

Prophecy Matters

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A French theologian spoke for all of us I think when he said “I need, as the universe needs, a God who saves me from the chaos and anarchy of my own ideas. Only God’s idea [cp. *logos*] delivers our minds and spirits from its long torment and our heart from its vast loneliness.” I am convinced that God provides that “idea,” that *logos* in Scripture, and the idea is that we can, if we play the game of life right, gain immortality and fix the world on a grand scale in the coming Kingdom. That “idea” reaches from one end of the Bible to the other. It is a drama about the Kingdom and the land/earth restored. It is not, with respect to one of our local preachers, “all about money”; it is all about the land. It is not about “going to heaven.” People who speak the language of going to heaven demonstrate a misunderstanding of God’s *logos*, His Plan. God desires this perplexed and warring world and church to be at peace, enjoying truth and fulfilling our destiny which is to live forever, on the terms of the Gospel announced by Jesus.

In the Bible the wise have their eye on the restored Kingdom of David. This understanding commends Abigail, one who became a wife of David and who was intelligent enough to recognize David as the Lord’s Messiah, a type of Jesus. The thief gained his success by believing in the coming Kingdom. This is the hallmark of all the celebrated men and women of faith in the Bible. We should follow their example.

“What is the most powerful thing in the world?” the Bishop of Winchester asked in his book in 1928. “That question at once conjures up mind pictures of bombs, guns and explosives. It is none of these things. They are merely instruments. Behind them is the mind that uses them. And their use, or disuse, will depend on the ideas in that mind. Therefore the most powerful thing in the world is the idea. Behind the ships at Boulogne, waiting for the invasion of England, more than 100 years ago, was the mind of Napoleon. The prevailing idea in that mind was the domination of Europe.”

I have been trying to urge students to stop clouding the issue by rather vaguely using “word of God” just as a synonym for the Bible as a whole, and confining it in a more strictly New Testament way (based on the first occurrence of “word of God” which came to Abraham in Gen. 15:1, when the covenant with him was announced). “Word of God” in the NT is almost invariably the shorthand for the **salvation Gospel about the Kingdom of God and the things of Jesus** (Matt. 13:19; Acts 8:12), God’s great idea.

The prevailing idea in the mind of Jesus was the preaching of his Father’s Gospel (God’s Gospel) centered on the Kingdom of God. Luke 4:43 remains the most neglected refrigerator verse: “I must preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God: that is the reason why I was commissioned.” Luke then tells us that as he preached the Kingdom they were listening to the word of God (Luke 5:1; cp Acts 8:4, 5, 12). We should follow Jesus’ and Luke’s example here. Jesus also bids his Church take that great commission Gospel to the world, “and then [and only then] will the end come” (Matt 24:14). “When you therefore see...,” he went on.

The great idea which emerged in the mind of Jesus in that marvelous Olivet Discourse is contained in that very next verse (Matt. 24:15). “When you *therefore* [connecting the thought to the “end of the age” he had just mentioned] **see the Abomination of Desolation standing where he ought not to...**” (Mark 13:14). The RV of 1881 corrected the pronoun to “he” and we find it now in ASV, NAB, NEB, REB, Goodspeed, Moffat, Fenton, “brutal desolator,” Good News Bible, “standing where he should not be (note to the reader: understand what this means).” The *Oxford Bible Commentary*: “Grammatically the participle, ‘standing,’ is masculine in Greek, qualifying a neuter noun: hence the ‘thing’ concerned is clearly personified in some way.”¹ The same idea occurs in Revelation 13:14 where the neuter “beast” is

¹ OUP, 2000, p. 914.

followed by a masculine pronoun, making him a person. His number 666 is interesting. It is what the ancients called a triangular number, the sum of all the numbers up to 36, but it is doubly triangular: 36 is the sum of all the numbers up to 8. 888 is the number of Jesus and the final beast is an 8th head. The final antichrist appears to be a horrible parody of the true Messiah.

We are commanded to pay attention to every word of the Bible — “man is to live out of every word which comes from God’s mouth” — not just the bits we feel “comfortable” with. One sometimes hears that the book of Revelation is not something to be studied, because it is all too difficult. But that is to follow Luther blindly. Luther said early on that Christ was not preached in Revelation at all. It is not an apostolic book. But that view deprives Jesus of 22 chapters of instruction to us, since the book is the revelation *of* Jesus Christ which God gave him. Jesus had said in Matthew 24:25: “Look, I have told you in advance.” These are warnings which we can scarcely afford to neglect. The book of Revelation is largely Jesus’ own expansion of his Olivet discourse. And both Revelation and Matthew 24 are based on Daniel and the other prophets. Obviously, Paul’s hope was that these prophetic warnings and teachings would be handed down from generation to generation (“teach my words to faithful people who will be able to teach them to others also,” 2 Tim. 2:2). When the time came for their fulfillment, they would serve as guiding lights for those whose lot is to live through the troubled times which *just precede* the arrival, the single Parousia, of Jesus. Did not Paul writing in about 55 AD say to the Thessalonians, “Don’t you remember how when I was with you [for a short time] I used to tell you these things?” (2 Thess. 2:5). He was referring to the detail about the antichrist, the man of sin, the Abomination or “brutal desolator.”

Date-setting by earnest students has caused the atheists and agnostics to mock. It may have been exciting to live in the years just before 1844, the year of Miller’s great failed prophecy of the end. But the cost was great in terms of disillusion. Worse than that, the date gave the Seventh-Day Adventists, not wanting to admit that the whole calculation was flawed, grounds for erecting a whole scheme which became dogma in that denomination: Jesus, they said, entered into some special new position in 1844. How much better it would have been to inspect and reject the whole theory that days are meant to mean years in prophecy and to go back to the drawing board. How much better to acknowledge that all the effort put into setting a date for the Parousia has so far failed. SDA’s summarily dismissed any who questioned their cherished dogma about 1844. Such is the intransigence of denominations.

The 1914 failed date led Jehovah’s Witnesses, rather than admit the error, to posit an invisible coming of Jesus in that year — the very year, ironically, when World War I broke out — odd since the date was meant to signal the beginning of the Kingdom of God! 1914 was only one of a series of mistaken calculations, and some loyal members of the original Witnesses are still sure that Jesus came back in the 1880s.

1948 has also not proven itself to be a chronological guide to the future Advent. Yes, it was remarkable that the state of Israel was founded in that year, but the Bible has much, much less to say about Israel in the land *in unbelief* than it does about the still future return of a remnant of *converted* Israel. This is part at least of the concern so eagerly asked about in the disciples’ famous last question: “Is this the time when you are going to restore national sovereignty and kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). (This is the question condemned outright as misguided by John Calvin who did not understand the Kingdom of God. Calvin said that “there are more errors than words in the question”! Thus Jesus’ students were damned by “orthodox\y” as ignorant)

As always, Jesus is our guide (“This is my beloved son; listen to him,” Luke 9:35). In Matthew 24:3 Jesus was asked about the end of the age in clear connection with trouble in the temple. Commentators have fought over that connection. But if one takes Daniel and other prophets, especially Isaiah, as one’s base then trouble in a temple and the appearance of a final awful figure, the antichrist, is to be expected. The disciples asking their question started with the advantage of a good knowledge of what the prophets had foretold about the end of the age. They ask the *right* question: “When will these things happen [the demolition of the temple] and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?” (Matt. 24:3). Mark and Luke report the very same question as the cue for the Olivet discourse. They do not

even mention the second coming *as such*, but they imply it in the phrase “all these things will be fulfilled” — a group of words which echoes the Greek of the last chapter of Daniel (see Dan. 12:7 for the exact same phrase, *suntelesthesetai panta tauta*). The fact is that the disciples were not, as it turns out, speaking of two events separated by nearly 2000 years, ie an AD 70 destruction in Jerusalem and then a Parousia much later. The AD 70 fall of the temple was definitely not a sign of the impending arrival of Jesus.

This has not prevented the rise of Preterism — “pastism” which boldly declares that Jesus *must* have returned in AD 70. After all did he not predict his arrival in very close connection with the destruction of the temple? Yes, he did. But had the Kingdom of God been understood as a new visible revolutionary government headquartered in Jerusalem, the catastrophic mistake promoted by increasing numbers could not have ever been imagined. Surely it is clear that far from the Kingdom and restoration of Israel being a fact of AD 70, the very opposite happened: Israel was dispersed and decimated! And what about the resurrection of the dead? Did *that* happen in AD 70? Clearly not. Those who promote the second coming in AD 70 have fallen for a colossal systematic mistake. The Kingdom of God has not happened as the event of the Parousia, and the dead have not been raised at the last trumpet. Do we really still have to say such patently obvious things? The whole Christian faith is at stake here.

1 Corinthians 15:23 remains one of those classic golden texts which gets us oriented to the New Testament scheme. “Those who belong to Christ [all the faithful of all the ages] will be *made alive/resurrected* at his coming [Parousia].” That is the Christian goal, plainly and simply. To “make alive” is one of those wonderful resurrection verbs. The *TDNT*² has it just right:

Life is given to man at the resurrection when God raises him. The idea of the immortality of the soul is quite alien... The immortality of the soul is first found along with dualistic Hellenistic psychology in Diogenes 6... “To make alive” is used generally of the future raising of the dead. Rom. 8:11: “the one who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise your mortal bodies.” I Cor. 15:22: “As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.” To be made alive thus means the same as raise up, and in John 5:21, as in Rom. 8:11, the two words occur together: “Just as the Father raises the dead and makes them alive, thus also the Son raises those whom he desires to. ‘Make alive’ is used in the same sense of Christ’s resurrection in I Pet. 3:18, ‘made alive in the spirit.’”³

The Abomination in the Future

The assumption that Jesus was referring to events in AD 70 has given rise to a “problem” causing many commentators to despair and some to accuse Jesus of being hopelessly mistaken. The destruction of the temple and city are inextricably bound up together with the Second Coming in the minds of the disciples when they asked their question (Matt. 24:3), and equally in the mind of Jesus when he gave his detailed reply. Both Jesus and the disciples knew what Daniel had already said, and Jesus expands on that preexisting pattern of prophecy. All problems arise when the base in Daniel is neglected.

Some commentary has done its best to *avoid* the fact that Jesus spoke of an end-time temple or holy place in which the Abomination of Desolation would stand “where **he** ought not to.” The deliberate masculine participle here (as in Rev. 13:14, of the Beast) is Mark’s way of alerting us to the all-important fact that the Abomination of Desolation is a personality. He stands where *he* ought not. This of course helps us to make the obvious link to Paul’s “man of sin” sitting in the temple, and to Jesus’ link in Revelation 17 to the final, eighth king who as an individual is “the Beast” to be destroyed by Jesus. And Paul’s man of sin is built on the final King of the North figure in Daniel 11, and this helps us to locate him. The “north” is not Europe but the area of Iraq, Syria, ancient Assyria or Babylon. Paul’s man of sin, as a single and final horrible individual, is also destroyed by the outshining of Jesus’ Parousia (2 Thess. 2:8). It is important to consult Paul’s source here to get at his meaning. Paul here quotes from an Assyrian endtime context in Isaiah 11:4, thus completing the circle of interlocking texts,

²The ten-volume *Theological Dictionary of the NT*, ed. Kittel

³ Vol. II, pp 864, 874, 875.

denoting the final antichrist as apparently a middle eastern character. The “decisive and final end” predicted is found in Isaiah 10:22-23, Isaiah 28:22 and Daniel 9:27, referred to as future also by Paul in Romans 9:27, 28.

The NT scheme is based heavily on Daniel, and the famous seventy “sevens” prophecy is the heart of the prophetic scheme along with the abomination of desolation (Dan. 9:26-27; 11:31 and 12:11).

Matthew Henry *Commentary*:

The message itself. It was delivered with great solemnity, received no doubt with great attention, and recorded with great exactness; but in it, as is usual in prophecies, there are things dark and hard to be understood. Daniel, who understood by the book of the prophet Jeremiah the expiration of the seventy years of the captivity, is now honorably employed to make known to the **church another more glorious release, which that was but a shadow of, at the end of another seventy, not years, but weeks of years.** He prayed over that prophecy, and received this in answer to that prayer. He had prayed for *his people* and the *holy city* — that *they* might be released, that *it* might be rebuilt; but God answers him *above what he was able to ask or think.* God not only grants, but outdoes, the desires of those that fear him, Ps. 21:4.

The times here determined are somewhat hard to be understood. In general, it is *seventy weeks*, that is, *seventy times seven years*, which makes just 490 years. **The great affairs that are yet to come concerning the people of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem, will lie within the compass of these years.**

By far the most detailed in terms of chronology and events is the famous last “week,” or better with the NIV “seven,” of Daniel 9:24-27. This prophecy contains all the gems of Jesus’ view of the future and has suffered miserably at the hands of rival systems. What is often neglected is the context of the Daniel 9:24-27 prophecy of the end time. Daniel had discovered the Jeremiah prophecy that the end of the desolation of Jerusalem under Nebuchanezzar was to be expected at the termination of a 70-year period (Dan. 9:2). It is to that great prospect of final restoration that Daniel addresses his attention, with all the zeal of the prophet for God’s intervention, the end of trouble in Israel and permanent peace and stability in Jerusalem. Daniel’s prayer is the famous “How long, O Lord?” cry of the righteous in all ages. Daniel sets the scene for the great seventy sevens prophecy. “In the first year of Darius’ reign, I, Daniel observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah, for **the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem**, namely seventy years” (9:2).

The whole point of the chapter, and in particular the 70 “sevens” prophecy of verses 24-27, is lost if this context is not kept in mind. Daniel wants to know how much more suffering and trouble is in store. When will the restoration come? “Do not delay,” Daniel implores God, “because your city and your people are called by your name” (9:19).

I believe this exegetical consideration should have prevented the amazing claim that the prophecy of the 70 “sevens,” obviously an extension of the 70 years prophecy, about to be completed in BC times, could have ended in 33 AD. Most improbable is the so-called “historicist” understanding that the final “seven” of the 490 years predicted in verses 24-27 could actually lie *beyond the end* of the prophecy, if it ended in 33 AD. This makes no sense at all. Daniel wants to know when the trouble will be *finally* over. It will be over when the decreed or “cut off” 490 years expire. It is incoherent to imagine that the prophecy would include a reference to the exact opposite of what is prayed for — i.e. the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by General Titus.

Keil has it right: The events prophesied “present the object for which the seventy weeks are determined, i.e. they intimate what will happen until, or with the expiry of, the time determined.” In AD 33 no ultimate deliverance occurred to the people and the city. What is worse — the city was again demolished 40 years later than the wrongly-supposed terminus in AD 33. “From the contents of the six statements, it thus appears that the termination of the seventy weeks coincides with the end of the present course of the world,”⁴ that is, **the second coming of Jesus.** If so, then all the prophecy chapters

⁴ Keil on Daniel, p. 349.

of Daniel unite to give us a grand picture of the coming of the Kingdom, which will entail the destruction of the final wicked “horn,” “beast” or antichrist.

If we see the AD 70 event as prophesied here, we are finding an event which lies wholly outside, i.e. about 40 years later than the supposed final week, if it ended in 33 AD. I think Keil is right again: “The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans followed the death of Christ, not after an interval of only 3 ½ years, but of 30 years, whereby the whole [historicist] calculation is shown to be inaccurate” (p. 382). That is, if one ends the seventieth week in AD 33, then the predicted destruction of Jerusalem *in the seventieth week* does not fit within the limits of the prophecy at all. On that historicist reading, the trouble in Jerusalem is removed from the seventieth and last “seven years.” But Daniel’s vision sees the final and ultimate trouble in Jerusalem as filling up the content of the seventieth “seven.” Finally, after that 70th “seven” expires comes blessed relief forever.

What then is to be expected in the seventieth “seven” ending with the return of Jesus? Before that seventieth week begins, i.e. “after the 69th week,” we learn that the prince Messiah (*maschiah nagid*) is to be “cut off and have nothing” (9:26). That event has been taken traditionally as predicting the now past appearance and sacrificial death of Jesus. Then follows a prediction of an evil person: “The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and sanctuary, and **his end** will come in the flood, and **he** will make a firm covenant with the many for the one week. And for half the week he will cause sacrifice and offering to be suspended, and on the wing of abominations **he** will cause desolation until the **irrevocably determined end** is poured out on the desolator” (9:26-27).

Much depends on the connection of “end” with the evil prince announced in verse 26. My appendix shows the evidence for the right translation as “his end.” As early as 1881 the RV scholars corrected the KJV and many have followed suit. The point here is that the prophecy is not about Titus in AD 70, because Titus did not come to “his end” in that event. But in Daniel 11:45 the evil King of the North does come to “his end” in the Middle East, just before the resurrection of Daniel 12:2. Keil makes our point loud and clear:

The prince who is to come who destroys the city consequently cannot be the Messiah but is the enemy of the people and the Kingdom of God, who shall arise in the last time (affirming 7:24, 25, the final wicked horn)...There thus remains [after his careful examination of alternatives] nothing else but to refer the suffix “his” of “**his end**” (v. 26b) to the prince. “End” (*ketz*) can accordingly only denote the destruction of the prince...The suffix “and **his end** with the flood” refers to the hostile prince whose end is here emphatically placed over against his coming...Preconceived views as to the historical fulfillment of the prophecy [to Titus in AD 70] lie at the foundation of all other references (pp. 360, 363).

Daniel’s prediction of “his end,” the end of the life of the wicked prince, simply will not fit the facts of the Roman invasion in 70 AD. Such was the cry of the futurists of all times.

All this is of the greatest relevance to the prophetic discourse of Jesus and thus of *our* responsibility to be informed and to warn future generations, however long they last, about the real signs of the impending end of the age and coming of Jesus. (I am not impressed with pop internet culture which seeks to turn Obama into Obamination; that is hardly serious Bible study.)

The disciples asked Jesus for a “sign of your coming and the end of the age.” The only visible and definite sign which Jesus offered, after general statements about wars and increased earthquakes and famines, is the appearance of the Abomination of Desolation, as defined not by our own whims, but by Daniel. “When you therefore see the Abomination of Desolation...” The Abomination is a feature of the seventieth “seven” where “he comes desolating on the wing of abominations” (9:27), and later in Daniel 11:31 the abomination is seen taking away the sacrifice. Finally Daniel 12:6, 7, 8, 11 provide just the specific chronological information we need to make sense of the prophecy. When Daniel had had time to recover from the shock of the extended troubling prediction of chapter 11, he asked for specifics on how long the **final phase** (the *acherit*) of the prophecy would last. Here was the answer: The whole brief interview deserves the greatest publicity. Daniel is privy to a conversation between angels. One angel said to the man dressed in linen: “How long will it be to the end of these amazing events?” (12:6;

the “how long” echoes Daniel’s impassioned “how long” of ch. 9). When will all the troubled times be over? It is our cry today also.

Now this most solemn announcement and oath:

I heard the man dressed in linen who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right and his left towards heaven and swore by Him who lives forever, that it would be for a time, times and half a time; as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, *all these events will be completed*. As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord [*adoni*], what will be the outcome, the final phase, of these events?” (Dan. 12:6-8).

The resurrection of those sleeping in dustland (the biblical *Sheol*, *Hades*) had just been announced as the final event of the last phase (12:2). But what about the events just before the resurrection? “From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the Abomination of Desolation is set up, there will be 1290 days” (12:11).⁵ With that amazing prediction Daniel is discharged from his long life as prophet: “As for you, Daniel, go your way to the end of your life; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age” (12:13). He must have died with these words ringing in his ears: “From the time the sacrifice is removed and the abomination of desolation is set up there will be 1290 days.” This is slightly beyond the length of the half week which had been prophesied for the breaking of the covenant by the wicked prince, the last half of the final seven of the seventy “sevens” prophecy.

The statement in Daniel 12:6 runs “and then all these things will be fulfilled.” So familiar were the disciples with this material that they echo those very words: “When will all these things be fulfilled?” (Mark 13:4). It is that critical period of time, the last half of the last seven years which shows up of course in Revelation in much more detail, as 42 months, 1260 days and “time, times and half a time,” showing again how the New Testament treats the seventieth week, and particularly its last half, as prophetic of events not in AD 33, not in AD 70, but in that final period just before Jesus appears in power and glory. This understanding was held by early church fathers too, Irenaeus and others.

According to Jesus the great tribulation would be days in which it would be very hard for pregnant and nursing mothers. It would be a clear breach of common sense to suppose that Jesus was talking about a period of nearly 2000 years beginning in AD 70. Rather Jesus, as he himself expressly says, is quoting from Daniel and there “the great tribulation” (12:1) is a time of trouble connected with the activities of the final wicked King of the North and followed by the great resurrection of all the saints of all the ages, who are currently asleep in the dust but will “awaken to the life of the coming age” (Dan. 12:2).

A remarkable theory arose for the first time in the 1830s in a charismatic setting in the UK at which a lady ventured the idea that the Parousia would in fact not be a singular, spectacular event, but would occur in *two phases*, one secret and unannounced for the purpose of removing Christians to heaven so that they would not have to be on earth when the great tribulation began, and the other seven years later “in power and glory” — a public display by which the wicked would be brought to an end.

The seventieth “seven” was correctly read as future, but the surprise innovation declaring what no one had ever seen before, that Jesus would have a second and third coming (though that language was cleverly not used) caused and continues to cause a storm of conflict and controversy. But is this really so difficult? Had not Jesus plainly declared that he would gather his elect “immediately *after* (post) the tribulation of those days” (Matt. 24:29-31)? Desperate attempts to derail this text which obviously allowed for no pre-tribulation rapture have been a staple diet in much prophecy writing. The strained plea has been that the “elect” in Matthew 24:31 must not be Christians but a special group of Jews who needed to suffer in the Great Tribulation. But by elect Jesus meant the Christian believers: “Many are called but few are elect” (Matt. 22:14). There lurks in this dispensationalist argument about the elect that dangerous tendency to divorce Jesus’ teaching from instruction for us Christians. Jesus was not talking about unconverted Israel as “the elect.”

⁵Note the confusing mistranslation in the Spanish Reina Valera which completely changes the terms of the prophecy, making a gap between the abomination and removal of the sacrifice.

Furthermore Jesus urged the disciples, apostles to flee to the hills when the Abomination appeared in a holy place and that is hardly appropriate if one expects to be removed to heaven by a pre-trib rapture event. But it was Paul who made any theory of a double second coming impossible. It was Paul who writing to the Thessalonians reflected on the present persecution and afflictions of believers. In true pastoral style he promised them relief (*anesis*) from all such suffering and he promised it at a very particular moment of the future. Here are Paul's wonderful words: "relief to you who are suffering, when the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel" (2 Thess. 1:7-8). Paul could not have penned these words if he believed that an event, *not* the appearing of Jesus in flaming fire, would bring about the desired relief from suffering. He simply could not have told his audience to expect relief "at the apocalypse of the Lord Jesus Christ in flaming fire to take vengeance," had he also taught them about the cessation of suffering by removal from the earth seven years earlier.

The sheer desperation of the pre-trib rapture camp which is massive in the USA was brought home to me recently when the editor of a leading pre-trib prophecy magazine felt the difficulty of this text in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8. He attempted a complete repunctuation of Paul. He said that Paul wrote "to you who are suffering now, relief. [new sentence] When the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed..." He assured me that this is what his German translation said. Well, I simply quoted Luther and several modern German versions, none of which even hinted at such a violent interference with Paul's words. Lesson to be learned: we will do almost anything to defend our strongholds! Even when they do violence to the obvious statements of the NT. I suggest that Paul is utterly clear. The end of trouble comes to believers only at the one public manifested arrival of Jesus in power and glory to establish the Kingdom.

Appendix
Daniel 9:26 “HIS END”
A key to understanding

First Moses Stuart, *Comm on Daniel (on the internet)*:

וְקִצּוֹ, *and his end*; whose? The obvious grammatical answer is, the end of the נְגִיד הַבָּא. One need but compare 8: 25, respecting Antiochus: *He shall be broken in pieces without [human] hand*, and to join with this 11: 45, *And he shall come to his end* (עַד קִצּוֹ), *and none shall help him* (וְאֵינְ עוֹזֵר לּוֹ), in order to see how exactly all three of the passages agree. In all, the *end* in question follows the injuries done to the holy city and temple. Manifestly the same personage is concerned. We cannot, therefore, refer קִצּוֹ to *city* and *sanctuary* (Häv.), for the suff. should then be plural; nor to גְּשָׁחִית, i. e. the action of destroying which ends in an overwhelming, (Hengst.). Indeed such an application would probably never have been thought of, had not that interpretation needed its aid, which makes Titus the Roman chief to be the נְגִיד in this case, who is to destroy city and sanctuary בְּשָׂבָתָהּ. But such a construction is incompatible with grammar, and equally so with the parallel passages to which reference has been made above.

New Jerusalem Bible: Daniel 9:26 And after the sixty-two weeks an Anointed One put to death without his . . . city and sanctuary ruined by a prince who is to come. **The end of that prince will be catastrophe** and, until the end, there will be war and all the devastation decreed.

Einheitsübersetzung, 1980: Daniel 9:26 Nach den zweiundsechzig Wochen wird ein Gesalbter umgebracht, aber ohne (Richterspruch). Das Volk eines Fürsten, der kommen wird, bringt Verderben über die Stadt und das Heiligtum. **Er findet sein Ende in der Flut**; bis zum Ende werden Krieg und Verwüstung herrschen, wie es längst beschlossen ist.

(Translation: “He will find his end in the flood”)

French Jerusalem Bible: Daniel 9:26 Et après les 62 semaines, un messie supprimé, et il n'y a pas pour lui... la ville et le sanctuaire détruits par **un prince qui viendra. Sa fin** sera dans le cataclysme et, jusqu'à la fin, la guerre et les désastres décrétés.

(Translation: “...a prince who will come. His end will be in the cataclysm.”)

Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible, 1988: Daniel 9:26 Et après soixante-deux septénaires, un oint sera retranché, mais non pas pour lui-même. Quant à la ville et au sanctuaire, le peuple d'un **chef à venir les détruira; mais sa fin viendra** dans un déferlement, et jusqu'à la fin de la guerre seront décrétées des dévastations.

(Translation: “...a prince to come will destroy them, but his end will come...”)

Bible en Français Courant, 1997: Daniel 9:26 A la fin de ces soixante-deux périodes, un homme consacré sera tué sans que personne le défende. Puis un chef viendra avec son armée et détruira la ville et le sanctuaire. Toutefois **ce chef finira** sous le déferlement de la colère divine. **Mais jusqu'à sa mort** il mènera une guerre dévastatrice, comme cela a été décidé.

(Translation: “However this ruler will come to his end....”)

Above we made mention of the translation in some versions “The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and sanctuary and ITS END will come in the flood” (Dan. 9:26).

Keil (*Commentary on Daniel*) translates, as does RV, Jerusalem Bible, Jewish Publication Society OT, *International Critical Commentary on Daniel, Peake's Commentary* etc., “And HIS end will come in the flood.” The reference is taken to be to *the evil prince* who is to come who destroys the city and sanctuary.

Keil says: “**And his end with the flood.**” “The suffix ‘HIS’ refers simply to the hostile prince whose end is emphatically placed in contrast to his coming (agreeing with Kranichfeld, Hofmann and Kliefoth). **Preconceived views as to the historical interpretation of the prophecy lie at the foundation of all other references.** The

Messianic interpreters who find in the words a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem [in AD70], and thus understand by the *nagid*, Titus, cannot apply the suffix to *nagid* [prince]. Geier, Havernick and others therefore refer the suffix to the city and the sanctuary; but that is grammatically inadmissible, since HA-IR [city] is feminine.” Auberlen and others refer it merely to the sanctuary but the separation of the city from the sanctuary is quite arbitrary.... Thus there remains nothing else than to apply the suffix to the Nagid, the prince. *Ketz* [end] can accordingly only denote the destruction of the prince... the prince will find his end in his warlike expedition.... In 7:21, 26 the enemy of God holds superiority till he is destroyed by the judgement of God... ‘The people of a prince who will come and find his destruction in the flood.’” (*Comm. on Daniel*, p. 363). In other words, translations which avoid the reference to the wicked prince (“his end”) do so because they think that the prophecy ought to refer to the Roman invasion of AD 70. Titus did not come to “his end” in that event.

Keil also maintains that the natural subject of “he will confirm” is the same wicked prince, since the prince who was to come is named last and also the subject of the suffix (*kitzo*, his end), the last clause of v.26 having only the significance of an explanatory subordinate clause.” Kranichfeld: “The reference to ‘he shall confirm’ to the ungodly leader of an army is therefore according to the context and the parallel passages of the book which have been mentioned, as well as in harmony with the natural grammatical arrangement of the passage,” and it gives also a congruous sense, although by the Nagid Titus cannot naturally be understood.” “The first historical fulfilling of Dan 11 in the Maccabean times does not exclude a further and fuller accomplishment in the future and the rage of Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jewish temple and the worship of God can only be a type of the assault of Antichrist against the sanctuary and the church of God in the time of the end.” “Still less from the words ‘whoever reads, let him understand (Matt. 24:15) can it be proved that Christ had only Dan 9:27 and not also 11:31 and 12:11 before his view.” “On these grounds we must affirm that the reference of the words under consideration to the desecration of the temple before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans is untenable.

Now this is no small matter. If the translation “HIS end” is correct, Daniel 9:26 cannot possibly have been fulfilled in AD 70 (the traditional evangelical view), because Titus did *not come to his end* in that episode.

I think that the translation “HIS (not ‘its’) end” is right for these reasons:

1) It is supported by commentaries that deal with the detail of the language minutely (Keil is typical of these).

2) The nearest singular masculine antecedent for the reference his/its end is the *prince* or his people, NOT THE CITY OR SANCTUARY.

3) If the city and sanctuary were meant (and these words are further away), the text should read “their end.” To separate city from sanctuary is very unnatural.

4) The Hebrew HIS END has a *masculine singular* suffix and cannot agree with the city which is feminine, OR WITH THE PLURAL CITY AND SANCTUARY. Keil says rightly that any reference except to the prince is very unnatural grammatically.

5) Most significant of all, the Hebrew word for end (*ketz*) never in 70 occurrences refers to *the destruction of a thing*. It refers to the **end** of a period of time and often to the end of the life, i.e. lifetime, of a PERSON. Even in Daniel alone, 11:45 speaks of HIS END, meaning the end of the final ruler (an obvious parallel with our verse in 9:26). Daniel is told to go to the END (i.e., of his life) in Daniel 12:13. In addition the end of human life is one of the main meanings of KETZ (Jer. 51:13, “your end” = end of your days; Lam. 4:18, “Our end” drew near = our days were finished; Job 6:11, “my end” = end of my life; Ps. 39:4, “my end” = extent of my days; also Genesis 6:13, “the end of all flesh”).

6) ***Brown Driver and Briggs Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible renders “kitzo” as “his end” (p. 893).***

7) Driver in his commentary (*Cambridge Bible for Schools*) renders “his end.”

8) The Jewish Publication Society translation has “his end.”

9) The RV of 1881 altered the mistranslation “end thereof” of the KJV to “**his end**,” putting the latter in the text.

9) From Hungary this comment: “I spoke to a friend who teaches at the Lutheran Theological Academy. According to him **Kitzo means “his end.”** This is the meaning generally accepted by the Hungarian Bible Society. According to a recent translation (1996) we read “But the reigning prince will have the end when the flood comes.” (Ferenc Jeszenszky, 10.28.00).\

10) We have an exact parallel in Dan 11:45 where the final wicked person comes to “his end. (Ketz occurs 15 times in Daniel)

I believe therefore that Keil and Moses Stuart are right when they say that the translation “ITS END,” i.e. the city’s end, is incorrect. The right translation, based on the immediate context (the antecedent is the prince) and the consistent meaning of KETZ which never refers to the ruin or destruction of a thing, but the end of a period of

TIME and especially the end of human life, is “he will come to HIS END [DEATH].” Daniel 9:26 thus refers to a future antichrist.

I maintain, therefore, with many commentators that Daniel 9 26 cannot be a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 since Titus, the leader of the attack, did not come to HIS END in that event. But the evil ruler will come to HIS END (Dan. 11:45) in the holy land just before the resurrection (Dan. 12:2).

For further confirmation I wrote to a distinguished Hebraist, under whose teaching I sat at the University of Jerusalem in 1970. Dr. Muraoka said: “Since the words ‘city and sanctuary’ are of mixed genders [one feminine and the other masculine] it would be difficult to know what the impersonal referent of the pronoun is. I think that the interpretation you propose [his end] is the most obvious.”

I note also the comment in *Lange’s Commentary on Daniel*: “The suffix in ‘his end’⁶ doubtless refers to the prince... The subject of ‘he shall confirm a covenant is beyond all question ‘the [evil] prince,’ which governs the preceding sentence as a logical subject, and is finally included in ‘his end,’ and is the prominent subject of consideration from verse 26b.”

Anthony,

It is funny that you are writing to me in Dutch. You see, I just got to know a Dutch Jewess three months ago with whom I and 5-6 other Christians share Hebrew reading and Christian fellowship once a month. I will ask her what the text says (I myself am not able to translate it).

As for Dan. 9:26

In **two Norwegian Bible translations** (translation of 1930 and 1988) the text reads that the city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed...It says not that the prince will meet his end: "The city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed by the people of a prince who will be coming - and the end of it will be a flood. And until the end there will be war, destruction has been determined."

A **third Norwegian translation** (1978) renders: "The city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed by the army of a coming prince. **He shall end his days in a flood.** The destruction that is determined, shall last until the end of the war."

The Danish 1998 translation (the Danish Bible Company) renders nearly the same and that **the prince will see his end** in a flood: "...and the city and the sanctuary is being destroyed by a prince who will be coming with his army. **He will meet his end** in a storming flood. It is determined that destruction shall continue until the war is over..."

The revised Swedish translation of 1917 (The Swedish Bible Company) - revision of 1997 - has a slightly different rendering: "And the city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed by the people of a coming (in the sense: coming with his armies) prince, but **this (the prince) shall have his end in the storming flood.** And until the end strife shall prevail (i.e. endure, last)."

The New Swedish translation of 1999 (The Swedish Bible Company) renders the verse: "Both the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed **as will the prince** to come. The end will come by a storming flood, and the determined destruction will last even until the end of the war."

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⁶ Strangely, Lange thinks that “his end” means “the end inflicted by the prince” rather than his own death.

70 Weeks Prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27)

HISTORICISM:

7 “weeks” — 49 years

62 “weeks” — 434 years

First arrival of Christ (AD 27)

Death of Christ

AD 34

?

AD 70
 Dan. 9:26a: evil prince destroys city
Dan. 9:26b: complete destruction of desolator

	70 th “week”
3 ½ years	3 ½ years

OR

FUTURISM:

7 “weeks” — 49 years

62 “weeks” — 434 years

Death of Christ (after “62 weeks”)

Sacrifices stop

2nd Coming
 Desolator destroyed

3 ½ years	70 th “week” 3 ½ years
Covenant with Antichrist	WAR to the end