

THE GOAL OF DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS

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Interpreters should hesitate before entering afresh into the exegesis of Daniel's seventy weeks, a passage that has been characterized as "the Dismal Swamp of Old Testament criticism."¹ Yet one particular avenue of approach appears to have been insufficiently explored—namely, the nature of the goal of this 490-year period, as it is stated in the six infinitival phrases of purpose in Dan 9:24, and the relationship of this sixfold goal to the events that are predicted for accomplishing it, as these are elaborated in the three verses that follow (9:25-27). Not that commentators have been unaware of the significance of 9:24 for the total interpretation of the passage; E. J. Young, for example, has written:

The six items presented . . . settle the *terminus ad quem* of the prophecy. The termination of the 70 sevens coincides with . . . the first advent of our Lord.²

And Robert D. Culver has written:

The *terminus ad quem* of the full 70 weeks is . . . not to be found in any event near the earthly lifetime of our Lord. . . . The scope of verse 24's prophecy requires that the last week terminate no earlier than the coming of Christ at the second advent.³

Despite their conflicting conclusions, both writers then lay down important principles for relating the prophecy's goal to the time period that is involved. Culver stresses the unity of God's design for the period in question: "Seventy weeks—it (singular) is decreed" to achieve the goal;⁴ and Young stresses the necessary inclusion of the sixfold purpose within the stated years: "These things are to be accomplished before the expiry of the 70 sevens, although the blessings brought about may continue for long after."⁵ But though rightly stressing the two principles thus stated, neither of the above-quoted writers proceeds actually to correlate the purposes given in v 24 with the specifications that come next. Young, it is true, cites many passages elsewhere in Scripture and makes one allusion to the preceding context of Dan 9:5-11, but he makes none whatsoever to vv 25-27 which follow. The present study seeks, there-

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¹J. A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (ICC; New York: Scribner's, 1927) 400.

²E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel, a Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949) 201.

³R. D. Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days* (Westwood, N. J.: Revell, 1954) 136, 155.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁵Young, *Prophecy*, p. 197.

fore, to examine in the light of their context the meanings that have been proposed for the six purpose-phrases of 9:24, and then to propose a relationship for these six to the content of 9:25-27.

I. THE MEANING OF DANIEL 9:24

It can be said for liberal expositors that they do at least connect the goal of v 24 with the context that they uniformly assume for Dan 9—namely, the ideals of the Maccabean revolt. If we move from the last of the prophet's infinitives to the first (which are felt to be less clear), we find that James Montgomery, for example, understands Daniel's sixth phrase, "to anoint the most holy," as meaning that after Jerusalem's three-year profanation under Antiochus Epiphanes, who is supposed to be specified in v 26, "the holy place is to be reconsecrated" (see 1 Macc 4).⁶ The fifth phrase, "to seal the vision," means that "past prophecy, particularly that of Jeremiah (Dan 9:2), is to be ratified"; next, "to bring in everlasting righteousness" means that "Israel is to be everlastingly 'right' with the Lord," that is, restored and saved;⁷ and "to atone for iniquity" means that God will "treat as covered," will "pardon or cancel," will absolve Israel from its sins of hellenization.⁸

For the first two phrases, liberal exegetes generally follow the critical apparatus of *BHK* and read *l'ē kallē* ('), "to restrain," as if it were really *l'ē kallē(h)*, "to finish (the transgression)," and *lahtōm*, "to seal," with the Qere *l'ē hātēm* (hiphil of *tāmam*), "to complete (the nation's sins)." The sense of these infinitives is one of "filling up the measure of sin," as in 8:23,⁹ and then "to bring the profanation to an end."¹⁰ Montgomery's logic is that all three of the first phrases—"to finish (transgressions)," "to complete (sins)," "to absolve (iniquity)"—must be "used quite synonymously.... The parallelism requires *finishing*.... The parallelism demands the Qere, *completing*."¹¹ As a result, the Seleucid cutting off of Israel's anointed leaders will be terminated at last.

Not all liberal exegetes, it is true, have so simplistic an approach. Arthur Jeffery suggests that the narrower reference of the six infinitives is to "the freeing of the people from Seleucid control and the restoration of the city and temple" but that their broader reference is to "the final consummation."¹² Similarly Norman Porteous emphasizes "the es-

⁶Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 373; cf. pp. 375, 376.

⁷Ibid., p. 373; cf. p. 375.

⁸Ibid., p. 374.

⁹Ibid., p. 373. Aquila, *teleiōsai*, with the Syriac and Vulgate, supports this Qere reading, though Theodotion, *sphargisai*, supports the Kethiv. The Chigi LXX, *spanisai*, "make rare," could have developed from either.

¹⁰A. Jeffery, "The Book of Daniel," *IB* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 6. 494.

¹¹Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 374.

¹²Jeffery, "Daniel," p. 493; cf. p. 494.

Table 1: MEANING OF DANIEL 9:24

	LIBERAL		CONSERVATIVE		
	past (Maccabean): Montgomery, pp. 373-375	"future" consumma- tion: Jeffery, pp. 493-494	future (dispensa- tional): Wood, pp. 248-250	past (classical): Young, pp. 198-201	contextually related to Dan 9:25-27: Payne, pp. 386-387
1a. "to restrain" (<i>l'kallē</i> ['']) (the transgression)			sins restrained "in an all-in- clusive sense" = riddance	sin shut in = no longer regarded as existing	the Prince (25b) restrains Jews, deso- late by their abominations (27c); e. g., "he found in the temple those who were selling . . . and he drove them all out and overturned their tables" (John 2:14-15)
1b. "to terminate" (<i>l'kallē</i> [h])	the profana- tion ended	all outrages over			
2a. "to seal up" (<i>laḥiōm</i>) (sins)		reserving sins for punishment: "grand assize"			those who leave Messiah "with nothing" (26a) will be desolated (26c, 27c); he reserved "Jerusalem to surrounding by armies . . . days of vengeance that all may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20, 22)
2b. "to complete" (<i>l'hātēm</i>)	to fill up the measure of sins		to make an end of sins	end of sins as enslaving	
3. "to atone for iniquity"	Israel to be absolved of hellenizing failures	the wiping out of sin	Christ's propitiating sacrifice	Christ's propitiating sacrifice	Messiah's cutting off (26a) stops sac- rifice (27b); "he takes away the first (rites) in order to establish the second"; "the sacrifice of himself" (Heb 10:9; 9:26; cf. Isa 53:8)
4. "to bring in everlasting righteousness"	the Jews "saved," brought to prosperity	righteousness granted in the messianic kingdom	a turning to God by Israel as a nation with God	the sinner's restored relationship	Christ's new covenant (27a): "now the righteousness of God has been manifested . . . through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Rom 3:21-22)
5. "to seal vision and prophecy"	to ratify it, especially Jeremiah's 70 years (Dan 9:2)	the foretold kingdom fulfilled	the final fulfillment of prophecy	no further prophetic revelation of the OT kind	validation of Daniel's 490-year prophecy of the Prince to come (26b): "all things which are written through the prophets about the son of man will be accomplished" (Luke 18:31)
6. "to anoint a most holy"	the altar reconsecrated (165 B. C.)	the new messianic temple	the restored millennial temple	the most holy Person of Christ = the "anointed"	unto Messiah the Prince (25b): "God anointed him with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:38); "the Christ" is "the holy one of God" (Luke 4:34, 41; cf. 1:35)

chatological event the writer hoped for.”¹³ Jeffery proceeds to spell out these broader implications, both negatively (as found in the first three phrases of purpose) and positively (in the latter three); see the second main column in Table 1. For the first phrase he still prefers the variant reading, “finish,” but he applies this to “outrage on true religion” in general. For the second, however, he feels under no compulsion to emend the consonantal Hebrew text, “to seal up sins” (for one could have a deliberate repetition in the fifth phrase, “to seal,” though there in the sense of “ratifying [prophecy]”). He cites parallel usage in Job 14:17 and Deut 32:34, where to seal up sins means to reserve them for punishment.¹⁴ Montgomery may fulminate that “the use of the same verb in quite different meanings in one verse would be intolerable”¹⁵ —but is this so impossible? With two separate objects that are as different as are “sins” and “prophecy,” the whole procedure could embody an insightful play on words with respect to the divine sealing. As to God’s reserving of sins for punishment, Jeffery insists that “this is precisely what would happen at the grand assizes at the end of time”; contrast in the next phrase Yahweh’s atoning for iniquity in the sense of “wiping out the old score.” The three positive purposes he understands similarly: The “bringing in of righteousness” is an eternal gift from God to men in the messianic kingdom;¹⁶ the “sealing of vision” refers to the ratification in that era of all that the seers had foretold; and the “anointing of the most holy” must refer to the messianic temple (as in Isa 60:7, etc.).

Against this view of “broader reference” conservative interpreters might naturally invoke the previously cited principles of Culver and Young, objecting both that such “broadness” destroys the unity of the passage’s purpose and that it places the accomplishment of at least part of its goals outside the past (supposedly Maccabean) scope of the seventy weeks, removing these to the future. Liberals, however, hasten to respond that the unknown second-century-B. C. writer of Daniel *thought* that the world consummation was imminent; even though “the end predicted did not come,”¹⁷ still—at least as originally intended—the Maccabean past and the messianic future were supposed to have been combined into one seven-year week. But though liberalism can thus in a sense preserve the unity of Daniel’s sixfold goal and keep it within the seventy weeks, the price it demands is far too high in terms of textual emendation and of admitted nonfulfillment. It further proposes that when subsequent Judaism was faced with the realities

¹³N. Porteous, *Daniel, a Commentary* (The Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 141.

¹⁴Jeffery, “Daniel,” p. 494.

¹⁵Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 374.

¹⁶Jeffery, “Daniel,” p. 494, developed from S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel* (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge: University Press, 1912) 136.

¹⁷Porteous, *Daniel*, pp. 141, 144.

of history, the synagogue was forced into a substitute belief, that of "the putting off of the fulfillment";¹⁸ the rabbis are said to have moved the whole prophecy forward, first to Roman and then to Islamic times. And after all, the figure of 490 years from the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the Messiah was based, as liberalism lamely presumes, on a "chronological miscalculation";¹⁹ by a pure coincidence, it did not get used up in Maccabean times anyhow!

What then about the conservative who finds a miraculous correspondence between Daniel's first 69 weeks, up to the Messiah, and the precise 483 years that elapsed between Artaxerxes' decree to Ezra in 458 B. C. (cf. Ezra 7:6-8 with 4:7-23 and Neh 1:3) and the inauguration of Jesus' ministry in the fall of A. D. 26?²⁰ Here arises a messianic consummation that did find fulfillment in history and that does fit the chronology. Conservatives, however, fall into two groups, depending on whether this past achievement is recognized as the full accomplishment of Daniel's hebdomads or whether at least part of the completion of their sixfold goal is viewed as still pending, as represented primarily by dispensationalism's concept of a yet future seventieth week.²¹ The latter view (the third column in Table 1) is exhibited, for example, by Leon Wood in his recent commentary, where he says of the six phrases: "Reference in these first three [or four]²² is mainly to Christ's first coming, when sin was brought to an end in principle. . . . Reference to Jews . . . requires the interpretation to include also Christ's second coming."²³

Specifically, for Daniel's first infinitive of purpose Wood prefers to retain the primary Hebrew reading, *l'e kallē'* ("to restrain"): "There is no reason for changing from the more natural root."²⁴ Many Hebrew MSS, it is true, read *l'e kallē(h)*, but Driver long ago admitted that

¹⁸Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 62.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 393.

²⁰While the present study does not seek to trace the chronology of the seventy weeks, the writer has found no sufficient reason to shift from the datings given in his *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) 96-97 or from J. Finegan's placement of Christ's crucifixion on April 7, A. D. 30 (*Handbook of Biblical Chronology* [Princeton: University Press, 1974], esp. pp. 301-302). He does not feel the arguments of H. Hoehner to be convincing for a redating of Christ's death and resurrection to A. D. 33 as set forth in *BSac* 131 (1974), esp. pp. 41-54, or in R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney, eds., *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974) 115-126. Hoehner's treatment of John 2:20 on the 46 years of Herod's temple and his advocacy of a special 360-day "prophetic year" seem particularly subject to criticism.

²¹Nondispensationalists may occasionally advocate a future seventieth week; cf. J. O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963), 2. 375-380, though historically this theory entered Protestant thought only with the rise of Plymouth Brethren dispensationalism under J. N. Darby in the 1830s; cf. J. B. Payne, *The Imminent Appearing of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 149-150.

²²L. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973) 251.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 249.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 248.

this is "an anomalous form":²⁵ If the infinitive of "to terminate" had been intended, it should have read *l^ekallôt*, and when GKC discusses lamed-he verbs behaving like lamed-alephs (sec. 75 rr) it includes no such infinitival endings in *hê*. Yet having made his point and having refused to emend this part of the text Wood proceeds, without lexical support, to what can only be described as nonliteral exegesis. He defines the sense of "restrain" as equivalent to "be removed . . . with the idea of riddance" and says, "It probably refers to sin in an all-inclusive sense." For the second phrase of purpose Wood adopts the Qere reading, "to complete/make an end of (sins)," especially for "Israel as a nation" at Christ's second coming. For the third, however, he limits the *atoning* to Christ's past work in his death on the cross, as elaborated in v 26. Its historical accomplishment serves to explain, he says, how sins can in the future be brought to an end, so that to this degree at least he can classify the first three phrases of Dan 9:24 as belonging together in one priestly act.²⁶ Its latter three purposes he defines as the "bringing in of righteousness" for Israel in the future, as the "sealing of prophecy" (in the sense of its final fulfillment), and as the "anointing of the most holy" restored, millennial temple.²⁷

The parallels of dispensationalism's interpretation with liberalism's understanding of a "future" consummation (second column of Table 1) are striking. But there exists this major difference: All conservatives are committed to the reality of the future that Scripture predicts—namely, that any remaining unfulfilled elements must yet come true. This, however, raises further problems of its own. While liberalism can shrug off its "consummation" as a false but still contemporaneous and unified Maccabean dream, dispensationally-oriented conservatives must surrender the unity of the sixfold goal of Dan 9:24 and understand its purposes as separate goals (plural). Furthermore, they must surrender the inclusion of the fulfillment of at least some of these six goals within the prophet's stated period of the 490 years. If it be argued (as dispensationalism does) that the consummation of Daniel's hebdomads is still pending and must embrace even a restored millennial temple, then Dan 9:27, with its reference to the final seven years, cannot go with v 26, which locates itself "after the [7 plus] 62 [or 69] weeks." It must still be future and a gap of over 1900 years must be introduced between v 25 and v 27, which would appear to destroy the very point in counting the seventy consecutive weeks.²⁸ Furthermore, if the seventieth week be future, the achievement of v 24's earlier goals, which

²⁵Driver, *Daniel*, p. 135.

²⁶Wood, *Commentary*, pp. 248, 249. Cf. H. A. Ironside, *The Great Parenthesis* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1943) 19: "Israel's transgression will be finished . . . because their Messiah will have made atonement for iniquity."

²⁷Wood, *Commentary*, pp. 250-251.

²⁸Cf. the extended discussion of this point in P. Mauro, *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation* (Boston: Hamilton, 1923) 91-99.

Wood describes as referring "mainly" to Christ's atonement (v 26), falls not in the seventy weeks at all but in the parenthesis that comes after the 69th week (v 25) and before the seventieth (v 27). As Philip Mauro observed, the heart of the sequence must have "happened in an unmentioned gap."²⁹ Culver suggests that "the basis was laid at the death of Christ, but . . . the full effecting comes only at the second coming."³⁰ This, however, brings us back to the question of just what the seventy weeks in their own context seek to effect. It may not be coincidental that the only part of the sixfold goal of v 24 that Wood chose to relate to vv 25-27 was the *atoning* work accomplished by Christ's death—which did occur in the course of the seven years that transpired immediately after Daniel's 69th week.

The other group that appears today within conservative Christian scholarship locates the fulfillment of the seventy weeks wholly in the past at Christ's first coming. It may with fairness be identified as the Church's classical position, because until the rise of sixteenth-century deism and rationalism "the exact terminus of the 70 weeks in the Advent became universal among Christian exegetes."³¹ Yet perhaps this very uniformity in understanding may have contributed to an undesirable levelling of the elements in the sixfold goal of the seventy weeks. Young, for example, combines the first three phrases of v 24 under the negative rubric of doing away with "that curse which has separated man from God."³² Specifically, for the first of the infinitives he insists more strongly than Wood on the predominant reading, "restrain": "The interpretation to *finish* or *complete* does not seem justifiable."³³ Yet the same problem of preserving the literal meaning of the verb crops up once its form has been textually determined. Young quotes with approval the following statement by Hengstenberg, who shifts from one verbal meaning to another: "The sin, which has hitherto lain naked and open before the eyes of the righteous God will now be shut in and hidden by the God of mercy . . . it may be regarded as no longer existing; [it is] a mode of describing forgiveness"³⁴ (cf. Leupold's conclusion that sins "will no longer grow and flourish"³⁵). At one point Young

²⁹Ibid., p. 101. He adds: "Thus, according to this view, the prophecy has been completely falsified."

³⁰Culver, *Daniel*, p. 157.

³¹Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 332; cf. Payne, *Appearing*, pp. 149-150.

³²Young, *Prophecy*, p. 199.

³³Ibid., p. 198. It is true that the verb *kālā*(') occurs elsewhere in Scripture only in the qal and niph'al, not in the piel as here pointed. H. C. Leupold may therefore be justified in a repointing of *l'kālē*(') —not an emendation of the consonantal text—into *liklō*('), with no great change of meaning; *Exposition of Daniel* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg, 1949) 411. Or this piel might constitute a unique denominative form from *kele*('), "prison," with the meaning "imprison, restrain."

³⁴Young, *Prophecy*, p. 198, quoting *The Christology of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1858), 3. 107.

³⁵Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 412.

had recognized a connection between the restraining of the transgression (9:24) and the preceding context (9:5-11) concerning Daniel's confession of Israel's rebellion in exile, but in the end he decides that 9:24 must refer "to all such apostasy and rebellion," which "Christ shut up by . . . His atoning death."³⁶

For the second phrase ("sealing up sins") Young might have retained the consonantal Hebrew text, even if only to express Leupold's idea—based on the usage of "sealing" as found in Isa 8:16—that the sins are "securely locked up, as it were, and not permitted to roam about."³⁷ But instead he adheres to the rendering of the *KJV* on "making an end of sins" (the Qere rather than the Kethiv reading), for he finds this second phrase essentially equivalent to the next one, on Christ's "atoning for iniquity." It is "done away, because the guilt which it involves has been expiated."³⁸

For the remaining three phrases, the classical view as represented by Young differs sharply from both Maccabean liberalism and futuristic dispensationalism. The bringing in of righteousness "is not mere prosperity. . . . It comprises both external and internal righteousness. . . . It is that state of right relationship which comes to the sinner through faith in Jesus Christ." Because v 24's fifth phrase speaks of "sealing" for the Hebraic phenomena of "vision and" (literally) "prophet," he understands this situation as one with "no further need of prophetic revelation in the OT sense."³⁹ His valid interpretation for the nouns in question thus combines with a usage for the infinitival verb that he had rejected as invalid in reference to Daniel's second phrase. As Jeffery says (while withholding his personal commitment): "Some take the meaning 'to seal up' in the sense of 'to stop,' just as above we had a sealing of sin; i. e., once the kingdom has come, the era of prophecy will be at an end."⁴⁰

For the final phrase ("to anoint the most holy") Young says, "The words refer to the anointing of the Messiah."⁴¹ Statistically the expression *qōdēš qēdāšîm*, literally "holy of holies," occurs at 22 other places in the OT and may refer to equipment in the tabernacle (5 times), sacred areas of land, particularly as dedicated to priests (3), sacrifices (2), the priests' portions of the sacrifices (10), and persons (2: Lev 27:28; 1 Chr 23:13, the latter reference being to Aaron the priest him-

³⁶Young, *Prophecy*, p. 198.

³⁷Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 413.

³⁸Young, *Prophecy*, p. 199.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 199-200.

⁴⁰Jeffery, "Daniel," p. 494. Still others invoke the usage of "sealing" in Isa 29:11 for spiritual blindness, so that the passage would be predicting this of Israel's rulers in Christ's day; Mauro, *The Seventy Weeks*, p. 51.

⁴¹Young, *Prophecy*, p. 201.

self⁴²—cf. the generally priestly context of Dan 9:24). A similar phrase employing the definite article, “the holy of holies,” occurs 16 additional times, often denoting the most holy place within a sanctuary. But in all these 38 instances outside of Dan 9:24 there is not a single undisputed reference to a temple building.⁴³ Culver may therefore have been a bit hasty when he asserts that Young “disposes of the linguistic evidence with a single stroke of the pen.”⁴⁴ In point of fact Young does defend his claim by invoking the entire context of Dan 9:24—that is, “the six items presented in this verse are all Messianic.”⁴⁵ He thus appeals, indeed, to Culver’s own principal argument for the unity of the passage’s sixfold goal, “a single unit in the divine determination.”⁴⁶ Culver in turn invokes the preceding context: “It would be exceedingly strange . . . to depart from the usual meaning here in a passage as clearly tied in thought to the rebuilding of Solomon’s temple”⁴⁷ (cf. Daniel’s prayer in 9:17, “Let your face shine on your desolate sanctuary”). Yet strangely enough neither contender makes reference to the *following* context, which constitutes Scripture’s own elaboration on the summary statements of v 24 and to which we must now turn for light that it can shed on this, Daniel’s sixth purpose-phrase, as well as on the five others.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP TO DANIEL 9:25-27

There are two subjects that appear in vv 25-27 that could be related to the concluding words of v 24. One is the allusion in 9:26 to *haqqōdeš*, the rebuilt sanctuary, which is again to be destroyed—a forecast upon whose fulfillment conservatives agree that it was accomplished by Titus in A. D. 70. But this holy building is probably not the intended subject of the *qōdeš q̄dāšim* predicted two verses earlier—not simply because of the omission of the qualifier “most” with “holy” in v 26 but also because, except for a single reference to Moses’ anointing of the wilderness tabernacle (Lev 8:10-11), we have no indication whatever that Israel’s temples were anointed—whether Solomon’s, the second temple

⁴²“To sanctify him as most holy,” though even this passage might be read “for his sanctifying a holy of holies.” But what the “holy” would then be is left contextually undefined, and it appears best to retain the reference to Aaron (contrast Wood’s dismissal of such as “forced exegesis”: *Commentary*, p. 250).

⁴³A debatable passage is Ezek 45:3—contrast the renderings of the *KJV*, “In it [the holy portion] shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place”; *ASV*, “In it shall be the sanctuary, which is most holy”; *Smith-Goodspeed*, “as the most sacred portion of the land.” In the light of Ezekiel’s usage elsewhere (43:12; 48:12), where *qōdeš q̄dāšim* refers to sacred areas of land, it would seem best at this point to relate it to *hammiddā*, “the area” (*NASB*) of the priestly allotment (48:12), rather than to *hammiqdās*, “the sanctuary”; cf. Keil, “This domain, in the midst of which is the temple, is to belong to the priests, as the sanctified portion of the land” (*Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950], 2. 322), and *IB*, 6. 315.

⁴⁴Culver, *Daniel*, p. 157.

⁴⁵Young, *Prophecy*, p. 201.

⁴⁶Culver, *Daniel*, p. 157.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 158.

(either at Zerubbabel's dedication in 515 B. C. or Judas' rededication in 165; cf. 1 Macc 4:42-61) or the future millennial temple. In any event the sanctuary in Dan 9:26, far from receiving a favorable anointing from Yahweh, is destroyed.

The other and more probable subject for relationship with 9:24 appears immediately after the concluding phrase of that verse. 9:25-27 seem, indeed, to exhibit a consistent revelational pattern—namely, that the six elements in the goal of Daniel's seventy weeks are taken up in a generally inverse order (see Table 2). That is, v 25 picks up and develops precisely that verbal root with which v 24 had closed. It had finished "... and to anoint [*māšāh*] a most holy. [V 25 continues:] So... from the decree to... rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah [*māšīāh*, "anointed"] the prince there will be..., etc. This term is repeated in v 26a: "Then after the [7 plus] 62 weeks Messiah will be cut off." The same subject seems to be repeated yet again in 26b, for although "anoint" does not occur the identical qualifying noun, "prince" (cf. v 25), and the same sort of verbal action, "destroying" (cf. the "cutting off" in v 26a), do occur, which seem to identify the same anointed one. The parallelism that this produces suggests that the consonants just before "prince" should be pointed '*im*' ("with," according to one Hebrew MS and the ancient versions),⁴⁸ rather than '*am*', "people." The text then reads literally, "The city and the sanctuary will be destroyed⁴⁹ with the⁵⁰ coming prince" rather than, "The city and the sanctuary will destroy [them]—namely, the people of the coming prince." This reading of v 26b is, confessedly, debated;⁵¹ but all conservatives agree that the first two references to the anointed one, in vv 25 and 26a, predict Jesus the Christ. To no one else could the priestly attribute of "most holy" be more properly applied (cf. Luke 1:35) than to him whom even demons honored, crying out, "I know who you are, the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34), for "they knew him to be the Christ," that is, the "anointed" (v 41); cf. the verses cited in the last column of Table 1.

Just before the anointing the preceding statement of purpose in Dan 9:24 reads "to seal vision and prophet." At this point classical and dis-

⁴⁸For even in those versions marked by conflate readings—Chigi LXX: *basileia ethnōn phtherei tēn polin meta tou christou* and Vulgate: *civitatem dissipabit populus cum duce venturo*—the prince is still object and not the destroying subject.

⁴⁹Reading the verb either niphāl, *yīšāhēt*, "will be destroyed," or retaining the hiphil vocalization, *yāšhīt*, but reading impersonally, "one will destroy," with the same passive effect.

⁵⁰Montgomery's objection (*Commentary*, p. 384) that if the *nagid* were that of v 25 it should have the article is answered by the fact that it has now come to be treated as a proper noun ("Prince"); cf. its modification by the arthrous participle, *habbā'*, and the identical syntax with Messiah in v 25: *māšīāh hannagid*.

⁵¹Though to assume the latter interpretation involves another major difficulty, namely that the people's (i. e., the Romans') prince (who can only be their leader at that time, i. e., Titus; cf. Young, *Prophecy*, pp. 211-212) had not yet in Daniel's day become the subject of a prediction (Zech 11:15-16 is later) so as to be styled "the coming one," nor did he ever—as far as is known—confirm a covenant with Israel, as stated next (Dan 9:27).

Table 2: RELATION OF DANIEL 9:24 TO 9:25-26 AND TO 9:27

v 24: Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city:					1st, to restrain the transgression;
					2nd, to reserve sins for punishment;
					3rd, to atone for iniquity;
					4th, to bring in everlasting righteousness;
					5th, to validate vision and prophecy;
					and 6th, to anoint the most holy.
vv 25-26:	From the decree for Jerusalem's rebuilding	until Messiah, the prince	is 69 weeks. who is to come,	After the 69 (=7 + 62) weeks Messiah will be cut off	and have nothing; and ... to the end of the city, for desolations war is determined.
v 27: And	he	will confirm a covenant with the many for one week.	In the middle of the seventieth week he will put a stop to sacrifice;	and there will be one who to completeness makes desolate, and that which is determined	shall pour on the desolate ... on a wing of abominations.

pensational conservatives unite in asserting that the verb *hātam* must signify some kind of comprehensive "stopping" or "fulfilling" of prophecy. Both then become subject to the same criticism. Dispensationalists have objected to Young's locating of Daniel's seventieth week during our Lord's ministry because "much prophecy pertaining to last days is found in the Old Testament, as well as in the New, and was not fulfilled in Christ's first advent."⁵² But when Culver, for example, quotes Keil on "the shutting up of all prophecy by its fulfillment . . . which will reach completion in the return of the Lord,"⁵³ one wonders if he would follow the latter's amillennialism and include within the seventy weeks such prophecies as those of God's final judgment and of the new heavens and new earth. Even the millennial prophecies, about a restored and righteous land, cannot be fitted into a seventieth week that is correlated with a future but more short-range great tribulation. Far better to follow the lead of (albeit liberal) writers like Montgomery and relate v 24's latter sealing to the ratifying of prophecies—not just of Jeremiah's about seventy years (as stated in the preceding context, Dan 9:2), but not to a ratifying of all prophecy either. The following context makes no such comprehensive allusion, but v 25 immediately after its reference to Messiah does predict a definite period of 483 years (7 plus 62, or 69, "weeks") until his coming. The next verse too, in its revelation of his subsequent destruction, refers to him as Messiah the prince "who is to come" (cf. such Isaianic prophecies of his coming and of his cutting off as 11:1 or 53:8). For when Scripture applies the verb "seal" to communications it conveys the sense of accrediting them (John 3:33; cf. 6:27),⁵⁴ and Daniel's fifth phrase seems to have been elaborated by our Lord himself when he foretold his death: "All things that are written through the prophets about the son of man will be accomplished" (Luke 18:51).

When the next preceding phrase speaks of "bringing in everlasting righteousness," it refers at the least to an "imputed righteousness . . . which God must bring in." Leupold then goes further to define it either as "this righteousness, or the Messiah who accomplishes it";⁵⁵ and Leupold's classical view is seconded by Wood, in his dispensational approach, who says, "When Christ died, He provided . . . for righteousness to be granted. He made the provision of Himself."⁵⁶ Grace of this sort in v 24 relates, therefore, to the objective side of salvation, everlastingly wrought at Christ's first coming, not to its subjective appropriation—whether by the Jews or by others—at his second

⁵²Wood, *Commentary*, p. 250.

⁵³Culver, *Daniel*, p. 158, quoting Keil, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1872) 349.

⁵⁴Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 375.

⁵⁵Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 414.

⁵⁶Wood, *Commentary*, p. 250.

coming. Subsequently Dan 9:25-27 says nothing about the latter matter, but v 27 does contain a major prediction of a covenant that most probably relates to the former, to objective salvation.

Here one must pause to identify another revelational pattern that appears in Dan 9:24-27—namely, that of repetition with elaboration. Dispensationalist writers strongly defend their hypothesis of a major gap between the 69th and the 70th of Daniel's seven-year weeks because "the 70th week is not picked up for mention till verse 27," and because the 69th week had ended in v 25, and because v 26 extends over forty years beyond this point, down to the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. So if "the contents of verse 27 are subsequent and consequential in relation to verse 26,"⁵⁷ a gap of some sort would seem unavoidable. Yet just two verses earlier, Dan 9:25-26 cannot be taken as subsequent to 9:24; instead vv 25-26 pick up (repeat and elaborate) the summary of the entire seventy weeks given in v 24. Even so v 27, on the 70th week, would appear to pick up (in the sense of repeating and elaborating) not simply the summary fact of this week's existence as stated in v 24 but also the summary identification of its chief event as stated in v 26—i. e., the cutting off of Messiah. For when v 26 is said to come "after the [7 plus] 62 weeks," what could be more naturally assumed than that it concerns the 70th week? That v 27 thus repeats v 26 is recognized by interpreters of every (nondispensational) stamp⁵⁸ and is confirmed by the verbal correspondences that appear, particularly in the last parts of the respective verses. Both speak, for example, of the completeness of the city's "end,"⁵⁹ of its "desolations," and of its suffering and warfare that is "determined" (see Table 2). These phrases hardly suggest two separate situations.

But then turning to the first parts of 9:26 and 27, one finds in v 27 precisely that elaboration of the chief (messianic) event of v 26 that explains the fourth purpose-phrase of v 24—namely, how eternal righteousness is to be brought to God's people. Its elaboration is that he (Messiah the prince who is to come, v 26) will confirm a covenant with the many.⁶⁰ For while neither history nor Scripture can document a

⁵⁷Culver, *Daniel*, p. 149. He particularly stresses the *wāw*-consecutive-plus-perfect with which v 27 commences, yet he seems to overlook the similar construction of the *wāw*-conjunctive-plus-imperfect that introduces v 25 and which he does *not* treat as subsequent to v 24.

⁵⁸Whether liberal (Montgomery, *Commentary*, pp. 381, 385; cf. titles) or conservative (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 431).

⁵⁹One might refer v 26c to the prince of 26b reaching "his end" (NASB margin) rather than to the sanctuary and "its end." But then 27a could obviously not be subsequent to 26c, and one is back to the principle of repetition.

⁶⁰Dan 9:27 adds "for one week," which confirms the initially stated application of the seventy weeks to Daniel's people and city, i. e., Israel and Jerusalem. It was to them that Christ's three and one-half years of earthly ministry were directed (Matt 10:5-6; 15:24), A. D. 26-30, the first half of the 70th week; and it continued to be to them that the everlasting gospel was first sent (Acts 2:14), until they drove the early Church from Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) after an additional three and one-half years, in what appears to have been A. D. 33 (see Payne, *Encyclopedia*, p. 388 [cf. Rev. 12:6, 14], or C. Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel* [London: SPCK, 1923] 195-199).

covenant made (let alone "confirmed")⁶¹ by Antiochus the Greek or by Titus the Roman (or by the eschatological antichrist), history and Scripture combine to find their unification and meaning in Yahweh's everlasting covenant (see Dan 9:4; 11:28, 30; etc.), which was confirmed by one in the first century who, before he was cut off, said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is to be shed on behalf of the many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:28) and which, as the apostle adds, was designed to provide "the righteousness of God through faith in . . . his blood" (Rom 3:22, 25).

To move forward from Dan 9:25 into 9:26 brings one into an explanation for the prophet's three phrases of purpose in the earlier part of 9:24. These had concluded with an "atoning for iniquity." Even commentators who fail to see the person of the Messiah in Dan 9 recognize this event as "the wiping out of the old score that had been piled up by iniquity."⁶² Again a dispensationalist such as Wood, despite his preference elsewhere for fulfillments that are still future, sees here "a clear reference to Christ's crucifixion"; and he cites as confirmation the words in 9:26 of "Messiah cut off."⁶³ What Wood fails to see, however, is this purpose's further confirmation by the words in 9:27, the second line of which goes on to explain that "in the middle of the [70th] week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering." It is here that God's method for the atoning is brought forth—i. e., by the fulfilling, and therefore by the terminating, of the anticipatory sacrificial system of the OT. As stated in Heb 10:9, "He takes away the first in order to establish the second" by the better sacrifice of himself. Accordingly when Christ died "the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matt 27:51), the final atonement having been accomplished.

Though most commentators recognize when Scripture applies the verb "seal" to sins that the resulting phrase conveys the sense of sealing them up, of reserving them for punishment, many seem to have felt compelled by one of the following two reasons not to accept such a meaning in Dan 9:24. First, they feel they must keep its opening three statements of purpose as parallel as possible. Yet Boutflower has proposed alternatively: "The first three clauses grow ever stronger till they reach a climax. Sin is first held back, then bound and confined, and lastly done away with . . . by atonement being made."⁶⁴ In-

⁶¹Wood, *Commentary*, p. 259, argues for the rendering "make a firm covenant," but without lexicographical support; contrast BDB, *hiphil* of *gabar*, p. 149, "confirm a covenant"; KB, p. 168, "prevail;" cf. Young, *Prophecy*, p. 209. Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 385, sounds less than compelling when, though acknowledging the meaning "confirm, maintain," he surmises, "There is no intrinsic objection to the translation of the verb, 'make strong.'"

⁶²Jeffery, "Daniel," p. 494.

⁶³Wood, *Commentary*, p. 249.

⁶⁴Boutflower, *In and Around Daniel*, p. 183.

deed, within these purpose-phrases one might plausibly find a pattern not of threes but of twos: In the initial pair God opposes the Jewish leaders, first restraining and then sentencing their sin; in the next pair he provides for the salvation of his Church, making atonement and bringing in righteousness; and in the third pair he accomplishes the incarnate ministry of his Son, validating messianic prophecy and anointing Jesus as the holy one in whom he is well pleased. A second reason lies in the fact that the purpose of "reserving sins for punishment" might seem, as Wood says, to be "an idea foreign to the text of the rest of verse 24."⁶⁵ Yet punishment is the very point that is stressed in the explanatory context that follows, especially in the latter parts of both vv 26 and 27. The city and the sanctuary will be destroyed, coming to an end with accompanying desolations; and v 27 adds the instrumentality, that there will be one who makes desolate (i. e., Titus), who will appear and accomplish complete destruction. Yet significantly both of the verses also indicate that behind the catastrophe lies God's prior decree: The war is determined (v 26) and that which is determined will be poured out (v 27). For although the city's punishment occurred historically in A. D. 70, some 37 years after the completion of Daniel's weeks, still the reserving for punishment, the decree for sealing up Judah's sins, was promulgated by our Lord's sentence of doom when he said, "All these things shall come upon this generation (Matt 23:36)";⁶⁶ and this he uttered in the midst of the 70th week.

Question might yet arise, however, about the sealed-up sins which the purpose-phrase of 9:24 places within the 490-year period. Are they explained in the larger context of Dan 9? Indeed they are. The subject of Daniel's whole opening statement (9:4-19) is the national sins of Israel; and Porteous, despite his orientation, properly refers this section "not only to the wickedness of Antiochus, but also to the rebellion of Israel. Daniel's prayer of confession must be taken in all seriousness."⁶⁷ In the verses that follow 9:24 Israel's failure toward God is further suggested by the fate that lies in store for their Messiah (v 26), for it is said, "He will have nothing."⁶⁸ Young explains, "This is a very forceful way of setting forth His utter rejection . . . [specifically by His own people, for] 'We have no king but Caesar,' cried the Jews."⁶⁹ Boutflower thus summarizes the relationship of v 26 to

⁶⁵Wood, *Commentary*, p. 249.

⁶⁶Cf. vv 37-38: "O Jerusalem, who kills the prophets . . . behold, your house is being left to you desolate"; or Luke 21:20-22; 23:28-31; 1 Thess 2:15-16.

⁶⁷Porteous, *Daniel*, pp. 140-141.

⁶⁸The *KJV* rendering, "and not for himself," has rich connotations of vicarious sacrifice and would accord well with the purpose-phrase "to atone for iniquity"; but from the viewpoint of language, it appears "highly unlikely," *ibid.*, p. 143. Young (*Prophecy*, p. 207) does, however, develop to some degree the implications of the *RV* reading by concluding, "He had nothing, nothing but the guilt of the sin of all those for whom He died."

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

the second purpose-phrase of v 24—both in respect to its prediction of judgment pronounced, “the sealing up of sins” (within the 70th week), and in respect to its prediction of what follows, the judgment accomplished, that they were “reserved for judgment” (outside the seventy weeks, as their historical epilogue)—when he says:

It is most natural to look upon v. 26b as describing the judgment to be inflicted because of the great national crime foretold in v. 26a. Even before that crime was committed, its punishment was invoked by the multitude: “All the people answered and said, His blood be on us and on our children,” Mt 27:25 . . . which led to the final overthrow in A.D. 70.⁷⁰

As the explanatory elaboration of Dan 9:25-27 moves back through the sixfold goal initially summarized in v 24, the first phrase, “to restrain the transgression,” is finally taken up at the close of v 27. There the fate determined against Judah’s city and sanctuary is said to “be poured out upon *šômēm*” (“the desolate,” *KJV ASV*; or, in *šômēm*’s most frequent usage and as it is here defined by KB, “the appalled, awestruck” [in the face of desolation, divine judgment]).⁷¹ The *RSV*, it is true, reads “on the desolator” as in 8:13; 12:11 (thereby denoting Titus).⁷² But since the standard transitive form for “desolator” (cf. 11:31) occurs just six words earlier,⁷³ it would appear that the normal intransitive meaning should be retained here at the close of the verse (cf. 9:18, 26). Moreover, the party that is foreseen as being desolate and appalled by divine judgment can be none other than Daniel’s people and city, which are the subject of his entire revelation of the seventy weeks. The very fact that their desolate status is prophetically determined indicates in itself a restraining of transgression (cf. v 24). But then what is “the transgression”? The Hebrew term is *pešā*, the language’s strongest word for rebellious conduct. In the following context, moreover, the most closely corresponding term is *šiqqûšîm*, “abominations,”⁷⁴ again appearing in the last line of v 27. Yet the meaning of this part of the line—“and upon the wing of abominations will come a desolator”—is one of the most disputed in the entire passage and is by no means certain under any approach. Liberal critics regularly resort to conjectural emendation so as to reintroduce the expression of 12:11, *šiqqûš šômēm*, “abomination that desolates/causes horror.” This in turn is probably a contemptuous surrogate for *ba’al šāmēm*, “the lord [Zeus] of heaven,” with which Antiochus would some day attempt to profane the sanctuary in Jerusalem (see 8:11-13). Montgomery proceeds to render 9:27c: “In its [the sacrifice’s] place will

⁷⁰Boutflower, *In and Around Daniel*, p. 195.

⁷¹KB, p. 988.

⁷²An abbreviated form of the polel participle, *m^ešômēm*; KB, p. 989.

⁷³Though critics here regularly emend *m^ešômēm* into *šômēm*, “desolator,” as well; Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 388.

⁷⁴Cf. the interchange of these two nouns in 8:13 and 12:11.

come the abomination that causes horror.”⁷⁵ Retaining, however, the Hebrew text (and the non-Maccabean interpretation!), one must still choose between two basic understandings that depend on whether the “wing of abominations” is related to the desolator or to the desolate. If it be the former, one might understand, with Driver: “The foe will come . . . riding upon a winged creature which is the personification of the forces and practices of heathenism”⁷⁶—though this would have little connection with v 24’s idea of restraining the transgression. Titus and the Roman forces under the idolatrous “eagles” of his legions were not restrained. If it be the latter and the abominable practices be those of the desolate, then the expression of vengeance coming “upon [Heb. *’al*] the wing of abominations” would parallel the final phrase about that which is determined being poured “upon [again, *’al*] the desolate.” The “wing” would correspond to the second temple’s *pterygion* (Matt 4:5; Luke 4:9), “extreme tip” (diminutive), or to some other “accessible elevation, like the top of a portico.”⁷⁷ The abominations⁷⁸ would then be explanatory of v 24’s opening reference to the transgression, and the use in the latter phrase of the Hebrew definite article would seem to have been designed to direct the reader back to Daniel’s preceding prayer, particularly vv 5-11, with its repeated acknowledgment of Israel’s sins, iniquity and persistent rebellion. How these sacrileges were intensified in the months immediately antecedent to Jerusalem’s fall to Titus is made all too clear by Josephus’ accounts of the zealots, who “polluted the temple of God” and made “the house of God full of many abominations”;⁷⁹ cf. Christ’s anticipation of “the abomination of desolation that was spoken of through Daniel the prophet [a quotation of Dan 9:27] standing in the holy place” (Matt 24:15). But such abominations had been an object of concern during his earthly ministry forty years earlier as well. And it is not simply that they thereby fall within the compass of Daniel’s seventieth week, but also that they are known

⁷⁵Montgomery, *Commentary*, pp. 386-388.

⁷⁶Driver, *Daniel*, p. 142. Liberal writers think of Antiochus IV’s Baal Shamem, “which is commonly pictured on monuments as an eagle” (Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 499). Conservatives think naturally of Titus and his troops under their idolatrous standards. Indeed, since our Lord’s allusion to Dan 9:27 in Mark 13:14 (Matt 24:15) is paralleled and explained by his words in Luke 21:20 (“when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand”) “this seems to make it plain that ‘the abomination of desolation’ refers to the forces gathering for the war that would destroy Jerusalem” (O. Root, ed., *Standard Bible Commentary, Matthew* [Cincinnati: Standard, 1967] 197). In this case the “holy place” (Matt 24:15) occupied by the abomination would be the environs of Jerusalem.

⁷⁷Elaborated by Montgomery, *Commentary*, p. 387. No historical support, however, exists for his attempt then to combine this architectural meaning with the “desolator-approach” to the abominations. The most he can assert is that “*we may suppose* [italics mine] a heathen image . . . set up by Antiochus upon the gable of the porch of the temple.” Such an attempt also fails to meet the conditions of Mark 13:14, something that Christians could observe so as to flee Jerusalem before A. D. 70.

⁷⁸Plural, and therefore not necessarily to be identified with one particular item of sacrilege such as Antiochus’ profanation in 11:31 and 12:11.

⁷⁹J. W. 4.2.1; 4.3.10; cf. Boutflower’s discussion and listing of references (*In and Around Daniel*, pp. 199-202).

to have been repeatedly restrained by him (cf. Dan 9:24). We may think of specific acts, such as when the Messiah exercised his priestly power and twice cleansed the temple: at the beginning of the seventieth week (John 2:15-17) and again at its midpoint (Mark 11:15-17). Or we may think of comprehensive acts of divine sovereignty: Concerning his passion he predicted, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:31-32; cf. Rev 12:5, 9, on Satan's being cast down at this time); or concerning Pentecost he foresaw that the Holy Spirit would "convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment . . . because the ruler of this world has been judged" (John 16:8, 11)—even though this restraining gospel would be denied further hearing in Jerusalem after about A. D. 33 (Acts 9:1) at the close of Daniel's 490-year period. Yet so often conservative interpreters of both the classical and dispensational viewpoints have missed these historical fulfillments of the first stated purpose of the seventy weeks—i. e., to restrain the transgression.

Recently the author's view on Dan 9 was faulted by a leading dispensational interpreter, who stated: "Payne spiritualizes these prophecies and does not expect literal fulfillment."⁸⁰ The first part of this criticism is most charitably understood as being simply the critic's way of saying that he disagrees with the present writer's interpretation. But the latter half contains this much validity: Payne really is not looking for their fulfillment—he believes it can be demonstrated from the immediate context of Dan 9 that they are already literally fulfilled and have been for over 1900 years. Such a realization, however, does not mean that Daniel did not prophesy about the great tribulation, or the antichrist, or about a second coming of Messiah the prince in the clouds and with great glory. The prophet did! But the point at which he did this must be determined on the basis of the book's larger context. Daniel's visions, recorded in the latter half of his volume (chaps. 7-12), are four, each of which commenced in the seer's own time: The first (chap. 7) is his comprehensive survey of world history and it concludes with the eschatological events just cited. The second, third and fourth visions are not comprehensive but concern specific aspects of the first. Chapter 8 refers to Medo-Persia and Greece (8:20-22, explicitly) up to 165 B. C.; chap. 9 refers to Christ's first coming and to Rome up to A. D. 70; and it is the fourth vision (chaps. 10-12) that goes on to tell of Armageddon, the first resurrection and the final judgment (11:45-12:3). But the third vision's time limit of seventy hebdomads, or 490 years, comes down to the first century and to the first century only. This is the meaning of their sixfold goal, as expressed in 9:24—if one accepts the literal meaning of the verse (without resorting to emendations or variant readings), if one maintains the unity of their goal (not of goals, millennia apart), and if one recognizes their accomplish-

⁸⁰J. F. Walvoord, "Posttribulationism Today," *BSac* 133 (1975) 119.

ment within the seventy weeks (not in a gap between them, or after them). And it is validated, as is no other view, by the relationship of these six purpose-phrases to the further explanation given by the prophecy itself in 9:25-27.