

Focus on the Kingdom

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Connecting the Dots While Staying in Balance

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Despite the blanketing fog of religious haze that has dominated and seduced people for centuries, powerful breakthroughs can truly happen in meaningful ways. People can move from point A to point B in the following ways: One person might go from total ignorance of a real Creator to faith in some sort of theism. Another person moves from a strong Trinitarian tradition to embrace unitary monotheism. Or someone changes from a selfish, immoral lifestyle to making concerted efforts toward compassionate, helpful living. The list could go on for such beautiful changes, which are truly commendable in themselves. Even if we might be aware that further changes might be desirable, it does not behoove any of us to be condescending, or to lack empathy when others make progress at their own pace. After all, we are **all** presently works in progress.

When I have made personal efforts to analyze my own emergence from what I now perceive as very perilous, misguided theology, I have never intended to bash others along their journey! As I gently urge others to examine the evidence behind previous assumptions, tracing awareness of bad fruit to certain spiritual and historical roots, I certainly respect the rights of individuals to proceed toward repentance according to what they are capable of grasping. Having been a “slow learner” myself in understanding spiritual things, I pray that I might continue to patiently put myself in the shoes of other truth seekers as they learn and unlearn at their own rate.

My winding road of long, sometimes painful struggles involves having been deeply immersed for decades in a tightly woven cocoon, a bizarre fusion of Ultra-Dispensationalism with Pentecostalism. My background in The Way International (TWI), despite some unique differences from other traditions, might be relevant to any who have needed to emerge from the coercive threads of modern evangelicalism, other strands of modern dispensationalism, distinct brands of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, and other diverse religions.

My specific cocoon of many fibers has been outlined in more detail elsewhere, in writings and interviews, with relevant quotes from several sources. Nevertheless, here is a brief “connecting of the dots,” so to speak. The “dots” can truly be pinpointed and

connected with a “big picture” analysis. I offer such a perusal as one who is humbly thankful for any arduous breakthroughs made by anyone — any individual who grows in clearer views and ways, while emerging from complex cocoons.

Having been repeatedly indoctrinated for years into a formulaic salvation approach (using Rom. 10:9-10 out of context), it was powerfully ingrained in my thinking that “repentance” had nothing to do with **changing** from sinful thoughts, words, and actions, to move towards a deliberate commitment to holy living. A thorough package of TWI teachings, to which I was addicted, purported to have presented the Word as it had not been known since the first century! Nevertheless, the clear Kingdom of God thesis of Jesus, Paul, and all new covenant writers was totally absent from our conglomeration of “Power for Abundant Living” teachings! Romans 10:9, 10 was used to promote an initial, one time “confession” of a lord and savior, in order to acquire effortless, automatic salvation (without any genuine, initial repentance). To emphasize the “once saved always saved” dispensational twist, the gospels and the teachings of Jesus were relegated to a previous “administration,” a definite time period whose instructions were “not addressed” to Christians!

It was (in my view) compulsory that I “stand on my rights” regarding what was already done for me. It was strictly taboo to consider that one must behave a certain way to really be saved! (According to us, that would have been the terribly grave heresy of trying to earn one’s salvation by “works”!) If a person would “condemn oneself” for behavioral failures, it was tantamount to questioning the validity of the “rightly-divided Word,” the whole doctrinal package of TWI interpretations.

Since salvation was assumed to be already completely accomplished, as in a “done deal” status, behavioral efforts to “renew one’s mind” were, honestly speaking, quite optional; they were mere “icing on the cake” to pile awards on top of an already acquired “eternal life.” Salvation itself was dogmatically stated to be “seed” implanted permanently as “holy spirit” inside each believer (by misusing 1 Pet. 1:23 in conjunction with Rom. 10:9 as a formula).

The true Scriptural idea of seed, in terms of Jesus’ teaching of the parable of the sower, and the need for a faithful, continuous response to the Gospel of the Kingdom, was totally unknown to us in our version of Christian efforts. We read the gospels’ teachings merely

as nice historical surveys of previous times and requirements. Thus, motivation to avoid temptation was pathetically feeble among us. There were no real consequences to fear (if one happened to be casually sloppy regarding sin). The fear of YHWH, as the beginning point of wisdom (Prov. 1:7) was sadly absent from our collective mentality!

By wrongly adapting a familiar “faith *versus* works” paradigm, as if humble, God-fearing, obedient actions to “work out our own salvation” (Phil. 2:12) were contradictory to “salvation by grace,” we (of my old group, along with countless others) badly misinterpreted all the writings of Paul! The following quote from David Bentley Hart’s introduction to his New Testament translation illustrates the perversity of such error:

“Therein lies the perennial appeal of the venerable early modern theological fantasy that the Apostle Paul inveighed against something called ‘works-righteousness’ in favor of a purely extrinsic ‘justification’ by grace — which, alas, he did not. He rejected only the notion that one might be ‘shown righteous’ by ‘works’ of the Mosaic Law — that is, ritual ‘*observances*’ like circumcision or keeping kosher — but he also quite clearly insisted, as did Christ, that all will be judged in the end according to their deeds (Rom. 2:1-16 and 4:10-12).”

On top of The Way’s convoluted development of E.W. Bullinger-styled, dispensational thinking, the arrogant thrust of TWI mentality was topped off by dramatically emphasized Pentecostal beliefs aligned with the thesis of permanence of holy spirit as seed. The two articles by Mark Clarke in the May and August, 2015 issues of Focus on the Kingdom give a good contrast between perverse Way assertions and a simple reading of 1 Corinthians 12 and 14. More considerations about “speaking in tongues” can be viewed at his site: www.godskingdomfirst.org

Though Victor Paul Wierwille did not give proper credit in his books to J.E. Stiles, his whole approach to speaking in tongues, as a priority to be actively sought out by all born-again believers, was directly from Stiles, a minister from the Assemblies of God. (It is noteworthy that 1 Cor. 12:28-31 in itself makes it crystal clear that the ability to speak by the spirit in real languages, not previously learned, is **not** a gift or evidence given to all.) Similarly, the founder of the modern tongues movement, Charles Fox Parham (starting in 1901), also contradicted 1 Corinthians and many Scriptures in his assertions about the “baptism with the Holy Spirit,” and highly coveted “tongues” as initial, decisive “proof” available to all!

Unlike many Pentecostals, in The Way Ministry and its offshoots, this spiritual “evidence” was considered proof of acquired salvation, or of having holy spirit born as “incorruptible seed” within one. A tongues

experience was exalted as undeniable proof of one “being headed to heaven, and all hell can’t stop him from going!” This was a popular V.P.W. phrase of encouragement. “Tongues” therefore served as an emotionally-driven proof of OSAS (Once Saved Always Saved) status.

Both V.P. Wierwille and J.E. Stiles practiced “leading people into” an initial “tongues” experience by getting them to exercise calm, steady breathing for a few minutes. V.P. Wierwille would give “you can do it” exhortations (with partial Scriptural quotes) while also discussing the mechanics of speech (a methodology he learned from Stiles). Then recipients would be taught to “act” by moving their lips and tongues, while emitting sounds from their throats. Syllable-like vocalizations were then **assumed** to be the real words and phrases of an understandable language, understandable somewhere!

Of course, a couple of major logical, biblical problems surface in this scenario:

(A) No one at all in Acts or 1 Corinthians sought out a “tongues” experience. No one was ever taught (or “led into”) speaking in languages by breathing techniques followed by emitting audible syllables, in conjunction with manmade methods. No theology that this “experience” was for all believers was pushed or promoted by anyone in New Testament times. In our old group, the fact that an emphasis on doing things “decently and in order” was present, did **not**, by any means, prove that the “tongues” were real languages!

(B) The tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians were meaningful signs distributed by God’s proactive intentions. They could really be either understood or translated (without people “making up” bland, deceiving, or erroneous “interpretations”). For over a century now, samples of modern “speaking in tongues” have been jotted down phonetically, recorded electronically, and analyzed by linguists and other experts. The overwhelming existence of an abundance of gibberish has been well-documented, something obvious for decades concerning the modern “tongues” movement. Very few, wishful-thinking claims to any real, documentable “languages” (for 117 years) have even been made, and such claims have been repeatedly demonstrated to be false. Such widespread gibberish and falsity were **not at all** the case in Acts 2, 8, 10, 19, and in Corinth!

Despite blatant lack of provable evidence, in TWI an initial “tongues” experience was affirmed to be proof of one being baptized in holy spirit (very similar to Charles Parham’s old theology since 1901). Unlike most Pentecostals, however, in TWI this was confirmation that holy spirit baptism had replaced mere “water baptism” — a dispensational claim rooted in an innovative replacement idea. A highly skewed, coercive

reading of Acts 1:5 was “creatively” imposed on several records in Acts to **extract** water from baptism!

A person still partially or totally within the cocoon of my old background has probably thought in the following terms: “Since Messiah’s greater baptism in holy spirit has replaced mere water baptism, John’s baptism ‘under the law of Moses’ [which is an erroneous assumption], why should I revert to an old, outdated physical practice? After all, **at will**, I can say, ‘Kashana, Kashana, Rakashana’” (or perhaps a much more complex language-sounding pattern). Thus, this person has trusted his/her “tongues” experience as real evidence of having received a baptism much “superior” to simple, physical water. Perpetual **blindness** due to wrongly connected, warped ideas can be the result.

If one persists for decades in reaffirming counterfeit faith in “evidence” (that cannot be documented as genuine), if one thus continues in euphoric patterns of very “iffy” feelings-based assurances, he or she can be badly mesmerized by deadly poison! Deeply etched grooves of habitual bias are dovetailed into grossly narcissistic, “got it made” theology! Sadly, a distorted view totally blocks seeing biblical baptism in water, as clearly commanded by Jesus, for its true significance. Instead of embracing repentant baptism as a joyous occasion to lovingly honor God and obey Jesus, one stays stuck in a rut of degraded, evil thoughts: “Why should I get dunked in mere physical water, when I am baptized in holy spirit!” In other words, “I can make syllable sounds” (and assume them to be real languages and a reliable proof of baptism without water!).

Though baptism in water is vastly misunderstood by millions of so-called Christians, attitudes toward it really become a key litmus test for those from my “anti-baptism” background. Hypothetically, if a meter could measure the degree of vehement **disgust** with which individual ex-Way people view baptism in water, it would be equal to the degree to which such folks are still “in denial” about how corrupt Way theology really was! I honestly don’t believe this statement is much of an exaggeration. At any rate, if people still get overtly hostile and defensive at the mere suggestion that baptism (dunking in water) should be studied, discussed, reconsidered, and ultimately **practiced** with child-like humility, something deeply rotten is still in play!

Strong emotions come to a head among many from my old background. The adamant pride in defending certain strands of our old theology as “mostly good” is an overwhelming temptation for many. This continues despite documentable evidence of roots of pervasive corruption, devious theological error, and bogus fruit which has damaged multitudes!

Put very simply, V.P. Wierwille spoke of personal experiences from 1942 to document his assertion that **he** was teaching the Word as it had not been known since

the first century. Many of us swallowed that claim, hook, line, and sinker! Why not examine it against Scriptures? Without trying to assess whether this claim involved hallucinations, deliberate lies, or demonic deceptions, one can be certain of the following: **no such teaching of the Word ever occurred!**

Disregard for Jesus’ Kingdom of God Gospel was a shameful, destructive omission. It was never, for a moment, understood nor taught in TWI! A fascination with E.W. Bullinger’s dispensational theories, leading folks to haughtily disobey Jesus’ words, as if they represented an outdated “works” standard not applicable to Christians, is the height of arrogance! As many either suspected or knew directly, the proud, happy-go-lucky “once saved always saved” mentality of The Way led to rampant sexual immorality. I’m merely scratching the surface now about decades of production of questionable fruit.

In light of all these connected “dots,” why should any of us trust V.P. Wierwille’s take on “tongues”? Since 1901, his predecessors also exhibited corrupt fruit while getting famous and rich! In common with V.P. Wierwille, they espoused splashy, mesmerizing theologies that totally ignored Jesus’ Gospel of the Kingdom. The roots of this movement were as unbiblical as Edward Irving’s mystical theology, which led to John Nelson Darby’s old dispensational ideas, starting in 1830. All these historical “dots” clearly connect selfish fruit to corrupt roots.

Why trust V.P. Wierwille’s flippant dismissal of biblical baptism? Despite being thankful for non-Trinitarian thinking, why defend a huge bulk of bogus theology (including the rejection of baptism) that does not concur with simple, sound Scriptural exegesis? I know from my own experience that one must overcome pride, and soberly admit that one has been badly wrong about basic foundational truths for a long time, but why not do it? Piles of evidence can be calmly studied to reveal that we should not trust our feelings or experiences; nor should we trust Pentecostal excitement since 1901, dispensational claims since the 1820s and 1830s, or the Way’s fusion of such errors in a feel-good, self-serving “once saved always saved” model. Why not simply get baptized in repentant obedience to Jesus, and stop being seduced by extremely twisted ideas?

It is certainly wonderful to move from point A to point B within a real, thoughtful paradigm shift, but why get tricked into missing out on further growth? Why not keep connecting the dots more completely, and come full circle — all the way out of the cocoon? ✧

Antichrist and Futurism: Views from the Early Church Fathers

The earliest post-NT writers on prophecy were premillennial, post-tribulational **futurists**: “Until Augustine in the fourth century, the early Church generally held to the premillenarian understanding of Biblical eschatology. This chiliasm [millennialism] entailed a **futuristic** interpretation of **Daniel’s seventieth week**, the abomination of desolation, and the personal Antichrist. And it was post-tribulational...The possibility of a **pre-tribulational rapture** seems never to have occurred to anyone in the early Church.”¹

It is sometimes said that futurism — the belief in a future tribulation and short reign of Antichrist just prior to the Second Coming — is a modern phenomenon unknown before its appearance in 1590. It was then that the Jesuit Ribera published a long commentary on Revelation, restricting most of its prophecies to the reign of a single Antichrist dominating the world for 3½ years just before the return of Christ.

This point of view is **demonstrably untrue** in the light of the clear evidence of the early “church Fathers.” Some of these had much to say about eschatology. As we will see they also looked for a short reign of Antichrist just before the arrival of Christ to establish the Kingdom on earth.

George Ladd, highly respected writer on eschatology, and agreeing with Gundry cited above, makes the point clearly: “The futuristic interpretation [the view that the present spirit of antichrist will take form in a final, single antichrist who will operate within a short period just before the return of Jesus] was essentially *a return to the method of prophetic truth found in the early fathers*, essential to which is the teaching that the Antichrist will be a satanically inspired world-ruler at the end of the age who would inflict severe persecution upon the Church during the Great Tribulation.”²

W.R. Kimball agrees that the early church was “generally premillennial, post-tribulational and futuristic in their eschatological belief.”³ (It is most important to add that the *pre-tribulation rapture* theory is entirely missing from any writer before the 1800’s). It is true that the church fathers did not expect a long period of time to intervene before the appearance of the Antichrist. However, they believed that the prophecies, read in a straightforward manner, described a *final short period* of intense tribulation *just before* the arrival of Jesus. This time of intense suffering, in which the church

would be involved, would last for 3½ years. The early church fathers definitely did not expect the Beast of Revelation 13 and Daniel 7 to rule for 1260 *years*. Such a day/year theory was not known prior to 1000 AD.

In 1826 modern futurism (still without the pre-tribulation rapture theory) was given publicity with the appearance of a book by Dr. Maitland, curator to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In his *An Enquiry into the Ground on Which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John Has Been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*, Maitland refuted the day-year theory and contended that the 1260 days be taken literally as a final period of unequalled persecution of the saints just before the Second Coming.

Of these 19th-century futurists George Ladd wrote: “These early futurists followed a pattern of prophetic events similar to that found in the early fathers...In fact they appeal to the fathers against the [then] popular historical interpretation for support of their basic view. A pre-tribulation rapture is utterly unknown by these men.”⁴

It is important that we examine the actual words of the church fathers to demonstrate their clear futurism. The false idea that futurism was introduced by the Roman Catholics must be corrected. The early church fathers’ type of futurism should make a special appeal to all premillennialists who all agree that it was later developments, particularly under Augustine, which led to the so-called amillennialist view of prophecy. The work of the ante-Nicene fathers, some of whom wrote in detail on Daniel, Matthew 24 and Revelation, reveals that they read the prophecies in a straightforward, natural way, using the words of Jesus to interpret Daniel.

A Latin church father, **Lactantius** (c. 250-330 AD), clearly expected the Beast [antichrist] to arise in **Syria**: “Another king shall arise out of **Syria**, born from an evil spirit...and he will constitute and call himself God, and will order himself to be worshipped as the Son of God, and power will be given him to do signs and wonders. Then he will attempt to destroy **the temple of God** and persecute the righteous people; and there will be **distress and tribulation** such as there never has been since the beginning of the world.”⁵ In ch. 16 Lactantius speaks of the tyrant arising “from the extreme boundaries of the **northern region**.” Another ante-Nicene father, **Victorinus** (c. 280 AD), refers **Micah 5:5** to the antichrist: “There shall be peace for our land...and they shall encircle **Assur [Assyria], that is antichrist**, in the trench of Nimrod.”⁶ Assyria is the

¹ Dr. Robert Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation*, Zondervan, 1973, p. 173.

² *The Blessed Hope*, p. 37.

³ *The Rapture: A Question of Timing*, p. 29.

⁴ *The Blessed Hope*, p. 39.

⁵ *Divine Institutes*, Book 7, ch. 17.

⁶ *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, ch. 7.

approximate equivalent of modern Iraq. (Victorinus also speaks of Babylon as the Roman state.)

It is not always recognized that the seventieth week of Daniel 9:24-27 is taken by Jesus to be a period *just before his return*. Jesus places the Abomination shortly before his Second Coming (Matt. 24:15-31). Matthew 24:29 says that “**immediately after**” the tribulation initiated by the Abomination (v. 15), he will come back in power and glory (v. 29-31). This fact is crucial to a fair reading of prophecy. Daniel expects the Abomination to appear in the seventieth “week” (Dan. 9:27). Jesus expects the Abomination (and therefore the seventieth week) just before his return.

That the seventieth “week” was **future** and close to the end of the age was understood in 243 AD by **Hippolytus** (*De Pascha Computus*). This fact is noted in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*: “**The one ‘week’ [of Dan. 9:24-27] is taken off as belonging to the eschatological period in the future.**”⁷ Irenaeus also expected a **3 ½-year tribulation and a rebuilt temple**: “In which [temple] the enemy shall sit, endeavoring to show himself as Christ, as the Lord also declares: ‘But when you shall see the Abomination of Desolation, which has been spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place’...Everything shall be given into his hand until a time of times and a half time, that is **for three years and six months**, during which time, when he [antichrist] comes, he shall reign over the earth...’The abomination of desolation shall be brought into **the temple**: even unto the consummation of the time shall the desolation be complete’ (Dan. 9:27). Now **three years and six months constitute the half-week.**”⁸ Irenaeus sees the antichrist, not just Antiochus, in the **eighth** chapter of Daniel and quotes **Daniel 9:27** as a prophecy of the final reign of the antichrist “for three years and six months.”

The seventieth week of Daniel 9 was seen as future and close up to the Second Coming by the earliest church fathers who wrote in detail on prophecy. Montgomery notes that this “apocalyptic” reading of the last period of seven years **is the one found in the gospels, and it is adopted by Irenaeus and Hippolytus.**⁹

Commodianus refers to a future and final antichrist in these words: “Isaiah said: ‘This is the man who moves the world and so many kings, and under whom the land shall become desert’...Then, doubtless, the world shall be finished when he shall appear. He himself shall divide the globe into three ruling powers, when, moreover, Nero will be raised up from hell, Elijah shall first come to seal the beloved ones; at which things the

region of Africa [King of the South?] and the northern nation [King of the North?], the whole earth on all sides, **for seven years** shall tremble. But Elijah shall occupy the **half of the time**, Nero shall occupy half. Then the whore Babylon, being reduced to ashes, its embers shall thence advance to Jerusalem; and the **Latin conqueror** shall then say, ‘I am Christ, whom you always pray to’; and, indeed, the original ones who were deceived combine to praise him. He does many wonders, since his is **the false prophet**. Especially that they may believe him, his **image** shall speak. The Almighty has given it power to appear such. **The Jews, recapitulating Scriptures from him, exclaim at the same time to the Highest that they have been deceived...**Moreover, when the tyrant shall dash himself against the army of God, his soldiery are overthrown by the celestial terror; the false prophet himself is seized with the wicked one, by the decree of the Lord; they are handed over alive to Gehenna.”¹⁰ ✧

Daniel 9:26b: “HIS end”

A Major Key to Understanding the Prophecy of the Seventy “Sevens”

There will be a future single antichrist whom Jesus will kill at his future Parousia, after the Great Tribulation: “**his end** will come speedily like a flood” (Dan. 9:26b, NET Bible).

Some translations have: “The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and sanctuary, and **its end** will come with a flood.”

Translations which avoid the reference to the wicked prince (“**his end**”) do so because they think that the prophecy ought to refer to the Roman invasion of AD 70. Titus did not come to “his end” in that event. Therefore the reference cannot be to AD 70!

Keil translates, as does RV, Jerusalem Bible, Jewish Publication Society OT, *International Critical Commentary on Daniel*, *Peake's Commentary*, *Brown Driver and Briggs*, etc., “And **his end** will come with a flood” (*Commentary on Daniel*). The reference is taken to be to *the evil prince* who is to come who destroys the city and sanctuary. This will correct the blasphemous teaching by some preterists or partial preterists who say that Jesus is the one who sets up the Abomination.

New Jerusalem Bible: “And after the sixty-two weeks an Anointed One put to death...city and sanctuary ruined by a prince who is to come. **The end of that prince** will be catastrophe and, until the end, there will be war and all the devastation decreed.”

Einheitsubersetzung, 1980: „Nach den zweiundsechzig Wochen wird ein Gesalbter umgebracht, aber ohne (Richterspruch). Das Volk eines Fürsten, der

⁷ Vol. III, p. 606.

⁸ *Against Heresies*, Book 5, ch. 25.

⁹ *International Critical Commentary on Daniel*, p. 394.

¹⁰ *The Instructions of Commodianus*, ch. 41, 42.

kommen wird, bringt Verderben über die Stadt und das Heiligtum. **Er findet sein Ende in der Flut**; bis zum Ende werden Krieg und Verwüstung herrschen, wie es längst beschlossen ist.“

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Translation: “However **this ruler will come to his end**...But until his death he will carry on a devastating war.”)

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

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

The revised Swedish translation of 1917 has a slightly different rendering: “And the city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed by the people of a coming [in the sense: coming with his armies] prince, but **this [the prince] shall have his end in the storming flood**. And until the end strife shall prevail [i.e. endure, last].”

The new Swedish translation of 1999 renders the verse: “Both the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed **as will the prince** to come. The end will come by a storming flood, and the determined destruction will last even until the end of the war.”

Moses Stuart: “v'*kitzo*, ‘and his end’; whose? The obvious grammatical answer is the end of the *nagid haba*, the prince to come. One need only compare Dan.

8:25...‘He shall be broken in pieces without [human] hand’ and to join this with 11:45, ‘And he shall come to his end (*ad kitzo*), and none shall help him (*v ayn ozer lo*),’ in order to see how exactly all three of the passages agree. In all, the *end* in question follows the injuries done to the holy city and temple. Manifestly the same personage is concerned. We cannot, therefore, refer ‘his end’ to city and sanctuary, for the suffix should then be plural; nor to ‘he will ruin,’ i.e. the action of destroying which ends in an overwhelming. Indeed such an application would probably never have been thought of, had not that interpretation needed its aid, which makes Titus the Roman chief to be the *nagid*, prince, in this case, who is to destroy city and sanctuary. But such a construction is incompatible with grammar, and equally so with the parallel passages to which reference has been made above.”¹¹

Keil says: “The suffix ‘**his**’ refers simply to the hostile prince **whose end** is emphatically placed in contrast to his coming (agreeing with Kranichfeld, Hofmann and Kliefoth). **Preconceived views as to the historical interpretation of the prophecy lie at the foundation of all other references**. The Messianic interpreters who find in the words a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem [in AD 70], and thus understand by the *nagid*, Titus, cannot apply the suffix to *nagid* [prince]. Geier, Havernick and others therefore refer the suffix to the city and the sanctuary; but that is grammatically inadmissible, since *ha-ir* [city] is feminine. Auberlen and others refer it merely to the sanctuary, but the separation of the city from the sanctuary is quite arbitrary...Thus there remains nothing else than to apply the suffix [‘his end’] to the *nagid*, the prince. *Ketz* [end] can accordingly only denote the destruction of the prince...The prince will find **his end** in his warlike expedition...In Daniel 7:21, 26 the enemy of God holds superiority until he is destroyed by the judgment of God...‘The people of a prince who will come and **find his destruction** in the flood.’”¹²

Keil also maintains that the natural subject of “**he will confirm**” (v. 27) is the **same wicked prince**, since “the prince who was to come is named last and also the subject of the suffix (*kitzo*, **his end**), the last clause of v. 26 having only the significance of an explanatory subordinate clause.”

Kranichfeld: “The reference to ‘**he shall confirm**’ to the ungodly leader of an army is therefore according to the context and the parallel passages of the book which have been mentioned, as well as in harmony with the natural grammatical arrangement of the passage,” and it gives also a congruous sense, although by the *nagid* Titus cannot naturally be understood...The first

¹¹ *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, p. 292.

¹² *Commentary on Daniel*, p. 363.

historical fulfilling of Daniel 11 in the Maccabean times **does not exclude a further and fuller accomplishment in the future, and the rage of Antiochus Epiphanes** against the Jewish temple and the worship of God can only be a type of the assault of **Antichrist** against the sanctuary and the church of God in the time of the end...Still less from the words 'whoever reads, let him understand (Matt. 24:15) can it be proved that Christ had only Dan. 9:27 and not also 11:31 and 12:11 before his view...On these grounds we must affirm that the reference of the words under consideration to the desecration of the temple before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans is untenable."

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

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

Comments

• "I'm very thankful for the work you guys are doing. I was raised Catholic, became a follower of Jesus at about age 30 and found my way into the independent Baptist system. I began a search for the truth a few years ago. Sir Anthony gave me the last pieces of the puzzle about a year ago in the videos on YouTube and I became a biblical unitarian, Kingdom Gospel believer. I was blessed to be rebaptized by Robin Todd." — *Washington*

• "I fervently hope that somebody in the Philippines, with the same beliefs and practices as yours, will rebaptize me in the future. Anyway, I am striving to be a real disciple of the Messiah." — *Philippines*

• "I have been searching for the truth for decades and have been a lover of God and Christ for all my life. As a youth I was christened by my parents and sent to the Church of Scotland where, I will be honest, I found no knowledge about the Scriptures that I can remember. I always would search but eventually as a young woman on my own I ended up being a Jehovah's Witness at the age of 24 until about thirty when I eventually faded. I prayed that I could find the truth without being deceived, ashamed about my foolishness and apologising to my family for expounding so much

rubbish and heresy. Guess what? I found yourself and Dan Gill. I just feel so passionate about what I found out that I have taught my son and I am trying to show my husband too about your great ministry of truth. You are truly blessed to find the truth. There is nowhere in Scotland that I can find that does not believe in the Trinity. Please keep revealing the Gospel about the Kingdom — wonderful message. What a message of Grace from our loving Father in Heaven and his Son Jesus Christ." — *Scotland*

• "Barbara's article on abortion in the July *Focus* was the best, most concise, thought-provoking article out there. As so many others I do not accept abortion in any form. But as so many others, I only voice my opinion to others of the same opinion. I do not venture out of my comfort zone. This article is going to help me voice to all that murder is murder any way you cook it." — *Arkansas*

• "Great article about abortion. Here's a line from a bumper sticker I've never been able to forget: 'Abortion does not make a woman un-pregnant, it makes her the mother of a dead baby.'" — *Washington*

• "Here where I live, people seem to have lost their hunger for God and His truth. The deceiver is doing his job well. He has even made his way into the church and created false doctrine and spreading false literatures and books, etc. That is why our ministry has distanced itself from them — to get away from false doctrine. To get away from books that don't necessarily line up with God's word. When I read my Bible through several times my eyes were opened to a whole new understanding. A lot of what I had been taught in the church I grew up in was simply incorrect. As I visited other denominations I began to see a trend. Most of them were either adding to or taking away from God's holy word. This concerned me. So I began to pray to God about my concern. I feel like I should share with you my personal beliefs. Some of them do not line up with what a lot of churches teach. I believe once we die, we simply go to sleep until the return of Christ. At that time, those of us who are believers will be resurrected. I don't believe in a pre-tribulation rapture. I believe that Christians will be here and have to go through the suffering of the tribulation period. I believe Christ returns at the end of the tribulation era to gather his true believers. At the end of the book of Revelation, John says he saw a new earth and a new heaven. He saw a new Jerusalem. And in the middle of that city he saw a new temple. And in this temple God dwelled with man. I tend to believe that this new earth will be our final dwelling place for eternity. Now you understand my difference of opinion compared to the teachings of most churches. But all of these beliefs I can back up with scripture." — *Nigeria*