

Daniel 9:26b: “HIS End” A Major Key to Understanding

The point below is derived from Daniel 9:26b: “and **his end** will come with a flood.” The subject of Daniel’s discussion is the wicked prince who is going to “desolate the city [Jerusalem] and the sanctuary” (9:26). “His end,” that is, the end of his life, will come as a result of a judgment of God which will annihilate him. My point here, in this long quotation of various translations, is that “his end” gives the correct version of the Hebrew, and “his end” cannot possibly refer to the death of Titus, the Roman general involved in destroying Jerusalem in AD 70. Titus died naturally some 18 years after destroying Jerusalem. Titus did not die supernaturally, but the future antichrist will. This is still future to us.

First Moses Stuart, *Commentary on Daniel*:

“*v'kitzo, and his end*; whose? The obvious grammatical answer is the end of the *nagid haba*, the prince to come. One need but compare 8:25...: *He shall be broken in pieces without [human] hand*, and to join with this 11:45, *And he shall come to his end (ad kitzo), and none shall help him*, 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.”

Daniel 9:26

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: “**Er findet sein Ende in der Flut** (Translation: “He will find his end in the flood”)

French Jerusalem Bible: « ...**un prince qui viendra. Sa fin** sera dans le cataclysme »

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

Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible, 1988: « **chef à venir les détruira; mais sa fin viendra...** »

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

Bible en Francais Courant, 1997: « Toutefois **ce chef finira** sous le déferlement de la colère divine. **Mais jusqu'à sa mort** il mènera une guerre dévastatrice. »

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

Above we made mention of the translation in some versions: “The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and sanctuary, and **its end** will come in the flood.”

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

Keil says: “**And his end with the flood**. The suffix ‘**HIS**’ refers simply to the hostile prince whose end is emphatically placed in contrast to his coming (agreeing with Kranichfeld, Hofmann and Kliefoth). **Preconceived views as to the historical interpretation of the prophecy lie at the foundation of all other references**. The Messianic interpreters who find in the words a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem [in AD 70], and thus understand by the *nagid* [prince], Titus, cannot apply the suffix to *nagid* [prince] [They are mistaken]...Thus there remains nothing else than to apply the suffix to the *Nagid*, the

prince. *Ketz* [end] can accordingly **only denote the destruction of the prince...The prince will find his end in his warlike expedition...**In 7:21, 26 the enemy of God holds superiority until he is destroyed by the judgment of God...‘The people of a prince who will come and find his destruction in the flood’” (*Commentary on Daniel*, p. 363).

In other words, translations which avoid the reference to the wicked prince (“his end”) do so because they think that the prophecy ought to refer to the Roman invasion of AD 70. Titus did not come to “his end” in that event.

Keil also maintains that the natural subject of “he will confirm” (9:27) 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 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 Daniel 9:27 and not also 11:31 and 12:11 before his view...On these grounds we must affirm that the reference of the words under consideration to the desecration of the temple before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans is untenable.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11) We have an exact parallel in Daniel 11:45 where the final wicked person comes to “his end.” (*Ketz* occurs 15 times in Daniel.) In Daniel 8:25 the wicked one “is broken supernaturally without human hand.”

12) *Irwin’s Bible Commentary*, M.A, D.D, 1928: “Daniel 9:26: ‘Hebrew, his end.’”

I believe therefore that Keil and Moses Stuart are right when they say that the translation “its end,” i.e. the city’s end, is incorrect. The right translation, based on the immediate context (the antecedent is the prince) and the consistent meaning of *ketz* which never refers to the ruin or destruction of a thing, but the end of a period of *time* and especially the end of human life, is “he will come to **his end** [death].” Daniel 9:26 thus refers to a future antichrist.

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

Therefore “the Abomination of Desolation standing where **he** (*estekota*) ought not to” (Mark 13:14) refers to the **future Antichrist** and is expanded by Paul when he describes the Man of Sin in 2 Thessalonians 2. This is the future King of the North of Daniel 11:21ff and also the final Beast of Revelation. John confirms this in 1 John 2:18 when he says that “you have heard that antichrist is coming.” That was not wrong! He adds that the spirit of antichrist was already on the scene in the time of John. Since then it has grown steadily and it will culminate in the final personal Abomination of Mark 13:14 (cp. Rev. 13:14: “the beast *who...*”; the assistant to the Beast is the false prophet).

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’ (9:27) 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.”

As for Daniel 9:26b:

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.”

The Danish 1998 translation (the Danish Bible Company) 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 (The Swedish Bible Company) has a slightly different rendering: “And the city and the sanctuary shall be destroyed by the people of a coming [in the sense: coming with his armies] prince, but **this [the prince] shall have his end in the storming flood.** And until the end strife shall prevail (i.e. endure, last).”

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