaving sea, and huge animals suggest supernatural forces: the power of God effecting his will (cf. Gen 1:2), the dense concentration of energy that threatens to disrupt and overwhelm order, the embodiment of this threatening energy in particular beings (cf. Rev 13:1–7; 17:8). *Four* winds and *four* creatures suggest the world-encompassing totality of divine power and disorderly energy (cf. the fourfold stream of Gen 2:10). Four winds also more prosaically suggest winds coming from the four points of the compass (8:8; 11:4; cf. Zech 2:6 [10]; 6:5; 2 Esd 13:5, a passage related to Dan 7), and the sea they churn up could suggest the Mediterranean, which some people would know. Daniel’s vision invites them to stand with him near the shore of the Mediterranean at a spot such as the promontory at Yafo where the waters crash onto the Rock of Andromeda. A well-known voyage from this port ended in Yahweh’s hurling a great wind into the sea, causing a mighty tempest, and eventually bringing about an encounter with a bizarre monster (Jonah 1). In Daniel’s vision, not merely one wind but gales from every direction whirlwind over the water and arouse it into a turbulent swell. The sea is an embodiment of tumultuous forces exerted *against* God.

The animals are not four similar embodiments of one hostile basic substance; they are explicitly varied. They correspond to the four metals of chap. 2, which the author of Dan 7 (at least) takes to denote four earthly empires; it was a recognized convention to symbolize nations by creatures from the animal world. The point will become explicit in v 17, which understands the sea and its animals to denote the world and four of its kings. As with the winds, four suggests totality. Each compass point spawns an animal. While the vision concerns a particular segment of history, not the entirety of history, it concerns that segment as a whole, with the totality of earthly forces that dominate the people of God over this period (cf. the four horns/smiths of Zech 1:18, 21 [2:1, 4]), and it suggests the idea that this segment of history embodies history as a whole. Mythic motifs lie behind the vision rather than on its surface, but their resonances carry through, adding depth and force to statements about history that are the text’s direct concern (as in Isa 17:12–13; 51:10). A world-transcending or world-encompassing scheme is adapted to communicate a perspective not on the cosmos as a whole, nor on history as a whole, but on the segment of history that directly concerns the visionary and the readers.

In themselves, wind, sea, and animals need not imply anything supernatural or alarming. But the collocation of supernatural winds, agitated sea, and huge animals suggests that the vision portrays more than an ordinary storm in the Mediterranean. The sea stands for the world, the interpreter will tell us; the huge animals represent the grimness of history. The first three animals, at least, are not explicitly evil, though they are grotesque, fierce, dangerous, and frightening. Further, the cosmic storm recalls motifs from myth that are already taken up in Gen 1:1–2. The story of the Beginning spoke first of God’s creative activity, then of the existence of formless waste, then of a supernatural wind/breath/spirit sweeping over it preparatory to God’s uttering his life-giving word.[[230]](#footnote-230) The Red Sea story, too, long ago demonstrated that the operating of God’s wind/breath/spirit on the sea had been known in Israel’s history as well as at the creation (Exod 15:10; cf. 14:21). In Job 40–41, Yahweh affirms that he controls the heaving and thrashing of those huge creatures that symbolize forces of disorder and rebellion asserting themselves against order and meaning.

Daniel’s vision combines the cosmic perspective of Gen 1, the broad perspective on human history and experience of Job, and the Israelite perspective of Exod 14–15: the totality of the winds of the heavens generates the totality of the events of history in which Israel’s own story unfolds. Here the powers of disorder are not natural forces but historical forces. The taming of the rebellious powers has not yet taken place, either at the Beginning, or at the exodus, or ever-repeatedly in history. We are already prepared for a vision of wider significance than that of chap. 2, yet it is the Mediterranean which the cosmic gale stirs up and from which the animals emerge onto the shore. Like the prophets, Daniel believes that God is Lord of historical events and can achieve his own purpose through them. Like them he recognizes that the process of history is nevertheless unsavory, unnatural, dark, and unreassuring, despite God’s ultimately being Lord of it—in a sense, the more so because of that fact.

If Dan 7 takes up such motifs from myths, the assumption that one God rules in the heavens and on the earth carries with it the implication that even the upheavals of history somehow derive from him or are permitted by him, not from a clash of wills in the heavens that mirrors the clash of wills on earth. God’s original creative work on the formless Deep does not mean he exorcised from it all potential forces of disorder. Within history there continue to emerge entities embodying that disorder. Perhaps Daniel implies that they are called forth by God himself, that behind the fourfold wind we may see the Holy Spirit acting “to bring forth those forms and frames of rule which he will make use of,”[[231]](#footnote-231) though there are no possible examples of the divine passive in these verses (as there are in 4-6). Creation had involved bringing sovereign order to a situation that was otherwise formless at best, turbulent at worst. It seems not to have achieved this ordering once and for all. Formlessness and turbulence remains, but God’s sovereignty also remains and God will reassert order in a final way.[[232]](#footnote-232) It is on this basis that lament psalms can utter their characteristic “How long?” (e.g., 74:10; 80:4 [5]), which Daniel’s visions in effect (and perhaps actually) answer.

The use of animal symbols already suggests that it is the history of nations that unfolds before us; specifically the animals signify the kings who rule the nations (v 17). Israelite clans were symbolized by animals such as ox, lion, and wolf (Gen 49; Deut 33), modern nations are symbolized by eagle, bear, bull, and springbok, and modern tribal societies use the same symbolism.[[233]](#footnote-233) None of this symbolism implies there is anything “bestial” about the nations’ character or behavior. But the unfolding vision will picture something higher than the animal as the nations’ destiny, aspiration, and successor (vv 4, 8, 13).

If the animals stand for the totality of the nations, their origin both in the initiative of the heavens and in the turmoil of the Deep suggests something of their ambiguity. It is they that embody the disorder of the formless Deep, its energy uncontrolled by any desire to serve God or humanity. Evil is not a unity. Earlier chapters have made clear that the nations stand under the sign of Rom 13; chap. 7 adds that they stand under the sign of Rev 13, too.[[234]](#footnote-234) Their ambiguity is also that of Gen 10–11. Modern nations symbolized by animals, such as the ones listed above, also stand under both these signs, as do international entities such as the European Community, the United Nations, and NATO.

**4–8, 19–21, 23–25** First there emerges a lion: king of animals, symbol of strength, courage, ferocity, destructiveness, voracity, and fearsomeness. It also has the wings of an eagle or vulture, king of birds, large and majestic, high-flying and deep-swooping, symbol of speed and rapacity. It represents a large, powerful, and expansionist nation, a mortal threat to smaller peoples. We are reminded of the power and authority given to the first of the four regimes in chap. 2, that of Nebuchadnezzar. The respective distinguishing characteristics of an animal and a bird are that it walks on four feet and that it flies. The lion-eagle is relieved of both these characteristics: its wings are removed and it is set on two feet. It is enabled to behave and think like a human being. That change reminds us of Nebuchadnezzar’s restoration in chap. 4, and it underlines the present vision’s affirmation of the nation symbolized by the first animal. When animals symbolize nations, human beings often symbolize heavenly beings. This nation occupies a godlike position of honor, responsibility, and caring for the world, like humanity itself in Gen 1–2 (cf. Dan 2:38; 4:20-22 [17–19]). Nations have their origin in dark forces, aggressive impulses, and defensive fears, but they can sometimes become means of heaven’s will being effected.

The second animal to emerge onto the shore is a bear, a huge, ungainly, strong, and fearsome creature, not normally a predator, but here encouraged to indulge its appetite. Is it God who does the encouraging? If so, the greedy expansionism of nations can have a place within God’s purpose. The bear’s distinctive characteristics may link with features of a specific people, but they are rather allusive.

The third animal is another fearsome predator whose natural speed is enhanced by an unnatural capacity to see and swoop in any direction. A powerful, energetic nation is given a wide-reaching dominion.

Then something new is heralded. The fourth animal to come from the sea is the one of most pressing importance. It is the most explicitly fearsome of the four and the most explicitly destructive. It is likened to no species and it retains a touch of mystery over its identity. It might make people think of the elephant, a fit symbol for the Greek empire and for the Seleucids in particular. But it would be unwise to be too prosaic in identifying it. The fourth animal is a monster, like Typhon in Greek myth,[[235]](#footnote-235) or like Dracula or Frankenstein, horrifying and frightening, dangerous and threatening, disgusting yet strangely fascinating, partly because such entities compromise the boundary between the human and the supernatural.[[236]](#footnote-236) The portrayal as a monster might be seen as designed to encourage violent rebellion[[237]](#footnote-237) or to discourage it.[[238]](#footnote-238) It is given authority to rule.

The line of animals as a whole represents the empires of the Middle East from Nebuchadnezzar to the Seleucids, the totality of powers that dominated Judahite history from the end of the monarchy in 587 to its revival in the second century BC. It is this sequence of world empires that Daniel’s vision affirms to have been summoned up from the primeval and formless depths by the activity of the heavens themselves, so that it manifests something of the purpose of God for responsible government of his world, but also something of the instinct of humanity for self-aggrandizement and destructiveness.

The last of the four empires is the most destructive and—we will soon discover—the most arrogant and godless, but these characteristics do not in themselves imply that all history is degenerating rather than progressing. The animals represent history as a whole as it was experienced by Judahites up to the second century BC. History had been consistently threatening, but it now becomes consumingly so. The artistic or intellectual achievements of Greek civilization do not feature in the vision’s portrayal of the fourth animal. It is distinguished from its predecessors chiefly by being more bellicose. There is perhaps a reflection here of Judah’s experience of being fought over by rival Greek empires during two centuries (cf. chap. 11).

Like the first three animals, the fourth has an anomalous feature, ten horns, suggesting a comprehensive totality of royal strength. The horns symbolize Hellenistic kings, though we cannot refer them with certainty to ten specific kings; perhaps the author did not have ten specific kings in mind. Likewise a number of historical persons could be more or less plausibly identified as the three displaced kings. The small horn that emerges among the ten, however, we can identify as Antiochus IV, the Seleucid king who precipitated the greatest crisis in the history of the Judahites between the fall of Jerusalem in 587 and the events of the first century AD. As with the Greek empire in general, much could be said about the positive stature of Antiochus IV, but it is irrelevant to the religious perspective of Dan 7. Antiochus sought to bring order to Judah, but it met resistance as a pseudo-order. Because it was the only order he was prepared to envisage, he had to impose it by force. Pseudo-order soon exposed itself as a masked embodiment of disorder, not a bulwark against disorder. The principalities and powers in theory undergird and protect human life, but in reality they easily threaten it.[[239]](#footnote-239) It is only with the fourth empire that this reality surfaces, but what does then surface is the inner nature of all the empires, because it reflects their origin in the tumultuous disorder of the primeval Deep. “Imperial beings present themselves as normal; more as virtuous, benign.”[[240]](#footnote-240) But Tacitus attributes to a Caledonian general a telling description of Rome: “plundering, slaughtering, stealing—they call it the empire, falsely, and they call it peace when they make a wasteland” (*Agricola* 30.5).[[241]](#footnote-241) The description applies to any superpower.

Like the first animal, the small horn on the fourth animal has certain human features. It looks and speaks like a human being. If the animal symbolizes the human and the human symbolizes the supernatural, Antiochus sees himself as having the power of a heavenly being, and speaks accordingly. But he is not given such a position by God, as the first three animals were given their different commissions. Gradually it becomes apparent that Antiochus is someone of arrogant look and tongue whose person and activity constitute a challenge to the heavens themselves, like the challenge of the Babylonian king in Isa 14:12–15.

The first three animals were under control. The fourth decides for itself what to do. It was brought into being by God, but it overreaches itself. Instead of playing the part that God’s purpose had designed for him (the times set by decree), the eleventh king grasps the rudder of history. And he is able to take charge of the process of history. So it goes on for a time, and for a longer time, and for yet more time…. But the promise is that a limit is set to it. It will not go on for ever. “For God to come in half the allotted time is to say that he will come ‘with all deliberate speed.’ His coming may seem to tarry (a time and then times) but its final arrival will be sudden (a time cut off)…. God’s time can arrive only on time.”[[242]](#footnote-242) Antiochus thinks he controls history, but there is a stronger hand on its rudder.

It is possible to make out a plausible case for identifying Rome as the fourth animal (see *Comment*); whether one finds later identifications (the Turks, Islam, the church, the pope, Nazism, communism, capitalism, the European Community, the United States, the Wolrd Council of Churches. the Islamic State) more or less plausible depends on one’s political and ecclesial commitments as much as on anything else. The use of symbolism in the vision and its omitting to name names (even in the interpretation) enables its reapplication to later embodiments of the same dark forces as Antiochus, initially Rome (cf. 2 Esd 12; Rev 13).[[243]](#footnote-243) There is no indication that the visionary intended thus to open up the possibility of reapplying its reference to subsequent situations where there is a reappearance of the pattern seen in the events of the second century BC, a pattern itself known from earlier situations and here being reworked. But its reticence over such naming unwittingly permitted such a reapplication, which was in keeping with its own reworking of earlier expositions of the pattern. And the reapplication of Daniel’s animal images to later empires reflects international history’s continuing to be a process in which “one ethnic group, then another, becomes through rampaging expansion a monstrous coherence of power and peoples.”[[244]](#footnote-244)

Another tradition of interpretation identifies the small horn with Antichrist.[[245]](#footnote-245) Antiochus could, indeed, be seen as a kind of anti-messiah, a royal figure who realizes the opposite of the messianic ideal, a negative to which the humanlike figure of vv 13–14 is the corresponding positive, one who aspires to the authority of the heavens themselves. But Antiochus is not a mere anticipation of something still to come. He is an actual, unpleasant reality in the life of the people of God. It is his reality that makes it possible for later generations to take him as a model for their portrayal of evil. Indeed he is more an Anti-Yahweh.[[246]](#footnote-246)

**9–12, 26** The four animals have appeared and their characteristics have emerged. The first three are worryingly fearsome, but their instincts are ones that God could use; compare the description of God himself in Hos 13:7–8. With the fourth, assertiveness against God and his glory is becoming overt. A nation threatens to make itself God, and God decides to act. In Ezek 1, the animals support God’s throne; in Dan 7 the fourth, at least, has sought to subvert it, and it is now judged before it.[[247]](#footnote-247) The very act of portraying Antiochus’s attack on God as a reenactment of the primordial battle offers an understanding of the earthly events involved, and offers a promise that matters will again turn out all right. The stories of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar have illustrated God’s judging activity within the course of the history of the nations. Here a final judgment is to be executed, not upon the deeds of individuals but upon the life of an empire. History has been allowed to unfold enough. It is time for action from heaven finally to terminate the pretension of this human power. The victory of order over disorder that creation stories associate with the Beginning is both brought into history and associated with the End.[[248]](#footnote-248) The world itself has to be understood not merely in light of the story of its Beginning but in light of the story of its End, for only then is the story of its Beginning completed.

There is a sense in which the whole of history can be foreseen by God, as is presupposed by the vision’s predictive form, and is even predetermined by God, since the animals emerge from the sea at the heavens’ prompting. Yet the bulk of history proceeds in a way that suggests no pattern or meaning, and no salvation history. The nations are “themselves,” not automatons; and God’s judgment is a response to actions by the king symbolized by the small horn.[[249]](#footnote-249) Daniel 7 is “a study in contrasts.”[[250]](#footnote-250) Even while Antiochus is making his big statements and mouthing his arrogance (vv 8, 11 either side of vv 9–10), a court is being calmly set up, and a judge is serenely taking his seat.

God then began to seat himself, as he had previously appeared to be passive, and not to exercise justice in the world. For when things are disturbed and mingled with much darkness, who can say, ‘God reigns’? God seems to be shut up in heaven, when things are discomposed and turbulent upon earth. On the other hand, he is said to ascend his tribunal when he assumes to himself the office of a judge, and openly demonstrates that he is neither asleep nor absent, although he has hid from human perception.[[251]](#footnote-251)

The affirmation that God reigns and judges (e.g., Ps 93; 96–99) becomes reality—though still in vision. While there was struggle and warfare during the sovereignty of the animals, “almost as soon as the Ancient of Days arrives, the judgment is settled.” There is no lengthy battle.[[252]](#footnote-252)

The collocation of reigning and judging deserves comment. Western democracies commonly separate branches of government such as the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature. The OT does not divide the exercise of power with the aid of such categories. When it uses words that are translated into English by terms such as “justice,” the OT has in mind the exercise of authority of the kind that the king possesses, and when it speaks of the king acting in judgment, it is thinking of the king exercising authority in order to implement justice in his realm. The fundamental significance of God’s acting in judgment is not the judicial punishment of people who have broken the law but the overthrowing of other authorities and the implementing of justice for the people they have wronged. As is regularly the case in the OT, “judgment” in Dan 7 is not to be understood in a Western sense. It denotes the exercise of authority by a person in power who is in a position to make and impose decisions, put down forces of disorder, and thus support and if necessary restore order in the world and in society.[[253]](#footnote-253)

The judge in Dan 7 is not one who is merely granted human (= heavenly) features or who aspires to them. Indeed, he not merely is human (= heavenly). He possesses the dignity, grandeur, and honor of an elder, bright and splendid in his appearance. The heavenliness, indeed divinity, symbolized by his venerable humanity is suggested by the fire that issues from his transcendent, awe-inspiring presence, representing also the dangerous power he embodies when he acts to implement his judgment. As in any king’s court, he is served and honored by countless courtiers, his counselors and executives; and as in any king’s court, he has available written records of the regime’s policy decisions, his purposes with regard to the final issues of history, including the punishment of evil and the implementing of his rule on earth, his plans regarding specific segments of history such as the permitting but the delimiting of particular periods of oppression, and his expectations regarding how humanity is to conduct itself and how he will judge the fulfillment or otherwise of his expectations.

The visionary has stood in suspense awaiting the judgment that the small horn’s arrogance must incur. The court’s coming to a verdict is implicit, not stated: we move straight from the horn’s words to the creature’s execution. “The loquacity of the little horn has been judged by the mute language of the heavenly books.”[[254]](#footnote-254) Who kills the creature is also unstated, but the passive verb again implies it is God or his agent. The vision offers no mandate for the belief that God commissions human beings to act to destroy the old order and bring in the new, as many seventeenth-century revolutionaries believed.[[255]](#footnote-255)

Although the vision looks at the history of the empires as a whole, they rule successively, receiving and surrendering authority one by one. For the first three, a time comes within God’s purpose when they cease to exercise authority, but the animals that represent them are not killed. It is not clear whether they simply retire to a home for displaced monarchies; v 27 will rather imply that they end up joining in the service of God and his people, honoring the new kingship of which we shall read there.[[256]](#footnote-256) Again, the ambiguity of human empires is implied. Not all are condemned: there is an exercise of power that is relatively responsible. Yet all are subject to constraint: no empire lasts. The alternative destinies of these nations correspond to the alternatives in Isa 40–55, which sometimes describes the nations as receiving enlightenment, sometimes as experiencing destruction. Nations either submit to God and his purpose in the way they govern their affairs and relate to his people, and in the way they acknowledge his new kingdom; or they assert themselves against him and his purpose in the way they govern their affairs and relate to his people, and they experience his asserting himself over them in judgment.

**13–14, 18, 22, 27** After the death of one animal and the dismissal of the others, the vision reaches another climax. A further humanlike figure appears, his heavenly nature underlined by his coming with the clouds of the heavens. He is presented before the enthroned judge and given the authority taken from the animals—and a much greater and more lasting authority. They appeared as a result of a heavenly initiative, and they are within the purview and control of the heavens, but they emerged from the sea, which suggests their disorderly, threatening nature. The humanlike figure who answers to them comes unequivocally from the heavens, and as a human figure he is also implicitly destined to exercise authority over the animals (Gen 1; cf. Jer 27:6; Dan 2:38; 4:20-22 [17–19]). In contrast to the eagle-lion become human, this 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 humanlike-ness is genuine, not contrived, and its heavenly glory is given, not seized.

Of the figure’s identity, the vision initially offers no indication beyond declaring its heavenly origin. 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 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. 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.

There is no doubt a biblical imperative to us to make the world more human, but it is not expressed here. Nations and governments are inclined to see themselves as the embodiments of order, but the best they can really do is restrain disorder. They act as lawgivers or policemen, but easily end up running a police-state. The real order is not that of the earthly kingdoms but that which comes from heaven.[[257]](#footnote-257) People of all races, nations, and languages had acknowledged Nebuchadnezzar (5:19), and he had acknowledged that God alone possessed lasting authority (4:3, 34 [3:33; 4:31]; these motifs also come in Darius’s story, 6:25-26 [26–27]). Now people of all races, nations, and languages acknowledge that this authority is given to the humanlike figure who takes the place of Nebuchadnezzar and succeeding empires. Whereas God had given delegated authority to the empires for a while, as is presupposed by the stories, God is now taking back that authority.[[258]](#footnote-258)

The interpretive vision is less than completely clear on the elements in the symbolic vision that it professes to explain. While the interpretation might have been clear to author and original audience but it is unclear to us out of their context, its allusiveness makes it at least as likely that an element of mystery is built into the vision (cf. vv 15–16, 28). While the animals clearly enough portray the rise and fall of worldly kingdoms, what would replace them is less transparent; the animals are closer to being steno-symbols, while the judgment scene and the humanlike figure are more tensive symbols (see *Form*). They affirm that the worldly kingdoms will be replaced by God’s kingdom; they do not make explicit how it will happen. With the four creatures, their historical reference is primary, though they are then portrayed theologically. With the judgment scene and the humanlike figure, their metahistorical or theological reference is primary; they represent ultimate events and realities which will come, but which are not yet present, and which therefore cannot be described straightforwardly like the kingdoms the animals represent.[[259]](#footnote-259) It is of a piece with this dynamic that Daniel’s requests for interpretation, and the content of the interpretation he receives, relate more to the most important of the symbols that has historical reference, even though it hardly requires explanation, than to the humanlike figure, which remains enigmatic.

In time we learn that the humanlike figure stands for holy ones on high; they receive his kingship. If the holy ones are Israelites, the vision’s significance for its readers is clear: it promises the great reversal that scatters the proud and dethrones princes, that gives aid to Israel and exalts the lowly. That promise may have a worrying aspect for subsequent readers. There is little evidence that Israelites or Christians make less oppressive rulers than Babylonians or Greeks. (I write in a week of harsh Israeli suppression of resistance to their occupation of Gaza, but Christian nations have too long a history of oppression for them to act superior with regard to such events.) It is characteristic of the chosen people to take on the characteristics of the world. The reapplication of Daniel’s picture of the fourth animal to post-Constantinian Rome or to the modern Christian democracies of Europe or the United States is quite plausible. The humanlike figure can become merely another animal.

The point cannot be safeguarded by declaring that the vision depends on the emergence of a faithful group within Israel who can be trusted with the kingship; the chapter offers no such reason for the kingdom being given to the holy ones. It contains no exhortation to faithfulness, no exhortation to any form of resistance to Antiochus, and no hint that acts on earth bring about the kingdom of God. It is not concerned with the conflict between the faithful and the state but with the development of the kingdoms and their appointed time,[[260]](#footnote-260) and with the promise that Antiochus does not have the last word; God will see to it. The violence is his; the unquestioned sovereignty will then be theirs. Even the humanlike figure takes no active role in the drama. He does not fight, like Marduk, or like the Messiah; he is simply invested. He receives without acting or striving. The vision does not picture Humanity coming to save humanity.[[261]](#footnote-261) Likewise the holy ones do not fight—at least, not successfully. It is their defeat that brings their attacker’s downfall (God will disarm principalities and powers through Jesus’ being crucified: Col 2:15). If the chapter implies a safeguard regarding the worry that human recipients of the new sovereignty will likely only turn it into a fifth empire, it is the fact that the humanlike figure comes from the heavens. The ones who fulfill this vision will be those who come from God, who can be perceived to share God’s priorities. Perhaps they have not yet been born.

But it is not clear that the holy ones who receive the sovereignty are earthly figures. They may be celestial beings. For the audience, what would be the significance of the information that celestial beings will be given a kingdom? The second-century crisis brought not only physical suffering but a crisis of faith. Though there is no talk of the humanlike figure’s having been under attack, the small horn is said to have attacked and overcome the holy ones. Antiochus has threatened, assailed, and even overcome the heavens themselves (chap. 8 will take these ideas further). Israel is not alone in being threatened, assailed, and even overcome by atheistic arrogance. The heavens themselves are part of that creation which is included in the suffering of the last days.[[262]](#footnote-262) This perspective brings consolation to those on earth who suffer, not least because it compounds the necessity for the small horn’s judgment. It also further explains the reason for the different treatment of the first three animals. Not all nations and kings actively oppose the glory of God and the concerns of the heavens. The heavenly realm has been despised and attacked, but it will have the final word. The holy ones do not destroy the fourth animal, but their suffering is the cause of its destruction.

The cosmic significance attached to Antiochus becomes especially illuminating in the nuclear age. Humanity now has the power to destroy itself and the world in which it lives. There is something unprecedented about this situation, and something theologically novel. God has allowed humanity to discover how to bring to an end the story he began.[[263]](#footnote-263) The prospect is “apocalyptic,” and it is in an apocalypse such as Dan 7 that we may find the scriptural resources for formulating what faith and hope could mean in such a context.[[264]](#footnote-264) What is extravagance in Daniel’s visions is now reality. Precisely in its extravagance, then, Daniel’s vision helps us. It imagines the unimaginable. It looks in the face the possibility of human power and arrogance toppling the rule of the heavens over the world. It affirms that the powers of the heavens may be assailed and hurt, but that God will still reserve the last word.

It might be tempting to infer that human efforts for peace are therefore unnecessary; bringing about world peace is God’s business. We may again recall that Dan 7 makes no suggestions regarding the human conduct that is appropriate in the Antiochene crisis. It is God’s act that counts. Yet the Daniel whose visions we are considering is the man of political commitment and religious faithfulness portrayed in chaps. 1–6; his is no privatized faith. And the inference that human efforts are unnecessary if peace must be God’s achievement parallels the inference that righteousness is unnecessary if our relationship with God must be his gift (Rom 6:1). Paul’s response to this inference is not to qualify his affirmation that everything depends on grace; it is to recall the objector to the fact that righteousness is an end, not a means. Similarly we seek peace because it is the God-like thing to do, not because God is necessarily dependent on our doing so. But as we do so, who knows, he may choose to utilize our peace-seeking to bring about his peace.

What happens when we consider the humanlike figure in light of the coming of Jesus? The familiar title “the Son of Man” is a literalistic rendering of the phrase in v 13. Such links between OT and NT are more formal than substantial. Yet Jesus is indeed the one who came in human likeness from the heavens, and the one who is still to come in human likeness on the clouds of the heavens to receive a kingdom and to accept the honor of all nations. The rule of God on earth is implemented through one who is himself from the heavens. Along with figures such as the prophet and priest, the supernatural aide is one of Jesus’ role models: he fulfills a place analogous to each of these figures.[[265]](#footnote-265) In the view of theologians such as John and Paul, he is so heavenly that he must share God’s own divinity: the similarity of judge and humanlike figure becomes a similarity of Father and Son.[[266]](#footnote-266) The indications in Dan 7 of thought in terms of more than one power in the heavens expresses an awareness of the complexity within the Godhead which in light of Jesus’ coming and the pouring out of his Spirit is taken further in the Christian awareness of God being in some sense three yet also one.[[267]](#footnote-267) Jesus’ coming implements in the most far-reaching way the reign of God on earth that Dan 7 promises. It brings that unveiling of the mystery of God’s plan for the world (Eph 3:1–12) which is spoken of here as the opening of the books (v 10).

According to *b. Sanhedrin* 98a, if the Jews deserve it the Messiah will come “with the clouds of the heavens,” if not he will come “lowly and riding upon an ass.” Jesus spoke of the Son of Man coming “not to be served but to serve” (Mark 10:45), and may imply a similar deliberate contrast with Dan 7:13–14.[[268]](#footnote-268) Talk of the holy ones’ being oppressed, however, could easily be transferred to the humanlike figure himself, even though our text does not make the transfer; and when Jesus goes on to speak of the Son of Man’s calling to give his life as a ransom for many, the suffering of the holy ones may have been one of the motifs in his mind. Jesus’ proclamation of the coming of God’s reign (Mark 1:15) also reflects Daniel’s description of the holy ones’ receiving the kingdom.[[269]](#footnote-269) He is to be the one to whom every knee bows, but only after accepting the form of a servant and the humiliation of the cross (Phil 2:5–11). The one who stands in the midst of the throne and of the four animals is a lamb bearing the marks of slaughter (Rev 5:6).

The power of the Seleucid monarchy was not broken in the 160s BC. But Jews under the domination of Rome who identified Rome as the fourth empire in the context of the pressures of their own time were not simply trying to solve the difficulty that the reign of God did not come in fullness in the years that followed this vision. They were seeking to discern how God might speak to them to their context in a way analogous to the way he had spoken in that comparable context.[[270]](#footnote-270) They model interpretation for subsequent readers who know that the power of Rome was not broken in the century of Jesus’ coming, either. Our longing for God’s reign continues to be frustrated, though we do see evil’s power circumscribed and at such moments rebuked, and those experiences buttress our conviction that we will see God’s dominion endure and triumph. Further, the affliction and the glory of Jesus are not just consecutive. The affliction manifests a peculiar form of glory; the glory has the marks of the cross about it. Perhaps the same is true for the holy ones: not just affliction (v 21) then glory (v 22), but a rule exercised in a strange, crosslike way. “Away, then, with the fable about a millennium!” Jerome commented.[[271]](#footnote-271) Yet Avravanel was right that the reign of the holy ones is to be exercised on earth, yet Calvin was right that this reign could be effected only through Jesus.[[272]](#footnote-272)

**15–16, 28** The end of the vision account is surprising.[[273]](#footnote-273) Each of the earlier stories ended in a positive fashion, with the success of Daniel and his friends (chaps. 1; 2; 3; 5) or the worship of the king (chaps. 4; 6). Whereas the stories invited their listeners into a confident hope, the accounts of this vision and the next one (chap. 8) implicitly identify with the listeners in their sense of trouble and in their puzzlement over the meaning of much of what they have heard and what its fulfillment might mean. They have to keep thinking and keep listening. To put it conversely, a distressed Daniel leads to a distressed reader.[[274]](#footnote-274) And further, “the expression of Daniel’s perplexity… encourages the reader to expect more to come, the clarify things further.”[[275]](#footnote-275)

Daniel is a scholar, but he is not a cool and involved scholar engaged in a disengaged academic pursuit, like the average scholarly interpreter of Daniel. When the symbolic vision comes to an end, and even after it has been “explained,” and even in light of the coming of Jesus, the response that the vision invites is alarm and openness. It does not encourage us to assume that we have yet reached understanding. When God acts, it is commonly in ways other than his people anticipate. Jesus’ birth, ministry, and death were not what people expected of God’s redeemer. Here, the visionary does not seem to know what the giving of kingship to a holy people on high will look like. In the manner of Jacob confronted by Joseph’s dream (Gen 37:11), Daniel is mystified and confused, but hopeful and open to surprise. “Daniel 7 is as much a story about a man who saw a vision and its interpretation, as a report of the vision and the interpretation given.”[[276]](#footnote-276) This man is determined not to discount the dream and not to miss anything, so he is going to keep thinking about it and looking for further revelation.[[277]](#footnote-277)

Although Daniel never knows the time of God’s destruction of evil in the world, the angel’s message is consistent: wait for the everlasting kingdom of the holy ones of the Most High. With this paradigm, the author presents a moving perspective of steadfastness, for despite terrible persecutions from their foreign oppressors and internal conflict within the community, the visions show that God has set up a universe where good triumphs. Having many fears and only limited knowledge, the ancient audience of the Hellenistic era is like Daniel, as they are encouraged to hope in God’s ultimate plan, to pray, and to wait while continuing to live lives of holiness. In times of persecution and community upheaval, these acts become heroic and perhaps subversive.[[278]](#footnote-278)

The report of Daniel’s disquiet encourages the hearers to reflect and to read on in the chapters that follow, and it has the same significance for later readers as we find ourselves in some perplexity over key aspects of it. If we thought we had a clear and certain understanding, it would be a sign that we had misunderstood. The visions in Daniel were not given so that people could engage in academic speculation[[279]](#footnote-279) but to drive home two themes. First, “the kingdoms of earth(the superpowers of that time and our own), persecutors and killers of the faithful—these are unmasked; more, they are declared redundant to God's grand design. They will have an end. The end is judgment. Time is granted the empires; the sense is of a more or less reluctant, temporary allowance, a doling out of a lifeline of time—this together with a stern watchfulness, their works of terror lying under the scrutiny of God.” And second, in that meantime, “the saints are summoned to stand firm in faith and endurance.”[[280]](#footnote-280) If fear and pride are key emotions in Daniel,[[281]](#footnote-281) it is this chapter that especially brings them together. Hence we pray,

Grant, Almighty God, since thou provest our faith and constancy by many trials… that we may not give way to the many attacks by which we are tossed about…. May we look forward to the advent of thy only -begotten Son, not only when he shall appear at the last day, but also whenever it shall please thee for him to assist thy Church, and to raise it out of its miserable afflictions. And even if we must endure our distresses, may our courage never fail us, until at length we are gathered into that holy rest, which has been obtained for us through the blood of the same, thine only-begotten Son.[[282]](#footnote-282)

# Gabriel Explains Daniel’s Vision of the Breaking of the Greek Empire (8:1–27)

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## Translation

*1In the third year of the reign of King Belš’aṣṣar,a a vision appeared to me, Daniyye’l, bfollowing onb the one that had appearedc to me earlier,d 2and aI looked at the vision.a*

*aAs I looked,a I was in Šušan, the fortress-cityb in the province of Elam. aI looked at the vision,a and I was at cUlay Gate.c 3I lifted my eyes and looked,a band there: a ramb standing in front of the gate. It had ctwo horns. Both horns were long,c but one was longer than the other, though the longer one came up later.d 4I watched the ram charging westa and north and south; no animal could standb against it, and there was no one who could rescue things from its power. cActing as it pleased, it did big things.c*

*5As I myself was looking on,a there: ba male goatb coming from the west over the face of the whole earth, withoutc touching the ground. The goat had da conspicuous hornd between its eyes. 6It came towards the ram with the two horns which I had seen standing in front of the gate, and ran at it in mighty fury. 7aI saw it close in on the ram and rage at it, attack the ram, and smash its two horns.a The ram had no strength to stand against it. It threw it to the ground and trampled on it; no one could rescue the ram from its power. 8The male goat agrew very big.a bThen just as it had become so strongb the big horn broke; but cfour came up in its place towards the four winds of the heavens.*

*9Out of aone of them ab smallc horn came up.a It dgrew extremely bigd southward and eastward eand towards the fairest,e 10It grew biga within reach of the heavenly army, and threw to earth some of that army (bsome of the stars) and trampled on them. 11He grew biga to within reach of the leader of the army; bby him the daily offering was removed and chis sacred placec dand an armyd were overthrown.b 12aIt will be set over the daily offering in an act of rebelliona and bit will throw truth to the ground. It will succeed in whatever it does.b*

*13Then I heard onea holy one speaking, and another holy one sayingb to the individual who had spoken,c “How long will the vision last—the daily offeringd and the desolatinge rebellion, the surrenderingf of bothg a sacred place and an armyh to be trampled down?” 14He said to me,a “For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then a sacred place bwill emerge in the right.”b*

*15aAs I, Daniyye’l, was watching the vision and seekinga understanding of it, there: standing in front of me was someone of manb-like appearance, 16and I heard a human voice aamidst Ulaya which called out, “Gabri’el, explain the revelation to this man.” 17He came near the place where I stood. When he came, I was overwhelmeda and I fell down on my face. He said to me, “You must understand, mortal man, thatb the vision relates to the time of the end.” 18While he was speaking to me, I fell into a trancea as I lay face down on the ground, but he touched me and stood me up in my place, 19He said, “Here am I, about to tell you what is going to happen as awrath draws to a close,a because bat a set moment an end will come.b*

*20The ram you saw, which had two horns, isa the kingsb of Media and Persia. 21The buck (the he-goat)a is the kingb of Greece,c and the big horn between its eyes is the first king.b 21The one which broke and the four which arosea in its place: four bkingdoms will ariseb from its midst,c but without its strength.*

*23aAs their kingship draws to a close,a*

*when the rebelsb reach full measure,c*

*A fierce-looking king will arise,*

*expert at enigmas.d*

*24His strength will be mighty*

*a(but without its strength).a*

*bHe will cause astounding devastation,b*

*and succeed in whatever he does.*

*He will devastate mighty ones,*

*ca people of holy ones,c 25awith his skill.a*

*He will succeed in deceit by his power,*

*bby his courageb he will do big things;*

*With easec he will devastate many,*

*and he will stand against a leader supreme;*

*then he will break without being touched.*

*26The revelation of evening and morning which has been related is trustworthy. But you are to close up the vision, for it relates to distant days.”*

*27I, Daniyye’l, afell illa for some days, then I got up and dealt with the king’s business. But I was overcome by the revelation and bI could not understand it.b*

## Notes

1.a. On the spelling, see n. 5:30.a.

1.b-b. אחרי hardly denotes merely the redundant observation that this vision came after the earlier one but that it was different yet related to it in form and content (cf. Ehrlich).

1.c. הנראה is pointed as perfect, but GKC 138k sees this as a masoretic repointing of a participle.

1.d. Etymologically ל ל ח suggests “[at the] beginning,” but in usage בתחלה can mean simply “previously,” like בראשונה (with which it appears in Gen 13:3–4; Isa 1:26). This meaning fits better here, given that it would be odd to refer to the immediately preceding chapter as “at the beginning” (against Zevit, “The Exegetical Implications of Daniel viii 1, ix 21,” 489). Cf. 9:21.

2.a-a. ראה ב = “to look [at]” (see BDB). Of the three occurrences of this verb in v 2 in connection with Daniel’s looking at the visions, OG omits the third, Th the first two, Syr the second. Whereas OG (through its paraphrase) and Th give the impression that Daniel was physically in Susa (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 10.11.7. [10.269]), MT’s cumbersome repetitions are perhaps intended to underline that Susa was only the setting of the vision (see e.g., Haag, *Daniel*, 63).

2.b. הבירה is in apposition to שושן “Šušan” and thus does not refer to a fortress within the city (against BDB) but denotes Susa as a fortress-city (cf. Neh 1:1; Esth 1:2).

2.c-c. Gate is אובל, which occurs here only in the OT. EVV “canal/river” identifies it with יובל, but the variation is odd, as would be the expression “before the river” (vv 3, 6). OG πύλη, Syr *’bwl* , Vg *porta* suggest it rather derives from Akk. *abullu* “city-gate” (Th transliterates, but Theodoret recognizes that the word means gate); cf. later Hebrew/Aramaic [א]אבול (*DTT*). Waterman (“A Note on Daniel 8 2”) objects that the word should refer to the (main) gate of (the city of) Ulay: but see Ginsberg, *Studies,* 84. אבל (as in vv 3, 6) is perhaps original here; it may have been confused by association with אולי or with יובל. And/or perhaps בל[ו]א is a gloss, so that Daniel is at the bank of the Ulay. For אולי “Ulay,” OG has Ωλαμ (or a variant); Th omits. In Hebrew, אולי “perhaps” is an expression of hope or fear, reflecting an acceptance of the uncertainty of what God may do (e.g., Gen 16:2), which would be an appropriate feeling in the context (Lacocque), but the suggestion of paronomasia is rather subtle.

3.a. ואראה עיני ואשא “I lifted my eyes and looked”: see n. 4:34.a. A common phrase not distinctive of visions (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis* ).

3.b אחד איל והנה, as in Gen 22:13 according to many textual witnesses there; but the parallel does not seem significant. On אחד = “a,” see GKC 125b; Charles translates “a single.” 4QDanab have דולג after אחד (so Gzella**).**

3.c-c. גבהות והקרנים קרנים : NAB omits והקרנים as dittog., following G; 4QDanab add an extra קרנים.

3.d. NEB “behind,” but this is a rarer meaning of באחרנה, and if the phrase were intended to indicate that the two horns were one behind each other rather than alongside each other as usual, one might have expected this point to come earlier in the sentence. OG connects באחרנה with the next sentence, but elsewhere it comes after the phrase it qualifies; it thus regularly appears at the end of a sentence.

4.a. 4QDana adds ומזרח (“and east”); OG has the order east, north, west, south. The Persians did extend their territory eastward, but for MT Persia itself is perhaps eastward enough for anything further to be ignored.

4.b. יעמדו: on dislike of the 3rd pl. f., see GKC 145pu.

4.c-c. והגדיל . . . ועשה: frequentative *waw* consecutives only loosely related to preceding clauses (GKC 112dd). הגדיל (cf. vv 8, 11, 25) is an inwardly transitive or declarative hiphil (“manifest bigness”; cf. GKC 53def). More abstract translations (“grew big”/“magnified itself,” EVV) are less likely in this context: see vv 8–11 and n. 8.a-a.

5.a. מבין: hardly an Aramaism (against Hartman/Di Lella); see BDB, 106.

5.b-b. העזים צפיר. BHS deletes ה to make the phrase more regularly indeterminate (“a he-goat of she-goats”); but this is too easy a simplifying of an anomalous expression. For indeterminate construct followed by determinate absolute, see GKC 127e. Jeffrey has “a buck of the goats,” i.e., the proud leader of the herd; but there are comparable idiomatic phrases such as עזים שעיר, עזים יגד (BDB, 777). Rather, take the whole phrase as determinate, denoting “the he-goat (who is already in a sense well known and is about to be described)”: see GKC 126qr; cf. Marti.

5.c. ואין has come virtually to mean ולא here and in v 27; see Carmignac, “La négation אין,” 410–11. Shortening of ואיננו by haplog. could explain one occurrence, but not two.

5.d-d. חזות קרן “a horn of visibility.” חזות is missing from G but not from Vg; OG suggests אחת “one,” but the unusual nature of חזות suggests it is original, and a word indicating the notable size of the horn seems appropriate (cf. v 8). מראה in 2 Sam 23:21 is comparable, but there are also textual problems there.

7.a-a. Perhaps וראיתיו is *waw* consecutive and the meaning is thus past imperfect; more likely this is simple *waw*, further illustrating the dissolution of *waw* consecutive. But the three following *waw* consecutives plus imperfect may continue the participial construction begun by מגיע “close in” (cf. GKC 116x).

8.a-a. מאד עד הגדיל. The verb which occurred first in v 4 reappears in each of vv 8–11, the forms of expression working towards a climax: simple הגדיל (“he did big things,” v 4); מאד עד הגדיל (“he grew very big,” v 8); יתר ותגדל (“it grew extremely big,” v 9), cf. Isa 56:12; השמים צבא עד ותגדל (“it grew big to within reach of the heavenly army,” v 10); הגדיל הצבא שר ועד (“he grew big to within reach of the leader of the army,” v 11). The more abstract translation “grew big” is appropriate here in v 8 (contrast v 4). Vv 8, 11 use hiphil, vv 9, 10 qal; the difference is stylistic, גדל being one of a number of verbs which can be used in qal and hiphil with similar meanings (cf. רשע “be faithless,” 9:5, 15; חזק “be strong,” 11:5, 7; צלח “be successful,” 11:27, 36). Translations such as “grew arrogant” (GNB) and “made a show of its strength” (NEB) are not justified, perhaps not even for hit התגדל in 11:36, 37, though there the preposition changes from עד to the more pejorative על (cf. Ezek 35:13). Here, any value judgments emerge from the context in which the verb is set. See further n. 25.b-b.

8.b-b. וכצצמו is the better attested and more difficult reading than ובעצמו (C and others). כ‍ can be temporal, expressing an exact point of time (virtually “as soon as”; cf. 10:9, 19; 11:4), though NEB takes it concessively (cf. *HS* 258, 262, 505).

8.c. MT includes חזות “visibility” here as in v 5, but it is more difficult grammatically (since it precedes “four”), textually (Th omits it; OG ἔτερα suggests it read it as אחרות [cf. NAB], but this, too, should follow the numeral, and OG seems to be simplifying the text as in v 5), and contextually (since the four were not notable, as the one was; cf. v 22; 11:4). It looks like an intrusion from v 5 (Ehrlich). Hartman/Di Lella sees an Aramaizing passive participle חזיות.

9.a-a. [f.] קרן אחת [m.] יצא [m.] מהם [f.] האחת: on the genders see GKC 135o, 145o.

9.b. Taking אחת as an Aramaism; NEB “one” takes it in the Heb. sense.

9.c. מצעירה, apparently “[a horn] from smallness.” BDB does not note this occurrence of the noun, but the real problem is the preposition. Perhaps repoint to the hypothetical noun מִצְיָרָה (Hartman/Di Lella) or מַצְעִירָה (Brockington) (“[a horn of] smallness” = “a small horn”) or emend to אחרת צעירה (“another small [horn],” cf. 7:8), which might have become assimilated to מהם אחת in the preceding line (Bevan).

9.d. See n. 8.a-a.

9.e. Syr omits הצבי ואל “and to the [embodiment of] beauty,” which may be a gloss, but there is no reason to assume that צביה ארץ (“the land of beauty,” 11:16, 41) is the original expression and הצבי is an abbreviation (against BHS); see *Comment*.

10.a. See n. 8.a-a.

10.b. Explicative *waw* (see n. 6:28.a); the phrase it introduces may be a gloss.

11.a. See n. 8.a-a.

11.b-b. The verbs in v 11b may be read as passive (הורם Q, וְהֻשְׁלַךְ cf. G) or as active (הרים K,

ךְ לֵ שְׁ הַ וְ as in v 12, suggested by Syr, Vg); ממנו means “by him” (BDB, 580a) or “from him” correspondingly. The evidence is closely balanced, the meaning similar. Goldstein (“The Persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV,” 142–43) connects וממנו with what precedes and translates “and beyond him” (cf. Gen 48:19). The s. verb could have a pl. subject, as required if וצבא is linked with v 11: see n. 11.d-d and GKC 145o.

11.c-c. מקדשו מכון comes only here, but cf. compounds such as שבתו מכון (“the place of his dwelling,” e.g., Ps 33:14); כסאו מכון (“the place of his throne,” e.g., Ps 97:2).

11.d-d. Taking וצבא, the first word of v 12, with v 11: so G (cf. BHS); cf. n. 12.a-a. Sanctuary and army are linked in v 13.

12.a-a. The most plausible translation of MT בפשע התמיד על תנתן וצבא is “thus an army will be set over the daily offering in an act of rebellion.” על נתן regularly means “set over” (BDB, 680) and the two words can hardly be interpreted independently (against, e.g., NIV). צבא must surely still mean “army,” not change its meaning to “warfare” (Driver) or “hard service” (Plöger). It is odd that תנתן is imperfect, but see n. 12.b-b and the *Comment*. It is also problematic that צבא has to be f. (it may be so in Isa 40:2, though see Bevan) and to have a different referent from vv 10, 11, 14. These difficulties make one suspect MT. Syr, Vg follow MT, but G suggests linking וצבא to v 11 (see n. 11.d-d), which is an improvement, though v 12 now begins even more abruptly. Most difficulties stem from the relationship of v 12a to its context; perhaps it is an explanatory gloss.

12.b-b. The tenses of ותשלך (simple *waw* plus jussive), ועשתה and והצליחה (both *waw* plus perfect) are puzzling; so is the tense of תנתן (imperfect) in v 12a. EVV translate תנתן and ותשלך as past, but they are hardly imperfect in meaning, and this really presupposes emendation to *waw* consecutive or perfect (cf. BHS; and G’s aorists. For RSV’s “was cast down” for ותשלך, see BHS. I take the whole verse to have future reference, ותשלך being a final or consecutive clause (GKC 109c suggests jussive is used for rhythmic reasons).

13.a. EVV take ד ח א as equivalent to indefinite article, but it should then follow the word it qualifies, as in v 3 (GKC 125b). Further, אחד . . . אחד is idiomatic for “one . . . another” (cf. Amos 4:7; see BDB, GKC 125b). This is also a difficulty for Lacocque’s suggestion that the same “holy one” is referred to both times. See further n. 13.c.

13.b. Taking ויאמר as another *waw* consecutive following a participle (cf. n. 7.a-a).

13.c. Lacocque takes המדבר פלמוני to refer to Daniel himself, but he then has to translate אמר (usually “said”) as “asked.” More likely Daniel’s vision follows the pattern of Zech 1:7–17, where the seer overhears heavenly figures speaking to one another.

13.d. NEB adds מורם, participle from רום (“overthrown”—cf. v 11), on the basis of OG.

13.e. BDB takes שמם as poel participle without a preformative, but this is hardly justified by appeal to GKC 52s (puals without מ‍ [which may be qal passives] and piels without מ‍ of verbs beginning with מ‍). Elsewhere in the OT (incl. 9:18, 26, 27) שמם is a regular qal participle. This participle usually meaning “desolated”—which fits the state of the temple through Antiochus’s action (Hammer). In later Heb. and Aram., forms of שמם can suggest “be demented”; this meaning could suggest an allusion to the derisive entitling of Antiochus Epiphanes, “[God] Manifest,” as Epimanes, “Madman” (Rowley, “The Bilingual Problem of Daniel,” 264–65). While such polysemy may be present, the basic idea is more likely that the rebellion will bring desolation (cf. 9:26–27): i.e., the participle is active in meaning, the natural understanding of the qal participle in 9:27 “the desolater” (cf. also Ezek 36:3 MT, defended by Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, on the passage). The poel, too, can have either transitive or intransitive/passive meaning. Presumably the qal form is chosen to correspond consonantly to ם[י]שמ‍ (see *Comment*), which also explains the omission of the article. In this connection, there may be further polysemy in the verb’s capacity to suggest “appalling” (cf. v 27, also 4:19 [16]). But the basic idea of “desolating” fits the stress on desolation (using שמם) in 9:18, 26 in the context of the use of this verb in 9:27, and on devastation (שחת) in the present context (vv 24, 25); cf. G’s ἐρημώσεως and ἐρημόω in 1 Macc 1:39; 4:38.

13.f. תת: the translation of v 13b follows MT, but MT is odd, and one might have expected that a further occurrence of נתן here would refer to the setting up of the pagan altar. Thus NEB moves it before שמם הפשע and BHS emends to נִתַּן. Yephet interprets it absolutely, “the giving/setting,” a further specific reference back to the wording of v 12.

13.g. See GKC 154a, n. 1.

13.h. NEB emends צבא to צבי “fairest.”

14.a. אלי; G, Vg, Syr have “to him,” but they may be conforming the text to what they expect, rather than reflecting an original אליו. For the seer’s involvement in his vision, cf. Zech 3:5 (where again G removes it). Or has MT understood פלמוני (“individual,” v 13) to refer to Daniel himself, as Lacocque does (n. 13.c)?

14.b-b. Cf. NEB for this translation of צדק niphal, which occurs only here; but it differs little from a passive “be put right/justified/vindicated” (cf. BDB), which would presumably be a divine passive (Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 60). G, Vg “be cleansed” may imply taking נצדק as an Aramaism. Zimmermann (“The Aramaic Origin of Daniel 8–12,” 261–62) suggests that it represents Aram. זכי “be cleansed/justified”; the translator then used צדק as if it had both meanings. But if the author were translating, or even thinking in Aram., why did he not use Heb. זכה with its meaning “be cleansed”? (BH זכה also shows the close relationship between “be clean” and “be justified.”) Ginsberg, 41–42, 79–80, says Aram. זכי can only mean “be justified” and posits a confusion with דכי “be clean”; but see *DTT* on זכי. Davidson (“The Meaning of Niṣdaq”) argues that *niṣdaq* can mean “be put right,” “be shown to be in the right,” and “be cleansed,” and that all three meanings are appropriate here (cf. Pröbstle, “A Linguistic Analysis of Daniel, 8:11, 12,” 97).

15.a-a. Taking the *waw* consecutive as continuing the infinitival clause; cf. GKC 114r. MT apparently takes the second verb as the main clause—so NEB, NRSV, the latter translating the two clauses as pluperfect and aorist, not as both imperfect; the effect is more prosaic.

15.b. גבר (geber): cf. the name גבריאל (Gabriel) in v 16. Etymologically that name means “God is my [strong] man” (cf. Collins) or “my [strong] man is God” (cf. Seow), but the chapter likely thinks of the name as a description of Gabriel as a “[strong] man of God.”

16.a-a. אולי בין is an odd phrase; like English “between,” בין is not used with a s. noun. The phrase is usually taken elliptically, “between [the banks of] the Ulay,” and 12:6–7 may presuppose that understanding, though it uses על “above,” not בין. ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ Ουβαλ (Th) may give a better interpretation—not that we need read אובל for אולי (against Hartman/Di Lella), but that the reference is to the Ulay Gate, amidst which the heavenly being stood. This understanding parallels the only other clear occurrence of בין with the s., Num 17:2 (in Isa 44:4 and Jer 48:45 the text is dubious on other grounds). Finkelstein (“‘Mesopotamia,’” 88–90) notes that the Akk. counterpart of בין, bīrī(t), can also be a noun meaning “middle ground” or “interval,” and sees ליאו בין as an Akkadianism designating a peninsula between two streams.

17.a. EVV “terrified”: but בעת means “overwhelm” without specifying the cause. The context can indicates something other than fear (e.g., 1 Sam 16:14–15), and fear is not indicated here (see *DCH*); likewise with the nouns בעתה, בעותים.

17.b. “Because” (Montgomery; cf. v 19b, and n. 19.b-b., also 11:27, 35) is less natural after הבן here.

18.a. Ginsberg takes נרדם as a mistranslation of Aram. דמך, which he says means both “lie” and “sleep,” but *DTT* suggests that דמך means “lie asleep,” not simply “lie down.”

19.a-a. הזעם באחרית “at the end of the wrath” in the sense of “during the latter part of…” (NIV), not “at [or after] the actual termination of . . .”; see on 2:28.

19.b-b. Cf. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*; Young. MT accents and G take as construct “it will be for the time of the end,” parallel to קץ עת in v 17. But that clause has החזון as subject; this clause would lack an equivalent (supplied by ThAB, cf. BHS). Ginsberg repoints to assimilate to 11:27, but there the phrase as a whole is different. Calvin assimilates the translation of v 17 to that accepted here for v 19.

20.a. There being no Heb. equivalent to “is,” vv 20–21 simply set visionary feature and interpretation alongside each other (cf. v 22).

20.b. “King(s)” need not be changed to “kingdom(s)” in vv 20–21 (against Hartman/Di Lella); Daniel elsewhere uses the former for the latter, and cf. the m. suffix in v 23a (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*).

21.a. השעיר הצפיר, the Aram. and then the Heb. word for “he-goat” instead of the idiomatic expression used earlier (see n. 5.b-b). EVV may be right to take השעיר as an adjective, “hairy.” G assimilates to vv 5, 8; more likely הצפיר alone is original and השעיר an explanatory gloss (Charles).

21.b. See n. 20.b.

21.c. יון, the regular BH word for Greece; Ionia made the earliest contacts eastwards.

22.a. The *waw* consecutive again continues the participial construction (see n. 7.a-a. and cf. n. 15.a-a.; GKC 116wx).

22.b-b. יעמדנה . . . מלכיות. Perhaps both are mixed forms, combining יעמדו . . . מלכים (“kings will arise”; G, Vg) and תעמדנה . . . מלכות (“kingdoms will arise”; EVV), though מלכיות is a form from later Heb. (Montgomery) and יעמדנה could be an Aramaism (Ginsberg, 56, cf. GKC 47k), so perhaps the forms are original here.

22.c. Reading ו גו מ (Ginsberg, 56; cf. גו in 3:6, etc.) rather than מגוי “from a nation” (MT) orמגויו “from his nation” (implied by G; cf. Gzella). Eitan suggests “from the world,” comparing גוי in 12:1.

23.a-a. See n. 19.a-a.

23.b. BHS repoints הַפְּשָׁעִים (“rebellions”): cf. G, perhaps assimilating to פשע in (e.g.) vv 12, 13; 9:24. But the use of the s. distinguishes these passages referring to “rebellion” rather than “rebels.”

23.c. Or “come to an end” (cf. n. 9:24.e-e).

23.d. There is no need to take חידות here (alone) to mean sayings intended to deceive (against EVV; see *Comment*), though this motif does come in v 25.

24.a-a. בכחו ולא, as in v 22; the meaning is likely the same (against Syr, JB): the line reaffirms that this king’s strength, too, does not bear comparing with his great predecessor’s. But G omits, and such a qualifying of the description of Antiochus’s power is unexpected as vv 23–25 build up the suspense; perhaps a gloss from v 22, either accidental or introducing a negative evaluation of Antiochus.

24.b-b ישחית נפלאות :“ [with] astounding acts he will destroy”; see GKC 100d, 118mp. 11:36 has נפלאות ידבר “he will speak astounding things,” and Hartman/Di Lella assimilates 8:24 to it, while Bevan emends ישחית to ישיח or ישחח “he will utter”; but such a meaning of שיח is not clearly instanced and this seems an implausible way to achieve an unnecessary end.

24.c. Explicative *waw* (n. 6:28.a); the phrase may be a gloss (Bentzen) or may be misplaced from v 25 (BHS)—see n. 25.a-a.

25.a-a. Cf. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*. Montgomery takes as an extraposed phrase (casus pendens) to begin v. 25, but examples and cross-references in *TTH*, 123; GKC 143 include none that are so abrupt (Qoh 5:6 comes nearest). OG presupposes קדשים after ועל (Graetz), dropped by haplog. (cf. end of v 24).

25.b-b. Taking בלבבו, literally “in/by his heart/mind,” as parallel to בידו “in/by his hand” in the previous line. For לבב “courage” cf. 11:25, similarly linked with כח “power.” “In his mind [he will grow big]” (EVV) is difficult to parallel, and on the verb see further n. 4.c-c., n. 8.a-a; here, too, there is no need to understand it as suggesting pretension, for the king really does “do big things.”

25.c. EVV generally refer בשלוה here and in 11:21, 24 to the (apparent) security of those who are attacked, unawares. It more naturally refers to the attacker himself: cf. Th, Vg; Syr (which lacks it at 11:24); OG (but in 11:21, 24 ἐξάπινα: if בשלוה means “suddenly” it is an Aramaism—so Hartman/Di Lella also here at 8:25); also JB at 11:21, 24.

27.a-a. ונחליתי נהייתי “I fell [?] and was ill”; for the first verb BDB’s “I came to an end” is dubious. OG omits; Ehrlich suggests dittog. Rather see n. 2:1.c.

27.b-b. G, Vg translate מבין ואין “and no one could understand/explain it”; but אין has already been used as virtually equivalent to לא “not” in a similar clause in v 5 where the subject of the previous clause has to be the subject of the ואין clause, and this understanding is also natural here.

## Form/Structure/Setting

### Form

The chapter is the report of a symbolic vision. It uses the term חזון six times (vv 1, 2, 2, 13, 15, 26), and also expressions for “appear”/“see”/“look” (vv 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 15, 20), the preposition כ‍ “like,” the demonstrative particle הנה (“there”/”here”, vv 3, 5, 15, 19), and terms such as רדם “fall into a trance,” which are characteristic of vision reports. The root חזה appears also as חזות (“conspicuous,” v 5, recurring in v 8 MT [see n. 8.c]). The symbolic nature of the vision is indirectly noted by the use of terms for “(cause to) understand,” vv 15, 16, 17, 19, 23. The chapter also uses מראה to denote not only appearance (v 15) but (verbal) revelation (vv 16, 26, 27); the auditory aspect to the vision is important (cf. שמע “hear,” vv 13, 16). The vision’s broad contours follow those of chap. 7 and earlier visions. It includes a narrative introduction giving a date and geographical reference, which helps to establish the vision’s actuality. There follows the symbolic vision itself. One then expects a description of the seer’s response and puzzlement (cf. 7:15); in chap. 8 this is syntactically incorporated into the initiative from heaven which brings the vision’s interpretation to the seer (vv 15–19). This elaborate section takes the form of the description of an epiphany (cf. Ezek 8; also the more elaborate equivalent in Dan 10) which establishes the heavenly authority of the explanation. This explanation follows in the next major section (vv 20-26), an interpretive vision elucidating the symbolic vision. It opens with the characteristic noun clauses of an interpretation, but changes to verbal clauses as it moves to providing information about events that were not precisely represented in the vision. The climactic importance of these verses is emphasized by the rhythm and occasional parallelism; vv 23-25 are poetic in form. Finally there is a conclusion to the vision as a whole and a narrative closure (v 27) corresponding to 2:46; 7:28; also Ezek 3:15. The “I, Daniel” formula appears at the three appropriate key points (vv 1, 15, 27; see chap. 7 Form). The symbolic vision and the portrait of the fierce-looking king parallel texts such as the Animal Apocalypse in *1 Enoch* and the Akkadian dynastic prophecy; chap. 8 is for the most part a similar quasi-prediction (see chap. 2 *Form*, chaps. 10–12 *Form*).

Although Daniel links this vision with the one in chap. 7 (v 1), visionary dreams like those in chaps. 2; 4; and 7 are now over. Chaps. 8–12 are not dreams, and the characteristic terms to denote a dream-vision (see 7:1, 2, 7, 13) do not appear; OG’s addition of τοῦ ἐνυπνίου (“of the dream,” v 2) highlights this lack in MT. Daniel is awake for the symbolic vision, though he is put into a deep sleep for a short time in v 18 (cf. 10:9–11). This motif, like the dream form elsewhere, deepens the sense of transcendent mystery about the experience being described, and thus heightens the authority of the revelation that issues from the vision. Like a dream, such trancelike sleep cannot be humanly generated: it indicates supernatural involvement.[[283]](#footnote-283)

On the use of symbols, see Dan 7 *Form*. Like the ones in chap. 7, these symbols are not merely a code of random ciphers. They indicate that the entity described possesses qualities belonging to the symbol (e.g., a horn suggests strength); they call to mind a body of ideas, images, and values attaching to them in their interrelationships, which are (selectively) projected onto the entity symbolized. Thus the king “breaks” (v 25), a term which literally applies rather to the horn that symbolizes him. But the symbolism of chap. 8 involves less of the mythic or poetic than that of chap. 7. The anthropomorphic image of God does not appear here.[[284]](#footnote-284) While vv 23-25 are poetic in form, bringing the interpretive vision to a climax,[[285]](#footnote-285) they do so partly through taking the form of a dynastic prophecy of the kind that will come more fully in chap. 11.[[286]](#footnote-286)

Compared with chap. 7, the vision thus refers less to events or realities beyond present experience, and it is less cryptic, unless the aspects of 7:4–7 that are cryptic to us were not so to the original audience. Conversely, it contains more literal description of the small horn’s deeds, which makes the symbolism more transparent (in theory: in practice, the literal description is now cryptic to us in a way it, too, may not originally have been). To oversimplify, chap. 7 is myth, chap. 8 is allegory.[[287]](#footnote-287) The symbolic vision in chap. 7 comes to a climax with this transition to myth, while the symbolic vision in chap. 8 comes to its climax with a date. Chap. 7 is an impressionist painting open to several interpretations, chap. 8 a political cartoon with the names of the characters incorporated to make sure the reader understands it. As exercises in theology and communication, the two visions thereby complement each other. Chap. 7 is deep, allusive, imaginative; chap. 8 is sober, explicit, concrete. Consequently, the identification of the empires and kings in chap. 8 is all but universally agreed, whereas the identification of the ones in chap. 7 leaves more room for dispute. Chap. 8 interprets chap. 7 for us (it is a sort of midrash on chap. 7);[[288]](#footnote-288) chap. 7 reminds us that the historical realities named in chap. 8 are but one set of historical referents of its symbols. It implies a broader horizon. Following the general form of chap. 7 and of earlier visions may add to the credibility and pedigree of chap. 8.[[289]](#footnote-289)

It is also influenced by earlier scriptures,[[290]](#footnote-290) and this inclination to scriptural allusion counterbalances its less profound use of symbolism. The depth and resonance suggested by mythic allusion or tensive symbol in chap. 7 is suggested by scriptural allusion in chap. 8. Even the mythic allusions in vv 10–11 have already been taken up into the scriptures in Isa 14.[[291]](#footnote-291) Aspects of Daniel’s description of his experience in vv 1–2 and of the epiphany in vv 15–18 correspond to aspects of Ezekiel’s: the provision of date and geographical setting (vv 1–2; cf. Ezek 1:1–3); the visionary journey to the scene of what is to be revealed (v 2; cf. Ezek 8:3); the location by a river (? vv 2, 3, 6; cf. Ezek 1:1–3—Ezekiel’s physical, not his visionary location); the one of humanlike appearance (v 15; cf. Ezek 8:2 [see BHS]); the form of address, “mortal man” (אדם בן, v 17; cf. Ezek 2:1; 8:5; etc.); and the setting upright of one who falls on his face to the ground (vv 17–18; Ezek 1:28–2:2; 3:23–24). Daniel’s vision report is not an account of a call, like Ezek 1–3; as a vision of the sanctuary desecration and of the desolating rebellion (vv 11–12), it corresponds in substance though not in forms of expression rather to Ezek 8.

The celestial dialogue introducing the interpretive part of the vision (vv 13–19) also reflects Zechariah’s visions. The first of these visions (Zech 1:7–17) features dialogue between humanlike figures, including a supernatural messenger who explains the vision to Zechariah. Yahweh’s aide asks “how long” (מתי עד) Yahweh is going to be wrathful (זעם) towards Jerusalem and Judah, beyond the seventy years of which Jeremiah spoke, and he is reassured that the moment of restoration and vindication is coming (cf. Dan 8:13, 14, 19; 9:2). But the isolated parallel with the “How long” of Isa 6:11 is likely coincidental;[[292]](#footnote-292) while the talk of “wrath” in Isa 10 is background to Dan 9 and 11 but not specifically to Dan 8.

In Zechariah’s second vision (1:18-21 [2:1–4]), four horns have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem; these horns of the nations will be knocked down (cf. Dan 8:24–25). The third vision (2:1-4 [5–8]) features another dialogue involving both celestial beings and Zechariah himself; it uses the very rare term הלז “this man,” which appears in Dan 8:16. The links with Zechariah hint that Dan 8 belongs with a way of thinking represented more explicitly in chap. 9: the Judahites’ position long after the sixth century is still an experience of subjugation and repression. Visions that are thus analogous to Zechariah’s are brought into relationship to an End centuries after his time by the allusion in vv 17 and 19 to Habakkuk’s comment that לקץ ויפח ד למוע חזון (“the vision relates to the appointed time and pants [?] for the end”; Hab 2:3); compare the systematic application of Habakkuk to such an End in 1QpHab.

The seer gives a key theological assessment of Antiochus by taking up the myth of a subordinate celestial being who seeks to usurp the place of God himself, the myth already applied to a historical figure, the king of Babylon, in Isa 14 (kings are described as goats [עתודים] in Isa 14:9). The myth is here reapplied.[[293]](#footnote-293) The mythic language adapted in Isa 14 is given precision by the more literal language of the laments in Isa 59:1–15; 63:7–64:11 [12]. There already truth has fallen in the public squares and cannot be found (Isa 59:14–15; cf. Dan 8:12), and God’s sanctuary is trampled down by Israel’s adversaries (Isa 63:15, 18; cf. Dan 8:11, 13). In the context of these links, the parallel between the three occurrences of פשע in Isa 59:12, 13 and the two in Dan 8:12, 13 may not be coincidental; nor may the parallel between the description of Jerusalem as a desolation (שממה) in Isa 64:10 [9] and the mention of the desolating rebellion (שמם הפשע) in Dan 8:13. Isa 63:9 also pictures Israel looked after by Yahweh’s personal aide, whose position may be analogous to that of the leader of the army in Dan 8:11. Earlier, Isa 52:14; 53:12 provides terms (שחת, עצומים, רבים) that appear in Dan 8:24–25.[[294]](#footnote-294)

The quasi-predictive animal allegories of Daniel and *1 Enoch* take up a tradition going back to Gen 49 via Ezekiel’s nature allegories (e.g., Ezek 15; 17; 19; also 39:18). *1 Enoch* 90 illustrates the motif of a horn growing, fighting, and breaking in a way parallel to Dan 8. The vision of ram and goat also has varied extrabiblical background. These two animals are the signs under which Persia and Syria appear in the zodiac.[[295]](#footnote-295) Indeed, there is nothing distinctively Jewish about the portrait of the ram and goat (vv 3–8a). It could have existed already and been taken into the vision as a whole.[[296]](#footnote-296) The horns have a varied background in Babylonian omen-literature, as well as in OT and wider Semitic symbolism (cf. Dan 7 *Form*). Stylized aspects of the description of Antiochus’s tyranny (vv 23–25) appear in Greek writers,[[297]](#footnote-297) while the characterization of Antiochus as the clever transgressor due for his comeuppance compares with the link between wisdom and pride already made in Isa 10:13; Ezek 28:2–5 (where the king of Tyre is compared with Daniel!).[[298]](#footnote-298) On the background of the 2,300 days, see *Comment*.

It has been assumed that the mythic and poetic aspects to chap. 7 suggest that it reflects a “real” visionary experience, while the more concrete aspects to chap. 8 suggest that it is a more consciously contrived elaboration or expansion of part of chap. 7. Both these assumptions can be questioned.

### Structure

1–2a Introduction: date and place

2b–14 Symbolic vision (beginning בראתי ויהי)

2b the seer’s circumstances

3–4 ram

3 its appearance

4 its activity

5–12 goat

5 its arrival

6–7 its activity

8a its increase

8b its shattering and new growth

9-12 its small horn

9 its arrival

10–12 its activity

10 in relation to the heavenly army

11 in relation to the army leader

12 in relation to the sanctuary

13–14 the limit set to the visionary events

13 one holy one asks

14 another holy one explains

15–26 Interpretive vision (beginning בראתי ויהי)

15–19 epiphany of interpreter

15a the seer’s circumstances

15b the interpreter appears

16 the interpreter commissioned

17a the interpreter approaches

17b the interpreter speaks

18 the seer’s response

19 the interpreter’s introduction to the message

20–26 message of interpreter

20 the ram interpreted

21 the goat interpreted

22 the shattering and new growth interpreted

23–25 the fierce-looking king

23 his rise

24–25a his success

25b his fall

26 concluding affirmation and instruction

27 Conclusion: the visionary’s response[[299]](#footnote-299)

Like chap. 7, chap. 8 uses introductory formulae to mark significant transition points. Thus vv 3 and 5 have long visionary formulae to introduce the ram and the goat; in v 8b the resumptive reference to the goat’s strength fulfills a similar function.[[300]](#footnote-300) The symbolic vision builds up to v 12, as the same elements recur in the portrait of ram, goat, and small horn: each appears, acts aggressively, enjoys success, but then falls. The sections of the symbolic vision characteristically open with noun clauses—an unusual number of these appear here—then change to verbal clauses. The effect is to draw attention to ongoing, enduring situations, then to punctiliar, changing events. The symbolic vision comes to its climax with a string of verbal clauses in vv 11–12.[[301]](#footnote-301) It encourages us to view the small horn’s career in light of patterns in earlier world history (the story of the ram and the goat), of the visions of Zechariah, and of the myth of the rebellion against the heavens’ authority; in each, the assertive powers get their comeuppance.

The portrait of the small horn stops short of this final element. The symbolic vision thus terminates at a surprising point and leaves us in suspense. Here there is no visionary presentation of judgment, restoration, or reign of God, and there will be no direct promise of it till the very end of the interpretive vision (v 25b). While vv 13–14 do not directly resolve the tension set by vv 8b–12, they bring the symbolic vision to a further climax with their transition from portraying animals to portraying celestial beings. The conversation between these beings indicates that the small horn is under control. It does not reveal what will happen to it, which is left for the climactic line of the interpretive vision in v 25. Our anticipation of that revelation is heightened as vv 13–14 presuppose something of the sort without announcing it. Here, however, another concern surfaces, the question of how long the crisis is to last. This concern is highlighted by its coming at the climax of the vision and by the transition from vision to auditory experuence and from an earthly scene to a dialogue between supernatural beings.[[302]](#footnote-302)

The symbolic vision comes to an end with a celestial conversation; the interpretive vision opens with a celestial conversation. While the symbolic vision gives nearly twice as much space to the ram and the goat as it gives to the small horn, the interpretive vision gives less space to the kings of Medo-Persia and Greece than to the final, fierce-looking king. As usual, some aspects of the symbolic vision are not explicitly interpreted, while some aspects of the interpretive vision have no antecedent in the symbolic vision. Formally, vv 20–25 do interpret vv 3–12 by identifying the chief referents of the symbolic vision, but they tell the audience only what they could work out and will have worked out for themselves. The symbols for the various nations are of transparent significance. In a sense it was the symbolic vision that was interpretive: it was designed to suggest the significance of the history that the audience knew. The kingdoms named in vv 20–21 have been portrayed so as to show that they embody more than they themselves are. They embody trans-historical, supernatural realities. The function of vv 23–25 is not to explain ciphers from earlier verses but to complement one set of enigmatic sayings with another set. Thus in vv 20–25 a portrait in terms of animals and astrological motifs is complemented by a portrait of a human-superhuman aggressor who still, however, remains incognito.[[303]](#footnote-303) In the manner of chap. 7, chap. 8 marks the importance of vv 23–25 as the vision’s climax by a transition to a rhythmic prosody with some parallelism. The importance of this climax is heightened by the expansion on the contents of the original vision that it offers, especially by the unheralded conclusion in the last line of v 25. The arrangement of the cola contributes to the sense of working to a climax. Verse 23 comprises two balancing bicola (a-a’, b-b’). Verse 24 comprises two bicola arranged chiastically (a-b-b’-a’); omitting the bracketed phrase as a gloss improves the prosody, but it is not necessary. In OG, at least (see n. 25.a-a), v 25 begins with two further bicola arranged chiastically (a-b-b’-a’), then a further bicolon (taking up ועל and יד from the first) carries the deeds of the previous four to an even greater height of enormity, and finally resolves the tension by declaring the divine response.

A number of expressions recur through the chapter: גדל “become big,” vv 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 25 (see n. 4.c-c., n. 8.a-a); עמד “stand”/“arise”/“place,” vv 3, 4, 7, 15, 17, 18, 18, 22, 22, 23, 25; שלך “throw down,” vv 7, 11, 12; רמס “trample,” vv 7, 10, 13; יד “hand”/“power,” vv 4, 7, 25 (the first two with מציל “rescue”); כח “strength,” vv 6, 7, 22, 24, 24; עצם “might,” vv 8, 24, 24; cf. the use of עשה “act” in vv 4, 12, 24. These repetitions help to bind together the symbolic vision, the epiphany by a celestial being, and the interpretive vision. They have a cumulative effect in establishing the tone of what is being described as it repeats itself through the story of the Medo-Persian empire, Alexander and his successors, and Antiochus. The repetition also serves to suggest that there is nothing so frighteningly novel about what is happening in this great crisis in Jerusalem.[[304]](#footnote-304)

The atmosphere of thrusting aggression conveyed by these terms is furthered by a series of expressions suggesting directions of movement. The ram charges west, north, and south (v 4). The goat comes from the west over the whole earth (v 5). Its four horns grow towards the four points of the compass (v 8). The small horn grows south, east, and towards Palestine (v 9). This aggressive movement then moves onto a different plane, to reach to the celestial army and the commander of that army (vv 10, 11). Alongside the references here to השמים (“the heavens,” vv 8, 10) appear a number of references to ארץ[ה] (“the earth/ground,” vv 5, 5, 7, 10, 12, 18): both terms are capable of referring both to the this-worldly plane and to movement between earth and heaven. Spatial allusions in the chapter actually begin with the book’s most elaborate determining of Daniel’s own—visionary—location, Elam/Susa/the Ulay (v 2).

The spatial allusions are complemented by a series of temporal references. These allusions also begin with Daniel’s visionary time (v 1), but they cluster at the transition from the symbolic vision to the interpretive vision (vv 13–19). A holy one asks י מת עד “how long” the crisis is to last, and another sets its term. Gabriel tells Daniel that the vision relates to the time of the end and that an end will come at an appointed time; the events will happen הזעם באחרית “as wrath draws to a close,” and Antiochus will arise מלכותם באחרית “as their kingship draws to a close” (v 23). In v 26 Gabriel finally brings these two temporal motifs together, describing the burden of the revelation in terms of how long the crisis is to last, and declaring that it relates to רבים ימים “distant days.” The narrative even includes a related temporal expression (ימים “some days”) in its conclusion (v 27), as it had begun with a chronological note (v 1). The effect of these various characteristics of the chapter is to combine a strong sense of aggressive horizontal movement, aggressive movement between the earth and the heavens, and temporal constraint.

There is some redundancy within vv 15–19; perhaps v 19 is in a narrower sense an introduction to vv 20–25, v 26 then being a corresponding conclusion to the interpretation.[[305]](#footnote-305) Scholars who trace a recensional history behind chap. 7 find a parallel one behind chap. 8:[[306]](#footnote-306) e.g., vv 13–14, 16–17, 26a, 27b may be attributed to the author of Dan 9, who is especially concerned with the timing of the crisis. In addition, vv 18–19 may be attributed to the author of Dan 10–12, with which they share a distinctive use of נרדם (“fell into a deep sleep, 8:18; 10:9) and a less supra-historical way of talking about the End than that of v 17 (compare 10:14; 11:27, 25 with v 19).

### Setting

Given that this vision’s historical setting lies just after the fulfillment of its portrait of the wicked acts of the small horn/fierce-looking king and before the reversal promised in vv 14b, 25b. The point of suspense at which v 12 stops is the point of suspense at which the vision’s audience lives, the time between the sanctuary’s desecration in December 167 and its restoration in December 164. The deeds of Antiochus to which it refers perhaps indicate a slightly later period than that to which chap. 7 belongs. The vision comes from conservative rather than reformist groups within the Jewish community. Its concern with the sanctuary’s violation hardly need point to a priestly circle; many other people would be concerned about the sanctuary, and the sanctuary is by no means the chapter’s exclusive focus (see vv 23–25). Neither need the expectation that the fierce-looking king will break without being touched suggest that the vision had its background in an antimilitarist group within conservative Jews.

In its literary setting, v 1 makes a double link with chap. 7: the date is just after, and the vision explicitly follows on that earlier one. The date also links the vision of Antiochus’s sacrilege with the reign of the sacrilegious Belshazzar of whom we read in chap. 5. The chapter supplements the vision of oppression and judgment contained in chap. 7. It reaffirms the promise of chap. 7, perhaps in light of a worsening situation. Repetition in itself also functions to strengthen the main impression conveyed by the previous vision (see Dan 6 *Setting*). Similar to chap. 7 in length, the chapter also divides into halves that resemble the corresponding halves of chap. 7 in length and structure.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  | Symbolic vision | Chap. 8 | Interpretive vision  Chap. 7 | Chap. 8 |
| Introduction | 1 | 1–2 | 16 | 15–19 |
| Summary | 2–3 |  | 17–18 |  |
| Babylon | 4 | (1) |  |  |
| Media | 5 | (2) 3–4 |  | 20 |
| Persia | 6 | 3–4 |  | 20 |
| Greece: Alexander | 7a | 5–8 | 19, 23 | 21 |
| His successors | 7b | 8b | 20a, 24a | 22–23a |
| Antiochus | 8 | 9–12 | 20b–22, 24b–25 | 23b–25a |
| God’s judgment | 9–12 |  | 26 | 25b |
| God’s purpose restored | 13–14 | 13–14 | 27 |  |
| Conclusion | 15 | (15) | 28 | 26–27 |

The comparison highlights chap. 8’s lack of any overall scheme for the time from the Babylonian period to Antiochus. It concentrates more on the Greek period, giving particular attention in the symbolic vision to Alexander and slightly more attention to his successors. Its more concrete portrayal of Antiochus’s actions also conveys a deeper sense of appalment at what is envisaged, and the seer’s reaction to the epiphany is one of shock unparalleled in chap. 7. It lacks the divine judgment scene but it includes the heavenly dialogue that opens the interpretive vision. The nature of God’s judgment and the positive fulfillment of his purpose is differently conceived in 7:9–14, 26–27 and in 8:13–14, 25b; in particular, the focus on the kingdom in previous chapters is supplemented by an interest in the temple here.[[307]](#footnote-307)

With chap. 8, Hebrew resumes. The transition from Hebrew to Aramaic at 2:4a fulfilled a rhetorical function; it is not so clear that the return to Hebrew fulfills a rhetorical function, as is the case with the equivalent transition in Ezra. The return does go along with a movement from a broader look at the empires in chap. 7 to a closer focus on the last of the four empires’ action against the Jewish people in chaps. 8–12.[[308]](#footnote-308) Once again “Language enacts identity” but here “the empire makes no further claim on the reader.”[[309]](#footnote-309) The chapters are written in varying forms of Hebrew. Chaps 8 and 10—12 are less consistent in their use of *waw* consecutive and in their word order, use pronouns in a distinctive way, omit to match the gender of words to one another, and often lack the simplicity characteristic of classical Hebrew prose.[[310]](#footnote-310) But these distinctives function rhetorically in connection with the “stories” that the chapters tell. “The Hebrew of the Book of Daniel is a very carefully crafted composition. Daniel 8 reveals this.”[[311]](#footnote-311) These characteristics are more marked than they were in chap. 1, which might suggest different authorship,[[312]](#footnote-312) and some of these characteristics can be seen as influenced by Aramaic and as resulting from translation from Aramaic.[[313]](#footnote-313) The Hebrew must at least have been written by someone who was as much or more at home in Aramaic (though some of the oddities explained by the translation theory presuppose that he was both a poor Hebraist and a poor Aramaist. Perhaps “the disturbed nature of the language reflects the intensity of the crisis that concerns the seer. It may be that Daniel actually saw things he could not describe any better than this, or he may have deliberately chosen to use rather confused language because of the awfulness of the sacrilege he refers to—the profanation of the Temple itself.”[[314]](#footnote-314) The effect on readers might be to draw attention to the fact that author and readers live in “a strange and difficult new world” but also a covenantal world.[[315]](#footnote-315) To write in Hebrew, the language of the Torah, and to take up the themes of the Prophets, was an act of resistance.[[316]](#footnote-316) It was perhaps also “a sign of hope, for now Daniel returns to the language of his youth, the language of his freedom.”[[317]](#footnote-317)

Chap. 8 is the last of the book’s symbolic visions; the succeeding revelations are more verbal than visual. They are still cryptic but not symbolic. Given that the explanation of the symbolic vision in chap. 8 actually explains little, this lack prepares the way for the following vision(s). V 27b thus leads into chaps. 9 and 10–12, which offer further reaffirmation and more explanation of the vision’s fundamental perspective. The chapter’s connection with the Babylonian period (its setting in the reign of the sacrilegious Belshazzar) links with the focus on the question of how long this oppression is to last which concerns chap. 9. Its epiphany and detailed quasi-prediction are paralleled on a larger scale by those of chaps. 10–12.

## Comment

**1–2** The date links back with chap. 7; it might indicate that in reality two years have passed since that vision.[[318]](#footnote-318) The third year of Belshazzar was c. 548/47; see 7:1 Comment.[[319]](#footnote-319)

Daniel is in Elam in his vision; the account presupposes a visionary journey such as Ezekiel experienced (see *Form*), a journey which has taken the subject far from his bodily setting.[[320]](#footnote-320) Elam lies between Babylon and Persia; it corresponds to the Iranian province of Khuzistan, north of the Persian Gulf. In 548/47 it wiould likely still have belonged to Babylon, but the chapter presupposes the status and circumstances of Susa after Persia became the great power.[[321]](#footnote-321) Whereas Susa had been destroyed by Asshurbanipal, Darius I rebuilt it as a fortified city, beginning in 521. Elam was then a province of the Persian empire, and in Jewish thinking Susa was the seat of the empire (Neh 1:1; Esth 1:2). Subsequently it was within the Seleucid empire; Antiochus III was killed there in 187. Its ruins lie near the River Karun, but the names and locations of the watercourses in the area seem to have changed over the centuries.[[322]](#footnote-322) Ulay is, however, an ancient name for a waterway near Susa. The vision is located at a gate opening towards a waterway, in the tradition of Ezekiel’s vision by the Kebar canal (cf. Dan 10:4; 12:5–7; *1 Enoch* 13.7–8; also Pharaoh’s dream set at a river, Gen 41).

**3–4** Within the OT and elsewhere, leaders are often symbolized by animals such as the ram and the goat (see *Form*). Ram and goat, which are singled out in Ezek 34:17, are both clean animals; contrast the unclean hybrids and fierce predators that represent nations in Dan 7 and in *1 Enoch* 89–90.[[323]](#footnote-323) So ram and goat are less fearful or objectionable symbols of authority and power. The ram might be readily identifiable as a symbol for Persia: in the zodiac, Persia was under Aries, the ram, and the name Ulay (ליאו) could bring to mind the word for ram (איל).[[324]](#footnote-324) According to the Ammianus Marcellinus, the fourth century AD Roman historian (*History* 10.1), Persian kings on the march carried a gold ram’s head.

The two horns on the single ram then suggest Media and Persia, here recognized to be one yet distinguishable. Persia entered the world stage later than Media but ultimately played a more major part. V 4 more likely describes Medo-Persia’s initial triumphs (under Cyrus) in Turkey and Babylon than later victories over Egypt (under Cambyses), Scythia and Greece (under Darius), and Athens itself (under Xerxes), since Daniel suggests the order “west and north and south.” Cyrus’ victories to the east are omitted: from a Palestinian perspective he is already the ruler of the east (Isa 41:2).[[325]](#footnote-325)

There is nothing inherently wrong with “doing big things” (הגדיל); but the expression is used in an unequivocally good sense only of God (1 Sam 12:24; Ps 126:2, 3). Of human beings it tends to suggest arrogance (Jer 48:26; Joel 2:20; Zeph 2:10; Ps 35:26; Ps 55:12 [13]), or at least achievement at someone else’s expense (Zeph 2:8; Lam 1:9). Here it is achievement that presages calamity. The expression has the foreboding ambiguity of the mouth speaking big things in 7:8, 20.

There are no divine passaive verbs in the description of the animals. “Divine activity is not visibly or directly causative, and the work of the ram and the goat appear to be self-propelled…. These beasts are not under divine commission. History in vv 3-12 appears to obey its own rhythms.”[[326]](#footnote-326)

**5–8** The opening resumptive phrase heralds a new development. The goat is a less frequent symbol for leadership than the ram (see Isa 14:9; Zech 10:3), but goats are fierce creatures, more powerful than sheep (cf. Jer 50:8). The imperial leadership more powerful than Persia’s will be Alexander’s. The goat might inherently suggest the post-Alexandrian Greek empire of the Seleucids; as the zodiac placed Persia under the ram, so it placed Syria under the horned goat, Capricorn. Further, like the hybrids of chap. 7, the goat may have demonic connotations.[[327]](#footnote-327)

The notion of the unicorn (cf. the sirussu) may derive from the profile reliefs that merge two horns as one.[[328]](#footnote-328) The description of Alexander’s flying advance recalls that of Cyrus in Isa 41:3 and the winged leopard of Dan 7:6 (cf. 1 Macc 1:1–4). Over a period of four years between 334 and 331 Alexander demolished the Persian empire and established an empire of his own extending from Europe to India. On the breakup of his empire, see 11:4 *Comment*.

**9** Rashi takes the small horn to be Titus, so that what follows refers to the destruction of the Second Temple, and some Christian commentators adopt the same approach or relate the small horn to a subsequent anti-messiah figure.[[329]](#footnote-329) This understanding links logically with the identifying of Rome as the fourth creature in chap. 7, and it facilitates an interpretation of this passage as pointing to the action of the continuing embodiments of Rome in the church (persecuting Jews) or more specifically of Catholics (persecuting Protestants). But in the context of this vision, the small horn growing from the Seleucid line is Antiochus IV. He was an insignificant person compared with Alexander, the youngest of several brothers who had no right to the throne, a hostage in Rome through much of his earlier life, and a king who would treat Judah ignobly—even if from a broader historical perspective he was an impressive ruler. On his expeditions and deeds, see 11:21–45 *Comment*.

“The fairest” (הצבי) refers to the land of Israel, the land flowing with milk and honey; the term comes in Ezek 20:6, 15, of which the allusion here may be a reminiscence. The word is used in phrases denoting both the country (Dan 11:16, 41; Jer 3:19; *1 Enoch* 89.40) and the hill of Zion in particular (Dan 11:45; cf. 1 Macc 2:12; also the city of Babylon in Isa 13:19). Both references are appropriate in this context. Parallel expressions are צבי נחלת “fair possession” (Jer 3:19); חמדה ארץ “lovely land”( Jer 3:19; Zech 7:14; Ps 106:24); חפץ ארץ “delightful land” (Mal 3:12), and descriptions of Zion as נוף יפה “beautiful in loftiness” (Ps 48:2 [3]; יפי מכלל “totality of beauty” (Ps 50:2; cf. Lam 2:15; also Ezek 27:3, regarding Tyre).

**10–11** In the interpretation of the small horn’s attack on the heavenly army ( השמים צבא ) similar issues arise to those raised by chap. 7. The reference to the sanctuary could suggest that the heavenly army is the Jewish people, or the priesthood in particular, viewed as having heavenly significance because of their relationship with the God of heaven. They are the Yahweh’s armies (Exod 7:4; cf. 6:26; 12:17, 51; Num 33:1); they are his heavenly children (2 Macc 7:34). It is they who are attacked by Antiochus (1 Macc 1:29–38). Yet the people who are here attacked include “some of the stars,” which rather suggests that the heavenly army is a supernatural body. Elsewhere “the heavenly army” denotes the actual stars in the heavens (Isa 34:4; cf. Gen 2:1; Ps 33:6), and more commonly the stars as personalized objects of worship (Deut 4:19; Jer 8:2; Zeph 1:5). The stars in the heavens are Yahweh’s servants (Judg 5:20), and Dan 12:3 promises that the faithful are destined to shine like the stars. The notion of attacking the stars, which goes back to Isa 14:13, is applied retrospectively to Antiochus in 2 Macc 9:10, and from 169 BC Antiochus’s coins picture his head surmounted with a star; he entitles himself King Antiochus God Manifest (Βασιλευς Αντιοχος Θεος Επιφανης). Perhaps an attack on the temple, on the people of Israel, and on the priesthood is seen as implicitly an attack on the God worshiped there and on his supernatural associates who identify with Israel (so 4Q Serek Šîrôt, the Angelic Liturgy).[[330]](#footnote-330) But the manner of expression is allusive, as in chap. 7.

The fall of some of the heavenly army/stars has a different significance from that in *1 Enoch* 6; 86. Their being thrown down and trampled presupposes that the small horn is now portrayed by synecdoche in terms appropriate to earthly leaders who are also symbolized by animals (cf. v 7; also 7:7, 19, 23). The same portrayal continues in vv 11–13 as sanctuary and truth are overthrown, and sanctuary and army are given over to be trampled. Army, sanctuary, and truth are all victims of the goat’s charging and butting.[[331]](#footnote-331) The king himself becomes momentarily visible in v 11a (“He grew…”).

The question of the identity of the army leader is also complicated. In 1:7–11, 18; 11:5, שר (leader) denotes a foreign official; in 9:6, 8, an Israelite leader; in 10:13, 20, 21; 12:1, heavenly beings. In 1 Chr 24:5; 2 Chr 36:14; Ezra 8:24, 29; 10:5, it denotes leaders among the priesthood. But הצבא שר is a term for an army leader (e.g., Gen 21:22; 1 Sam 12:9), and the compound expression needs to be understood in light of the reference to “the army” in v 10. It refers to the leader of Israel or of Israel’s celestial equivalents (not, surely, the sun as commander of the heavenly host).[[332]](#footnote-332)

Who is this leader? The high priest could be so identified, and 2 Macc 4 reports the murder of the high priest Onias III in 171, but this event antedated the incidents related in v 10, and Antiochus is not elsewhere blamed for the murder (though see 11:22). Indeed, the reliability of the 2 Maccabees account has been questioned.[[333]](#footnote-333) Perhaps the reference is more generally to Antiochus’s usurping the authority of the priesthood over the temple’s religious life. But behind such an arrogation of power is an attack on heaven itself. In Josh 5:13–15 the leader of Yahweh’s army is a celestial being, and the leader of the army here might thus be Michael, though the description of his authority goes beyond that of Michael elsewhere:[[334]](#footnote-334) Michael is only one of the prominent leaders (10:13), having a special relationship with Israel parallel to the relationship of other leaders with Persia or Greece (10:21; 12:1). More likely the leader is God himself, who is presumably the “leader supreme” ( שרים שר) in v 25, frequently termed צבאות יהוה (“Yahweh of armies,” EVV “the Lord of hosts”). While a plausible view of the humanlike figure in 7:13 is that he is a personification of the holy ones, that understanding cannot apply to this army leader, since he is distinguished from the rest of the army; nor does an attack on Israel thus constitute an attack on God, so that anti-Semitism is deicide.[[335]](#footnote-335) But an attack on the Jerusalem sanctuary does constitute an attack on God. Although Antiochus hardly made himself an object of worship, his self-designation as Epiphanes could be taken to imply something approaching such arrogance, and theologically his assuming authority over the affairs of the temple involved assuming an authority that belonged to God alone (cf. 11:36–37 and the *Comment*).

“The daily offering” (התמיד, lit. “the [offering of] continuity”; 8:11–13; 11:31; 12:11) is a regular term for the whole offering sacrificed every morning and evening (תמיד[ה] עלת): see Exod 29:38–42; Num 28–29; Ezek 46:1–15; Ezra 3:5; Neh 10:33 [34]. Other passages use the word in connection with the daily grain offering (התמיד מנחת, Num 4:16; Neh 10:33 [34]; cf. Lev 6:20 [13]), the daily incense offering

(תמיד קטרת, Exod 30:8), and the daily (Presence) bread ( התמיד לחם, Num 4:7; cf. 2 Chr 2:4 [3]). 1 Macc 1:45 records the suspension of whole offerings, sacrifice, and libation. While התמיד on its alone does refer primarily to the morning and evening whole offering (cf. v 14), it can thus hint at a wider range of observances, and it may here suggest the religious practices of the temple in general, which were suspended by Antiochus. The temple was not overthrown or destroyed in 167 in the way it was in 587 BC and in AD 70, but it was robbed of its valuables, emptied of its worshipers, and defiled by the accoutrements of an alien religion (1 Macc 1:20–24, 39–40; 3:45; cf. 4:43–48). Its overthrowing consists in its being prevented from functioning as a place of proper worship of the true God.

**12** Antiochus and his army now become more transparent (in MT: but see n. 12.a-a); cf. v 21 in chap. 7. The seer abandons the visionary way of speaking proper to one who has been watching an event which he thus describes in the past, and adopts the future tense proper to an interpretive vision. Concerning the army set over the sacrificial system of the temple, see 11:31 *Comment*. If the army of vv 10–11 is an earthly people as well as its heavenly equivalent, however, the same may be true of this hostile army: cf. Isa 24:21 and the allusions to the individual celestial leaders of Persia and Greece in Dan 10:13, 20.

In isolation, the rebellion (פשע) could be that of the compromised priesthood or of people generally who were involved in reforms affected by Hellenism, which are seen as bringing about Yahweh’s punishment and thus the wrath of which v 19 speaks. But the Jewish community as a whole has been portrayed as sinned against rather than sinning.[[336]](#footnote-336) Daniel seems positive in his attitude to the temple in principle, too (contrast *1 Enoch* 89.73); he envisages the vindication of the temple, not a new temple.[[337]](#footnote-337) In v 13 “rebellion” will refer to Antiochus’s sacrilege and in v 23 his people will be termed “rebels,” so that “rebellion” is likely the reference here, too. The truth (אמת) that is thrown to the ground might denote concretely the Torah, whose authority over the religious life of Judaism is abrogated by Antiochus’s acts; Torah scrolls were destroyed by his forces (1 Macc 1:56). But “truth” is a more general word and it points more generally to the way things are supposed to be.[[338]](#footnote-338) “Truth” is the opposite of “deceit” (v 25). According to 2 Macc 6, the result of Antiochus’s actions was that people could not keep the Sabbath or observe the feasts, and these commitments were replaced by horrifying alternatives.

**13–14** Presumably the holy ones are discussing the vision’s meaning, and the seer catches the end of their conversation; compare the allusive nature of the vision/auditory event in Zech 1:7–17 (which underlies this chapter). If the holy ones are members of the heavenly/earthly army who are themselves discomfited by Antiochus’s actions, their “how long” (cf. 12:6) may nevertheless stem simply from their concern for afflicted Jews, as in Zech 1:7–17. The “how long” connects with this vision, but behind the vision it connects with that question—rather, plea—as it is expressed in protest psalms, not least concerning the devastation of the land and the defiling of the sanctuary (Ps 74:9–10; 79:5; 80:4 [5]; 89:46 [47]; cf. 6:3 [4]; 13:1 [2]; 90:13; 94:3; also Isa 6:11; Jer 12:4; 2 Esd 6:59). The cry of the holy ones takes up the cry of afflicted Israel. A number of the passages expressing this cry presuppose or permit a context in the Babylonian period, of which subsequent afflictions such as those of the Antiochene period are seen as a continuance (cf. chap. 9 and the sixth-century setting of Daniel generally); and the response they look for—at least in the way such psalms would be understood in the late OT period—is God’s final turning to his people and restoring of them which Dan 8 associates with “the time of the end” (v 17).[[339]](#footnote-339)

“Desolating rebellion” ( שמם הפשע ), like “desolating abomination” (שמם[מ‍] [ים]שקוץ[ה], 9:27; 11:31; 12:11), apparently parodies the name of the god שמים בעל (Ba‘al Šamem, “Lord of the heavens”).[[340]](#footnote-340) While “Lord of the heavens” was a foreign epithet for the highest God, in an earlier period it was one that Jews could utilize as appropriate for the true God (see 2:18 *Comment*), but it is now a title that the Seleucids especially use. Its Greek equivalent is Ζεὺς ’Ολύμπιος (Olympian Zeus): see, e.g., Josephus’s quotation from the Phoenician historian Dius in *Against Apion* 1.17 [113]. It is the title by which 2 Macc 6:2 designates the god to whom Antiochus dedicated the Jerusalem temple. In the creative Jewish distortion of the name, “rebellion” or “abomination” replaces “Ba‘al,” indicating a theological evaluation of the religious innovations of the time (cf. v 12). “Desolating” replaces “heavens,” using similar letters, and indicating the effect these innovations have on Jerusalem and its sanctuary (cf. vv 24–25; 9:26; 1 Macc 1:39; 3:45; 4:38). The compound phrase does not yet have a fixed form and is apparently a term of recent creation.[[341]](#footnote-341) According to 1 Macc 1:54, the “abomination” was erected on the sacrificial altar, and Porphyry says it involved images of Zeus and of Antiochus himself.[[342]](#footnote-342) But 1 Macc 1:59 speaks of a (pagan) altar erected on the sacrificial altar (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.5.4 [12.253]), which implies rather that the abomination consisted in the rebuilding of the altar to serve different religious observances (as in Judg 6:25–26): Antiochus had it turned into an old-fashioned shrine.[[343]](#footnote-343)

On the daily offering, the trampling of sanctuary and army, and Daniel’s attitude to the temple, see on vv 10–12. The charging of the ram and its eventual overthrowing and trampling were events no one could resist and from which there was no rescue (vv 4, 7), but the trampling of the sanctuary has a term set to it. The forensic metaphor that describes judgment being given for the holy ones on high (7:22) reappears as at least one aspect of the vision’s promise that the sanctuary will “emerge in the right” (נצדק: see n. 14.b-b, and cf. 1 Macc 2:29).

The 2,300 evenings and mornings before this vindication could suggest 2,300 occasions when evening or morning whole offering was not sacrificed—thus, 1,150 days.[[344]](#footnote-344) And the period from the pagan altar’s erection to the sanctuary rededication was three years and ten days (1 Macc 1:54; 4:52–53), a slightly shorter period, though orthodox rites might well have been suspended a little before the first of these dates. So 1,150 days could denote correctly, by guess or revelation or hindsight, the chronological period during which no regular sacrifices were offered.[[345]](#footnote-345) But why should 2,300 evenings and mornings be taken to denote 1,150 days? An evening and morning make one day (Gen 1:5–31; the order of evening and morning there explains the order here),[[346]](#footnote-346) and the morning and evening offering was seen as one unit rather than as two independent ones which could then naturally be counted separately.[[347]](#footnote-347) So the natural way to understand the phrase is as denoting 2,300 days (cf. G).[[348]](#footnote-348)

If it were necessary to relate 2,300 days to a period of this chronological length, it might still begin with the cessation of sacrifice in late 167 and go on to the prospect of complete victory over Seleucid power and release of the temple area from foreign overlordship or the threat of it. This fulfillment might be seen to have come in 160 with the victory described in 1 Macc 7, though it was soon followed by the death of Judas Maccabaeus and the triumph of the Hellenizing party (1 Macc 9).[[349]](#footnote-349) Alternatively, 2,300 days is not far from seven years (cf. 9:27) and could stretch from the removal of the high priest Onias III in 171 to the rededication of the sanctuary in 164,[[350]](#footnote-350) though the events referred to in v 13 perhaps have a closer connection with those of 167 than those of 171.

But the periods of time in chapters on either side of chap. 8 (see 7:25; 9:24–27) have symbolic rather than chronological significance, and it is appropriate to look for a significance beyond the chronological for the 2,300 days—whether or not it is significant in each case that the periods are approximately correct chronologically. The figure twenty-three occurs in *1 Enoch* 90.5. Of the seventy shepherds who have oversight of the Jews during the gentile domination, twenty-three have this responsibility for the early Hellenistic period. By implication, another group of twenty-three is responsible during the Persian period.[[351]](#footnote-351) The first sixty-nine of the seventy weeks of years from the Babylonian period to Antiochus (Dan 9:24–27) could thus be seen as three times twenty-three. The 2,300 days may, then, suggest a fixed “significant” period, which might or might not denote a chronological period in the region of six or seven years.

**15–19** That the humanlike person is a celestial being is here overt (contrast 7:13, even if it is to be inferred there; cf. 3:25, 28; 10:16, 18). His appearance is that of a גבר, a rather macho word for a male (Judg 5:30), but it comes to denote a man who is strong in and because of his relationship to God (e.g., Jer 17:5–8), and in the Qumran literature to denote someone especially chosen by God.[[352]](#footnote-352) Understood to mean “man of God,” גבריאל is thus an appropriate name for God’s celestial servant, and גבר is an appropriate term by which to refer to him, both for its sound (*geber*) and for its meaning (see n. 15b). Although Gabriel is the first named supernatural being within one of the books that came to be included in the scriptures, he is only one of a number who already appear in older parts of *1 Enoch*. He features with Michael, Raphael, and other leading holy ones in *1 Enoch* 9–10; 20; cf. also 1QM 9.15–16. Familiarity with such figures is presupposed here, though Gabriel’s role in Dan 8 and 9—and Michael’s role in Dan 10–12—does not particularly link with the descriptions in *1 Enoch*, and the place of these figures is reduced compared with some such approximately contemporary writings. Within the Christian scriptures as a whole, he will reappear in Luke 1, but “it is futile to ask what Gabriel did or was between the role ascribed to him in Daniel and his part in the events of the nativity. All that we are told concerning the individual existence of angels is that they are there as the mighty ones "that do his commandments … ministers of his, that do his pleasure" (Ps. 10320f.), and we do well, therefore, to picture their individual existence, if at all, only in the actuality with which it is presented in this Psalm.”[[353]](#footnote-353)

The names of Michael, Gabriel, and other leading holy ones are parallel in form to that of Daniel himself—or rather, vice versa. Daniel’s name thus hints at a kinship between him and the celestial beings (Daniel is the name of such a being in *1 Enoch* 6.7) and at the possibility of a link between the seer and the heavenly world. The voice that commissions Gabriel (v 16) is described as a human one (אדם קול); that expression recalls the description of God’s own appearance when he speaks in Ezek 1:26. To bring the vision in Dan 8 to a climax, then, there appears not merely an anonymous celestial being but a specific, named one, who belongs to the number of the well-known leading holy ones. [[354]](#footnote-354) And God himself not only appears, as in 7:9–10, but speaks.[[355]](#footnote-355) The supernatural conversation refers to both a vision (חזון) and a revelation (מראה). Each word relates to a verb for seeing and suggests a visual disclosure. In v 26, however, and presumably then in v 27, the latter word refers to the verbal message about the 2,300 evenings and mornings; the same reference will apply in v 16, the revelation being that in vv 13–14 (the term refers to a verbal message in 9:23; but see further n. 10:1.f).

Gabriel is a “man of God”; he is himself addressed by a “human” voice, that is, God’s voice. He addresses Daniel as “mortal man” (אדם בן, traditionally “son of man”), using God’s characteristic form of address to Ezekiel (e.g., 2:1, 3); it suggests both solemnly and encouragingly the awesomeness and the honor of an ordinary human being hearing this man of God address him.[[356]](#footnote-356) Falling on the face is a traditional courtly way of expressing recognition of a king’s majesty, the most extreme possible form of personal obeisance (2 Sam 9:6; 14:4; 25:23). It is naturally also an expression of a similar recognition of God’s majesty, especially in a worship context (Lev 9:24; 1 Kgs 18:39; 2 Chr 7:3). Ezekiel falls on his face in self-effacing obeisance (e.g., 1:28), which is in turn the immediate background to Daniel’s doing so, though here the object of the recognition is God’s heavenly representative, as in Josh 5:14 (a passage noted in connection with v 11) and Tob 12:6 (involving Gabriel’s associate Raphael).

Falling into a trance (נרדם) has different connotations. It is not an everyday life or worship word; it denotes a coma-like state of deep sleep brought about by supernatural agency, especially in connection with visionary experiences (Gen 2:21; 15:12; 1 Sam 26:12; Job 4:13; 33:15; cf. *T. Levi* 2.5; ironically, Isa 29:10; Jonah 1:5–6; Prov 10:5; 29:10; ?Judg 4:21). The verb recurs in 10:9; see further the seer’s description of his experience in 10:7–19 and the *Comment*. The seer’s touching also recurs there. While Isa 6:7 and Jer 1:9 refer to God touching a prophet’s lips in a vision (cf. Dan 10:16), the only antecedent for touching to awaken, reassure, and strengthen is Elijah in 1 Kgs 19:5, 7. The more general background is again Ezek 1:28–2:2, where God takes hold of the prophet and sets him on his feet.

“Time” (עת), “end” (קץ), “closing part [of the wrath]” ([הזעם אחרית]), and “set moment” (מועד) appear in vv 17, 19; compare the further expressions “closing part [of their kingship]” ([מלכותם] אחרית, v 23) and “distant days” (רבים ימים, v 26). Like their English equivalents, these terms are everyday words. None inherently refers to the absolute End, and only their contexts tell us whether the expressions in the various combinations refer to the end of a particular period of time or to the End of Time. And “within the context of this vision ‘the end’ (19) need not be ‘The End,’ the ultimate end of history.”[[357]](#footnote-357)

The notion of a period characterized by wrath is one of the aspects of Dan 8 that reflects Zech 1, where the Babylonian period is a period of wrath (Zech 1:12). The context there indicates that reference to wrath does not denote God’s punishing Israel for its rebellion: although rebellion was the cause of the fall of Jerusalem, the ongoing period of wrath is one in which Israel is continuing to be treated harshly because of the hostility of its enemies rather than because of its own rebellion. In a parallel way 1 Macc 1:64 speaks of Antiochus’s persecution as the coming of very great wrath on Israel (cf. 2 Kgs 3:27), and Dan 11:30 speaks specifically of Antiochus’s wrath rather than God’s.[[358]](#footnote-358) Indeed, “the ‘wrath’ has become a quasi-technical term for the tribulation cause by those kingdoms, especially in its latter phase.” [[359]](#footnote-359) It is thus unlikely that the seer views Israel’s experience in the 160s simply as God’s punishment.[[360]](#footnote-360) On the other hand, 1 Macc 1:11–15, 43, 52–53 likely imply that Israel’s transgressions contributed to what happened in the 160s, and Dan 9 will point in the same direction. Perhaps Daniel would agree with Zechariah in Lk 1:77, that Israel needs both deliverance and forgiveness.

Both the seventy years of desolation, which Dan 9 sees as extending to the Antiochene period, and the Antiochene period in particular are periods of wrath in the sense that they are periods of oppression and suffering. The time of wrath referred to in 8:19 might be either of these periods, but the link with Zech 1 and the vision’s beginning with the Persian era suggest that the whole period from the fall of Jerusalem to Antiochus is the time of wrath denoted here. This retrospective view of these centuries contrasts with the prospect set before the Judahites by Zech 1, as by prophecy during the Babylonian period. The Second Temple period has not been a time of God’s comfort but a time of God’s absence.[[361]](#footnote-361) The “closing part” of this period is thus also the “closing part” of the four kingships (v 23), namely the time of Antiochus (on אחרית, see on 2:28), and the “end” in v 19 is then the termination of this period of wrath. While קצת/קץ “end” and אחרית “latter part” appear in similar phrases (see, e.g., 2:28 and 4:34 [31]) and sometimes in the same context (cf. 12:8–9), קץ differs from אחרית in being an essentially punctiliar word; קצץ means “cut off,” קצה means “extremity” or “edge.”

The time described as an “end” is also termed “a set moment” (מועד).The verb יעד means to appoint or assign, and the noun denotes a set time, place, or meeting (cf. 11:29; 12:7). It is the designating rather than a time reference which is essential to מועד. While קץ “end” and מועד “set moment” thus refer to the same time, קץ denotes its punctiliar character in relation to what leads up to it, while מועד denotes its character as designated by God; קץ relates to the horizontal, chronological plane, מועד to the vertical, metahistorical plane.

“The time of the end” (קץ עת, v 17) is a more allusive expression. The “end” must still be the punctiliar moment of the termination of the Antiochene persecution and the vindication of the sanctuary, but this more absolute phrase hints that v 17 does see this moment as the End; at least it implies that the end of the Antiochene oppression (v 19) is also the end of the era (יומיא חרית א), the closing scene of the history of Israel and the nations (2:28), and the moment of a final judgment (cf. סופא עד, 7:26). It is open to the further explication of what the End will involve, which will be offered in chap. 12; yet the context here in v 14b also includes a more down-to-earth understanding of what the End will mean for Israel than the one that appears in chap. 12. In 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9, “the time of the end” is the period leading up to the End, the period in which the audience of these visions lives. This understanding also fits 8:17–19: the phrase denotes the final act of that historical drama which will come to its actual end with Antiochus’s fall and the sanctuary’s restoration.[[362]](#footnote-362)

Daniel is not thinking of “the absolute eschatological ‘End,’” of “the final and absolute End for all events” when “human history comes to a close.”[[363]](#footnote-363) If anything, further human history on earth is presupposed by talk of the sanctuary’s restoration, as it was by talk of a new kingdom in 2:44; 7:14, 18, 27. The End in Daniel is not so different from the Day of Yahweh in the prophets.[[364]](#footnote-364) Indeed, קץ is one of the expressions Daniel derives from the prophets: see Hab 2:3; also Amos 8:2; Ezek 7:1–7; cf. Lam 4:18. The seer’s use of Hab 2:3 may be compared and contrasted with that in 1QpHab 7.5-8, where it is interpreted to mean that “the last time will lengthen, far beyond anything the prophets said: for the mysteries of God are awesome” (here קץ means “time,” as often in the Qumran literature). 1QpHab is directly commenting on Habakkuk, though its interpretation alters the text’s meaning more explicitly than the less direct allusion in Dan 8:19 does; 1QpHab’s use of Hab 2:3 corresponds more to the reinterpretation of Jer 25 in Dan 9.

Chronologically, then, “the time of the end” denotes a similar period to “the latter part of the wrath,” but it looks at this period in which the seer lives from the perspective of where it is leading, whereas the second expression looks from the perspective of what has led to it. “Distant days” (v 26) and “the closing part of their kingship” (v 23) both also refer to approximately the same period. The former looks at it purely chronologically in relation to the Babylonian period. The latter looks at it chronologically in relation to the history of the empires, but perhaps also hints that that violent story will come to some sort of cataclysmic end.

The comparative significance of these various terms may be seen diagrammatically:

*The history of The rule of*

*independent Israel the empires Antiochus’s persecution Antiochus’s fall*

←------------------wrath--------------------------------------→ v 19

←-------the closing part of wrath--------------→ v 19

the end of wrath v 19

the set moment v 19

←-------the time of the end---------------------→ v 17

the end v 17

←-------the closing part of their kingship----→ v 23

←-------distant days-------------------------------→ v 26

The expressions “set moment” and “end” recur in Sirach 36 [33]:8, though not as a construct phrase, and such parallels with Daniel hardly prove that Daniel antedates Sirach.[[365]](#footnote-365)

**20–25** The identification of the political entities denoted by the animals and horns is hardly made to unveil something that was otherwise obscure. It was obvious enough whom vv 3–12 signified. Thus the climax of the interpretive vision comes in the further description of Antiochus in vv 23-25, expressed in rhythmic bicola until they end with a climactic tricolon whose closing with its “rhetorical economy… deflates Antiochus’s massive pretensions.”[[366]](#footnote-366)

Regarding the time when “their kingship draws to a close” (v 23), see on vv 15–19. פשעים “rebels” denotes people who break obligations to another party. In international relationships as well as in relation to God the verb thus denotes rebellion (2 Kgs 1:1; 3:5, 7); EVV “transgression” obscures the point. While there were Israelite rebels who could be seen as opening the way for Antiochus, as in v 12 this rebelliousness will be that of Gentiles attacking God and his people in Jerusalem. The notion of rebels or rebellions reaching full measure applies well to Gentiles: see Gen 15:16; Wis 19:1–4; and especially, with reference to the Antiochene period, 2 Macc 6:13–16. That passage is most explicit on the difference between God’s treatment of Jews and Gentiles which is presupposed by the idea of rebels or rebellions reaching full measure. God is forbearing with the Gentiles’ wrongdoing, but this forbearance involves allowing their wrongdoing to reach an extreme form that necessitates radical punishment. God chastises Jews without waiting for their wrongdoing to reach full measure, so as to seek to draw them back to him and so that they are not finally forsaken. God’s forbearance with Gentiles in the time of Abraham (Gen 15:16), the exodus (Wis 19:1–4), and Antiochus (2 Macc 6:13–16) gives them the opportunity to repent, but it serves God’s purpose to bring deliverance and blessing to his people through a judgment that is justified by Gentiles’ failure to repent.

Two key aspects of Daniel’s portrait of Antiochus are summarized in v 23b and expanded in vv 24 and 25,[[367]](#footnote-367) his ruthless boldness and his artful cleverness. These characteristics are not mere randomly observed aspects of a particular person’s character. Nor does the seer imply that Antiochus only looks fierce and/or that he compensates for lack of real strength by trickery. Used for evil ends, Antiochus’s two characteristics are both elements in the standard portrayal of a tyrant.[[368]](#footnote-368) They are not so much descriptions of Antiochus’s distinctive personal character as elements in a stylized characterization of him as a wicked king (see also *Form*). More neutrally, however, they are key attributes of any king. Even if Antiochus cannot be compared with Alexander (but see n. 24.a-a), he is quite strong enough to do just as he wishes with Judah. The “ease” with which he achieves his ends is another aspect of the standard characterization (cf. Ezek 38–39),[[369]](#footnote-369) rather than having distinctive historical reference. His expertise with things that are enigmatic (חידות) is another necessary attribute of a king, as is reflected in the portrayal of Solomon in comparison with the Queen of Sheba and King Hiram of Tyre (1 Kgs 10; Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.5.3 [8.141–49]).[[370]](#footnote-370) There may nevertheless be a pejorative implication about this expression, if it suggests that Antiochus can interpret heavenly secrets as a result of forcing his way into the heavenly realm.[[371]](#footnote-371) His deceitfulness (see 11:21, 23, 24, 27, 32) is illustrated in 1 Macc 1:29–30; see also his manipulation of the high-priesthood, 2 Macc 4:7–29.

Throughout these verses, the objects of his violence and trickery are the people of God. While “mighty” (עצומים) would be a natural term for foreign enemies (cf. 11:25), that reference is less relevant in the context: compare the focus on Jews in 1 Macc 1:24–32; 2 Macc 5:11–14, and the

עצום עם of Ps 35:18. Before God, the people of Judah are mighty ones, so Antiochus’s contempt for them augurs ill for him. The following phrase makes this point explicit (see n. 24.c-c): the mighty are a people of holy ones. The holy ones who are the object of Antiochus’s attacks are further described as רבים (“many,” v 25), which also parallels עצומים “mighty” in Isa 53:12; all these terms are the self-descriptions of the conservative Jews. “Many” becomes a frequent term in Daniel’s visions and a technical term for the faithful community in 1QS 6.20–23.[[372]](#footnote-372) Whereas קדשים and עצומים might be used of either earthly or heavenly beings, רבים suggests that the objects of Antiochus’s attacks are earthly figures.

The leader supreme ( שרים שר, “leader of leaders”) against whom Antiochus sets himself is God (see v 11 *Comment*). Setting himself against God will bring Antiochus’s rebellion to its ultimate point, but thereby to the point where God intervenes. Antiochus breaks: once again a term appropriate in the symbolic vision, where it refers to horns, enters the interpretive vision. Antiochus’s breaking by no human hand recalls 2:34, 45 (cf. 11:40–45). It might suggest that the seer did not believe in the Maccabeans’ violent resistance to Antiochus,[[373]](#footnote-373) though the combination of human activity and divine judgment appears at the climax of the Animal Apocalypse, *1 Enoch* 90. The vision emphasizes the fact of Antiochus’s fall, not the means of it.[[374]](#footnote-374) 1 and 2 Maccabees agree that Antiochus died in the course of a not-wholly-successful campaign in Persia. His death took place in November/December 164.[[375]](#footnote-375)

**26–27** Ezekiel’s contemporaries dismissed at least one of his visions on the grounds that it related to distant days (12:27). Ezekiel knew that God does not speak about distant days in a way that has no implications for the present: his promises and warnings relate to the future that is coming upon a prophet’s hearers. The apparent exception here (cf. 10:4) proves the rule, because the real date of the seer’s vision is in the 160s and it concerns events that are present and imminent for seer and audience. Closing up (סתם) the vision because of its relevance to that far future context might denote merely keeping it safe until the day when it is needed, but the verb more naturally suggests keeping it secret until that day; it appears alongside “seal” (חתם) in 12:4, 9. For a second-century BC audience, this closing up “explains” why the vision has not been heard of before. At the same time, the motif gives parabolic expression to the conviction that the revelation the seer was bringing to his contemporaries really came from God. Its very emergence was a sign that the End, the breaking off of oppression and the fulfillment of God’s purpose of his people, was near.[[376]](#footnote-376)

## Explanation

Suppose we imagine the seer reflecting on his vision.

**1–2** My second vision took my first one further, and it, too, seemed to be set in the reign of the sacrilegious Belshazzar. Belshazzar’s acts foreshadowed events of our own day in the context of the trouble Antiochus brought to us, but his fall also foreshadowed the judgment we looked forward to. There can be comfort in the lessons of history. In one sense it was not as awesome a vision as the previous one, but I knew it was a vision that I, and other people, needed to pay careful attention to. Its very geographical setting made clear that it did not relate to the Babylonian period but to later circumstances.

**3–12** It began with animals again, animals that symbolized national powers full of aggressive strength. Picturing them that way did not imply any great critique of nations: by their nature nations are full of such strength. Force and violence are of the essence of their lives. It is how they come into existence and how they stay in existence. My vision offered no further hint regarding the origin of their violence. It did not suggest that supernatural powers, heavenly or demonic, lay behind the activity of the nations. It assumed that they have to be taken seriously in themselves. But it suggested no glorifying of the achievements of Medo-Persia or Greece and no celebrating of the spread of Greek thinking, culture, and civilization.

New to this vision was the picture of two of these powers in conflict with each other. Neither of them was particularly good or bad, nor was one of them God’s agent and the other God’s opponent.[[377]](#footnote-377) There was no hint of an anti-messiah in the vision. Events were proceeding in a way that did not manifestly involve God. He was either absent from this history or was way behind the scenes. The origins of human power did not come into focus. What the vision revealed was the empires’ destiny—that is, their fall. Horns, and the human strength they symbolize, are strong, yet they are also strangely vulnerable.[[378]](#footnote-378) Each mighty, even apparently unassailable, human power is in due course broken by another—sometimes at the height of its achievement, as if the effort involved in that achievement proves too much. God can view the process with distanced disdain, if he chooses: the nations will resolve their own destiny (Ps 33:10–17).

My previous vision made use of the four empire scheme which did not emerge from the history of the empires themselves but was brought to them (like the fourteen-generations scheme in Matt 1:1-17). In contrast, chap. 8 “tries to identify some internal logic to political power per se as it manifests itself in history.”[[379]](#footnote-379) History has its patterns, but they are not imposed on it so as to shape it in a way unrelated to the intrinsic significance of events. The patterns are ones that emerge from the consistencies inherent in human nature, in the world, and in God himself. The arrogance of power works itself out, as the aggrandizing growth of one kingdom arouses the envy of another, which challenges and defeats the one that had grown excessively powerful.

This vision was again designed to help people cope with a life-threatening crisis by building up faith and hope. It sought to build up faith by making the present more intelligible, revealing how it linked logically to the past and took further a shaping of events that could be perceived in the past and that thus showed how history was “less out of control and so somewhat less terrifying.”[[380]](#footnote-380) It built up hope by using that same patterning as a basis for future projection: “if God made x end in y, he will surely make X end in Y.”

The tone of this vision was “decidedly more somber” than the previous one.[[381]](#footnote-381) When a nation reaches beyond violence towards other nations like itself to violence towards the people of God and the worship of God, it is a terrible further transgression, but it is also the act that makes its fall inevitable. The events that overtook us in the 160s were not merely acts of cruel oppression like others. Behind the earthly place of worship, the earthly people, and the earthly priesthood stood supernatural realities: the being of God himself who was worshiped there, a purpose of God to have a witness to himself in the world, a reminder that human power is subject to limits. Attacks on Israel are not the same as attacks on other peoples. Anti-Semitism has an extra dimension. The kind of acts we had witnessed made God subservient to politics, which is then not merely politics’ sin but its downfall. When these events happen, they are a strange kind of encouragement, even though it is difficult for their victims to view it this way until they can see what is at stake in events of this kind. “If God’s own ground can be invaded, and the very ordinances which he himself established as an abiding assurance of a vital relationship between his people and himself can be rudely set aside by a pagan idolater, can the very security of the universe itself be relied upon?”[[382]](#footnote-382) The seriousness of the invasion’s implications mean that God must take action.

**13–14** There was a further encouragement in the awareness that these events were matters of scandal and concern not only on earth but in heaven. Of course we ourselves were groaning “how long?” to ourselves and to God, like the psalmists. But in my vision that groan was shared by others (cf. the “how long?” of the martyrs in Rev 6:10). How long? “The question encapsulates in a harrowing phrase the unrequited suffering of the innocent through all ages.”[[383]](#footnote-383) As the NT will make clear, the appearance of celestial beings in my visions or in other works from Second Temple Judaism does not imply that God himself now seems distant from our lives,[[384]](#footnote-384) though it is the case that when God gave me this vision he was not acting to protect his people. The involvement of heavenly figures with us was an encouragement. I knew that in asking “how long?” the heavenly being was not merely being inquisitive but was sharing in the sorrow of the suffering people of God and concerned for the glory of God.[[385]](#footnote-385)

The central feature in the act of deliverance would be not the destruction of an enemy but the fate of a sanctuary. That prospect was reflected in the way the holy one set a term to the offensive events: they would last for a period conceived in terms of how long daily sacrifices would be suspended. The climax of the deliverance would come with the vindication of the sanctuary, which would be as significant an event for the world as the granting of a worldwide lordship in my first vision (cf. Isa 2:2–4).[[386]](#footnote-386)

The figure of 2,300 days should not be misinterpreted. Its first significance was to promise that there would be an end, and then that this end was not too far off. But it looked like a symbolic number, and I am not sure it had a literal reference—though I cannot deny that it is interesting that the time from Onias’s death to the restoration was about that period. If people assume that a day refers to a year and count from the time of Nehemiah in 458/457, then 2,300 years will take one to AD 1843/44, the date William Miller will expect the appearing of Jesus. If Jesus does not appear then, it will be a disconfirmation of the kind that will regularly follow on attempts to make inferences from my dates, but neither on this occasion nor on others will it be the case that “the disappointment that [disconfirmation] produced led to a temporary end to date-setting.”[[387]](#footnote-387) Actually, the fact that there was an answer to my question may be more important than the content of the answer. Oppression will not go on forever.[[388]](#footnote-388)

**15–19** I do not believe that this promise was merely a comforting human reassurance for people that everything was going to be all right. It was a God-given reassurance. I am not necessarily claiming to have heard God audibly speaking to me. I know I am a mere human being. I am claiming that my message reflects God’s word and suggests a heavenly perspective on events. Nor is it a message about events that have mere passing significance. The attacks of earthly powers on the people of God, on the worship of God, and on the name of God raise ultimate questions, not mere transient ones.[[389]](#footnote-389) In the time of Antiochus we saw a fearful intensifying of human despite of God, which had to lead to an “end.” It is suggestive that those words about an end should have been the ones that came to me. I was not saying that *the* End was imminent. But there was something ultimate about that outbreak of wrongdoing, and thus there was something ultimate about its termination. I was not implying that there was something demonic about all history (I did not mention the demonic at all, in fact), only that there was something distinctively godless about the history we had to live through. It was like being on the receiving end of someone’s intense anger. I do not mean we thought God was angry with us (I talked of “wrath,” not “God’s wrath”).[[390]](#footnote-390) There have been times when God was angry, and I am not against that way of speaking, emerging as it does from our relationship with a deeply personal God. Perhaps “the silence of God in the face of the oppressor’s triumph… is an exercise of divine wrath that is disciplinary and instructive for God’s people…. The Seleucids are, at best, mere instruments of the Lord’s intentional pedagogy” during the time when God may be “waiting for the right moment to take decisive action against the foreigners who dare to challenge God’s authority.”[[391]](#footnote-391) But there are times when calamity strikes and it is as if someone has struck out at you in anger, but there seems no reason why someone should, and so it was for us. It felt as if Antiochus was the rod of God’s anger the way Sennacherib had once been, but I wasn’t clear that the situation was the same. I might have described it as Antiochus’s anger (cf. 11:30). Not that I mean to ascribe feelings to him—it may have all been very calculated—but he was the actual author of the calamity that came to us.

**20–26** To a greater degree than was the case with my previous vision, the symbols were fairly transparent. The interpretive part mostly made explicit things that were not very enigmatic, though they thus still reinforced the point, yet they left the picture with a touch of mystery and allusiveness. There were several reasons. One was that I am not sure I was clear about it all myself. Another was that the vision did concern ultimate realities, which one cannot reduce to down-to-earth prosaic terms without losing something. A further ramification is that the significance of those symbols transcended the events we were involved in. People who have said my visions were about the pope or Antichrist are wrong in the sense that they were designed by God to speak as his word to the Antiochene period, in terms that meant something then. But keeping the metaphor even in the interpretive sections of the vision retained the hint of ultimate realities that were embodied for us in one particular historical situation. “The end time… is here anticipated in the downfall of tyrants.”[[392]](#footnote-392) Those ultimate issues have surfaced on other occasions, and I cannot say that people who lived in such circumstances did wrong to find themselves in my visions, even if I might prefer to speak of that process as one of reapplication or appropriation rather than as exegesis.[[393]](#footnote-393)

Thus the portrait of Antiochus will furnish Paul with imagery to describe a figure who will come as a kind of false Messiah before Jesus himself returns (see 2 Thess 2:1-12) and will furnish Revelation with imagery for describing the persecution of the faithful by Rome. First John will provide Christian thinking with the expression “anti-messiah” (e.g., 1 John 2:18, 22) which will become a standard way of denoting a person who embodies opposition to God and to Jesus. The composite figure that will emerge can then be read back into my visions.[[394]](#footnote-394) Thus Jerome will comment, “Most of our commentators refer this passage [v 14] to the Antichrist, and hold that that which occurred under Antiochus was only by way of a type which shall be fulfilled under Antichrist.”[[395]](#footnote-395) Yet Hippolytus and Theodoret will not mention the Antichrist in connection with this chapter, and Jerome will confine his comments to the chapter’s reference to events in Antiochus’s day. While Luther will describe Antiochus as a figure of the Antichrist,[[396]](#footnote-396) Calvin will comment that Luther is “indulging his thoughts too freely” when he refers this passage to the masks of Antichrist.”[[397]](#footnote-397) Perhaps Calvin is too hard on Luther, given that Luther does take seriously the passage’s reference to Antiochus. The fact that horns assert themselves against one another and that one breaks another “is world-history.”[[398]](#footnote-398) It is a sequence that never stops. One horn is broken by another.

Empires rise and fall as they successively overreach themselves in arrogance. And sometimes they reach a pinnacle of climactic evil and violence against God and God’s people. But eventually they are overthrown by God. And in the end—the ultimate end, as distinct from the many partial “endings” that history illustrates—God will finally destroy all that opposes him and establish his own reign fully and forever…. Although Antiochus Epiphanes is the single historical figure in view in Daniel’s vision…, he is a kind of archetype. That is, he represents a reality that has surfaced at different times in history…. That coalition of anti-God, anti-church, anti-truth forces and intentions faced the people of Israel in the Old Testament has faced the Jewish people and the Christian church at different times in past centuries and still faces the people of God in many parts of the world today. Jews have seen Antiochus Epiphanes as a pre-figuring of the horror of pogroms under “Christian” nations in Europe, culminating in the Holocaust. Christians have suffered from tyrannical regimes that sought to stamp out the Christian faith and church, from Roman emperors to atheist communist states that banned Bibles and all other symbols of Christian profession, to the brutal excesses of ISIS, Boko Haram, and Al Shabab.[[399]](#footnote-399)

The idea of rebels reaching full measure is another motif that is solemn but simultaneously reassuring, because it suggests that an act of judgment must follow when full measure is reached. That result comes about in a mysterious way. It is not merely the fruit of historical forces, like the passing of power from one empire to another at earlier stages. Even if the historical forces that bring the downfall of evil can be traced, there is something supernatural about it. People and events had a transcendent significance. Antiochus is a Satanic figure, an embodiment of demonic pretension, but my vision did not suggest that separate from Antiochus there was an independently existent supernatural being using Antiochus, or foreshadowed by Antiochus. It did not point us towards a mythic understanding of the battle of the godless against God, what some people call “spiritual warfare.” Antiochus was not literally fighting supernatural beings; rather, therein was the significance of his attack on people and sanctuary. The visible realities such as the Jewish people and the Jerusalem temple had a transcendent significance that Antiochus denied. When believers are hurt, heaven is hurt. At this point, whatever might have seemed to be the case earlier in the vision, it was clear that heaven and earth are not two disconnected, discontinuous worlds. Each underlies the other. Heaven cannot but be involved with earth, earth with heaven.[[400]](#footnote-400)

The motif of rebels reaching full measure is taken up and applied to the Jewish people itself in Matt 23:32; 1 Thess 2:16 in light of their refusal to acknowledge Jesus; its openness to such reapplication means it can be reapplied again to the Church if the Church turns its back on God’s way (cf. Rom 11:17–22). Whether or not it was “a call to faith, not a call to arms,” my vision was a challenge to loyalty under persecution,[[401]](#footnote-401) and a call to humility and repentance on the part of people not under persecution. I am honored to think that “modern readers… have to make an effort to realize what a powerful act of intellectual courage and resistance is represented in the work of this chapter, as it wrestles the brutal and horrifying events of 167 into a symbolic framework that is able to acknowledge not only the devastating nature of what has happened but also to project grounds for certainty that the evil will be overcome in the near future.”[[402]](#footnote-402) Yes, it has involved assassination of a high priest, plundering of the temple, civil war, massacre, enslavement, and foreign occupation, desecration, and a ban on proper worship of Yahweh. My vision was hardly a command not to try to put the tyrant down, but it was a reassurance that our inability to put the tyrant down need not trouble us.

**27** Awareness of where history is going puts you into a complicated position.[[403]](#footnote-403) It indeed gives you confidence where you might otherwise have been overcome by worry: you know that a supernatural hand has already broken all evil power and that the risks you have to live with can be lived with. But you may also be awed and troubled, by having been put in touch with heavenly realities, by the knowledge of what the future may bring to you and to other people. And at the same time you have to get on with the job of living—which for Daniel means working and serving in the context of the ongoing life of the “horns.”

At the end of this vision, even with the involvement of a celestial interpreter as well as a human one, I know that a gap in understanding still exists. Interpretation remains a “slippery and difficult business.” But at least my readers understand that they do not understand and may therefore “continue to seek for relevance and meaning.” The vision’s message is “intentionally mysterious and it demands (re)interpretation.”[[404]](#footnote-404)

# Daniel Prays for the End of His People’s Desolation and His Prayer Is Heard (9:1–27)

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## Translation

1In the first year of Dareyaweš, son of Aḥašweroš, a Medite by birth, who awas made kinga over the realm of the Kasdim— 2in the first year of his reign, I (Daniyye’l) noteda in the documents the number of years c(the word of Yahweh which came to Yirmiyah the prophet)c to be completed for the ruins of Yerušalaim, seventy years. 3So I turned to the Lorda God to bmake prayers of supplicationb with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes; 4I prayed a prayer of confessiona to Yahweh my God.

Ob Lord, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenantal commitmentc with people who love him and keep his commands, 5we failed, awent astray, acted faithlessly, rebelled,a bwe turned awayb cfrom your authoritative commandsc 6and did not listen to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name ato our kings, our leaders, and our fathers, and to all the people of the country.a 7Right belongs to you, Lord, while aa look of shamea attaches to us this day,b to the people of Yehudah and to the citizens of Yerušalaim, and to all Yiśra’el near and far away in all the countries where you drove them because of the trespasses they committed against you. 8Yahweh, a look of shame attaches to us, our kings, aour leaders, and our ancestors, in that we failed you; 9aa deep compassion which keeps pardoninga belongs to the Lord our God.

Becauseb we rebelled against him 10and did not listen to the voice of Yahweh our God by living according to his instructionsa which he set before us by means of his servants the prophets, 11and all Israel overstepped your instruction and turned awaya to avoid listening to your voice, bthe solemn curseb written in the instruction of Moses the servant of God overwhelmed us. Because we failed him,c 12he kept his wordsa which he uttered against us and against bthose who acted as our leadersb cby bringingc great trouble upon us, din thatd nothing has happened in all the world such as happened to Yerušalaim, 13just as it is written in the instruction of Moses, aall this trouble—it cameb upon us. cWe did not seek mercy fromc Yahweh our God by turning from our waywardness and dgiving heed tod your truthfulness,e 14and Yahweh kept this trouble ready and brought it upon us. Yes,a Yahweh our God bwas rightb in all the things that he did, and we did not listen to his voice.

15But now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of the country of Egypt by strength of hand, and earned renown for yourself this day: we failed, we acted faithlessly. 16Lord, in keeping with all your aright deeds,a O may your burning fury turn away from your city, Yerušalaim, your sacred mountain; for because of our failures and our ancestors’ wayward acts, Yerušalaim and your people became objects of scorn to everyone around us. 17But now, our God, listen to your servant’s prayers of supplication, and smile upon your desolate sanctuary, for amy Lord’s sake.a 18My God, give ear and listen,a openb your eyes and look at our desolate state in the city which bears your name,c for it is not on the basis of our right deeds that we are laying down our supplications before you, but rather on the basis of your great compassion. 19Lord, listen. Lord, pardon. Lord, hear and act, do not delay, for your own sake, my God, because your city and your people bear your name.”

20aI was still speaking, confessing in prayerb my failurec and the failurec of my people Yiśra’el, and laying down my supplication before Yahweh my God concerning the sacred mountain of my God, 21still speaking in prayer, when Gabri’el, athe beinga I had seen in the vision I had previously,b cwhen I was tired and weary,c approached me ate the time of the evening offering. 22aHe spoke with me and explained:a “Daniyye’l, I came outb specificallyc dto give you clear insight.d 23When you began your supplications a word came out,a and I came to declare it,b for you are cheld in high regard.c

dSo heed the word and give heed to the revelation.d

24Seventy sevensa have been assignedb

forc your people and forc your sacred city,

To endd the rebellion,

eto do away with failures,f

To wipe awayg waywardness,

to bring in lasting vindication,h

To seal ia prophet’s vision,i

to anoint ja most sacred place.j

25You must acknowledge and perceive:

From the coming out of a word

to abuild a restoreda Yerušalaim,

To an anointed, a leader:

bseven sevens.

For sixty-two sevensb cit will be restored,

and rebuiltc squared and moat.e

fBut in the pressure of the timesf

26and after the sixty-two sevens,a

An anointed will be cut offb

cand will have neither the city nor the sanctuary.c

A leader to comed will devastatee a people,f

and its end:g with the flood.

Until the end ofh battle idesolations are determined,i

27and a covenant will prevaila for the multitudeb

for one seven.

cIn the middle of the sevenc

sacrifice and offering will cease,d

And eupon a wing:e a desolating abomination,f

until ga conclusion which has been decreedg

overwhelms a desolate one.h”

## Notes

1.a-a. הָמְלַךְ, the only instance of the hophal in BH; BHS compares מלכותא ל ב ק (taken as “received the kingship”) in 5:31 [6:1]. G, Syr have an active verb “he reigned,” perhaps indicating הִמְלַךְ understood in an inwardly transitive sense (cf. GKC 53def for other verbs; PS, 277 for this verb in Syriac). An Aramaism (Lacocque)?

2.a. Qal י ת נ י ב (instead of בנתי) is a shortened hiphil in form (see GKC 73a). For the meaning (“consider” is better than “understand”: that is part of Daniel’s problem!), see BDB; it need not be an Aramaism (against Hartman/Di Lella).

2.b. ם י ר פ ס: EVV “scriptures,” may be too specific (so Wilson, “The Prayer of Daniel 9”)

2.c-c. The wording of the parenthesis, הנביא ירמיה אל יהוה דבר היה אשר, follows that of passages such as Jer 14:1, where אשר “which” is defined by the subsequent noun דבר (see BDB, 82b); it is not accusative of respect (as EVV) (cf. Charles, comparing Deut 5:5).

3.a. In chap. 9 God is referred to as יהוה “Yahweh”, אדני “Lord,” and אלהים “God.” OG uses δέσποτα (“Master,” only in the vocative), κύριος “Lord,” and θεός “God.” In vv 3, 15, 16, 17, and 19a (twice), where L has אדני, some medieval mss have ה ו ה י. Q אדני may sometimes have replaced יהוה in the text, though the substitution of יהוה for אדני is also explicable (e.g., in v 3, assimilating to v 2). In vv 15, 16, and 17 OG has δέσποτα, but not in v 3 (though this difference might simply come about because the term there needs to be accusative), nor in v 19a; OG also has δέσποτα where MT has יהוה in v 8. OG’s use of δέσποτα must be utilized with caution as evidence for an original יהוה since δέσποτα also appears as an equivalent of אלהינו (“our God,” v 17) and אלהי (“my God,” v 19b).

3.b-b. ותחנונים תפלה לבקש. “To seek prayer . . .” gives an odd sense. “To inquire with prayer…” gives good sense, but when בקש means seeking a word from God, it needs an object (2 Sam 21:1; Ezek 7:26; Amos 8:12); so also the similar use of דרש. Rather the lit. meaning is “to ask a prayer . . .,” i.e., to utter one: an Aramaism—cf. the use of בעה in 6:8 [7] (Zimmermann, “Aramaic Origin,” 263). Appeal to Akk. *baqaš*u (G. R. Driver, according to Porteous) seems forced and unnecessary. The first noun is a general one for (formal, liturgical) prayer; the second specifies the kind of prayer. Cf. vv 17, 18, 23; also for the compound expression 1 Kgs 8:30, 33, 45, 49; Dan 6:11 [12] for an Aram. equivalent with verbs. See Sawyer, “Types of Prayer in the OT.”

4.a. ואתודה . . . ואתפללה “I prayed and confessed”: again (see n. 3.b-b) the first word is a general one for (formal, liturgical) prayer, the second specifies the kind of prayer.

4.b. “O” in EVV before a vocative rarely has a BH equivalent, but it has one here (contrast vv 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 in EVV): אנא is “a strong part[icle] of entreaty” (BDB). Cf. enclitic נא (v 16).

4.c. והחסד הברית “the covenant and the commitment.”

5.a. The three verbs are simple *waw* plus perfect, the events being coordinate not consecutive (*TTH* 131–33). Q omits ו “and” from והרשענו “[and] we acted faithlessly,” assimilating to 1 Kgs 8:47; G omits both this “and” and the previous one for stylistic reasons.

5.b-b. וסור, inf. absolute continuing the series of finite verbs; cf. GKC 113z (cf. v 11).

5.c-c. וממשפטיך ממצותך “from your commands and from your decisions.”

6.a-a. The terms are in descending order of status; אבות thus refers to heads of local kinship groups (not here “ancestors,” as JB) and הארץ ם ע to ordinary people; cf. Jer 1:18 (Jeffery).

7.a-a. הפנים בשת “shame of face.”

7.b. הזה כיום regularly means “today,” “this very day,” not “as at this day” (EVV); see, e.g., Jer 44:6, 22, 23. Cf. *HS* 262.

8.a. ולשרינו “and our leaders” acc. Oriental mss (so BHK), G, Syr.

9.a-a. והסלחות ים הרחמ, both pl., perhaps suggesting “acts of.”

9.b. It is hard to instance כי meaning “although” (NEB), though “when” comes near that implication (cf. BDB, 473b). See Aejmelaeus, “Function and Interpretation of כי ,” esp. 207; contrast Vriezen, “Einige Notizen zur Übersetzung des Bindesworts kī,” 272; Schoors, “The Particle כי,” 272–73. But anyway, the י כ clause is an odd follow-up to v 9a, and more likely begins a new sentence (Joubert, 162–63).

10.a. OG, Vg have s., but the less usual pl. is surely original.

11.a. Cf. n. 5.b-b.

11.b-b. והשבעה האלה “the curse and the oath.”

11.c. Some medieval mss correct לו “him” to לד “you.” But the prayer keeps moving between 2nd and 3rd person (as psalms do); God has been referred to in the 3rd person three words previously, and the 3rd person reference is presupposed by the opening of v 12. I take this clause as the beginning of that sentence (Wambacq, “Les Prières de Baruch et de Daniel,” 469).

12.a. Q has s., perhaps rightly (Plöger).

12.b-b. שפטינו אשר ו נ י ט פ ש “our judges who judged us”: but the noun can denote leaders other than the “judges” (BDB).

12.c-c. להביא, perhaps “that he would bring” (JB).

12.d-d. אשר; Bevan “so that.” For both possible meanings, cf. BDB, 83b.

13.a. הרעה כל את perhaps resumes גדלה רעה “great trouble” (v 12)—hence the object marker (so Behrmann, Marti). It is doubtful if את simply emphasizes the noun, which is actually the subject of באה (see *EWS*, 148–54 against GKC 117m; Saydon, “Meanings and Uses of the Particle את”; Macdonald, “The Particle את”). The phrase may be the quasi-object of the passive כתוב “is written” (Bevan; cf. GKC 117k, 121c); or the construction may simply break down (so in different ways Montgomery; Blau, “Zum angeblichen Gebrauch von את vor dem Nominativ,” 9).

13.b. באה accented on the first syllable and thus taken as perfect. Some medieval mss have הבאה (participle, “which came”).

13.c-c. את פני חלינו ולא “and we have not sweetened the face of”: a different חלה from חלה “be sick” (cf. BDB). EVV continue from the previous clause, implying that v 13b denotes a failure to seek God after his punishment fell. But this understanding of either the Babylonian or the Second Temple period is unlikely; more likely v 13b again reviews Israel’s history in broader fashion. If the reference should be tied down more specifically, it would be to the preexilic period (cf. v 9b and the last clause of v 11).

13.d-d. ב השכיל might mean “gaining insight in/by means of”: cf. v 25.

13.e. אמת suggested “true religion” in 8:12, “reliability” in 8:26, but the more common OT meaning fits well here (cf. NEB “[remembered] that thou art true to thy word”).

14.a. EVV “for”: we should perhaps give even apparently asseverative כי some connective function (Aejmelaeus, “Function and Interpretation of כי in Biblical Hebrew, 205), but this כי introduces a closing clause which balances v 7 (see *Structure*) and the connection is with vv 9b–14a as a whole, not just with v 14a.

14.b-b. The context has to determine the time reference of a noun clause, and past reference seems appropriate here.

16.a. Taking צדקתך as literal pl. (BDB, 842b, cf. Syr) rather than pl. of amplification (“true justice,” see GKC 124e; cf. G).

17.a-a. אדני למען, an odd expression (esp. in a 2nd person context), but apparently original, since Th (“for your sake, Lord”), OG (“for your servants’ sake, Lord”), and Syr (“for your name’s sake, Lord”) all offer different “improvements” on MT.

18.a. עוּשֲׁמָ: the composite shewa emphasizes the vocal character of the shewa after ו (GKC 10g).

18.b. K reads פקחה as a lengthened form of the imperative (cf. v 19); cf. Q פקח. But the ה might be an abbreviation for יהוה; the clause’s structure then parallels its predecessor and the pair parallel 2 Kgs 19:16 (Lacocque).

18.c. עליה שמך נקרא אשר “over which your name has been proclaimed.”

20.a. On the circumstantial clause, see *TTH* 169; GKC 116u.

20.b. On ומתודה ומתפלל “praying and confessing,” see n. 4.a.

20.c. G, Vg, Syr presuppose pl. pointing each time.

21.a-a. G “behold the man. . .” perhaps presuppose reading האיש והא (Montgomery); for הא see BDB, 210b, 1089b. “The man Gabriel” is odd, even in light of 8:15; Ehrlich compares Exod 11:3 and suggests translating “the lord Gabriel.”

21.b. In isolation one could take בתחלה to mean “at the beginning” and as referring back to chap. 7; but following on the occurrence of the expression in 8:1 (see n. 1.d there) it more likely again means “previously.”

21.c-c. Grammatically, ביעף מעף “wearied with weariness” could apply to Daniel or Gabriel, but the word order implies the former (Keil), and also suggests referring it to the faint of 8:17–18 rather than to the result of this time of prayer and fasting. G, Syr, Vg connect the phrase with Gabriel’s flight and presuppose that יעף “be weary” has a homonym meaning “fly,” a by-form of עוף (Brockington emends to עף מעפף, forms of עוף itself), which implies that such heavenly aides, like seraphs and cherubs, have wings to fly with. V 21 rather implies (like other parts of the OT) that such beings are human in form and can be distinguished from seraphs (Isa 6) and the hybrid figures in Ezek 1: see esp. Gen 28:12 (supernatural aides moving between heaven and earth by ladder); even I Chr 21:16 does not say that the aide has wings to fly with.

21.d. נגע can mean “touched” (so Th, cf. 8:18; 10:16), but “reached” (OG, Syr, cf. 8:7; 12:12) fits better here. For the participle referring to a punctiliar event in a double participial construction, see GKC 116u.

21.e. כ‍ indicating time at which, not “about” which (against NIV) (cf. *HS* 262); the variants ל and ב make this explicit.

22.a. ויאמר עמי וידבר ויבן “he explained and spoke with me and said.” NAB emends to …ויבינני “he made me understand,” comparing Th, Vg—but they may only be translating in light of the context; בין ה can be used absolutely (BDB, 107a). NRSV, JB emend to ויבא, comparing OG, Syr—but they are more likely resolving some typical Danielic fulsomeness.

22.b. יצאתי “come out,” as in vv 23, 25 with respect to the message “coming out,” suggests a supernatural commission more specifically than the בוא of the similar passage Josh 5:13–15 (cf. 2 Sam 14:15).

22.c. עתה draws attention to the “moment-ousness” of the occasion rather than having a simply temporal reference (“now”) in such contexts; cf. Josh 5:14 (Ehrlich).

22.d-d. בינה להשכילך “to instruct you [in] insight”; the noun is adverbial accusative.

23.a. יצא, as in v 22 to refer to Gabriel himself.

23.b. Heb. lacks “it”; direct and indirect object can be omitted after הגיד (BDB, 616b). לך (“to you”; 2 medieval mss, cf. G, Syr) is presumably an addition. The following clause (אתה חמודות כי) might be the object of הגיד (“that you are held in high regard”) (cf. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l’AT* 3:471).

23.c. חמודות, intensive pl. (see GKC 124e). The term is usually preceded by a construct noun, and איש might be added here as in 10:11, 19 (cf. Th), but grammatically the noun in the predicate of a noun clause is quite regular (GKC 141c, *TTH* 189).

23.d-d. במראה והבן בדבר ובין, a double hendiadys, “give careful heed to the revelatory word.”

24.a. שבעים; while שבוע is the regular BH word for “week,” etymologically it means a heptad (a period or group of seven of something); as well as meaning seven days, it can thus mean seven years in *Jubilees* and in postbiblical Hebrew (*DTT*). Outside Dan (9:24–27; 10:1–2), its pl. is שבועות; שבועים may be an Aramaism (Hartman/Di Lella).

24.b. The s. נחתך implies “there has been determined/God has determined seventy sevens” (GKC 121ab), or perhaps “[a period of] seventy sevens has been determined” (cf. GKC 145h, 124ab).

24.c. Montgomery translates על “against,” but the context points rather to the frequent meaning “concerning” (cf. BDB, 754b; also in Aram., BDB, 1106a).

24.d. K probably implies לִכְלאֹ from כלא “restrain,” leading into לחתם “seal” in the next phrase (see n. 24.e-e) (RVmg). The verbs through v 24a then develop, but not in a very plausible way. More likely with Q the verbs are synonyms, and לכלא comes from כלה not כלא (cf. BDB, 476b, 478a; GKC 75aa, rr; G ουντελεσθῆναι, also Aq; cf. Q and many medieval mss לכלה). כלה can mean “complete, finish” or “eliminate, finish off” (cf. 9:27; 11:16, 36; 12:7) which better fits the general context here (Bevan; contrast Plöger). Finish off in the sense of completing the payment for a debt (Anderson, *Sin*, 85-89) requires more reading in.

24.e-e. Reading ולהתם (from תמם) with Q, cf. OG, Aq, Syr, Vg. K לחתם “to seal” (cf. Th) perhaps follows on from לִכְלאֹ (n. 24.d); after לְכַלֵּא it might imply sealing up as complete (Bentzen), but this idea is also rather allusive, and it is more likely לחתם here is assimilated to לחתם in v 24b than that the word is used twice with different meanings.

24.f. Following K חַטָאוֹת (cf. G, Syr). Q and many medieval mss, also Aq, have s. ת הַטָא “failure,” which looks like assimilation to s. פשע (Bevan). Perhaps the three expressions for sin (the rebellion, failures, waywardness) deliberately vary (article with s., anarthrous pl., anarthrous s.).

24.g. כפר; in Arabic *kpr* can mean “cover,” but the Heb. meaning links rather with Akk. *kaparu*/*kuppuru* “cleanse”: *CAD*; Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord*, 56–66, 123–27; against BDB. Cf. OG.

24.h. MT punctuation divides v 24 after עלמים צדק “lasting vindication,” but more likely we should divide the infinitival clause(s) between the three negatives (all two-word clauses) and the three positives (all three-word clauses); cf. BHS.

24.i-i. ונביא חזון “vision and prophet.”

24.j-j. קדשים קדש “a sacredness of sacrednesses.” There is no word for “place,” but in the OT the phrase always refers to locations or objects (the wilderness sanctuary or the temple, esp. its inmost room, also its altars, vessels, incense, sacrifices, etc.: see Driver). Vg takes it to refer to a person (cf.Turpo, “El ‘ungimiento del santísimo’ en Daniel 9:24”; also *Estudio exegético de Daniel 9:24*), but it never does so elsewhere in the OT except for one possible understanding of 1 Chr 23:13 (see RVmg), though it likely does at Qumran, which opens up the possibility of that understanding here (so Meadowcroft, “Exploring the Dismal Swamp”). A fortiori the reference cannot be to the anointed one, the “Messiah” (cf. Syr *mšyḥ’*). G’s literal ἄγιου ἁγίων could be read as denoting a person or a place, but OG hardly presupposes a messianic interpretation, since it even lacks the verb “anoint” (its εὐφρᾶναι “rejoice” apparently misreads למשח as לשמח [Montgomery]).

25.a. ולבנות להשיב “to restore and to build.” “To rebuild” (cf. Vg) would require emending להשיב to לשוב (BHS), since שוב is always qal when used in coordination with another verb to indicate repeating an act (GKC 120d). Bevan repoints ב שִׁי הֹ לְ “to populate,” but this would be a unique sense of ישב hiphil.

25.b-b. ששים ושנים ושבעים שבעה שבעים. NIV’s “seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens’” (cf. G, Syr) suggests that the appearance of “an anointed, a leader” comes after sixty-nine “sevens,” but this translation involves ignoring MT’s more natural division of the verse. Shea’s argument for it on poetic grounds (“Poetic Relations of the Time Periods in Dan 9:25”) is not compelling; contrast the understanding of the prosody reflected in the translation above. Young questions whether Heb. syntax allows ושנים ששים שבעים to be accusative of duration; but see GKC 118k. Do the verbs then imply that restoration and rebuilding continue over the sixty-two years (so Hengstenberg, *Christologie*)? That would be odd, and so that NIV could be right, and MT might then be seen as antimessianic (Beckwith, “Daniel 9 and the Date of Messiah’s Coming,” 522), but its construal is well-instanced in early Christian writers (see McComiskey, “The Seventy ‘Weeks’ of Daniel”).

25.c-c. Qal תשוב “be restored” could here stand in coordination with נבנתה “be built” and the phrase as a whole could mean simply “be built again” (cf. GKC 120e on the construction). But the usage in v 25a suggests rather that תשוב is quasi-passive of השיב, as נבנתה is passive of בנות; letting the two words be independent fits the prosody. For this use of שוב in qal cf. 1 Kgs 13:6. Bevan (cf. n. 25.a-a) repoints תֵּשֵׁב.

25.d. רחוב; a “broad open place” (cf. root רחב), not “street” (NEB), though hardly the temple court specifically (against van Selms, “The Origin of the Name Tyropoeon in Jerusalem,” 173), which would need to be made explicit as in Ezra 10:9.

25.e. חרוץ; the root means “cut,” the adjective “sharp.” In Akk. ḥarīṣu denotes a ditch (cf. NEB “conduit”) or moat, associated with a rampart (cf. Th τεῖχος, JB). Van Selms (see n. 25.d) plausibly takes חרוץ to refer to the Tyropoeon Valley here and in Joel 3 [4]:14 (at one time the Tyropoeon was more of a ravine, like the Qidron).

25.f-f. Linking העתים ובצוק with v 26, with NEB (though it speaks of “the trouble of the times” not “the times of the trouble”; contrast 12:1). The ו “but” looks like the beginning of a new sentence or clause. Syr *lšwlm zbn’* suggests העתים ובקץ “but at the end of the times,” which would also naturally link with v 26 (Bevan); cf. OG καὶ κατὰ ουντέλειαν καιρῶν (in v 27)—influenced by Syr? Yet Syr looks like the substitution of a more familiar expression for a less familiar one. Van Selms (see n. 25.d) ingeniously suggests that the phrase means “mound [cf. BDB on בצק, בצקת] (and) bends [cf. BDB on עות],” the last four words of v 25 thus referring to Jerusalem’s east (temple court), west (Tyropoeon), north (the more elevated hill), and south (the valleys below the city). If MT is right, v 25b as a whole refers to the two features of Second Temple history that could be known from the OT, the rebuilding of the city and the pressure of Israel’s hostile neighbors (Hartman/Di Lella).

26.a. OG “and after seven and seventy and sixty-two.” OG thus suggests Year 139 of the Seleucid era, the year 171 BC (see e.g., Bruce, “The Earliest OT Interpretation,” 43-44).

26.b. כרת niphal: “disappear” (Plöger).

26.c-c. Ozanne, “Three Textual Problems in Daniel,” 446–47; MT’s punctuation of

והקדש והעיר לו ואין places the athnah after the first two words, which makes them cryptic (cf. G, Vg, Syr, EVV). For ו …ו = “both… and,” see GKC 154a; cf. 8:13.

26.d. הבא; for indeterminate noun followed by determinate participle, see GKC 126w. נגיד “leader” is perhaps implicitly determinate (cf. *TTH* 209). On OG καὶ ἤξει, see n. 26.g.

26.e. ישחית, cf. 8:24–25; also 11:17, though there it could refer to moral/religious rather than physical damage. If we read עִם (see n. 26.f), the verb will then be understood as intensive hiphil, “will act corruptly” (cf. GKC 53dg)—or we could follow one medieval ms יִשָּׁחֵת “will be corrupted/destroyed” (cf. Syr *ttḥbl*).

26.f. עַם—one medieval ms has עִם “with” (cf. Th, Syr; OG, Vg conflate readings), which looks like an attempt to make easier sense of an apparently difficult MT, and/or a reinterpretation of it based on the conviction that “a leader to come” is the same as the “leader” of v 25.

26.g. In 11:45 קצו refers to the end the leader comes to, but here this meaning would require a sudden change in the meaning of קץ in the next clause. More likely קץ denotes the end he brings, or the people’s end (JPSV). שטף (verb and noun) more often denotes the flood of calamity brought by an oppressor (11:10, 22, 22, 26, 40). OG [καὶ ἤξει] ἡ ουντέλεια (cf. n. 26.d), “[and] the end [will come],” substitutes a more familiar for a less usual expression.

26.h. So MT, Th, Syr; Aq., Sym “until the end there will be…” (cf. EVV). קץ is used in a nontechnical sense in 11:6, 13.

26.i-i. שממות נחרצת “a decree of desolation,” נחרצת being niphal participle f. s. construct, שממות qal participle f. pl. absolute.

27.a. Th, Vg, EVV translate הגביר “confirm” or the like (cf. 1QH 8.35), with ברית “covenant” as object, but one might then have expected the subject to be indicated. “Prevail” (cf. OG) fits well with other occurrences of הגביר, Ps 12:5; 1QH 2.24; for m. verb with f. subject, see GKC 145c (cf. Bentzen, Plöger).

27.b. הרבים “the many” is becoming a commonplace term for the main body of the (faithful) community (11:33, 39; 12:3; Esth 4:3; 1QS 6.20–23); thus hardly “the mighty” (NEB), Cf. Isa 53:12. The ל is equivalent to a dative of disadvantage, “against” (cf. Charles). Anarthrous רבים retains the commonplace meaning “many” (against Wiklander, “Begreppet rabbim i Daniel 8–12”).

27.c-c. חצי could denote duration of time (“for half of”: see Keil; cf. GKC 118k), but point of time reads better (so G, Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 13; cf. GKC 118i). While one would expect ב “in” before חצי, cf. the absolute use of חצות in Ps 119:62; Job 34:20.

27.d. Cf. G, Vg. MT ישבית (EVV “cause to cease”) can have this meaning (cf. GKC 53def); it hardly needs repointing.

27.e-e. MT שקוצים כנף ועל implies “upon the wing of abominations” (RV). But G, Vg “in the temple” rather implies the noun pointed as absolute, כָּנָף: see n. 27.f.

27.f. משמם שקוצים looks like one of the phrases for the desolating rebellion/abomination (see 8:13; 11:31; 12:11). The pl. is odd, but G also has a pl. expression, βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων: see *Comment*.

27.g-g. Hendiadys (Bentzen). כלה “destruction” denotes putting an end to something; it can hardly mean merely “in the end” (NEB). Cf. n. 24.d.

27.h. In 8:13, 12:11, שמם has transitive meaning, but there it is preferred to משמם for paronomasia. Here in 9:27 משמם has been used for the transitive, and שמם for “desolate” in vv 18, 26, following general OT usage. Intransitive is thus also more likely here. Cf. KJV.

## Form /Structure/Setting

### Form

The framework of chap. 9 is a seer’s report of a revelation; it has some parallels with Middle Eastern reports of a revelation coming in a dream.[[405]](#footnote-405) It thus opens (vv 1–3) with a note of the historical and personal context, though it lacks any corresponding closure after v 27 (contrast 7:28; 8:27); indeed, the revelation itself (vv 24–27) comes to an abrupt end (contrast 8:26; 12:5–13). The revelation has the form of a quasi-prediction (see chap. 2 *Form* and chaps. 10–12 *Form*); vv 25-27a refer to events that are past in the visionary’s time, while vv 24, 27b contain the actual prediction. The revelation speaks allusively in a manner not unlike the interpretive viisons in 7:17–18, 23–27; 8:22–25; compare also the closing vision in chaps. 10—12. It contains no equivalent to the symbolic visions in chaps. 7 and 8, the role of the symbolic vision being played by a passage from the scriptures which Gabriel takes up.

Beginning as it does not with a dream or vision but with a text from the scriptures, chap. 9 comes nearer than any other passage in Daniel to being expository midrash, midrash which explicitly concerns itself with issues raised by a specific biblical passage, while still concerned—like all interpretation—with questions arising from the context in which the scriptures are being read. Indeed, “this is the only instance of explicit biblical interpetation in the Book of Daniel and one of very few instances in Jewishapocalyptic literature.”[[406]](#footnote-406) In taking the passage as a prediction of events in the audience’s day, its hermeneutic corresponds to that of pesharim such as 1QpHab, but the chapter does not use the term פשר, nor does the revelation take the pesher form (see chap. 2 *Form*). As is often the case with midrashic study, the celestial revelation offers illumination from the text which emerges from setting it in the context of other passages from the scriptures.[[407]](#footnote-407)

The passage’s “text” is Jer 25 and/or Jer 29), which refers to the completing of seventy years of punishment for Judah’s wrongdoing. Jeremiah’s “seventy years” was earlier taken up in Zech 1:12 (cf. 7:5).[[408]](#footnote-408) 2 Chr 36:20–23 then nuances Zechariah’s prophecy by understanding the seventy years in light of Lev 25:1–7; 26:31–35, 43. The period of ruin and desolation comprises seventy years during which the land is uncultivated, to make up for the approximately 490 sabbathless years of the monarchic period. The deuterocanonical Epistle of Jeremiah, possibly written soon after Alexander and also taking Jer 29 as its jumping-off point, turns the seventy years into seven generations, which perhaps signifies 280 years according to an OT way of reckoning.[[409]](#footnote-409)

Dan 9 dates itself in the period to which Zech 1 and 2 Chr 36 refer, but it presupposes a time of continuing “desolation,” national subservience to foreign powers that came to a climax with the oppression of Antiochus. This desolation has lasted a comparable period to that of the monarchy. How could this be? Considering Jer 25:11/29:10 in light of Lev 26:18, 21, 24, 28 as well as 25:1–7; 26:31–35, 43 provides an answer: the seventy sabbath years needed to be exacted sevenfold. The last part of Lev 26 is also more encouragingly significant. Years of desolation and ruin do not mean that Yahweh has ratified Israel’s breaking of the covenant (vv 15, 44); if Israel acknowledges its waywardness and the appropriateness of its punishment, Yahweh will remember the covenant (vv 40–42). The two-sided implications of Lev 25—26 correspond to two sides to Jeremiah’s prophecy in chaps. 25 and 29. The former warns how long Yahweh’s chastisement will be, the latter promises that it will not last forever.

The use of 70 and 490 in structuring history appears elsewhere in writings of the Persian and Greek periods. From the flood to the End is 70 generations (1 *Enoch* 10.12) or 70 weeks (4Q180 1.9); 1 *Enoch* 91.1–17; 93.1–10 divides history into seven followed by three weeks. Seventy shepherds pasture Israel from the Assyrian captivity to the End (1 *Enoch* 89–90); *T. Levi* 16.1; 17.1 seems to speak in a similar connection of 70 weeks. While the time from the exodus to the building of the temple was 480 years or twelve generations (1 Kgs 6:1) and there are hints that the time of Israel’s ancestors, of the monarchy, and of the Second Temple period could also be reckoned at 480 years each, there are other hints of an understanding of biblical history as involving 490-year sequences,[[410]](#footnote-410) and 11QMelch envisages a period of ten jubilees, thus 490 years, up to the final judgment. While some of these documents may be later than and dependent on Daniel, they represent a way of thinking that Daniel takes up rather than initiates.[[411]](#footnote-411) Lev 25:8–17 also describes the jubilee year, and *Jubilees* in due course structures history by jubilees,[[412]](#footnote-412) though Dan 9 itself does not describe the 490 years in these terms and the seven sevens of Dan 9:25 are hardly sufficient to indicate that reflects jubilee thinking.[[413]](#footnote-413)

The supernatural revelation in Dan 9 presupposes a reading of Jer 25:11/29:10 in light of further passages beyond Lev 25–26. The leader (נגיד) who is anointed (משיח) recalls the prophecy about the king of Tyre in Ezek 28 (see vv 2, 14), which shares other motifs with Dan 9:24–27 such as ruin and desolation (שחת, שמם, vv 8, 17, 19), God’s sacred mountain (vv 14, 16), and the profaning of sanctuaries by failure and waywardness (vv 16, 18).[[414]](#footnote-414) Isa 10:22–23 declares that ונחרצה כלה כי. . .: צדקה שוטף (“justice is in full flood…. because, an end which has been decreed [is Yahweh . . . bringing about ]”). Each word recurs in Dan 9:24–27; the second phrase appears in the identical form in v 27, apparently indicating that the consummation which is now effected is that of which Isaiah spoke.[[415]](#footnote-415) The allusive הגביר (“prevail”?—see n. 27.a) might have its background in the גבור אל “God the champion” of Isa 10:21.[[416]](#footnote-416) There are a number of possible links between Dan 9 and Isa 52:13–53:12, of which the most plausible are in 52:14: שמם, רבים, שחת (1QIsaa משח!).[[417]](#footnote-417)

Within the framework of the supernatural revelation, Dan 9 is dominated by a long communal prayer of confession (vv 4–19). It is comparable to other Second Temple prayers in Ezra 9:6–15; Neh 1:5–11; 9:5–38; Bar 1:15–3:8; 1QS 1.22–2.1; 4Q Words of the Luminaries (and less so to Isa 59:12–15; 64:5-12 [4–11]; Jer 14:7–9, 19–22; Pss 51; 106; Prayer of Manasseh),[[418]](#footnote-418) though each of these prayers is distinctive in relation to its context. [[419]](#footnote-419)

This prayer begins with an ascription of praise to God (v 4), a motif which recurs in the body of the prayer (e.g., vv 7a, 9a, 15). The recognition that right is on Yahweh’s side is of key importance to the prayer, which in this connection can be described as a *Gerichtsdoxologie*, an act of praise at the justice of God’s judgment.[[420]](#footnote-420) The central feature of the prayer is thus an acknowledgment of wrongdoing (vv 5–14). It makes a statement in general terms of what Israel did and failed to do (vv 5–6, 9b–11a, 11b, 13b, 14b) and of God’s acts in response (esp. vv 11b, 12–13a, 14), and it contrasts the consequent moral positions of God and people (esp. vv 7–8a). It incorporates some description of the afflicted state of the people for whom Daniel prays; the description corresponds to the lament in a protest psalm. This second section of the prayer is the longest, yet it does not express its main aim. The prayer is not just an acknowledgment of wrongdoing and acceptance of responsibility for it, like Josh 7:20–21; 2 Sam 12:13a, and the Deuteronomistic History as a whole. The acknowledgment of being in the wrong is designed to open the way to a plea for mercy, as in Judg 10:15; 1 Sam 15:24–25; Ps 106;[[421]](#footnote-421) contrast—among the communal prayers of confession—Ezra 9. Thus the third element in the prayer’s form is a plea for God to turn back to his people in forgiveness and restoration (vv 15–19). The transition to the plea is marked by the emphatic particle ועתה “but now,” which recurs in v 17: for the repetition, compare 2 Sam 7; 1 Kgs 8. It expresses an outburst of emotion that is contained throughout the confession; it is both a conjunction and an interjection.[[422]](#footnote-422) The plea is dominated by motive clauses and phrases that indicate the reasons why God should forgive and restore (vv 15a, 16a [two phrases], 16b, 17b, 18a, 18b, 19b).

The prayer’s alternating between “we/our” and “I/my,” and between “you” and “he” in speaking of God, reflects features of the corporate prayer of the Psalter. While the “we” is appropriate to a prayer that concerns Israel’s wrongdoing, the “I” puts Daniel in the position of intercessors such as Moses and Jeremiah.[[423]](#footnote-423) It may take up the picture of Dan[i]el as a just man who might be the means of delivering others (Ezek 14:12–20; cf. Jer 15:1). The prayer’s language has the characteristic repetition of liturgical style. It assembles series of near-synonyms (vv 4b, 5a, 15b, 18a; also instances treated as hendiadys, vv 4b, 5b, 9a, 11b), similar phrases (v 4b), parallel clauses (vv 5b–6, 9b–10, 11, 13b), and whole sentences of similar meaning (vv 7 and 8–9a; vv 9b–11, 11b–13a, and 13b–14). Comparable impacct is achieved by chains of related expressions (e.g., vv 6b, 7b, 8a). The pathos and effectiveness of the plea’s climax in v 19a depends on the repetition of imperative phrases calling on God, as well as on their novel brevity.

The prayer’s repetitiveness also reflects that of the Deuteronomistic covenant tradition to which the prose prayers of confession belong.[[424]](#footnote-424) In terms of that tradition, the prayer is an acknowledgment of the covenant God (vv 4, 7a, 14b, 15a), of the breaking of the covenant through Israel’s failure to keep covenantal commitment (vv 5–6, 7b, 8, 9b–11, 15b), and of the appropriateness of God’s treatment of Israel in the framework of the covenant (vv 11b–14). It appeals to the graciousness that lay behind God’s covenantal commitment (vv 9a, 16a, 18b) and implicitly to the possibility of forgiveness and restoration announced in the covenant for people who repent of their covenantal failure. Among Deuteronomistic motifs in the prayer are terms such as חסד, תורה, אהב, שוב, and היום (commitment, teaching, love, [re]turn, and today), the significance attached to Moses, kings, and prophets as scribes, hearers, and preachers of Yahweh’s instruction (i.e., Deuteronomy itself) (vv 6, 8, 10, 11, 13), the phrase “as it is written,” the idea of the curse, the references to Yahweh’s name (vv 18, 19), the actual use of the name, and the stress on shame and scorn (vv 7, 8, 16: בשת and חרפה do not come in Deuteronomy itself, but for the idea, see, e.g., 22:13–21; 24:10–11; 25:3, 9; 27:16). Both Leviticus and Deuteronomy envisage the relationship between Yahweh and Israel being fundamentally disturbed by Israel’s faithlessness and disobedience, yet see Yahweh’s response in punishing Israel as stopping short of finally terminating the covenant. If the people in exile acknowledge their wrongdoing and the justice of Yahweh’s punishment, he will remember his covenant with them (Lev 26:39–45); if they return to Yahweh, he will restore them (Deut 30:1–10; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–53; Jer 29:10–14). Dan 9:4–19 expresses the repentant confession that these passages look for.[[425]](#footnote-425)

This response also features in the other communal prayers of confession. Practically every phrase in vv 4–20 can be paralleled in Ezra 9; Neh 1; 9, or the traditions that underlie these four prayers: the Deuteronomistic prose of Deuteronomy, 1 Kgs 8, and Jeremiah, or the more worship- oriented traditions of Leviticus, Chronicles, and the Psalter.[[426]](#footnote-426) The prayer was hardly composed with any of these texts sitting before the writer, but it was composed by someone who knew this tradition well, from study and/or from worship, and who instinctively but also consciously prayed in ways stimulated and hallowed by it. The prayer has a particularly close relationship with that in Baruch. As with parallels with 1 *Enoch* in chap. 7, a case can be argued for dependence either way or for mutual dependence on a third source, in this case some already existent liturgical prayer.[[427]](#footnote-427)

The communal prayer of confession is a Second Temple phenomenon. It may have developed from the preexilic community lament, but if so, lament and protest with their characteristic “Why?” have disappeared, perhaps because the Deuteronomic covenant theology offers an intelligible understanding of contemporary experience of adversity to which the appropriate response is rather a confession of God’s justice and of human failure.[[428]](#footnote-428) Yet elsewhere the book of Daniel does not suggest such a theology, and the opening of the book pointedly omitted any explanation of the fall of Jerusalem from within this framework. And in this prayer much of the logic of protest may be present, particularly if we translate the past tense verbs as aorist (referring to past history) rather than perfect (as if applying to the present community. The prayer says, “Okay, but enough already!”[[429]](#footnote-429)

### Structure

1–2 narrative introduction to the revelation

1 date

2 occasion

3–4a narrative introduction to the prayer of confession

4b–19 prayer of confession

4b ascription of praise

5–14 acknowledgment of wrongdoing

5–6 Israel’s disobedience

7–9a God in the right, Israel’s shame

7a God in the right

7b Israel’s shame because of wrongdoing

8 Israel’s shame because of wrongdoing

9a God’s mercy

9b–11 Israel’s rebellion and Yahweh’s punishment

11b–13a Israel’s failure and Yahweh’s bringing trouble

13b–14a Israel’s recalcitrance and Yahweh’s deliberate response

14b God in the right, Israel’s disobedience

15–19 plea for mercy

15 resumptive acknowledgment of wrongdoing

16–19 fourfold plea for God’s mercy, each with motivation

20–27 revelation

20–22a narrative introduction resumed

20–21a occasion

21b celestial being’s epiphany

22a introduction to celestial being’s speech

22b–27 celestial being’s speech

22b–23 introduction

24–27 revelation

24 summary: what will be achieved by the end of 70 sevens

25–27 detailed outline of the 70 sevens

25a the first 7 sevens

25bαβ the next 62 sevens and their end

26b–27a the first half of the 70th seven

27b the middle of the final seven and the final events

The narrative opening (vv 1–2) provides the date expected in a vision or revelation (see chap. 2 *Form*) and indicates the circumstances that led to the prayer of confession. The introduction to the prayer (vv 3–4a) discloses that it will be a prayer of supplication and confession; it discloses it both by the acts that accompany it and by the titles it is given. In the prayer, then, Daniel will be seeking a fulfillment of the prophecy referred to in the narrative opening, by offering the response that opens up the possibility of that fulfillment. As the passage from the scriptures fulfills the role of the symbolic vision in chaps. 7 and 8, the prayer takes the structural place occupied by the symbolic vision there. The framework of the chapter emphasizes God’s sovereignty; the prayer emphasizes the importance of his people’s penitence.[[430]](#footnote-430)

There are links between the revelation and the prayer. The revelation concerns “your people and your sacred city” (cf. v 20). It promises that rebellion, failure, and waywardness will be dealt with: the prayer also began here (v 5, cf. vv 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 20—though in the prayer the idea of rebellion is expressed by terms other than פשע. Its concern with justice corresponds to a feature of the prayer (vv 5 [רשע, the antonym], 7, 14, 16, 18—though never צדק itself). The rebuilding and restoring of the desolate city and sanctuary correspond to motifs in the prayer (vv 17, 18); both speak of God’s judgment overwhelming (vv 11, 27). The covenant’s prevailing (see n. 27.a) recalls the covenant-keeping God of the prayer (v 4). The introduction to the revelation promises insight, lack of which the prayer had confessed (see n. 13.d-d).[[431]](#footnote-431) The revelation does not take up other motifs: God’s angry fury, his solemn curse, his compassionate forgiveness, and his name borne by those who belong to him; the trouble, shame, abuse, and dispersion inflicted on city and people. Conversely, the prayer makes no reference to the anointed leader or the prophetic vision; the prayer’s concern with prophecy has a different focus, and this motif in the revelation goes back to v 2. The comparisons and contrasts between prayer and revelation open up two readings of the revelation. It can be understood in light of the prayer at each point, so that it is Israel’s wrongdoing which necessitates the prolonging of the years of devastation, but which can now be dealt with in response to the (second-century BC) prayer, or it can be understood semi-independently, the wrongdoing then being that of Israel’s oppressors.

As happens with words of revelation in other chapters, vv 24–27 are expressed in rhythmic language, with some of the symmetry and balancing of parallelism (esp. in v 24) and with the terseness and allusiveness of poetry, though one could argue over whether they are better seen as elevated prose rather than strictly as verse.[[432]](#footnote-432) The revelation’s allusiveness, with its lack of articles, is also the allusiveness characteristic of “sibylline” quasi-predictions.[[433]](#footnote-433) After its opening in v 24, the bidding in v 25 suggests another new beginning there (see *Comment*).

The introduction and the revelation are in comparable Hebrew to that of chaps. 8 and 10–12, characterized by jerkiness, Aramaisms, and complex resumptive sentences (vv 1–2, 20–21). The prayer is composed in literary Hebrew, without Aramaisms. Further, the prayer can be removed from its context without disturbing the latter’s coherence; indeed, the omission of the prayer along with vv 4a, 20 improves the flow of the chapter as a whole.[[434]](#footnote-434) Because the prayer stands out from its context in its language, its use of the name Yahweh, its overtly Palestinian perspective, and its emphasis on the sin of Israel as a cause of their troubles, one might ask whether it is a later addition to the chapter, like the additions in chap. 3 (3:24–90 G).[[435]](#footnote-435)

Some considerations that have raised this question are not substantial. It is not the case that vv 1–3 make one expect a prayer for illumination rather than a prayer of confession; Daniel in the sixth century had no reason to be puzzled by the prophecy, and the observances of v 3 are appropriate to penitence. It is not the case that there are no links between prayer and revelation (see above). Variations in expression between vv 20 and 21a do not imply a change of author, nor is the repetitiveness of vv 3, 4a and 20, 21a uncharacteristic of Danielic prose. The appearing of a prayer of this kind in the place occupied in chaps. 7 and 8 by a symbolic vision does not argue against its originality. Nor do the features noted in the previous paragraph point strongly to its being a later addition. The possibility of removing it is not evidence of its being secondary. Its distinctive language reflects its nature and background as a quasi-liturgical prayer; the same is true of its distinctive use of the name Yahweh, which is paralleled in Neh 1:4–11 in relation to its context, and by the way other names for God concentrate in specific chapters in Daniel.[[436]](#footnote-436) Its Palestinian perspective is the author’s perspective, and here he simply omits to conceal it; the revelation’s not needing the prayer to lead into it reflects the conviction that God’s sending Gabriel was independent of the prayer—it issued from his prior plan.

Some arguments for the prayer’s originality are also weak. While the chapter would be short without it, it would not be a torso: its structure would more closely correspond to that which appears on a large scale in chaps. 10–12 (see chaps. 10–12 *Structure*). Nor is it the case that a prayer of confession must meet with an oracle of response, such as a protest psalm looks for.[[437]](#footnote-437)

The difficulty of the hypothesis that the prayer is a later addition to the chapter lies in the close links between prayer and context, noted above.[[438]](#footnote-438) These links are not as marked as those in Ezra 9; Neh 1; 9, which could not have existed independently of their context, though their degree of specificity to their setting varies. Possibly the prayer in Dan 9 already existed and was taken over by the author of the chapter, but the hypothesis is not compelling. It is as easy to believe that the author wrote the whole chapter.

### Setting

The chapter offers divergent pointers regarding its historical setting. The prayer suggests a Jerusalem setting (vv 7, 16). Its perspective might point to the Babylonian period; interpreters who have reckoned it independent of its context have dated it as early as 600 BC, perhaps with second-century glosses.[[439]](#footnote-439) But the prayer’s perspective is not very different from that of Ezra 9; Neh 1; 9, and—like them—it alludes to the community’s experience in a later day, in its references to Jerusalem’s “desolation,” which parallel those in vv 24–27. Writings from the Persian, Greek, and Roman epochs commonly see these periods as a continuation of the time of desolation.[[440]](#footnote-440) The form of the revelation suggests it is a quasi-prediction whose setting would be Jerusalem between the introduction of new forms of worship in 167 and their abolition in 164 (cf. chap. 8). The end of desolation is described by taking up earlier prophetic texts (v 27), as in 11:40–45, which suggests that it is still future for the seer.[[441]](#footnote-441) While the narrative introduction refers explicitly to a setting in the Babylonian period and presumably in Babylon, that feature seems to be part of the fictional scene-setting for the revelation which aligns the chapter as a whole with the rest of the book.

Dan 9 is concerned about the temple and its offerings, which might suggest a link with priestly circles, though it iincludes neither positive nor negative references to the priesthood, and many people outside such circles would share a concern with the temple and its offerings.[[442]](#footnote-442) It does reflect the views of conservative rather than reformist groups in second-century Jerusalem. Reference to praying “before Yahweh” at the time of the evening offering (vv 20, 21) might suggest that the prayer itself presupposes a temple setting,[[443]](#footnote-443) as do Ezra 9 and Neh 9, but such features appear in a dispersion context in Dan 6:10 [11]; Neh 1:4, 6. The study of the scriptures and the liturgical style of prayer could as easily suggest a background in the synagogue, which encouraged communal study of the scriptures and a way of praying that reflects the study of the scriptures.

In the chapter’s setting in the book, its concern with insight ([ה]בינ‍) links it with chap. 8.[[444]](#footnote-444) Chap. 9 begins with that focus (v 2; cf. 8:5), as chap. 8 had ended there, the positive contrasting with the preceding negative. This motif is prominent as the supernatural being appears with his revelation (vv 22–23), as it had been prominent at the equivalent point earlier (8:15–17, also 23). The implication might be that Dan 9 was intended to clarify issues raised in chap. 8; it takes up the question of the fate of the temple and seeks light from the scriptures on what the dream and vision left opaque. In other respects, however, chap. 9 is not as closely linked to chap. 8 as chap. 8 was to chap. 7. Although it takes further the theme of the restoration of desolate Jerusalem and its temple, it does so by means of different forms, structure, and motifs. It also shares its emphasis on insight with chap. 1 (vv 4, 17, 20), which concerned itself with the question of the length of the time of desolation, too. One might perceive a link between the 70/490 years and the date in 1:1, though the attention given to Israel’s history over Second Temple times is more explicit in chap. 9, and is explicit only there in the book—elsewhere chaps. 7–12 focuses more on world history, and structures events by the history of world empires.[[445]](#footnote-445) Chap. 9 relates sacred history, other chapters profane history.[[446]](#footnote-446) Chap. 9 alone, too, refers to preexilic history; elsewhere the temple’s destruction is such a caesura that it seems as if history began then.[[447]](#footnote-447) The model prayer in chap. 9 is that of the model Israelite in exile who has been portrayed in chaps. 1–6. Is it the kind of prayer the Daniel of chap. 6 is assumed to have prayed, soon after Darius was made king (compare the terms of vv 3–4a with those of 6:10-11 [11–12])? It is hardly appropriate to declare that the prayer “is not an actually practiced prayer,” but it would be the case that “the practice of the prayer in Dan 9 [is] a social action.”[[448]](#footnote-448) The suggestion that chap. 9 is the center of the book[[449]](#footnote-449) overestimates the importance of its stress on sin, which is actually another feature that makes it stand out from its context.

## Comment

**1** Zech 1 links Jeremiah’s seventy-years prophecy with the events of 519, in the time of Darius I, which are close to seventy years after the fall of Jerusalem in 587, and Porpyry thus assumes that the king by whose reign chap. 9 is dated must be Darius I.[[450]](#footnote-450) But in the context of Daniel, the Darius who is “of Median birth” must be the Darius of Mede who was introduced in 5:31 [6:1]. His “being made king” of Babylon may reflect his “acquiring/receiving” the kingship of Babylon there (and see *Setting* above). אחשורוש (Aḥašweroš) is the regular BH equivalent of OP Ḳšayarša (Aram. חשיארש corresponds better), in Greek Ξερξης (Xerxes: so OG here; Th transliterates); see Esther; Ezra 4:6. Historically, Darius I was the father of Xerxes I; the order of events in Ezra 4 might have suggested that Xerxes (v 6) preceded Darius (v 24). Ḳšayarša, like Dārayavahuš*/*Dārayavauš itself, may be a throne name, meaning “hero among rulers,”[[451]](#footnote-451) and it has been suggested that it could thus have been borne by an earlier figure such as Darius the Mede’s father,[[452]](#footnote-452) though it seems a problem with this suggestion that Ḳšayarša is a Persian name. In Esther, G takes אחשורוש to refer to Artaxerxes, while in Tob 14:15, Ασυηρος (Asueros) denotes Uvakštra (Cyaxares) the Median conqueror of Nineveh in 612.[[453]](#footnote-453) He might be seen as Darius the Mede’s predecessor/ancestor/father, and אחשורוש is actually as close a transliteration of Uvakštra (Akk. U-aksa-tar) as it is of Ḳšayarša.[[454]](#footnote-454)

**2** The resumptive opening phrase may simply arise from grammatical need (Th omits it); yet v 1 is not so very long, and perhaps the phrase suggests that this year is the very year in which fulfillment of Jeremiah’s promise was due. Jeremiah’s seventy-year period of Babylonian rule might be reckoned to begin with Judah’s submission to Babylon in 605 or with the fall of Jerusalem in 597 or 587; it might be reckoned to end with the fall of Babylon in 539, the initiation of a Judahite return in 538, or the completion of the rebuilding of the temple in 517. It is thus possible to argue that Jeremiah was chronologically accurate. But he himself hardly intended the “seventy years” to have a precise chronological reference; nor is there reason to infer that Daniel understood it this way. “Seventy years” suggests a human lifetime (cf. Isa 23:15; Ps 91:10; also Esarhaddon’s inscription, “Seventy years as the period of its desolation he [Marduk] wrote down [in the book of fate]”.[[455]](#footnote-455)

Although the revelations given in dream and vision in Daniel show the influence of the scriptures, here alone is there explicit reference to a passage. If “the documents” (הספרים) is a term for the scriptures, it suggests the existence of an identifiable collection of authoritative religious writings, though the fact that the book of Daniel is not yet among them shows that their existence does not imply a “canon” to which nothing could be added. The inclusion of Jeremiah among the books would suggest that “the scriptures” denotes at least “the Torah and the Prophets,” which might be a collection not very different (Daniel apart) from what became the Hebrew Bible.[[456]](#footnote-456) Perhaps the existence of such a collection of “scriptures” necessitated or at least opened up the possibility of recourse to the “pesher” method of interpretation and to the device of pseudonymity.[[457]](#footnote-457) Both dream or vision and the scriptures would be seen as the true loci of revelation concerning present and future that contrasted with the Babylonians’ heavenly tablets.[[458]](#footnote-458) It was the God of Israel who really gave such revelations, sometimes hidden in the symbols of dream, vision, and portent, sometimes hidden in apparently straightforward words from the scriptures. And one way in which God continued to speak to his people was by inspiring their reflection on those scriptures so that they spoke out what the original speaker might say now. But “the documents” may more specifically denote the letters included or mentioned within Jeremiah that relate to the exchanges between Jeremiah and the exiles, to which Jer 29 refers as “documents.” As the book of Daniel tells the story, Daniel was in Babylon when these exchanges took place.[[459]](#footnote-459) Perhaps we are to imagine him consulting those documents again.

Either way, Daniel is not seeking an explanation of a puzzling text. He knows that the two passages in Jeremiah document a threat or warning (Jer 25) and a promise or reassurance (Jer 29).[[460]](#footnote-460) In his prayer he will go on to seek to fulfill the condition laid down in Jer 29:12-13.[[461]](#footnote-461) “Daniel never asks for enlightenment about the seventy years of Jeremiah or even expresses bewilderment. His reaction to the prophecy is one of distress” and therefore confession of sin and request for mercy.[[462]](#footnote-462) Dan 9 is “profoundly concerned with divine absence” yet it “does not necessarily attest to a profound dissonance concerning that absence as Dan 8 does.”[[463]](#footnote-463) Instead it expresses penitence and thus accepts responsibility for the absence, and it prays.

**3–23** On the prayer, see *Form* and *Structure* above. Motifs recurring in the prayer are (a) God as its object, (b) his characteristics, (c) his ways of speaking and his means of speaking; (d) Israel as the ones who are addressed and who are prayed for, (e) the response he looks for in them, (f) their actual characteristics, and (g) their needs; also significant are (h) the nature of the prayer, (i) its content, and (j) the response it meets.

**3–23 (a)** The object of prayer is God (אלהים). But this most general word appears only once, in the introduction to the prayer (v 3). Even here it is combined with the title “Lord” (אדני, also vv 4, 7, 9, 15, 19, 19). While Ezekiel frequently uses the title “Lord” in accordance with its philological meaning, suggesting God’s authority and awesomeness, Daniel’s usage does not stress this connotation. Rather it reflects Judaism’s developing inclination to use the title “Lord” to avoid uttering God’s actual name Yahweh (cf. Q אדני, G κύριος, EVV Lord). Each occurrence of “Lord” in chap. 9 comes at a point where Israelite prayer would traditionally have used “Yahweh”: compare the general preference for אלהים “God” rather than יהוה in Pss 42–79. “Lord,” then, is suggestive of reverence before the person of the God of Israel. The name Yahweh itself comes in vv 4, 8, 10, 13, 14, 14, 20; also v 2 (and see n. 3.a). Whereas “Lord” generally appears as a vocative, and thus appears especially in the plea, “Yahweh” characteristically appears in third person references, and not at all in the plea. Only here in Daniel does the distinctively Jewish name for God feature; Dan 9 follows earlier prophetic and liturgical usage. The very use of the name constitutes an appeal to the special relationship between Yahweh and the Israel who alone knew the name.

That consideration also lies behind the references and appeals to “our God” (אלהינו, vv 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17) and “my God” (אלהי, vv 4, 18, 19, 20, 20). Daniel uses “my God” when referring to his own prayer, at its opening and closing; he uses “our God” in the midst of the prayer when referring to those on whose behalf he prays. Much of his usage is comparable to the Psalms, where the phrases “Yahweh my God”/“Yahweh our God” are common and “my God”/“our God” appears in parallel with “Yahweh.” Sometimes the context suggests that “my God”/“our God” appeals directly to the special personal relationship indicated by the pronouns (e.g., Pss 22:2, cf. 1 [3, cf. 2]; 38:21 [22]; 48:14 [15]; 71:4; 86:2; 91:2; 94:22; 95:7; 106:47; 118:28). The combination of “my” and “our” in one psalm is rare. Interesting is 94:22–23, where the psalmist appeals to the fact that Yahweh is “our God” as the basis for expecting him to act as “my God.” The argument in Dan 9 takes the opposite form: Daniel urges “my God” to act as “our God.” This way of praying appears in one other prose confession, Ezra 9. A person such as Ezra or Daniel prays as someone who has a close relationship with God, someone to whom God may be expected to listen. The prayer that “my God” may act as “our God” is therefore powerful. The personal nature of Daniel’s appeal on behalf of the entire people is clearest in vv 18–20.

At the opening of the prayer, the Lord is reverenced as the great and awesome God

(והנורא הגדול האל, v 4). The phrase corresponds to Neh 1:5. “God” is here *’el*, the name of the Canaanite high god (e.g., Gen 14:18–24), but often in the OT a common noun for God (cf. Dan 11:36). There is some courage about beginning with recognition of the majestic aspect to God, which is a threat to people who fail to yield to him, whether foreigners or Israelites (cf. the closely comparable phrases in Deut 7:21; 10:17; Neh 4:14 [8]; 9:32). It is precisely such failure that Daniel will have to go on to acknowledge.

**3–23 (b)** “Great and awesome”(v. 4) is the first of a series of terms to denote God’s characteristics; v 4 adds that he is one who keeps his covenantal commitment (והחסד הברית) with his people. As in English, a “covenant” (ברית) is a formal agreement involving two parties, which has been entered into in a solemn and binding fashion. It may be primarily an undertaking by one party to the other, who is required only to receive what the first offers; or it may presuppose that a more powerful party requires certain reciprocal undertakings from a less powerful one in response to benefits promised or given by the former; or it may be a mutual bond between equal parties. For secular instances, see, e.g., Gen 21:22–32; Josh 9:3–20; 1 Sam 11:1; 18:3; 2 Chr 2:3; 15:12. “Covenant” then provides a natural image to describe relationships between God and humanity. The emphasis in such relationships may be on God’s commitment (Gen 9:8–17; Lev 26:40–45; Num 25:10–13; Jer 31:31–34; 2 Chr 13:5), or on human beings’ commitment to God (Job 31:1; Ezra 10:3; 2 Chr 29:10), or on a reciprocity in the relationship—though hardly, for theological reasons, an equality between the two parties (Exod 19:3–6; Deut 29:1–29 [28:69–29:20]; 2 Kgs 23:1–3; 2 Chr 34:30–32). This last application of the covenant image is characteristic of Deuteronomy, which seems to utilize Israel’s knowledge of the equivalent political covenants (i.e., treaties); it is this kind of covenant relationship that is presupposed by Dan 9 (see *Form*).

“Commitment” (חסד) has its background in human relationships more broadly, where it denotes an attitude of kindness or generosity or mercy that expresses itself in acts of the same kind and thus initiates or presupposes a relationship of mutual loyalty and faithfulness (Josh 2:12; Judg 1:24; 8:35; 1 Sam 15:6). Appeal to someone’s חסד presupposes that he or she has taken on a responsibility and can be expected to fulfill it. Applied to God, it suggests his turning to humanity in his unconditioned and steadfast friendship and magnanimity, thus working towards his divine claim to have fellowship with human beings.[[464]](#footnote-464) In the OT, the most common application of the idea to the attitude shown by God to human beings appears, not surprisingly, in contexts such as the present one, the context of prayer, in the Psalms (e.g., 25:6–10; 36:5-10 [6–11]). חסד is not essentially a “covenant” word,[[465]](#footnote-465) but the human relationships in which חסד is expressed may be described in “covenantal” terms (1 Sam 20:8, 14–16; 1 Kgs 20:31–34). God’s חסד may also be associated with his covenant, as is so in Dan 9:4; the usage stems from Deuteronomy (see 7:9, 12; cf. 1 Kgs 8:23; Isa 54:10; 55:3; Pss 89:28 [29]; 106:45; Neh 1:5; 9:32).

The prayer’s opening allusion to God’s keeping his covenant commitment is not an implicit appeal for mercy, but an acknowledgment that Yahweh has kept his side of the covenant and bears no responsibility for its collapse. It offers no direct basis for Daniel’s prayer; the latter will have to acknowledge that Israel has not kept its covenantal commitment, and thus has no claim on him. Yet it is necessary that the prayer begins from an acknowledgment of these facts as they are. Further, if Israel’s relationship with God began from an unearned commitment on God’s part, perhaps it could be reestablished on the same basis? There is a close connection between commitment (חסד) and grace (חן), in human relationships (Gen 19:19; 47:29; Ps 109:12; Esth 2:17), and in God (Exod 34:6 and related texts).[[466]](#footnote-466)

It is only as they invoke the grace of God which forgives sins that Moses (Ex. 3211f., Deut. 923), Solomon ( 1 Kg. 8) and Daniel (94f.) can intercede with God that He will still graciously accept this people. It is never their own being and doing which constitutes the justice of their cause, and for the sake of which the divine advocacy and action takes place. It takes place only for the reason that Israel's infidelity cannot suspend God's fidelity ( Rom. 33), that God cannot repent of His gracious promises and calling ( Rom. 1129), and therefore only for the sake of God's own righteousness. Looking upon Israel's own ways and conduct, God can only judge, reject and punish. In the process of judging, rejecting and punishing, God does not break but keeps His covenant, and therefore comforts, helps and saves…. Only in faith in Him, only in that intercession of Moses, Solomon and Daniel for the forgiveness of sins, can Israel be subjectively in the right. But in faith, in that prayer, it is in point of fact subjectively righteous. If it seizes this promise of the divine advocacy and action, in this apprehension it already lives in its fulfilment, and it can and may and will stand before its enemies and in every misfortune.[[467]](#footnote-467)

Reliability, truthfulness, or constancy (אמת, v 13) commonly accompanies commitment both in references to God and in references to human conduct (Gen 47:29; Exod 34:6; Josh 2:14; Pss 25:10; 40:10-11 [11–12]; 57:3, 10 [4, 11]; 61:7 [8]; 85:10 [11]; 89:14 [15]; 108:4 [5]; Prov 3:3; 16:6; 20:28; Isa 16:5; Hos 4:1; Zech 7:9). Sometimes the two terms are a hendiadys suggesting a commitment that can be relied on; where they can be distinguished, the former may suggest protective faithfulness, the latter active kindness.[[468]](#footnote-468) For God’s truthfulness as our protection, see Pss 25:5; 40:11 [12]; 43:3; 57:3 [4]; 61:7 [8]; 91:4; 96:13 [14]. Yahweh is אמת אל, the God who is by nature reliable and constant (Ps 31:5 [6]). That aspect of his nature is revealed in his deeds; they always correspond to his words (Ps 111:7). Thus another of the prose confessions declares that Yahweh has been entirely truthful in his relationship with Israel over the years (Neh 9:33). It is precisely this point that Dan 9:13 echoes: the history of Israel is the story of God’s truthfulness; his promises have been reliable, his protection has been constant.

Daniel makes a similar point when declaring that Yahweh is in the right over against Israel. A prominent motif in his prayer is that any breakdown in relationship between Yahweh and Israel is the responsibility of the latter, not the former. Yahweh is in the right, Israel is in the wrong. Near the beginning and end of his confession Daniel declares that “right” belongs to God and that he is “in the right,” in his relationship with Israel (הצדקה, צדיק; vv 7, 14). The second of these two affirmations corresponds to ones that appear in prose confessions in Ezra 9:15; Neh 9:33 (cf. also Exod 9:27; 2 Kgs 10:9; Ezek 18:9; Lam 1:18; 2 Chr 12:6). The first corresponds to forms of expression in Gen 15:6; Deut 6:25; 24:13. “Right” is another term from human relationships, but here relationships looked at within a framework of law. In a court contest between God and Israel, Daniel affirms, God would win the case. Right is on his side.

This narrow, forensic connotation of צדיק/צדקה is appropriate to vv 7 and 14. In other OT contexts [ה]צדק has a wide range of significance, suggesting God’s doing the right thing in his relationship with his people by acting faithfully. In v 16, this broader meaning is closer to hand: part of the evidence of God’s being in the right is the concern for what is right that has characterized his behavior in relation to Israel. While the declarations at the opening of the confession that צדקה attaches to Yahweh, and at the end that he is צדיק, could signify that Yahweh is justified in his punitive action (compare צדק in Isa 5:16; 10:22), the prayer goes on to refer to his צדקת (“right deeds,” v 16), which are concrete expressions of צדקה in acts of faithfulness, mercy, and deliverance: see the context in which צדקה comes in Isa 51:6, 8; 59:16–17; 60:17; Hos 2:19 [21]; Pss 33:5; 36:5-10 [6–11]; 40:10 [11]; 71:2, 15–16, 19, 24; 98:1–13; Prov 21:21. We should hardly confine the reference in vv 7, 14, then, to God’s being justified in his punishment of Israel: it denotes more broadly his being in the right in the way he has dealt with Israel. He has been a faithful rock and deliverer in accordance with his word.

The allusion to his right acts recalls Judg 5:11b; 1 Sam 12:7; Isa 45:24; Mic 6:5; Ps 103:6. These right acts are his acts on behalf of Israel when it is attacked or afflicted by oppressors in Egypt, in the wilderness, in the “judges” period, and in the exile. The dynamic aspect to צדקה is brought out by its common association with משפט, which denotes authority and decisiveness (RV “judgements”: cf. שפט “judge”). A king’s calling is to exercise וצדקה משפט (2 Sam 8:15; 1 Kgs 10:9): to act with authority on behalf of what is right. Such action is also characteristic of God (Isa 5:16; Pss 33:5; 36:6 [7]). At the beginning of the plea (v 15), Daniel specifically refers to the exodus, Yahweh’s paradigm act of צדקה. God brought Israel out of Egypt by strength of hand and thus established his reputation for doing what is right. It is the reference to the exodus which leads into the generalization about Yahweh’s צדקת in the next verse.

The opening allusion to Yahweh’s being in the right begins a chiasm in vv 7–9a (see Structure) which closes with a balancing allusion to Yahweh’s being compassionate and pardoning. There is no tension between these two. In the same way, Yahweh’s abandoning anger at Israel’s wrongdoing is assumed to be in keeping with his right deeds, not in conflict with them. צדקה (EVV justice/righteousness) is not a justice that is centrally concerned to see wrongdoing punished, or a personal quality of moral righteousness. It is a concern for what is right that rejoices in being merciful to the weak; and it still sees his people who suffer because of their sin as people who need to be restored.

Those who take this word “righteousness” to mean “judgment,” are in error and inexperienced in interpreting the Scriptures; for they suppose God’s justice to be opposed to his pity. But we are familiar with God’s righteousness as made manifest, especially in the benefits he confers on us. It is just as if Daniel had said, that the single hope of the people consisted in God’s having regard to himself alone, and by no means to their conduct. Hence he takes the righteousness of God for his liberality, gratuitous favor, consistent fidelity, and protection, which he promised his servants: *O God,* therefore, he says, *according to all thy promised mercies;* that is, thou dost not fail those who trust in thee, thou dost promise nothing rashly, and thou art not accustomed to desert those who flee to thee; oh! by thy very justice, succor us in our distress. We must also notice the universal particle “all,” because when Daniel unites so many sins which might drown the people in an abyss a thousand times over, he opposes to this *all* God’s promised mercies. As if he had said, although the number of our iniquities is so great that we must perish a hundred times over, yet thy promised mercies are far more numerous, meaning, thy justice surpasses whatever thou mayest find in us of the deepest dye of guilt.[[469]](#footnote-469)

Like צדקת (“right deeds”), “compassion” and “pardon” (v 9) are both plural, suggesting deep or repeated compassion and pardon—though רחמים is always plural and חות[י]סל is plural in two of its three occurrences (here and Neh 9:17; the third is Ps 130:4). Compassion and pardon are two outworkings of commitment (חסד, v 4): see Exod 34:6–7; Num 14:18–19; Isa 54:7–10; Hos 2:18-23 [20–25]; Pss 25:6–7; 51:1 [3]; 69:16 [17]; 86:5, 15; Neh 9:17.

רחמים (also v 18) is a feelings word: it denotes a strong emotion. רחם denotes the womb, so that רחמים could point to the strong feelings of love and concern that might be expected within the family, on the part of a mother, a father, a husband, or a brother. This implication underlies a number of occurrences of the noun and the related verb (see Gen 43:30; 1 Kgs 3:26; Isa 13:18; 49:13–15; 54:6–8; 63:15–16; Jer 31:20; Hos 1–2; 14:3; Amos 1:11; Ps 103:13; Lam 4:10).[[470]](#footnote-470) רחמים also features in combination with terms such as commitment, faithfulness, and grace (see Exod 34:6 and related texts; Isa 63:7; Pss 25:6; 40:11 [12]; 51:1 [3]; 77:9 [10]; 145:9; Lam 3:22; and esp. the prose confession Neh 9:16–33). In such contexts, with which Dan 9 may be compared, the significance of רחמים as a word that points to the feelings of a mother or a father is not in the foreground; but the frequency of that usage elsewhere in the OT suggests it would be present in the background.

Although רחמים is thus a feelings word, it does not denote mere feelings. It suggests a compassion that instinctively issues in action. רחמים is lifegiving.[[471]](#footnote-471) Here, the particular outworking of compassion is pardon (סלחות; vv 18–19), as is the case in some passages where the reference to family feelings is overt (Jer 31:20; Hos 1–2; Ps 103:12–13); it is also so in Exod 34:6 and related passages, and in others where רחמים appears in combination with terms such as grace and faithfulness (Pss 25:6; 51:1 [3]), including a number which speak in covenant terms (Deut 4:31; 13:17 [18]; 1 Kgs 8:50; Neh 9). We have noted that the term for pardon reappears only in the prose confession in Neh 9:17 and in Ps 130:4. The related verb סלח (v 19) comes in passages we have had cause to note already as containing motifs common to Dan 9 (Exod 34:9; 1 Kgs 8:30–50; Pss 25:11; 103:3). The verb and noun are used only of God. They thus contrast with the use of the verb most commonly translated “forgive,” נשא (e.g., Exod 10:17), which more generally denotes “carry.” While סלח may have been used of human beings (e.g., a king), it suggests “pardon” (by a superior), whereas נשא suggests “forgiveness” (which may be by an equal).

It has been suggested that in the Second Temple period law gained a significance of its own independent of covenant—necessarily, because the covenant had been broken.[[472]](#footnote-472) If so, this framework of thinking is not reflected in Dan 9; covenant provides the context for all that follows by way of an understanding of the relationship between God and Israel. There is no hint that the Judaism represented by Daniel has a legalistic understanding of that relationship. The bond is more what has been called “covenantal nomism”:[[473]](#footnote-473) the relationship stems from the gracious initiative of God but then requires the responsive obedience of Israel. Israel’s wrongdoing breaks the covenant, but not in such a way as inevitably to terminate the relationship. One’s wrongdoing leads to a casting of oneself on mercy.

Proper prayer has two aspects. It requires an abject acknowledgment that we are in the wrong and have no deserve. And it requires a confidence in God’s mercy that makes it possible to emerge from “the abyss of despair.”[[474]](#footnote-474)

**3–23 (c)** Yahweh’s relationship with Israel involves words as well as deeds. These words are first termed מצות (“commands,” vv 4, 5). They declare the will he expects to be obeyed. They embody his authority—they are משפטים (v 5). This expression is another term for commands, but we have noted in (b) that the underlying idea of משפט is the exercise of authority on behalf of what is right and against what is wrong. משפטים are authoritative declarations concerning behavior that is acceptable and behavior that is not. In the Torah the term refers to particular enactments, but it also has a more general reference to the authoritative commands that belong to the covenant (Lev 26:15, 43, 46; Deut 26:16–17; 30:16; Ps 147:19–20; 2 Chr 33:8; and, in prose confessions like this one, Neh 1:7; 9:13, 27).

Daniel’s favorite general term for God’s words is instruction(s) (ת/תורה, vv 10, 11, 11, 13). “Law(s)” (EVV) gives a misleading impression, since תורה can refer to the teaching of a prophet or a parent. Alongside מצוה and משפט, תורה does denote a set of directives regarding how Israel is to live its life, along with associated warnings regarding the consequence of disobedience. The repository of God’s instructions is the teaching of Moses, the pentateuchal “law,” *the* Torah. When “word(s)” (ו[י]דבר) are specifically mentioned here (v 12), they are not words of instruction nor words of information, but words of warning.

Yahweh’s words have two ways of reaching people. His instructions come orally through his servants the prophets (vv 6, 10). They speak in his name, as his representatives (v 6); they make his voice audible (v 11). As in Neh 9, prophets appear only in a good light in Dan 9. Heeding their word could have prevented the fall of Jerusalem. Their oral teaching is backed up by the word “written in the instruction of Moses” (vv 11, 13), who is also “the servant of God” (v 11). The prophets teach orally what Moses teaches in writing. The specific reference to Moses’ teaching, too, is not to information or instruction, but to words of warning. The words that back up the teaching emanating from the prophets constitute the solemn oath that Yahweh has now kept (see Deut 29:20-27 [19–26]).

**3–23 (d)** The people to whom prophets spoke were in particular “our kings, our leaders, and our fathers” (vv 6, 8). Whereas in 1 Kgs 8 “the king himself serves the people by interceding for them and teaching them how to do penance,” here the kings appear only in a bad light (so also Neh 9:34).[[475]](#footnote-475)

“Leader” (שר) is a broad term that gains its specific connotation from its context. It often denotes people in authority under the king (2 Kgs 24:12, 14; Jer 34:21; 1 Chr 22:17; Neh 9:32, 34): they may be ministers of state, royal advisers, army commanders, magistrates, or the king’s representatives in a particular city or area. Such a meaning fits the word’s appearance here after the reference to kings. On the other hand, it precedes the term “fathers,” and in light of that collocation might denote the leaders of the clans that were composed of the fathers’ houses.[[476]](#footnote-476)

“Our fathers,” then, are the men who rule in the local community by virtue of an authority associated with their seniority, age, and sex. Their authority is reinforced by describing their position in kinship terms: they have the kind of authority in the community that a father has in the family. Strictly, then, the fathers are the people who stand at the head of a household or an extended family, a אב בית or “father’s house,” though “heads of families” or “fathers” can suggests clan leaders in a broad sense.[[477]](#footnote-477)

In v 16 the term for fathers, ת ב א, appears in a different sense; “kings” and “leaders” are not mentioned, and the word is apparently a more general term, for ancestors. While the OT does refer elsewhere to the sin of Israel’s early ancestors, in this context more likely the expression denotes the generations previous to that of the speaker, the preexilic generations. One generation commonly pays for the previous generation’s wrongdoing, and the fall of Jerusalem resulted from the actions of earlier generations as well as those of people alive at the time (Lev 26:39–40; Lam 5:7). The implication is not that a generation may be punished despite being relatively innocent itself: if a generation repents, it finds mercy (see the discussion in Ezek 18; also Jer 31:29–30). Rather the implication is that the effects of wrongdoing accumulate over time, and the next generation will likely walk the same way as the previous one. Thus OT confessions often acknowledge the wrongdoing of previous generations, as Lev 26:40 requires (2 Kgs 22:13; Jer 3:25; 14:20; also the prose confessions Ezra 9:7; Neh 1:6; 9:2, 16).[[478]](#footnote-478)

While God’s message comes directly to the community’s leaders, it concerns the whole people, the “we/us” with whom Daniel often associates himself: “all the people of the country” (v 6), “all Israel” (v 11), Judah, Jerusalem, and the dispersed Israel far and near (v 7), “your people,” “your city,” “your sanctuary” (vv 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20). The first of these expressions (הארץ עם כל, v 6) follows up the reference to kings, leaders, and fathers, and thus denotes the mass of ordinary members of the people (cf. 2 Kgs 16:15; Jer 1:18; 34:19; 44:21; Ezek 22:25–29; Hag 2:4, for the use of the term with this meaning in similar contexts). Elsewhere in the Second Temple period “the people of the country” became a pejorative term, for non-Jewish people in Palestine (e.g., Ezra 9) or for Jews who were unobservant or ignorant of the Torah, but there is no suggestion of pejorative connotation here.[[479]](#footnote-479)

The chapter three times uses the name Israel to refer to the people to whom God’s word came and for whom Daniel prays (vv 7, 11, 20). As the whole people saw Jacob/Israel as their ancestor, the whole people bore his name. When it split into two, the much larger of the two resultant kingdoms had assumed continuing use of the name. The Judahites, however, saw themselves as the preserved remnant of that whole people of God, and in due course came to apply the name “Israel” to themselves (cf. 1:6). To speak of Israel, then, is to make a significant theological claim for the little community of surviving Judahites, in seeing them as the successors of that whole people with whom Yahweh entered into covenant (vv 11, 20). Chronicles emphasizes how “all Israel” took part in events such as making David and Solomon king, bringing up the covenant chest, and dedicating the temple. Admittedly the unity of “all Israel” in v 11 is a unity in wrongdoing. Yet, like Chronicles, Daniel has not abandoned an awareness that “Israel” was designed to be a much bigger entity than “Judah and Jerusalem” (v 7). The latter is the nucleus of Israel, but as such it does not exclude others; it is rather a “representative centre, to which all the children of Israel should be welcomed if they return.”[[480]](#footnote-480) The coimmunity of the Babylonian period and of Second Temple times represents Israel as a whole: compare the reference to Ephraim and Manasseh as well as Judah and Benjamin at the head of the list of the Second Temple community in 1 Chr 9:3, the twelvefold leadership of “the men of the people of Israel” in Neh 7:7, and the first of Nehemiah’s prose confessions, offered on behalf of “the descendants of Israel” (Neh 1:6).

Daniel describes them as “my people Israel” (v 20). When Israel is “my people,” the pronoun usually refers to Yahweh. In prayer, they would normally be “your people”: so vv 15, 16, 19 (as Daniel speaks of “your city” and “your sanctuary” in vv 16, 17, 19). The expression indicates Yahweh’s special relationship with Israel, which is fundamental to the basis on which one prays for them. On the other hand, Yahweh can use the expression “your people” in speaking to their representative (Exod 32:7; 34:10; contrast 32:11, 12; 33:13, 16); he is then dissociating himself from them. Here Daniel takes the initiative in identifying himself with the people whom Yahweh has every ground for repudiating. His speaking of them as “my people” links to his addressing Yahweh on their behalf as “my God.” It is by their association with him that he commends them to Yahweh. Daniel belongs to that company of persons such as Israel’s ancestors, the prophets, kings, priests, and heavenly beings whose prayer can be expected to find a hearing with God. If Ezek 14:14 refers to this Daniel rather than to an ancient hero belonging to the epoch of Abraham and Job, there is a tension between this view and the warning about the effectiveness of Daniel’s prayer for himself alone in Ezek 14:14.[[481]](#footnote-481) He prays as one who is *persona grata* with Yahweh, though the passage does not quite make the explicit assumption that an intercessor’s personal merits may “count” on behalf of people for whom he prays.[[482]](#footnote-482)

Daniel has a special focus on Judah, Jerusalem, and its sanctuary (vv 7, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20). It was Judah that remained faithful to David and to Zion; it was Judah (and Benjamin) that continued to be the embodiment of the actual Israel (cf. the list in Neh 11). Administratively, Judah was a separate area from that of the old northern kingdom, Samaria; the arrival of the Persians meant it became a province of the Persian empire, ruled by its own provincial governor (see Hag 1:1; Ezra 2:1, 63; Neh 1:3; 5:14–15; 8:9).[[483]](#footnote-483) In the Hellenistic period, the Ptolemies treated it as part of the larger major province of Syria and Palestine; within that province Judah (Judea) remained a distinguishable unit over against Samaria to the north and Idumea to the south.[[484]](#footnote-484)

There are also both theological and political reasons for special mention of the city of Jerusalem in the prayer (vv 7, 16, 18, 19). Yahweh’s city, centered on Mount Zion, is the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth; it is the place where Yahweh has made himself known in the history and the worship of his people (Pss 48; 50:2). It is the city Yahweh chose as the dwelling place of his name (Neh 1:9, identifying Jerusalem as the place denoted by Deut 12:5). Admittedly, Daniel emphasizes rather that it is the city that bears Yahweh’s name—that is, the city he owns. Nor does Daniel specifically speak of it as Zion, the name which carries most theological freight and which thus most often features in the praise and prayer of the Psalms, though he does refer to it as “my God’s sacred mountain” (אלהי קדש הר, v 20, cf. v 16), which is an epithet of Zion (Pss 2:6; 48:1 [2]; 99:9). In any case, the Babylonians’ desolation of Jerusalem put a question mark by the theological claims that had been made for Zion (Lam 2:15). The restoration of the city is of key importance for prophets and community leaders in the sixth century, but even in Nehemiah’s time the city lacks inhabitants and requires a semi-compulsory repopulation (Neh 11:2). The prose confessions in Ezra-Nehemiah do not focus on Jerusalem, despite the context of Neh 1 in a concern for the city, and despite the Jerusalem setting of Ezra 9 and Neh 9. Although set geographically in the exile, Dan 9 thus contrasts with those confessions. But in the Hellenistic period, the city increased in political significance. “As the only ‘city’ of Judea, Jerusalem completely dominated the country.. . . Judea could now be regarded by outside observers as the territory of what seemed to be the ‘polis’ of Jerusalem.”[[485]](#footnote-485)

Within the city, Daniel is specifically concerned for the sanctuary. The significance of the sacred mountain (קדש הר) lies in the presence of the sacred place (מקדש) (v 17; cf. 8:11; also the use of קדש in 8:13, 14; 9:24 [?], 26). In 587 and in the 160s the sanctuary was despoiled and emptied of its thronging worshipers. “[Jerusalem’s] sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, its feasts were turned into mourning, its sabbaths into reproach, its honor into contempt”; sacrifices were suspended and the building defiled (1 Macc 1:39, 45–47; cf. Lam 1:4, 10; 2:6, 7). The prayer’s interest in matters concerning worship corresponds to that of other material in chaps. 7–12.

**3–23 (e)** The response God looks for from his people is stated first in the initial description of God’s characteristics: he is faithful to those “who love him and keep his commands” (v 4). The phrase recalls, behind Neh 1:5, Deut 7:9 (also Deut 5:10 = Exod 20:10); the theme of loving God is most common in Deuteronomistic contexts. As is the case here, the context there characteristically indicates that this love is not so much an emotion as a moral commitment (cf. Deut 6:5; 10:12; 11:1; 30:16, 20). The same emphasis features subsequently in Dan 9 in repeated references to listening to/obeying (שמע) God’s voice speaking through the prophets (vv 6, 10, 11, 14), which issues in living (הלך, “walk”) by his teaching(s) (v 10). These expressions, too, are characteristically Deuteronomistic (e.g., Deut 11:22; 12:28; 13:4–5 [3–4]; 19:9; 28:1–2; 30:2, 8, 10, 16; Josh 22:5). The response God seeks from his people is the one required by the covenant expounded in Deuteronomy.

If the people give God that response, they will be in the right with him, able to appeal to him on the basis of their צדקת (“right deeds,” v 18). That they should be able to do so is presupposed by the use of the term in Ezek 3:20; 18:24; 33:18. With the use of different words it is a common theme elsewhere in Israelite prayers, which commonly protest the innocence of the people who pray (e.g., Ps 7:3-4 [4–5]; 44:17-22 [18–23]; Job 31) in the conviction that casting oneself on God depends on one’s relationship with him being right.

An element of disobedience on Israel’s part is inevitable. Their task then is to turn (שוב) from it and pay attention (שכל) to God’s truthfulness (v 13). The idea of turning from wrongdoing—as opposed to (re)turning to God or simply (re)turning/repenting—is characteristic of the prose of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (e.g., Jer 15:7; 18:7–11; 23:14; 25:5; 26:3; 35:15; 36:3, 7; Ezek 3:19; 13:22; 18:21–30; 33:9–19; see also 1 Kgs 8:35; 13:33; 2 Kgs 17:3; Jonah 3:10; Zech 1:4; Neh 9:35; but not Deuteronomy). It is thus an idea especially associated with the Babylonian period and its desolation, and with the religious situation in which Daniel’s prayer is set. Its assumption is that Israel’s wrongdoing does not in itself end Israel’s relationship with Yahweh (cf. section [b] above). If Israel turns from such wrongdoing, the relationship continues.

If there is a specific background to the idea of paying attention (שכל) to God’s faithfulness (v 13), it lies in the communal confession of Ps 106, which acknowledges that Israel’s ancestors did not pay attention to and learn from Yahweh’s wondrous acts in Egypt (v 7; cf. Deut 32:29). But Daniel uses words from this root more than any other OT book except Proverbs (and Psalms, if one includes the word משכיל). It is a wisdom word. Daniel’s concern here is for Israel to be wise in their relationship with God as they reflect on his dealings with them.

Evidencing such reflection is advisable if they are to persuade Yahweh to take a warm and favorable attitude towards them (יהוה פני את חלה, v 13; see n. 13.c-c). The phrase comes sixteen times in the OT, and like many OT theological expressions it has its background in the royal court (cf. Ps 45:12 [13]; Job 11:19; Prov 19:6). It implies some concrete expression of respect, homage and honor that prepares the way for making a request. It need not imply that the superior party is angry, only that the inferior is needy. Such a way of speaking easily transfers to the theological sphere. It would then naturally connect with making offerings to God (1 Sam 13:12; Mal 1:9), though—as here—the offering could belong to the realm of morality and piety, not explicitly that of worship (cf. Ps 119:58).[[486]](#footnote-486)

**3–23 (f)** The prayer presupposes that such expectations have not been met; most of the terms just surveyed appear in Dan 9 in the negative. Israel has not listened, not lived by Yahweh’s teachings, not turned from its wrongdoing or paid heed to his faithfulness, not sought his favor, and it is not in the right with him. In acknowledging these facts, in effect Daniel is providing the necessary response to a fourfold confrontation by Yahweh.[[487]](#footnote-487)

The term used most often to describe Israel’s shortcomings is failure (חטא, vv 5, 8, 11, 15, 16, 20, 20; EVV “sin”). In secular usage the verb suggests missing a target (Judg 20:16) or missing the way (Prov 19:2), though the religious usage of the word in other Semitic languages antedates the OT’s, and it may be hazardous to assume that the secular usage is basic to understanding the religious usage.[[488]](#footnote-488) Either way, חטא does not suggest that people had been seeking to live in accordance with God’s expectations but did not manage to achieve what they were aiming at. Their failure is willful.

Daniel’s opening confession in v 5 adds to failure four other images. “We have gone astray” (עוה; cf. v 16, עון “waywardness”) has a similar background meaning to that of חטא.[[489]](#footnote-489) “We have acted faithlessly/done wrong” (הרשיע; also רשענו, v 15) is a forensic expression, the antonym of צדק (“act faithfully/do right,” vv 7, 14, 16, 18). It indicates action that puts a person in the wrong in a legal or quasi-legal setting, but also in a quasi-familial one. It is used in connection with the covenant relationship in 11:32. “We have rebelled” (מרד; also v 9) may be a stronger term, and a less technically religious one, than פשע (see v 24). “We have turned our backs” on your commands (סור, v 11) is another Deuteronomistic expression (e.g., Deut 17:11, 17, 20), though it goes back to the very beginning of Israel’s covenant relationship with Yahweh (Exod 32:8). Perhaps the verbs build up through v 5 (and v 6a): turning the back and closing the ears is the climactic rejection of Yahweh’s word and the crowning insult.

Later verses in the confession introduce two further terms. “Trespass” (מעל, v 7), a common expression for unfaithfulness to Yahweh in worship or life in Ezekiel and Chronicles, suggests encroachment on what is holy, including on God’s name (by violating an oath).[[490]](#footnote-490) “We have overstepped your instruction” (עבר, v 11) indicates a contravention of the enactments of the covenant in a broader sense.

The wrongdoing Daniel confesses characterizes not only the present generation but past generations (v 16) (see the discussion of the “fathers/ancestors” above). It characterizes the people as a whole, and specifically Israel’s national leadership (v 8). Neither priests nor prophets are mentioned; Daniel’s prayer contrasts with the outlook of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who saw the fall of Jerusalem as in part issuing from the failure of prophets and priests.

**3–23 (g)** Being in the wrong in relation to Yahweh, one finds oneself overcome by great trouble (vv 12, 13, 14), by unprecedented trouble (v 12). The term for trouble, רעה, is a general one, equivalent to English “bad”: it covers what is unpleasant or objectionable, what is distressing or calamitous, what is hurtful or injurious, and what is evil or wicked. In the last senses it applies to Israel’s conduct before Yahweh, in the earlier senses it applies to the judgment he brings on their conduct (e.g., Jer 36:3, 7, 31; 44:2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 17, 23, 27, 29).

The concrete descriptions of this trouble are twofold. On one hand, it has involved the desolation of city and sanctuary (שמם, vv 17, 18). Desolation suggests the wasting of a place, the devastation and ruin of what is built and the consequent emptying of what is inhabited. That a place should be wasted is a standard threat (Lev 26:22, 31–43; Jer 4:27; Amos 7:9); that the land has been wasted is a standard element in the depiction of Judah’s position (Isa 59:8, 19; Ezek 36:34-36; Zech 7:14; Lam 1:4, 13, 16; 5:18; 2 Chr 36:21) and of the Antiochene period (1 Macc 1:38–39; 3:45; 4:38) (see 8:13 *Comment*).

“Trouble” also takes the form of banishment (נדח, v 7) from Judah and Jerusalem to countries near and far away. That phrase is characteristic of Jeremianic prose. There is a pathos about the phrase “all the countries where you have driven them”; it features prominently in promises that Yahweh will restore the people even from all these countries (Jer 16:15; 23:3, 8; 29:14; 32:37; 46:27; also Deut 31:1, where in this context the exiles are coming to their senses).

One of the threats of Israel’s banishment, Jer 29:18, also refers to its bringing abuse (חרפה) on Judah—not to say taunts and curses; cf. also Jer 24:9; 49:13. Daniel, too, speaks of the desolation and emptying of Jerusalem having brought shame and abuse (בשת, חרפה; vv 7, 8, 16). The two terms come together in Isa 54:4; Jer 51:51 to denote the real or imaginary sense of contumely and contempt caused by the exile (also Isa 30:5; Ps 69:19 [20]). The visible shame to which Daniel refers appears also in Jer 7:19; Ps 44:16; Ezra 9:7; 2 Chr 32:21, while passages such as Ezek 5:14–15; 36:15; Lam 5:1 speak of the abuse brought upon Israel by the fall of Jerusalem (cf. also ובחרפה גדלה ברעה “in great trouble and in reproach” in Neh 1:3, leading in to Nehemiah’s prose confession).

Daniel’s prayer is prayed as out of the situation brought about by the fall of Jerusalem. Here as in other apocalypses, it is not a fictional conceit. It was from that sixth-century catastrophe that many of the problems of second-century Jews stemmed. It was their model experience, as is the case in many of the laments in the Psalter, though the content of their prayer is different (see *Form*).[[491]](#footnote-491) As Daniel’s prayer overtly takes up the experience of the sixth century, it covertly takes up that of the second century, in which that earlier experience continues.

Thus far, Daniel’s description of the people’s fate bears comparison with the description in 1 Macc 1:39–40; 2:7–12:[[492]](#footnote-492) desolation, mourning, dishonor, banishment. Daniel’s understanding of its cause, however, differs from that in 1 Maccabees. He can picture the cause in impersonal terms: in their affliction a solemn, written curse has its effect (v 11). A curse (להא) does not denote an imprecation, but a sanction imposed in the name of legal rights or religio-ethical demands.[[493]](#footnote-493) Such a conditional curse buttresses the commitment to fidelity that two parties make to a treaty. By analogy, the treaty/covenant relationship that Yahweh lays upon Israel is protected by a curse, as is declared in Deut 29 (see esp. vv 19-21 [18–20]), which backs up the promises and warnings of chaps. 27–28. Such a curse “overwhelmed” Israel (נתך): the image is of something pouring forth and flowing over, like a torrent of rain or a flooding waterfall (Exod 9:33; Job 3:24). The word is regularly used of God’s wrath overwhelming people; and—solemnly—of the smelting of metal in a furnace, a figure of judgment (e.g., Ezek 22:17–22).

To speak of a curse overwhelming Israel is to exclude an explanation of their calamity in terms of chance or of the demonic. It is not, however, to exclude an explanation in terms of the magical.[[494]](#footnote-494) Here, however, Daniel immediately describes the calamity’s origin more personally: in it Yahweh is keeping his spoken undertaking (v 12). Daniel underlines the personal deliberateness of Yahweh’s deed by speaking of him as watching over the trouble, keeping it ready; it comes as his carefully considered act (v 14), the determined realization of a predetermined plan. The unusual verb Daniel uses (שקד) again recalls Jeremianic prose (Jer 1:11–12; 31:28; 44:27).

At the same time, his act expresses his burning fury (וחמה אף, v 16). The OT can speak of wrath, too, as an impersonal disaster that comes on people irrespective of what they deserve (e.g., 2 Kgs 3:27; Qoh 5:17), or as a disaster that comes on people as retribution for wrongdoing but without the idea of God’s personal activity being prominent (e.g., Josh 9:20; cf. Ezra 7:23). In each of the passages just quoted, the noun is קצף. In Daniel the term זעם is used in a similar way (8:19; 11:36; following Isa 10:25;[[495]](#footnote-495) 26:20). But אף and חמה, the OT’s two most frequent words for anger, appear more consistently with a possessive pronoun or noun, or with another indication in the context that they are essentially personal expressions. Feelings are more integral to the aspect of wrath they convey: wrath as it shows in the appearance of the face (and the snort of the nostrils?) (אף); wrath as burning rage (חמה).

**3–23 (h)** The antonyms of anger in the OT are words such as רחמים “compassion” and חסד “commitment.”[[496]](#footnote-496) And the God of Israel has already been described in this prayer as the God of compassion and commitment. It is on this basis that Daniel intercedes with him on Israel’s behalf. His intercession involves turning to God (v 3). In 6:10 [11] Daniel prayed in a room facing Jerusalem, and here his turning to the Lord will have a similar implication.[[497]](#footnote-497) At the same time, turning

(פני את ואתנה, “I set my face”) implies a deliberate, purposeful act expressive of determination in connection with a crisis or challenge: cf. 2 Chr 20:3; also Gen 31:21; and 2 Kgs 12:17 [18] with Luke 9:51; contrast Dan 10:15. The deliberateness of Daniel’s action is underlined by his describing it as “laying down” supplications before Yahweh (הפיל, “cause them to fall”; v 20). Behind this expression there lies the practice of causing oneself to fall before God. “Supplications” (ים תחנונ, vv 3, 20, 23) are prayers in which one casts oneself on grace (חן) and pleads on that basis.

Daniel’s prayer for Jerusalem’s restoration begins as a confession (see also v 20). The verb ידה[הת] covers confessing both the great things God has done (2:23; 6:10 [11]) and the wrong things we have done. In either case, the confession characteristically takes the form of pure statement: either the declaration of God’s acts (e.g., Ps 40) or the declaration of our acts (as here). In either case, expressions such as “we thank you” or “we are sorry” have less prominence than is the case with Christian worship. The confession lies in the statements themselves.[[498]](#footnote-498) Further, in the case of confessing sin, this act also is a confession of the justice of God—an act of praise at the justice of his judgment (see *Form*).

Such turning to God is a matter of words, spoken out loud (vv 20, 21). But words spoken out are accompanied by deeds acted out (v 3); the actions add to the seriousness and earnestness expressed by the prayer. Fasting, sackcloth, and ash are indications of grief and self-abasement in the context of calamity or loss experienced or threatened, or of wrongdoing committed (Isa 58:5; Jonah 3:5–9; Neh 9:1; Esth 4:1–4). Fasting involved abstaining from (regular) food during the day (Judg 20:26; 1 Sam 14:24; 2 Sam 1:12; 3:31–35; 12:15–23; Jer 16:7; Ezek 24:17; fasting for the whole of twenty-four hours is less usual—see Lev 23:32; Esth 4:16). Sackcloth was dark, rough, cheap material worn in contrast to the more presentable smart clothing in which a respectable person would normally wish to appear in public (1 Kgs 20:31–32; 2 Kgs 19:1–2). The reference to ash denotes putting ashes (or dirt) on the head or on the head and body, or lying or sitting in a pile of ash (Josh 7:6; 1 Sam 4:12; 2 Sam 1:2; 13:19).

Shock, loss, and grief naturally express themselves in a loss of interest over food and one’s appearance and in an inner gloominess that expresses itself in gloominess of appearance. Such practices give formal, stylized, ritual expression to feelings people have or purport to. Fasting also features in the context of special meeting with God, or the seeking of a meeting with God or of a revelation from him. It then suggests abandoning regular human preoccupations for the sake of concentration on seeking God or being with God (Exod 34:28; 1 Kgs 19:8; 2 Esd 6:31; *2 Apoc. Baruch* 20.5–6; 47.2; Matt 4:1–2; Acts 13:2–3). In the apocalypses, the two contexts or significances of fasting coalesce. The seers behave as people who are grieving and abasing themselves; the background of many apocalypses, notionally or actually, in one of the falls of Jerusalem is relevant here. The seers are also people who hope for and receive revelations from God after a period of such self-abasement (2 Esd 5:13, 20; 6:35; *2 Apoc. Baruch* 5.7; 9.2; 12.5).[[499]](#footnote-499) Either context or significance could be appropriate to Dan 9. Daniel’s mourning belongs in the context of his asking God, “When are you going to restore Jerusalem?” The question might represent a seer’s plea for information regarding God’s purpose, or a suppliant’s plea for action to implement that purpose. Reading it in light of the apocalypses (and of v 22, also 10:2) would suggest the former, whereas reading it in light of other references in the OT (and of vv 1–2) would suggest the latter. The two need not be dissociated. Vv 1–2 do not directly portray Daniel as in need of revelation; he understands the revelation and seeks its fulfillment. But the second-century author and audience is in need of revelation, and its puzzledness also underlies vv 1–2. The expression of grief and self-abasement is both a plea for divine revelation and a plea for divine action.

The prayer of confession, then, is an expression of self-abasement before God that is appropriate to someone who longs for God to reveal and implement his purpose for his people. It’s been said that the confession is key to an explanation of Daniel’s “degenerative conception of history.”[[500]](#footnote-500) But like the prayers of confession at the beginning of some church services, it may simply indicate a sense that sin is always an obstacle between humanity and God, and needs to be confessed and forgiven before we can expect God to speak or act. It is a model act of repentance for people who want to seek God.[[501]](#footnote-501) The prayer from the 1549 English *Book of Common Prayer* recalls it:

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy.[[502]](#footnote-502)

Words from Daniel’s prayer thus feature in the confessions during the evening service on Yom Kippur.[[503]](#footnote-503) One might see the prayer as a typical act of Second Temple piety whose confession is not to be related to an awareness of a link between particular people’s sin and a particular experience of trouble. The prayer need not carry the implication that it is Jewish sin that explains Jewish suffering in the second century.[[504]](#footnote-504) Further, while such a prayer is a necessary undertaking on the part of someone who seeks for God to speak and act, God’s response is not directly a response to this confession—as may be hinted by the fact that Gabriel was commissioned at the beginning of the prayer, not after its end.

**3–23 (i)** The content of Daniel’s supplication is expressed in vv 16–19, most directly and movingly in v 19, the close and climax of the prayer. “There is hardly another prayer in scripture so urgent.”[[505]](#footnote-505)

It asks first that God may “listen” (שמעה). That note appears already in v 17, and then in v 18 (“give ear and listen”), while v 19 adds a plea to “hear” (הקשיבה). It is the standard first element in the actual prayer in a protest psalm.[[506]](#footnote-506) Such plea arises out of a context where God has been ignoring his people’s plight and their prayer. It pleads first that he should give attention. The other regular feature of the prayer in a protest psalm is the appeal to God to act, to deliver the petitioner(s) and if necessary to punish their oppressors. Here, Daniel’s closing plea asks that God may “pardon” his people (סלחה; cf. v 9). Perhaps this plea takes the place of an appeal to punish the oppressors. The unjustly afflicted seek justice; the justly afflicted seek pardon. “The Israel which acknowledges its God’s justice even when disaster comes to it can ask for his mercy. Only those who know that they are struck down as guilty before God, only they can appeal to God’s mercy.”[[507]](#footnote-507)

The same idea lies behind the plea for God’s burning fury to turn away from the city (שוב, v 16). Like the use of this verb to refer to turning away from wrong-doing (v 13), its use to denote God’s wrath turning away from people is frequent In Jeremianic prose (Jer 2:35; 18:20; 23:20; 30:24; cf. Isa 12:1; Hos 14:4 [5]; Prov 29:8). It is used elsewhere of other figures who caused God’s wrath to turn away (Num 25:11; Ps 106:23; 2 Chr 12:12; 29:10; 30:8), like Daniel and Jeremiah (for turning away human wrath, see Gen 27:44–45; Prov 15:1). The expression pictures anger as a violent, dynamic force like a fierce wind that would destroy all in its path. It cannot be instantly calmed once generated; it has to spend itself. Someone in its path must bear its force, or must hope it may veer and dissipate itself harmlessly elsewhere.

To put the point more positively, Daniel asks that God’s face may shine on the sanctuary

(ניך פ האר, v 17). He takes up one element in the Aaronic blessing (Num 6:25), which becomes a prayer in Psalms (31:16 [17]; 67:1 [2]; 80:3, 7, 19 [4, 8, 20]; 119:135; cf. 4:6 [7]; 118:27). The metaphor presupposes that a person’s happiness shows in the brightness of his or her face (cf. 1 Sam 14:27, 29), then that this same brightness directed towards other people is an indication of regard and favor (cf. Job 29:24; Prov 16:15). In such passages, the expression is regularly used in association with words such as save, bless, and redeem, the verbs characteristic of a psalmic plea for God to act. Thus Daniel, too, in his final plea bids God act and not delay (תאחר אל עשה). Such an appeal to God not to delay acting closes off the pleas in Pss 40:17 [18]; 70:5 [6]. It recalls the “how long . . .?” in the lament itself (Pss 6:3 [4]; 13:1-2 [2–3]; 74:10; 79:5; 80:4; 89:46; 90:13) and the positive plea to hurry to help (e.g., 22:19 [20] 38:22 [23]; 40:13 [14]; 70:1, 5 [2, 6]; 71:12).

Each verse in the plea offers some motivation for God to hear, forgive, and act. It would be in keeping with his acts in the past, in rescuing his people from oppression in Egypt (vv 15–16) (cf. Isa 63:7–64:12; Jer 32:16–25; Pss 80; 106; and the prose confessions in Neh 9). Daniel appeals to the saving act that led to Yahweh’s covenant relationship with Israel and always underlay it, an aspect of the covenant that offered promise for the future rather than merely explaining the trouble of the present. He urges God to open his eyes and look at the desolate state of people, city, and sanctuary (see [g] above). It is an appeal to his compassion, but also to his honor. In rescuing people from Egypt, he made a name for himself as a God of compassion who did the right thing by that afflicted people (vv 15, 16, 18). People, city, and sanctuary bear Yahweh’s name. Calling something by your name (see n. 18.c) indicates that you own it (2 Sam 12:28; Isa 63:19; 65:1; Amos 9:12). The people’s desolation brings discredit on God; for his own sake, he should act (vv 17, 18, 19). “To the degree that he has committed himself to preserving the safety of those things which are named by his name (identified with him, blessed in his name and with his sanction), to that extent the God of Israel has limited and compromised his own freedom to act in the future.”[[508]](#footnote-508) It is on that note that the prayer closes.

**3–23 (j)** The OT assumes that prayers meet responses. OT narratives support this assumption (e.g., Josh 7:7–15; 2 Chr 20:1–30), passages within the prophets suggest the same dynamic (e.g., Jer 3:21–4:2; Hos 14:1-8 [2–9]; cf. the promise of Isa 58:9), and some protests in the Psalter preserve responses (Pss 12; 60). Others show a marked change of mood reflecting an assurance that God has heard and granted the prayer, which might indicate that a priest or prophet responded to the plea (Pss 6; 13; 22; 28). The suppliant of course hoped that this response would be for positive, but could not take it for granted (e.g., Jer 14:1–15:9).[[509]](#footnote-509)

Daniel’s prayer receives the expected response (v 21), though it comes via a heavenly being rather than via an earthly one. It comes at the time of the evening offering, the special hour for prayer (cf. Ezra 9:5, the introduction to Ezra’s prose confession). In Dan 9 the note could have special point, because the offerings may not have been regularly made during the Babylonian period, and they were certainly suspended by Antiochus (cf. 8:11; 11:31; 1 Macc 1:45). The relationship between God and Israel still holds, notwithstanding the lack of offerings; compare the promise of Ezek 11:16 for the people exiled from the temple. “Prayer can still be acceptable even when Antiochus had proscribed certain rites and polluted the temple.”[[510]](#footnote-510) God behaves as though the offerings are still being made. The cosmic temporal order, reflected in the rhythm of the hours of prayer, stands despite the vicissitudes of history.[[511]](#footnote-511)

Gabriel describes the message as one that will bring insight and understanding to Daniel (v 22). He does not speak of giving Daniel an interpretation of Jeremiah’s words from which the chapter began but of bringing a new “revelation” (v 23).[[512]](#footnote-512) But the revelation will take the form of a gloss on that scriptural passage, a gloss which will explain why Jeremiah’s promise was not fulfilled. The image of a message “coming out” or issuing (יצא) has its background in everyday life, where it is used of the deliberate proclamation of significant words (Num 30:2 [3]; Josh 6:10; Judg 11:36; Jer 44:17), especially by the king (Esth 1:19; 7:8; cf. נפק in Dan 2:13). The image is naturally applied to God’s declaration of his will and intention (Isa 2:3; 45:23; 48:3; 51:4; 55:11; Ezek 33:30). The message issues authoritatively from God himself, like the original word of prophecy. It comes to Daniel as a person “held in high regard”

(ת ו ד ו מ ח). Like words such as אהב “love,” חמד suggests both a feeling and an attitude that expresses itself in being drawn towards the object of love and in committing oneself to it (Isa 53:2; Pss 19:10 [11]; 68:16 [17]).[[513]](#footnote-513) Daniel is one to whom God is committed; he has indeed prayed to Yahweh as *persona grata*. Or might the genitive be subjective: Daniel is one who loves well?[[514]](#footnote-514)

In keeping with the possibility that self-abasement ([h] above) may suggest both a plea for divine revelation and a plea for divine action, the response to Daniel’s prayer involves both revelation and a promise of action. It would offer little good news to a sixth-century context; the revelation it offers to the second-century context mostly comprises a way of understanding what God has been doing over the preceding four centuries, like the other revelations in chaps. 7—12. It thus takes the overt form of a revelation to the seer set in the sixth century, but it covertly promises action on behalf of the people praying this prayer in the second century. Like the exiles in that period in which Daniel’s prayer is set, they could be inclined to think that God was indifferent to his people’s cries in their affliction (Isa 40:27; 49:14; cf. 58:3). The point expressed in loving hyperbole in Isa 65:24 (cf. 65:1), that Yahweh responds to his people’s prayer before it is begun, let alone finished, here becomes prosaic narrative reality.[[515]](#footnote-515) The implication is not that the prayer was unnecessary or unheard, but that God is eager to respond to his servants when they come to him on behalf of his people in need. The picture of God “responding” before Daniel actually prays may also safeguard God’s sovereignty, a concern that underlay some hesitation over the whole idea of intercession in Judaism,[[516]](#footnote-516) as it can underlie Christian hesitation over the idea that prayer leads to God doing things that God would not otherwise have done.

**24-27** “Seventy sevens” implies “seventy times seven years,” as the original “seventy” of Jeremiah was explicitly a period of seventy years (v 2). The seventy years of punishment due according to Jer 25:11/29:10 is being exacted sevenfold in accordance with Lev 26 (see *Form*).

This passage has been variously treated, and so distracted, and almost torn to pieces by the various opinions of interpreters, that it might be considered nearly useless on account of its obscurity. But, in the assurance that no prediction is really in vain, we may hope to understand this prophecy, provided only we are attentive and teachable according to the angel's admonition, and the Prophet's example. I do not usually refer to conflicting opinions, because I take no pleasure in refuting them, and the simple method which I adopt pleases me best, namely, to expound what I think delivered by the Spirit of God. But I cannot escape the necessity of confuting various views of the present passage.[[517]](#footnote-517)

Explicitly or implicitly (and not wrongly), ancient and modern interpreters have commonly understood vv 24–27 by beginning from the end of the seventy sevens and working backwards: “let the 490 years be calculated in reverse.”[[518]](#footnote-518) The oldest surviving understandings of the passage illustrate the point. The description in 1 Macc 1:54 of Antiochus’s constructing a desolating abomination on the temple altar is “the earliest interpretation of the phrase in Daniel.”[[519]](#footnote-519) OG’s version of the opening of v 26 presupposes a reference to the Antiochene crisis which had taken place a few years previously (see n. 26.a). In general, indeed, OG’s idiosyncrasies in vv 24-27 partly reflect an attempt “to shape the wording to correspond as closely as possible with recent events as the translator(s) understood them.”[[520]](#footnote-520) Naturally enough, a parallel instinct to relate the passage to their own times subsequently encouraged Jewish and Christian interpretation not to relate the passage to the Antiochene period, until the calculations of the innovative seventeenth century chronographer John Marsham (subsequent to his entanglement in the English Civil War with its rather different involvement with Daniel).*[[521]](#footnote-521)* Marsham’s work was then taken up by the philosopher Anthony Collins as an aspect of his defense of a more historical approach to the Scriptures.[[522]](#footnote-522)

Taking the Antiochene crisis as the starting point for understanding Gabriel’s message fits the other visions’ focus on this crisis. At the same time, OG shows signs of recognizing that not everythng promised in vv 24-27 has yet happened, and “it is evident from 1 Maccabees—not to mention other Second Temple literature—that not all prophecy or even the six objectives of Dan 9:24 reached complete realisation at the resolution of the Antiochene crisis. The author of 1 Maccabees knew that the death of Antiochus IV and the victory of the Maccabees did not mark the full accomplishment of the six objectives of the seventy sevens.” [[523]](#footnote-523)

Ironically, in their relationship to subsequent events there is a parallel between this prophecy in Daniel and the Jeremiah prophecies which form its starting point. It is the regular relationship between prophecy and event in both Testaments. A prophet declares that God is about to do something that constitutes the “end,” the achievement of God’s ultimate purpose. Subsequently something happens that constitutes a confirmation of the prophet’s word. An end comes upon Samaria or Jerusalem, confirming the words of Amos or Jeremiah; an end to desolation comes to Judah, confirming promises in Jeremiah or Isaiah 40—55. But neither end is *the* end, in the bad sense or the good sense. The threats and promises then stand as warnings and encouragements in light of which the people of God need to live.

As Dan 9 reapplies Jeremiah’s promises to the second century, Jews and Christians came to reapply Dan 9 to events at the end of the Second Temple period. To put it the other way, they too calculated the 490 years in reverse, but they took events in the first century AD as their starting point for understanding the significance of Dan 9 for themselves. Jewish interpreters began from the Roman assault on Jerusalem in the 60s and understood this event in light of Dan 9.[[524]](#footnote-524) The NT does not refer to the seventy sevens in this connection; Luke 1–2 applies v 24 in a different way.[[525]](#footnote-525) Nor does Justin Martyr in his *Apology* refer to the passage. “It was only in the late second-century AD that Christian writers began to use this part of Daniel to prove that Jesus was the one to fit the chronology,”[[526]](#footnote-526) and there are only passing references in Christian writers before Hippolytus.[[527]](#footnote-527) As far as we know, Julius Africanus in the third century was the first to work out an approach to an interpretation of vv 24-27 that began from Jesus’ life and/or death, on the basis that he brought about the achievements described there. Jerome subsequently notes various ways of doing so that are represented by Eusebius, Hippolytus, Apollinaris, and Tertullian, and the different views they espouse continue to be maintained in thetwenty-first century.[[528]](#footnote-528) Both for Jews and for Christians, it would be evident that once more not everything promised in the passage had been achieved, and that its fulfillment remains an object of hope.

It is not surprising that Jews and Christians disagree over the precise first-century AD starting point for a retrospective interpretation of Gabriel’s message. It might be more surprising that interpreters such as Julius, Eusebius, Hippolytus, Apollinaris, and Tertullian and their twenty-first century equivalents, who are in broad agreement over an interpretive starting point, disagree over whether (e.g.) to work back from Jesus’ birth or death, and/or over whether to work back to Artaxerxes, Darius, or Cyrus, and/or over how many days to assume that there are in a year, and and/or over where one locates the final seven years. Their differences of understanding reflect some inevitable arbitrariness over the starting point, the finishing point, and the method of calculation.

The problem here is the assumption that first Jeremiah and then Gabriel offer chronological information. Jerome is again illuminating. As well as declining to offer an opinion concerning the question on which the other theologians differ, he notes that Julius’s contemporary, Clement of Alexandria, “regards the number of years as a matter of slight consequence,” though this conviction does not hold Clement back from suggesting a calculation.[[529]](#footnote-529) There are ways of making Gabriel’s chronology work whether one starts from the 160s or from Jesus, in such a way that the seventy sevens extend from some point in the sixth century to the second century BC or to some point in the first century AD (then maybe with a 2000-year extension on the basis of “prophetic postponement). [[530]](#footnote-530) Yet the very variety in the approaches raises questions about the venture and may seem to suggest the conclusion that Dan 9 misestimates the time period and reflects “wrongheaded arithmetical calculations.”[[531]](#footnote-531)

But a fundamental objection to attempts either to vindicate and build on Daniel’s figures or to critique them is that both attempts are mistaken in taking the 490 years to offer chronological information. Writers of the Hellenistic period were not uninterested in or incapable of discovering the real chronology of preceding centuries.[[532]](#footnote-532) Yet the variety of ways of understanding the data in Dan 9 raises the question whether these data, at least, involve not chronology but chronography. Chronography is a stylized scheme of history which is used to interpret historical data, rather than an understanding that arises from the data. It is comparable to cosmology, arithmology, and genealogy as these appear in writings such as the OT.[[533]](#footnote-533) A general consideration of OT dates supports the view that a figure such as 490 years is not designed to offer chronological information. The Books of Kings offer precise figures regarding how long kings reigned (28 years, 41 years, etc.), and while these figures raise detailed problems, they do seek to convey chronological information. In contrast, Judges speaks of periods of forty years of oppression, peace, or some other experience, which do not look like chronological markers of that precise kind. First Kings itself says that the building of the temple began 480 years (twelve times forty years) after the exodus (6:1), and this date, too, does not have the appearance of a chronological note, while elsewhere 490 also seems to have been used as a principle for periodizing history (see *Form*). Dan 9 is to be related to these ways of speaking. It begins from Jeremiah’s “seventy years,” which was hardly a chronological calculation but a term denoting a period such as human lifetime that extends beyond the years that the hearers will see, and combines that figure with the principle of sevenfold punishment from Lev 26. 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. The attempt to interpret as chronology figures that are not amenable to any consistently literal interpretation is misguided.

With unconscious irony, Jerome further comments that in connection with Gabriel’s numbers Origen “had no leeway for allegorical interpretation… but was restricted to matters of historical fact.”[[534]](#footnote-534) Where is Origen with his symbolic interpretation when you need him?— because the numbers are “symbolical,” and “it is not warrantable to seek to discover the precise lengths of the sevens.”[[535]](#footnote-535) It was the apparent specifity of the numbers, the fact that the exile did last seventy years, and the human desire for insight about the future that came to draw interpreters into treating them as providing such information.[[536]](#footnote-536)

**24** Gabriel declares that by the time the seventy sevens end, six things will have been achieved for people and sacred city; his concern is Israel and Jerusalem, not the world as a whole. The three negatives in v 24 are near-synonyms: wickedness is characterized as rebellion, failure, and waywardness (פשע, though with the article; חטאת, though plural in K; and עון). Daniel’s prayer has used such terms to describe Israel’s wickedness: see *Comment* (f) on vv 3–23. In speaking of the “wiping away” of waywardness, v 24 uses the key sacramental verb כפר. It presupposes that cleansing is God’s own act of salvation in history rather than a human sacramental act.[[537]](#footnote-537)

One might thus understand the message as a response to Daniel’s confession of Israel’s sin, promising cleansing and relief from the afflictions that have come as sin’s punishment; it would then parallel Isa 40:1–2 in the Babylonian period.[[538]](#footnote-538) Yet several considerations point against this view. There is no indication in the prayer or the message that the whole Second Temple period is seen as a period of wickedness. The prayer refers more explicitly to the unfaithfulness of the monarchic period. In the message, the last “seven” is characterized by wickedness, wrath, and desolation, but Daniel has not so far pictured the afflictions of the second century as punishment for the Jews’ wickedness. Antiochus is the desolater rather than the rod of Yahweh’s anger,[[539]](#footnote-539) and the expression “the rebellion” recalls 8:12–14, 23,[[540]](#footnote-540) where the offending acts of Antiochus have at least part of the focus. Like Job 38–41, Gabriel’s message does not relate very directly to what precedes; it is designed to give a new perspective on issues raised so far.[[541]](#footnote-541) The promises in vv 24–27 emerge from God’s sovereign will; they are not a response to Israel’s sin or to Daniel’s confession. Daniel will subsequently make explicit that there is a distinction between faithfulness and wickedness that runs within Israel itself (see 11:30–35; 12:10), and Dan 9 might presuppose this distinction; the innocent identify with the wicked, and God responds to their prayer.[[542]](#footnote-542) But the chapter is allusive over the question, as chap. 7 is allusive over the identity of the humanlike figure. Perhaps its allusiveness is to be resolved by later chapters, as that of chap. 7 may be. Or perhaps, like other instances of ambiguity in the OT, it functions to set questions before the hearers: to drive us to ask what relationship between calamity, confession, and promise obtains between us and God. Or perhaps the ambiguity over whether the wrong referred to is Antiochus’s or Israel’s indicates that the agency or subject of this wrong is not in focus. It is the objective result in the sacrilege of the sanctuary that is Gabriel’s concern.

In v 24, three positives correspond to the three negatives. צדק “vindication” recalls the prayer’s use of צדיק/צדקה (“right,” vv 7, 14, 16, 18), which denoted the idea that Yahweh was in the right over against Israel. “Bringing in צדק” thus suggests causing right to be acknowledged. But it is also natural to connect this “lasting vindication” with the vindication of the sanctuary in 8:12–14, as one facet of the close parallelism between this oracle and the vision in chap. 8. It is less natural to take צדק in a Christian theological sense, to refer to the justification of sinners,[[543]](#footnote-543) or in the broader OT sense instanced in Isa 45:8, to refer to Israel’s deliverance,[[544]](#footnote-544) or in the Qumran sense, to refer to a personified divine attribute.[[545]](#footnote-545)

Reference to the sealing of a prophet’s vision recalls 8:26 (for the verb, cf. Dan 12:4, 9; also 6:17 [18]). Yet it is Jeremiah, not Daniel, whom chap. 9 describes as a prophet (v 2). The phrase has been taken to suggest that prophecy is to be sealed up and thus silent through this period,[[546]](#footnote-546) but this inference is a lot to read out of the phrase. Sealing elsewhere suggests authenticating (1 Kgs 21:8), which fits the present context: the promise is that Jeremiah’s prophecy will be fulfilled and thus confirmed.

The anointing of a most sacred place (קדשים קדש: see n. 24.j-j) again recalls the treading down and vindication of the sacred place (קדש) in 8:13–14. The meeting tent, the altar, and associated objects had been anointed to consecrate them at the beginning (Exod 30:26–29; 40:9–11; cf. also 29:36–37, where כפר, משח, and קדושים קדש appear together).[[547]](#footnote-547) They are now anointed to reconsecrate them after their defiling (cf. the account in 1 Macc 4:36–59).[[548]](#footnote-548)

A coherent understanding of v 24 thus emerges if we take it as a restatement of the promises in chap. 8. Like that vision, it looks forward from the time of Daniel to the Antiochene crisis, and promises God’s restoration.

**25** The opening of v 25 (“you must understand and perceive”) repeats the contents of v 23b (“heed the word,” “give heed to the revelation”). The resumptive exhortation marks v 25 as a new beginning. Vv 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.[[549]](#footnote-549)

While v 23 has already spoken of a “word” coming from Yahweh’s mouth, v 25 goes on to refer to a different “word,” or to one aspect of that word. The “word” to which v 23 referred constitutes vv 24–27 as a whole. Gabriel now speaks of a word of command, a commission to build a restored Jerusalem. The “coming forth of a word” again suggests the image of a solemn royal proclamation, and thus here a solemn proclamation by Yahweh. “From the coming forth of a word to build a restored Jerusalem to an anointed, a leader” lasts seven sevens. While these seven sevens must come at the beginning of the period from the Babylonian period to Antiochus, we cannot certainly identify either their beginning or their end. By the proclamation to restore Jerusalem, Gabriel may have meant Jeremiah’s prophecy referred to in v 2 (605 in the case of 25:12; 597 in the case of 29:10); or his prophecies recorded in connection with the fall of Jerusalem in 587 (30:18–22; 31:38–40); or Gabriel’s own words to Daniel (?539); or the decree of Cyrus in 539 (Isa 45:1; Ezra 1:1–4; seen as a rebuilding of the city, not just of temple, in 4:12–16); or the decree of Darius in 521 (Ezra 6:1–12; also seen as a rebuilding of the city in anticipation in 4:21); or the decree of Artaxerxes in 458 (Ezra 7:12–26); or the warrant given to Nehemiah in 445 (Neh 1).[[550]](#footnote-550) “To restore and build” is a rich and suggestive phrase that combines reference to the restoring of the community and the rebuilding of the city.[[551]](#footnote-551) It would be wooden to suggest it could only denote one or another of the events envisaged by these passages, all of which were aspects of the restoration of Zion. “Square and moat” does make clear that the restoration Gabriel speaks of involves the city’s material renewal; the phrase perhaps refers to the internal layout of the city and its external defenses.[[552]](#footnote-552)

“An anointed, a leader” (נגיד משיח) could conceivably denote a non-Israelite ruler: the first term refers to Cyrus in Isa 45:1, the second to the ruler of Tyre in Ezek 28:2. But both words are more characteristically used of Israelite leaders, and there is something out-of-the-ordinary about the exceptions in Isa 45:1; Ezek 28:2.[[553]](#footnote-553) A non-Israelite ruler would more naturally be referred to here as a מלך, a king, as commonly in Daniel. In the absence of indication to the contrary, then, “an anointed, a leader,” is more likely an Israelite figure, a ruler (e.g., 1 Sam 2:10, 35; 9:16; 10:1) or a (high) priest (e.g., Lev 4:3; 2 Macc 1:10; Jer 20:1; Neh 11:11; cf. Dan 9:26; 11:22). If the seventy sevens commence about the time when the Babylonian oppression begins, and the anointed leader appears after the first seven sevens, then the term likely refers either to Zerubbabel or Joshua, היצהר בני “sons of oil” according to Zech 4:14.

Some of the periods that might be denoted as seven sevens come near to forty-nine calendar years, but the principles about chronography and chronology dissuade us from inferring that the period nearest forty-nine calendar years must be the one referred to. Seven sevens do constitute one jubilee, but jubilee themes do not explicitly feature in vv 24–27 (see*Form*).

**26** The sixty-two sevens that follow are characterized by or end in the situation of oppression which especially concerns the seer and his audience, the oppression whose termination v 24 promised. “The pressure of the times” (העתים צוק) contrasts with “the stability of your times” (עתיך אמונת) promised in Isa 33:6.

Talk of devastation, battle, and desolation reflects the seriousness of the trouble brought to people, city, and temple by the combined force of heathen ruler(s) and usurper priest(s), described at length in 1 Macc 1–4 and 2 Macc 4–5. They are also reflected in the early Maccabean messianic oracle *Sib. Or.* 3.265–94; it refers overtly to events of the Babylonian period, including the destruction of the temple, but covertly to the Antiochene crisis.[[554]](#footnote-554) The sufferings of this crisis are not to be minimized, as they are by writers who seek to dissociate Dan 9:24–27 from the second century.[[555]](#footnote-555) At the same time, one may grant that the terms used to describe these troubles are theologically freighted. The crisis is an anticipatory embodiment of the last great battle, and also a historical embodiment of the first great battle between the forces of chaos and the forces of order (cf. Ezek 38–39 and 1QM).[[556]](#footnote-556)

Thus after the seven plus sixty-two sevens “an anointed is to be cut off” (משיח יכרת). It is impossible to argue that this “anointed” must be the same “anointed” as in v 25[[557]](#footnote-557) or that he must be a different one;[[558]](#footnote-558) likewise the suggestion that vv 24–27 refer to the expectation of two messiahs known from other Jewish writings[[559]](#footnote-559) builds too much on an allusive text. Nouns in Daniel’s visions are commonly anarthrous (e.g., a vision, a prophet, a most sacred place [v 24]; a word, an anointed, a leader, a square, a moat [v 25]; an anointed, a leader, a people [v 26]; a covenant, a wing, an abomination, a conclusion, a desolate one [v 27]). The effect is to contribute to the allusiveness appropriate to a vision, which cannot be resolved from within chap. 9 itself. In the context of the Antiochene crisis, this “anointed” will be the high priest Onias III, also referred to as “a covenant leader” in 11:22. On the accession of Antiochus in 175, Onias was displaced as high priest by his brother Jason, in 172 Jason in turn was displaced by Menelaus, brother of another of Onias’s opponents, and if we may believe 2 Macc 4, in 171 Menelaus had Onias killed.[[560]](#footnote-560) Being “cut off” could signify displacement or disappearance or death.[[561]](#footnote-561) Losing city and sanctuary sounds like a reference to his displacement and withdrawal for safety to Daphne, near Antioch (2 Macc 4:33); but his death in 171 would mark the beginning of the seven years of trouble.

Presumably the “leader to come” (הבא נגיד) is also a representative of the high-priestly line, one who follows Onias. Onias’s successor Jason[[562]](#footnote-562) both corrupted and devastated—the two possible senses of ישחית—the people of Jerusalem (see 2 Macc 4–5). The hostility of Jason’s action may be indicated by the verb “come,” which frequently denotes an aggressive “coming” in chap. 11 (e.g., v 10, with the term “flood” [שטף] as here). “His end” and “the end” are closely related.

**27** The ברית (covenant) prevailing for the body of the Jews for the final seven could akkude to the covenant between God and Israel referred to in 9:4; 11:22, 28, 30, 32. The words could then denote either the faithfulness of conservative Jews despite the pressure placed on them (cf. 1 Macc 1:62–63), or the faithfulness of God (cf. Lev 26:42).[[563]](#footnote-563) But the verse goes on to describe aspects of the sacrilege of the Antiochene crisis, which suggests that ברית in v 27a has negative connotations. It might be an Aramaism for an edict imposed by Antiochus;[[564]](#footnote-564) more likely it denotes the covenant between reformist Jews and Gentiles reported in 1 Macc 1:11. The multitude is presumably still the body of (faithful) Jews (see n. 27.b). If so, the idea of the clause is that the covenant made between the reformist Jews and the Greeks will last for seven years, to the hurt of the conservative Jews. 1 Macc 1:11 implicitly associates this covenant with the beginning of Antiochus’s reign in 175, but it is hazardous to infer that the seventieth seven is the period that begins then, so that the events of the actual crisis belong to a further seven.[[565]](#footnote-565)

Halfway through this final seven the worship prescribed by the Torah will cease, to be replaced by a repellent alternative (cf. 1 Macc 1:41–59). Sacrifice and offering covers the blood sacrifices involving the death of an animal and the offering of grain, oil, and wine, and thus between them they cover the total system of sacrifice and offering. To describe its replacement, Gabriel uses a variant on the term “the desolating rebellion” (שמם הפשע) in 8:13. Here the expression is “a desolating abomination” (משמם שקוצים: see n. 27.f). שקץ replaces פשע, perhaps because its numerical value is 490,[[566]](#footnote-566) perhaps because of the association of שקץ and שמם in passages such as Jer 4; 7; 44; Ezek 5; 6; 7.[[567]](#footnote-567) It is plural, if we accept MT, perhaps because it substitutes for the quasi-plural noun אלהים “God.”[[568]](#footnote-568) The desolating abomination will appear “on a wing” (כנף). G and Vg take the “wing” to be the winglike top corner of the temple, the “pinnacle” of Matt 4:5. But the desolating sacrilege lay not on the temple pinnacle, but on the altar within the temple, which had winglike top corners that are usually described as horns. Perhaps Gabriel speaks of wings rather than horns because “winged one” (כנף בעל, “lord of wing” or “winged one”) is a title of Ba’al.[[569]](#footnote-569)

Devastation will continue to overwhelm desolate Jerusalem until what God has decreed is exhausted. Within the gloom are thus gleams of light. The calamity fulfills the prophecy of Isa 10:22–23: so it is not meaningless. And it is de-termined, not endless. If שמם really means “desolater,” not “desolate one” [see n. 27.h], or if the desolate one is Antiochus himself as his end comes, the gleam of light is an explicit beam.

## Explanation

**1–2** We move on once more to the year when the Babylonians lost control of Babylon. In previous chapters, many scriptural passages have contributed subtly to the shaping of the stories and visions which we have been invited to take as clues to understanding what God was doing in the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek periods. But the stories and visions stood in their own right. Their scriptural allusions could have remained unnoticed. The stories and visions commended themselves to us on the basis of the experience and insight they embodied. Here, in contrast, insight emerges overtly in connection with the scriptures. Babylon is now ruled by a king of Median birth, as Jer 51:28 promised. The punishment threatened in Jer 25:12–14 has begun. The restoration of the exiles that Jer 29:10 associates with that same moment, and the restoration of Jerusalem that prophecies in Isaiah and Ezekiel promised, ought therefore to be imminent.

It is easy to imagine an exilic Daniel noting the passages in Jer 25/29 that spoke of a seventy-year exile and wondering about their fulfillment; Zechariah, after all, did so. It is also easy to imagine a second-century “Daniel” doing the same thing. Whether or not we should universalize the declaration that when Yahweh acts, he always reveals his purpose to his servants the prophets (Amos 3:7), the existence of the more-or-less collected prophetic scriptures in the second century will have encouraged people to look there for some explanation even of the devastating experiences of this time.[[570]](#footnote-570) God’s having spoken through the prophets does not mean that all the faithful have to do is sit, newspaper in hand, awaiting the outcome. “The faithful do not so acquiesce in the promises of God as to grow torpid, and become idle and slothful through the certainty of their persuasion that God will perform his promises, but are rather stimulated to prayer.”[[571]](#footnote-571)

**3–19** Daniel’s prayer complements his other prayer in 2:20-23; “to Daniel, prayer was praise *and* lament, thanksgiving *and* confession.”[[572]](#footnote-572)There is a form of prayer appropriate to every day, the prayer Daniel prayed in chap. 6. There is also a form of prayer that arises in extraordinary situations, the prayer Daniel prays here. “In the prayer of ch. 9 Daniel uses every device he can muster to ‘move the heart of God from wrath to pity’; confession of sin, complaint, petitions, historical reviews, declarations of the attributes of God, covenantal reminders, and the language of shame and honor.”[[573]](#footnote-573)

Or perhaps both prayers are the same and Dan 9 was a way people prayed throughout the Second Temple period. A particular prayer may be prayed every day but with new significance in different situations—especially when it comes to be newly juxtaposed with the scriptures. There is interplay between the words of the scriptures and the words of prayer. The scriptures stimulate prayer. Prayer constitutes the appropriate response to the scriptures. Prayer naturally reflects the scriptures. At the same time, it naturally reflects the traditional liturgical prayer of the believing community. The individual’s experience of life and of God keeps the prayer of the ongoing community alive and real. The tradition of the community’s prayer over the centuries gives the individual’s prayer its means of expression and its context in the prayer of the whole community of faith. So Daniel prays, and perhaps says, “When you pray, say….”

Lord, you are our God. You have committed yourself to us. And you are my God, because in your sovereignty you have chosen to work through me, and through me to reveal your purpose to your people. You have proved your commitment to me, and I come to ask you to do so again in response to my prayer for your people.

You revealed your name to us, but I hesitate to use it lest I do so wrongly, perhaps falling into overfamiliarity. For you are the great and awesome God, and I will have to acknowledge that we have not often treated you as such. My visions have pictured the empires as faithless and implied that the people of God are the faithful , but I know that we must identify with the empires and acknowledge our own faithlessness as the people of God rather than pretending to be otherwise.[[574]](#footnote-574)

Yet no sooner do I recall your greatness and awesomeness than I also find myself affirming your loving compassion. At Sinai and before, you committed yourself to us as your people, in the way that mighty powers like Assyria would commit themselves to the protection of lesser powers. But the great powers were always clear about what they would get out of the relationship. Your commitment to us was less hardnosed; and you have always kept your commitment. When we pray, as we do now, out of desolation and affliction, we know that such desolation and affliction does not stem from your failure to keep your commitment. You are the God who is by nature reliable and faithful, true to his word and constant in his protection. If you and we should find ourselves in court, you would win any case that the court considered. You are in the right. There is nothing on your side to cause a breakdown in the relationship between us and you. Part of the evidence is that you have always been concerned to do what was right for us, you wanted the best for us. It goes back to the exodus again, when you showed yourself concerned for the rights of a people afflicted by oppressors, and you have been that way in your relationship with us and in your acts on our behalf ever since. In other words, you have been a compassionate God, caring about us with the deep feeling of love that we associate with family life. You make allowances for us, like a king being merciful to his servants when they fail him.

We know that the basis of our relationship with you is not what we do for you; it is what you have done for us. Yet we know that we are called to respond to what you have done for us. You have issued to us commands to be obeyed, authoritative declarations regarding the deeds you approve, directions regarding how we are to live our lives. We have heard them through your prophets who spoke to us as your representatives, making your voice audible, and we have read the warnings of Moses about the consequences of ignoring them. Although the covenant did not stem from our initiative, we know that it demands our obedience, and that disobedience imperils it.

Your word came directly to those who have exercised leadership among us over the generations, kings and other people who have authority in the community. But it relates to the whole people for whom I am concerned to pray and whom I long to commend to you on the basis of your regarding me with your favor, that people of Judah which has a certain self-awareness as a political entity within the empire that governs it, but which more importantly is the remnant of the people of Israel that you have preserved and to which your covenant commitment still applies. It relates to that city, Jerusalem, which is the focus of Judah politically and religiously—because it is the city that you made your own. It relates to that sanctuary where you are worshiped.

So your word came to us; and you expected from us a response that was behavioral at least as much as emotional. You expected us to heed your words and live by them. Your design was that we would then be in the right with you, as you are with us, in a position to cast ourselves on you in need because our relationship with you was right. Not that we would never fail—but when we did fail, it was our task to turn from wrongdoing, reflecting wisely on your faithfulness in the past and giving you that respect and homage which prepares the way for renewed prayer.

What actually happened was that leaders and people did not listen to you or live by your teachings or turn from our wrongdoings or pay heed to your faithfulness or seek your favor. We are not in the right with you. We have failed, willfully, to live in accordance with your expectations. We have avoided the path you laid before us. We have contravened the enactments of the covenant. We have put ourselves in the wrong in relation to you. We have rebelled against your authority. We have turned our backs on your commands. We have been unfaithful to our relationship with you.

As the people of God, we accept responsibility for our actions and neglects. We are not fatalistic. Our history has not been out of our control, imposed on us by you. Your dealings with us are not predetermined to unfold in a sequence uninfluenced by human acts. We recognize them as a response to our acts. We know that our acts affect history as it subsequently unfolds. It is because we are in the wrong in relation to you that we have found ourselves overcome by unimagined calamity. City and sanctuary became wastes: buildings devastated and ruined, habitations emptied because their people are banished. We feel the contumely and contempt of people whose wrongdoing has been exposed. It is as if we were overwhelmed by a curse—the solemn curse written into the covenant as a legal document, designed to protect the relationship between you and us, but inevitably bringing harm to us as the price of being protective in other circumstances. You yourself saw to it that the curse fell. It was your premeditated, carefully considered act. It was calculated, but not cold: it expressed the burning fury that accompanies your warm compassion and commitment, both of them aspects of your being a real person.

It is because this situation is the position of my people that I come to you determined to gain your attention for myself and for my prayers. I am casting myself on your grace, that instinct of yours to show favor when none is deserved. By that grace I have sought to stand firm in my commitment to you, but I also stand firm in my commitment to my people in their waywardness and their affliction, and I dare to ask you to look on them in mercy because of your love for me, because you are my God. I began my confession by acknowledging that you are the awesome yet loving God of Israel. But the goal of my confession was to acknowledge that we are in the wrong in relation to you. You are in the right. I start there; but on the basis of starting there, I believe that I can plead with you for mercy upon these people who have justly experienced disaster from your hand. I turn aside from concern with food or with my appearance: I come with an inner gloominess which expresses itself in a gloominess of appearance. I long for you to reveal and implement your purpose for your people. You are ignoring our plight and our prayer, as you have the right to do. Lord, listen. You seem to be holding our wrongdoing against us, as you have the right to do. Lord, pardon, let your anger dissipate itself somewhere else. You are refusing to give us that blessing you promised through Aaron, as you have the right to do. Lord, look on us with the bright smile of your love. You behave as if intent on doing nothing in our lives. Lord, act. It is what you have done in the past. It is what we need now. It is what will bring you honor.’”

If this is indeed how people prayed in those days, we can see how they came through the storms and stresses of that terrible time.[[575]](#footnote-575)

**20–23** It is to be expected that prayers meet with answers, and so it is with Daniel. The answer indicates that communication between earth and heaven goes on, even though the sacrificial system may be interrupted. The content of the answer corresponds to the content of the protest, as the prayer has offered the response to God’s prophetic word that makes the fulfillment of that word possible. The promise of fulfillment issues when Daniel turns to God, yet it issues before he prays his prayer, so the story affirms not only the importance of prayer and the place it plays in the outworking of God’s purpose (it is in response to prayer that God acts) but also the importance of God’s sovereignty (prayer is a means of God’s own good will being put into effect). One person’s prayer brings about the restoration of the people of God; but it is a matter of releasing that restoration which God already purposed.[[576]](#footnote-576) The dynamics of the interrelationship of prayer and divine act here may be compared with those in Gen 18:17–33.

While the significance of Jeremiah’s words might have been clear for their original hearers, their significance in a later context is not. A general theological principle is implied: the subsequent significance of this passage from Jeremiah cannot be discerned by ordinary human study. It can only be received by revelation, like the original prophecy, or like visions such as those that come elsewhere to Daniel. To understand the significance of prophecies (or other scriptures) one needs the same divine inspiration that the prophet himself had received.[[577]](#footnote-577) One might add that the key to hermeneutics is character. “To become the kind of person open to repentance and prayer in the manner of Daniel in chapter 9 is to become the kind of person well suited to “perceiving in the books” what is significant or pertinent to the life of faith.” Thus “If you want to become a better exegete, become a deeper person, as Brevard Childs is reported to have said.”[[578]](#footnote-578)

Yet historically, the interpretation emerges from a situational context, in the second century BC; it is in light of this context that the scriptures are studied and enabled to become newly illuminating. History itself is not inherently revelatory, but history poses questions about the meaning of the scriptures to which revelation provides the answers, and thus history plays a part in revelation.

**24–27** Jeremiah had spoken of seventy years’ desolation for Jerusalem, but the desolation was to last centuries longer. God is free to exact whatever chastisement he chooses. The message’s good news is that it is not chastisement without end. The number 490 is not an arithmetical calculation to be pressed to yield chronological information. It is a figure that puts together two symbolic figures, the seventy years (a lifetime) of Jer 25:11/29:10 and the sevenfold chastisement of Lev 26:28. The result is a doubly symbolic figure extending from the beginning of chastisement to whenever it ends. The description of the end in vv 24–27 is allusive, but fortunately we are in a position to move from the known to the unknown. The climax to which chap. 8 looks lies in the crisis in the second century BC, when God delivered his people and his sanctuary from the combined threat of Antiochus Epiphanes and reformist Judaism. The same crisis is the focus of chaps. 10–12. The implication is that chap. 9 has in mind the same events, and the details of vv 24–27 support that inference, as do OG’s translation and the way 1 Maccabees tells the story of the Antiochene crisis.

The time between the two desolations of Jerusalem divides into two. The first period is the years of Babylonian domination, which began with a promise of restoration from that domination at the beginning of the sixth century and ended with the fulfillment of that promise when Judahites were free to return to Jerusalem and rebuld temple, city, and community at the end of the sixth century and during the fifth. The second period is the long years from that time of rebuilding to the second century, the period of Jerusalem rebuilt (v 25), when the city is nevertheless still under foreign domination. The Antiochene crisis is heralded by the deposing of one high priest and the wickedness of another (v 26). It brings a period of unholy alliance, of disruption of temple worship, of its replacement by an apostate alternative, and of a devastation that will continue to overwhelm desolate Jerusalem until the exhausting of what God had decreed (v 27). This gloomy prospect is set in the context of a promise that by the end of the seventy sevens God will have purged people and city of wrongdoing—Greek wrongdoing and Jewish wrongdoing alike, perhaps—and vindicated the sanctuary and the prophecy of Jeremiah from which we started (v 24). The fulfillment of God’s promise is described in 1 Macc 4:42–61; what Gabriel pictures as a divine work, 1 Maccabees relates as an achievement involving human initiative and activity.

To speak of God determining history over 490 years may suggest a “radically deistic” view of God’s activity; time is now autonomous and unalterable, and even God has to wait upon it.[[579]](#footnote-579) Yet “the author of Dan 9 seems to have been able to hold to both apocalyptic determinism and conditional covenant theology at the same time.”[[580]](#footnote-580)

Parallel sets of causation, one human, the othe supernatural, neither of which renders the other inoperative, are as much a feature of Greek thinking about accountability as they are of their storytelling from Homer onwards…. The function of supernatural causation is not, as we might hink, to replace or override empirical cause and effect…. Nor is it the function of a theory of supernatural causation to remove moral responsibility, to make men and women no longer accountable for their actions.[[581]](#footnote-581)

Further, we must recall that Gabriel’s way of speaking belongs at the end of the 490 years; only retrospectively does he affirm God’s “control.” The 490 years unfolded in the ordinary way that history does (as chap. 11 will show in detail). If Gabriel’s quasi-prediction were actual prediction, a deistic view might be implied; but it is not. Further, the quasi-prediction says nothing of God being positively involved in the historical events of the Babylonian and Second Temple periods, because its real focus lies on the events of the 160s rather than because God was assumed to be absent.

In Jewish and Christian tradition, Gabriel’s promises have been applied to later events: the birth of the Messiah, Jesus’ death and resurrection, the fall of Jerusalem, various subsequent historical events, and the still-future manifesting of the Messiah. The promises do not apply directly to these events. The detail of vv 24–27 fits the second-century crisis and agrees with allusions to this crisis elsewhere in Daniel. The verses do not indicate that they are looking centuries or millennia beyond the period to which chaps. 8 and 10–12 refer. They do not suggest that the cleansing and renewal of which v 24 speaks is the cleansing and renewal of the world: it is the cleansing and renewal of Jerusalem. The passage refers to the Antiochene crisis.

Yet its allusiveness and the incompletemess of its fulfillment in the second century BC justifies its reapplication in later contexts, as is the case with previous visions. Indeed, it directly encourages such reaaplication by its not referring to concrete persons and events in the manner of a historical narrative such as 1 Maccabees. It speaks in terms of symbols of what those persons and events embodied, symbols such as wrongdoing, justice, an anointed leader, a flood, an abomination. It invites people to understand concrete events and persons in light of such symbols, but the symbols transcend them. They are not limited in their reference to these particular concrete realities. The symbols have other embodiments.

The identification of these other embodiments is a matter of theological, not exegetical, judgment—a matter of faith, not of science. But if Jesus is God’s anointed, and his birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and appearing are God’s ultimate means of revealing himself and achieving his purpose in the world, then these realities are also God’s means of ultimately achieving what the symbols in vv 24–27 speak of. It is in this sense that “although every chapter[of Daniel] contains an abundanceof doctrine, nevertheless this chapter by far exceeds the others. Daniel hands down the *clear* testimony concerning the advent of Christ, the death of Christ, the righteousness of the New Testament and the destruction of the Jewish state. He includes the doctrine of penance in a prayer, he rightly assess es the value of his own righteousness, and he shows the righteousness of faith.”[[582]](#footnote-582)

It is this point that is made by talk in terms of a typological relationship between events and people of the Antiochene crisis and deliverance, and those of Jesus’ time and of the End we still await.[[583]](#footnote-583) And it is in this sense that we can affirm the comment Pascal adds to an observation on the equivocal nature of the seventy weeks prophecy, that “we understand the prophecies only when we see the events happen.”[[584]](#footnote-584)

Gabriel’s allusiveness accompanies an inclination to speak in the words of the scriptures reapplied. Gerard Manley Hopkins observed that “the world is charged with the grandeur of God”; Daniel recognizes that the same is true of the scriptures, with “a prodigious energy.”[[585]](#footnote-585) Daniel is doing with Isaiah what subsequent exegetes do with Daniel. This mode of interpretation, too, reflects the fact that the author speaks “with faith rather than knowledge.”[[586]](#footnote-586) The period of deepest oppression did last about 3 1/2 years, but that is not the point. Gabriel’s message is not prognostication or prediction. It is promise. “The issue here…is not the mathematical conundrum of determining what date in history the prediction of Jeremiah should forecast. Rather, to judge by the prayer that follows, the problem is a theological one: what is the meaning of the desolation of Jerusalem, why does it last, and when will it really end?”[[587]](#footnote-587) But “the prayer embodies the theology implicit at the beginning of the book. Daniel knows that his God has given Jerusalem over to its enemies,”[[588]](#footnote-588) but that same fact means that God can take it back again.

Gabriel’s message does not have a worldwide perspective; he is not speaking of the end of all history, or of the sin of the whole world. Dan 9 is returning to “salvation history” from the secular history that dominated chaps. 7–8 and will dominate chaps. 10–12. The book’s moving between these two foci suggests that both are of God. God is the God of all history, but nature and grace are not identical; there are special purposes he is achieving in Israel’s history. On the other hand, while God is the God of Israel’s history, nature and grace are not to be sundered; he purposes to reign in all history.[[589]](#footnote-589) Gabriel’s message is a promise given from the midst of a life and death crisis—life and death for human beings and for Jewish faith. It contains no exhortation to action. It is not concerned to urge people to obedience or resistance, but to offer them hope. The scriptures are often content to do so.

In contrast to the preceding chapters, Dan 9 fails to tell us Daniel’s reaction to the revelation. As is the case with other texts that close with a question or something puzzling (e.g., Jonah; Mark), the effect is to ask how the reader is going to react.[[590]](#footnote-590)

# A Celestial Figure Reveals to Daniel What Will Happen to His People at the End of the Era (10:1–12:13)

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## Translation

*10:1In the thirda year of Koreš bking of Paras,b a message was revealedc to Daniyye’l, who had been named Belṭeša’ṣṣar. The message was trustworthy; it concerned a great war.d He understoode the message; understanding came to him through the vision.f*

*2“During that time I, Daniyye’l, was mourning for aa period of three weeks.a 3I ate no rich food, no meat or wine passed my lips, and I did not anoint myself at all,a until the period of three weeks was completed. 4Then on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, when I was by the bank of the Great River, the Tigris,a 5I lifted my eyesa and looked, and there: a man dressed in linen, his waist belted with pureb gold, 6his body like topaz,a his face with the brightness of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and feet with the gleam of polished brass, the sound of his words like the sound of thundering.b*

*7aNow I, Daniyye’l, alone saw this sight; bthe men who were with me did not see the sight.b Nevertheless, such terror came over them that they fled intoc hiding. 8So I myself remained alone. I looked at this great sight, and no strength remained in me; my vigora dissolved into confusion band I had no strength left.b 9aThen I heard the sound of his words. Whenb I heard the sound of his words,a cI was falling in a trance,c don my face, with my faced to the ground. 10And there:a a hand touchedb me and shook mec onto dmy hands and knees.d*

*11He said to me, ‘Daniyye’l, man held in high regarda, attend to the words which I am about to speak to you, and stand up in your place, because I have now been sent to you.’ As he told me this, I stood up, trembling. 12He said to me, ‘Don’t be afraid, Daniel, because from the first day you set your mind to understand, by humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard—I have come because of your words. 13The leader of the kingdom of Paras was opposing me for twenty-one days, but there:a Mika’el, one of the supreme leaders, came to help me, when bI was left aloneb there with cthe kings ofc Paras. 14I have come to explain to you what will happena to your people at the end of the era,b because cthere is yet a vision concerning that era.’c*

*15“While he spoke these words to me, I bowed my facea to the ground and kept silence. 16And there:a bsomeone of human formb touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to the one who stood before me: ‘My lord, at this sight turmoilc has convulsed me, I have no strength left. 17And how can my lord’s mere aservant speak with such asa my lord? Now,b I have no strength left in me. There is no breath in me anymore.’*

*18Again one of human appearance touched me and encouraged me, 19saying ‘Don’t be afraid, man held in high regard. All will be well with you.a Take courage, take courage.’b Whenc he spoke to me, I took courage and said ‘My lord may speak, for you have encouraged me.’ 20aThen he said, ‘Have you realizedb why I have come to you? But now,c I must return to fight with the leader of Paras, though when I go,d there:e the leader of Yawan will be coming. 21Nevertheless, I will tell you what is inscribed in a trustworthy book.a No one supports me against these, except Mika’el, your leader. 11:1And I, ain the first year of Dareyaweš the Medite: I took my standb to support and strengthen him. 2But now,aI will tell you something trustworthy.*

*“‘There:bthree further kings will arise in Paras, but the fourth—he will be far wealthier than anyone.c And through the power he obtains through his wealth, he will stir upd eeveryone in relation to the kingdom of Yawan.e 3Then a warrior-king will appear who will rule aa great realma and act as he pleases.b 4But as soon asa he arises, his kingdom will break up and divide towards the four winds of the heavens. cIt will not belong to his surviving family nor be a realm such as he ruled,c because his kingdom will be uprooted and will belong to others besides these.*

*5“‘The southern kinga will then be powerful, bbut one of his officers b—he will be more powerful than him and he will rule, his rule being a great rule.c 6Then after some years an alliance will be madea and the daughter of the southern king will go tob the northern king to establish an agreement. But she will not be able to hold onto cher powerc nor will his powerd last out. She will be given up,e as will those who escorted herf and the one who fathered herg and hsustained her.h In timei 7one ofa the shoots from her roots—he will ariseb in his place. He will attack the armyc and enter the stronghold of the northern king. He will deal with them as their conqueror;d 8their gods with their molten images and their precious silver and gold ware he will also take off to Miṣrayim. Although hea will keep away from the northernb king for some years, 9he will then invade the southern king’s kingdom, but will return to his own country. 10His sonsa will commit themselves to war. They will gather a massive horde which bwill advance and advance and sweep through like a flood.b It will again battle on as far as his stronghold;c 11but the southern king will be provoked to come out to fight with him—with the northern king.a Heb will raise a large horde, but the horde will be given into his power. 12When the horde is carried off,a hisb mind will be elatedc and heb will put down tens of thousands,d but he will not be victorious.*

*13The northern king will returna and raise a larger horde than the first. Thus bafter a period of yearsb he will advance and advancec with a large force and much equipment. 14During those times many will rise up against the southern king, but when wild men amonga your people assert themselves, in fulfillment ofb a vision, they will stumble. 15Thena the northern king will advance, throw up siegeworks,b and capture a fortified city.c The southern forces will not be able to withstand. Even their picked troopsd ewill be powerlesse to withstand. 16His attacker will thusa be able to act as he pleases and no one will be able to withstand him, and he will take his stand in the fairest land,b destructionc being in his power. 17He will determinea to bcome into control of his whole kingdomb and will make an agreementc with him and give him a wifed in order to destroy it.e But itf will not succeed; itf will not come about for him. 18So he will turna his attention to the sea landsb and capture many. cBut a commander will put an end to his challenge for him,c dso that he will not be able to returnd his challenge to him. 19He will turna his attention to the strongholds in his own land. But he will stumble and fall, and disappear.*

*20“’There will arise in his place one who will send around an oppressora ofb kingly splendor. But in a few days he will break, though not in the heat of battle.c*

*21“‘There will arise in his place a despiseda man who has not been given royal honor; he will advance with ease and gain power over the kingdom by means of empty words. 22Overwhelming forcesa will be overwhelmed before him and bbroken, and so too a covenant leader.b 23Thus by means ofa alliances made with him he will act deceitfully. He will badvance to powerb with a small group; 24with easea with the powerful ones of a provinceb he will go on to act as his fathers and grandfathers did not. Spoil, plunder, and wealth he will scatter among them. He will also devise plans against fortresses, until a certain time.*

*25“‘He will asserta his strength and act with determination againstb the southern king with a large force, but the southern king will commit himself to war with an exceedingly large and powerful force, though he will not be able to stand firm, because plans will be devised against him. 26People who eat his provisionsa will break him. His force will pour away,b and many will fall slain. 27The two kings themselves, their minds set on trouble, will sit at a common table and speak lies, but to no avail, because an end will yet await the set time. 28Then hea will return to his country with great wealth. bHe will act with determination against a holy covenant,b and then return to his own country.*

*29“‘At the set time he will again invade the south, but it will not be like the first and the second occasion.a 30Ships from Kittima will attack him, and he will quail and return; bhe will take harsh actionb against a holy covenant and return.c He will pay heed to such as have abandoned a holy covenant, 31and forces of his will take their stand and desecrate the sanctuary (the strongholda). They will remove the daily offering and set up the desolating abomination.b 32Such as have acted faithlessly in relation to a covenanta he will turn into apostatesb by means of empty words, but a people that acknowledgesc its God will offer firm resistance.d 33Discerning onesa within a people will enlighten the multitude,b though they will stumblec by sword and by fire, dby captivity and by becoming prey, for some time. 34When they stumble, they will receive a little help.a But many will join them with empty words,b 35and some of the discerning will stumble, to refine, to purify, and to cleanse them,a buntil the time of the end—for itb will still awaitc the set moment.*

*36“‘So the king will act as he pleases, and will exalt himself and magnify himself over any god;a concerning a God of godsa he will utter awesome statements. And he will succeed, until wrath is complete,b cfor what is determined shall be done.c 37Thus he will pay no heed to the god of his fathers,a nor to the one women love,b cnor to any godc will he pay heed, but he will magnify himself over everything. 38In his placea he will honor a stronghold god,b chonor a godb his fathers did not acknowledge, with gold and silver, with precious stones and rich gifts. 39So he will deal witha a most secure strongholdb by the aid ofc an alien god. The people he regardsd he will endow with great honor and make them rule over the multitude, and he will divide upe land as payment.*

*40“‘At the time of the end the southern king will engage in a struggle with him. The northern king will storm against him with chariots, cavalry, and many ships. He will invade other countries, sweep through like a flood,a 41and invade the fairest land. Many of thema will stumble, but while theseb will escape from his power, Edom, Mo’ab, and the leadersc of the Ammonites, 42when he lays his hand ona other countries,b Miṣrayim will not go free. 43He will gain control of the gold and silver treasures and of all the riches of Miṣrayim, and Lubbites and Kušites will fall at his heels.a 44Then reports from the east and north will alarm him and he will set off in great fury to devastate and annihilatea many. 45He will pitch his royal headquartersa between the Sea andb the fairest holy hill. But he will come to his end, with no one to help him.*

*12:1At that time there will arise*

*Mika’el the supreme leader,a*

*Who stands byb those who belong to your people,c*

*and there will be a time of trouble*

*Such as has not occurredd since they became a natione*

*until that time.*

*But at that time your people will escape,*

*everyone who can be found written in the book.*

*2Thus many of those who sleepa*

*in a land of earthb will wake up,*

*cSome to lastingd life,*

*others to utter shame,e to lastingd abhorrence.*

*3The discerning will shine*

*like the moona in the sky.*

*Those who set the multitude rightb*

*will shine like the stars to all eternity.*

*4You, Daniyye’l, are to close up these words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will hurry to and fro,a and sufferingb will increase.’*

*5“Then I, Daniyye’l, looked, and there before me two other figures were standing, one on the rivera bank on this side, one on the rivera bank on the other side. 6The man dressed in linen who was afurther upstreama was asked,b ‘How long is it to the endc of these awesome events?’ 7I listened to the man dressed in linen who was further upstream. He raised his right hand and his left to the sky and swore by the One who lives for ever that it would be for a set period,a two set periods,a and a half, and that when the shatteringb of the power of the holy people is ended,c all these things will come to an end. 8I listened, but I could not understand, and I said, ‘Sir, what will be the last stagea of these events?’ 9He said, ‘Go your way, Daniyye’l, because these words will be closed up and sealeda until the time of the end.*

*10aMany will purify themselves, cleanse themselves, and refine themselves,b*

*but the faithless will act faithlessly.*

*None of the faithless will give heed,c*

*though the discerning will give heed.c*

*11From the time when the daily offering is taken away and the desolating abomination is set up will be 1290 days. 12Happy the one who waits and reaches the 1335 days. 13But you may go your way until the enda and rest. You will riseb to your destiny on the final day.’”*

## Notes

1.a. OG “first” may assimilate to 1:21 or may be an inner Greek corruption (so Pace, *The OG Text*,225–227).

1.b-b. In secular usage, this title belongs to the Greek period, but in Ezra it is a regular title for the Persian kings (see Wilson, “The Title ‘King of Persia’”).

1.c. נגלה could mean “revealed itself” (e.g., 1 Sam 3:21), but a reverential passive also makes sense.

1.d. צבא most often means “army”; cf. 8:10–12 (and OG?), though there the phrase השמים צבא “heavenly army” is more explicit. It can also refer metaphorically to an appointed time of hard service (Isa 40:2; Job 7:1; 14:14), and it might denote the long (גדול) period to elapse before the vision’s fulfillment (Rashi) or the toil it demanded of Daniel in order to understand it (NEB; cf. Vg, Th). In Num 4; 8:24, 25 it denotes Yahweh’s sacred “army,” the Levites, fulfilling their “service.” But it can also mean “war” (cf. Aq) and a reference to the heavenly and earthly conflicts of 10:12–12:4 (cf. JB, NIV) fits the context, even if Isa 40:2 suggested the word (see *Form*, *Structure*).

1.e. ובין, perhaps a qal derived from a hiphil form (Hartman/Di Lella), though hardly itself hiphil (against GKC 73a). The text may be suspicious (cf. OG, Aq, Syr); for emendations, see, e.g., Hartman/Di Lella, Brockington. The verb and the following cognate noun denote both understanding and attentiveness. In 12:10 (which the phrase anticipates: see *Structure*) the context suggests a focus on attentiveness; so also 9:23 where two forms of the root appear. Here the form of the subsequent noun clause suggests a focus on understanding.

1.f. The definite article is required (against NIV). The reference is hardly confined to the vision in chap. 10 (see *Structure*).

2.a. ימים שבעים שלשה “three weeks days”: see GKC 131d, though “three whole weeks” (cf. EVV) overinterprets (Driver). The idiom may derive here from the Joseph story (Gen 41:1) or may indicate literal weeks of days not of years (contrast chap. 9; Lacocque).

3.a. Hartman/Di Lella explains the odd phrase here as a mistranslation from Aram.

4.a. This identification is hardly a gloss; the phrase “the Great River” is always followed by an identification, elsewhere as the Euphrates (e.g., Gen 15:18; cf. Syr here), and the Tigris is not so far from Babylon (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

5.a. See n. 4:34.a.

5.b. Uphaz (EVV) is otherwise unknown (except when this phrase recurs in Jer 10:9). Rather אופז is to be connected with קזז (“refine [?],” 1 Kgs 10:18) and פז (“pure gold,” e.g., Cant 5:11, 15); cf. Ibn Ezra, Ps-Saadia. The initial א perhaps reflects the variant reading אופיר (Ophir, cf. NEB; Hartman/Di Lella).

6.a. תרשיש is apparently a yellow topaz or yellow quartz, known in Greek as chrysolite (Aq, Vg, and G elsewhere). Beryl (JB) is green. See *IBD*, *IDB* “Jewels,” “Tarshish.”

6.b. This basic meaning of המון fits well here (cf. BDB); EVV “crowd” (cf. 11:10–13) is a derived meaning. See Gerleman, “Die lärmende Menge.”

7.a. Taking וראיתי (“now I saw”: *waw* plus perfect) as a circumstantial clause rather than merely an Aramaism (against *TTH* 160).

7.b. MT in Dan apparently distinguishes מַרְאָה (also vv 8, 16) from מַרְאֶה (“vision”; 8:16, 26, 27; 9:23; 10:1)—though the nature of the difference is unclear (BDB, Montgomery take מַרְאָה as “vision”) and C fuzzes it. See Brenner, “‘מַרְאֶה’–ו ‘מַרְאָה’.”

7.c. One would expect ל, not ב; Bevan translates “in the act of hiding.”

8.a. See BDB for this meaning of הוד; the phrase takes up v 7 (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*).

8.b-b. There are no textual grounds for removing this phrase, though it repeats the content of “no strength remained in me” and anticipates words in v 16.

9.a-a. OG, Syr omit one of these repetitive clauses (haplog./to simplify?).

9.b. See n. 8:8.b.

9.c-c. נרדם הייתי, cf. 1:16; see GKC 116r. But it could be a pluperfect (Bevan) or simply an Aramaism for “I fell” (Zimmermann, “The Aramaic Origin of Daniel 8–12,” 259–61). On רדם see n. 8:18.a.

9.d-d. ופני פני על. Th omits the first phrase, OG, Syr the second. The first might be assimilation to 8:18, the second assimilation to 10:15 or dittog, or MT might be conflate.

10.a. The הנה marks a sudden experience (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*).

10.b. The most common meaning of נגע, cf. v 16; it can mean “strike,” but not “grasp” (cf. BDB).

10.c. For ותניעני, 6QDan להניעני has “to shake me.” For the translation cf. JPSV (and Aq ἐκίνησέ). “Raised” (G, Vg, Syr) and “set me trembling” (EVV) are too gentle (cf. Taylor, *Peshitṭa*, 258).

10.d-d ידי וכפות ברכי “my knees and the palms of my hands.” Th lacks the second phrase; one medieval ms, OG have רגלי “my feet” for ידי.

11.a. OG “pitied” (implying ל מ ח for ד מ ח) follows vv 8-9 nicely; similarly in v 19.

13.a. See n. 10.a.

13.b-b. ותרתי נ is difficult, but Syr, Vg presuppose it and G κατέλιπον looks more like an attempt to interpret than a witness to original הותרתי (against NRSV)—which would anyway mean “left him alone,” not just “left him” (Driver). The meaning might be “I held out” (NEB) or “I gained the superiority” (Keil, cf. the hiphil) or “I was left over” (i.e., no longer needed; RVmg).

13.c-c. מלכי: 6QDan’s מלכות, “kingdom” (cf. Th) looks like assimilation to v 13a.

14.a. Following K יִקְרֶה; Q יִקְרָא assimilates to Gen 49:1.

14.b. See on 2:28.

14.c-c. לימים חזון עוד. The word order suggests “yet a vision for the days,” not “a vision for days yet (to come),” חזון “vision” having no article; cf. NRSV against RSV, which assimilates to 8:26 (with G?).

15.a. פני; 6QDan אפי.

16.a. See n. 10.a.

16.b-b. אדם בני כדמות “like the appearance of human beings”: the pl. is odd but s. (one medieval ms, Th, Vg) looks like simplification of a difficult text. 6QDan אדם יד כדמות (“like the appearance of a human hand”; cf. OG) is perhaps assimilation to v 10—or was the יד lost by assimilation to 8:15; 10:18?

16.c. ציר, properly the fearsome and helpless convulsion of childbirth (1 Sam 4:19).

17.a-a. זה . . . זה: cf. BDB, 261, 262.

17.b. עתה[מ‍] (cf. 10:20; 11:2) is not a chronological “now” but an emphatic or adversative one: see Jenni, “Zur Verwendung von ‘attā ‘jetzt’ im AT,” 8–10. Jenni queries the text here, but see Ehrlich; cf. *DTT*. The pronoun אני is also emphatic.

19.a. NEB: on this meaning of שלום here (cf. 4:1; 6:25 [3:31; 6:26]) in the context of Daniel’s reaction in vv 9–17 see Eisenbeis, *Die Wurzel שלם im AT*, 212–15; against Montgomery.

19.b. Some medieval mss have ואמץ חזק “take courage and be strong” for וחזק חזק —cf. G, Vg, Syr, assimilating to Josh 1:6–9, etc. Saadia comments that he translates as if ואמץ חזק were the reading, to avoid the repetition. The ו is unusual when an imperative is repeated (Bevan); cf. the greater frequency of ו copulative with repeated nouns in Late Biblical Hebrew (GKC 123c).

19.c. See n. 8:8.b.

20.a. The train of thought in 10:20–11:2a is difficult, but there are no textual grounds for querying the order of the verses, and commentators who reconstruct them vary in the way they do so.

20.b. הידעת (perfect) takes up vv 12, 14 (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

20.c. See n. 17.b.

20.d. Or perhaps “come forth [from that battle]”; cf. NRSV “am through with him,” though this reads rather a lot into יוצא (despite 1 Sam 14:41; Qoh 7:18).

20.e. See n. 10.a.

21.a. Not “the,” and אמת suggests dynamic reliability rather than simply objective truth.

(ב ת כ ת in the BHS fascicle is a misprint for בכתב.)

11:1.a-a. Perhaps the phrase’s similarity to introductory dates elsewhere (e.g., 10:1) led to the anomalous MT petuchah at the end of 10:21, which the medieval chapter division follows. EVV remove the phrase as a gloss and emend v 1 in varying ways. For Darius the Mede, G has Cyrus, smoothing out the chronology (Collins, *Daniel*, 8).

1.b. עמדי (inf. construct, “my standing [was]”). 4QDanc י ת ד מ ע “I stood” (cf. Vg, Th), OG εἶπέν, Syr *qm* look like different ways of responding to the unusual MT expression.

2.a. See n. 10:17.b.

2.b. See n. 10:10.a.

2.c. Not “any of them” (EVV): מכל is absolute (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

2.d. G έπαναστήσεται hardly requires יעור (against BHS), since יעיר could mean “act in an aroused manner” (BDB). Cf. G’s [ἀνα]στήσεται in v 3a to translate עמד qal.

2.e-e. מלכות יון את הכל. Hardly “the whole kingdom of Yawan” (cf. G, Syr): why then would את follow הכל? Even as an explanatory gloss, “the kingdom of Yawan” raises problems (see *Comment*). If these problems can be overcome, more likely הכל “everything” is the subject (Barr; Torrey, “‘Yāwān’ and ‘Hellas,’” adding שר). More likely את denotes a less direct object. “Against” (EVV, cf. Vg) presupposes את ii “with” (cf. Aq; Jer 38:5; Bentzen); compare עם following קום and יצב in Ps 94:16 (Bevan). For “toward” (cf. Syr) see examples in Izre’el, “אל = את”; BDB.

3.a-a. Cf. G; the adverbial understanding of phrases here and in vv 4, 5 (Vg) is less straightforward.

3.b. Cf. vv 16, 36.

4.a. See n. 8:8.b.

4.b. Were there not so many shortened imperfect (jussive) forms following simple *waw* in chap. 11, one would understand this occurrence as suggesting a result clause (Montgomery), but here rather it is a stylistic preference.

4.c-c. Taking these as noun clause(s) (even though the pronoun is omitted) rather than noun phrases (Bevan, cf. 8:19, 26; GKC 116s, 147). אחרית is broader than “descendants” (cf. Amos 4:2; 9:1) (Keil). OG (cf. BHS) assimilates to 8:22, 24.

5.a OG replaces “of the south” by “of Egypt” in this chapter, but it allows the literal “of the north” to stand—forttuitously, in not destroying the reminiscence of the OT image of the northern foe.

5.b-b. An extraposed phrase (casus pendens) at the beginning of a new clause, for emphasis (against MT accents): see *TTH* 123, 125.

5.c. On the construction, see Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l’AT* 3:477-78.

6.a. Taking יתחברו as impersonal; EVV have “they will make an alliance,” but see *Comment*.

6.b. אל בוא is an expression for a bride’s going to live in her husband’s home (Josh 15:18; Judg 12:9; Jeffery).

6.c-c. הזרוע כוח, “the power of the arm.” OG takes הזרוע as subject, but cf. 10:16; and a change of subject for the verb would need to have been made earlier (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, 212–13).

6.d. וזרעו. The ו is pleonastic, for emphasis (Wernberg-Møller, “Pleonastic *waw*,” 324–25). EVV “his posterity” implies repointing זְרֹעוֹ to זַרְעוֹ with Th. But Dan 11 likes to repeat words—thus זרע twice here; see also n. 6.g. Philologically ע[ו]זר could mean “army” in v 6 like the pl. in vv 15, 22, 31 (Conrad, “On זְרוֹעַ”), but this meaning does not fit here (see *Comment*).

6.e. For the absolute use of נתן, see e.g., 2 Sam 20:21.

6.f. מביאיה, picking up בוא from v 6a; some medieval mss have s. מביאה here.

6.g. EVV “her child” implies reading הַיַּלְרָּהּ with one medieval ms, Th (Syr, Vg have “children”; OG lacks). MT implies that throughout v 6 the reference is to the people involved in establishing the marriage—and thus here to father rather than to child.

6.h-h. Or “the one who had power over her,” her husband (GNB): but see n. 6.g.

6.i. The time phrase makes more sense as the introduction to v 7 (cf. EVV).

7.a. Partitive מן (GKC 119w and the note).

7.b. ועמד follows the extraposed phrase (see n. 6.i and cf. *TTH* 123); there is no need to emend.

7.c. NEB “the defences” repoints הַחַיִל as הַחֵיל.

7.d. והחזיק בהם ועשה “he will deal with them and he will prevail.”

8.a. Emphatic הוא precedes the verb, suggesting a circumstantial clause (Montgomery).

8.b. חצפון in the BHS fascicle is a misprint for הצפון.

10.a. בניו Q; K בנו “his son.” Historically K is more accurate (see *Comment*); s. and pl. both appear in v 10, the subject of some verbs being unclear.

10.b-b. ועבר ושטף בוא ובא “will come [with] coming and will pour through and will overwhelm.” Inf. בוא suggests repeated action; some medieval mss have בו (cf. OG, Syr), but that reading is idiomatically simpler and fits the context less well.

10.c. מעזה: presumably the southern king’s, as he is the antecedent; the southern king has changed since v 9, from Ptolemy III to Ptolemy IV, but the celestial being often views the sequences of kings corporately, esp. the southern one, who is merely the opponent of the great northern king (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*). Driver suggests Gaza (עזה!), though Antiochus may have already occupied that town; more likely Raphia (see *Comment*).

11.a. Perhaps a double reading (Collins); but for such defining phrases explaining a pronoun, see GKC 131n.

11.b. The northern king is the antecedent; his army is therefore overcome by the southern king.

12.a. Like chaff carried off by the wind (Delcor, comparing 2:35). “Rises up [for battle]” (cf. Keil) is less likely, since the usage of נשא is more unusual and ההמנן “the horde” has to refer to a different army.

12.b. After v 11, presumably the southern king, which then leads naturally into v 13.

12.c. K ירום; Q, C, many medieval mss ורם. Dahood (“Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography III,” 323) takes ירום as participle from ירם, a by-form of רום.

12.d. רבאות, a mixed form (BHS).

13.a. שב could simply indicate repetition (“will again [raise a horde]”), cf. vv 10a, 29a; but chap. 11 often uses שוב for north-south movement (cf. vv 9 [with בוא, as here], 28–30).

13.b-b. שנים העתים לקץ “at the end of the times, years”; again perhaps a double reading (Collins) but cf. the expression in 10:2 and the note.

13.c. בוא יבוא; see n. 10.b-b.

14.a. פריצי בני “the sons of the violent of [your people]”: see *Comment*.

14.b. העמיד ל could denote their aim or simply the result of their action.

15.a. If v 15 refers to further stages in the campaign (see *Comment*); but v 15 could resume from v 13 after a parenthesis in v 14.

15.b. וישפך; 4QDana,c ושפך is more what one would have expected (Pace, *OG Text*, 34).

15.c. See *Comment*. Th, Syr take ת ו ר צ ב מ ר י ע as pl. (cf. GKC 124r). The standard pl. expression is בצרות ערים (e.g., Neh 9:25) or מבצר י ר ע (e.g., Jer 34:7), and the term here might have been misdivided through the influence of ר צ ב מ in vv 24, 39 (cf. Syr?).

15.d. Or perhaps “their fortresses” (Schafer, “מבחור/מבחר, 395). The suffix on מבחריו apparently has הנגב “the south” as its antecedent (cf. JB).

15.e-e. כח ואין: emphatic ו (Ehrlich).

16.a. See n. 4.b.

16.b. See on 8:9.

16.c. ה לָ כָּ, as 9:27. G, Syr understand וְכָלָה as a verb, suggesting “and it will be destroyed by his hand” (cf. Jer 16:4); the verb occurs in 12:7. “All of it” (NRSV) implies repointing to כֻּלָּהּ. The construction involves an asyndetic noun clause, like the one at the end of v 5.

17.a. פניו וישם “and he will set his face”: see n. 4.b.

17.b-b. מלכותו כל בתקף לבוא: “to come in all his kingly might” (cf. NIV) leads into the rest of v 17 less well.

17.c. See BHS on ישרים; there is no need to emend. The *waw* consecutive ועשה follows its extraposed object (cf. *TTH* 123).

17.d. הנשים ובת, “the daughter of women.”

17.e. The kingdom: not “to destroy her” (it did not) nor “to corrupt her” (it did, from Antiochus’s angle, but this is too subtle).

17.f. Not “she” (against NEB); the phrase follows Isa 7:7 (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

18.a. Reading K וישב not Q וישם (“set,” cf. JPSV “head for”)—assimilation to v 17; see also n. 4.b.

18.b. The term can denote any islands or countries around the Mediterranean.

18.c-c. לו חרפתו קצין ת י ב ש ה ו; G, Syr suggest “and he will stop a commander who challenges him” (or “. . . with his challenge to him,” cf. Keil); but see *Comment*. קצין is an archaic poetic term for a military leader; a consul was both a magistrate and a military commander.

18.d-d. Not “indeed he will return” (cf. NRSV); בלתי is a negative. Charles suggests emending

בלתי לו to לבלתי (“so that not”; cf. JB), but probably בלתי alone could have this meaning (cf. the alternatives of למען and יען). The clause then refers to the northern king’s inability to deal with the commander’s response to his original challenge. Ozanne (“Three Textual Problems,” 447–48) emends to לבלתי (“by wearing him down”; cf. NEB).

19.a. Reading וישב not וישם with some medieval mss: see n. 18.a.

20.a. נגש usually means “to rule (in a domineering way)”; it can mean “to exact” (Deut 15:2, 3) (see *Comment*).

20.b. There is no preposition; “for” is also possible (NRSV). Plôger takes as direct object (cf. RSV, JB), understanding “the splendor of a kingdom” to be Israel.

20.c. ה מ ח ל מ ב ולא באפים ולא “but [some medieval mss, Syr, Vg omit] not in anger and not in battle”; cf. OG. Th, JB, NEB take אף in an Aram. sense as “face” (*DTT*).

21.a. Or “contemptible” (NRSV) or “worthless” (cf. GNB); but the next clause suggests נבזה means “despised” (cf. Isa 53:3).

22.a. השטף זרעות “the forces of the flood.” NEB repoints to הִשָּׁטֵף, NRSV to הִשָּׁטֹף.

22.b-b ברית נגיד גםו וישברו; NEB emends to . . . גם וישבר, making the covenant leader subject. Suggestively, Goldstein makes the covenant leader (then Menelaus) the subject of vv 23–24 (*II Maccabees*, 262): but the transition after v 24 is difficult.

23.a. מן rarely means “after” (NIV) except with temporal expressions such as יום.

23.b-b. ועצם ועלה “come up and grow powerful.”

24.a. See n. 8:25.c. RSV links with v 23, Syr omits.

24.b. The best of the possible translations (cf. EVV) of מדינה משמני in the context of vv 23–24 (see *Comment*), following on from v 23b (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

25.a. NEB repoints to וְיָעֻר, “he will be aroused [in].”

25.b. Lit., “his heart will be against” (cf. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, and n. 28.b-b).

26.a. פת־בגו ואכלי perhaps belongs to the end of v 25 as the subject of יחשבו (“[people . . .] will devise”) (BHS, though there is no need to delete the emphatic ו). On פת־בג see n. 1:5.b.

26.b. Qal ישטוף (cf. vv 10, 40) can hardly have the usual meaning “overflow” either transitively or intransitively (against Barthélemy). But שטף can mean “wash away” (transitively) (Ezek 16:9), to which this occurrence can be taken as an intransitive correspondent; there is no need to assimilate to the niphal of v 22 (against BHS).

28.a. The northern king. See n. 4.b.

28.b-b ועשה קדש ברית לע ולבבו “and his heart [will be] against a holy covenant, and he will act.” I ignore MT punctuation and assume that he takes this action on the way home; the last clause in v 28 is then resumptive.

29.a. With Th against EVV: see Hanhart, “Die Übersetzungstechnik der Septuaginta.”

30.a. כתים, originally a town in Cyprus, then a term for the island as a whole, then for “Cyprus and beyond,” and later for Rome (cf. OG, Vg).

30.b-b. ועשה . . . וזעם “and he will be harsh . . . and he will act.” Antiochus’s harshness is hardly his personal rage at his humiliation in Egypt; the word denotes the harshness of his actions as experienced by his victims rather than his personal feelings. Cf. the noun in v 36; 8:19.

30.c. The balanced arrangement of clause(s) in v 30 (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*) suggests that ושב belongs with what precedes (against MT).

31.a. Grammatically it is easiest to take מעוז as a description of the sanctuary, but it is an odd word to use of it and historically it refers more easily to the citadel near the temple (see *Comment*).

31.b. משומם השקוץ: as in 8:13 (see n. 8:13.e) the participle lacks the article but it is here poel, while פשע is replaced by שקוץ.

32.a. ברית מרשיעי (cf. 1QM 1.2): giving the verb its usual meaning in Daniel and taking the construct as defining (cf. RV; GKC 116h, 128x). But “such as wrong a covenant” (cf. the use of הכשיל in Mal 2:8) or “such as condemn a covenant” are possible. “Covenant” might virtually mean “covenant people”; but “such among the covenant people who act faithlessly” (partitive) is unlikely, as the phrase denotes the people referred to in v 30b and the celestial being would hardly make a point of stating that they belong to the covenant people.

32.b. יחניף; the verb suggests keeping the outward form of a faith that one has really given up.

32.c. It is perhaps significant that ידע appears here in a covenant/treaty context (cf. Huffmon, “The Treaty Background of Hebrew *yāda*‘”).

32.d. ועשו יחזקו “display strength and act.”

33.a. The more common meaning of the hiphil verb in BH, though participle ל כי ש מ commonly means “teacher” at Qumran (Kosmala, “Maśkîl,” 240). While the phrase might refer to all those who acknowledge their God (v 32; Delcor), more naturally it suggests a group among the conservative Jews.

33.b. See n. 9:27.b.

33.c. There is a troubling paronomasia between “discerning” (ל כ ש) and “fall” (כשל) (vv, 33, 34, 35) (cf. JB). כשל can mean “be caused to sin” (Jer 18:15; Mal 2:8) but this ill fits the context.

33.d. 6QDan, G have “and.”

34.a. Or “strength”: see Miller, “Ugaritic *q́zr* and Hebrew ‘*zr* ii,” 171.

34.b. As an understanding of בחלקלקות, covert support (JB) is less likely than covert hostility, as in v 21 (and cf. v 32 בחלקות).

35.a. The many potentially insincere adherents of v 34b are a more plausible antecedent for בהם than the discerning of v 35a (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*).

35.b-b. כי קץ עת עד; NEB reverses the last two words.

35.c. If “it” is the final moment; “last for” if “it” is the persecution.

36.a. [ים]אל refers to subordinate heavenly beings; English “god[s]” in relation to “God” gives just the right impression.

36.b. כלה: perhaps wrath on the northern king being “full and ready to be expressed” (cf. 1 Sam 25:17) (so JB), or being “fully expressed, poured out” (cf. Ezek 5:13; 2 Chr 36:22), but more likely wrath on Israel being “exhausted, at an end” (cf. Isa 10:25; Dan 8:19). See n. 9:24.d.

36.c-c. נעשתה נחרצה כי: perfect of certitude, as following כי and as paralleling the imperfect after נחרצה in 9:27 (cf. GKC 106n), rather than “when what is determined is done.”

37.a. More likely s. than pl., as the standard BH expression for “the God of his fathers” (Bunge, “Der ‘Gott der Festungen,’” 170): see *Comment*.

37.b. Grammatically נשים חמדת “the love of women” could be objective genitive “love for women,” but this does not fit contextually.

37.c-c. 2 medieval mss omit (cf. OG).

38.a. כנו על: the antecedent is “his fathers’ god,” the one this new god replaces. “On his stand” (Hartman/Di Lella) involves reordering the words to fit the context, and the meaning as in vv 7, 20, 21 is more natural.

38.b. מעזים אלה, lit. “god of strongholds,” preceded by ל marking the object (BDB, 512).

38.c. Taking the ו as explicative (cf. NEB): see n. 6:29.a.

39.a. ל עשה: as with other occurrences of עשה in chap. 11, the verb’s meaning is further defined by the following verb(s), with which it forms a compound idea. See also Josh 8:2 for the construction in v 39 (Keil).

39.b. Taking מבצרי as pl. of extension/amplification (cf. GKC 124abe), referring to Jerusalem (Lacocque).

39.c. עִם “with.” NEB, NAB, JB repoint עַם to provide עשה with an object, but the resultant expression is dubious, and see n. 39.a.

39.d. הכיר אשר; JPSV, JB “the man who regards him,” but this changes subject between this verb and the next one and changes number between this word and the following verb’s suffix. Q יכיר looks like a correction of K הכיר (Bevan).

39.e. וחלק, following its extraposed object (cf. *TTH* 123).

40.a. ועבר ושטף “and pour through and overwhelm.”

41.a. רַבּוֹת, apparently referring to the ארצות of v 40. EVV repoint רִבּוֹת “ten thousands” (so Sym; cf. n. 12.d).

41.b. Taking the clause beginning ואלה as circumstantial.

41.c. ראשית suggests the flower of a people (Pss 78:51; 105:36; Baldwin). Syr implies שארית “remnant”; but cf. Num 24:20; Jer 49:35; Amos 6:1.

42.a. The phrase can indicate plotting rather than action (Tawill, “Two Notes,” 36), but the usage is rarer and not indicated by the context here.

42.b. בַארצות; some medieval mss בָארצות

43.a. במצעדיו: Kopf (“Arabische Etymologien,” 272–73) translates “to his power,” on the basis of Arabic.

44.a. Driver (“Hebrew Homonyms,” 56–59) derives ולהחרים from חרם ii “cut off” not חרם i “devote” (see BDB).

45.a. אפדנו אהלי, “the tents of his pavilion.” אפדנו comes from a Persian word for a colonnaded audience hall; it entered Aram. via late Babylonian (see Itō, Old Persian a pa da a na”; Wagner, *Aramaismen*, 28). On the magnificent palace complexes at Susa and Persepolis see Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 272–87; Cook, *The Persian Empire*, 158–63.

45.b. Taking ימים “seas” as pl. of extension (cf. GKC 124b) and as referring to the Mediterranean (as Judg 5:17; cf. Montgomery). NIV “between the seas, at …” is possible, but its reference is unclear.

12:1.a. That is, one of the supreme heavenly beings (not the sole one), several of whom appear in chaps. 8 and 10.

1.b. על העמד; cf. NEB “who stands guard over.”

1.c. עמך בני “the sons of your people.” There is no reason to limit the phrase’s reference to the seer’s own group (Collins, “The Mythology of Holy War,” 603, against Plöger).

1.d. But see n. 2:1.c.

1.e. Grammatically it is easier to take גוי as subject of היות (EVV), but taking it as complement gives a better meaning (Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife*, 339).

2.a. “Many who sleep” (which might then mean “all who sleep”—all Jews or all people) would require taking מן as explicative, which is rare (BDB, 581), unlikely with רבים (contrast Qoh 3:12; Esth 8:17; 2 Chr 30:18), and not indicated by the context.

2.b. עפר אדמת: not “the dust of the earth,” both because of the word order, and because עפר means “soil” (Hartman/Di Lella, cf. BDB) and this translation is more natural in a quasi-geographical expression (Nickelsburg, *Resurrection,* 17). Talmon (“Double Readings,” 167–68) takes the phrase as a conflation of two readings. Doukhan (“From Dust to Stars,” 90) links the strange expression to Gen 3:19 where the words come in this order.

2.c. Alfrink (“L’idée de résurrection”) begins a new clause here, “they will go to lasting life, while others will go to utter shame,” though the second lacks an antecedent (Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*). The idea of the wicked being awakened in order to be exposed and condemned seems bizarre, but the idea of exposure and condemnation after death without such awakening is little less so, and the problem arises from taking vv 1–2 literalistically. The notion of a double resurrection is not clearly stated elsewhere for two centuries (2 Esd 7:32–44; Rev 20).

2.d. עולם: see on 2:20.

2.e. לחרפות (“to shames,” pl. of amplification—GKC 124e); perhaps a gloss on the less familiar דראון (“abhorrence,” only here and Isa 66:24).

3.a. Cf. Wolters, “Zōhar Hārāqîa,‘” for the meaning “luminary”; his specific reference to Halley’s Comet is less convincing (cf. Lucas, *Daniel*, 263).

3.b. Or “vindicate,” a common meaning of הצדיק in Dan 7–12. “Justify” in the sense of “atone for” (Delcor) is not suggested by the context.

4.a. ישׁטטו: BHS suggests emending to ישׂטטו “will fall away.” שׁטט can hardly refer to searching the book (against Delcor).

4.b. EVV “knowledge” fits ill in the context; hence JB’s “wickedness,” emending דעת to רעה (cf. OG). Rather follow NEB in linking דעת to a ידע ii meaning “be still, submissive” different from ע ד י “know” (cf. Thomas, “Note on הדעת in Daniel xii.4”; Emerton, “A Consideration of Some Alleged Meanings of ידע in Hebrew,” 150, 177; Day, “Da‘at ‘Humiliation,’” 98–99).

5.a. Not נהר as in 10:4 but יאר, a loan-word from Egyptian, usually referring to the Nile, derived here from the Joseph story (see the several verbal links between 12:5–7 and Gen 41:1; cf. n. 6.a-a).

6.a-a. היאר למימי ממעל “above in relation to the waters of the river”—but this hardly means in the air (against EVV); cf. n. 9:21.c-c., also על in Gen 41:1.

6.b. Taking ויאמר as indefinite 3rd s. (cf. GKC 144d), rather than inferring that one of the figures in v 5 is the subject (NIV, JB); cf. Gen 19:17; 38:28. There is no need to emend to ואמר (NEB, RSV, cf. OG—but the versional evidence is uncertain (Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l’AT* 3:494).

6.c. At Qumran קץ often means “time,” which is possible here; but “end” fits well (cf. vv 7–9) and corresponds to usage elsewhere in Daniel.

7.a. See n. 4:16.a.

7.b. נַפֵּץ: the Heb. is unusual and often emended (NEB נִפֹּץ, JB נֹפֵץ, interchanged with the next word יד), but no one emendation carries conviction. NEB also derives the word from נפץ ii “scatter” not נפץ i “shatter.”

7.c. ככלות: “stopped” rather than “brought to completion” (so NIV?); see n. 9:24.d-d.

8.a. אחרית, not קץ “end”: cf. Driver.

9.a. Paul (“Daniel 12:9”) identifies this double expression as the equivalent of a technical Akkadian term.

10.a. Rhythm and parallelism suggest taking v 10 as a double bicolon, which works abb’a’.

10.b. יצרפו; C יתצרפו, 4QFlor יצטרפו, both hitpael.

10.c. “Explain [it]” (Lebram, “The Piety of the Jewish Apocalyptists,” 179) is oversubtle, esp. given the rarity of בין hiphil used absolutely.

13.a. G omits לקץ (“until the end”—i.e., your death), which might be dittog from the next line.

13.b. עמד is used as an equivalent to קום in Late Biblical Hebrew (BDB, 764a).

## Form/Structure/Setting

### Form

See chap. 2 *Form*. Dan 10–12 is the report of a vision and auditory experience given to a human being by a supernatural being. The vision prepares for the auditory experience rather than conveying the content of the revelation, as a prophetic vision does; the revelation’s content lies in the auditory event.[[591]](#footnote-591) The content is expressed less allusively and more directly than is the case in any of the other visions. While chaps. 10–12 include some mythic motifs, in general they communicate more by means of ciphers and less by means of symbols than the preceding visions do.

The revelatory message concerns present, past, and future, illustrating how apocalypses have a much broader interest than the preoccupation with questions about the future that is often attributed to them.[[592]](#footnote-592) But the central part of the auditory revelation is a regnal prophecy outlining the rise, activities, achievements, and fall of a series of kings, who are unnamed but can be identified on the basis of the events referred to. Thus “this vision is more firmly and obviously rooted in human history than any of the others,” [[593]](#footnote-593) even though it names no names.

Such prophecies have no parallels elsewhere in the OT, but have a number outside it from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece, from the late second millennium to the Hellenistic period. An Assyrian example reads:

… A ruler will arise, he will rule for thirteen years.

There will be an attack of Elam against Akkad, and

the booty of Akkad will be carried off.

The temples of the great gods will be destroyed, the defeat of Akkad will be decreed [by the gods].

There will be confusion, disturbance, and unhappy events in the land, and

the reign will diminish [in power]; another man, whose name is not mentioned [as a successor] will arise, and

will seize the throne as king and will put to death his officials….[[594]](#footnote-594)

These texts are for the most part quasi-predictionrather than actual prediction. They combine extensive quasi-prediction of events before the writer’s day with more limited actual prediction of events still to come. The formulae and the detail in the texts compare with Daniel; so does the anti-Hellenistic nature of instances from this period. On Grayson’s interpretation, the “Dynastic Prophecy” from the Hellenistic age, which covers the history of the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic empires, ends in a way that is particularly similar to Dan 10–12, with an actual prediction of the fall of the Seleucid empire and a rubric regarding keeping the prophecy secret.[[595]](#footnote-595)

As is the case with other parts of the OT, Dan 11 becomes clearer when seen against its ancient Near Eastern background. As with other such parallels, the implication is not that the quasi-predictions in Daniel are directly dependent on such Assyrian texts,[[596]](#footnote-596) but this material does indicate that in their context the Danielic visions would be mostly quasi-prediction. We would require evidence if we were to think that the author has turned a known way of formulating quasi-predictions into a way of giving actual predictions, for which there are no parallels in the OT. “The burden of proof must fall on those who wish to argue that Daniel is different from the other examples of the genre.”[[597]](#footnote-597) The difference in Daniel’s theology does not invalidate this assumption;[[598]](#footnote-598) these quasi-predictions “are distinctively Jewish, yet are a Jewish form of a widespread contemporary phenomenon.”[[599]](#footnote-599)

In unveiling its revelation, chaps. 10–12 take up motifs from chap. 7: with 7:25 compare the characterization of the northern king in 11:36 and the limit placed on the time of trouble in 12:7. It has further links with chap. 9: with the account of Daniel’s preparation for and receiving of his revelation in 9:3, 21–23 compare 10:1–3, 9–11; with the content of the revelation in 9:24–27, compare 11:10, 16, 22, 31, 36 (floodlike destruction, the removal of the anointed/leader, the suspension of regular sacrifices and the desolating abomination, the implementing of what has been determined). Many of these motifs have also appeared in chap. 8, and it is with chap. 8 that chaps. 10–12 have most detailed points of contact. Indeed, reminiscences of almost every verse of chap. 8 reappear here.[[600]](#footnote-600) One can thus see chaps. 10–12 as a reworking of those earlier visions, and in particular of chap. 8.[[601]](#footnote-601)

Like the previous visions, Dan 10–12 is also shaped by earlier scriptures; it is in part another situational midrash. Clearest influence in chap. 10 is exercised by the accounts of God’s appearing in Ezek 1–3; 9–10:[[602]](#footnote-602) the detailed chronological reference, the river setting, the man dressed in linen, each detail of his description (v 6), Daniel’s reaction (v 9), the man’s response (vv 10–11), and the one of human appearance (דמות, v 16). Behind Ezekiel’s description of his receiving his vision is a long tradition concerning the seeking and receiving of oracles, going back to Mari.[[603]](#footnote-603) The address of the supernatural being as “my lord” corresponds to Zech 1:9; 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4; his rhetorical question in v 20 also compares with such questions in Zech 1–6, and his touching Daniel corresponds to Jer 1 and Isa 6, though with different significance. For v 14, cf. Gen 49:1.

Some key words in Dan 11 parallel the warning of Jerusalem’s destruction in Ezek 7:19–27: the temple as the fairest (v 16) will be attacked by violators (v 14); people who seek a vision (v 14) will fall over (כשל, v 14) the stumbling block (מכשל) of their iniquity; the sanctuary/strong[hold] will be desecrated by abominations and made a desolation (v 31); people will hear reports that alarm them (v 44). More generally, the vision takes up aspects of Isaiah that may have seemed enigmatic: in light of events, the seer seeks, receives, and relates illumination on what these texts now signify. Thus he begins in 10:1 with allusions to Isa 40:1–11 with its references to conflict/servitude (צבא, v 2), to the reliability of God’s message (v 8), and to something being revealed (v 5); for the vision’s setting in the reign of Cyrus, compare Isa 45:1.[[604]](#footnote-604) The body of the revelation reflects the influence of earlier passages from Isaiah concerning the Assyrians, upon which Dan 11 is an actualizing commentary in the manner of the Qumran literature.[[605]](#footnote-605) Allusions to armies flooding through the land and to many stumbling and falling (vv 10, 18-19, 22, 26, 33-35, 40) recall Isa 8:7–8, 14-15. The characterization of the last northern king (vv 36–39) recalls that of the Assyrians in Isa 10, especially vv 5–6, 12, 15 (cf. 14:12-15; 33:10),[[606]](#footnote-606) while the desolations that are determined (v 36) reflect Isa 10:22–26 (cf. 28:22). See also Isa 7:5-7 (cf. v 17), 17:12 (cf. v 10), 30:18 (cf. 12:12); 34:17 (cf. 11:39; 12:13). Phrases from servant passages in Isa 40–55 appear at several points. Clearest are allusions to Isa 52:13–53:12 in 12:1–4: the role of the discerning (משכילים, cf. Isa 52:13 ישכיל); their setting the multitude right (cf. 53:11); also perhaps their shining like stars (cf. 53:11 1QIsaa);[[607]](#footnote-607) and the increase in דעת (“suffering” [see n. 12:4.b], cf. Isa 53:11).[[608]](#footnote-608) See also 10:8, the seer’s face being disfigured (משחית, cf. Isa 52:14); 11:12 (נשא and ירום, cf. Isa 52:13); and 11:22, 28, 30, 32 for the use of “covenant” to refer to people (cf. Isa 42:6; 49:8).[[609]](#footnote-609)

From other passages in the prophets and elsewhere, 11:20 contrasts with Zech 9:8, and 11:21 with 1 Chr 29:25. The end awaiting its time (10:14; 11:27, 35; cf. 8:17) takes up Hab 2:3. The ships from Kittim (11:30) are those of the prophecy in Num 24:24. The account of the last northern king’s end (11:40–45) is shaped as a whole as well as in specific detail by the OT tradition of the attack of a gentile foe who is defeated and killed near the gates of Jerusalem (e.g., Pss 2; 46; 48; 76), a tradition already reworked in prophetic passages such as Isa 10; 14:24–25; 31; Ezek 38–39; Joel 2:20; Zech 14,[[610]](#footnote-610) as well as by the prophetic portrayals of judgment on Egypt (Isa 19; Jer 43:8–13; 46; Ezek 29–32; and for the Libyans and Sudanese, e.g., Nah 3:9, but also Ezek 30:5 [see BHS]).

In chap. 12, the time of trouble (v 1) recalls Jer 30:7. The awakening of some who sleep in the dirt and the consigning of some to abhorrence (v 2) combines phrases from Isa 26:19 and 66:24; Isa 26:17–21 also includes the ideas of an experience of trouble and of the punishment of the wicked.[[611]](#footnote-611) The hurrying to and fro during the time that God’s words are hidden (v 4) takes up Amos 8:12. Expressions and ideas in 12:1-2 take up Gen 3 and other passages that talk about lasting death and lasting life.[[612]](#footnote-612)

Dan 10–12 is situational midrash rather than expository midrash; its starting point is questions raised by present experience, which the interpreter seeks to address by means of the scriptures, rather than questions raised by studying the text in its own right. Or perhaps we may say that it resolves one problem, the apparent meaninglessness of present history, by first bringing to the surface a second, the enigmas of ancient prophecy, and solves both problems by setting them alongside each other. The seer promises that the ancient word is to be fulfilled or filled out in a way that will restore meaning to present experience. The anthologizing of the scriptures that has been a feature of chaps. 7–9 becomes central in chaps. 10–12: it enables the seer to develop a systematic interpretation of past, present, and future that will help his people to live with them.

The quasi-predictions contribute to this process by interpreting recent history in light of the scriptures. They are not engaged in apologetics, in proving something, but in theological need.[[613]](#footnote-613) Nor must it be the case that a pretended ability to predict the future in 11:2–39 gives grounds for believing the actual predictions in 11:40–12:3. Rather, the quasi-predictions’ ability to make sense of the past, by relating it in the light of the scriptures, implies grounds for trusting the actual predictions’ portrait of what the future will bring, a portrait painted in the light of the same scriptures. When they speak about the past, they do so on the basis of having historical data and scriptural text as a means of interpretation. When they speak about the future, they have only scriptural text. The seer “did not draw a clear-cut line between past and contemporaneous events which already had been realized in accordance with God’s *predestined* course of history, and the impending eschatological events predicted by the prophets, whose words were *iinspired* by the same Lord.”[[614]](#footnote-614)The seer is then providing an imaginary scenario, a possible embodiment of that text. It is not to be pressed to provide (or be judged by) literal historical data, any more than is the case with the prophets. Its object is not to provide literal historical facts but to provide scriptural interpretation of the events that will come. While the seer implicitly wishes to commend a certain form of behavior, namely, resistance to Seleucid/reformist pressures, his explicit focus is cognitive. He aims to provide a way for conservative Jews to understand their present experience, by looking at it in light of some scriptural texts.

The supernatural being provides this understanding for the seer (10:1, 14); the “discerning” provide it for the multitude (11:33). While aspects of his and their ideas may have a Persian background, there are no clear pointers in this direction. At Qumran, the dualism of light and darkness, Michael and Belial, represents a way of thinking that might more plausibly be thought to indicate Persian influence.[[615]](#footnote-615) There is apparently no Persian equivalent to the idea of heavenly beings identified with particular peoples,[[616]](#footnote-616) which is more likely a development of OT ideas (e.g., Deut 32:8 4QDeut, LXX). The picture of the celestial beings’ activities in 10:13; 10:20–11:1, and of the discerning who join them in 12:1–3, provides crucial insight on the “metaphysical backdrop” to current events.[[617]](#footnote-617) The picture likely reflects visionary experience of the kind chaps. 10–12 testify to, building on scriptural reflection. The promise of resurrection in chap. 12 conflates the prophetic eschatological hope and its stress on the realization of God’s sovereignty in relation to Israel as a whole with the concern for the destiny of the individual characteristic of the wisdom tradition and the Psalms.[[618]](#footnote-618) It does not require an explanation in terms of Persian influence.[[619]](#footnote-619) If extra-Israelite traditions appear, they are old Canaanite ideas about human life being subsumed into the life of the celestial world.[[620]](#footnote-620) The evidence for Egyptian background for the portrait of Antiochus[[621]](#footnote-621) is rather circumstantial.

### Structure

MT divides the section as 10:1-3; 10:4-45; 11:1—12:3; and 12:4-13, possibly a slightly more illuminating understanding than that of the medieval chapter divisions in printed English and Hebrew Bibles. I understand the structure of the section approximately as follows.

10:1 Narrative introduction and summary

10:2–19 Opening appearance of supernatural beings

2–3 Seer’s preparation

4–19 Appearing and address of supernatural being

4–6 Appearing

7–9 Daniel’s response

7–8 to the sight

9 to the sound

10–11 Twofold elevation of Daniel

12–14 Preliminary address by supernatural being

15–17 Daniel’s response to the address

18–19 Reassurance of Daniel

10:20–12:4 Main address by supernatural being

10:20–11:2a Introduction

11:2b–12:3 Announcement of events to come

11:2b Persian kings

11:3–4 A warrior king

11:5–19 Conflicts of southern and northern kings

5 Rise of the southern king’s lieutenant

6 Alliance between north and south

7–8a Invasion by the southern king

8b–9 Invasion by the northern king

10–12 Further invasion by the northern kings

13–15 Further invasion by the northern king

16–19 The northern king’s triumph and eventual fall

11:20 A northern king who sends round an oppressor

11:21–45 The last northern king

21–24 His rise and success (until a certain time)

25–28 His invasion of the south and his attack on a covenant (but the end waits)

29–35 His further invasion and attacks (at the set moment; but the end still waits)

36–39 His attack on God (until wrath is complete)

40–45 His last invasion, attack, and fall (at the time of the end)

12:1–3 The deliverance of the faithful (at that time)

12:4 Conclusion

12:5–13 Closing dialogue with supernatural beings

5 Their appearing

6–7 Seer overhears their conversation

8 Seer asks for explanation of it

9–13 Closing address by supernatural being

9 Command to seer and explanation

10–12 Summary announcements of events to come

13 Command to seer and promise

The narrative introduction and summary (10:1) emphasize the importance of this final vision; it is the first third-person introduction since chap. 7. They also introduce some suspense into the section as they hint allusively at the content that will follow. The elaborate opening appearance of supernatural being(s) and the dialogue with the seer (10:2–19) further underline the authority and significance of the revelation’s content. Daniel’s apprehensiveness and reluctance on account of his sense of unworthiness parallel features of prophetic call narratives and thus imply that the revelation has prophetic authority.[[622]](#footnote-622) The dialogue also opens up a key point of substance regarding the perspective on history to which the revelation invites its audience (v 13), and perhaps implies an anticipatory contrast with the action of the last northern king in 11:20–45: whereas he will seek to storm heaven and will be put down, heaven reaches down to Daniel and he hesitates to raise his head but is lifted up. There is contact between earth and heaven, in the experience of the seer and in the realities of his people’s history.

The main address opens (10:20–11:2a) by recapitulating this point and by emphasizing the reliability of what is to follow. Its announcement of events to come begins with a series of kings who seem to have the capacity to achieve much, but who eventually fail or fall (11:2b–9). There follows a northern king—not clearly distinguished from his predecessors—who foreshadows acts of the last northern king (11:10–19) by his two campaigns against a southern king, his being checked by a third force, his receiving support among Daniel’s own people, and his campaigning in the fairest land. Another northern king foreshadows a different aspect of the last king’s activity, his violation of the Jerusalem temple; he, too, then falls (11:20). The main address comes to a climax with a lengthy description of the last northern king (11:21–45), whose career follows that of his foreshadowing types, but goes beyond it—he acts “as his fathers did not”—in his achievement, his intrigues, his campaigns, his unconscious fulfillment of the scriptures, his dealings with a covenant people and their sanctuary, his god-like and god-defying assertiveness, his plunder, and his fall. The momentousness as well as the divine determination of his reign is marked by recurrent references to waiting for the “set moment.”[[623]](#footnote-623) The “rise” of a quite different leader, with the deliverance of the faithful who have been under attack during the last king’s reign, completes the announcement of events to come (12:1–3; MT puts a petuchah here). These verses manifest features of poetry (rhythm, parallelism, metaphor, simile), which emphasize their significance at the high point of the main address, as happens with the other visions.[[624]](#footnote-624) The main address is closed off with words to Daniel (12:4). The vision then returns to the dialogue between seer and supernatural figures with which it began (12:5–13). The function of this further dialogue is to add reassurance regarding the limits set to the events that have been presaged, and to stiffen the resolve of those who will be put under pressure by them.[[625]](#footnote-625)

Chaps. 10–12 are again written in idiosyncratic Hebrew influenced by Aramaic and perhaps translated from Aramaic.[[626]](#footnote-626) They include a number of instances of extraposed phrases (casus pendens) followed by *waw* (11:5, 7, 17), of emphatic *waw* (11:6, 15), and of the combining of עשה and another verb in hendiadys (11:7, 30, 32, cf 28). At the same time, chap. 11 in particular is characterized by the use of a variety of terms within certain fields of meaning that help give it a particular cast: terms suggesting royal authority and power (√מלך, √משל, תקף, יד, כח, זרוע), its acts and achievements (עשה [כרצון], חזק, בשלוה, עשר, לבבו, ירום, גדל, רב, פנים שים, חלקלקות), the rise and fall of kings and their empires ([כנו לע] עמד, כשל, נפל, שבר, נתש, חצה, כח, עצר), military matters (חיל, המון, שר, מבצר, מעוז, אף, מלחמה), military action, victory, and defeat (ב בא, נלחם, עור, גרה, סלל, שטף, מעוז, שבר, נתן, נשא), and movement more generally (בא, יצא, שוב).[[627]](#footnote-627) Family words are drawn in, often in the context of the making of alliances (בת, ההילד, אבות, אחרית, זרע, חבר, ישרים[מ]), as are religious terms such as words for God, gods, idols, and sacred vessels, and expressions for time (עת, שנים, קץ, מועד). Several words appear with particular frequency: עמד (arise/stand/raise, sixteen times), בא (come/attack/bring, twelve times), שוב (turn/return/do again, twelve times), עשה (make/act/do, ten times). These verbal phenomena contribute to the drawing of patterns in history: for example, kings who seem to have the power to do as they will but who are then frustrated and fall (vv 3, 16, 36); kings who seek to seal alliances by means of marriages, and fail (vv 6, 17); more generally, the ceaseless movement and warring between north and south, the unending rise and fall of rulers and empires with their awesome power and authority yet their less acknowledged constraints and transience. Some of the terms are taken on from chap. 10 into chap. 11 or from chap. 11 into chap. 12 (e.g., עמד; חזק and other terms for strength);[[628]](#footnote-628) they thus establish links and contrasts between the different forms of strength and authority that the chapters portray. The book of Daniel “redefines ‘strength’ for the faithful in stark contrast to that of the battling powers of Antiochus and his armies.”[[629]](#footnote-629)

On the basis of overlaps, repetitions, and unevennesses, it has been suggested that an earlier form of the section lacked some of 10:1; 10:20–11:1; 12:5–13, in whole or in part, or conversely lacked the bulk of chap. 11,[[630]](#footnote-630) along with some explanatory phrases such as “the northern king” in 11:11 (BHS) and the explicit reference in Egypt in 11:8.[[631]](#footnote-631) Carroll looks at the developing sequence of estimated periods in 12:7, 11–12 in the light of Festinger’s studies of how groups cope with nonfulfillment of prophecies.[[632]](#footnote-632)

### Setting

The Hellenistic period has been described as one of secularization, materialism, economic activity, exploitation, and militarization,[[633]](#footnote-633) and more of the elements in such a profile are visible as the background of chaps. 10–12 than were visible in earlier chapters. While Greek rule and culture thus had a profound influence on Palestine, Ba‘al Šamem is a Syrian god, and the Antiochene period once more brings to a head questions about the relationship between Israel’s faith and that of other Middle Eastern religions, as well as its relationship to Hellenism.[[634]](#footnote-634) The chapters’ specific historical setting at the point where quasi-prediction gives way to actual prediction lies after the outbreak of resistance to Antiochus IV some time between 167 and 164. It reflects the beliefs and pressures of conservative Jews, who might be identified with the “ḥasidim” or “committed” of 1 Macc 2:42. The ḥasidim can later be divided into more and less militarist groups; here this division is possible but not explicit. Although the ḥasidim may be characterized as a transformationist sect set over against reformist Jews (see chap. 7 *Setting*), their emphasis on the multitude, the main body of the community, indicates that they had a vision for the people as a whole; in this sense their mentality was not sectarian.[[635]](#footnote-635) They are anti-Seleucid but not explicitly anti-Hellenistic or pro-Ptolemaic. Dan 10:2–3 suggests that the group was one that respected “mantic activity” in the sense of the attempt to open oneself to God in a way that might lead to God revealing something.

Stylistic differences in chaps. 10—12 may indicate a different author from that of previous chapters,[[636]](#footnote-636) but if so, the author comes from the same group. The chapters gain special emphasis by their length and their location at the end of the book. Their introduction is particularly complex and awesome, with a number of celestial beings involved. It provides a concrete “metaphysical backdrop” to the quasi-prediction in chap. 11.[[637]](#footnote-637) Following on the symbolic dream and vision of chaps. 7 and 8 and the still cryptic scriptural exposition of chap. 9, chap. 11 offers the plainest and most clear-cut of the quasi-predictions, explaining and decoding what precedes.[[638]](#footnote-638) The account of the End in 11:40—12:3 complements the earlier portrait of the lasting reign of the holy ones, the vindication of the temple, and the downfall of the desolater, by working out some of their implications for people whom death seems to rob of the chance to see or share in them. Throughout, links with the earlier visions are pointed up by links of vocabulary, with a possible implication that Daniel “grows” as a seer through the book.[[639]](#footnote-639) The repeated concluding instructions (12:4, 9, 13) enhance a sense that the book is coming to its end,[[640]](#footnote-640) and “mention of Daniel’s death in 12:13 clearly indicates the closure of the book.”[[641]](#footnote-641)

This closing section of Daniel also links back to its opening chapter. 10:1 introduces chaps. 10–12 as a story about Daniel like chaps. 1–6, uses the name Belteshazzar, refers to Cyrus, and relates an incident in the king’s third year (cf. 1:1, 7, 21). 10:2–3 recalls 1:8–16 as well as 9:3. We are to read a vision received by the hero portrayed in chaps. 1–6.[[642]](#footnote-642) It is a vision relating to leaders experiencing the same afflictions as are described in chaps. 1–6—sword (2:6, 12–13), fire (chap. 3), exile (chap. 1), and becoming prey (chap. 6): see 11:33. They are confronting an overweening king like the kings of chaps. 4–5: see 11:36. If he does not turn like the first king, he will fall like the second king. They are challenged to acknowledge their God and offer firm resistance (cf. chaps. 3; 6) and to purify themselves (cf. chap. 1): see 11:32, 35; 12:10. They are to be steadfast in sharing the fruits of their discernment (cf. chaps. 1–2; 4–5, especially the use of שכל and בין in 1:4, 17, 20): see 11:33. The promise of resurrection in chap. 12 takes up the motif of miraculous deliverance from death in chaps. 3 and 6.[[643]](#footnote-643)

## Comment

**10:1** The opening verse summarizes chaps. 10–12 as a whole by introducing the motifs of the trustworthy revelation that comes to Daniel, the conflicts chap. 11 describes, and the understanding Daniel then receives. The date “in the third year of Cyrus” fits the pattern of other Danielic dates (see 1:1 *Comment*, 2:1 *Comment*) but it may be significant in its own right: it takes us beyond the first year of Cyrus mentioned in 1:21, which should herald the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s seventy-years prophecy and the restoration of the temple as the exiles are free to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1–3), into and apparently beyond “the second year of their arrival” (Ezra 3:8), when they were able to begin the restoration but were soon caused to give up (Ezra 4:24). The disappointment associated with the beginning of Israel’s restoration from exile is countered by a promise of final restoration (12:1–3).[[644]](#footnote-644)

**10:2–3** The date thus provides the background to the “mourning” of vv 2–3, which emerges from a context parallel to that of 9:1–2 and has similar significance to Daniel’s seeking God in 9:3 (see 9:3–23 *Comment* [h]). Mourning (אבל) is the response to the state of Jerusalem in Isa 66:10; see also 60:20; 61:2–3; Neh 1:4; 8:9. There is less ground here than in chap. 9 for taking the mourning to denote penance (against JB). As in chap. 9, mourning expresses itself in fasting in the sense of abstention from festal food and even from the everyday grooming of a respectable person (2 Sam 12:20; 14:2; Qoh 9:7–10; Jdt 10:3). The three-week period will be explained by v 13; Daniel commits himself to fasting until he gets a response from God. There is also perhaps an implication that Daniel’s self-affliction goes far beyond the three-day periods of Exod 19:10–16; Esth 4:16.[[645]](#footnote-645)

**10:4** The date implies that Daniel’s fast will have included the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread, which Antiochus “turned into mourning” as he made them impossible of proper observance (1 Macc 1:39, 45). Daniel shares in anticipation in this “mourning.” Twenty-four days also equals 3 1/2 weeks, which might indicate that the vision comes halfway through a week of years.[[646]](#footnote-646)

**10:5–6** The appearing of the man in linen (vv 5–6) reflects that of the supernatural beings in Ezek 1; 9–10 (see *Form*). Linen is the garb of a priest; here as in Ezek 9–10 the servants of the heavenly temple concern themselves with the affairs of its earthly equivalent. The details of the description in v 6, as in Ezek 1, combine to suggest the impression of the dazzling brightness and awesome splendor of a heavenly being.

**10:7–19** This effect continues in the description of the dismayed reactions of Daniel’s companions and of Daniel himself to the sight and sound reported in vv 4–6, and the stages by which Daniel is restored. The man in linen is not described as a “holy one,” but the verses illustrate “the idea of the holy” as suggesting fundamentally a splendor that inspires awe rather than a purity that evokes an awareness of sin.[[647]](#footnote-647) Daniel is almost seeing God and hearing God, and almost losing his life as a consequence (see Exod 33:20; Deut 4:33; Judg 6:22–23).[[648]](#footnote-648) We are told successively how his companions fled in terror, how Daniel was overcome by weakness, and how he fell into a trance (see 8:18 *Comment*). We are then told successively how he was touched and raised to his hands and knees and then to a standing but bowed position, then touched and enabled to voice his weakness, then touched and encouraged to listen to the messenger. It is perhaps significant that he is now addressed as “man held in high regard” (v 11, contrast 9:23): he has been devastated, given the life of an animal on all fours, then restored to his human standing (cf. chap. 7).[[649]](#footnote-649) “It is especially important that Daniel pay heed to the angel’s words because he is not offering any quick resolution to Daniel’s grief; there are yet many sorrows to come.”[[650]](#footnote-650)

It is not clear how many supernatural beings appear in the section. In 12:5–6 there are two others apart from the man in linen, and so it may be here, but the seer does not make it explicit. The man in linen (vv 5–6) may be Michael (on whom see 7:12-13 *Comment*)and the subsequent speaker may be Gabriel, though—if so—it is odd that the names are not applied to the figures, nor are the links noted (contrast 9:21); nor does the reference to Michael in 10:21 mention his being present. The figure in vv 11-12 has the task of speaking, not acting, and the description of his role corresponds to that of Gabriel in 9:20–23; so also v 14. If Gabriel is the man in linen, then he is being described in more awesome terms than were used of Gabriel previously. They are terms like those used of God in Ezek 1, though they need not indicate that the person is God or represents God (like the messenger of Yahweh, e.g., Gen 16), only that the passages have this literary connection.[[651]](#footnote-651) The man in linen might be the one who spoke with Gabriel in 8:16.[[652]](#footnote-652) There is no reason to link any of the figures here with the humanlike figure of 7:13. Like chap. 7, then, the scene has the allusiveness that often characterizes vision reports and the visionary experience itself, and exegesis has to preserve this allusiveness. It heightens the awesomeness of what is described.

Like other ancient Near Eastern writings, the OT assumes that the results of battles on earth reflect the involvement of heaven. Usually the picture is of heavenly forces aiding Israel and enabling it to win against otherwise overwhelming earthly forces. Yahweh and his armies fight with Israel’s armies: hence Israel’s victories against impossible odds (Num 10:35–36; Deut 33:2–3; Judg 5:19–20; cf. 1QM 12; Hab 3; Ps 68). There is a parallel between the structure of heaven as portrayed in Canaanite myths and as the OT sees it, but in the OT the “gods” are merely the servants of the one Yahweh. The exodus story gives Yahweh’s messenger a key role in connection with Israel’s victorious progress (Exod 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2); the Joshua story pictures the involvement of the commander of Yahweh’s armies (Josh 5:14–15). Where Israel loses, it means he has been fighting against them; other heavenly powers may still be acting as his servants (cf. Deut 29:26; 32:8 4QDeut, LXX; Sirach 17:17). But a few passages suggest that there are heavenly armies that oppose Yahweh, so that earthly battles reflect battles in heaven; whichever side wins in heaven, its equivalent wins on earth. Heavenly beings who oppose Yahweh are destined for punishment (Isa 24:21; Ezek 28, if the leader of Tyre is the heavenly figure who is identified with Tyre; Ps 82; *1 Enoch* 89–90; 2 Macc 5).

It is unclear how the description of affairs in heaven in 10:13 and 10:20–11:1 is to be placed in relation to this broader OT material. The description is again equivocal, though perhaps for reasons different from those that apply to the figure(s) in the vision, if seer and audience could presuppose a frame of reference that clarified what is now unclear to us.

The conflict presupposed here[[653]](#footnote-653) may be a verbal/legal one with the representative of Persia, as in the scenes in Zech 3 and Job 1–2,[[654]](#footnote-654) or one involving a warrior seeking to halt a messenger,[[655]](#footnote-655) or a “physical” struggle between supernatural armies:[[656]](#footnote-656) compare the appearance in the heavenly scene of the Persian kings, presumably heavenly equivalents of the earthly kings who appear in 11:2.[[657]](#footnote-657) The background to the Persian representative’s opposing the messenger may be the earthly conflicts described in Ezra 4,[[658]](#footnote-658) or the conflicts to be announced in chap. 11: the Persian representative will wish to avoid the declaring and thus the implementing of a message that speaks of the fall of the Persian empire, an event associated with the end of the era (v 14).[[659]](#footnote-659)

**10:20–11:2a** Three comments about the messenger’s purpose in coming and his intention with regard to the message (the opening of 10:20, of 10:21, and of 11:2) interweave with two sayings about his conflicts (the bulk of 10:20 and of 10:21–11:1) in an a-b-a-b-a arrangement; cf. the a-b-a arrangement of similar material in 10:12–14. The effect is to tie together the delivering of the earthly message and the significance of the heavenly conflicts. The effect is thus also to underline in another way the message’s importance, if its delivery was worth diverting the messenger’s attention from such crucial conflicts (the sayings about the conflicts are longer and thus more prominent).

In v 20, the details of expression are again allusive, but apparently the verse pictures the messenger returning to resume the fight to ensure that Persia continues to be restrained from adversely affecting God’s purpose (especially for Israel), but then pictures the Greeks in turn taking up their attempt to implement their own will, which also threatens that purpose. The words do not imply that the nations oppose Israel in particular; Israel just happens to be in their way. Chap. 11 implies the same picture. The celestial messenger is not speaking of the imperial nations’ direct concern with Israel which is presupposed elsewhere when the nations are God’s agents in executing his wrath on Israel. The conflict between Persia or Greece and Israel is a political, not a religious one.[[660]](#footnote-660) The messenger is opposing the heavenly correspondents of these earthly powers, supported by Michael (v 21b)—not surprisingly, because the interests that concern the messenger, which focus on the purpose of God himself, are also the interests of Michael’s own people, since they are central to that purpose. There is thus a common interest between the messenger and Michael, which made it appropriate for the messenger to support Michael on another occasion (11:1). This comment might refer to the fall of Babylon to the Medes, an earlier historical event of key importance for Israel (see 5:31 [6:1] *Comment*), or to the deliverance of Daniel (see chap. 6), or to the message in chap. 9 (see 9:1).

The “nevertheless” of v 21 indicates that the messenger is prepared to delay resuming his battles in order to deliver the revelation that follows. For the notion of a book detailing a program of events to take place, cf. the heavenly tablets of *1 Enoch* 81:93;[[661]](#footnote-661) regarding the individual, Ps 139:16.

**11:2b–39** The content of the message constitutes “a deep investigation of the intrinsic structures of history as they are disclosed by the detection of patterns in a detailed chronicle of events.”[[662]](#footnote-662) It combines a considerable amount of historical information on the Persian and Greek periods, especially the reigns of Antiochus III and IV,[[663]](#footnote-663) with interpretation by means of a considerable number of allusions to passages from the scriptures (see *Form*). These allusions may imply that the period’s history is a recapitulation of crises in earlier centuries; typologically the earlier Assyrian enemy from the north stands for the Syrians and Sargon for Antiochus.[[664]](#footnote-664) Or they may portray this period as a fulfillment of prophecies from Isaiah, Habakkuk, Numbers, and elsewhere, in the manner of 1QpHab.[[665]](#footnote-665) Or they may simply illuminate the period without the chapter presupposing a specific hermeneutical link between them and the events. Our chief sources for the history of the events, apart from Daniel itself, are 1 and 2 Maccabees (first century BC), the Greek historians Polybius (second century BC) and Diodorus Siculus (first century BC), the Roman historians Livy (c. 59 BC—AD 17) and Appian (second century AD), the Jewish historian Josephus (first century AD), and the philosopher Porphyry (third century AD) as quoted by Jerome in his commentary on Daniel.[[666]](#footnote-666)

Like narrative history, quasi-predictive history selects and presents its material on some principle, such as an interest in political or social or military or religious affairs, or in the achievements of great individuals. Chaps. 10–12 focus more on the Hellenistic period than earlier chapters did. While the time of wrath may be the period beging with the exile, there are fewer pointers in this direction than was the case in 8:19. The more specific focus lies on the career of Antiochus IV. The picture of him is “strangely lacking in individual traits”[[667]](#footnote-667) because he is portrayed as a second-century BC instance of the “type” of the arrogant gentile warrior attacking the people of God (see *Form*, *Structure*). The historical facts that are included are ones illustrating this portrayal; the generalizations relate to the “type” that he fulfills, so that descriptions of his cleverness or deceitfulness do not constitute attempts to characterize his personal individuality.

Chap. 11 is “God’s mirror of the nations and their rulers. It is neither entertaining nor edifying to look into it, but it is wholesome and necessary.”[[668]](#footnote-668) It is a story dominated by money, power, cunning, deception, and violence. Given the bleakness of this historical account, why should Daniel not despair? The answer is that these terrors are known by God and they exist only in the appointed time—a time that is surely limited. Antiochus’s despotism is no different from that of the preceding kingdoms; as they have fallen, so will the empire of Antiochus, the new Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed, when this day arrives a radical change will occur. Instead of one kingdom following yet another, it will be the time of the End (12:4).[[669]](#footnote-669)

One aspect of the pattern of history as portrayed in chap. 11 emerges immediately. It is the story of the exercise of power, but the exercise of power leads only to external conflict (v 2b), internal dissolution (vv 3–4), or eclipse by a more powerful entity (v 5). The nature of kings is not to recognize this fact; they always aspire to the elusive final victory. They seek it by marriage alliances, but they fail (v 6). More commonly they seek it by the use of force, but the use of force also fails (vv 8b–9). It may win famous victories, but the victories always turn out to be temporary (vv 7–8a, 10–12). A first climax to the portrayal of history by this pattern comes in vv 13–19, where most of the individual features of vv 2b–12 come together. A final victory of north over south seems possible, but in the end the northern king is stopped in his tracks by another power altogether. The talk of his standing as others are unable to stand before him (vv 15–16) is replaced by talk of his plan’s not standing and of his stumbling and falling (vv 17, 19).

The account of the relationship between Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires is not primarily concerned with making moral judgments. As it describes kings obtaining wealth and power, being in a position of unchallengeable authority, using marriage as a means of cementing dynastic relationships, invading the holy land, or involved in ceaseless invasion and warmongering, it is reflecting the fact that such conflicts are built into history. Thus, “despite alternating patterns of aggression, neither the king of the north nor the king of the south can ‘effect a permanent rule by reason of their containment of each other.’”[[670]](#footnote-670)

It is Antiochus IV who reaches after the overcoming of this ongoing impasse, but by issuing a challenge to God he makes it inevitable that God overcomes the impasse in a different direction. When the seer reaches his goal, the reign of Antiochus, he structures his portrayal by means of a series of time expressions, mostly reusing terms that appeared in 8:17, 19 (see *Comment*). The repetition of קץ (“end,” vv 27, 35, 40, cf. 45; also 12:4, 6, 9, 13) underlines the punctiliar, definitive actuality and finality of the reversal promised. The less punctiliar term אחרית (“latter part,” “last stage”: see on 2:28) comes only in 10:14; 11:4 (where it is not a temporal term), and 12:8 (where EVV do not take it in a temporal sense). The repetition of מועד (“set time,” vv 27, 29, 35; cf. 12:7) underlines the divine control and purpose at work even in the abominations and the suffering of the Antiochene period. They are acknowledged by referring to it as a time of wrath (זעם, v 36), a time of unprecedented trouble (צרה עת, 12:1), and a time of awesome events (הפלאות, 12:6); but the idea of wrath being “complete” (11:36) implies that they cannot go on without limit. Exegetically, it makes best sense to refer all the indications of time to the same moment. Antiochus’s purposes are frustrated at a particular juncture because “an end will yet await the set time” (v 27), and some of the discerning later fall for the same reason (v 35). It is this set moment that will arrive with the last battle between the two kings (v 40), and this moment that will see Michael arising (12:1). It is until this moment that Daniel’s book is to be sealed (12:4, 9), this moment that will come after a set time (12:6), and this moment when Daniel will arise to his destiny (12:13).

**11:2b** The Achaemenid kings were Cyrus (560/59–530), Cambyses (530–522), Smerdis (522), Darius I (522–486), Xerxes I (486–465), Artaxerxes I (465–424), Xerxes II (424), Sogdianos (424–423), Darius II (423–405/4), Artaxerxes II (405/4–359/58), Artaxerxes III (359/58–338/37), Artaxerxes IV (338/37–336), and Darius III (336–330).[[671]](#footnote-671) If the assertion that “the fourth king will be far wealthier than anyone” is to be pressed, it has to allude to Xerxes I, who invaded Greece to be defeated at Salamis in 480. Strictly, there was no one Greek empire until the time of Philip of Macedon. The reference of v 2b as a whole is thus to the four kings who followed Cyrus. But the prophecy then has to leap over a century from Xerxes to Alexander. Further, the reference to the four Persian kings recalls the four heads of 7:6, while “three… and the fourth” recalls numerical sayings in passages such as Prov 30 and Amos 1–2.[[672]](#footnote-672) Therefore the figure “four” may need not to be pressed, nor the kings specifically identified, because the phrase may denote the Achemenids as a whole. And/or they might be represented by the kings mentioned in the OT, Cyrus, Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, and the Darius of Neh 12:22 if that is Darius II or III, and if “the fourth” means the fourth of the total number, not a fourth after Cyrus. The wealth of the last is then the presumed accumulated wealth of the last Persian king,[[673]](#footnote-673) as the hostility to Greece denotes that of the empire as a whole.

**11:3–4** Alexander the Great came to the throne of Macedon in 336. He invaded and conquered the territory from Turkey to India and thus came to rule the largest empire the world had yet known. But he reigned over this empire less than a decade; he died of a fever in 323. His empire shattered, and four units eventually emerged from its fragmentation, centered on Macedon and Greece; Thrace; Syria and the east; and Egypt. To speak of the empire dividing towards the four winds of the heavens involves a figurative expression (cf. the four horns of 8:8): the division did not correspond at all closely to the points of the compass.

Alexander’s empire did not “belong to his surviving family.” His half-brother Philip III and his son Alexander IV were nominal rulers of the empire until their deaths in 317 and 311 (or 305),[[674]](#footnote-674) but central administrative power was held by Alexander’s prime minister, Perdiccas, until his assassination in 321. And the united Macedonian empire immediately became a fiction. Alexander’s real “successors” (*diadochoi*) were the generals who ruled different satrapies of his empire. Among these were Ptolemy in Egypt, Antigonus, whose area included much of Turkey and later Syria and the east, and Seleucus, who became satrap of Babylonia in 321.

**11:5** In chap. 11 “the southern king” and “the northern king” are generic terms to refer to the current occupants—whoever they may be—of the Ptolemaic throne in Egypt and the Seleucid throne in Syria and Babylonia. The two realms lie either side of Palestine and thus directly concern Judea, and they are the two most powerful of the Hellenistic monarchies. Chap. 11 shows that the outline of the history of the Syrian and Egyptian empires was quite well known to the author. He alludes to thirteen of their kings, noted in the following outline of their reigns:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ptolemy I Soter, son of Lagus, 322–285 (v 5a) | Seleucus I Nicator, 312–280 (v 5b) |
| Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 285–246 (v 6) | Antiochus I Soter, 280–261 |
|  | Antiochus II Theos, 261–246 (v 6) |
| Ptolemy III Euergetes, 246–221 (vv 7–9) | Seleucus II Callinicus, 246–226 (vv 7–9) |
|  | Seleucus III Soter Ceraunus 226–223 (v 10) |
| Ptolemy IV Philopator, 221–203 (vv 10–12) | Antiochus III Magnus, 223–187 (vv 10–19) |
| Ptolemy V Epiphanes, 203–181 (vv 14–17) | Seleucus IV Philopator, 187–175 (v 20) |
| Ptolemy VI Philometor, 181–146 (vv 25–28) | Antiochus IV Epiphanes, 175–163 (vv 21–45) |
|  | Antiochus V Eupator, 163–162 |
|  | Demetrius I Soter, 162–150 |

The first southern king, Ptolemy I, ruled Egypt from 322 but declared himself king only c. 305. The first northern king is Seleucus I, but he fled to Egypt and became one of Ptolemy’s generals when Antigonus expanded his empire in Asia and attacked Babylonia in 316. Ptolemy and Seleucus defeated Antigonus’s army at Gaza in 312. Subsequently Seleucus not only recovered Babylonia but also gradually won control of the rest of Antigonus’s empire, until after Antigonus’s death at the battle of Ipsus in 301 Seleucus became “more powerful” than Ptolemy and exercised a particularly extensive rule: he controlled the largest of the post-Alexander empires. Its significance in the ancient world is reflected in the fact that the Seleucid era provided a new basis for chronology, used in 1 Maccabees. The Ptolemies, however, controlled Palestine through the third century, which was a source of conflict between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires.

**11:6** Half a century later, about 250, Ptolemy II attempted to mend relationships with the Seleucid empire by marrying his daughter Berenice to Antiochus II, who divorced his first wife, Laodice, and excluded their sons Seleucus and Antiochus from succeeding him. But after two years, Antiochus II apparently went back to Laodice, who then had him killed, along with his son by Berenice (thus clearing the way for her own son Seleucus), Berenice herself, and a number of her Egyptian attendants. Berenice’s father also died in the same year.

**11:7–9** Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III, succeeded to their father’s throne in Egypt. In connection with the violent sequence of events involving his sister, his nephew, and his kingdom’s subjects, he invaded the Seleucid empire, gained control of considerable areas of Syria (including the kingdom’s capital, Antioch on the Orontes, and Seleucia, its fortified port on the Mediterranean) and of the lands further east, avenged his sister by having Laodice killed, and took much plunder back to Egypt. Taking a nation’s gods (v 8) was a sign of subjugation and the exercise of power. Despite his huge successes, Ptolemy did not press on to total conquest of the Seleucid empire. In the end he had to leave the throne there to Seleucus II (son of Antiochus II by Laodice) and return to Egypt to deal with an uprising at home. For two years there was no conflict between the two empires. Then in 242 Seleucus II attempted to invade Egypt (v 9), but had to retreat, his army decimated.

**11:10–12** Seleucus II was succeeded by his sons, Seleucus III (226–223) and—on his murder during a campaign in Turkey—Antiochus III (223–187). The latter attempted to turn the tide of aggressive power between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, beginning in 219 by recapturing Seleucia. He invaded Palestine and conquered a large part of it. The talk in terms of a flood takes up the imagery of Isa 8:8 where it referred to the Assyrians, which “lends an epic quality to the description,… though it may also subtly indicate that these events are not, finally, the outcome of the autonomous will of the kings but are part of the divine plan.”[[675]](#footnote-675) In due course (v 11) Ptolemy IV (221–203) sent an army to engage with Antiochus III at Raphia, the Egyptian stronghold on the border with Palestine, in 217. According to Polybius (*Histories* 5.79), Antiochus took 62,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry, and 102 elephants into battle against Ptolemy’s 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants. Antiochus lost over 14,000 men in defeat (v 12), but Ptolemy, despite the encouragement, still lacked his father’s instinct for warmaking. He was content with victory and the regaining of Palestine and Phoenicia, and did not press his advantage, making peace with Antiochus. The seer gives none of this exciting information; it is only by reading the verses in light of other sources that we understand more clearly what was going on. The seer is more interested in the typical nature of the event.[[676]](#footnote-676)

**11:13–15** Over the next fourteen years Antiochus III campaigned in Turkey and the east and regained much of the old Seleucid empire, winning for himself the title “the Great.” He then raised an even larger army in alliance with Philip V of Macedon to invade the Ptolemaic kingdom. There were native Egyptian rebellions (v 14a) against Ptolemaic rule from 207, a consequence, Polybius (5.107) suggests, of the encouragement of native Egyptian morale by the Egyptian victory over Antiochus. Ptolemy IV died in mysterious circumstances, to be succeeded by his infant son Ptolemy V (203–181). The country was actually ruled by Agathocles, a chief minister under Ptolemy IV; his oppressive regency provoked insurrection in Egypt, and his assassination. But the “many” may also refer to the soldiers of Antiochus and Philip.

The period was one of strife within the Jewish community (v 14b). The high priest held supreme authority in both political and religious affairs, but Onias II had been forced to share actual political power with his brother-in-law Tobias, and the Tobiads became significant political forces in Jerusalem. The Oniads were inclined to be anti-Egyptian, the Tobiads to be pro-Egyptian, though there was also conflict over policy within the Tobiad family.[[677]](#footnote-677) The assertiveness of the “wild men” (פריצים בני) might refer to Jews—presumably Oniads—joining in the resistance to the southern king which v 14a refers to. But it is odd to say that they failed or “fell.” Apart from one short-lived victory on the part of the Egyptian general Scopas, the story of events from 201–198 is of Antiochus’s triumphant conquest of Palestine. More likely the unsuccessful wild men are Tobiads.[[678]](#footnote-678) Further, “wild men” is a term used to suggest violation of the holy rather than suggesting polemic against violent action.

The acts of violation take place in fulfillment of a “vision”; that word occurs more frequently in Dan 8 than in any other chapter in the OT. Were the violators unintentionally fulfilling Daniel’s revelation? But it is not obvious why this motif in chap. 11 should be described thus. Nor is it likely that Daniel would use the term in the modern sense of the people’s political vision or policy.[[679]](#footnote-679) Was the vision one received within the community at the time (cf. Ezek 13:6)? Or was it a passage from the prophets (cf. 9:24; also Ezek 12:22–27; Hab 2:2–3)? OG assumes Amos 9:11;[[680]](#footnote-680) Jerome suggests Isa 19:19, connecting the passage with Onias’s building of a temple at Leontopolis,[[681]](#footnote-681) though this understanding clashes with the idea that v 22 refers to Onias’s death (see 8:10-11 *Comment*). Daniel would then be implying a conscious or unconscious attempt to bring about the fulfillment of God’s plan expressed in these scriptures, but an attempt that fails, because God’s time has not yet come. Dan 11-12 will go on to indicate the further events that must take place before that End.[[682]](#footnote-682) But the reference to a vision is one of the passage’s points of contact with Ezek 7 (v 26; see *Form*), where it refers to people in Jerusalem seeking some vision to encourage them. More likely, then, the vision is that passage in Ezek 7, which the violators unconsciously fulfill, and fall because God brings judgment on them as he warned there.

Then, in 199 (v 15) Antiochus defeated Scopas at Paneas (Caesarea Philippi), followed him to Sidon, an Egyptian fortified city, and laid siege to it. Next year Scopas and his troops, along with reinforcements sent from Egypt to relieve him, had to surrender.

**11:16–19** Antiochus thus gained firm control of Palestine and Phoenicia, including Judea, and also captured some of the areas on Turkish coast that had been subject to Egyptian rule, Cilicia, Lycia, and Caria. He was in a position to invade Egypt itself and destroy the Ptolemaic empire (v 17), but he feared Roman intervention, and instead made peace with Egypt in 197, betrothing his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V. He hoped to further his designs on Egypt through her, but she (Egypt’s first Cleopatra) became loyal to her husband and new homeland and encouraged an Egyptian alliance with Rome, which frustrated Antiochus’s continuing designs on the Ptolemaic area of the old empire of Alexander.

In the meantime (v 18), Antiochus resumed his attacks on Egyptian-held areas of Turkey and went on to invade Macedon, Thrace, and Greece itself. But in 191 the Romans defeated him first at Thermopylae, then decisively at Magnesia near Smyrna a year later, ending his pretensions to power in the west. Antiochus became a vassal of Rome and his younger son, the later Antiochus IV, was taken to Rome as a hostage. Antiochus thus returned to Syria (v 19). He was assassinated at Elymais in 187 while attempting to pillage the treasury of Bel, one of his own gods, to pay the tribute imposed on him by the Romans after their victory.

**11:20** His successor, Seleucus IV, was an unfortunate and unpopular ruler whose main concern had to be paying the tribute imposed on his father. The oppressor he sent around in this connection was his finance minister Heliodorus, whose acts included attempting to pillage the treasury of the temple at Jerusalem. This was *the* event of Seleucus’s reign not merely because of its unexpected thwarting (2 Macc 3) but because of its being an anti-fulfillment of an OT prophecy (see *Form*). Seleucus died in 175. According to Appian, *Wars* 11.8 [45], he was assassinated in a plot engineered by Heliodorus in which Seleucus’s younger brother Antiochus—now on his way back from Rome—may also have been involved (see on 7:24). There is perhaps a slur in the comment on his ignominious death, “not in the heat of battle.”

**11:21–24** Rashi (for instance) assumes that Daniel moves on at this point to describe the activity of the Romans in the Hasmonean period, and that vv 21-35 cover the period from the beginnings of Roman involvement with Palestine to the sacrilege of Titus, the fall of Jerusalem, and the faithful service of Johanan ben Zakkai and Judah Hanasi. But there is no indication in the vision of such a move. Jerome (for instance) assumes that the vision refers in the immediate sense to Antiochus but that the portrait is larger than life and implies that Antiochus is a type of the anti-messiah.[[683]](#footnote-683) The vision’s omitting to name names encourages this approach to seeing the vision’s longer-term significance, but again there is no positive indication in the vision of such a move. The prophecy describes its next and last northern king.

The most prominent feature of the prophecy, the career of this king, forms a series of episodes, marked by time references: vv 21–24 (“until a certain time”), vv 25–28 (“an end will yet await the set time”), vv 29–35 (“at the set time . . . until the time of the end—for it will still await the set moment”), vv 36–39 (“until wrath is complete”; and see the beginning of v 40), and vv 40–45 (“at the time of the end”); cf. 12:1–3 (“at that time . . . to all eternity”). The successor of Seleucus IV was his younger brother, who became Antiochus IV (175–164). The prophecy begins with an account of his extraordinary rise to power, remarkable for its shrewdness. The description of him, like the epithet Epimanes, Madman (Polybius 26.1a [10]), contrasts with the claim expressed in his title [Theos] Epiphanes, [God] Manifest. There had been no reason to regard the exiled Antiochus as a potential successor to his brother. Seleucus’s heir should be his eldest son, eventually to reign as Demetrius I, but in 175 he had been sent to Rome to replace Antiochus as hostage there.

The details of Antiochus’s rise to power are uncertain. A plausible reconstruction is that while staying at Athens on his way home he heard that his brother had died and that Heliodorus was seeking to consolidate a position as regent, with Seleucus’s younger son, also called Antiochus, as puppet king. He hastened homewards. On the basis of being uncle to Seleucus’s son—and thus a safeguard against usurpers from outside the dynasty—he gained the support of King Eumenes of Pergamum and Attalus his brother, removed Heliodorus, and took power as guardian to and co-regent with the young Antiochus.

The “overwhelming forces” (v 22) were perhaps rivals to the throne; but one of them was Ptolemy VI of Egypt, son of Seleucus’s and Antiochus’s sister Cleopatra, and the language here suggests a reference to the conflict with Egypt that is a main feature of Antiochus’s reign as vv 21–45 describe it, and a main feature of the Hellenistic period as chap. 11 as a whole describes it. The removal of “a covenant leader” belongs in the same context, if the phrase refers to the high priest Onias III (cf. 9:26), replaced because of his Egyptian sympathies (cf. 2 Macc 4) by Jason from the aristocratic, pro-Syrian Tobiad party. It would be part of a logical policy on Antiochus’s part of putting his own nominees in key governmental positions within his empire.[[684]](#footnote-684)

Thus while Antiochus began with the support of only “a small group” (v 23), in Judea he won over the “powerful ones of a province,” the Tobiads and Jason, Onias’s brother. They furthered his cause in Jerusalem; he made it possible for them to hold both civil and religious power there; and it is presumably they who are the beneficiaries of his well-known liberality on the basis of plunder (v 24; cf. 1 Macc 3:28–31).

The Tobias who gave theTobiad family its name came from across the Jordan. Whether they were gentilized Jews or Judaizing Gentiles, Tobias and his family were not people of conservative attitude to the Torah. The account of events in 1 Macc 1 and 2 Macc 4 tells of Jason and his associates also proposing to Antiochus that they should establish a Hellenistic-style community in Jerusalem. The sequence of events and the significance of the Antiochene measures affecting Jerusalem are disputed.[[685]](#footnote-685) While they may have been an aspect of a cultural or religious concern for the Hellenization of Judea or the broader empire, they seem likely also to reflect Antiochus’s political concern to exercise effective control of his empire and the Tobiads’ concern for power in Jerusalem. In other words, trouble in Jerusalem issued from the volatile interweaving of the external conflict between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies and the internal rivalry between the different powerful Judaean families.[[686]](#footnote-686)

Since Artaxerxes’ decree in 458, the Torah had been the law of the land in Judea, a situation confirmed by Antiochus III when he made the Jews a people with internal self-government on the basis of their own laws (Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.3.3 [12.135]). In accordance with the Torah, then, the government was in the hands of the priesthood, and the high priest was the means of implementing the king’s authority. He was thus naturally and quite legitimately appointed, from a priestly family, by the king. He had to see that Jewish affairs were conducted in accordance with the Torah, both because the king said so and because God said so. He would need the king’s permission to introduce practices differing from those in the Torah, because of the Torah’s place in the constitution approved by the king.

The implication of 1 Macc 1 and 2 Macc 4, then, is that on Antiochus’s accession the authorities in Jerusalem petitioned him for a constitutional change whereby Jerusalem ceased to be the center of a community governing itself in accordance with its own law and became a Hellenistic city-state whose citizenship would comprise those who accepted a Hellenistic way of life. From Antiochus’s perspective, the proposal would be welcome because such Hellenistic city-states provided a means of controlling his empire, and the Jerusalem leadership presumably saw it as a wise move to conform their city’s constitution and life more to the imperial norm. It would involve no necessary contravention of the central tenets of Jewish religion, though by conservative Jews it would be seen as an abandonment of the Torah and of the terms of the people’s covenant relationship with Yahweh, which exclude covenants with other peoples.

On the other hand, it would be quite in keeping with Daniel’s portrayal of events if initiative for the establishment of the city-state came from Antiochus himself.[[687]](#footnote-687) While one might have expected Dan 11 to make this explicit, since it is inclined to emphasize Antiochus’s responsibility for events, equally one might have expected Daniel to mention the fact if the reformist Jews were responsible. So the rationale for Antiochus’s actions is a matter of debate.[[688]](#footnote-688)

**11:25–28** There now begins a more detailed account of Antiochus’s involvement with Egypt. In 170 an Egyptian army set off to attempt to recapture Palestine. According to 2 Macc 4:21–22, Antiochus became aware of the need to defend Palestine; indeed, according to 1 Macc 1:16 he had designs on Egypt that mirrored Ptolemy’s designs on the Seleucid realm. Antiochus defeated the Egyptian army, captured the border fortress of Pelusium, entered Egypt, took his nephew Ptolemy VI prisoner, and occupied much of the country (1 Macc 1:17–19).

In some sense Ptolemy was the victim of treachery (v 26). Perhaps the reference is to people who betrayed Pelusium to Antiochus, or perhaps to Ptolemy’s advisers who brought about the Egyptian defeat by urging the attack on Palestine, brought about his capture by urging him to flee from Antiochus, and brought about his deposition by then crowning his brother as Ptolemy VII in Alexandria in 169. “These two kings” (v 27), Antiochus and Ptolemy VI, were now united in desiring to regain the throne for the latter, as Antiochus’s puppet. Both are declared to be serving their own interests and deceiving each other but not achieving their conflicting ultimate purposes.

In 169 Antiochus visited Jerusalem and appropriated part of the temple treasury (cf. v 28). There are differences between the sources over events in Jerusalem and over Antiochus’s visit(s) there after his two Egyptian campaigns.[[689]](#footnote-689) Dan 11 is more allusive than 1 Macc 1; 2 Macc 5; or Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.5 [12.239–50]; *Jewish War* 1.1 [1.31–33], and not too exposed to the charge of finding prophecy difficult even after the event. It may be that Antiochus took action against Jerusalem in both 169 and 168 (cf. vv 28 and 30) but that on the latter occasion he acted via Apollonius (cf. 1 Macc 1; 2 Macc 5 then conflates the two sets of events into a personal visit in 168). In a “temple-state” such as Judaea[[690]](#footnote-690) the temple treasury functioned as bank and state exchequer; Antiochus could haveviewed its plunder as potential tribute[[691]](#footnote-691) and could have acted thus because he simply needed the money. But he was thus acting against a “holy covenant”; that phrase is a new one, here denoting the covenant people (cf. v 30a; 1 Macc 1:15, 63).[[692]](#footnote-692) It takes up the “holy ones” of chap. 7 (especially v 27); cf. also the “holy people” of 12:7 and the “covenant leader” of v 22. They are the people who are endowed with a covenant relationship with God; there need be no suggestion of an anthropocentric view of the covenant as depending essentially on its human possessor and guardians.[[693]](#footnote-693)

**11:29–31** By the expression “at the set time,” the momentous, then painful, then horrifying events to follow are marked as within the control of God. After Antiochus’s departure from Egypt the two Ptolemies had made peace and agreed to reign jointly. In 168 Antiochus invaded again, but this time with disastrous results.

The “ships from Kittim” or the west (v 30) are a delegation headed by Gaius Popillius Laenas when Egypt had appealed to Rome in connection with the events of 169. They intercepted Antiochus on his way to Alexandria and ordered him off Egyptian territory (Appian 11.11 [66]). It was a turning point in Roman history, a mark of the extent to which internationally the period from 200 to 150 is the story of the extension of Roman dominion in the Hellenistic empire.[[694]](#footnote-694)

Following on a rumor that Antiochus had been killed in Egypt, Jason—whom Antiochus had removed from the high-priesthood—returned to Jerusalem and led a violent rebellion against his successor Menelaus and the Tobiad ruling party (2 Macc 5:5–10), and presumably against the Syrian governor (2 Macc 5:21–23a). Conservative Jews may have supported his action; he was a less objectionable person than Menelaus, who had cooperated with Antiochus’s looting of the temple the previous year. To Antiochus, Jason’s action amounted to an attempt to overthrow the government he had appointed and replace it by one that could be presumed to be pro-Egyptian if it was anti-Syrian. Hence he had to “take harsh action against a holy covenant” (v 30) to put down this rebellion (2 Macc 5:11–14), sending to Jerusalem Apollonius, the commander of his mercenaries from Mysia in Turkey (2 Macc 5:23b–27; 1 Macc 1:29–32). Antiochus thus reestablished the authority of the Tobiad leadership (v 30b).

He took steps to strengthen his position in Judaea (v 31a) in the context of the conflict with Egypt and/or the resistance in Jerusalem by developing “the stronghold” from which his forces and members of the Hellenistic city-state could oversee temple and city. The “stronghold” will have been near the temple mount: compare the stronghold mentioned in Neh 2:8, and the later Antonia Fortress (see 1 Macc 1:29–40).[[695]](#footnote-695) While the earlier introduction of the Hellenistic city-state in 175 would have been an affront to conservative Jews, it had not affected the temple. The imposition of this garrison, however, implies the temple’s desecration. The fortress would be a base from which gentile as well as Jewish “citizens” could enter the shrine in “their” city, which is effectively taken away from Jews who do not belong to the Hellenistic community (cf. 2 Macc 11:24–25, which records its return to conservative Jews).[[696]](#footnote-696) The gentile troops would naturally introduce there the worship of their god Ba‘al Šamem, the Syrian equivalent to Zeus and—as they would see it—to Yahweh (cf. 2 Macc 6; see *Comment* on 8:13).

To judge from 1 Macc 1:41–64, the suspension of the sacrificial system (v 31b) was a separate event from the desecration of the temple by the introduction of the “desolating abomination” just noted. Perhaps continuing conservative Jewish resistance to Antiochene/Tobiad rule and to the effects of the gentile garrison’s presence spurred Antiochus into a ban on the distinctive feature of Jewish religion. The reasoning behind the ban was thus local and political. Evidence from elsewhere does not suggest that Antiochus generally tried to abolish the various religions of his empire to make everyone worship Zeus, despite 1 Macc 1:41–42.

**11:32–35** The sources do not say that the Jews who had sought the establishment of a Hellenistic community desired the abolition of the external distinctives of Jewish religion; 1 Macc 1 implies that they found themselves drawn into cooperation with a policy that had gone beyond their original expectations. The “people that acknowledges its God” comprises those who insist on still expressing their commitment to Yahweh in the ways specified by the Torah. They are the ḥasidim, the committed, of 1 Macc 2:42.

Their “firm resistance” (v 33) presumably includes active attempts to prevent the implementing of Antiochus’s edict. “The discerning” (משכילים: see n. 33.a) are conservative leaders who possess the insight which consists in awed submission to Yahweh (the essence of the theological ethic of the book of Daniel),[[697]](#footnote-697) the understanding which has reflected deeply on his ways in history, and the insight which perceives how his cause will ultimately triumph.[[698]](#footnote-698) They use this discernment to “enlighten the multitude.” The verb (בין) is common in Daniel, generally denoting insight into the meaning of dreams, visions, or prophecies.[[699]](#footnote-699) It implies that the ministry of the discerning is not teaching in general or exhortation to faithfulness but the interpretation of the prophetic scriptures—and no doubt of these Danielic visions—for the persecuted community.[[700]](#footnote-700) “The multitude” suggests the body of the community as a whole (see on 9:27) and implies that the majority resist Antiochus; only the Tobiads and the Hellenistic community accept the edict. In Daniel’s thinking it is “the discerning” and “the multitude” who really make up “the people” (vv 32, 33).[[701]](#footnote-701) While v 35 will refer to the martyrdom of some of the discerning, many ordinary people also experience sword (1 Macc 2:9, 31–38), fire (2 Macc 6:11; 7:1–41), captivity (1 Macc 3:41), prey (1 Macc 1:31), and other afflictions (cf. 1 Macc 1:60–64). The terms “the discerning” and “the multitude” hint that the calling of the servant of Yahweh described in Isa 52:13–53:12 (see *Form*) is being fulfilled here, not only by the leadership but by the community as a whole who also suffer.[[702]](#footnote-702)

The people offering a little help (v 34) are hardly the Romans helping the ḥasidim, though this will happen later.[[703]](#footnote-703) It may be the discerning encouraging the martyrs[[704]](#footnote-704) or other Jews coming to share the martyrs’ commitment,[[705]](#footnote-705) if either would count as “help,” but more likely the expression refers to the successes of the first Jewish activists (1 Macc 2–4). It is “a little help” compared with the ultimate victory, deliverance, awakening, and exaltation that will come at “the set moment” (v 35): see 11:40–12:3. One need not infer that the seer dissociates himself from the active resistance of the Maccabees (cf. v 14 *Comment*).[[706]](#footnote-706) The ḥasidim do fight (1 Macc 2:40–44), but their willingness to fight does not mean that they rely on human hands rather than on the acts of God (see 1 Macc 3:16–22, 52–53, 58–60; 4:8–11, 30–33), and we have no evidence for a pacifist group among them. To describe the achievement of the Maccabees as merely a little help might seem odd, as it is they who achieve Jewish independence, though arguably the rebellion ended in failure in 157.[[707]](#footnote-707) Whereas the Maccabean stance is taken up by the Zealots two centuries later, life for Judaism comes from the faith that Daniel was commending.

The many who join the discerning with empty words (v 34b) are people whose commitment to the resistance movement could not be trusted in the long run. Some may have joined out of fear of the Maccabees’ own ruthlessness (cf. 1 Macc 2:44; 3:5–8; 6:18–24). The martyrdom of some of the discerning (v 35) tests how real is the commitment of people who have joined the resistance movement perhaps too lightly. That their “stumbling” is the means of their learning that violent resistance is a false path is hardly implied by vv 32–35;[[708]](#footnote-708) in vv 14 and 19 “stumble” (כשל) does suggest the undoing of people who were on the wrong path, but not in vv 33, 34, 35, 41.

**11:36–39** Jews and Christians who do not see v 21 as marking a transition from describing Antiochus to describing another figure have common assumed that v 36 does mark such a transition, a future king such as John of Gischala, leader of the Jewish revolt in AD 66-70,[[709]](#footnote-709) or Constantine who turned the Roman empire Christian,[[710]](#footnote-710) or a king who is yet to come,[[711]](#footnote-711) or or the anti-messiah: “after these remarks in reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, he then moves from the image to the archetype,… the antichrist.” [[712]](#footnote-712) But there is again no indication that the identity of “the king” has changed. Rather, the quasi-prediction in chap. 11 closes with an evaluative summary of Antiochus’s religious attitudes. It moves from the earthly plane of attacks on people and sanctuary to the heavenly plane of attacks on God himself, though the language of chaps. 9 and 11 is more down-to-earth than that of chaps. 7 and 8.[[713]](#footnote-713) The paragraph begins resumptively with a general statement in v 36; more detail follows in vv 37–39.

That “the king will act as he pleases” (v 36) is the standard description of apparently unchallengeable authority (8:4; 11:3, 16) which presages unexpected disaster, or at least the frustration and failure of the king’s plans. It thus adds to the sense of expectancy that Antiochus’s success cannot continue. The sense of expectancy is encouraged by the declaration that he “will exalt himself and magnify himself”: these verbs apply in the OT only to God and to one who impiously asserts himself against God and has judgment declared upon him (Isa 10:15; 33:15). Antiochus took the title Epiphanes, “[God] Manifest,” used the title Θεός, “God,” on coins, used divine symbols, plundered temples, and suppressed other religions than his own. These acts were not peculiar to Antiochus (see v 5 *Comment*); Hellenistic kings regularly associated themselves closely with religion in various ways, to support their position.[[714]](#footnote-714) They thus stood under the protection of particular deities, sometimes assimilated themselves to them, and sometimes encouraged worship of themselves. But other Hellenistic kings did not come into such sharp conflict with the “God of gods” concerning whom Antiochus uttered his “awesome statements,” edicts suppressing worship of Yahweh. If Antiochus took his divinity more seriously than most, the reason may again be political: it helped to bind his empire together and to him. For him, as for other kings, religion was the servant of his political position. Yes, he is more important than any god.

Antiochus replaced Apollo by Zeus as the god of the Seleucid dynasty (v 37), apparently again for political reasons: it provided religious support for the irregularity involved in his accession. “The one women love” is then plausibly taken as a god especially favored in Egypt, Adonis or Dionysus, who was slighted by Antiochus through his various encroachments on the southern kingdom; the reference to Tammuz as one worshiped by women in Ezek 8:14 seems less relevant. Antiochus had shown contempt for the key gods of both the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties.[[715]](#footnote-715) The critique may presuppose that Yahweh himself allocated the nations their gods (Deut 32:8 4QDeut, LXX), so that Antiochus overreaches himself in changing them.[[716]](#footnote-716) But the seer may simply be expressing a theological distaste for what he sees as Antiochus’s subservience of religion to politics.

The “stronghold god” (v 38) will be Zeus, who replaced Apollo, and was worshipped as Ba‘al Šamem by the Syrian garrison. Zeus could also be identified with Jupiter, Herakles, or Yahweh, but this possibility seems less relevant.[[717]](#footnote-717) Antiochus’s dealing with a most secure stronghold (v 39) will be a further reference to the development of the citadel near the temple (see on v 31). And the people he regards will be the Tobiad leadership, which was favored by Antiochus (see on v 24).

**11:40–45**

This passage is very obscure, and has consequently been explained in very opposite ways by interpreters. And whatever is obscure, is usually doubtful, and there would be little utility and no termination, if I were to narrate the opinions of them all. I shall therefore follow another method, and omitting all superfluous labor, I shall simply inquire the angel's meaning. I must, however, refer briefly to opinions received by the consent of the majority, because they occupy the minds of many, and thus close the door to the correct interpretation. The Jews, for instance, are not agreed among themselves…. Some explain it of Antiochus, and others of the Romans, but in a manner different to that which I shall afterwards state. The Christian expositors present much variety, but the greater number incline towards Antichrist as fulfilling the prophecy. Others, again, use greater moderation by supposing Antichrist to be here obliquely hinted at, while they do not exclude Antiochus as the type and image of Antichrist. This last opinion has great probability, but I do not approve of it…. Antiochus did not long survive the pollution of the Temple, and then the following events by no means suit the occurrences of this time.[[718]](#footnote-718)

Calvin goes on to see the verses as applying to Roman rulers in general. But the “him” again presupposes that “the northern king” is the same person as that in vv 21–39. There is no hint of a transition to Antichrist or to Antiochus V[[719]](#footnote-719) or to Pompey and his associates[[720]](#footnote-720) or to the Russians, to whom perhaps an apology is due.[[721]](#footnote-721) Porphyry assumed that the quasi-predictive historical account of Antiochus’s career continues,[[722]](#footnote-722) but “at the time of the end” (contrast v 35) works against our taking the verses as simply a further résumé of Antiochus’s career, and vv 40–45 cannot be correlated with events as vv 21–39 can. “There are four somewhat different accounts of Antiochus’ final campaign and death” in Maccabees and in Polybius but nothing in them “bears any relation to what is said in Dan. 11:40-45.”[[723]](#footnote-723)

Further, in vv 40–45 scriptural phraseology becomes more pervasive than it was earlier (see *Form*). V 40 marks a transition from quasi-prediction based on historical facts to actual prediction based on the scriptures and on the pattern of earlier events.[[724]](#footnote-724) The seer is “using history’s deep structures to predict the future.”[[725]](#footnote-725) These verses, then, are not predictions in the sense of simply anticipatory announcements of fixed future events.Like the promises and warnings of the prophets, they paint an imaginative scenario of the kind of issue that God will ensure will come from present events. Their portrayal does not correspond to actual events in the 160s, as Jesus’ coming does not correspond in a straightforward way to other OT prophecies of future redemption (e.g., Isa 9:2-7 [1–6]). It is not the nature of biblical prophecy to give a literal account of events before they take place.

So the seer imagines Antiochus’s deeds reaching even beyond anything we have already read. He attempts that ultimate victory over the Ptolemaic king which has been denied to so many of his predecessors, and to break the shackles of the constraints that north and south have exercised on each other (v 40).[[726]](#footnote-726) In doing so, he recapitulates Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion, once again sparing the old enemies who had taken advantage of Israel then (v 41; cf. Ezek 25). He goes on to fulfill the prophecies that envisaged Nebuchadnezzar’s final defeat of Egypt itself—hence the naming of Egypt and other southern countries, as in those prophecies; the southern king is unmasked as old Egypt, the northern king as Israel’s ancient Mesopotamian foe from the north (vv 42–43). But the moment of triumph again heralds downfall, as so often in chap. 11. Disturbing reports alarm the northern king—another motif from Ezek 7. His victory heralds the last great battle of this supreme world power against shady foes beyond the orbit of the Mesopotamia-Egypt axis (v 44). The final battle takes place, as it must, at the midpoint of that axis, at the center of the world, at the place where the scriptures had therefore long expected the final conflict; it signifies the end of this apparently unassailable earthly power (v 45). Antiochus schemes against an unsuspecting and vulnerable people but finds himself God’s victim.[[727]](#footnote-727)

**12:1** This form of “prediction” continues into 12:1–3. The phrase “at that time” indicates further continuity with what precedes and excludes the idea that the prophecy is moving to some far future moment. Indeed, the threefold “that time” reinforces the impression that the whole verse is resumptive (as will the allusions to “the discerning” and “the multitude” in v 3). The “time of trouble” is thus a resumptive summary reference to the troubles of 11:40–45, not a new event; it would in any case seem implausible to suggest that the seer writing from the midst of terrible suffering (11:21–39) offers people not only one (11:40–45) but a second further scenario of affliction. Like the descriptions beginning in 11:25 and 11:36, this description also overlaps with the one that precedes it. Chap. 11 has made clear how the time of trouble is “such as has not occurred since they became a nation until that time,” in that Antiochus was seeking to terminate the worship of the true God and to devastate his people.

The reference to Michael and the description of him takes up 10:13, 21 (see *Comment*), and the arising of Michael is the event underlying the defeat of the northern king in 11:45. It is the heavenly side to that earthly event.[[728]](#footnote-728) Each nation has a representative in the heavenly court who fights its battles, legal and military, and Michael is the one who “stands by those who belong to your people.” By “your people” he means Israel insofar as it resists the pressure of Antiochus and the reformists, who hardly now count as Israel (cf. 11:32). Michael is “the supreme leader,” perhaps by implication the most powerful of those heavenly figures, as Israel is the most significant of the nations, the one whose destiny is guaranteed. So Michael will stand up in court, as in *T. Dan* 6.2 and Jude 9,[[729]](#footnote-729) to fight for Israel, and his victory there over Antiochus’s heavenly representative means that on earth Antiochus is defeated and that “your people will escape.”

Michael will thus take up their cause and point out that their names “can be found written in the book.” The verse refers not to the “trustworthy book” of 10:21, which included the future acts of the wicked as well as those of the people of God, nor to one of the “books” mentioned in 7:10, which recorded the past basis for God’s judgment. It refers to a list of those who belong to God’s people, the citizen list of the true Jerusalem (cf. the lists referred to in Ezra 2; Neh 7); this book has become a metaphor in Isa 4:3; Ezek 13:9; Ps 87:6, and a mythic motif in Exod 32:32; Isa 48:19; Ps 69:28 [29]. Michael’s intervention establishes that these people belong to the people of God and have no business to be cast precipitously into the realm of death. That promise may mean they “escape” from the annihilation referred to in 11:44, avoiding death, unlike the martyrs of 11:33–35, or it may mean that they “escape” from the realm of death by breaking out from it, as v 2 will elaborate; for comparable usage of מלט, see Isa 49:24–25; Ps 116:3–4 (where צרה “trouble” also occurs); 4Q *Words of the Luminaries* (which also refers to people whose names are written in the book of life).[[730]](#footnote-730)

**12:2** The meaning of v 2 needs to be approached via its context in Daniel, not via the formulated doctrine of resurrection developed by groups such as the Pharisees and adopted by Christians. While in continuity with other notes in the OT, it is “the first transparent and indisputable prediction of the resurrection of the dead in the Hebrew Bible.”[[731]](#footnote-731) Its affirmation concerning resurrection is one expression of a conviction expressed in other writings of the period, especially in *Enoch* and in Qumran writings.[[732]](#footnote-732) It is not a piece of theological teaching but a vision or a flight of the imagination, and not a “fully developed” belief in resurrection; nor is an awakening of the dead of nations other than Israel within its purview. [[733]](#footnote-733) “In an unprecedented developmental leap in Old Testament religion the persecuted body also becomes a means of subversion – in this instance undermining the dire result of persecution. Death itself is defied and with it any attempt by political powers at subverting people by means of the gravest bodily punishments.”[[734]](#footnote-734)

The seer continues to portray the future on the basis of the scriptures, especially Isaiah (see *Form*); his imaginative portrayal need not be a literal prediction. Its message connects with the historical events related in its literary context in 11:21–12:3.[[735]](#footnote-735) It is not concerned with the eschatological restoration of the covenant people,[[736]](#footnote-736) if this understanding implies a future that is distanced from a present context. It does not reflect the seer’s withdrawal from history with its constraints, on the basis of a suspicion that Yahweh is not now acting in history—an idea which can be thought characteristic of apocalyptic thinking. It is not concerned with “the transcendence of death” in itself; if this is the distinguishing mark of apocalyptic eschatology,[[737]](#footnote-737) then Daniel fails this test, even here, as it fails others. This resurrection promise by God is historically contextual, like his promise in Ezek 37 which in its context does promise the revival of the covenant people. Daniel is less explicitly contextual, though more clearly so than the prophecy in Ezek 38–39.[[738]](#footnote-738) And anyway, “it is not clear that the deaths of the faithful,” the problem that resurrection solves, “are the driving concern that motivates the final revelation” (in Dan 10—12 as a whole).[[739]](#footnote-739)

The OT’s standard way of envisaging dying then coming back to life speaks of lying down to sleep then of waking and getting up. Dying is an extreme form of going to sleep, which thus provides the metaphor for it (2 Kgs 4:31; 13:21; Isa 26:19; Jer 51:39, 57; Job 14:12). It means lying down with one’s ancestors in the family tomb, which has Sheol as its nonmaterial equivalent; so coming back to life would mean leaving such a “land of earth” (cf. also Pss 49; 73). The image presupposes a restoring to life of the whole person with its spiritual and material aspects.

What does the image of renewing earthly life refer to? People are to be revived to “lasting life” in a way that makes for a contrast with the destiny of “others” whose destiny is “utter shame” and “lasting abhorrence.” These others will be the apostate, the persecutors, and the blasphemers of 11:29–45. The promise of vv 1–2 corresponds to motifs from the Psalms (e.g., 6; 69; 79). There supplicants pray for their vindication and for rescue from the realm of death, and also for the exposure and punishment of their attackers, and the desired response to such a double prayer is a double promise. So here the seer promises renewal of life and the exposure of the faithless. Although the promise does not focus on the community in the manner of Ezek 37, there is both a community and an individual aspect to this awakening, as there is in the Psalms. Part of the sufferers’ affliction is that it deprives them of a place in the people of God, one way or another. Their awakening restores them to that place; Dan 12 promises the awakening of people individually, but with a view to their sharing a corporate destiny.[[740]](#footnote-740) It is an expression of the movement “From Dust to Kingship”[[741]](#footnote-741) envisaged in passages such as 1 Sam 2:6–8; 1 Kgs 16:2; Ps 22:15 [16]; 44:25 [26]; 113:7, that great reversal when the powerful are put down and the nobodies are given power.

Like the awakening to renewed life, the exposure of the wicked has a this-worldly connotation. It was so in Isa 66:24, which v 2 takes up: its picture of people in Jerusalem looking at the corpses of the wicked decomposing in the Valley of Hinnom suggests a metaphor for a feature even of the new Jerusalem. “Everything suggests that Daniel’s use of the [Jewish resurrection] imagery shows dependence on the book of Isaiah.”[[742]](#footnote-742) Vindication and exposure after this life cannot be literally described, as vindication and exposure in this life such as the Psalms seek can be, so the latter becomes a metaphor for the former. The reference to the exposure of the wicked brings out how vv 1–3 as a whole is concerned with restoration to life not simply for its own sake, nor for the sake of communion with God, but as part of and as a means to vindication.[[743]](#footnote-743)

Might this consideration underlie the promise that “many” not all will awaken, so that the faithful who lost their lives awake for vindication and the faithless awake for condemnation, while the regular mass of faithful Israel remain in Sheol?[[744]](#footnote-744) But “many” more likely contrasts with “few” rather than with “all,” and more likely the groups raised are the faithful in general and the unpunished wicked, with the already punished wicked remaining in Sheol.[[745]](#footnote-745) But the passage is handling a specific problem and the threefold division suggested by the metaphor must not be pressed to yield a technically precise doctrine of the afterlife.

**12:3** “The discerning” who “set the multitude right” have had their teaching despised, and some of them have lost their lives. Their position will be reversed, not merely by their being restored to life, but by their being given a position of pre-eminent honor. Once again, it is difficult to tell how literal and how metaphorical is the description of their destiny. The stars can represent celestial beings (cf. 8:10; also Judg 5:20; Job 38:7; *1 Enoch* 104; *T. Moses* 10.9; *2 Apoc. Baruch* 51). Comparing the discerning with the stars need not imply that they will be located among them, still less that they will become celestial beings.[[746]](#footnote-746) A poetic couplet echoing an earlier scriptural passage (Isa 52:13; 53:11) within a visionary flight into the future cannot be pressed.

We can ask about the significance of comparing the discerning to stars or of locating them among the celestial beings. In earlier OT thought the king has been characterized in these terms (Num 24:17; 1 Sam 29:9; 2 Sam 14:17, 20; Isa 9:6 [5]), against the background of an assumed correspondence or other linkage between heaven and earth and between heavenly powers and earthly powers such as we have noted in connection with Dan 10. The last northern king had sought to storm heaven’s gates. In 12:3 such notions are not quite democratized, but they are applied more broadly to the “discerning” leaders of the community. We might compare the designation of prophets as Yahweh’s aides (מלאכים). These “discerning” are given a place in Yahweh’s council.[[747]](#footnote-747) They receive the honor the last northern king vainly sought. Once again, it is inappropriate to be literalistic in interpreting the poetry: the vision relates to life on earth lived by beings who are still human. But neither is it appropriate to be prosaic in understanding the promise: it envisages life of a heavenly character, the life of the age to come. The discerning share in the theophanic glory of the new Jerusalem.[[748]](#footnote-748) The promise speaks not of resuscitation but of resurrection, which incorporates transformation. And it is not in heaven but on earth.[[749]](#footnote-749)

**12:4** Closing up and sealing suggest not merely conserving the words in the book but withholding them (cf. 8:26; sealing reminds us that the “book” is a scroll). This understanding is confirmed by the next words: because they are withheld, “many will hurry to and fro,” unable to find a word from God (see Amos 8:11–12). But the unsealing of Daniel’s book during the Antiochene crisis ends that famine.[[750]](#footnote-750) It also means that the words now become intelligible, “for every prophecy, before its fulfilment, appears to people to be full of enigmas and ambiguities. But when the time has arrived and the prediction has come to pass, the prophecies have a clear and certain meaning.”[[751]](#footnote-751)

**12:5–10** The scene returns to that of 10:2–18; again there is some unclarity about how many persons Daniel sees, and about their relationship to the persons in chap. 10. The two other figures of v 5 connect with 8:13–14 rather than Deut 19:15.[[752]](#footnote-752) The anonymous—presumably celestial—questioner’s “how long?” (v 6) once more takes up the “how long” of Israel’s laments (see on 8:13–14). The awesome events (פלאות) of which he enquires are the ones that came to a climax in 11:29–12:3, involving Antiochus’s laying his hand on the realm of God (cf. 8:24 as well as 11:36). Yes, “‘How long?’ implies that it has already been too long, that too many have perished.”[[753]](#footnote-753)

Raising one’s hand to heaven in taking an oath (v 7) acknowledges God as witness (cf. Gen 14:22), though elsewhere the expression is used only of God himself as if he acknowledges some other witness (e.g., Ezek 20:5–6). The doubling of the hands further underline the undertaking’s solemnity, though the imagery recalls Deut 32:40 (especially in the text form that may lie behind LXX).[[754]](#footnote-754) On the 3 1/2 “set periods” (מועד here, not עדן), see on 7:25. The shattering of the power of the holy people is presumably the events of 11:21–45, or perhaps the whole period from the exile onwards; there is no particular reason to refer it to the crushing of Judas’s rebellion in 160, and the context goes against this understanding.[[755]](#footnote-755)

“The style of the apocalypse forces the reader to become an interpreter as much as Daniel and the angelic mediators are.”[[756]](#footnote-756)As in 8:15, the expert reader has become the baffled reader, and even more clearly than was the case there, he consoles and encourages subsequent readers who cannot understand his text. How could we be surprised? [[757]](#footnote-757) “The angel ordered him to seal the Book and not to divulge the secret of the ending. He submitted. Too bad. Couldn’t he haveslipped in an allusion here and there, to facilitate our task?[[758]](#footnote-758) Daniel’s puzzled question (v 8), natural for one set in the exile, facilitates a further restatement of what we have been told (vv 9–10), which also comes nearest to an explicit exhortation regarding conduct under the affliction that the seer’s hearers are experiencing. The faithful have no scope for action that will change history. Daniel is told simply to go his way; contrast chaps. 1–6. The vocation of the faithful is to keep themselves pure in the context of the pressures of history. In the abb’a’ bicolon comprising v 10, commitment to purifying, cleansing, and refining goes along with discernment, while faithlessness goes along with a turning away from insight. “The wise are antonymous to the wicked”; you can be righteous but not wise, but if you are wise, you will be righteous, and if you are wicked you will not be wise.[[759]](#footnote-759) To put it another way, they are to wait: but waiting is active, not passive. “In waiting, the faithful are called to stay the course, to remain firm in Torah observance and the praxis of resistance outlined for them elsewhere in the book.” [[760]](#footnote-760)

**12:11–12** The “how long?” receives a further answer giving temporal precision to the more symbolic expression of v 7, in terms of a number of days—indeed two numbers, both different from the one in 8:14. The numbers can be related to 8:14 and to other numbers in Daniel by Pythagorean arithmology,[[761]](#footnote-761) but “the issue is clouded by uncertainty as to the method by which the numbers were calculated.”[[762]](#footnote-762) The possibility that they have some calendrical significance both clarifies and further complicates. Various calendars were in use in the seer’s day. The Babylonians used a lunar calendar that produced a year of 354 days, the Essenes a solar calendar of 364 days,[[763]](#footnote-763) the Hellenistic regimes a luni-solar one of 360 days; in each case the calendar was corrected to the true length of the solar year by intercalating months. Evidence of familiarity with all three calendars has been found in the OT. The question of the right calendar was overtly a subject of dispute in the second and first centuries BC (see on 7:23–25), and Daniel’s periods of days have been seen as reflections of this dispute. They most straightforwardly fit the luni-solar calendar,[[764]](#footnote-764) but they can be understood in the light of the other systems. When allowance is made for intercalation, 1290 days can represent 3 1/2 lunar years[[765]](#footnote-765) or 3 1/2 solar years;[[766]](#footnote-766) 1335 days can also be reckoned to comprise 3 1/2 solar years.[[767]](#footnote-767)

As Daniel’s figures can be related to several calendars, so they can be related to several sets of events between 168 and 164. The beginning point of v 11 could be the time of one of the edicts by Antiochus, the time of the temple desecration, or the time of the enforcement of the ban on the regular sacrificial order (11:31–33). The beginning point of v 12 could be one of these moments, or an earlier event such as Apollonius’s mission. More likely vv 11–12 begin with the same event and v 12 terminates later, suggesting that the promised release will have successive stages during which a continuing faithful expectancy is required. Thus vv 11–12 could terminate with Judas’s victories, the temple rededication, Antiochus’s death, the arrival of news of his death, or the further events envisaged by 11:45–12:3. According to 1 Macc 1:59; 4:52–53, the period from the first pagan sacrifice to the altar’s rededication was exactly three years.

**12:13** The concern of vv 1–3 was the resurrection of people in the seer’s day, not figures from the past such as an exilic Daniel. Yet behind the figure of Daniel is the seer himself, a member of the group who might well lose their lives, so the man in linen’s encouragement to face both life (“go your way”) and death (“and rest”) with equanimity relates directly to the calling of the “discerning.” Although v 13 differs from what precedes in its implicit rationale for resurrection and in its language,[[768]](#footnote-768) the picture of death as rest (cf. Isa 57:2; Job 3:13, 17) and of returning to life as rising from sleep picks up the imagery of v 2. “Destiny” (גורל) appears frequently in the Qumran literature as a term for the community’s fellowship with the holy ones (1QS 11.7; 1QH 11.11), but even there the word is used with other meanings (e.g., 1QS 1.10); OG nicely translates it δοξα (glory).[[769]](#footnote-769) “The final day” (הימין קץ, literally “the end of the days”) is not a technical term for the End (cf. similar expressions in 1:18; 11:6, 13; Neh 13:6); presumably it is the same time as “the time of the end” (קץ עת) in v 4.[[770]](#footnote-770)

## Explanation

The seer might have drawn our attention to six main affirmations in this final vision, which provides keys to understanding the book as a whole with its emphasis on power, understanding, and time.[[771]](#footnote-771)

**(a) My message came by divine revelation.** The main point of my narrative in 10:1-19 was to encourage my hearers to receive the message in 10:20—12:4 (and in 10:13, 20; 12:7–13) as a revelation from heaven. The overt basis on which it did so was the nature of the experience I related, an experience like Ezekiel’s that implied that my message could be accepted as Ezekiel’s was. Heavenly beings—so impressive and awesome that one of them might have been God himself—had been in touch with me. While their appearing draws attention to the gulf between earth and heaven, which makes it necessary for revelation to be sought and granted, it also highlights the contact between earth and heaven, because revelation was sought and granted.[[772]](#footnote-772)

I do not necessarily imply that either I or my audience took this argument to be conclusive. First, while I believed my message to have come by divine gift, I knew that it was not received by the exilic Daniel in the way I described it, and at least some of my contemporaries knew. Second, even if I was inviting people to believe that the message was received through a revelatory experience, “translated” into—or experienced as—an experience of the exilic Daniel, I and they also knew that a claim to revelatory experience is not to be accepted purely on the basis of the claim (cf. Jer 23:15–32).[[773]](#footnote-773)

My account therefore implies some other reasons for accepting my message as a God-given revelation. I could present it as an experience of a man of proven discernment and faithfulness. In chaps. 1–6 these qualities appear in Daniel; in chaps. 10–12 they also appear when we as the actual recipients of these visions become fleetingly visible (11:32–35; 12:10). And my message was presented not as a quite new revelation but in large part as a piece of scriptural exposition (see *Form*). Biblical prophecy and not merely personal insight provided the categories for my understanding of the events of Hellenistic history.

Of course not everything in my vision was expressed in terms that are anticipated earlier in the OT; the revelation concerning the involvement of heavenly figures behind earthly events is an important exception, even though it has theological links with earlier scriptures. And in any case, the use of scriptures no more makes a message biblical and true than an account of an experience like that in chap. 10 makes a message a divine revelation. I was reapplying the scriptures to Antiochus and the promised destiny of conservative Jews. I was not the only person who did so: others did, in the cause of expounding different perspectives on the Antiochene crisis, in I Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, and *1 Enoch*; some reformist Jews believed they had the scriptures on their side, too (cf. 11:14?). Canons of exegesis cannot prove that my use of Isaiah reflects the spirit of Isaiah.

Another obvious criterion for deciding whether a prophecy comes from God is whether it comes true (Deut 18:22). I might seem to fail that test. People such as my community may live with unfulfilled prophecies by reinterpreting the events that they experience (emphasizing that something did happen) or by reinterpreting the prophecy’s time reference (it hasn’t been fulfilled yet) or by reinterpreting the prophecy itself (it didn’t really refer to an actual event), though in thus acquitting prophecies of failure they risk emptying them of cognitive content.[[774]](#footnote-774) It might also be said that while I was offering people a way of seeing order in the cosmos by promising that things would work out, it was a high-risk enterprise: it could put the total order at risk in the long run.[[775]](#footnote-775)

All these ways of living with prophecy have been found in my visions themselves. First, the words of the OT prophets, who sometimes fail the test of fulfillment, commonly receive what people could see as a partial fulfillment, and perhaps it is this partial fulfillment that encouraged the community to hold onto words that were not fulfilled—these words must also have come from God and must offer illumination for the future. My community, too, might not have preserved my words if they had experienced no spectacular deliverance in 164–163 BC. Hanukkah celebrates the fact that proleptically my words were fulfilled and that I did not prophesy falsely.[[776]](#footnote-776) Second, though 12:11–12 have been seen as successive reinterpretations of the prophecy’s time reference, in general I can claim that I avoided giving the impression that the End was imminent, even if I did sound interested in calculating its time.[[777]](#footnote-777) Third, some prophecies are intended “mythically.” They involve that “intersection of the ideal and the circumstantial” which features in the royal psalms; they are not purely eschatological.[[778]](#footnote-778) Even my quasi-predictions, after all, offered not an objective historical account of Antiochus but an interpretive portrait of what he stood for, painted in light of scriptural archetypes. The actual declarations about the future, which also do something newly creative with old words from the scriptures, are then more promise than prediction; 12:1–3, for instance, was a flight of my imagination comparable to Job’s (e.g., 19:23–27). The encouragement they offer can survive literal disconfirmation, and subsequent generations can feel that they directly address them in different but analogous crises in which the End approaches them as threat but which in their light can become promise.

That dynamic suggests another way of establishing whether my message was a divine revelation. Does it look like one that can be lived with? At least some people in the second century BC found it so, preserved it, and shared it with subsequent generations, so that it found a place among those scriptures that shaped the identity of Jews and Christians of all shades of belief and gave them the perspectives with which to view analogous crises.

**(b) Heavenly powers share in shaping the events of earthly history.** I spoke of a struggle involving Israel’s leader, Michael, and the unnamed leaders of Persia and Greece, a struggle over whether God’s purpose for history should be revealed, which was also a struggle over whether it should thereby be put into effect. That way of thinking does not mean that we should understand history in a dualistic way. God is sovereign in heaven and on earth; there is no other power to rival him (I do not refer to a Satan). His purpose can be opposed and delayed, but not frustrated. I did not suggest a dualism of ultimate powers. Nor did I imply that the real decisions about history are made in heaven, so that human acts make no difference to what happens. My revelation concerning Hellenistic history made clear that human beings are responsible for history. Armies have to fight as if the battle on the earthly plane alone counts. On the other hand, monistic thinking about history is an oversimplification. I do not see history as the outworking of human decisions alone. There is “a synergism between human and divine history.”[[779]](#footnote-779) Not only do free human decisions unwittingly contribute to the working out of God’s purpose (see chap. 2 *Explanation*); what I said about the activity of the supernatural leaders of the nations (10:13; 10:20–11:1) presupposed that the purposes of kings and nations are more than merely the decisions of particular human beings. Something in the realm of the supernatural lies behind them.

Compared with *1 Enoch* I made only rather allusive reference to those heavenly beings, though I allowed more for this way of thinking than 1 Maccabees does. I said little or nothing about their nature or origin, about how many of them there are or how they are ordered, or about distinctions between good and evil beings among them.[[780]](#footnote-780) What I did say indicates that consideration of them requires more than jest or sentimentalism. They are not dainty figures in dresses, but figures whose very names draw attention to the uniqueness and the might of God, which they mediate.

Historically, the idea of the leaders of the nations developed from the the idea of many gods in polytheistic religions. We always knew that Yahweh was uniquely God; even Michael’s name draws attention to there being no one like God even in heaven.[[781]](#footnote-781) But we also knew that the life of heaven was more complex than might be implied by a bare affirmation that Yahweh alone was God. And the idea of the leaders of the nations provided a way of thinking about history as we experienced it. History involves conflicts between peoples that seem to reflect more than merely human factors—for instance, it involves inexplicable defeats and inexplicable victories. This conflict is sometimes one that seems to have more than merely human significance, yet on other occasions it is one in which the hand of God cannot be discerned nor can promises such as those of Ps 2 be seen to be effective.

The power of the leader of Persia mirrors Persia’s actual political power.[[782]](#footnote-782) The idea of the heavenly leaders of the nations is a way of expressing the fact that there is more to history and to reality than we can see: both individuals and states are more than merely themselves as historical realities.[[783]](#footnote-783) While the leaders are somehow under God’s control, and they are not his demonic opponents, neither are they simply his heavenly obedient servants. The job of the leader of Persia is to represent Persian interests in a world in conflict; “it has a right to contest for the best interests of the Persian empire narrowly defined.” The leaders are not “idealized personifications” of their nations; “they represent the actual spirituality and possibilities of actual entities.”[[784]](#footnote-784)

Not only is it often impossible to see the hand of God in history; it is often impossble to see the hand of the nations themselves. Events work out despite their intentions rather than through them. I have a vision of a day when the United States and the Soviet Union have reached an agreement in principle on the control of medium-range nuclear weapons such as could not have been dreamed of two years before, given the then posturing of both governments; but in that same week I foresee an escalation of Iranian-American hostilities in the Gulf War despite the apparent desire of both governments for disengagement.[[785]](#footnote-785) What nations do, for good or ill, is not always what they were planning to do. It is as if some power other than the powers themselves influences the shaping of their destiny.

Another theological issue underlies this idea, or at least emerges from it. In referring to the figures who appeared to me, I did not use words such as “angel” that apply only to supernatural beings. I called them by phrases such as “a manlike being,” or—without that qualifying“like”—“a man in linen.” I emphasized that there was something special about these figures, but my language also stressed their kinship with humanity. I used the ordinary word “leader,” too, without qualification, both for celestial beings and for earthly ones (10:13, 20, 21; 11:5; 12:1; cf. 1:7–11, 18; 8:11, 25; 9:6, 8), and the ordinary word for “king” in 10:13 in a context where I was talking about supernatural figures.

The NT uses the equivalent Greek words for “leader” for both material and spiritual/heavenly powers (e.g., Th’s equivalent for שר in Daniel, ἄρχων , in Rom 13:3; 1 Cor 2:6, 8; the more common related noun ἀρχή, e.g., Rom 8:38; Eph 6:12; Col 1:16). Both the Hebrew and the Greek words generally denote human leaders, but sometimes denote supernatural ones, and sometimes they are ambiguous (cf. Dan 10:13). Perhaps the fluidity and ambiguity in such usage reflects a duality about all entities that embody power.[[786]](#footnote-786) There is something human, earthly, structural, political, and visible about them. There is also something heavenly, invisible, suprahuman, immaterial, and supernatural. The powers have an inner and an outer aspect, an outer form and an inner driving self. They are not merely metaphors for structures of power within the nation itself, but neither do they exist in themselves, as independent persons or disembodied spirits. They have no profile of their own; their significance is only as agents of God and/or foci of human societies. Nations as such, then, have personalities and vocations.[[787]](#footnote-787) But even in a democracy power becomes embodied in individuals. “It is the fortuitous conjunction of a powerful personality in a powerful office that makes a powerful leader.”[[788]](#footnote-788) “Leaders,” human and heavenly, both focus that personality and vocation.

Col 1:16–20 reaffirms what I presupposed, that all power in its visible and invisible aspects was created by God and exists for God. Overwhelmed by the significance of Jesus, Paul further affirms that all such power was created in him, through him, and for him. The powers “only have their being because of him; they are upheld, even in their defections, by him. They exist to serve the purpose of the whole creation as it comes to its focus in him…. Try as they will to become autonomous and set up their own interests as the highest good, the Powers must inevitably come to terms with the Power of the Powers.”[[789]](#footnote-789) In a context such as that of Dan 1–6, it is our task to call them back to their origins and destiny. Even in a context such as that of Dan 7–12, when there seems no likelihood that they will respond to such a call, my vision implies that it is our task to pray for them. It is still our way of confronting the supernatural realities of which the political is an embodiment. It was not my job to engage with these heavenly forces. It was my job to pray and to recognize that the reality of conflict in heaven was one factor that made things troublesome in the world.[[790]](#footnote-790) Presumably it is no coincidence that my period of prayer and the leaders’ period of conflict were coterminous. It implies that prayer can play a role in opening up the possibility of God’s purpose being fulfilled when human purposes conflict with it. There are sometimes reasons why prayers don’t get answered straightaway.[[791]](#footnote-791) But my cry “opened an aperture for God to act in concert with human freedom. It inaugurated war in heaven. It opened a way through the impenetrable spirituality of a foreign hegemony in order to declare a new and real divine possibility.”[[792]](#footnote-792) My vision did not provide a rationale for how this is so, but it expresses in narrative form the conviction that it is so.

The celestial interrogators are a blessing to the persecuted. “Raise the questions, they imply…; raise them in groanings of spirit…. Shall faith permit of no perplexities? The angels deny it, urging perplexities of their own.”[[793]](#footnote-793)

**(c) The details of Israel’s history are within the control of God.** My vision pictured a heavenly being revealing during the 530s events to take place over the subsequent four centuries up to the End, from the contents of “a trustworthy book” (10:21). To say that history was pre-written was to affirm the belief that it is under control. It could seem to imply that history is an imposed destiny, fixed independently of the wills of its participants; the march of the kingdoms is the march of toy soldiers programmed by God.[[794]](#footnote-794) If it were so, even I might have reckoned that God could have programmed it better. To speak in terms of history’s being pre-written is not incompatible with speaking of God’s giving people responsibility so that they choose whether to walk in his way (cf. *1 Enoch*). The stories of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar (Dan 4–5) similarly treat heathen kings both as standing beneath an overarching determination of God and as responsible to him and to themselves for their destinies. In understanding the significance of the book image, one needs to keep reminding oneself that in respect of the vast bulk of the history that I described as pre-written, I was declaring it to be so only afterwards. I was describing events as inevitable (11:14, 27, 36) when they were inevitable, after they had happened. To describe them in this way at that point need not imply a more mechanical view of history than the prophets’ view, as if history is fixed and predetermined or self-imposing as it happens. It is inappropriate to be literalistic in interpreting my visions, as if my message was other than a quasi-prediction.

The significance of describing past history as pre-written is to declare that God is in control even of the inexplicabilities of history—the successes of the godless and the sufferings of the faithful—and even at moments when evil is asserting itself in a particularly oppressive way. Given the difficulty of viewing history as it unfolds as the direct will of God, the books declare that it was foreknown by God and in some sense willed by him. It is part of some pattern and purpose, rather than being random and meaningless. Like other parts of the scriptures, however, I assume that God’s capacity to know about events before they happen and to stay in control of the way they develop is not incompatible with the reality of human decisionmaking and responsibility for them.

The really future events that are read out of God’s books are ones associated with the End, with the final defeat of evil and the final establishment of God’s rule in the world, which is part of the purpose for human history that God is determined to achieve. In this connection, there is a fixed inevitability about history; human beings cannot frustrate God’s ultimate purpose, and in that sense they cannot alter what has been determined by God’s will. But the detailed portrayal of how the End will come is an imaginative scenario drawn in the light of scriptures, rather than a forecast of how things must be (see [a] above).

**(d) The details of Persian and Hellenistic history have no positive theological significance.** “With a doggedness not found in any other part of the Book of Daniel the concept of the divine predetermination of the times renders history essentially meaningless, even though this section devotes more space than any other to a review of history.”[[795]](#footnote-795) Actually, it is not the idea of predetermination that makes history meaningless. History is meaningless anyway. If we see “historiography as a way of knowing,”[[796]](#footnote-796) then what it enables us to know is something deeply discouraging.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,

creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

to the last syllable of recorded time:

. . . . . . . . . . . a tale

told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

signifying nothing.

(William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 5.5.18–20, 25–27)

I am unable to find any meaning in history.

(H. A. L. Fisher)[[797]](#footnote-797)

The implication is not that I suggest a mythical rather than a history-oriented view. While I denied that history is going anywhere and I did look forward to God taking decisive action to being about the victory of the good, I did not take a cyclic view of history nor did I see history as predetermined in a way that excludes human decision-making and responsibility for what happens, nor did I lack interest in actual history.[[798]](#footnote-798) Yet “we cannot fail to see or realise that humanity appears strangely lost in its history.” Is it at all possible to know what has happened and what does happen, in any sequence of empires or dynasties you care to name, from ancient times to the twentieth century. “We recall all the few or many things that we know of all the great and little powers which here rise and fall, of all the civilisations that come and go with all their transmutations, of all the treaties concluded and broken, and above all of all the wars which were fought, and ended.” We recall the great names and the acts associated with them.” We remember, too, the hopes and disappointments and sufferings and joys, more felt than known, of the anonymous millions of individuals recorded by history only in partial selection and brief outline, yet also participating and contributing as they also live and die in the limits and under the pressure of the conditions imposed upon them. Whence and whither and to what end is all this? What does any of it mean?[[799]](#footnote-799) Any hope lies not in some possibility inherent in the story but in a possibility one locates somewhere else.

My vision implies a different interpretation of history from the one that predominates among OT historians, prophets, and psalmists. It constitutes an exposition of profane history, in contrast with the outline of sacred history in 9:24–27; it gives history more space than any other chapter in the book, but indeed renders it essentially meaningless.[[800]](#footnote-800) Events unfold as a pointless sequence of invasions, battles, schemes, and frustrations. Military power and political maneuvering are central themes; but military issues are not always settled by the size of an army, and political schemes come to nothing, whether pursued by means of battle or by means of alliance.[[801]](#footnote-801) It is a tale of selfishness, irrationality, and chance. Human beings formulate farreaching plans but keep being frustrated by each other. Neither power nor politics take people anywhere. History is not the outworking of a just purpose, nor is the hand of God directly visible in it; God, indeed, for the most part remains in the gallery, only watching—though no doubt noting the parallels in this history to earlier events involving Assyria and Babylon as the prophets commented on these events, and committed to bringing upon it a corresponding judgment. I was not suggesting that history was always hell-bent on the disaster that emerges at the end of chap. 11. I was not negative about Alexander and the Hellenistic empires in general (contrast 1 Macc 1). Even the eventual disaster, though it comes as determined, is a result of chance collocations of people and events. History is going nowhere. The interpretation of history that I was offering will turn out to match the way people experience history in more secular centuries.

So “the details of the ensuing history [in 11:2-20] are without theological interest,”[[802]](#footnote-802) though the outworking of this history is not incapable of theological interpretation. While the four great empires contained one another by each terminating the rule of the last, the Seleucids and the Ptolemies mutually contained each other by frustrating each other’s aspirations to wider empire over a period of centuries, thus protecting each other from reaching the ultimate arrogance that must provoke God to intervene.[[803]](#footnote-803) That provocation is also offered when war and politics become interwoven with religion. Yet generally I was not concerned to offer any ethical judgment on history, though I did imply a negative judgment based on the imperial powers’ involvement in religious matters for their political reasons.

Nor was I concerned to comment on Israel’s own involvement in history. Later works such as 1 and 2 Maccabees would do so, but they came from a period when there was the history of an independent Jewish state to reflect on. They revived in different ways a historical perspective like that of 1 and 2 Kings, valuing the activism of the Maccabees, though presupposing two different evaluations of martyrdom, miracle, prophecy, belief in resurrection, and of the Hasmonean monarchy.[[804]](#footnote-804) Whether or not people took a quietist stance rather than resisting Antiochus by military means, I wanted to put the emphasis on the activity of God, not on what our own acts could achieve. I did not want people to blame themselves for the Antiochene crisis. Neither did I want to put the responsibility on some cosmic act of rebellion near the beginning of world history, as if people in our day were not responsible for their acts. “If the point of Genesis 1 was ‘In the beginning God…’, the point of Daniel 7 was ‘In the end God….’”[[805]](#footnote-805) While the reformist Jews had been irresponsible fools, they had played into the hands of the person who was my real scapegoat, Antiochus.

Readers will be able to see Antiochus in my story, but I do not name him or name any preceding kings or events. This omission helps to make the point that there is nothing unique about these kings or the events they are involved in. I present their story in a way that schematizes it and implies a typology.[[806]](#footnote-806) The same things keep happening and I keep using the same phrases to describe them and keep making those links with earlier scriptures which suggest a pattern that is being repeated here.

**(e) The destiny of the faithful—and of the faithless—is sure.** The solemnity of my vision could be troubling and make it hard to be open to.[[807]](#footnote-807) While it could indeed seem troublesome that the people of God are under such pressure, it would be even worse if supernatural forces were not fighting on our behalf.[[808]](#footnote-808) And it would be even worse if it were not possible to look at these events in light of the scriptures. My quasi-prediction continued to be shaped by the scriptures through chap. 11. The Assyrians provided one model for my portrait of the Seleucids: and as the former fell, so would the latter. The temple desecration was like the desecration by the Babylonians: and as that desecration had been reversed, so would this one be. The affliction was like that of Yahweh’s servant in Isaiah: and in this case, too, it would give way to triumph.

As chap. 10 speaks of celestial figures who are the embodiments of earthly institutions, so chap. 11 speaks of earthly figures who are the embodiments of supernatural principles. I speak of no figure who embodies the fulfillment of God’s positive purpose—no messiah. Nor is there any indication in my vision that at some point it moves from talking about Antiochus to talking about an anti-messiah or a Satan, or begins to speak in words that refer both to Antiochus and to an anti-messiah. It is not the case that “the interpretation of the book of Daniel has been sharply altered by those who edited it” in order to remove references to Antiochus and permit readers two centuries later to identify the fourth empire with Rome.[[809]](#footnote-809) But in the way I spoke of Antiochus I was suggesting that he—like the King of Babylon in Isa 14 or Gog in Ezek 38–was the very embodiment of godless wickedness, so that the language used of him could be used of an anti-messiah or a Satan. I was indeed implying that he was such an embodiment of something bigger than him. So my vision could be understood typologically to throw light on the anti-messiah or a Satan.[[810]](#footnote-810) And such a use fits the way a “conversation between history and eschatology… is at the heart of these vision chapters of Daniel.”[[811]](#footnote-811)

The trouble with Antiochus was that he treated religious questions as subordinate to political ones. Nationhood and kingship are not wholly bad, but they do have an irresistible tendency to self-idolatry. Whatever is the right interpretation of Antiochus’s motivations in his relationships with Jerusalem, what counted for him was the stability of the Seleucid empire and its ability to play the international role for which it seemed to be destined. The state, or Hellenism, or he himself, had highest importance: it was God.[[812]](#footnote-812) Hope for the living, then, lay in the downfall of the one who epitomized godlessness and in the vindication of the people who resisted him.

What of the people for whom this vindication would come too late? In my vision I saw them brought back to life to resume the life they had wrongly lost, while those who led them in the way of faithfulness shine like stars. One version of the myth of the overweening king, which underlies the portrait of Antiochus, describes him—ironically, in the end—as wiser than Danel/Daniel. But I was the one who was granted an audience with heavenly beings, who was addressed as someone held in high regard by God (a royal epithet), who did have by God’s grace the discernment that the king was supposed to possess. As the king and his kind come to their end and know shame and abhorrence instead of the place among the stars to which they aspired, the people of discernment and faithfulness leave the land of dirt that is the overweening king’s destiny and rise to an inheritance, to lasting life, and to our own place among the stars. Like the vision in Isa 52:13–53:12, my vision affirmed a kingship ideal but radically reshaped it by presupposing that the way to royal glory is the way of martyrdom. It “provides a rationale for martyrdom.”[[813]](#footnote-813) It brings to a climax the ambivalent aspects to the portrayal of kingship that run through my story and my visions. Real power is recognized and can be affirmed, but in practice it tends to encourage a vainglorious arrogance that has to be turned to shame. Only those can enjoy royal glory who have already come to terms with shame. These images came to have more literal meaning for the Qumran community, who saw themselves—in Johannine fashion—as already enjoying the life of heaven in the company of the angels. My vision was not that prosaic in its implications. I was speaking the language of hope, speaking of a future resurrection, not of a transition to a new sphere of life now;[[814]](#footnote-814) though it is the case that those who wait for Yahweh’s new act find new strength, and in a sense new life, even now (Isa 40:31).

Several sorts of reasoning may have led to my affirmation of resurrection. One is the conviction that God will see that truth, commitment, and faithfulness are vindicated. “Daniel has taken the bold step to affirm that the God who is the source of all life, who can restore life to the dead if he wishes, will raise the dead so that justice may be done. For Judaism of this period resurrection was very much a justice issue, and the same seems to have been true of the earliest interpretations of Christ's resurrection appearances. He had died a shameful death, apparently under a curse (Gal 3:13; Deut 21:23), but his resurrection was vindication (Acts 2:24-25; 5:30-31).”[[815]](#footnote-815)

Another line of reasoning is that resurrection does relate to the fulfillment of God’s purpose for Israel. It is not simply an individual experience. Belief in a personal life after death does not replace belief in the final corporate and cosmic achievement of God’s ultimate purpose. Resurrection is an event associated with the final achievement of that purpose. It happens to individuals, but it does not happen to them individually, in the meantime. It happens to individuals, yet it is not the means of their enjoying individual bliss, but of their having a share in the new life and glory of the people of God. My concern was thus nationalist rather than individualist. It was also nationalist rather than universalist; other peoples were not within my concern. And it was nationalist rather than sectarian. I viewed reformist Jews as having lost their soul through their involvement with the gentile powers and as having forfeited their place within the true Israel; that attitude is an implicitly sectarian one, yet my vision was for the true Israel and the empirical Israel to be coterminous.[[816]](#footnote-816)

A further related consideration is that surely God cannot simply let people who have suffered persecution and martyrdom end their lives in ignominious and painful suffering and in a death which so contrasts with the fate of the wayward (cf. *1 Enoch* 102–4). Lasting life was God’s intention from the beginning but humanity sacrificed it (Gen 2—3). Yet lasting life surely follows from God’s entering into relationship with people: God is not God of the dead but of the living (Mark 12:27). As a people, for many centuries we did not follow up on or develop those truths in the way other peoples did when they formulated mythic solutions to the problem of death.[[817]](#footnote-817) In fact, our affirmation of this life sat in tension with the pie-in-the-sky beliefs of other peoples. Declarations about resurrection life had to be wrested from us through experiences that made the affirmation of this life difficult for people whose experience was not of life in fullness.

Was this wresting simply an example of how “blissful illusions… not seldom prove to be effective opiates for patients whose condition is beyond rational cure”—illusions opposed by realists like the writer of Ecclesiastes?[[818]](#footnote-818) In due course such a critique will be undermined by the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of people who belong to Jesus follows from the fact of his resurrection (1 Cor 15). And as the earlier history of the Middle Eastern empires shaped my understanding of Antiochus and the fate he would experience, so my vision of the awakening and vindication of the holy and discerning martyrs shaped perceptions of Jesus, for Jesus himself and for his followers. It had an anticipatory relationship with the event that more than any other brought a realization within history of realities that belong to the End; and by a feedback process the death and resurrection of Jesus turned out to be the vindication of my own vision. Setting my vision in the context of the NT reveals that one martyr indeed awoke to such vindication. If you are called to walk the way that the discerning and holy of the Antiochene (and the Roman) period walked, you are promised that his experience is your key and your hope as you do so.

My vision of resurrection also implied that the wicked’s simply dying the same death as the righteous is not enough. But what it promised for them was not eternal physical pain but eternal shame. That promise has been fulfilled, both for reformist Jews and for Antiochus and his empire. They have not been forgotten, like most of the dead. Wherever the gospel of Daniel has been preached through the whole world, what these people did has been spoken of, perpetuating their memory. Scholarship’s difficulty in attaining a more objective historical understanding of Antiochus and the reformist Jews is unconscious testimony to the fulfillment of Dan 12:2.

**(f) The faithful are challenged to steadfastness.** So what was the purpose of offering people all this quasi- and actual information about the past and the future? Information as such does people some good (the gnostics were not wholly wrong). It helps them formulate a mind on issues that confront them. But I also wanted to influence their behavior. I wanted to encourage the discerning to be steadfast in their faithfulness, and to encourage others to join them. I went as near as I could to saying as much, when I described the faithfulness of conservative Jews and described the positive significance our affliction can have. I did not say that suffering was redemptive or atoning or a means of provoking God to act on our behalf.[[819]](#footnote-819) I could see that it had a refining effect on the community. It forces people to make up their mind which side they are on. I did not need to encourage loyalist Jews to fight for the cause if necessary. If anything, they needed to be wary of overestimating what can be achieved through fighting. You would have thought our story over the centuries would have shown them, but it had not, and the subsequent believing communities have not been very good at learning it, either. But what I wanted to emphasize was the responsibility of the conservative leadership to teach people: to do what I was trying to do myself, passing on to people what God was revealing to us about the way he looked at past and present and future, and encouraging them in light of that revelation to refuse to collaborate with Antiochus and the reformist Jews. I wanted them to fight in that sense, and to stand their ground to the end if necessary (cf. Eph 6:10–18). I saw myself as having a position rather like Daniel’s, and I wanted the rest of the leadership to be Daniel-like, too—indeed, I wanted the whole people to be Daniel-like. That is why I ended the way I did.

In 12:11, Calvin comments, “I have no hesitation in supposing the angel to speak metaphorically” and in 12:12, “in numerical calculations I am no conjurer, and those who expound this passage with too great subtlety, only trifle in their own speculations,” but he adds “It is as if the angel had said, although half the time should be prorogued, yet the faithful ought constantly to persist in the hope of deliverance.” God will not in the end disappoint us.[[820]](#footnote-820) Further, “the promise of rest is a word addressed to the listener, right now.” It places the hearer in a moment of “urgency that demands acknowledgment and response.”[[821]](#footnote-821) The Puritan theologian John Owen preached on 12:13 at the funeral of Oliver Cromwell’s son-in-law Henry Ireton, who died in a plague during a campaign in Ireland. Ireton, Owen says, resembled Daniel in being a man of wisdom, of love for his people, and of uprightness; but like Daniel, Ireton had to accept his dismissal when God said it was time, even if God says this word of dismissal before the work is all done. But how blessed we are if God declares that the time for rest has come, knowing that God himself will fulfill his purpose at the End. [[822]](#footnote-822) Therefore we pray,

Grant, Almighty God, as thou didst formerly appear to Daniel thy holy servant, and to the other prophets, and by their doctrine didst render thy glory conspicuous to us at this day, that we may reverently approach and behold it. When we have become entirely devoted to thee, may those mysteries which it has pleased thee to offer by means of their hand and labours, receive from us their due estimation. May we be cast down in ourselves and be raised by hope and faith towards heaven; when prostrate before thy face, may we so conduct ourselves in the world, as in the interval to become free from all the depraved desires and passions of our flesh, and dwell mentally in heaven. Then at length may we be withdrawn from this earthly warfare, and arrive at that celestial rest which thou hast prepared for us, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.[[823]](#footnote-823)

# Conclusion

## The Book’s Form

The distinctive formal feature of Daniel is its combining in nearly equal proportions a series of stories about Daniel and his friends and a series of visions attributed to Daniel. It is a bipolar book.[[824]](#footnote-824)

The visions are especially influential in determining descriptions of Daniel’s form: Daniel is an apocalypse. The word comes from the Greek term used of “The Apocalypse” in Rev 1:1. Apocalypse as a genre of writing is usefully distinguished from apocalyptic eschatology as a form of belief about the future that may appear in writings of various literary forms (for instance, in the Gospels and in Paul’s letters) and from apocalypticism as a form of religious faith as a whole that can arise in particular social contexts and in which apocalyptic eschatology has a prominent place.[[825]](#footnote-825)

In Rev 1:1 an apocalypse is a revelation by God through an intermediary to a seer concerning realities in heaven and events to come associated with the End, accompanied by exhortations that prepare the hearers to be open to the visions that occupy the main part of the book. Developing this understanding, an influential definition sees apocalypse as “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.”[[826]](#footnote-826) The connection with eschatology marks the way an apocalypse will deal with things to come, but it may also deal with things above (heaven), as is the case in Revelation, with things below (Sheol and Gehenna), and with things before us (the past, including creation).[[827]](#footnote-827) Daniel is certainly concerned with things to come and with things above (see especially chap. 10). It tells us little about things below, but each vision shows considerable interest in what is past from the perspective of seer and audience, giving much space to interpretations of past historical events from the exile to the second century. As a visionary work, Daniel is thus illumined by both these definitions.

These definitions also suggest pointers to the significance of the stories in Daniel. First, in preceding the bulk of the revelatory material, the stories may be seen as equivalent to the hortatory material in Rev 2–3.[[828]](#footnote-828) While Revelation thus incorporates this exhortation in its visions, Daniel presents its equivalent in story form, in keeping with OT precedents. Its stories implicitly urge upon their hearers the life of trust and faithfulness that will be difficult but vital in the circumstances to which the visions speak. Relating as they do to pressures similar to those of the second century (see on 11:33), the stories show this trust and faithfulness to be possible because it is undergirded by God’s faithfulness and power. Second, the stories comprise the bulk of the visions’ narrative framework. They introduce the visionary with his qualities of discernment and faithfulness which help to establish his authority and give him the right to urge faithfulness on others. Third, the stories, like the visions, portray a God who rules in heaven who is also sovereign over the realm of death, who is active in the past and trustworthy for the future.

The space the stories occupy warns against interpreting them as wholly subordinate to the visions. Apocalypse may be an example of a genre that becomes simpler as it develops, and the subsequent development of the apocalypse form must not obscure the nature of this early example. It is a mixed form, as much a series of short stories to which visions are attached as a series of visions prefaced by some stories.

The stories reflect historical experiences and events. But they are not historiography. The indications of this fact are not confined to their incorporating material that tells a different story from what we otherwise know of the period, such as the portrait of Nebuchadnezzar, the placing of a Median empire between the Babylonian and the Persian, and the existence of Darius the Mede. The stories are not simply failed attempts at writing history. The book of Daniel hardly raises more historical problems than books such as Chronicles, and even if all such features are unhistorical, it is not this feature that marks the stories as not historiographical. The pointers to this conclusion lie in the way they manifest the positive features of short stories that make use of fictional features as well as historical ones in order to achieve their aim of telling an instructive and edifying and true story. It is not the case that “the tales in chapters 1-6 have a history-like character, but they also present notorious historical problems.”[[829]](#footnote-829) Comparison with (say) the closing chapters of 2 Kings makes clear that they do not have a history-like character, even on an OT understanding of “history-like.” To imply that they are at fault if they contain unhistorical features is to judge them on alien criteria; to defend them by seeking to establish that at such points they are factual after all is to collude with such a false starting point.[[830]](#footnote-830)

Ironically, it is the visions that have more in common with historiography.[[831]](#footnote-831) The visions are for the most part quasi-prediction rather than actual prediction, and they are pseudonymous; we do not know who these visionaries were. The reasons for this conclusion are formal and theological rather than philosophical. It is not that prediction of second-century events in the sixth century would be impossible; let its possibility be granted. Formally, it is not essential to or distinctive of apocalypses to be pseudonymous or quasi-predictive. Both features are missing from Revelation and present in works of other genres. In general, pseudonymity can be a mark of humility and deference, though it can also be a way of commending a work. Not least in visions, pseudonymity may indicate a sense that one is inspired by the person to whom one refers. This person is God’s agent in mediating the vision. Isaiah ben Amoz contributed to the inspiration of the prophecies in Isa 40—55. Dan 2 was passed down as a vision of Daniel and the visions in chap. 7—12 found part of their inspiration there. “The visionary of the Maccabean period must have identified with Daniel and seen history, as it were, through Daniel’s eyes.”[[832]](#footnote-832) More broadly, the midrashic aspect to both stories and visions, which presupposes the existence of some scriptures and makes these scriptures one of their starting points, suggests another consideration underlying the visions’ pseudonymity.[[833]](#footnote-833) Conversely, pseudonymity means making a deliberate choice not to identify oneself as authow; the author “claims no authority for the self embedded within existing structures of domination.” It “chooses to claim only the authority of the pseudonymous hero (and the heavenly sourced from which that hero’s revelation proceeds).”[[834]](#footnote-834)

There are no OT parallels to the visions in Daniel, but ancient Near Eastern parallels to the visions in Daniel are pseudonymous quasi-predictions not actual predictions of known authorship. These parallels also suggest that there is no reason to assume that the authors were scoundrels perpetrating a scam and producing a forgery with the cynical intention of deceiving their hearers regarding the visions’ origin.[[835]](#footnote-835) It is just as likely that the immediate hearers would have known how to hear them.

We must assume at least that the immediate circles of the authors were aware of the manner in which the works were actually produced. In contrast, the attribution of the apocalyptic books was apparently accepted by the general public, and there is no evidence that the literary convention was generally recognized in Judaism or early Christianity. Yet these books, whether canonical or not, are all of high moral serioueness, and so it is difficult to dismiss them as mere forgeries or calculated deceptions.[[836]](#footnote-836)

It is even more likely that their authors and readers would not have been preoccupied by the question. Our concern with it in the context of modernity parallels the similar development of a preoccupation with the difference between history and story.[[837]](#footnote-837) Actually, we do not know how many of the author’s contemporaries or how many of those among whom the book soon became popular misunderstood quasi-predictions as actual predictions. Jude 14 instances the quoting of a quasi-prediction as if it were actual prediction, and whatever view we take of that chapter may also be appropriate to Daniel. Perhaps *1 Enoch* deceived Jude; a mistaken belief that Paul wrote Hebrews contributed to its inclusion in the NT, so that the Church Fathers there did the right thing for (partly) wrong reasons. Or it may be that Jude knew very well that *1 Enoch* was a quasi-prediction but colluded with the document’s own convention; the convention is too widespread for us to imagine all the people being fooled all the time, even if most people except Porphyry later forgot or refused to acknowledge it. Or it may be that the distinction between real prediction by a saint of old and quasi-prediction by a later person “inspired” by him, obvious to us, was less sharp both to the author of *1 Enoch* and to Jude.

The theological support for this formal point that the visions in Daniel are quasi-predictions is the fact that the God of the Bible characteristically speaks contextually, into situations rather than independently of them. Further, he reveals key truths about the End that are relevant to people’s present lives, but declines to give information of a concrete or dated kind, insisting that people live by faith. It is difficult to see how the God of the Bible would reveal detailed events of the second century to people living in the sixth, even though he could do so.[[838]](#footnote-838)

There are some common hesitations about such a conclusion.[[839]](#footnote-839) It may seem to imply that the “revelation” was nothing of the sort; yet concluding that the author knew of the historical events that the visions relate by the same means as other OT writers knew of historical events they related leaves quite open whether the chapters’ understanding of these events is God-given in the same way theirs can have been. It may seem to imply that the preparation for the vision in chap. 10 was also fictional; yet this implication does not follow, though even if it were the case, it would not imply that it was merely “local color” from which we were not intended to learn theologically. It may seem to imply that the chapters’ account of the efficacy of prayer or of the heavenly warfare it describes reflects only the writer’s subjective ideas; yet this inference also does not follow, since the account can be just as God-given as other parts of the scriptures. It may seem to imply that the author speaks parabolically when giving no indication of doing so; yet the opposite is the case, because the chapters use a way of speaking characteristic of quasi-prediction, not of actual prediction. It may seem to imply that the seer is wrong in his prediction about how Antiochus died, which implies that he is no more likely to be reliable in his understanding of spiritual issues; yet this inference involves assuming that vv 40–45 purport to offer literal prediction, which is questionable: see *Form*, *Comment*, *Explanation*; nor does the alleged implication follow.

Stories and visions share an explicit stress on interpretation, in connection with dreams, portents, and visions, as well as with the scriptures. Daniel is the mediator of interpretation in chaps. 1–6, and its recipient in chaps. 7–12. In each case there is a divine revelation, yet its meaning is a mystery (רז, chap. 2). It cannot be made to yield clear sense except by a divine gift of insight (בינה, a key word in Daniel,[[840]](#footnote-840) though this insight can be sought and prepared for. Its having this origin is then reflected in the fact that the interpretation (פשר) stands on its own rather than emerging directly from the revelation in any obvious way.[[841]](#footnote-841)

Stories and visions are characterized by repetition. Chaps. 1, 3, and 6 relate the testing of the exiles and God’s faithfulness. Chaps. 2, 4, and 5 tell of Daniel’s skill in interpretation and his revelations concerning the fall of kings. Chaps. 2 and 7 report a vision of a sequence of four empires. Chaps. 7, 8, 9, and 10–12 recount a quasi-prediction of events up to the Antiochene crisis and a promise of its end. The effect of such repetition is both to highlight common features of each set of chapters and thus to emphasize these common features, and to draw attention to distinctive features of each member of a set that make it stand out from its fellows, and thus to emphasize these features (e.g., the different fates of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar or the difference between visions coming by God’s initiative or by Daniel’s seeking). In the terms of information theory, “verbal repetition increases predictability, creates expectations, eliminates noise, persuades, and reduces alternative interpretations.” It “teaches the implied reader how to ‘read’ the text.”[[842]](#footnote-842)

Stories and visions communicate in complementary ways.[[843]](#footnote-843) In neither do the authors speak directly, as happens with prophecy; they stand behind the narrator in the stories and behind the persons of Daniel and of heavenly beings in the visions. In contrast to prophecy, neither stories nor visions directly address their hearers. The visions come nearer to doing so; in the stories the relationship between authors and second-century hearers is particularly indirect. There, anonymous authors tell stories to unidentified hearers about another time and another place, setting up a contrast between what used to be and what is so that the book may function like a protest psalm.[[844]](#footnote-844) The visions do speak—if cryptically—about the situation in which authors and hearers live, and more explicitly draw them into identification with Daniel himself.

Though “these words” and “the book” that records them denote the message(s) of the man in linen recorded in 10:11–12:3, placing this vision at the end of Daniel hints at applying these terms to the book as a whole. There is no indication that the book has been shaped in order to function as a canonical document.[[845]](#footnote-845) On the other hand, the canonizing of Daniel may presuppose a reading of the book that differed from the authors’.[[846]](#footnote-846) If the authors believed they were providing the date(s!) of an imminent End that did not come about as they expected, the canonizers apparently read it in some more open way.[[847]](#footnote-847)

## Streams of Tradition behind Daniel

As an aspect of the midrashic character of Daniel, it has links with a variety of streams of tradition in the OT and elsewhere. During the Second Temple period there was a variety of streams of tradition in Judaism. Like Chronicles, Daniel represents a creative amalgam of many of them.[[848]](#footnote-848) It is not distinctively linked with one of them.

It begins with a virtual quotation from Chronicles, which makes a connection with the narrative works that occupy the first half of the OT.[[849]](#footnote-849) Chaps. 1—6 then work through a sequence of reigns while incorporating story material in a way that also recalls this tradition. The same link is suggested by the historical accounts in quasi-predictive form in the visions, especially chap. 11. The periodizing of history in chaps. 2 and 7 parallels the periodizing of P.

Parallels with P and Chronicles hints at a background in worship traditions, which is also suggested by the psalmlike passages at key points in the stories, by the stress on prayer, and by the visions’ concern with worship and their longing for the cleansing of the temple, defiled by Antiochus.[[850]](#footnote-850) There is no hint of hostility to the temple in Daniel (contrast *1 Enoch* 89.73). Its background in worship traditions might also underlie the mythic features of chaps. 7 and 10–12 that make it possible to speak of remythologizing as a feature of Daniel.[[851]](#footnote-851) Neither stories nor visions are preoccupied with details of obedience to the Torah—though chap. 1 presupposes the importance of diet and chap. 9 has links with D—but they do identify with concerns the Torah shares with other parts of the OT such as faithfulness to the one God. The do not mention proscription of circumcision or of Sabbath observance, enforced eating of pork, or burning of Torah scrolls (contrast 1 Maccabees).

There are prophetic features to the stories, though they do not call Daniel a prophet. Indeed, as a man held in high regard, in whom the divine spirit dwells, and to whom such extraordinary revelations are given, he may be more than a prophet rather than less.[[852]](#footnote-852) He confronts Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, speaking of sin and judgment in the manner of a preexilic prophet; the stories of these confrontations recall prophetic stories in Kings. The visions with their symbolism recall those of prophets such as Zechariah, and their mystical aspect recalls Ezekiel.[[853]](#footnote-853) They manifest prophecy’s focus on the interpretation of present history and on coming decisive events that will bring God’s judgment on pagan kings who have resisted God’s will, and they manifest the historical dualism—in the sense of a contrast between this age and an age that God will bring about—inwhich features prophecy such as Isa 40–55 and Ezek 38–39.[[854]](#footnote-854) Concern with the purity of the temple is a further theme of Second Temple prophecy.[[855]](#footnote-855) On the other hand, the visions (unlike the stories) do not confront people with a challenge to turn and thereby avert the judgment that threatens them. The hearers are not responsible for history; history seems to be predetermined rather than open, and God’s purpose is effected in it only negatively, not positively.[[856]](#footnote-856)

Daniel’s utilizing of mythic motifs might also suggest links with the learning of the circles of scribes who were responsible for Israel’s great narrative works. An association with such groups coheres with indications that Daniel has points of connection with Israelite wisdom traditions, though this idea contains its ambiguities.[[857]](#footnote-857) Chap. 1 presupposes the significance of pragmatic wisdom as an Israelite royal ideal. The visions recall philosophical wisdom’s longing for an understanding of the whole (cf. Qoh 3:11), its conviction that God’s knowledge and activity undergird all, and its sometimes pessimistic view of humanity. They also suggest a link with “mantic” or divinatory or predictive wisdom in the OT and elsewhere.[[858]](#footnote-858) Perhaps “the wise man who finds himself estranged from his own wisdom tradition has become an apocalyptist.”[[859]](#footnote-859) Yet philosophical wisdom itself also has room for visions (Job!) and the visions in Daniel manifest a concern with the possibility of grasping history on a large scale and by means of a grand scheme, if not of grasping the whole of history. Even the seer’s concern with the End appears in the Wisdom of Solomon, though the latter does not share his sense of the world’s being out of joint and of discontinuity between this age and the age to come.[[860]](#footnote-860) Daniel himself parallels Joseph in embodying the combination of pragmatic wisdom and prophetic wisdom.

As somone who can interpret dreams and omens with the awareness that the future is in some sense set, the visionary operates in the same area and on the same basis as the Babylonian diviners, and the book’s symbolism has this background.[[861]](#footnote-861) Quasi-prediction has its background in Akkadian prophecies that are influenced by Mesopotamian divination.[[862]](#footnote-862) Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic thinking, the first two in part already incorporated within the last, may be the source of other features of Daniel that are not evidenced elsewhere in the OT, such as the four-empire scheme, the concept of revelation, and pseudepigraphy. OT ideas regarding angels and the various forms of dualism develop as they do in line with Hellenistic thought,[[863]](#footnote-863) and Jewish apocalypticism in general has been seen as a fruit of Hellenistic syncretism.[[864]](#footnote-864) But it is difficult to point to distinctively Hellenistic features in Daniel, and the dominant culture of Jerusalem up till Antiochus’s time has been seen as still Persian[[865]](#footnote-865)—though even the distinctively Persian features are few. Indeed, aspects of the visions parallel anti-Hellenistic writings and traditions of Egypt and the East. In this sense the Antiochene crisis is part of widespread anti-Hellenistic reaction in the Middle East that contributed to the downfall of the Hellenistic empires, though Daniel is more specifically anti-Antiochene than anti-Hellenistic in principle.[[866]](#footnote-866)

## The Book’s Structure

In discussing the setting of each chapter, we have noted links between them. There are a number of ways of understanding the structure of the book as a whole. We cannot say whether any was in the mind of an author, but each enables us to perceive aspects of the book.

In English, Daniel most obviously divides into a series of stories and a series of visions. The stories also involve three other young men, whereas in the visions Daniel alone features. The stories include a series of messages from God to kings, with Daniel interpreting them; the visions comprise a series of messages given to Daniel, with a celestial being interpreting them. These two series comprise chronological sequences corresponding to the schemes of four reigns:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1–4 | Nebuchadnezzar | 7–8 | Babylon |
| 5 | Belshazzar | 9 | Media |
| 6 | Darius | 10 | Persia |
| 6:28 [29] | Cyrus | 11–12 | Greece |

To the person who reads Daniel in the original, another distinction is striking, that between sections in different languages:

1–2:4a Hebrew

2:4b–7:28 Aramaic

8–12 Hebrew[[867]](#footnote-867)

Such chiastic structures feature in other ancient Near Eastern works.[[868]](#footnote-868) In Daniel, the linguistic distinction does not correspond to the literary one; linguistic continuity thus binds the book where distinction of form might divide it, while conversely formal continuity binds the book where distinction of language might divide it. Such structural features underline diversity in unity as an important feature of the book; compare the distinction between material that speaks about Daniel and the friends (1:1–7:1; 10:1) and material in which Daniel speaks (the remainder). They also draw attention to chap. 7 as the center of the book, belonging as it does to the first part by language, to the second by form.

Chaps. 2–7 form a chiasm,[[869]](#footnote-869) which holds together yet another sequence of chapters and further strengthens the bonds that hold together the diversity in the book.The rest of the book can then be seen as structured around this chiasm:

1 Exile and the questions it raises: story

2 A vision of four empires

3 A trial of faithfulness and a marvelous deliverance

4 An omen interpreted and a king challenged and chastised

5 An omen interpreted and a king challenged and deposed

6 A trial of faithfulness and a marvelous deliverance

7 A vision of four empires

8 Aspects of this vision developed

9 Exile and the questions it raises: vision

10–12 Aspects of this vision developed[[870]](#footnote-870)

The stories themselves develop towards a climax. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges Daniel’s brilliance (chap. 1), then prostrates himself to him (chap. 2); he acknowledges the God of the exiles as uniquely able to deliver (chap. 3), then as ruling through all ages (chap. 4); Belshazzar finds that this God cannot be defied (chap. 5), then Darius requires that the whole empire acknowledge him (chap. 6). The four men progress from being the most insightful sages (chap. 1) via being responsible for provincial affairs and being active at court (chap. 2) to the three friends’ being promoted in Babylon (chap. 3) and Daniel’s being the only interpreter in whom the spirit of deity dwells (chap. 4), and on to Daniel’s being Deputy in the realm (chap. 5) and ultimately the most distinguished of the three most senior ministers of state (chap. 6). Their confession moves from private abstinence (chap. 1) through discreet revelation (chap. 2) and discreet noncooperation (chap. 3) to straight challenge (chaps. 4–5) and open defiance (chap. 6).

The visions also develop towards a climax, at least in the sense that the last of the four is the most detailed. They offer four perspectives on the future that are different in form:

Chap. 7 is a portrayal in symbol and myth

Chap. 8 is more concrete and it explicitly refers to specific empires

Chap. 9 alone explicitly refers to a specific scripture and it is dominated by a prayer

Chaps. 10—12 is much the longest vision, giveing a unique amount of detail, though naming no names.

The relationship between the visions may be expressed schematically.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Chap. 7 | Chap. 8 | Chap. 9 | Chaps. 10–12 |
| focus: | kingdom | Temple | temple | persecution |
| following on: | Apollonius | Desecration | desecration | resistance begins |
| revelation: | dream | Vision | auditory event | auditory event |
| form: | myth | Allegory | midrash | oracle in code |
| content/portrayal:  Babylon | lion/eagle |  | 7 times |  |
|  |  |  | 7 weeks |  |
| Media/Persia | bear, then | ram with |  | four/five |
|  | leopard | two horns | 7 times | Kings |
| Greece: |  |  |  |  |
| (a) Alexander | horned ani- | goat with big |  | mighty king of |
|  | mal | Horn | 62 | Greece |
| (b) Hellenistic | ten horns | four horns | Weeks | breaking of his |
| Empires |  |  |  | kingship |
| (c) Antiochus | small horn | small horn | final week | north-south battles |
|  |  |  | of horror |  |
| God’s act: |  |  |  |  |
| (a) judgment | beast killed | last king broken |  | northern king dies |
| (b) restoration | new kingship | temple vindicated |  | faithful delivered |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Yet the book’s chiastic structure also suggests that it goes nowhere. There is more *Sturm und Drang* about chap. 7[[871]](#footnote-871) but neither it nor the chapters that follow go much beyond chap. 2. The sequence of visions in Daniel do not “solve” the problem the book sets itself; in the manner of narrative, they rather explore it.[[872]](#footnote-872)

## The Book’s Origin

The two halves of the book offer contrary indicators regarding their origin. Individually, at least, the stories suggest a setting in the eastern dispersion in the Persian period where there are specific pressures on Jewish faith but there is the possibility not only of survival but of success.[[873]](#footnote-873) The visions presuppose a setting in Jerusalem in the 160s where power lies in the hands of constitutionally hostile gentile authorities and a compliant Jewish leadership that has cooperated with the subversion and outlawing of traditional Jewish faith.[[874]](#footnote-874) It is natural to ask whether the visions in chaps. 7—12 have a pre-second-century history, and indication of this has been found in chap. 7 and elsewhere, but the arguments for identifying earlier strata are not compelling.

It is natural to ask conversely whether the stories were composed in a similar period to the visions, despite appearances, or were edited then.[[875]](#footnote-875) Specific indication has been found in 2:41–43, but intermarriage was a common phenomenon and we cannot infer that these verses refer to a particular instance. The chiasm formed by chaps. 2–7 presumably came into existence in the second century and aspects of the stories would be relevant in that context, but they would not have come into existence in this form then.[[876]](#footnote-876) The geographically and contextually separate background of the stories and the visions in chaps. 7—12 does not imply that they were produced independently of each other and were then later combined.[[877]](#footnote-877) The stories contribute important features to the visions, such as the person of Daniel himself and thus the feature of pseudonymity, the four empires, and the characterization of Babylon as a lion. The visions were written in the light of the stories: they have been seen as a pesher or actualization of earlier Aramaic material now appearing in chaps. 2–7.[[878]](#footnote-878)

Can we go behind the story cycle as we know it? There have been various attempts to trace the process where the story sequence developed, especially in connection with extra-biblical material relating to Nabonidus[[879]](#footnote-879) but it is impossible to have any conviction about one reconstruction rather than another. In the vision cycle, the chapters are chronologically sequential, and as well as deriving features from the stories, each refers back to one or more of its predecessors. The visions manifest a generally consistent viewpoint, though this consistency need not suggest common authorship, which can be contested on stylistic grounds.[[880]](#footnote-880) Diversity of authorship might be one reason for diversity of language in the book; perhaps Hebrew-writing authors added chaps. 8, 9, and 10–12 to the Aramaic chiasm.[[881]](#footnote-881) They might also have been responsible for chap. 1 (though in their period one might have expected an introduction that was less friendly to foreign powers);[[882]](#footnote-882) as well as introducing the chapters that make up the chiasm, it is also Hebrew, and it has in common with chaps. 10–12 the term “discerning,” the visionaries’ self-designation, and a number of linguistic parallels with Gen 41.

We have no direct information concerning the circles that might have generated these stories and visions. What follows is conjecture based on the unproved assumption that the information may lie between the lines of the work itself.

The stories concern life at court in the dispersion and they speak most obviously to Jews with leadership positions there. They presuppose a situation in which Jews can do well in dispersion.[[883]](#footnote-883) A suspicious hermeneutic might view the stories as an upperclass text designed to justify the authors’ collaboration in exile. But they are stories of a popular kind and they may be designed to speak to Jews as an ethnic and religious minority more generally, the implicit argument being that if people like Daniel and his friends in their positions remained faithful and proved the faithfulness of God, ordinary people can do so too. In the structure of the book, however, chap. 7 belongs integrally with the stories in chap. 2—6. While the individual stories may have a background in the eastern dispersion, then, as an arranged sequence they belong in the second century, and there is no indication that they were collected as a sequence before that time.[[884]](#footnote-884)

The visions presuppose a different audience, in second-century Jerusalem. Their authors might also be people involved in the administration, but it is now the Seleucid administration in Jerusalem, an involvement which would explain their extensive knowledge of political affairs and the angle of their apparent sympathy.[[885]](#footnote-885) And in themselves neither apocalypse as a form nor apocalypticism as a phenomenon need suggest a situation of persecution or alienation; the one can exist without the other, in the ancient and in the modern world.[[886]](#footnote-886) But in these visions, authors and audience seem to be people who feel ousted from power in their community, which is divided into people who support the foreign government and people who oppose it. They are persecuted by these foreign overlords and puzzled at their God’s failure to act in response to attacks on his sphere—his sanctuary, its priesthood, its worship, its people. They are people who attach particular importance to matters of worship; the authors could belong to priestly circles, though their concern about the temple need not imply it. They feel themselves distinguishable from the more liberal Judaism of people prepared to cooperate with and share some of the ways of the Hellenistic imperial authorities, though the visions suggests no polemic against Hellenistic culture or lifestyle as such.

If the authors appear in the book, they might be the “discerning” of 11:33–35—and of 1:4, where they stand behind the figures of Daniel and his friends. They see themselves as called to a ministry of teaching and encouragement among the people who are inclined to faithfulness but are pressed to apostatize. Although the visions are less “popular,” more learned works than the stories, in their case, too, it would be unwise to infer that they were expected to interest only “learned” circles; again it is not so in the modern world. More likely the visions, too, were intended for all the faithful in their time of testing, and were the means of the discerning teachers fulfilling their ministry.[[887]](#footnote-887)

The authors will have belonged to the ḥasidim if we take that term to denote people “committed” to traditional as opposed to reformist Judaism. But saying that the seer belogs to the ḥasidim is not to say a great deal, since there were several ways of being ḥasidim—illustrated by the stances embodied in Enoch and in Daniel.[[888]](#footnote-888) Formulating a theory about the role of the ḥasidim “stretches the brief passing references… far beyond anything indicated in the text.”[[889]](#footnote-889) While the visions may not oppose a willingness to fight for the right to remain faithful to the Torah, the particular calling of the “discerning” is to teach, not to fight.[[890]](#footnote-890) The “discerning” might be connected with circles that produced other philosophical or speculative wisdom such as the Enoch literature (rather than the Torah-related wisdom of Sirach and the “scribes”). This interest seems to have developed in the dispersion; hence perhaps the linking of dispersion stories and visionary material of this kind, and thus the bringing of the former as well as the latter to Jerusalem.[[891]](#footnote-891) Formulating a theory about the “discerning,” too, involves much inference. One has to conclude that it would be illuminating to identify the social setting of Daniel, but that the variety of such identifications[[892]](#footnote-892) suggests that the paucity of evidence does not enable us to do so.

## The Book’s Theological Significance

The points of difference—indeed, of tension—between the stories and the visions are a key to recognizing the theological significance of Daniel as a whole. Readings that begin from one or from the other will suggest different understandings of God’s relationship with the world and our life in it. The significance of the book depends on the interaction between them.[[893]](#footnote-893) Perhaps the variety in the book’s placement in the scriptures is linked to the diversity within the book.[[894]](#footnote-894)

**(a) The book suggests varying perspectives on God’s relationships with people and on his involvement in the world.** It does so against the background of a consistent portrait of God as powerful, sovereign, and almighty: the special name Yahweh all but disappears in favor of terms that make explicit that he is not merely a peculiarly Jewish god but the God in/of heaven, King/Lord of heaven, God of gods, Lord of Lords, great God, living God, God On High, august, awesome, and fiery. He controls history and can therefore reveal history. Myriads of heavenly aides fulfill and reveal his will in the world. There is no need to infer that this loftiness makes him remote: he is also our God, my God, your God, the God of the covenant, the fathers’ God, one who is compassionate and forgiving.[[895]](#footnote-895) Story and vision portray him as the hearer of prayer who is accessible to people even in dispersion, and as the personal giver of revelations whose spirit indwells the servant he holds in high regard. While such revelations are transmitted via his heavenly messengers, the faithful are not confined to approaching these messengers: they approach God himself. While the revelations are expressed mysteriously and are communicated pseudonymously, these characteristics carry no implication regarding the remoteness of the God who reveals himself to the anonymous seer.[[896]](#footnote-896)

The difference between story and vision relates to God’s acts rather than to his revelations. In the stories he is involved as the God of mercy and grace in the lives of the faithful, in person or through his aides. The God of Daniel is always there when you least expect him—in a stone, in a crematorium oven, on a whitewashed wall, in a pit of ferocious beasts.[[897]](#footnote-897) In the visions his involvement in the present is harder to see. The stories share the prophets’ view of time; they see God’s purpose being realized in history. The visions can only look for God’s definitive intervention at the End.[[898]](#footnote-898) Nevertheless, “it was the same God of the three youths who was the God of the Maccabees. The former escaped fire, the latter were executed by fires; but both will conquer in the eternal God.”[[899]](#footnote-899)

**(b) The theme central to Daniel as to no other book in the OT is the kingdom of God**.[[900]](#footnote-900) The book as a whole concerns how the rule of God becomes a reality of this world in contexts where Jews as such lack political power but where Gentiles who do exercise political power are assumed to have a religious responsibility.[[901]](#footnote-901) The purpose of God is to be realized on earth, but by the transcendent power of heaven.[[902]](#footnote-902) In Daniel as a whole “the ideology of rule is in fact the theology of rule.”[[903]](#footnote-903) Nd throughout, the challenge of the book concerns a loyalty to God as king that refuses to acknowledge the final authority of the emperor as king.[[904]](#footnote-904)

The stories portray God’s reign becoming a reality via the heathen ruler, who receives his kingly power from God and is responsible to act as his viceregent in his world, but they recognize that often the heathen ruler fails to exercise his power in a way that reflects this understanding of his calling. They picture the leaders of the people of God then challenging him to do so, sometimes with success, sometimes not. But they close with him acknowledging that lasting dominion indeed belongs to God. The stories invite readers to use their portrayal of this rule of God becoming reality to interpret the history for which we must accept responsibility. They imply that the cynicism and the deceit that often characterize politics will not have the last word. The incompetence and stupidity that we often perceive in our leaders will not have their way. The faithful under pressure can stand by their convictions sure that the powers that be will ultimately acknowledge where true power lies and who is its witness. The stories invite readers to set Daniel’s experience and testimony alongside the stories that emerge from their political experience and see what happens.

The ambivalence in attitude to the empire in chaps. 1—6 disappears in chaps. 7—12: “any hint of deference or obligation to empire is withdrawn.”[[905]](#footnote-905)

The kings’ exercise of their rule as the visions describe it keeps the rule of God from becoming reality. Only an act from heaven can bring God’s rule. The visions thus offer an alternative portrayal of how God’s rule becomes reality, one designed to help us live with history when we cannot control it. They begin (chap. 7) with God’s lasting dominion: rule is taken away from heathen rulers and given to the people of the holy ones on high. That rule is still to be exercised on earth. Even the judgment by the venerable figure of chap. 7 takes place on earth and is implemented here, while the restoration to life of chap. 12 is a restoration to earthly life of whole people, not of disembodied spirits in heaven. The millennarian movements were not unfaithful to Daniel in looking for a salvation that was collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, and miraculous.[[906]](#footnote-906)

The whole book looks for the realization of the reign of God on earth; but apparently there is a time when we can see this coming through earthly rulers and through us, in this age, and a time when that realization can be neither seen nor envisaged, but only hoped for as the direct act of God which brings a transition from this age to another age.[[907]](#footnote-907) There is a time when the present can be understood only in light of the past and the future. There is a time when the people of God experience conflict with the world, and a time when behind that conflict they perceive a conflict with supernatural powers.[[908]](#footnote-908) The focus on the future in chaps. 7–12 insists on our being critical of the present, in the conviction that the promise of God demands a fulfillment that cannot be identified with this present; the focus on the present in chaps. 1–6 forbids us to be escapist, and insists we face the force of the observation that “apocalyptic is full of promises, but it has never kept one of them.”[[909]](#footnote-909) Between them they affirm both present and promise. Political powers stand between the perspective of chaps. 1–6 and that of chaps. 7–12, choosing which is applicable to them, and the faithful who are involved in politics have to discern which choice they are making. Subject to them, the faithful in general live as children of this age, but also as children of an age to come. It is the conviction that the new age has come in Jesus that makes apocalyptic “the mother of all Christian theology.”[[910]](#footnote-910) It might be that the book of Daniel’s focus on God’s kingdom is key to the missional implications of the book[[911]](#footnote-911) “The apocalypse, as a powerful discourse of liberative praxis, has implanted in [the Jewish community] a profound theological vision and radical hope in the ultimate victory of God and the establishment of His Kingdom, which would finally guide to the restoration and resurrection of God's creation.”[[912]](#footnote-912)

**(c) The book of Daniel thus suggests two understandings of the meaningfulness or otherwise of political history.** The book begins with a God involved in history, giving the Judahite king into the power of Babylon. He controls historical eras and removes and sets up kings. He rules human kingdoms and gives power to whomever he wishes. He evaluates the rule of kings and puts them down when they fail his assessment. The process of history thus has meaning; it sees the outworking of God’s grace, mercy, purposefulness, justice, and zeal, even if the way events reflect these characteristics is not always clear. The prophets concern themselves with international history insofar as it affects the history of Israel; Daniel is closer to having a philosophy of international history in itself.

In the visions the origins of human empires are more ambiguous: they arise out of the world itself, rather than by the gift of God, and they resemble strange animals emerging from the sea—even if it is a supernatural wind that stirs that sea. God has been active in Israel’s history in revelation, in grace, and in judgment, and can be urged to be active there in mercy and m restoration (chap. 9); he is active in the nations’ history only by bringing an End to it. He is in control of their history, but in the manner of the prison governor who still controls the prison during a riot in the sense that the prisoners can only go so far (the visions’ quasi-predictive form should not mislead us into thinking that Daniel sees God predetermining this history). Even in heaven there are conflicts between the agents of God’s will who personify earthly powers in conflict with each other. The details of history have little intrinsic meaning; meaning belongs to the End, not to the process. Daniel thus differs from 1 and 2 Maccabees, which in different ways rework the classic attitude to history of books such as Kings and Chronicles, and it differs from *1 Enoch*, which extends its historical perspective back to embrace creation so that it extends from Beginning to End, and—like some Christian thinking, though not the OT or the NT—sees conflicts in heaven and in history as resulting from the rebellion of heavenly beings near the beginning.

Neither stories nor visions see history as a whole or see it as progressing towards a goal. Daniel does not embody the apocalyptic view of history. The difference between stories and visions suggests that there are times when the hand of God can be detected in the processes of history and times when it has to be looked for at the End. “The book of Daniel contains a theology of history that is neither as deterministic nor as exclusively eschatological as scholars have portrayed it…. Daniel has a keen interest in both the human and the supernatural causes of historical events.”[[913]](#footnote-913) Daniel is seriously interested in history.

**(d) The book offers two paradigms of the leadership of the faithful in community life.[[914]](#footnote-914)** In the stories this leadership can mean involvement in the work of government, which presupposes an affirming of those who exercise authority. By the will of God himself and by the nature of his commission to earthly rulers, human beings have a responsibility for urging them to fulfill that calling as before God; they can realistically be challenged to fulfill such a responsibility. The perspective matches that of Rom 13.

The perspective of the visions compares rather with that of Rev 13. The visions cannot see God’s activity in history. Paradoxically, Jews back in Jerusalem in the second century experience something more like exile with its meaninglessness (see especially chap. 9) than did their brothers and sisters in dispersion in the Persian period. Faithfulness to God, which could cohere with participation in politics in the context presupposed by the stories, now demands critique of the governing authorities, and rules out involvement in government.[[915]](#footnote-915) The visions are not specific about lines of action they expect of the faithful (military action? passive resistance? continuing obedience to the Torah? withdrawal from temple worship?). History is portrayed as closed and fixed, though this portrayal is a way of assuring people that history has been under God’s control even when it is difficult to recognize as the act of God. The possibility of leadership is to instruct the believing community on the significance of history, past, present, and future.

Throughout the book the calling of the leadership is to pray, to the God who controls and reveals history. But apparently there is a time to be active in the present and a time to teach about the End. The stories invite believers who live under oppressive regimes to allow for and to be encouraged by the possibility that there are contexts where one can be involved in the affairs of state without compromise. Given that for them “the witness of visibility” is succeeded by “the witness of vulnerability,”[[916]](#footnote-916) the visions invite believers in easier times than theirs to an empathetic act of identification—perhaps of deed, not just of word—if they are to enter into the pain of people who live under oppressive regimes and thus to be able to share the real meaning of their visions and not just the words.

**(e) The book has a vision for both life in dispersion and life in Jerusalem.** The stories see dispersion life as the result of the act of God; it is neither meaningless nor the reflection of the greater power of other gods. Neither is it explicitly the result of an act of God in punishment for the sin of Judahites. It is simply his will. That fact in itself lays the foundation for the possibility that one can be a good Jew in dispersion. A Jew will remain distinctive, will remain faithful, and will continue to pray towards Jerusalem, but will do so in a dispersion setting, and will prove that it can be the way to a successful life. There is no suggestion of “next year in Jerusalem.”

The visions almost ignore dispersion life. Their concern is with the restoration of the city of Jerusalem, its sanctuary, its worship, and its priesthood. The dispersion explicitly features only once, and there it is the result of sin (chap. 9). North and south are the origins of enemies rather than the location of brothers and sisters. Jerusalem is the only natural Jewish place to live. The visions offer their own challenge to faithfulness, yet not one accompanied by an implicit promise that faithfulness will be rewarded by worldly success and promotion. The stories of the dispersion heroes both illustrate Jews being willing for faithfulness to be its own reward, and also remind their hearers of the power and the faithfulness of God himself who will see that faithfulness receives its reward in the age to come if not in this age.[[917]](#footnote-917)

In the book’s portrayal, Jewish life is precarious and Jewish faithfulness is under pressure wherever it is lived. Both Babylon and Jerusalem are experiences of “desolation,” the latter a protraction of the former, of which it can thus be a paradigm, and people dealing with the former can be prototypes of people dealing with the latter.[[918]](#footnote-918) One might have expected it to be obvious that dispersion was a place of pressure: actually the pressures there are usually more subtle. One might have expected Jerusalem to be a place of safety: actually the pressures there are clear, to the seers at least. Neither dispersion nor Jerusalem is without danger. Each brings its challenge. Neither is called to judge the other.

**(f) The book suggests two different overall thrusts, summed up by its being located by the synagogue among the Writings and by the church among the Prophets**.[[919]](#footnote-919) That ambiguity encourages two alternative readings of Daniel, as wisdom or as prophecy, as pedagogics or as eschatology, as halakah or as haggadah. While a location among the Prophets might seem superior to a location among the Writings, it is possible to put a positive spin on the latter location.[[920]](#footnote-920)

Both story and vision exist to render a world. Story renders a world that is clearly one with our world, even though it points to signals of transcendence that suggest something beyond our world. It served the needs of the dispersion well. In the second-century crisis “the time of narrative must now leave room for the time of vision.”[[921]](#footnote-921) Vision creates a radically different world that makes continuing life in this world possible on the basis of its not being the only world, or not being in the End the most important one. Daniel’s work is preserved even though the End of which he spoke did not come, because in another sense that End did come. His vision brought the End of an old order’s power to lord it over his fellows, because it opened up an alternative world that people were prepared to believe would endure as the old order would not, a world in which what seemed at present to be weakness was revealed to be true power and what looked like death was revealed to be the gateway to life.[[922]](#footnote-922) Daniel as a whole invites people to live this life in the light of such convictions about that life.

1. See Black, “The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission,” on the “throne-theophany” form. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 189–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 43–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. E.g., Murdock, “History and Revelation,” 181–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. Gaston, “The Son of Man,” 377–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See Reynolds, *Between Symbolism and Realism*. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Cf. Setio**, “**Fantasy in Apocalyptic Daniel 7,” 190-91; he thinks of them as fantasy, like that of a dream, though he then does not want to reduce fantasy to symbol or metaphor. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Porter, *Metaphors* *and Monsters*, 5, following Black, *Models and* Metaphors. Porter suggests that the “root metaphor” of the shepherd underlies Dan 7 and 8 as a whole, though shepherds are never mentioned. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. In Ricoeur’s terminology: see e.g., *The Symbolism of Evil*. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In Wheelwright’s terminology: see *Metaphor and Reality* (cf. Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom*, 29–31). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See Eggler**,** *Influences and Traditions Underlying the Vision of Daniel 7:2-14.* [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 111–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. To Hos 13:7-8, Gardner adds Isa 13:5 and other passages (**“**Decoding Daniel”). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 63–86, 95–118, 121; Massyngberde Ford, “Jewish Law and Animal Symbolism,” 204–6; more broadly Lucas, “The Source of Daniel’s Animal Imagery.” [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See Heaton, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See Gillingham, “Psalmody and Apocalyptic.” [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See Porteous, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See Collins, “The Mythology of Holy War,” 596–600; Bentzen, *Messias*, 71–74 (ET 73–75); Engnell, review of Sjöberg’s *Der* *Menschensohn*, 191–92; ———, “Die Urmenschvorstellung und das AT,” 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. On the background of Dan 7 in Ezek 1—3, see Kim**,** *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Daniel*, 186-249. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Bentzen, *Messias*, 37–42 (ET 39–44); Wifall, “David—Prototype of Israel’s Future?” 103–7; Haag, “Psalm 80 und der Menschensohn.” [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. If one follows the text as emended by BHS in light of LXX. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Zimmerli, *Ezechiel* on the passage; on the Ezekiel material as possible background to the humanlike figure, see Procksch, “Die Berufungsvision Hesekiels”; Feuillet, “Le Fils de l’homme de Daniel” (he also adds as background the hypostatized Wisdom of Prov 8); Black, “The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the ‘Son of Man,” 60; cf. Balz, *Methodische Probleme der NT Christologie*, 80–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. E.g., Grelot, “Daniel vii, 9–10 et le livre d’Hénoch”; Kvanvig, “Henoch und der Menschensohn”; ———, *Roots of Apocalyptic* ; Müller, “Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der Menschensohnvorstellung, 253–61; Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 255–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. E.g., Emerton, “The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery,” 226; Casey, “The Use of the Term ‘Son of Man’ in the Similitudes of Enoch,” 20–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. E.g., Coppens, “La vision du Très-Haut en Dan., vii et Hén. éthiop. xiv”; Müller, “Menschensohn und Messias,” 175–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Cf. the survey in Collins, *Daniel*, 280-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. See Gressmann, *Der Messias*, 403–9; Lebram, “König Antiochus,” 743–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. See Morgenstern, “The ‘Son of Man’ of Daniel 7 13f”; ———, “Jesus as the ‘Son of Man.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See the systematic exposition in Borsch, *Son of Man*, 55–106. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See the survey in Hultgård “Das Judentum in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit und die iranische Religion,” 515–36. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. See *ANET*, 102; cf. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, 148 (ET 98, 325); Hommel, “The Apocalyptic Origin of the Expression ‘Son of Man.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *ANET*, 109–10; see Kvanvig, “An Akkadian Vision as Background for Dan 7”; *Roots of Apocalyptic*. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *ANET*, 60–72, 501–3; see Gunkel, *Schöpfung* *und Chaos*, 323–35 (ET 205-7); Kraeling, “Some Babylonian and Iranian Mythology in the Seventh Chapter of Daniel”; Gardner**,** “Daniel 7,2-14.” [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See e.g., Lacocque, “Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7”; Walton notes also the *Anzu* myth (“The *Anzu* Myth as Relevant Background for Daniel 7?”). [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. But see the careful discussion in Kearns, *Vorfragen zur Christologie* 2:173–74; Collins, “Stirring up the Great Sea.” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See *ANET*, 129–42; Driver/Gibson, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*; Eissfeldt, *Baal Zaphon*, 25–30; Emerton, “The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery”; Rost, *Studien zum AT*, 72–75; Colpe, “ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου”; Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 292–324, 369–401, for parallels in Zechariah; Kearns, *Vorfragen zur Christologi*e 2:83–194; Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 95–106; Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon*; critique in Casey, *Son of Man*, 34–38; Coppens, “Les origines du symbole du Fils d’homme; Ferch, *Son of Man*, 54–77; Mosca, “Ugarit and Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Cf. Steinmann, *Daniel*, 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Wittstruck, “The Influence of Treaty Curse Imagery on the Beast Imagery of Daniel 7”; but see Rimbach, “Bears or Bees?” [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Hillers, Treaty Curses and the OT Prophets, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Caquot, “Sur les quatre bêtes de Daniel vii.” [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See Coppens, “Un nouvel essai d’interpréter Dan., vii”; Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon*, 154–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. See on 1:3–5; also Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 15–29. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Cf. *ANET*, 585–86; see Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 84–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Morenz, “Das Tier mit den Hörnern”; Staub, “Das Tier mit den Hörnern.” [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. See Momigliano, “The Origins of Universal History”; **———** “Daniel and Imperial Succession”; Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History*, 27-43. Keel (“Die Teere und der Mensch in Daniel 7,” in Keel/Staub, *Hellenismus und Judentum*, 1-35) urges attention to other aspects of Greek background to the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. E.g., Beasley-Murray, “The Interpretation of Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Cf. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 217-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Rowe, “Is Daniel’s ‘Son of Man’ Messianic?” 84–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Gressmann, *Der Messias*, 346. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. This understanding combines insights from Ferch (*Son of Man*, 136–37) and Kvanvig (“Struktur und Geschichte in Dan 7,1–14,” 101–2). The larger chiasm Ferch finds in Dan 7 as a whole (*Son of Man*,142; cf. Raabe, “Daniel 7,” 267–68) seems more forced. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. So Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 189–92. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Casey, review of Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*,480–81. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. E.g., Coppens, Dequeker, Haag, Haller, Kearns, Kvanvig, K. Müller, Noth,Weimar (see *Pericope Bibliography*); also Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*; Hölscher,“Die Entstehung des Buches Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Cf. Kruse, “Compositio Libri Danielis et idea Filii Hominis.” [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. E.g., Weimar, “Daniel 7,” 15–25; Hölscher, ,“Die Entstehung des Buches Daniel,” 120–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. E.g., Rowley, “Composition of the Book of Daniel,” Collins, *Daniel*, 278-80; Casey, *Son of Man*; Ferch, *Son of Man*; Munnich**, “**Retouches rédactionnelles au texte proto-massorétique”; Beyerle**,**“‘Der mit den Wolken des Himmels kommt,’” in Sänger/Backhaus (eds.), *Gottessohn und Menschensohn*, 1-52. Miller **(**“The Redaction of Daniel”) sees vv 1-2a a redactional joint to unite what were earlier two separate blocks of material. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Boyarin, (**“**Daniel 7, Intertextuality, and the History of Israel’s Cult”) offers a distinctive version of this approach. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. The nature of Antiochus’s action and the dynamic of Jewish resistance is a controverted question: see recently Collins/Manning (eds.), *Revolt and Resistance in the Ancient Classical World and the Near East*. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. I adapt the typology from Wilson, *Magic* *and the Millennium*, 18–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Reid, *Sociological Setting of the Historical* Apocalypses, 162–63; *Enoch and Daniel*, 89-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. See e.g., Meadowcroft**,** “‘One Like a Son of Man’ in the Court of the Foreign King”; Tanner, Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel”; Patterson**,** “The Key Role of Daniel 7”; David, *Composition and Structure*, 97-180. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. See Lenglet, “Structure littéraire de Daniel 2–7”; Weimar, “Daniel 7,” 33–34. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives*, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Frisch, *The Danielic Discourse on Empire*, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Cf. Barr, “Daniel,” on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Cf. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Towner, *Daniel*, e.g., 114-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. On the links between Dan 7 and the other stories, see further Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 234-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. See Sumner, “Daniel,” 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Smith-Christopher, “Daniel*,”* 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Wright, *Hearing the Message of Daniel*, 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Hasel, “The First and Third Years of Belshazzar.” [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Newsom, *Daniel*, 220. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. *DSS* 2:1080-81; see Angel, **“**The Sea in 4Q541 7.3 and in Daniel 7:2”; also Gardner, "The Great Sea of Dan. vii 2." [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. See Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 15–29. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Cf. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, vol. 1; cf. Massyngberde Ford, “Jewish Law and Animal Symbolism,” 209 [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. See G. J. Botterweck in *TWAT* on ירא. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. See Alon, *Natural History of the Land of the Bible*, 220–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon*, 479–80; plate 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Cf. Keel**,** “Die Tiere und die Mensch in Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Cf. Caquot, review of Delcor, *Daniel*, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Kvanvig, “Struktur und Geschichte in Dan 7,1–14,” 103; Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Lebram, “Apokalyptik und Hellenismus,” 517–18. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. See Torrey, “‘Medes and Persians,’” 11-12; Plöger, *Daniel*, on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Waterman, “A Gloss on Darius the Mede”; Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*, on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Cf. *Cant Rabbah* 3:3, Esth *Rabbah* 3; possibly the three subordinate kings of Jer 51:27 (Gurney, *God in Control*, on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. So Hippolytus, *Daniel*, 4.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. So Ibn Ezra in גדולות מקראות on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. So Young, *Daniel*, on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. So Torrey, “‘Medes and Persians,’” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Against Staub, “Das Tier mit den Hörnern; Hanhart, “The Four Beasts of Daniel’s Vision in the Night,” 577. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Against Coppens, “Dan., vii, 1–18.” [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 156–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Merrill Willis,*Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 70-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Brongers, “Die Zehnzahl in der Bibel und ihrer Umwelt.”; TWNT. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. See Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel,” 162–65; J. J. Collins, *OTP* 1:381–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Cf. Lester, *Daniel Evokes Isaiah*, 85-89. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Cf. Pace, *Daniel*, 238; and see further the comparison with the vision of a divine throne and judgment scene in the Qumran *Book of Giants* (4Q530) as well as *1 Enoch*, in Newsom, *Daniel*, 227-28; also Stuckenbruck**, “**The Throne Theophany of the Book of Giants.” [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Cf. Lopez**, "**Standing Before the Throne of God," 147; Beasley-Murray, “The Interpretation of Daniel 7,” 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Cf. Kearns, *Vorfragen zur Christologie* 3:178. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 301. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Cf. McEntire**,** “The Graying of God in Daniel 1-7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Cf. Merrill Willis, “Heavenly Bodies,” 16-17, 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Cf. Saadia, *Daniel*, 543. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. See Brenner, *Colour Terms in the OT*, 90, 93, 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. On which see V. Hamp in *TWAT* on אש; Eichrodt, *Theologie* *des AT* 2:1–4 (ET 16–20). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Eichrodt, *Theologie* *des AT* 2:2 (ET 18). [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Sumner (“Daniel,” 172) notes a multiplicity of link with Ps 68 in this chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Against Jeffery, “Daniel,” on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Se Koep, *Das himmlische Buch*, 1–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Against Murdock, “History and Revelation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires*,123–24; Ginsberg (*Studies in Daniel*,6–11) relates v 12b to specific decades within the Greek period. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Cf. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Kvanvig, “Struktur und Geschichte in Dan 7,1–14,” 101–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Cf. Ferch, *Son of Man*; Casey, *Son of Man*; on the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Cf. Sabourin, “The Biblical Cloud,” 304, following Luzarraga, *Las tradiciones de la nube en la biblia y en el judaismo*. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Smithnotes an occurrence in Ugaritic **(**“The 'Son of Man' in Ugaritic”). [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Stevanovic (“The Use of the Aramaic Word *bar* (“son”) as a Noun of Relation in the Book of Daniel”) notes that *bar* means son in only two of its eight occurrences in Daniel. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Angel (*Chaos and Son of Man*) argues that the vision presupposes an already-existent link between a human-like figure and the theme of God as the victor over disorder. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. So Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 352; against Kraeling, *Anthropos and Son of Man*, 142–44. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Cf. Volz, *Eschatologie*, 11–12; Gressmann, *Ursprung der israelitisch-jödischen Eschatologie*, 342. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. So Coppens, “Le Fils d’homme daniélique et les relectures,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Cf. Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and His World*, 835–40; Caquot, “Les quatre bêtes et le ‘Fils d’homme,’” 68; Wifall, “Son of Man.” [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Feuillet, *Etudes d’exégèse et de théologie biblique*, 454. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Bruce, “The Background to the Son of Man Sayings,” 58; Casey, *Son of Man*. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Against Schmid, “Daniel, der Menschensohn.” [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Against Gaster, “The Son of Man.” [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Klein, “Über das Buch Daniel,” 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Cf. Haupt, “The Son of Man,” 130; Sahlin, “Antiochus IV. Epiphanes und Judas Mackabäus”; Buchanan, *To the Hebrews*, 42–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. See Breed, “History of Reception,” 245-52; so e.g., Yephet *Daniel*, 36; recently, e.g., Shepherd**,** “Daniel 7:13 and the NT Son of Man”; Alomía**,** *Daniel* 2:177-256. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. So Rowe, “Is Daniel’s ‘Son of Man’ Messianic?” 95–96; cf. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Gross, “Der Messias im AT,” 167–69. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Against Lacocque (*Daniel*, on the passage), who identifies him as the true high priest to hold civil, military, and religious authority in place of the Antiochene Jason; Lacocque’s view is taken up by Fletcher-Louis**,** "The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible.” [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. So, e.g., Moule, *Essays in NT Interpretation*, 77, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Barrett, “The Background of Mark 10:45,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Hooker, *Son of Man*, 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Against Coppens, “Le Fils d’homme daniélique et les relectures,” 17; in criticism of this notion, see, e.g., Rogerson, “The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality.” [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. So Feuillet, *Etudes d’exégèse et de théologie biblique*, 435–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. So Procksch, “Die Berufungsvision Hesekiels,” 148–49; “Christus im AT,” 80–81. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. So Caragounis, *Son of Man*. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. So Black, “Die Apotheose Israels”; ———. “The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the ‘Son of Man,’” 60–62. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Cf. Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions*, chap. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Massyngberde Ford, “Jewish Law and Animal Symbolism,” 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Cf. Hooker, *Son of Man*, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 170, 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Koch, “Der ‘Menschensohn’ in Daniel”; ———, “Das Reich der Heiligen und des Menschensohns.” Cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 304-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Cf. Coppens, “Le Fils d’homme daniélique, vizir céleste?”; Stier, *Gott und sein Engel im AT*, 96–104 [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 171–72, against Zevit, “The Structure and Individual Elements of Daniel 7”; ———,“The Exegetical Implications of Daniel viii 1, ix 21”; see on 9:21. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. See Müller, “Der Menschensohn im Danielzyklus,” 47–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Cf. Stier, *Gott und sein Engel im AT*. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. See Schmidt, “The ‘Son of Man,’” 26–27; Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 123–52; Sahlin, “Wie wurde ursprünglich die Benennung ‘Der Menschensohn’ verstanden?” 147–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Müller, *Messias und Menschensohn*, 7–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Caquot, “Les quatre bêtes et le ‘Fils d’homme,’” 59–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. See, e.g., de Jonge and van der Woude, “11Q Melchizedek and the NT,” 302–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. So Porteous, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Müller, “Der Menschensohn im Danielzyklus,” 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Against Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 123–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Newsom, *Daniel*, 238: cf. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. See Pyper**,** “Reading in the Dark,” 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. So Gressmann, *Der Messias*, 344, 366; JBright, Kingdom of God, 184; cf. also Wittstruck, “The Influence of Treaty Curse Imagery on the Beast Imagery of Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. So Hanhart, “The Four Beasts of Daniel’s Vision in the Night.” [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. See e.g., Fröhlich, *“Time and Times and Half a Time,”* 69-76, against e.g., Montgomery, *Daniel*; Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*. on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Cf. recently Gruenwald, “Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. But Caragounis (“Greek Culture and Jewish Piety”) suggests that the vision is concerned especially with the baneful influence of Greek culture. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Korner **(***“*The ‘Exilic’ Prophecy of Daniel 7”) argues for Ptolemy I Soter in chap. 7 but not in chap. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Bevan, *Daniel*, 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. So J. J. Collins, *OTP* 1:359. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. So Casey, *Son of Man*, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Casey, *Son of Man*, 51–70; see *Daniel in the Church 100-500* in the Introduction to this commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. See Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel,”; J. J. Collins, *OTP* 1:381–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Walton (“The Four Kingdoms of Daniel”) sees the four as Assyria, Media, Medo-Perisa, and Greece. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. See e.g., Casey, *Son of Man*, 71–73. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. So at the beginning of the twentieth century, Hertlein, *Die Menschensohnfrage im letzten Stadium*; he dated Daniel in the first century AD. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. So Van Hoonacker, “The Four Empires of the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. So also, e.g., Lagrange, “Les prophéties messianiques de Daniel”; Buzy, “Les symbols de Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. CF. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Gruenthaner, “The Four Empires of Daniel,” 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. See Caragounis, “History and Super-history,” 390-94; and more broadly on the Persians and Medes, Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East* 2:652-61; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 13-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Collins (*Daniel*, 313-17) argues for this meaning here. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Brekelmans, “The Saints of the Most High and Their Kingdom,” gives a list of references, though he includes many from *1 Enoch* 37–82 whose date is likely to be significantly later than Daniel. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Against Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. With Procksch, Noth, Dequeker, Coppens, Collins; against Brekelmans, Hanhart, Deissler, Hasel, Poythress, Casey (see *Pericope Bibliography*). [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Young, “Daniel’s Vision of the Son of Man,” 9; Ferch (*Son of Man*, 175–80) stresses the differences between the humanlike figure and the holy ones (cf. Hasel, “The Identity of ‘the Saints of the Most High’ in Daniel 7”; Shea, “Judgment in Daniel 7”). [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. See Collins (*Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 123–52); cf. Lamberigts, “Le sens de

     ם שי ו קד dans les textes de Qumrân; and see Mertens, *Das Buch Daniel*,145–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. See Poythress, “The Holy Ones of the Most High”; Beasley–Murray, “The Interpretation of Daniel 7,” 54–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Against Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Cf. Noth (“Die Heiligen des Höchsten,”, 286–90 (ET 225–28). [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Newsom, *Daniel*, 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. See, e.g., Porphyry as reported in Jerome, *Daniel*, 77; Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*;Goldstein, *1 Maccabees,* 42; Buchanan *To the Hebrews*, 42–48; Caragounis, “The Interpretation of the Ten Horns of Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. See Sachs/Wiseman, “A Babylonian King-List of the Hellenistic Period,” 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Blasius, “Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Ptolemaic Triad.” [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. See further Scolnic**,** “Antiochus IV and the Three Horns in Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires*,103–5 [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. See, e.g., VanderKam, “Origin, Character, and Early History of the 364-Day Calendar”; “2 Maccabees 6, 7a and Calendrical Change in Jerusalem”; see further on 12:11–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Cf. Barr, “Daniel,” on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Beek, “Zeit, Zeiten und eine halbe Zeit,” 19–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Merrill Willis,*Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Bookof Daniel*, 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Cf. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage; cf. Stahl**,** “‘Eine Zeit, Zeiten und die Hälfte der Zeit,’” 484 (he takes the numbers in chaps. 8—12 as attempts to give precision to the symbolic figure here). [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Cf. Collins, “The Meaning of ‘The End’ in the Book of Daniel,” 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Cf. Noth, “Die Heiligen des Höchsten.” 280, 284–85 (ET 219–20, 223–24). [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. See, e.g., Brekelmans, “The Saints of the Most High and Their Kingdom,” 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Hanhart, “Die Heiligen des Höchsten,” 99–101. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Lacocque, *Daniel in His Time*, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Davies, *Daniel*, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Knibb**,**“The Book of Daniel in Its Context,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Cf. Hebbard, *Reading Daniel,* 160*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Gowan, *Daniel*, on the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Seow, *Daniel*, 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Di Lella, *Daniel*, 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Newsom, *The Self As Symbolic Space,* 44 (her emphasis); cf. Perrin, *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation*, 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung*, 92–95 (ET 102–6). [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Walker, “Daniel 7:13–14,” 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Cf. Nesom, *Daniel*, 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Mayer, *Commentary upon All the Prophets*, 547. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. See further Wilson**,** “Creation and New Creation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Owen, “Concerning the Kingdom of Christ,” 369. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Cf. Wilson**,** “Creation and New Creation,” 202-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Gammie, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Cf. Lucas, *Daniel*, 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. See Van Henten,“Antiochus IV as a Typhonic Figure in Daniel 7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. See Macumber**,** “A Monster without a Name”; cf. Lenchak**,** “Puzzling Passages.” [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Cf. Van Henten,“Antiochus IV as a Typhonic Figure in Daniel 7,” 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. So Macumber, “A Monster without a Name,” 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Aukerman, *Darkening Valley*, 76–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Cf. Frisch, *The Danielic Discourse on Empire*, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. Sumner, “Daniel,” 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Cf. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” 439. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Aukerman, *Darkening* *Valley*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. See e..g., Jerome, *Daniel*, 80; recently Gulley, “Why the Danielic Little Horn is not Antiochus IV Epiphanes.” [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. So Haag, *Daniel*, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. Cf. Rowe, “Is Daniel’s ‘Son of Man’ Messianic?” 84–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung*, 123–24 (ET 137) [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Daniel thus suggests insights belonging to various theologies of history distinguished by Towner, *Daniel*, 110-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Wade**,**“'Son of Man' Comes to the Judgment in Daniel 7:13,” 278. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:33. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Smith-Christopher, “Daniel,” 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. Cf. Lacocque, “Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7,” 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Ferch, *Son of Man*, 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Towner, “Were the English Puritans ‘the Saints of the Most High’?” [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Newsom, *Daniel*, 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Koch, “Spätisraelitische Geschichtsdenken,” 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Newsom, *Daniel*, 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. See Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 209–15; against Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*,93. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Koch, “Spätisraelitische Geschichtsdenken,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Feuillet, “Le Fils de l’homme de Daniel,” 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung*, 124 (ET 137). [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Cf. Garrison*, The Darkness of God*; Schell, *The Fate of the Earth*. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Hanson, “Biblical Apocalypticism,” 10–14; Bauckham, “Theology after Hiroshima.” [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Sahlin, “Wie wurde ursprünglich die Benennung ‘Der Menschensohn’ verstanden?” 173–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. Cf. Procksch, “Christus im AT,” 81–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. See Viviano**,** “The Trinity in the OT: from Daniel 7:13-14 to Matt 28:19.” [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Barrett, “The Background of Mark 10:45,” 8–9; cf. Stuhlmacher, “Existenzstellvertretung für die Vielen,” 419–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. See Gowan, *Daniel,* on the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. *Daniel*, 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. See Calvin, *Daniel* 2:74-75, responding to Avravanel, הישועה מעיני. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Cf. Seow, *Daniel*, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Hebbard, *Reading Daniel*, 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Lucas, *Daniel*, 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Pace, *Daniel*, 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Cf. Mayer, *Commentary upon All the Prophets*, 547. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. So Mermelstein**,** “Constructing Fear and Pride in the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:58-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Cf. Merrill Willis, "Heavenly Bodies,” 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. BHS includes v 26 (cf. Segert, “Poetic Structures in the Hebrew Sections of the Book of Daniel”), but this verse rather lacks poetic features. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 339, 343. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Hölscher, “Die Entstehung des Buches Daniel,” 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Dequeker, “The ‘Saints of the Most High’ in Qumran and Daniel,” 109 [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. So Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. See Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 61–120 [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Merrill Willisdiscusses the more general mythic nature of Dan 8 in“Myth and History in Daniel 8.” [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Against Nicol, “Isaiah’s Vision and the Visions of Daniel,” 504. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Though Yarbro Collins notes that the myth appears in a form closest to Dan 8 in the fifth century AD in Nonnos’s *Dionysiaca* 1.163–64, 180–81 (*The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 76–83; cf. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 229). [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Brownlee, “The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls.” 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Cumont, “La pius ancienne géographie astrologique,” 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*, 401–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 220–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. See Lebram, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel,” 739–43. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Nuñez (“Narrative Structure of Daniel 8”) suggests a slightly different structure on the basis of text linguistics. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” 418. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” 417–18. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” 436. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 258. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. So Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. See Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*,29–38, developing points made in Noth, “Zur Komposition des Buches Daniel,” 160–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. Goswell (“The Temple Theme in the Book of Daniel”) sees the temple as a key theme in the entire book. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Cf. Mayer, *Commentary upon All the Prophets*, 547. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Portier-Young,“Languages of Identity and Obligation,” 104, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. See *TTH* 196; but also see n. 4b*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Gzella**,** *Cosmic Battle and Political Conflict,* 157, at the conclusion of her verse-by-verse study. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Cf. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, xlvii, 1–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Cf. Zimmermann, *Biblical Books Translated from the Aramaic*; Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*; Hartman/Di Lella (*Daniel*)lists the Aramaisms. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Gowan’s comment (*Daniel*, on vv 10-12 in particular). [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Portier-Young,“Languages of Identity and Obligation,” 113, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 257-58. The poor quality of the Hebrew makes it less likely that the change conveys a move from the vernacular to the scholarly (so Hebbard, *Reading Daniel*, 177). [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. Pace, *Daniel*, 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Cf. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Cf. Hasel, “The First and Third Years of Belshazzar.” [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Cf. Lucas, *Daniel*, 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. On Susa, see Cook, *The Persian Empire*, 73–74, 145, 158–66; Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 163–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Cf. *IBD* 1496, 1609. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Massyngberde Ford, “Jewish Law and Animal Symbolism,” 205–8 [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Cf. Ps-Saadia in גדולות מקראות on the passage (cf. Gallé, *Daniel*, 87). [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. On the history, see Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East* 2:656-75; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Merrill Willis,*Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. So Gzella**,** *Cosmic Battle and Political Conflict,* 135-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. So Montgomery, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. See e.g., Rashi in גדולות מקראות on 8:9, and further Goldwurm, *Daniel*, 220-38; Shea, “Why Antiochus IV Is Not the Little Hom of Daniel 8”; Alomía**,** *Daniel* 2:269-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Cf. Strugnell, “The Angelic Liturgy at Qumrân.” [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. See Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 57, 65–66, 89–95. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Against Goldstein, “The Persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV,” 142–43. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. See Parente, “Onias III’ Death.” [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Bampfylde **(“**The Prince of the Host”) sees him as the chief angel. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Against Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Cf. Hamerton-Kelly, “The Temple and the Origins of Jewish Apocalyptic.” [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 63–65, referring to Childs, *Introduction to the OT*, 517–18; Becker, *Israel deutet seine Psalmen*, 41–68. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Nestle, Zu Daniel,” 248; Eissfeldt, “Ba‘alšamēm und Jahwe,” 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Cf. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*, 343. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. See Jerome, *Daniel*, 86, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Cf. Bickerman, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 90-116 (ET 61-75); on Goldstein’s suggestion (I Maccabees, 146–47) that the abomination constituted meteorites fixed to the altar as objects to be worshiped, see Lust, “Cult and Sacrifice in Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. So e.g., Saadia, *Daniel*, 573; Yephet, *Daniel*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. For more precise—but speculative—interpretations, see Schedl, “Mystische Arithmetik"; Burgmann, “Die vier Endzeittermine im Danielbuch.” [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Cf. Longman, *Daniel*, 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Schwantes, “‘*Ereb bōqer* of Daniel 8:14 Re-examined,” noting especially Ezra 3:3–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. So e.g., Ibn Ezra, according to some accounts (cf. Goldwurm, *Daniel*, 229); alsoTheodoret, *Daniel*, 214-15;Luther, ““Vorrede uber den Propheten Daniel,” 17 (ET 302); Thiering, “The Three and a Half Years of Elijah,” 49, though her calendrical explanation is also questionable: see on 12:11–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. Cf. Burgmann, “Die vier Endzeittermine im Danielbuch,” 544–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Cf. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. So Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*, 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. See Kosmala, *Hebräer-Essener-Christen*, 208–39; “The Term *geber* in the OT and in the Scrolls”; and in *TWAT* on גבר. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Barth, *CD* III, 3:456. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Zuiddam (“The Shock Factor of Divine Revelation”) argues that Gabriel’s role in chaps. 8 and 9 is also to provide reassurance to Daniel. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Lucas, *Daniel*, 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Cf. Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Collins, *Daniel*, 339. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Against, e.g., Steck, “Weltgeschehen und Gottesvolk im Buche Daniel,” 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. De Vries, *The Achievements of Biblical Religion*, 342 [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Cf. Wilch, *Time* *and Event*, 111–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Against Wilch (and cf. Pfandl, “Daniel’s ‘Time of the End’”); contrast Jones, *Ideas of History in the Book of Daniel*, 178–219. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Cf. Blaising**,** “The Day of the Lord and the Seventieth Week of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Against Fox**,** “Ben Sira on OT Canon Again: The Date of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Newsom, *Daniel*, 272. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, 230–31. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Lebram, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel,” 739–43. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Möller, “Der Begriff ‘Rätsel’ im AT,” 477–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Cf. Barr, “Daniel,” on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Cf. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Portier-Young (*Apocalypse Against Empire*, 223-79) especially emphasizes the nonviolent commitment of Daniel’s visions. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung* *in der Bedrängnis*, 82–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. See Sachs and Wiseman, “A Babylonian King List.” [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. See Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 107–14, with references to other apocalypses. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. Lüthi, *The Church to Come*, 110-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Newsom, *Daniel*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Newsom, “The Past as Revelation,” 43; also 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. Newsom, *Daniel*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Towner, *Daniel*, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 137-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Against Towner, *Daniel*, 117; see further the *Comment* on 4:13-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. So Mayer, *Commentary upon All the Prophets*, 550. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Koch, “Spätisraelitische Geschichtsdenken am Beispiel des Buches Daniel,” 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. So Gowan, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. Smith Christopher, “Daniel,” 114, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Cf. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. Seow, *Daniel*, 130-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Cf. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” 439. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. On the subsequent history of this approach to Daniel, see Breed, “History of Reception,” 273-83. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. *Daniel*, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. Luther, “Vorrede uber den Propheten Daniel,” 17 (ET 302). [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:119. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Lüthi, *The Church to Come*, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Wright, *Hearing the Message of Daniel*, 172, 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. Cf. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Reid, *Sociological Setting of the Historical Apocalypses of 1 Enoch and the Book of Daniel*, 184, 188; *Enoch and Daniel*, 102, 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Newsom, *Daniel*, 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Lüthi, *The Church to Come*, 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. Hebbard, *Reading Daniel*, 184, 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. See *ANET*, 606. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. Collis, *Daniel*, 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Cf. Venter, “Intertekstualíteít, kontekstualiteit en Daníël 9”; Van Deventer **(**“Suffering, Psalms and Allusion in Daniel 9”) adds the Psalms to the prayer’s intertextual links; Haydon (“‘The Law and the Prophets’ in MT Daniel 9:3-19”) sees the Torah and the Prophets as ptoviding the prayer with its “theological grammar.” [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. See Lipiński, “Recherches sur le Livre de Zacharie,” 35–42. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. See Moore, *Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah: The Additions*, 334–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Cf. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*, 5–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. See Cornill, “Die siebzig Jahrwochen Daniels,” 7–9, 14–18; Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 248–59; Koch, “Die mysteriösen Zahlen der judäischen Känige”; Thiering, “The Three and a Half Years of Elijah,” 43–45; Fitzmyer, “Further Light on Melchizedek”; Dimant**,** “The Seventy Weeks Chronology (Dan 9,24-27) in the Light of New Qumranic Texts.” [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. See, e.g., Beckwith, “The Significance of the Calendar for Interpreting Essene Chronology and Eschatology,” 168–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. Park thus speaks only of “Overtones of the Jubilee in the Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27.” CBut see further (e.g.) Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 42–43; Ulrich, *The Antiochene Crisis and Jubilee Theology in Daniel’s Seventy Sevens***;** ———. *From Judgment to Jubilee*; Berner**,** *Jahre, Jahrwochen und Jubiläen*; Redditt**,** “Daniel 9”; Henze**,** “Daniel and Jubilees.” [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. See Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. See Lester, *Daniel Evokes Isaiah*, 142-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. See Kilne, “The Covenant of the Seventieth Week,” 466–67. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. See Brownlee“The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls,” 13–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. See Harvey, *Le plaidoyer prophétique contre Israël*; earlier Gunkel, *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, 117–39 (ET 82-98). [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. See Williamson, Ezra, Nehemiah, on the prayers in Ezra and Nehemiah;Boda**,** *Praying the Tradition*, 26-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. See von Rad, “Gerichtsdoxologie.” [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Hoftijzer, “David and the Tekoite Woman,” 425–27. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Laurentin, “*We‘attah-Kai nun*,” 190–97. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Gilbert, “La prière de Daniel,” 303–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Cf. Harvey, *Le plaidoyer prophétique contre Israël*; Buis, “Notification de jugement et confession nationale”; Kline, “The Covenant of the Seventieth Week,” 454–58; Baltzer, *Das Bundesformular*. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. So Lacocque, “The Liturgical Prayer in Daniel 9,” 122–24; Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 488–89; against Towner, “Retributional Theology”; but Towner is right that there is a conventional element in the confession—Dan 9 is not simply a transition to “retribution theology” (Van Deventer, “The End of the End,” thinks rather in terms of the prayer being an addition to reassert Deuteronomic theology). [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Lists in Szörényi, *Psalmen und Kult im AT*, 105–9; also Montgomery, *Daniel*, and Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Discussion in Moore, “Toward the Dating of the Book of Baruch.” [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. So Westermann, “Struktur und Geschichte der Klage im Alten Testament,” 48–49, 74–75 (ET 171–72, 206). [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. See further Flesher, “Tricksters and Martyrs.” [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Cf. Venter**,**  “Constitualised Space in Daniel 9.” [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Jones, “The Prayer in Daniel ix,” 491; Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 8–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Segert (“Poetic Structures in the Hebrew Sections of the Book of Daniel,” 267-69) has a slightly different poetic analysis and some comments on poetic features. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Delcor, *Daniel*, on the passage. But Grabbe (“‘The End of the Desolations of Jerusalem’”) infers from its allusiveness that it is an older prophecy which the author of Daniel has taken over. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. Wilke (*Die Gebete der Propheten,* 67-91) adds that vv 5-14 and 15-19 look like originally separate units. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Rigger (*Siebzig Siebener*) suggests that the chapter developed in four stages between 180 and the 160s as the Antiochene crisis deepened. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. Bayer, *Danielstudien*, 49 [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. Against Lipiński, La liturgie pénitentielle, 83–106. [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. And from a narrative-critical angle, see De Long,“Daniel and the Narrative Integrity of His Prayer in Daniel 9.” [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. So Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. Laato**,** “The Seventy Yearweeks in the Book of Daniel,” sees vv 24-27 as a pre-Maccabean message which has been updated in the 160s. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. See Knibb, “Exile in the Literature of the Intertestamental Period”; Gowan, “The Exile in Jewish Apocalyptic.” [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. Cf. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Cf. Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 92-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Gilbert, “La prière de Daniel,” 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 4–6. Nel (“Daniel 9 as Part of an Apocalyptic Book?”) notes its close connection with chaps. 7—12 more generally. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. So Koch, “Spätisraelitische Geschichtsdenken am Beispiel des Buches Daniel,” 20–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. Hanhart, “Kriterien Geschichtlicher Wahrheit in der Makkabäerzeit,” 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Gowan, “The Exile in Jewish Apocalyptic,” 214; cf. Janssen, *Das Gottesvolk und seine Geschichte*, 51–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Werline, “Prayer, Politics, and Social Vision in Daniel 9,” 23, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. Bickerman, *Der Gott der Makkabäer* 26 (ET 16). Van Deventer (“Suffering, Psalms and Allusion in Daniel 9,” 213) calls it the “focal point.” [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. See Jerome, *Daniel*, 90. Dequeker (“Darius and the Prophecy of Seventy Weeks”) takes the original reference to have been Darius II. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. So Frye, *Heritage of Persia*, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. See Lucas’s discussion, *Daniel*, 234-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. Frye, *Heritage of Persia*, 72–73. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. See Auchincloss, “Darius the Median”; Torrey, “‘Medes and Persians,’” 7–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. Luckenbill**,** “The Black Stone of Esarhaddon,” 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. See Barton, *Oracles of God*, 47–48, on the reference to the “Prophets” in the near-contemporary Prologue to Sirach. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. Cf. Tigay, “An Early Technique of Aggadic Exegesis.” [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Cf. Wright, *Hearing the Message of Daniel*, 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Scheetz, *The Concept of Canonical Intertexuality*, 107-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. So Wilson**,** “The Prayer of Daniel 9”; cf. Bergsma**,** “The Persian Period as Penitential Era.” [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. Collins, *Daniel*, 347. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Stoebe, “Die Bedeutung des Wortes *ḥäsäd* im AT,” 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Against Glueck, *Ḥesed* *in the Bible*. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. See Sakenfeld, *The Meaning of* *Ḥesed* *in the Hebrew Bible*, 137, 237–38. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Barth, *CD* II, 1:389-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. See A. Jepsen in *TWAT* on אמן. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:177. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 31–59 [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. Jepsen, “Gnade und Barmherzigkeit im AT,” 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. So Noth, *Die Gesetze im Pentateuch*. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. It is in this sense that one could see Daniel as reflecting a focus on “law” (see Kratz, “Reich Gottes und Gesetz im Danielbuch”—he understands chap. 9 as the latest arrival in the accumulating development of the book: see Kratz, “The Visions of Daniel”). [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:159. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Towner, *Daniel*, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. See Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh* 257–92, 365; de Vaux, *Les institutions de l’AT* 1:21–22 (ET 7–8). [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. See the passages in Gottwald and de Vaux just cited. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. See H. Ringgren in *TWAT* on אב. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. See de Vaux, *Les institutions de l’AT* 1:111–13 (ET 70–72); also Charlesworth, *The OT Pseudepigrapha and the NT*, 20–21, 146–47. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 26, referring to Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 87–140. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. Cf. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:189 [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. See Bowker, “Intercession in the Qur’an and the Jewish Tradition,” 79–80; le Déaut, “Aspects de l’intercession dans le Judaïsme ancient,” 35–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Widengren, “The Persian Period,” 510–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. See Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus*, 32–105 (ET 1:18-55). [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Hengel, *Judentum* *und Hellenismus* 101 (ET 1:53). [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. See Seybold, “Reverenz und Gebet”; also in *TWAT* on חלה; Ap-Thomas, “Notes on Some Terms Relating to Prayer,” 239–40; Sawyer, “Types of Prayer in the OT,” 136–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. Lederach, *Daniel*, 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. According to K. Koch in *TWAT*, חטא fundamentally means “to commit an offence against someone with whom one stands in an institutionalized community relationship” (ET 4:311). See also Knierim, *Die Hauptbegriffe für Sünde im AT*. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. See *HALOT* for the nontheological use of עוה, against BDB, which posits separate roots. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. Milgrom, “The Concept of ma‘al in the Bible and the Ancient Near East”; expanded in Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 16–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Gowan, “The Exile in Jewish Apocalyptic,” 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Towner, *Daniel*, 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. J. Scharbert in *TWAT* on אלה. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Again cf. Scharbert in TWAT on אלה. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Cf. Lester, *Daniel Evokes Isaiah*, 73-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. See E. Johnson in *TWAT* on אנף. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Layton, “Biblical Hebrew ‘To Set the Face,’” 171–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. On ידה, see Westermann, *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen*, 20–24 (ET 25–30). [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Smith-Christopher also notes that fasting could be part of preparation for war (cf. 1 Macc 3:44-46): it is “associated with a communal call on God to act when the odds seem overwhelming.” It as “an act of spiritual warfare” (“Daniel,” 126). [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. Boccaccini**,** *Middle Judaism*, 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. Cf. Wilke, “Daniel 9.” [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Cf. Wright, *Hearing the Message of Daniel*, 202-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. See *Form of Prayers for the Day of Atonement*, 31-68; cf. Sumner, “Daniel,” 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. Cf. Towner, “Retributional Theology in the Apocalyptic Setting.” [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Lederach, *Daniel*, 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. See Westermann, *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen*, 40, 49, 50 (ET 54, 67, 69). [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Towner, *Daniel*, 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. See Westermann, *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen*. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. Cf. Pace, *Daniel*, 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Lebram, “The Piety of the Jewish Apocalyptists,” 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Cf. Bergsma**,** “The Persian Period as Penitential Era.” [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. BDB; cf. Herrmann, “Das zehnte Gebot.” [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. Cf. Wiesel, “Daniel,” 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. Cf. Yephet, *Daniel*, 49; Saadia, *Daniel*, 595. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Le Déaut, “Aspects de l’intercession dans le Judaïsme ancient,” 51–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:195-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. Theodoret, *Daniel*, 244-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Collins, *Daniel*, 357. [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. Adler, in VanderKam and Adler (eds.), 206; Spangenberg**,** “The Septuagint Translation of Daniel 9.” [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. See his *Chronicus canon aegyptiacus, ebraicus, graecus*, 610-19; cf Collins, *Daniel*, 356. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. See The Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered, 173-200. Cf. Bickerman, Four Strange Books, 132-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Ulrich, “How Early Judaism Read Daniel 9:24-27,” 1069. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. See e.g., Rashi and Ibn Ezra in גדולות מקראות on vv 24-27; cf. Grabbe, “The Seventy Weeks Prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27) in Early Jewish Interpretation”; see also Chazan’s study of medieval Jewish exegesis**, “**Daniel 9:24-27: Exegesis and Polemics.” [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. See the paragraphs on “Daniel in the NT” in the *Introduction* to this Commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Dunn, “Tertullian and Daniel 9:24-27,” 336-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Cf. Tanner, “Is Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy Messianic?” 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. See Jerome, *Daniel*, 95-110; on the patristic writers, Dunn**,** “*Probabimus venisse eum iam”* and **“**Tertullian and Daniel 9:24-27”: over the past century (e.g.) Anderson, *Prince*; Hoehner, “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks and NT Chronology”; McFall**, “**Do the Sixty-Nine Weeks of Daniel Date the Messianic Mission of Nehemiah or Jesus?” Kalafian**,** *The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of the Book of Daniel*; Lurie**,** "A New Interpretation of Daniel's 'Sevens' and the Chronology of the Seventy 'Sevens’”; Ouro**,** “Daniel 9:27a”; Shea, “When Did the Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24 Begin?” [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Jerome, *Daniel*, 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. See E.g., Behrmann, *Das Buch Daniel*, on the passage; more recently Athas, “In Search of the Seventy ‘Weeks’ of Daniel 9”; Price**,**  “Prophetic Postponement in Daniel 9 and Other Texts.” Pierce (“Spiritual Failure, Postponement, and Daniel 9” rather suggests a link with the Hasmonean kings. Segal (*Dreams, Riddles, and Visions*, chap. 6) takes the first seven to beging rather than end with Cyrus. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. Porteous, *Daniel*, on the passage; cf. Driver’s comment that some of the figures are “patently incorrect” (“Sacred Numbers and Round Figures,” 65). [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. Beckwith, “Daniel 9 and the Date of Messiah’s Coming.” [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Grabbe, “Chronography in Hellenistic Jewish Historiography,” 43–44; Young (*Daniel*, on the passage)describes it as symbol. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Jerome, *Daniel*, 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. Young, *The Messianic Prophecies of Daniel*, 56. Cf. e.g., Flesher**,** “Daniel 9:24-27 and the Tribulation,” 586; Hess**,** “The Seventy Sevens of Daniel 9”; Haydon**,** “The ‘Seventy Sevens’ (Daniel 9:24) in Light of Heptadic Themes in Qumran”; Lucas, “A Statue, a Fiery Furnace and a Dismal Swamp” 296-99. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. See e.g., Koch, “Die Bedeuting der Apokalyptik”; Deines, “How Long? God’s Revealed Schedule for Salvation and the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.” [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Janowski, *Söhne als Heilsgeschehen*, 115–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. So Anderson, *Signs and Wonders*, on the passage; Steck, “Weltgeschehen und Gottesvolk im Buche Daniel,” 65–75. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Collins, Daniel with *an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 94–95. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Cf. Charles, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Jones, “The Prayer in Daniel ix,” 493. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Cf. Heard’s study of the perspectives of 2 Maccabees and *T. Moses*, “The Maccabean Martyrs’ Contribution to Holy War,” 293–308. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. Against Young, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. Against Delcor, *Daniel*,on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Against Baumgarten, “The Heavenly Tribunal and the Personification of Ṣedeq in Jewish Apocalyptic,” 222–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. So Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 11–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. Avalos (**“**Daniel 9:24-25 and Mesopotamian Temple Rededications”) notes Mesopotamiah parallels. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Against Payne, “The Goal of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks”; Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” 12–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. See Poythress**, “**Hermeneutical Factors in Determining the Beginning of the Seventy Weeks.” [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. So Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*,on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. See Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja: Kap*. 40–66, and Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, on the passages. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. Nolland, “Sib. Or. iii. 265–94,” 162–63. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. Hengstenberg, *Christologie des AT*; Baldwin, *Daniel*, on the passage; but also Montgomery, *Daniel*, 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. Porteous, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Against Young, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. Against Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. Torrey, “The Messiah Son of Ephraim,” 268–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. But see *Comment* on 8:10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. See BDB, 504a. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. So Bevan, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Philip, *By the Rivers of Babylon*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. So Charles, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Against Lebram, “Apokalyptik und Hellenismus im Buche Daniel,” 513–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. Klein, “Über das Buch Daniel,” 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Ford, *The Abomination of Desolation*, 148. See further Theophilos, *The Abomination of Desolation in Matthew 24*, 178-90; he also notes the irony with which [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Lacocque, *Damiel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Delcor, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. Koch, “Spätisraelitische Geschichtsdenken am Beispiel des Buches Daniel,” 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:135. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. Petersen**,** “The Prayers of Daniel,” 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. Flesher, “Tricksters and Martyrs,” 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. Cf. Lüthi, *The Church to Come*, 121-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Porteous, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Cf. Rosscup**, “**Prayer Relating to Prophecy in Daniel 9.” [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. So Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Address of Thanksgiving to Origen* 15; cf. Bickerman, *Four Strange Books of the Bible*, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Briggs, “‘I Perceived in the Books,’” 124, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Cf. DeVries, *Achievements of Biblical Religion*, 342. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Werline, “Prayer, Politics, and Social Vision in Daniel 9,” 30; Venter on “Daniel 9” in the same volums makes parallel points. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. J. Gould, *Herodotus* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1989), as quoted in Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History*, 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. Melanchthon, *In Danielem prophetam*, 153, as quoted in Beckwith, *Ezekiel, Daniel*, 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. Cf Ulrich’s comment on Jewish interpretation, “How Early Judaism Read Daniel 9:24-27.” [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. Pascal’s *Pensées*, 697 or 698 (the numbering varies); *Thoughts of Blaise Pascal*, 131. Cf. Bickerman, *Four Strange Books*, 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Seow, *Daniel*, 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Nolan Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 122 (she adds that God gave Jerusalem over because of its sin, but Dan 1:1 pointedly does not make that point). [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. See Lash, *Theology on the Way to Emmaus*, 66–69; cf. Rahner, “Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschichte.” [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Hebbard, *Reading Daniel*, 193-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. See Rowland, *The Open Heaven*. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. Meadowcroft, “History and Eschatology in Tension,” 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. *ANET*, 606; cf. *NERT* 118–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. Grayson, *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts*, 13–37; see also Lambert, *The Background of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 9–16; Lucas, *Daniel*, 269-72;more broadly Hengel, *Judentum* *und Hellenismus*, 337–45 (ET 1:184–89); Osswald, “Zum Problem der *vaticinia ex eventu*”; also Collins (ed.), *Apocalypse*, on *Sib. Or.,* especially the oracle on Alexander in 3.388–400, updated to refer to Antiochus. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. See Neujahr**,** *Predicting the Past in the Ancien Near East*, 119-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Collins, *Daniel* *with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Against Baldwin, “Some Literary Affinities of the Book of Daniel,” 92–94. On theological questions that might be raised by the conclusion that the scriptures contain quasi-predictions, see the Conclusion to this commentaryunder *Form*. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Lists in Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel*, 224–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. Hasslberger (*Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, 190–91) understands 10:14 to refer to chap. 8 in this connection. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. See Kim, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Daniel*, 250-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Weinfeld, “Patterns in Prophetic Literature,” 181–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. Cf Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Seeligmann, “Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese,” 171; and now more systematically Teeter**,** “Isaiah and the King of As/Syria in Daniel’s Final Vision.” [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. See Lester, *Daniel Evokes Isaiah*, 61-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. Cavallin, “De visa lärarnas död och uppstȧndelse,” 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Allen, “Isaiah liii. 11 and Its Echoes,” 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. Brownlee, “The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls,” 12; Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 272-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. Gese, ““Das Geschichtsbild des Danielsbuches und Ägypten,” 150–51. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Kossen, “De oorsprong van de Voorstelling der opstanding uit de doden in Dan. 12:2”; Bailey**,**"The Intertextual Relationship of Daniel 12:2 and Isaiah 26:19.” [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. Cf. Gardner, “The Way to Eternal Life in Dan 12:1e-2.” [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 510–11 (and see 509–22 generally); cf. Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History*, 46; against e.g., Hartman, “The Functions of Some So-called Apocalyptic Timetables.” [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. Van der Woude,“Prophetic Prediction, Political Prognostication, and Firm Belief,” 63, comparing Osswald, “Zum Problem der *vaticinia ex eventu.”* [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. Collins, “The Mythology of Holy War in Daniel and the Qumran War Scroll,” 604–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. So Bertholet, “Der Schutzengel Persiens,” 34–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Collins, *Daniel* *with* *an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. Kleinknecht, *Der leidende Gerechtfertigte*, 78; Moore, Resurrection and Immortality.” [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. Cf. Nötscher, *Altorientalischer und alttestamentlicher Auferstehungsglauben*, 173–261; against, e.g., Birkeland, “The Belief in the Resurrection of the Dead in the OT,” 75–78; Hultġård (“Das Judentum in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit und die iranische Religion,” 544–45) derives the idea of double reward from Persia. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife*, 341–43. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Lebram, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel,” 750–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Cf Anderson, *Signs and Wonders*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. On chap. 11, see Clifford, “History and Myth in Daniel 10–12,” 24–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Segert (“Poetic Structures in the Hebrew Sections of the Book of Daniel,” 269-71) again has a slightly different poetic analysis and some comments on poetic features. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Zamora(“The Daniel and Qohelet Epilogues”) compares this last section with the last section of Ecclesiastes. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. See conveniently Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*, on the chapters. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Wildgruber (*Daniel 10—12*, 241-42) comments that no semantic field is as prominent in chap. 11 as the field of words for power. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. Barth, *Diesseits* *und Jenseits im Glauben des späten Israel*, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. See, e.g., Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, 135–41; Davies, *Daniel*,63–65; Redditt, P. L., “Calculating the 'Times': Daniel 12:5-13”; and David’s rationale for the place of 11:1 (“Daniel 11,1”). [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. So Charles, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. See *Pericope Bibliography*. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. So Hengel, *Judentum* *und Hellenismus*, 8–107 (ET 1:6–55). Collins (*Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture*, 1-43) is more dispassionate. See also Collins/Sterling (eds.), *Hellenism in the Land of Israel.* On the other hand, Portier-Young (*Apocalypse Against Empire*, 49-216) is more passionate. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Lampe, “Die Apocalyptiker,” 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. Reid, *Sociological Setting of the Historical* Apocalypses, 214–15, contrasting *1 Enoch*; cf. *Enoch and Daniel*, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. So, e.g., Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, 145–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 103–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Szold, "The Eleventh Chapter of the Book of Daniel,” 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. See Makiello**, “**Daniel as Mediator of Divine Knowledge in the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Collins, *Daniel* *with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Collins, *Daniel*, 402-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. See Anderson, *Signs and Wonders*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. See Goswell**,** “Resurrection in the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Plöger, *Daniel,* on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. So Burgmann, “Die interkalation in den sieben Jahrwochen des Sonnenkalendars,” 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Gammie, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Cf. Anderson, *Signs and Wonders,* on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Lacocque, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. Pace, *Daniel*, 314. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. Heaton, *Daniel*, on the passage; contrast, e.g., H. Haag in *TWAT* on ם ד ־א בן; Rowe, “Is Daniel’s ‘Son of Man’ Messianic?” 90–91. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. So Bampfylde, **“**The Prince of the Host,” 129–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. On which see Haag**,** “Der Kampf der Engelmächte in Daniel 10—12.” [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. Cf. Jerome, *Daniel*, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Cf. Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Meadowcroft (“Who are the Princes of Persia and Greece?”) notes that the Persian leader could be a human figure, like the leaders in (e.g.) 9:6, 8; cf. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:252. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. So Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Cf. Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. Cf. Collins, “The Mythology of Holy War,” 601. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. See Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 107–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. Newsom, *Daniel*, 326. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. On which see Grainger**,** *The Syrian Wars*. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*; cf. Teeter**,** “Isaiah and the King of As/Syria in Daniel’s Final Vision,” 193-99. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. See Seeligmann, “Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese,” 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. See Walbank et al. (ed). *The Hellenistic World*, 1–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. Delcor***,*** “L’histoire selon le livre de Daniel,” 386. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. Lüthi,*The Church to Come*, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Pace, *Daniel*, 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. Newsom, *Daniel,* 327, quoting from Clifford, “History and Myth in Daniel 10–12,” 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Cook, *The Persian Empire*, 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. See Wolff, *Dodekapropheton* 2 (ET *Joel and Amos*) on the passage, and his references. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. So Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. See Wacholder, “The Beginning of the Seleucid Era,” 183–211. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Newsom, *Daniel*, 342. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Cf. Wildgruber, *Daniel 10—12*, 228-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. See Schäfer, “The Hellenistic and Maccabaean Periods,” 571–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. So Toll, “Die Wurzel *prṣ* im Hebräischen.” Schlatter ("Die Bene parisim bei Daniel: 11, 14) suggested that Daniel was referring to their involvement in anti-Seleucid resistance. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. Against Plöger, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. See van der Kooij, “A Case of Reinterpretation in the OG of Daniel 11,” 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Jerome, *Daniel*, 125; cf. more recentlyKeil, “Onias III,” 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Cf. Täubler, "Jerusalem 201 to 199 b.c.e.,” 1–30; Lebram, “Apokalyptiek als keerpunt in hetjoodse denken,” 273–75. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. *Daniel*, 129-31. Alomía **(***Daniel* 2:399-432) illustrates how chap. 11 as a whole can be related to European history from the Roman period to modern times. For the history of such understandings, see further the Introduction to this commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Bunge, “‘Theos Epiphanes,’” 61; Lebram, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel,” 751–52; less likely it denotes Ptolemy (Calvin, *Daniel* 2:307) or the young Antiochus (Rowley, "The 'Prince of the Covenant'”). [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. See further Bickermann; Hengel; Tcherikover; Mørkholm; Goldstein (*see General Bibliography*); Fischer, *Seleukiden und Makkabäer.* [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. Cf. Newsom, *Daniel*, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. So Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 111–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. See e.g., Gruen**,** “Hellenism and Persecution,” with comments and discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. See Schäfer, “The Hellenistic and Maccabaean Periods,” 564–66. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. See e.g., Horsley, *Scribes, Visionaries, and the Politics of Second Temple Judea*, 15-51; Grabbe**,** “The Hellenistic City of Jerusalem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Cf. Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Jaubert, *La notion d’Alliance dans le Judaïsme*, 83; it hardly refers to the priesthood in this context (against Lebram, “Apokalyptik und Hellenismus im Buche Daniel,” 512–13; van der Kooij, “The Concept of Covenant [*berît*] in the Book of Daniel).” [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. Against Eichrodt, *Theologie* *des AT* 1:23 (ET 64). [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 11. But Scolnicand Davis(“How *Kittim* Became ‘Rome’”) take Kittim still to refer to Cyprus here. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Cf. Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 213–19; Schäfer, “The Hellenistic and Maccabaean Periods,” 555–56; Tsafrir, The Location of the Seleucid Akra in Jerusalem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, 194–95; ———, “Apokalyptik und Hellenismus im Buche Daniel,” 508–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. So Barton, “Theological Ethics in Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. Kosmala, “Maśkîl.” [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Cf. Williams, *Jesus’ Death as Saving Event*, 60–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. Cf. Gardner, **“**ל כ שׂin the Hebrew Bible.” [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. So Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. Brownlee, “The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls,” 12–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. Against Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 47–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. So Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. So Collins, *Daniel* with *an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. Indeed, Sweeney (“The End of Eschatology in Daniel”) sees the Book of Daniel as designed to support the Maccabean revolt. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. So Fischer, *Seleukiden und Makkabäer*, 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. Against Lebram, “The Piety of the Jewish Apocalyptists,” 182–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. Parry**,** “Desolation of the Temple and Messianic Enthronement in Daniel 11:36—12:3.” [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. So Ibn Ezra in גדולות מקראות on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Mercer, “The Benefactions of Antiochus IV Ephiphanes and Dan 11:37-38.” [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. Theodoret, *Daniel*, 304-5; so e.g., E.g., Hippolytus, *Daniel*, 4.49; Jerome, *Daniel*, 136; Luther, “Vorrede uber den Propheten Daniel,” 49 (ET 313); Harton**,** “An Interpretation of Daniel 11:36-45”; Steinmann**,** “Is the Antichrist in Daniel 11?" Lederach, *Daniel*, 306; MacArthur**,** *The Future of Israel*, 71; Adeyemo**, “**Daniel**,”** 1010*.* Again, see the survey in the Introduction to this commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 198, in critique of Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*,, 135–36. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. See Walbank (ed.), *The Hellenistic World*, 84–99. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. Bunge, “Der ‘Gott der Festungen,’" with Lebram’s comment, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel,” 755. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Clifford, “History and Myth in Daniel 10–12,” 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. Against, e.g., Charles, *Daniel*, on the passage; Morgenstern, “The King-God among the Western Semites,” 167; Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:338. The Introduction to this commentary expands on these various approaches to the interpretation of the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. Fischer, *Seleukiden und Makkabäer*, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. Gurney, *God in Control*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. So Tanner, “Daniel’s ‘King of the North.’” Cf. Knox**,** “The Watch Tower Society and the End of the Cold War.” [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. See Jerome, *Daniel*, 139; so e.g., Mayer, *Commentary upon All the Prophets*, 579-82. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Lucas, *Daniel*, 290, 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. Perhaps including the story of Cambyses (Lebram, “König Antiochus,” 769-70) as mediated by Herodotus (Niskanen, “Daniel’s Portrait of Antiochus IV”). [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Newsom, *Daniel*, 320. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. Newsom, “The Past as Revelation,” 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. Davies, Daniel*,* 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Collins, “The Son of Man and the Saints of the Most High,” 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection* *, Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 11–27. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Nickelsburg, Resurrection, *Immortality, and Eternal Life*, 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. See the survey in Collins, *Daniel*, 394-98; Newsom, *Daniel*, 361-63; Beyerle, *Die Gottesvorstellungen in der antik-jüdischen Apokalyptik*, 189-268. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Against Gese, *Zur biblischen Theologie*, 52 (ET 57). [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Van Deventer, **“**The Bold, the Beautiful and the Beasts in the Book of Daniel,” 728. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. Cf. Haag**,** “Daniel 12 und die Auferstehung der Toten,” [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. Against Preuss, “‘Auferstehung’ in Texten alttestamentlicher Apokalyptik,’” 133, referring to J. Kammerer, *Die Auferstehung der Toten im Alten Testament als Element der eschatologischen Restauration des Bundesvolkes Israel* (Diss., Vienna, 1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Collins, “Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death,” 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Contrast Erling, “Ezekiel 38–39,” 113–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Martin-Achard, “Trois remarques sur la résurrection,” 315–17. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. Brueggemann, “From Dust to Kingship,” esp. 11–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Day, “The Development of Belief in Life after Death in Ancient Israel,” 242; cf. Day, “Resurrection Imagery from Baal to the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. Charles, *Eschatology*, 137–38; 211–13; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life*; Kleinknecht, *Der leidende Gerechtfertigte*. [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Cf. Hobbins,“Resurrection in the Daniel Tradition and Other Writings at Qumran,” 414. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. So Kaiser, *Tod und Leben* (ET *Death and Life*). [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. On this question, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, *Immortality, and Eternal Life*,26; contrast Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 136–38. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. See Wifall, “The Status of ‘Man’ as Resurrection.” [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Cavallin, *Life* *after Death*, 27; Martin-Achard, “L’espérance des croyants d’Israël face à la mort,” 449; Nickelsburg, Resurrection, *Immortality, and Eternal Life*,26. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. Cf. Pace, *Daniel*, 337. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. Lindenberger, “Daniel 12:1–4,” 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* IV, 26:1; cf. Stevenson/Glerup (eds.), *Ezekiel, Daniel*, 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. See McGarry**,** “The Ambidextrous Angel (Daniel 12:7 and Deuteronomy 32:40).” [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. Against Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. Newsom, *Daniel*, 329. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. See further Pyper**,** “Reading in the Dark.” [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. Wiesel, “Daniel,” 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. Hebbard, *Reading Daniel*, 211-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. Mathews**,** “The Numbers in Daniel 12:11-12.” [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. Collins, *Daniel*, 400. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. Cf. Van Goudoever, “Time Indications in Daniel that Reflect the Usage of the Ancient Theoretical So-called Zadokite Calendar,” in van der Woude **(**ed**.),** *The Book of Daniel*, 533-538; Boccaccini**,** “The Solar Calendars of Daniel and Enoch.” [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. E.g., Beckwith, “The Earliest Enoch Literature and Its Calendar,” 377–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. E.g., Cornill, “Die siebzig Jahrwochen Daniels,” 29–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Burgmann, “Die vier Endzeittermine im Danielbuch,” 545–46. [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. Eiss, “Der Kalender des nachexilischen Judentums.” [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. Cf. Stele**,** *Resurrection in Daniel 12*; he emphasizes the difference between the resurrection ideas in the two verses. [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. Raurell**,** “The *Doxa* of the Seer in Dan-LXX 12,13.” [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. Jones, *Ideas of History in the Book of Daniel*, 208–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. So Wildgruber, *Daniel 10—12*, 280-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. On approaches to undertstanding the visionary experience, see DiTommaso, “Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity,” 263-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. See Carroll, *When Propecy Failed*, utilizing the work of Festinger, *When Prophecy Fails.* [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 510–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. Gese, “Das Geschichtsbild des Danielsbuches und Ägypten,” 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. Lebram, “The Piety of the Jewish Apocalyptists,” 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. Carroll, “Prophecy and Dissonance,” 113, quoting Eaton, *Kingship and the Psalms*, 134). [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. Towner, *Daniel*, 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. Cf. Barth, *CD* iii, 3:410–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Barth, *CD* iii, 3:456. [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Thus these supernatural figures are not *territorial* spirits (see Stevens, “Daniel 10 and the Notion of Territorial Spirits”). [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. Koch, “Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht,” in Hellholm(ed.), *Apocalypticism*, 438. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. Speaking as the author, I note that I leave these contextual remarks as I formulated them in the 1980s. They illustrate the contextual nature of our reading of the scriptures and our hopes and fears. I could formulate different hopes and fears now. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Cf. Wink, *Naming the Powers*; *Unmasking the Powers.* [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 93–94 [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Wink, *Naming* *the Powers*, 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Cf. Wright, *Hearing the Message of Daniel*, 216-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. Cf. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:251. [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Berrigan, *Daniel*, 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. So Towner, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. Towner, *Daniel*, 174. Cf. von Rad, *OT Theology* 2:303-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. Quoted by Philip, *By the Rivers of Babylon*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. See e.g., the “interchange on myth and history” (Marrill Willis, “Myth and History in Daniel 8,” 151) between Jindo (“On Myth and History”) and DiTommaso (“History and Apocalyptic Eschatology”); and D. D. Baldwin, “Free Will and Conditionality in Daniel,” in Merling (ed.), *To Understand the Scriptures*, 163-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. Barth, *CD* IV, 3:694. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. See Hanhart, “Kriterien Geschichtlicher Wahrheit in der Makkabäerzeit,” 82; Towner, *Daniel*, on the passage; Rappaport**,** “Apocalyptic Vision and Preservation of Historical Memory.” [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 191–92. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
802. Gowan, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
803. Newsom, “The Past as Revelation,” 48; Lebram, ““The Piety of the Jewish Apocalyptists,” 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
804. See Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 3–36. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
805. Redditt, *Daniel*, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
806. Wildgruber, *Daniel 10—12*, 226-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
807. Cf. Garber**,** “Resisting Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
808. Cf. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:253. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
809. Against Childs, *Introduction to the OT as Scripture*, 619 (cf. Childs, “The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the OT,” 77). [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
810. Cf. Wildgruber, *Daniel 10—12*, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
811. Meadowcroft, “History and Eschatology in Tension,” 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
812. See Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 87–88, 95–96 [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
813. Collins, *Daniel*, 403. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
814. Against Collins, “Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death,” 34–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
815. Gowan, *Daniel*, on the passage. [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
816. Collins, “The Mythology of Holy War in Daniel and the Qumran War Scroll,” 603. [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
817. Kellermann, “Überwindung des Todesgeschicks in der alttestamentlichen Frömmigkeit,” 261–62. [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
818. So Pfeiffer, “Wisdom and Vision in the OT,” 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
819. Contrast Revelation: see Yarbro Collins, “The Political Perspective of the Revelation to John.” [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
820. Calvin, *Daniel*, 391, 392. [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
821. Sumner, “Daniel,” 220. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
822. “The Labouring Saints Dismission to Rest”; cf. Sumner, “Daniel,” 220. [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
823. Calvin, *Daniel* 2:245-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
824. Shea**, “**History and Eschatology in the Book of Daniel,” 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
825. See e.g., Hanson, *IDBSup* 27; Barker (“Apocalyptic”) notes that Daniel lacks most of the features of apocalyptic thought. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
826. Collins (ed.), *Apocalypse*, 9. Collins considers the debate on this definition in *Apocalypse, Prophecy, and Pseudepigraphy*, 1-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
827. Cf. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
828. Cf. Koch, *Das Buch Daniel*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
829. Collins, “Inspiration or Illusion,” 29. The statement is puzzling because Collins earlier noted that the stories do not belong to the genre history, partly on the basis of their having patterns typical of folktales (*Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 41). [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
830. Brant et al. (eds.), *Ancient Fiction*, offers a discussion of how people think about stories that relate things that happened and things that didn’t. [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
831. See Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History*, on parallels with Herodotus; also Goldingay, “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” 641. [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
832. Collins, *Daniel*, 58. On the rationale for attributing one’s visions to a figure from the past, see Najman, “How to Make Sense of Pseudonymous Attribution.” [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
833. So Niditch, “The Visionary,” 157–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
834. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)
835. Words used by Hamilton in *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 37-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-835)
836. Collins, *Daniel*, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-836)
837. See Frei in *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*. [↑](#footnote-ref-837)
838. Cf. Goldingay, “The Book of Daniel: Three Issues,” 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-838)
839. See e.g., Baldwin, *Daniel*. [↑](#footnote-ref-839)
840. Beek, “Zeit, Zeiten und eine halbe Zeit,” 20–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-840)
841. Mertens, *Das Buch Daniel* 115–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-841)
842. Anderson, “Double and Triple Stories,” 84; cf. Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 116–17. [↑](#footnote-ref-842)
843. Davies, *Daniel*,125–26. [↑](#footnote-ref-843)
844. Flesher, “Tricksters and Martyrs,” 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. Koch, “Is Daniel Also among the Prophets?” 128–30, against Childs, *Introduction to the OT as Scripture*, 613–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. Cf. Koch, “Stages in the Canonization of the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Bauckham, “*Daniel* *with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*. . . by John J. Collins,” 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. Cf. Hall, *Post-exilic Theological Streams and the Book of Daniel*, 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. Davies, “Apocalyptic and Historiography.” [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. Chary, *Les prophètes et le culte à partir de l’exil*, 236–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. Delcor; Frost; F. M. Cross (see *General Bibliography*). [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. Koch, “Is Daniel Also among the Prophets?” 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 29–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. E.g., Rowley; Frost; Osten-Sacken; Hanson (see *General Bibliography*). [↑](#footnote-ref-854)
855. Wanke, “Prophecy and Psalms in the Persian Period,” 180–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-855)
856. Buber, “Prophetie und Apokalyptik” (ET “Prophecy, Apocalyptic, and the Historical Hour”). [↑](#footnote-ref-856)
857. See Heaton, *Daniel*; von Rad, *Theologie des AT*; Gammie, “Spatial and Ethical Dualism in Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic Literature”; Smith, “Wisdom and Apocalyptic,” describing apocalyptic as a scribal phenomenon; but see the critiques of Michel (“Weisheit und Apokalyptik”), noting that it all depends on what you mean by wisdom and by apocalyptic, and of Wilson (“Wisdom in Daniel and the Origin of Apocalyptic”) who notes the relative limited use of wisdom vocabulary in Daniel. [↑](#footnote-ref-857)
858. H.-P. Müller in *TWAT* on חכם; ———. “Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik”; VanderKam, “Prophetic-Sapiential Origins of Apocalyptic Thought.”; Mastin**,** “Wisdom and Daniel.” Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 80–87; in critique, Wooden**,** *The Book of Daniel and**Manticism*; Bedenbender**,** “Seers as Mantic Sages in Jewish Apocalyptic (Daniel and Enoch).” [↑](#footnote-ref-858)
859. Pinette, “The Lady Vanishes,” 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-859)
860. Cf. Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-860)
861. Porter, *Metaphors and Monsters*. [↑](#footnote-ref-861)
862. VanderKam, *Enoch* *and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Legend*, 62–69. [↑](#footnote-ref-862)
863. See Hengel; Eddy (see *General Bibliography*). [↑](#footnote-ref-863)
864. Betz, “Zum Problem des religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnisses der Apokalyptik,” 409 (ET 155). [↑](#footnote-ref-864)
865. So Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran*. [↑](#footnote-ref-865)
866. Lebram, “König Antiochus im Buch Daniel”; Collins, “Jewish Apocalyptic against Its Hellenistic Near Eastern Environment.” [↑](#footnote-ref-866)
867. On the significance of the switch, see chap. 2 *Structure*. [↑](#footnote-ref-867)
868. See Welch, “Chiasmus in Ugaritic,” UF 6 (1974) 425–28; see further Welch (ed.), *Chiasmus in Antiquity*. [↑](#footnote-ref-868)
869. Lenglet, “La structure littéraire de Daniel 2–7.” [↑](#footnote-ref-869)
870. Gooding’s tracing of an arrangement balancing chaps. 1–5 and 6–12 (“The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel and Its Implications”) is less convincing; likewise David’s double chiasm (*Composition and Structure,* 395) and Waters’s several chiasms (““The Two Eschatological Perspectives of the Book of Daniel”). [↑](#footnote-ref-870)
871. Though in another sense chap. 11 is full of *Sturm und Drang* (cf. Towner, *Daniel*, 147). [↑](#footnote-ref-871)
872. Cf. Goldingay, “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” 642. [↑](#footnote-ref-872)
873. Humphreys, “A Life-style for Diaspora.” [↑](#footnote-ref-873)
874. Lucas argues for a dispersion origin for the visions (“Daniel: Resolving the Enigma”; *Akkadian Prophecies, Omens and Myths*). [↑](#footnote-ref-874)
875. Van Deventer (“Another Look at the Redaction History of the Book of Daniel”) suggests that they were written after the visions and after the temple rededication. [↑](#footnote-ref-875)
876. See Ginsberg, against Rowley (see *General Bibliography*). [↑](#footnote-ref-876)
877. Against (Hartman/Di Lella, *Daniel*. [↑](#footnote-ref-877)
878. E.g., Szörényi, “Das Buch Daniel, ein kanonisierter Pescher?” [↑](#footnote-ref-878)
879. See, e.g., von Soden, “Eine babylonische Volksüberlieferung von Nabonid in den Danielerzählungen”; Eissfeldt, “Daniels und seiner drei Gefärten Laufbahn im babylonischen, medischen und persischen Dienst”; Dommershausen, *Nabonid* *im Buche Daniel*; Müller, “Magisch-mantische Weisheit und die Gestalt Daniels,” 85–88; Davies, *Daniel*,40–45; more generally and in detail, Stahl**,** *Von Weltengagement zu Weltüberwindung* [↑](#footnote-ref-879)
880. See Hasslberger, *Hoffnung in der Bedrängnis*. [↑](#footnote-ref-880)
881. Cf. Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 15–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-881)
882. Gammie, “The Classification, Stages of Growth, and Changing Intentions in the Book of Daniel,” 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-882)
883. Bickerman, “The Babylonian Captivity,” 346–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-883)
884. Cf. R. Albertz, “The Social Setting of the Aramaic and Hebrew Book of Daniel,” in Collins/Flint (eds.), *The Book of Daniel* 1:171-204 (175-79). [↑](#footnote-ref-884)
885. Redditt, “Daniel 11 and the Sociohistorical Setting of the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-885)
886. Burridge, “Reflections on Prophecy and Prophetic Groups,” 100, commenting on Wilson, “From Prophecy to Apocalyptic,” 84–86—with which cf. Hanson, *IDBSup* 27–31. See the survey on theories concerning the function and social setiing of the apocalypses in DiTommaso, “Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity,” 250-63. [↑](#footnote-ref-886)
887. Gardner (**“**ל כ שׂin the Hebrew Bible”)suggests that the “disocerning” teachers would be priests. [↑](#footnote-ref-887)
888. Cf. Venter**,** “Daniel and Enoch: Two Different Reactions”--respectively simply resistant and militantly activist in their opposition to reformist Jews and to Antochus; cf Venter, “Daniel 7-12 in sosiaal-wetenskaplike Perspektief.” [↑](#footnote-ref-888)
889. Horsley, *Scribes, Visionaries, and the Politics of Second Temple Judea*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-889)
890. See Davies, “*Ḥasidim* in the Maccabaean Period.” against Plöger, *Theokratie und Eschatologie* (ET *Theokracy and Eschatology*; Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus* 319–94 (ET 1:175–218). [↑](#footnote-ref-890)
891. See Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 54–59; Davies, *Daniel*,122–25; VanderKam, *Enoch* *and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Legend*. [↑](#footnote-ref-891)
892. See notably the work of Albertz, Beyerle, Davies, Grabbe, Knibb, and Lacocque in Collins/Flint (eds.), *The Book of Daniel*, 171-265, and in van der Woude (ed.), *The Book of Daniel*, 315-61, 399-411. [↑](#footnote-ref-892)
893. Davies, *Daniel*,81. [↑](#footnote-ref-893)
894. So Scheetz, “Daniel's Position in the Tanach, the LXX-Vulgate, and the Protestant Canon.” [↑](#footnote-ref-894)
895. On “Who is God?” in Daniel, see further Goldingay, “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” 643-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-895)
896. Against Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-896)
897. Lacocque, *Daniel*,108 [↑](#footnote-ref-897)
898. Cf. Abadie**,** “Du temps prophétique au temps apocalyptique dans le livre de Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-898)
899. Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, 77 (on Ps 34:17), but as quoted by Bickermann, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 7 (ET v). [↑](#footnote-ref-899)
900. Boehmer**,** *Reich Gottes und Menschensohn im Buch Daniel*, 16–17. Cf. Merrill**, “**Daniel as a Contribution to Kingdom Theology.” [↑](#footnote-ref-900)
901. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 211–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-901)
902. Hall, *Post-exilic Theological Streams and the Book of Daniel*, 224–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-902)
903. Harrington, **“**The Ideology of Rule in Daniel 7—12,” 540. [↑](#footnote-ref-903)
904. Cf. Goswell, “The Ethics of the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-904)
905. Collins, *Apocalypse, Prophecy, and Pseudepigraphy*, 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-905)
906. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-906)
907. Barth, *Diesseits und Jenseits im Glauben des späten Israel*; Newsom, **“**Political Theology in the Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-907)
908. Philip, *By the Rivers of Babylon*, on chap. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-908)
909. R. Trevors Herford: see Kreuziger, *Apocalypse and Science Fiction*, 149 (quoting Koch), and further, e.g., 78–79, 158–62, 176 [↑](#footnote-ref-909)
910. Käsemann, “Die Anfänge christlicher Theologie,” 180 (ET 40). [↑](#footnote-ref-910)
911. See Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context*. [↑](#footnote-ref-911)
912. Thomas**, “**The Book of Daniel: The Apocalypse with a Distinct Charter for Liberative Praxis and Theological Vision,” 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-912)
913. Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History*, 3 (Niskanen’s declaration emerges from a comparison of Daniel with Herodotus); cf. Hellberg, “The Determination of History cccording to the Book Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-913)
914. On leadership in Daniel, see further Goldingay, “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” 648-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-914)
915. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-915)
916. Walters, “The End (of What?) Is at Hand,” 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-916)
917. Joubert, *Power and Responsibility in the Book of Daniel*, 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-917)
918. Davies, *Daniel*,13. [↑](#footnote-ref-918)
919. Koch, “Is Daniel Also among the Prophets?” 127; cf. also the reflections in Haas, “The Book of Daniel.” [↑](#footnote-ref-919)
920. Cf. Warhurst**,** “The Associative Effects of Daniel in the Writings.” [↑](#footnote-ref-920)
921. Lacocque, “Apocalyptic Symbolism,” 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-921)
922. Barr, “The Apocalypse as a Symbolic Transformation of the World,” 39–50; cf. Schlüssler Fiorenza, “The Phenomenon of Early Christian Apocalyptic.” [↑](#footnote-ref-922)