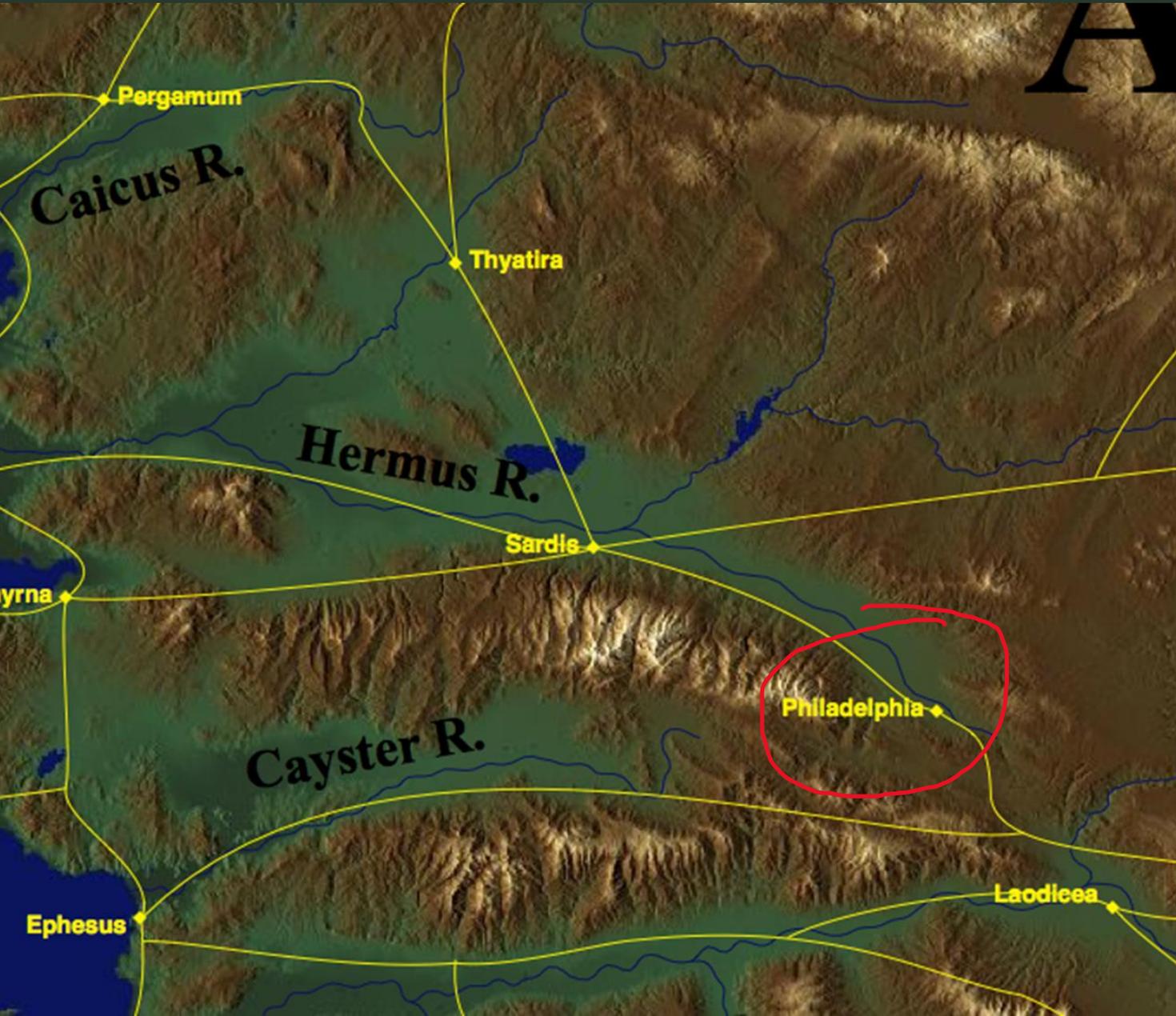


The Call to Overcome Weariness (Pt 2)

Revelation 3:7-13

“Gateway to the East”



Earthquakes



The Call to Overcome Weariness (Pt 2)

Revelation 3:7-13

Galatians 6:7-9

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Ecclesiastes 8:11

Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil.

Galatians 6:7-9

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.**

Big Idea- We draw strength to endure the cost of following Jesus by believing and remembering the promises of God.

- 1) A Relevant Description of Christ
- 2) Christ's Assessment of His Church
- 3) A Promised Reward

Big Idea- We draw strength to endure the cost of following Jesus by believing and remembering the promises of God.

- 1) A Relevant Description of Christ**
- 2) Christ's Assessment of His Church
- 3) A Promised Reward

John 14:6

No one comes to the Father except through me.

Big Idea- We draw strength to endure the cost of following Jesus by believing and remembering the promises of God.

- 1) A Relevant Description of Christ
- 2) Christ's Assessment of His Church**
- 3) A Promised Reward

Daniel 4:35

He does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and **none can stay his hand** or say to him, "What have you done?"

Genesis 50:20-21

As for you, you meant evil against me, but **God meant it for good**, to bring it about **that many people should be kept alive**, as they are today.”

Revelation 1:9

I, John, your brother and partner in **the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance** that are in Jesus,

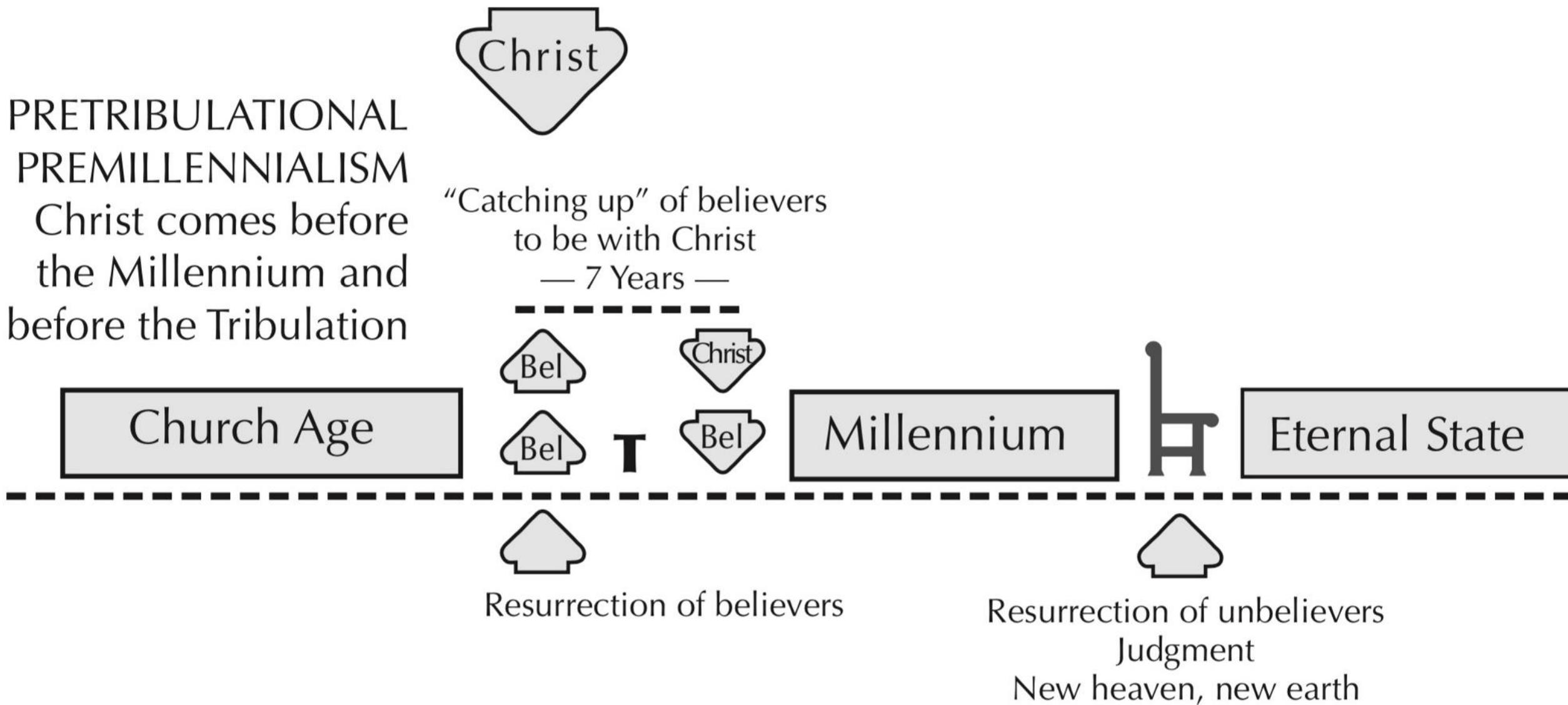
1 Corinthians 1:26

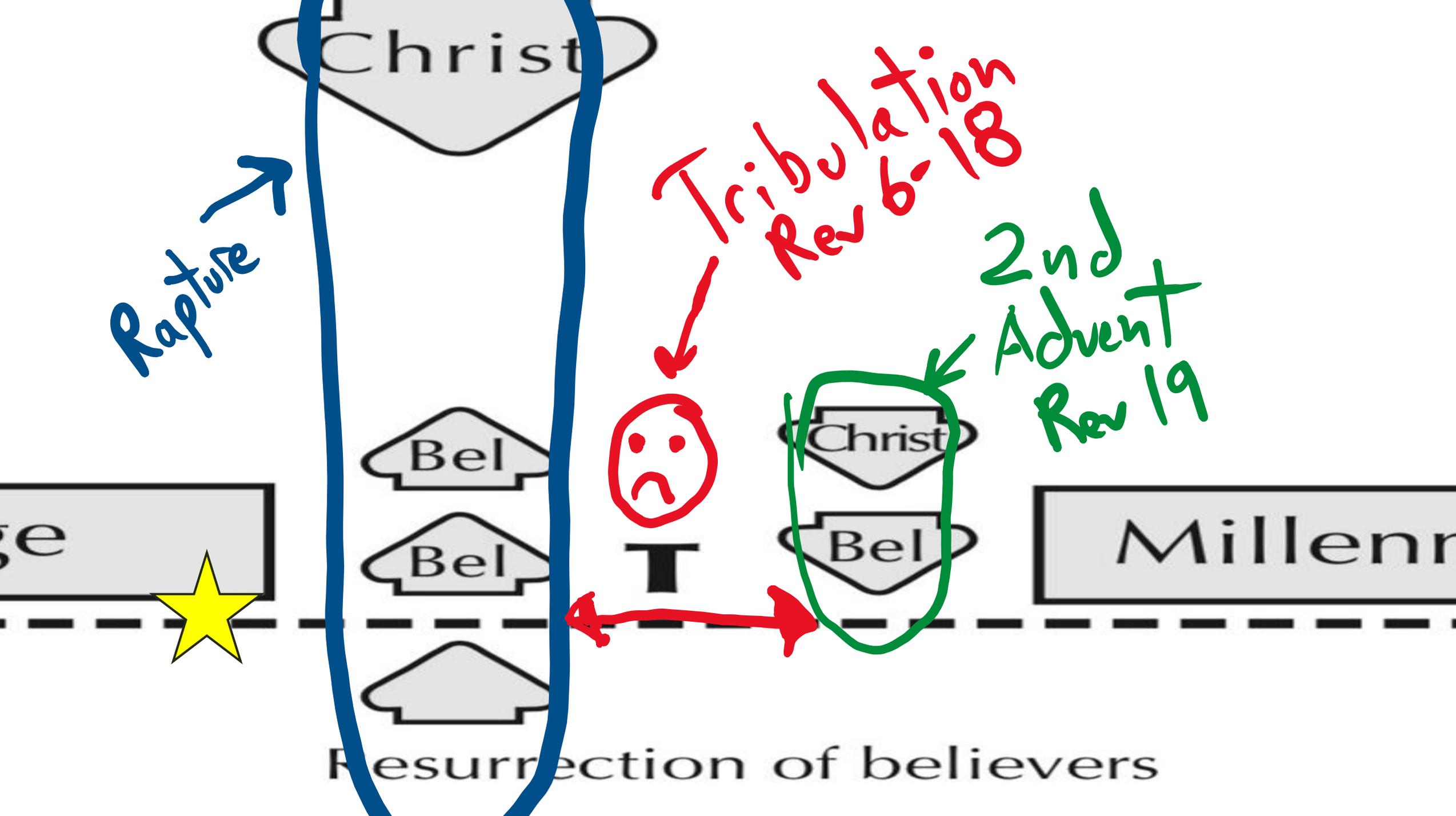
For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to **meet the Lord in the air**, and so we will always be with the Lord.

PRETRIBULATIONAL
PREMILLENNIALISM
Christ comes before
the Millennium and
before the Tribulation





Revelation 2:10

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

John 17:15

“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you **keep them from the evil one.**”

John 17:15

“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you **keep** them **from the evil one.**”

Revelation 3:10

“I will **keep** you **from the hour of trial.**”

John 17:11-12

And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, **keep them in your name**, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, **I kept them in your name**, which you have given me. **I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost** except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

John 16:33

In the world you will have tribulation.

1 Peter 4:12

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

John 10:28-29

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Daniel 9:26-27

26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. 27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Daniel 9:26-27

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Revelation 1:9

I, John, your brother and partner in
the tribulation

Luke 2:1

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that **all the world** should be registered.

Acts 11:28

...Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be **a great famine** over **all the world** (this took place in the days of Claudius).

Philippians 2:12-13

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Big Idea- We draw strength to endure the cost of following Jesus by believing and remembering the promises of God.

- 1) A Relevant Description of Christ
- 2) Christ's Assessment of His Church
- 3) A Promised Reward**

Psalm 27:4

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DECREED: A MODIFIED ROMAN
INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 9:24-27

An Exegetical Paper

Presented to

Dr. James Hamilton Jr.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for 20220WW

by

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SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DECREED: A MODIFIED ROMAN INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 9:24-27

Shortly after the Persian empire conquered Babylon in 539 BC, an exiled Jew named Daniel cried out to God to bring restoration to his people. The answer given to this prayer by means of the angel Gabriel is one of the most enigmatic and debated passages in the Old Testament (OT). Interpretations of the passage are so varied that Montgomery referred to its history of exegesis as “the Dismal Swamp of O.T. criticism.”¹ This paper will cautiously venture into that deep swamp, arguing for a modified understanding of the “Roman” interpretation that views the seventy week restoration of God’s people coming in four stages, culminating in the Parousia and the new heavens and earth. To support this thesis I will (1) make a contextual argument in favor of the traditional Roman interpretation, (2) summarize the traditional Roman view, and (3) propose a modification to the Roman interpretation’s understanding of the last week.

An Argument for the Roman View

In this section I will seek to establish the Roman interpretation of the seventy weeks as the soundest. To do this, I will first provide a brief overview of the main Christian interpretations of the seventy weeks. Then I will make a case for the Roman interpretation by considering the context of Daniel 9.

¹ James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927), 400.

A Brief Survey of the Dismal Swamp

Interpretations of Daniel 9:24-27 could be compared to fingerprints, no two are exactly the same but they often share common features. Based on these shared features, Hill sorts Christian interpretations into two main camps: (1) a “messianic” approach which sees the vision being fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah and (2) the “Antiochene” approach which focuses on “the restoration of Jerusalem during the Persian period, and the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV Epiphanes during the Hellenistic era.” He points out these two camps can be further subdivided between (1) those that understand the time periods of the vision to indicate a literal chronology and (2) those that take the time periods symbolically.² Ulrich broadly classifies these two subdivisions of the “messianic camp” as (1) the dispensational view and (2) the Roman view. Dispensationalist typically argue that the sixty-nine weeks represent 483 “prophetic years” between Nehemiah’s mission (Neh 2:4-6) and the coming of Christ.³ An indeterminate gap (i.e., the church age) is believed to exist between the Messiah’s death and the last week. When this “parenthesis” of the church age is complete, the seventieth week will begin bringing seven years of great tribulation which culminates in the millennial kingdom. Contrary to the rigid literalism of this view, the Roman view often sees the sixty-nine weeks as a symbolic period of time, running from Cyrus’s decree to rebuild the temple (2 Chr 36:22-23) until Jesus’s death.⁴ The seventieth week is believed to immediately follow Christ’s death and is most often understood to describe the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome in AD70.⁵

² See Andrew E. Hill, *Daniel*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel-Malachi*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 173.

³ A “prophetic year” is a year that is 360 days long. Steinman writes, “Proponents of this supposed prophetic year claim support from Revelation, where 1,260 days appear to correspond to forty-two months, yielding exactly thirty days for each month (Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5; cf. Rev 12:14).” Steinman goes on to note the shaky exegetical ground of this scheme for “there is no evidence in Scripture for the use of such years outside of Revelation, and Revelation itself is probably using time periods symbolically.” See Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 460–462.

⁴ There are some in the “Roman camp” who interpret the seventy weeks literally, running from a declaration made by Artaxerxes until the public ministry of Christ. For an example see Robert J. M. Gurney, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (1981): 29–36.

⁵ For a more detailed summary of these views, see Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, Tyndale Commentary 23 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 191–197; Dean R. Ulrich, “The Need for More Attention to Jubilee

Context, Context, Context

Within its literary context, the vision of seventy weeks is seen to be an answer to prayer made by Daniel in 9:3–21.⁶ The instigating force for this prayer was Daniel’s awareness that the seventy year exile prophesied by Jeremiah was to end with the fall of Babylon (9:2; cf. Jer 25:11-12; 29:10). Additional contexts for the vision of seventy weeks (and Daniel’s prayer), include Daniel’s prior experience, the rest of the OT, and the interpretation of redemptive history provided by New Testament (NT) authors. By looking at these contexts, I believe the Roman view emerges as the firmest exegetical ground to stand on in the Dismal Swamp.

Daniel’s Five Kingdom Structure. Three other visions are recorded in Daniel prior to the vision of seventy weeks (Dan 2, 7, 8). Collectively, these visions foretold the events of four world kingdoms. The first three kingdoms are identified in Daniel as Babylon (2:38), Medo-Persia (8:20), and Greece (8:21; cf. 10:20). While the fourth kingdom is never named, it is generally assumed by conservative commentators to refer to Rome.⁷ Particularly troubling to Daniel was the revelation that a little horn would rise up in both the third and fourth kingdom who prevailed in trampling God’s people (7:21; 8:9-10). But it was not to last, for in the days of that fourth kingdom, a fifth kingdom would be established forever—God’s righteous kingdom (2:31-35, 40-45; 7:11-14, 17-18, 26-27). In light of Daniel’s awareness of this, it seems highly probable to me that his prayer for restoration from exile included God establishing this fifth

in Daniel 9:24-27,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 26, no. 4 (2016): 481–500; Richard S. Hess, “The Seventy Sevens of Daniel 9: A Timetable for the Future?,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 21, no. 3 (2011): 315–30.

⁶ Duguid writes concerning Daniel’s prayer, “This prayer is the context in which the vision comes to Daniel, a context that has often been overlooked in interpreting the vision.” Iain M. Duguid, *Daniel*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing Company, 2008), 162.

⁷ In order to delay the arrival of God’s kingdom until the eschaton, dispensationalists argue the fourth kingdom (Rome) is prolonged until the eschaton. They do this by assigning symbolic meaning to the ~~unmentioned~~ toes of the statue in Dan 2. For a refutation of this interpretation see Steinmann, *Daniel*, 56–57. Those holding to an Antiochene view see the fourth kingdom as some expression of Greece. This view is held by many nonconservatives who argue for a late date of Daniel and discount predictive prophesy. See Hill, *Daniel*, 68–70. I find the Antiochene view unconvincing on two grounds in particular. First, a close reading and comparison of all of the visions does not allow for Antiochus to function as the fourth beast, but rather only as the little horn on the third beast (8:5-9, 21-23; cf. 7:6). Secondly, the redemptive perspective of the NT is that God’s kingdom was inaugurated in the days of the Roman empire which fits with the plain reading of Daniel’s visions (Mark 1:15).

kingdom, which is clearly presented in the NT as being inaugurated by Christ in the days of the Roman empire (Matt 4:17; 12:28). The restoration provided by the Maccabees, which the Antiochene view sees as the culmination of the seventy weeks, hardly fits the description of an “everlasting kingdom” (7:27 ESV) ruled by one who is seated at the right hand of the Ancient of Days (7:13-14; cf. Luke 1:33; Heb 1:3).

The Book of Jeremiah. As mentioned above, the impetus for Daniel’s prayer was his realization that one of the stipulations in Jeremiah’s prophecies had been met for Israel’s return out of exile, namely that the Babylonian empire had recently fallen (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10; Dan 9:1).⁸ The other stipulation was for God’s people to cry out to him in heartfelt prayer, which Daniel set about doing immediately (Jer 29:12-13; Dan 9:3-20; cf. Lev 26:31-42; Deut 4:27-31; 30:1-5; 1 Kgs 8:46-51).⁹ Daniel’s prayer for restoration, based on Jeremiah’s prophecies, most certainly included a request for a physical return to the land and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its sanctuary. The vision promises this restoration would occur, being completed at the end of seven weeks (Dan 9:25).¹⁰ But as Daniel read Jeremiah, he would have been aware of other promises that far exceeded a mere physical restoration to the land, promises which pointed to a second exodus that surpassed the redemptive blessings of the first (Jer 16:14-15; cf. Deut 30:5).¹¹ The days were coming when God was going to make a new covenant with Israel which was

⁸ Dan 9:1 identifies Daniel’s prayer as occurring “in the first year of Darius.” Opinions differ on the identity of this Darius. Steinman provides a strong argument for identifying Darius with Cyrus king of Persia who is mentioned in 2 Chr 36:22-23. See Steinman, *Daniel*, 290–296. Baldwin cuts through the ambiguity and gets at the heart of the matter as it relates to Jeremiah’s prophecies: “Whatever the identity of Darius, the writer has in mind the first year of the Persian empire, 539 BC, and referred to in Ezra 1:1 as the first year of Cyrus king of Persia.” Baldwin, *Daniel*, 182.

⁹ It is striking how much the structure of Dan 9 parallels the prophesy Jer 9:10-14. The chapter opens by stating that Darius the Mede was reigning in his first year, implying Babylon’s recent fall (Dan 9:1; cf. Jer 29:10). Daniel, perceiving that this condition for restoration had been met, then responded by seeking the Lord in prayer (Dan 9:3-19; cf. Jer 29:12-13) and God answered by sending a word of restoration — the seventy week vision (Dan 9:23-27; cf. Jer 29:14).

¹⁰ See Steinman, *Daniel*, 472; Baldwin, *Daniel*, 189; Duguid, *Daniel*, 169.

¹¹ See Duguid, *Daniel*, 163.

superior to the one that led to exile. It would be a covenant marked by a changed heart, complete forgiveness of sins, and the knowledge of God filling the land—the very things Daniel was pleading for (Jer 31:31-33). This glorious restoration would see the promised king from the line of David on the throne, who would save Judah and make Jerusalem dwell securely (23:5-6; 33:15-16). While not explicitly stated in the text, Duguid comes to a conclusion that is all but certain: “Daniel was praying for the fulfillment of these promises.”¹² Once again these promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ — the king of David who established the new covenant (Matt 1:1; Luke 1:33; 22:20; Acts 5:31). Unless one narrowly boils Daniel’s prayer (or God’s response to him) down to include only physical restoration, nothing in the Greek period could come close to fulfilling all of the restoration promises in Jeremiah.

Sabbatical Years and the Year of Jubilee. Many commentators have observed that the significance of “seventy weeks” can only be understood in light of sabbatical year cycles and the year of jubilee (Lev 25).¹³ The seventy year exile mentioned in Daniel 9:2 is explicitly stated in Scripture to relate to the sabbatical years (2 Chr 36:20-21; cf. Lev 26:34-35). The mention of another “seventy” in 9:24 establishes a connection between the vision and the exile, but the multiplication of a week (i.e., seven) to the vision shifts the focus from the sabbatical year to the jubilee year. The jubilee began on the Day of the Atonement after “seven weeks of years”(Lev

¹² Duguid, *Daniel*, 163. In his section on the contemporary significance of Dan 9, Longman rightly acknowledges that the “concept of the covenant reaches its culmination in the teaching of Jesus.” But Longman goes on to contrast Daniel’s looking back to the Mosaic covenant with the new covenant proclaimed by Jesus. I do not think this dichotomy is warranted. It is much better to say that Daniel was looking back to the Mosaic covenant *and* looking forward to the promised new covenant. Temper Longman III, *Daniel*, New International Version Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 220.

¹³ Wacholder writes, “Daniel never uses the term jubilee directly, but his numbers can be only understood in the light of Lev. 25:1–23, which gives seven sabbaticals as the maximum time of sanctioned bondage.” Ben Zion Wacholder, “Chronomessianism: The Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 46 (1975): 201–18. For a clear treatment of this subject that I found to be particularly convincing see James M. Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation Through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 41–49. See also Ulrich, “The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24–27,” 481–500; Hill, *Daniel*, 168. Steinman rejects the idea that the seventy weeks relates to the jubilee because the word “Sabbaths” is missing from the passage (Dan 9:24; cf. Lev 25:8; 26:34–35). I find this overly demanding of the prophesy, especially considering that the concept of “Sabbaths” is associated with the seventy year exile in Dan 9:2 despite the absence of the word. See Steinman, *Daniel*, 459–460.

25:8). On that day Israel was to sound a trumpet proclaiming liberty throughout the land. Daniel's seventy weeks (i.e., 490) then are the "ultimate tenfold jubilee" symbolizing complete freedom from bondage and full restoration to the land.¹⁴ Supporting this assertion is the description in 9:24 that the seventy weeks will bring liberation from sin's power and guilt, arguably the greatest source of bondage plaguing humanity.

This jubilee symbolism is problematic for the Antiochene view, for while the Maccabean period might be described as a foretaste of jubilee restoration, it falls far short of the six redemptive accomplishments of the "tenfold jubilee" listed in 9:24.¹⁵ Jubilee symbolism, combined with the failure of any interpreter to provide a convincing historical chronology, also points us away from the literal interpretation of the numbers which characterize the dispensational hermeneutic.¹⁶ Further, I am aware of no interpreter who views the seventy weeks as literal "weeks", and the word "years" in 9:2 is notably absent in 9:24.¹⁷ Context best supports that the seventy weeks symbolically point to Jesus Christ (i.e., the Roman view) whose first recorded sermon in the Gospel of Luke declared fulfillment of the jubilee (Luke 4:16-21; cf. Isa 61:2).¹⁸

¹⁴ Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 125.

¹⁵ As Gunsey notes, "'Everlasting righteousness' was certainly not brought in by the Maccabees!" Gurney, "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27," 31.

¹⁶ Ulrich writes, that the dispensational "attention to precise chronology... strains to make the math work and belittles the symbolic value of sevens and its multiples throughout the Bible, especially in apocalyptic literature." Ulrich, "The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27," 493. Longman summarizes the problem with a literal interpretation succinctly: "Attempts to correlate these years, understood as 490 years, with the date of Antiochus Epiphanes, Jesus Christ's first coming, his second coming, or any of the countless other special redemptive events that have caught interpreters' attention, have been unpersuasive to any but a few devoted followers." Longman, *Daniel*, 214. For a summary of the various attempts of interpreting the seventy weeks literally see Steinman, *Daniel*, 459-462. See also his critique of the literal hermeneutic espoused by dispensationalists on 53-54.

¹⁷ Dispensationalists assert that since the seventy weeks are related to the seventy years, the word "years" is implied. But this does not solve the dispensationalists problem, for as Baldwin points out, "There are various ways of reckoning the years of exile, none of which comes exactly to seventy years." Baldwin, *Daniel*, 183. See also Hess, "The Seventy Sevens of Daniel 9," 323. Hill suggests that the "'seventy years' of Jerusalem's 'desolation' (v. 2c) may be a round number used symbolically to represent a normal human life span, a lifetime (cf. Ps 90:10; Isa 23:15)." Hill, *Daniel*, 160.

¹⁸ "In Christ, our jubilee trumpet has sounded, and the victory over sin and tribulation has been won."

Cyrus's Decree. Second Chronicles 36:22-23 records that, in the first year of his reign, Cyrus king of Persia made a proclamation for the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, thus ending the exile (cf. Ezra 1:1-4). This proclamation has three points of contact with Daniel 9 which make it the most likely start of the seventy weeks. First, Daniel's prayer, the word that went out (9:23), and Cyrus's proclamation all occur in the first year of the Persian empire.¹⁹ Next, Cyrus's proclamation is said to fulfill Jeremiah's prophesy regarding the end of the seventy year exile (2 Chr 36:20-23), the very thing Daniel was praying for. Lastly, the content of Cyrus's proclamation matches the word that goes out in Daniel 9:25 to "restore and build Jerusalem."²⁰ Based on this contextual evidence, we can be confident that the *terminus a quo* (i.e., starting point) of the seventy weeks was in the first year of the Persian empire, either with Cyrus's decree or the decree sent by God in response to Daniel's prayer.²¹ The Antiochene view often argues for a *terminus a quo* prior to Cyrus's reign, while the dispensational view argues for a *terminus a quo* after Cyrus during the reign of Artaxerxes.²² It is primarily the Roman interpretation that holds to the *terminus a quo* that flows most naturally out of the context of Scripture — Cyrus's decree.

Duguid, *Daniel*, 171. I believe the contextual argument I have presented (i.e., Daniel's five kingdom structure, the new covenant promises of Jeremiah, and the jubilee symbolism) is a sufficient rebuttal to Ulrich's claim that the Roman view "too quickly reads the OT in view of the NT and does not take the time necessary to understand the OT in its grammatical (or literary) and historical contexts." He further accuses adherents of the Roman view of having a "redemptive-historical method" rather than a "grammatical-historical method." Ulrich, "Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27," 491. In response, I would simply point out that preferring a less plausible explanation simply because it does *not* resort to NT revelation is as much (or more in light of Luke 24:27) a violation of the grammatical-historical method as forcing Jesus into the text.

¹⁹ See footnote (8) above for discussion on the identity of Darius the Mede in Dan 9:1.

²⁰ While rebuilding Jerusalem is not explicitly mentioned in the decree in 2 Chr 36, it is implied in Hag 1 and prophesied in Isa 44:28: "[The LORD] says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purposes'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'" Against overwhelming contextual evidence, dispensationalist make a firm distinction between the temple and the city so that the seventy weeks can begin during the reign of Artaxerxes. As Ulrich notes, the motivation for this is undoubtedly "a strong desire to pinpoint the exact date of Jesus's death, and the *terminus ad quem* of the 69th seven then dictates the *terminus a quo* of the 70 sevens." Ulrich, "The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27," 493.

²¹ The emphasis in the book of Dan on God's sovereignty over the nations makes it difficult to discern whether the decree in 9:25 is from God or Cyrus.

²² For a summary of proposed start dates see Steinman, *Daniel*, 468-471; Ulrich, "The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27," 481-500.

A Summary of the Roman View

Having made my contextual argument that the traditional Roman interpretation is the firmest ground in the Dismal Swamp, I will now summarize the content of Daniel 9:24-27 from that perspective. Following this summary, I will consider a weakness of this interpretation which I will then address in the final section of the paper.

Six Redemptive Accomplishments (9:24)

The seventy weeks were to bring about six redemptive accomplishments, all of which were fulfilled by life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.²³ Sinclair Ferguson summarizes the first four accomplishments succinctly: “[Christ] came to die for our sins that through Him we might die to sin and be raised to a new life of righteousness (Rom. 6:2,18). It is because these things have been accomplished by Him that grace reigns ‘through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord’(Rom. 5:21).”²⁴ For the fifth accomplishment, it is understood that Jesus seals “both vision and prophet” either by (1) fulfilling all the prophets had predicted thus *authenticating* that their message was from God (Luke 24:27; 2 Cor 1:20) or (2) closing the canon of Scripture as God’s final and perfect revelation (cf. Heb 1:3).²⁵ The final accomplishment, “to anoint the most holy” (NASB) points to Jesus being both God’s Messiah (John 4:25-26) and the true temple of God (Matt 12:6; John 2:21;4:21-26).²⁶

²³ See Sinclair B. Ferguson, *Daniel*, The Preacher’s Commentary 21 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 201–202; Steinman, *Daniel*, 465–468.

²⁴ Ferguson, *Daniel*, 201. Hamilton has a slightly different take on the first two accomplishments (i.e., “to finish the transgression” and “put an end to sin”). He presents a strong argument that they refer to a set amount of transgression that will occur before sin is ended (along the lines of the statement in Gen 15:16 that “the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete”; cf. Dan 8:23; 1 Thes 2:16). Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 51, 117–118, 126–127.

²⁵ Ancient documents were sealed to authenticate who they were from. The act of sealing a document would also prevent any further writing. Many commentators affirm either image may be in view in the expression “to seal both prophet and vision”, most believe “authentication” is primarily in view. See Hill, *Daniel*, 170; Baldwin, *Daniel*, 188; Duguid, *Daniel*, 165; Longman, *Daniel*, 211–212.

²⁶ The expression “to anoint a most holy” could refer to the temple or an individual based on OT usage of the words (cf. Ex30:29-30; 1 Chr 23:13; Ezek 43:12). Once again, Baldwin is helpful in cutting through the ambiguity: “In 539 BC concern was centered on the holy place in Jerusalem, and the rededication of the temple was not excluded, but the Lord’s anointed was ultimately to be a man (Matt. 12:6, ‘a greater thing than the temple is here’, RV mg.) who was the subject of ‘vision and prophet.’” Baldwin, *Daniel*, 188.

The First Sixty-Nine Weeks (9:25-26a)

The first sixty-nine weeks is broken up into two distinct periods of time — seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.²⁷ Steinman contends, “The ‘seven weeks’ refer to the period of the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of its temple to the completion of Jerusalem’s walls by Nehemiah in 445 BC.”²⁸ The city Daniel prayed for would be “built again, with plaza and moat,” but it would be “times of distress” as the book of Nehemiah attests (9:25).²⁹ Sixty-two weeks later (sixty nine total from Cyrus’s decree) Jesus the Messiah arrives and is “cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of [God’s] people”(Isa 53:8 ESV; cf. Mark 8:30-31; 9:31-32; 10:32-34,45). Despite protests from Peter, when the hour for darkness came, Jesus would “have nothing”, being abandoned all (Matt 26:30-34, 56; John 16:32).³⁰

The Last Week (9:26b-27)

Interpretations of the last week vary greatly. Most see the destruction of “the city and the sanctuary” in 9:26b to refer to Jerusalem’s destruction by Rome in AD 70. Opinions are divided on who the prince and his people are. One view argues that the “prince” (NASB) is Jesus and the “people” are the Jews. In this view, the Jews are generally thought to have brought the destruction upon themselves through their rejection of the Messiah. The “covenant” in 9:27 is taken to be the new covenant that Jesus established. He is also the one who puts an end to sacrifice by offering his perfect final sacrifice on the cross (Heb 10:1-14, 26). As far as the

²⁷ An *athnach* (a Hebrew accent) at the end of the phrase “seven weeks” in Dan 9:25 could be interpreted either as a period or a comma. If it is treated as a period (e.g., ESV rendering) two Messiahs are likely in view, with the one in 9:25 coming after seven weeks. However, most translations favor a softer break between the “seven weeks” and “sixty-two weeks” (e.g., NASB, CSB, NIV, KJV, NET; cf. ESV notes) which would imply that the Messiah comes at the end of sixty-nine weeks. Those who hold to the Roman view land on both sides of this issue. For further discussion see Steinman, *Daniel*, 471–472.

²⁸ Steinman, *Daniel*, 472. Hamilton has a significantly different take, asserting the seven weeks runs until the conclusion of Malachi’s prophetic ministry. Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 131.

²⁹ Ferguson, *Daniel*, 202. Hamilton identifies the “troubled time” as the intertestamental period where there was no prophetic guidance. Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 131.

³⁰ See Steinman, *Daniel*, 447. He points out the phrase “have nothing” has no subject and simply means “nothing/no one belongs to him.” He concludes that “when the Messiah is ‘cut off’ he possesses or owns nothing and is completely abandoned by everyone.”

abomination that makes desolate at the end of the vision, Duguid contends that it “is nothing other than the crucifixion of Christ, the rejection and cutting off of God’s appointed Messiah.”³¹ Ferguson has a different understanding. He believes 9:27b describes in more detail the events of 9:26b, both of which refer to Titus’s destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.³²

Another school of thought holds that the “prince” is an antichrist type figure (possibly Titus or Hadrian) and “his people” is a reference to the Roman army. The covenant in this view is an unholy one established by a foreign power. The abomination of desolation is thought to point ~~to point either~~ to Rome’s destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 or AD 135.³³

A Critique

While some advocates of the Roman view hint that the seventy weeks will not be complete until the Parousia, the emphasis is clearly placed on Christ’s first coming.³⁴ While this is certainly warranted for the third jubilee accomplishment in 9:24 (“to make atonement for iniquity”), the first coming of Christ is presented in the NT as only inaugurating the other accomplishments, not completing them.³⁵ Ulrich writes, “There is an ‘already-not yet’ quality to Christian living that the advocates of the Roman view would surely affirm in other contexts but seems to be absent in their reading of Dan 9:24-27.”³⁶ The NT’s portrayal of Christians as being “in exile” in this world supports Ulrich’s point (Heb 11:13). Like Daniel, God’s people today remain in Babylon, awaiting the sound of the jubilee trumpet (1 Cor 15:52; cf. 1 Pet 5:13).

³¹ Duguid, *Daniel*, 173.

³² Ferguson, *Daniel*, 203

³³ See a summary of this view in Steinman, *Daniel*, 453–454, 474–476.

³⁴ See Steinman, *Daniel*, 475; Baldwin, *Daniel*, 197. Hamilton is explicit in seeing the seventy weeks lasting until the Parousia. See Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 131–133.

³⁵ For example, while the NT declares that Christians are dead to sin (Rom 6:2,18), it also states the fight against sin will not be over until the Parousia (Rom 8:23; 1 John 1:8).

³⁶ Ulrich, “The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27,” 481–500.

A Modification of the Roman View

In light of the “already-not yet” tension in the NT, I propose a modification of the Roman view that takes the tenfold jubilee accomplishments in 9:24 as being inaugurated in Christ’s first coming and consummated at his second. The structure I propose for understanding the seventy week vision is as follows:

1. The first seven weeks conclude with the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. This restoration from physical exile is but a foretaste of the redemption God will accomplish at the end of the seventy weeks.
2. The sixty-two weeks conclude with Jesus, the anointed prince, being cut off to establish the new covenant which will last the entirety of the final week.
3. The first half of the final week ends with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. This time period will follow patterns of persecution which characterized Antiochus Epiphanes’s reign in Daniel 8 & 10-12.
4. The last half of the final week culminates in the consummated jubilee as Jesus returns in glory to defeat the Antichrist, who is once again patterned after Antiochus Epiphanes.

If these divisions are correct, the following parallel structure can be seen in the divisions:

- A The first half of the sixty-nine weeks (i.e., seven weeks) ends with the rebuilding of Jerusalem and sanctuary.
- B The last half of the sixty-nine weeks (i.e., sixty-two weeks) ends with Jesus Christ—the temple’s replacement—being cut off in his first coming, inaugurating the tenfold jubilee.
- A’ The first half of the last week ends with the destruction of Jerusalem and sanctuary.
- B’ The last half of the last week ends with the second coming of Christ, who consummates the tenfold jubilee by cutting off the Antichrist and establishing the final temple—the new heavens and earth.

Since this proposed structure is largely in agreement with the traditional Roman view for the first sixty-nine weeks, I will focus the defense that follows on the events of the last week. I will support my proposed structure with four claims: (1) the covenant established in 9:26 is the new covenant which lasts the entire interadvental period; (2) that in the middle of the last week Jesus put an end to sacrifice and the Jews destroyed “the city and the sanctuary”; (3) half of a

week (or three-and-a-half) symbolically points to a “quality of time” characterized by the “little horn” pattern first established by Antiochus Epiphanes; and (4) the last half of the week runs from the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 until the Parousia.

The New Covenant in My Blood

As articulated above, many in the Roman view identify the “firm covenant” (9:27; NSAB) with the new covenant. Ulrich points out a dilemma however for those who see a fulfillment of the seventy weeks prior to the Parousia: “If...this covenant is the covenant of grace, surely...this covenant remains in effect beyond the first-century AD.”³⁷ I agree with Ulrich’s observation and therefore assert that if the new covenant is in view (and I believe it is) then the last week should naturally be seen as lasting the entire interadvental period. I will now present a defense that the new covenant is in view in 9:27.

Messiah the Prince. The Roman view asserts that “Messiah the Prince” (9:25) and the “Messiah” who is cut off (9:26) are both references to Jesus. As mentioned above, opinions differ whether the “prince who is to come” in 9:26 is Jesus or a new individual. The use of the same Hebrew words for “Messiah” and “prince” in 9:25 and 9:26 does not mandate, but certainly supports that the same individual is in view. The connection is made surer however, by the wording of the Messiah’s death. The Hebrew word translated “cut off” is used throughout the OT to describe the act of making a covenant (Gen 15:18; 1 Sam 20:16; 2 Kgs 11:17;17:35; 1 Chr 11:3; Ezek 17:13). Ferguson states the word is also used to “describe violent penal death (cf. Lev 7:20).”³⁸ In other words, it was the cutting off of the Messiah at the end of the sixty-ninth week that established the strong covenant at the beginning of the seventieth week. This fits with NT revelation which links Jesus death with the establishment of the new covenant. Nowhere is this made more explicit than Jesus’s own words at the last supper: “This cup which is poured out

³⁷ Ulrich, “The Need for More Attention to Jubilee in Daniel 9:24-27,” 490.

³⁸ Ferguson, *Daniel*, 202.

for you is the new covenant in My blood” (Luke 22:20//Matt 26:28; cf. Acts 8:32-35; Eph 1:7; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

The Immediate Context. Commentators who argue that the covenant in 9:27 is an unholy one, enacted by a foreign power, often focus on the context provided by the visions in Daniel 7, 8, and 10–12.³⁹ While the context from those chapters should not be ignored, I agree with Duguid that the immediate context of Daniel’s prayer ought to guide our interpretation here.⁴⁰ As argued above, Daniel’s prayer for restoration included a desire for the establishment of the new covenant which would bring the forgiveness he desired for his people. In a vision that is ultimately about jubilee fulfillment, it seems natural then to see the covenant mentioned in 9:27 as an answer to Daniel’s prayer. This is supported by the fact that the Hebrew word for “covenant” is always used in a positive sense in Daniel to refer to God’s holy covenant (9:4; 11:22,28,30,32).⁴¹ Daniel resorts to other Hebrew words to describe political alliances which do not involve God (i.e., “alliance” in 11:6, 23; “agreement” in 11:6; “terms of an agreement” in 11:17 ESV).

Common Descriptions. One final indicator that the new covenant is in view is the description of the covenant in 9:27. Steinman notes that the word used to denote the covenant participants (i.e., “many”) is used five times to designate the “beneficiaries of the Servant’s sacrificial atonement and resurrection” in Isaiah (Is 52:14, 15; 53:11,12).⁴² The same language is used in the NT to describe Christ’s beneficiaries (Mark 10:45; Rom 5:15), most notably in the

³⁹ See Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 120. Hamilton’s argument is primarily in reference to the city being destroyed, which I will address below.

⁴⁰ See Duguid, *Daniel*, 171.

⁴¹ The only use of the word “covenant” where it is debatable whether God is one of the parties is in 11:22. Steinman claims this too is a reference to God’s covenant. He makes this claim based on the four other references to the covenant in the passage (11:28,30[twice],32) and the mention of the small nation in 11:23 (which is most likely a reference to Jerusalem and Judea). Steinman, *Daniel*, 526–527.

⁴² Steinman, *Daniel*, 449.

last supper proclamation that Christ's blood was poured out as a "covenant" for "many" (Mt 26:28//Mark 14:24).

The reference to the covenant being "firm" (NASB) or "strong" (ESV) also fits with the description of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-33 and Jesus's declaration that "all the Father gives me *will come* to me" (John 6:37; emphasis mine).⁴³ The new covenant is a strong covenant, compelling obedience through a changed heart (Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:26-27) and overcoming every obstacle (Rom 8:35-39).

Son of Man with Everlasting Dominion

While identifying the new covenant in 9:27 may be, as Hamilton puts it, an "attractive understanding," many fail to be convinced because of the two other implications of identifying Jesus with the prince. These implications are that (1) the Jews, not Rome, destroyed Jerusalem and the sanctuary and (2) that Jesus was the one to put an end to sacrifice and offerings. It is natural to take these two events together (and to refer to the events of AD 70) since the destruction of the sanctuary would necessarily put an end to sacrifice and offering.⁴⁴ Hamilton raises three main objections to these implications: (1) that it "departs from the picture seen in Daniel 7, 8, and 10–12...of a foreign attacker cutting off sacrifice and trampling the sanctuary;" (2) that it is "difficult to account for how, or why" the Messiah's people would destroy city and sanctuary; and (3) that the natural reading does not support the people of the prince provoking

⁴³ Baldwin states that the description of the covenant as strong "has the implication of forcing an agreement by means of superior strength." This leads her to the conclusion that the prince is "the enemy of God's cause." Baldwin, *Daniel*, 191. But as I have argued above, her description is equally valid of the new covenant, though the agreement is "forced" through a changed heart wrought by God rather than threats of violence.

⁴⁴ Many, such as Duguid, argue that Jesus put an end to sacrifice when he died on the cross. He writes, "Since the final sacrifice that atoned for the transgression of the many had now been offered, there was and is no further need for the temple in Jerusalem. As soon as Jesus died on the cross, the Jerusalem temple was functionally obsolete." Duguid, *Daniel*, 172. While Duguid's argument is certainly true theologically, I agree with Longman's assessment that the events in 9:26-27 portray destructive actions, rather the positive ones. Longman, *Daniel*, 213.

destruction of the city, but actively destroying it.⁴⁵ In this next section I will support that Jesus is the prince in 9:26-27 by answering these objections.

Which Context is King? In his book *With the Clouds of Heaven*, Hamilton notes that there is a “little horn” pattern that reoccurs in the third and fourth kingdoms (7:8; 8:9). The little horn of the third kingdom, Antiochus Epiphanes, is described in 8:11-13 as desolating and trampling the sanctuary, causing the burnt offering to cease. Another reference to Antiochus in 11:31 has even more parallels with 9:26: “Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall take away the regular burnt offering.” Because of these strong parallels, Hamilton believes a foreign attacker must be in view in destruction described in 9:26.⁴⁶

In response, I first would point out that it is only the Antiochene view that believes 9:26 refers to Antiochus. In other words, even Hamilton only believes the passages repeats a pattern that does not have to exactly replicate events. The fact that Antiochus never destroyed Jerusalem or the temple is a prime example that there can be significant departures in the pattern. Second, assuming that a foreign power must be the agitator fails to acknowledge the paradoxical twist that occurs when the new covenant replaces the old. Unbelieving Jews become the “gentile dogs” (Phil 3:2) who crucified Christ (Acts 2:22-23) and persecute the true Israel (Acts 13:50; Rom 9:6; Gal 3:29; Eph 2:11-21).⁴⁷ Under the new covenant, the situation is no longer ethnic Israel against all the nations; so I see little grounds for assuming a foreign (i.e., non-Jewish) power is an essential element to the little horn pattern.

⁴⁵ Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 120–121.

⁴⁶ Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 54–55, 120–121.

⁴⁷ Another example of this is found in Rev 3:9. In a great twist of irony, Jesus reverses the apparent roles of OT prophesies and promises the church of Philadelphia that the Jews will bow before them (cf. Is 45:14; 65:14).

Once again, I would point us to a more immediate context than the visions in Danial 8 and 10–12, namely the context of Daniel’s prayer. It is notable that in the prayer, culpability for the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC is placed squarely on Israel. No foreign powers are mentioned. They were exiled “because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against [God]” (9:7; cf. 9:5-6,8,10-16). It is noteworthy that Jesus and Josephus also lay the blame upon Israel for Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70.⁴⁸

Where Did the Messiah Go? Hamilton argues that the “prince who is to come” (NASB) cannot be the Messiah because the Messiah is cut off in 9:26a.⁴⁹ I believe a solution to this dilemma is found in Daniel 7:13-14. That passage describes “one like a Son of Man” coming on “with the clouds of heaven” to “the Ancient of Days” where he is given “an everlasting dominion” over “all the peoples, nations and men of every language.” In relation to historical events, that passage functions as a sequel to Jesus’s ascension on a cloud recorded in Acts 1:9. The Messiah being cut off in Daniel 9:26 did not remove him from the picture, rather it led to his exaltation (cf. Matt 28:18; Phil 2:8-11). The cut off Messiah was *alive* and had total sovereign dominion over the Jewish nation *and* Rome when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70. It is in this sense that I understand Jesus putting “a stop to sacrifice and grain offering” in “the middle of the week” (9:27).

This perspective has strong contextual support in Daniel. The entire book shouts from the rooftop that God is sovereign over the nations. This truth permeates Daniel’s prayer in 9:4-19 which repeatedly asserts that God is the sovereign agent who brought about the destruction of

⁴⁸ During the triumphant entry, Jesus predicted Jerusalem would be destroyed “because you did not recognize the time of your visitation” (Luke 19:41-44). Josephus also placed culpability for the destruction in AD70 on the Jews. He wrote concerning the Jewish zealots: “They occasioned the fulfilling of those very prophecies belonging to their own country; for there was a certain ancient oracle of those men, that the city should then be taken and the sanctuary burnt, by right of war, when a sedition should invade the Jews, and their own hand should pollute the temple of God. Now while these zealots did not [quite] disbelieve these predictions, they made themselves the instruments of their accomplishment.” All translations of Josephus’s *Bellum judaicum* follow the translation in Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. A. M. William Whiston, 2 vols, (London: Bohn, 1862) *B.J.* 4.6.3.

⁴⁹ Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 119.

Jerusalem and the sanctuary, thus putting an end to the morning and evening sacrifice (9:7,12,14,16). It is fitting then, that in the next destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary, the son of man seated at the right hand of the Ancient of Days is portrayed as the sovereign agent of destruction. History was to repeat itself. The first destruction of Jerusalem was an expression of God's judgment on his people for their sin, and so was the second.

Who Destroyed Jerusalem? The last objection made by Hamilton that needs addressed is that the use of active verbs, rather than reflective ones, does not support the people of the prince merely provoking destruction of the city, but actively destroying it.⁵⁰ In response, it is not stretching the historical records to state that the Jewish zealots had a very active role in destroying the city and temple. An extended quote from Telushkin's summary of the events from 66–70 AD is warranted in order to demonstrate the difficulty in assigning active blame for Jerusalem's destruction:

The highly embittered refugees who succeeded in escaping the Galilean massacres fled to the last major Jewish stronghold—Jerusalem. There, they killed anyone in the Jewish leadership who was not as radical as they. Thus, all the more moderate Jewish leaders who headed the Jewish government at the revolt's beginning in 66 were dead by 68—and not one died at the hands of a Roman. All were killed by fellow Jews.

The scene was now set for the revolt's final catastrophe. Outside Jerusalem, Roman troops prepared to besiege the city; inside the city, the Jews were engaged in a suicidal civil war. In later generations, the rabbis hyperbolically declared that the revolt's failure, and the Temple's destruction, was due not to Roman military superiority but to causeless hatred (*sinat khinam*) among the Jews (*Yoma 9b*). While the Romans would have won the war in any case, the Jewish civil war both hastened their victory and immensely increased the casualties. One horrendous example: In expectation of a Roman siege, Jerusalem's Jews had stockpiled a supply of dry food that could have fed the city for many years. But one of the warring Zealot factions burned the entire supply, apparently hoping that destroying this "security blanket" would compel everyone to participate in the revolt. The starvation resulting from this mad act caused suffering as great as any the Romans inflicted.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Hamilton, *Daniel*, 120–121.

⁵¹ Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People, and Its History* (New York: William Morrow and Co, 1991), chap.74, para. 13–14, Jewish Virtual Library.

Examples could be multiplied of the zealots destructive actions. Conversely, Josephus repeatedly describes Rome as trying to minimize damage to Jerusalem in general and the temple in particular.⁵²

Jesus's prophesy of Jerusalem's destruction recorded in the Olivet Discourse provides further support that the Jewish zealots were the "foreign power" who destroyed city and sanctuary (Mt 25:15-23//Mk 13:14-20//Lk 21:20-24). In Matthew and Mark, Jesus warns his followers to flee Judea when they see the "abomination of desolation" standing in the holy place (i.e., the temple). But if Rome is the source of the abomination at the temple, then as Carson notes "it was too late for anyone in the city to flee."⁵³ Looking at the parallel passage in Luke 21:20, we see that the disciples were to flee "when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies" (thus implying Rome was still outside the walls when the temple was desecrated). Who then was at the temple while Rome's army surrounded Jerusalem? The zealots are the only possible choice, who made the temple their fortress in AD68, filling it with abominations.⁵⁴ Coincidentally, as Carson notes, "there is a reasonably good tradition that Christians abandoned the city, perhaps in AD 68."⁵⁵ If true, this would imply that the Christians in Jerusalem recognized the fulfillment of Jesus's prophesy while Rome was still outside the walls.

The Little Horn Pattern

Having presented my case that Jesus is the prince in Daniel 9:26-27, I will now turn to consider the meaning of the final week's division into equal halves. As discussed above,

⁵² In his preface of *Bellum judaicum*, Josephus states in para. 11 his intent to describe "how often Titus, out of his desire to preserve the city and the temple, invited the seditious to come to terms of accommodation" and "how the temple was burnt, against the consent of Caesar." Josephus, *B.J.* (Winston).

⁵³ D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew & Mark*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 562.

⁵⁴ Josephus records a speech by Ananus in AD68 who said in reference to the zealots, "certainly it had been good for me to die before I had seen the house of God full of so many abominations...." Ananus goes on to assert that the sacrilege committed by the Jewish zealots surpassed anything done previously by the Romans. Josephus, *B.J.* 4.3.10 (Winston).

⁵⁵ Carson, *Matthew*, 562–563.

Hamilton argues convincingly that the similarities between the little horns in Daniel 7 and 8 establish a typological pattern which is used throughout the NT to describe antichrists and the Antichrist (cf. 2 Thes 2:12; 1 John 2:18).⁵⁶ Both little horns originate in similar ways (7:8; 8:8-9), act arrogantly (7:8; 8:23), and successfully persecute God's people (7:21,8:12) for "time, times, and half a time"—a symbolic three-and-a-half year period (7:25; 12:7). This same time period is referenced in a host of other ways in the both Daniel and Revelation.⁵⁷ Based on the little horn pattern, I would suggest that a three-and-a-half period of time is meant to communicate a time of persecution of God's people (cf. Rev 11:2; 13:5). The Book of Revelation also suggests that God's people are nourished and empowered through this entire time period for the purpose of witnessing (Rev 11:3; 12:14).

The significance of this discussion for Daniel 9:27 is that sacrifice is said to stop "in the middle of the week." In other words, the week (i.e., seven) is divided into two equal three-and-a-half periods. This indicates that God's people should expect the last week to be a "quality" of time not unlike the reign of the little horns described in Daniel 7, 8, 10–12. This is confirmed by Jesus's statement to flee Judea "when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION *which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet*" (Matt 24:15; emphasis mine). The abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel in 11:31 and 12:11 clearly refers to the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (the little horn of the third kingdom), but Jesus projects the pattern of past events into the future.

Until the Consummation

If the destruction of Jerusalem occurs in the middle of the last week, when does the week end? What do we do with the last three-and-a-half period? I would suggest that it runs the

⁵⁶ Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 52-53.

⁵⁷ For example, 42 months (12 x 3.5) or 1260 days (12 x 30 x 3.5) in Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5. In Daniel, we read of 1290 days (12:11) and 1335 days (12:12). In 8:14, the number "2300" in reference to evenings and mornings likely pertains to the number of sacrifices missed, thus implying 1150 days. For further details see Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 53–54.

rest of the interadvental period until the Parousia. This is supported by Revelation which also speaks of a three-and-a half time period which lasts until Christ's return. For the entirety of the last week the "little horn" pattern would repeat many times and in various ways as indicated by the plural reference to "desolations" (9:26) and "abominations" (9:27). But eventually the pattern will culminate in the singular "one who makes desolate", the Antichrist (cf. 2 Thes 2:12; 1 John 2:18), whose reign will end in "complete destruction" at the Parousia (9:27). On that day, Jesus Christ will consummate the redemptive achievements of the jubilee that he inaugurated at his first coming. The restoration Daniel prayed for will be fully realized, and God's people will no longer be called "exiles." So while we may rightly call the history of the interpretations of this passage a Dismal Swamp, the message of the vision itself is anything but. Yes, the vision promises suffering for God's people throughout the entire seventy weeks. But his people can suffer with joyful hope, knowing that God is sovereign and has decreed an end to evil. While we may have to be less than certain of our interpretation of the seventy week vision, we can be certain that God will bring out the full restoration it promises.

Conclusion

In this paper I have presented the Roman interpretation as the best understanding of the seventy week vision based on contextual evidence. In the summary, I addressed a critical weakness of the Roman position, namely an excessive emphasis on the "already" aspect of the jubilee redemption, to the neglect of the "not yet." I addressed this deficiency by proposing a structure which views the last week symbolically, culminating in the Parousia.

*Honor Code: I have written this paper exclusively for 20220WW. If I received any editing or proofreading advice, I have made all such corrections myself. I have also documented each paraphrase, direct quotation, and borrowed idea in compliance with the Turabian and SBTS style manuals.

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