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#### ORIGINAL RESEARCH

## **Jesus and the six objectives of Daniel 9:24**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Although Daniel 9:24-27 addresses the Antiochene crisis of the second century bce, many of Jesus' foll passage with reference to his first and second comings. Following the typological example of the Old Testament, this article considers how Jesus is another anointed one that replays the 6th and 2nd centu thereby accomplishes the six objectives of Daniel 9:24.

### **OPSOMMING**

Alhoewel Daniël 9:24-27 die krisis in die tweede eeu v.C. veroorsaak deur Antiogus aanspreek, lees ba hierdie gedeelte met verwysing na sy eerste en tweede koms. Hierdie artikel volg die tipologiese verst Testament en Nuwe Testament en ondersoek tot hoe 'n mate Jesus nóg 'n gesalfde is wat die tweede-

## Introduction

The New Testament never explicitly cites Daniel 9:24-27 to say that Jesus fulfils the prophecy of the seventy sevens (Ulrich 2014:1062-1083) has previously considered the meaning of this prophecy, including the six objectives of the Antiochene crisis of the second century and early Judaism afterwards.<sup>1</sup> That crisis consisted of the compromises of Hellenistic Jews for economic benefits, and the murder of a legitimate high priest structure and details of the seventy sevens or ten jubilee cycles, Jewish readers (e.g. 1 Macc 1:54) first saw the relationship between 6th and 2nd century instances of human evil on the one hand and God's preservation of inheritance on the other. By the end of the 1st century ce, Josephus (*A.J.* 10.11.7 §§275-276) recognised Antiochene and Roman desecrations of the Jerusalem temple and considered them instances of Daniel's desolation (Dn 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). The history of God's relationship with the Jews featured recapitulation and blessing.<sup>2</sup>

Not to be overlooked is that Jesus, before Josephus began to write, had already anticipated the Roman desecration of the Jerusalem temple and reinterpreted Daniel's abomination of desolation in view of it (Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14). The Gospels, however, never say that Jesus identified himself with the cut off anointed one of Daniel 9:26. Instead, the writer of Hebrews likened Jesus' role to Melchizedek (Heb 5:10). Even so, many of Jesus' followers have read Daniel 9:24-27 with reference to the second comings.<sup>3</sup> Whether they silently ignore or explicitly deny the interest of Daniel 9 (along with the Antiochene crisis, they identify Jesus as the cut-off anointed one of Daniel 9:26. In death, he is thought to fulfil the objectives of Daniel 9:24. This article, whilst affirming the Antiochene interest of the seventy sevens, will explore another anointed one that repeats the pattern of the 6th and 2nd century worlds of Daniel 9 and their respective objectives of Daniel 9:24.

## How Jesus participates in Daniel's typology

Unlike the Babylonian exile of the 6th century, the Antiochene crisis of the second century did not involve the loss of the land. Nevertheless, faithful Jews in Judea during the second century could feel alienated from their land because Seleucids or compromised Jewish leaders) controlled Judea and them. Jubilee may represent a return to the land one had been estranged, but living in the land did not necessarily constitute jubilee. God's people also needed to be independent and faithful in their land. A Hellenised Jewish leader who disregarded God's law (cf. 1 Macc 1:11; 5:6) was no better or preferable than a Seleucid ruler who persecuted those who kept the law (1 Macc 1:11). Under either of them, the alienation persisted, and jubilee (i.e. the restoration of lost inheritance) remained unattainable.

For this reason, a 6th century narrative world in Daniel (and for some readers, a 6th century real world) can be typologically related. In both cases, leaders failed to perform their duties with a concern for God's people. Consequently, many of God's people lost sight of their identity and mission and became wayward. Jesus encountered a similar situation - irresponsible leaders and wayward people - during his ministry. For Jesus, cleansing the temple (Mt 21:12-13; Mk 11:15-16; Lk 19:45-46; cf. 1 Macc 4:41-43), applied the term *abomination* to the events of his day and beyond (Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14; Lk 21:20). He read Daniel typologically and saw in his day a pattern of unbelief and worldliness that the writer of Daniel had applied to Hellenistic Jews during the second century (France 2007:911-912; Hagner 1995:700; Vos 1986:95; Wright 1996:351). The Roman invasion and siege of Jerusalem gave him his insight.

Wright (1996:493) says, 'Jesus' symbolic actions [at *the temple*] inevitably invoked this entire wider context of *response to Antiochus IV*. Jesus was performing *Maccabaeen* actions, albeit with some radical differences.'

made literal war when he cleansed the temple, but the Antiochene crisis included the murder of a high priest, which eventually replayed. Whatever differences there may be between them, Onias III and Jesus shared unjust deaths at the hands of unrighteous sons of Abraham.

Unlike the writer of Hebrews, Matthew may not call Jesus a priest, but Matthew makes a point of explaining the significance of Jesus' name (Mt 1:21). He then presents Jesus as the one who can forgive sin (Mt 9:2) by dying on the cross, paid the penalty for sin (Mt 20:28). Jesus was the definitive priest because he offered himself as a sacrifice. By so doing, Jesus was involved in a war that others brought to him and that he took to them. This war that Jesus fought was the death of evil, involving stripping the spiritual forces of evil of their power to captivate people in rebellion - an act that the exorcisms had foreshadowed (Meyer 1979:155-156; Ridderbos 1962:61-64; Tannehill 1986:88-89). Jesus' power over sin was not by destroying the sinners but by absorbing the punishment for their sins. Because his suffering became vicariously redemptive, he, indeed, lived up to the meaning that the angel had assigned to his name. He saved his people from their sin and reconciled them to God.

Daniel 9:26 forecasts trouble and deprivation for the second anointed one of the seventy sevens, and this was the way to Onias III whose brother, Jason, unlawfully paid Antiochus IV for the office of high priest that Onias III held (2 Macc 4:7-10; 4 Macc. 4:17). Later, Menelaus unlawfully supplanted Jason and murdered Onias III (2 Macc 14:1-2). A similar case can be said about Jesus. Herod the Great tried to kill Jesus in infancy, and the trouble only continued as Jewish religious leaders debated Jesus and tried to trap him with his words so that they could kill him. Jesus was surprised by the opposition. In fact, he seemed to initiate it by his supposedly blasphemous claims about himself, both of which challenged the entrenched power of the religious establishment. Saying that he came to bring peace, he certainly divided families, neighbours, and patriots over his identity (Mt 10:34-35). In some ways, Jesus' trouble that eventually put him on the cross. Moreover, Jesus even announced his death. No sooner had he been anointed one than Jesus predicted his impending suffering and death at the hands of Jewish religious leaders. Even though they eventually succeeded in having him executed. The anointed one was cut off, seemingly without warning, and never seemed to have much. Whilst alive, the anointed one had no place of sleeping to call his own (Mt 26:55). After he died, his friends deserted him out of fear of being guilty by association (Mt 26:56; Mk 14:50), and the Roman soldiers took away his clothes that they had taken away from him (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lk 23:34; Jn 19:23). After being crucified and exclusion and/or extermination (and both happened to Jesus outside Jerusalem), Jesus was buried in a tomb (Mt 27:60). Maybe the worst of all, He had even been disowned by God (Mt 27:46).

At first glance, Jesus did not look like an anointed one who would accomplish the six objectives of Daniel's prayer about mercy for Israel and glory for God (9:17-19). His sinless life surely did not arouse the expectations of his contemporaries, but his humble beginnings hardly aroused expectations of royal destiny or priestly inheritance. His refusal to call himself an anointed one further made him an unlikely messianic figure. Moreover, he seemed to have ended like Onias III and so never realised the hopes that others had for him. Even so, all of this trouble was part of Jesus' inaugurating his kingdom of redemption (cf. Mt 11:12; 20:28), and the Gospels suggest that Jesus spent his time intentionally looking ahead to his death. By his death, Jesus became greater than Onias III. This observation brings the objectives of the seventy sevens into view.

## **How Jesus achieved the six objectives of Daniel 2:24**

Whilst it is true that the New Testament never explicitly cites Daniel 9:24, explicit quotations are not the only way in which the New Testament interacted with the Old Testament. Its categories of thought almost unconsciously shaped the world and especially their view of Jesus. This was certainly true of the book of Daniel (cf. Evans 2009:286; Wright 1996:598). When Jesus called himself the Son of Man, he did not have to mention Daniel as the source of the title. Everybody knew what text was in view. The same could be said about the six objectives of Daniel's prayer: atonement, righteousness, fulfilment of prophecy, and temple were woven into the fabric of the New Testament. On Jesus' hermeneutics lesson on Easter Sunday (Lk 24:25-27, 44-47), the New Testament writers instinctively pointed to the person and work of Jesus.

### **The first three objectives**

Because the first three objectives concern the problem of sin, they can be grouped together here. It is clear that the New Testament considers the death of Jesus the definitive solution to sin. The New Testament explanation of Jesus' name in terms of salvation from sin (Mt 1:21), and then the first four books devoted to narrating Jesus' death. Jesus in Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45 describes his impending death as a ransom, calling himself the good shepherd in John 10:11, Jesus says that he willingly lays down his life for the sheep. He announces in John 12:23, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified' in death. When these verses are read with recollection of the meaning of Jesus' name, it is evident that Jesus was aware of the atoning work he was about to do. The rest of the New Testament agrees with Jesus' self-evaluation (e.g. Ac 13:38; Gl 1:4; Tt 2:14; 1 Pt 1:18; 1 Jn 2:2 4:10; Rv 5:9).

Daniel 9:26 may not specifically say that the anointed one's death atoned for sin. Even so, one is not surprised why the death of the second anointed one is mentioned if it has nothing to do with the accomplishing of the first three. Moreover, Daniel's prayer implores God to provide a merciful solution to the problem of sin. The first three objectives of the seventy sevens indicate that God wills to do so. In this atoning context, Daniel foretells that an anointed one will be cut off. Meanwhile, Daniel has been reading the book of Jeremiah, which foretells an anointed king of exceptional righteousness. This king's reign will be accompanied by the priestly perfection of sacrifice (Jr 33:18). Daniel has also handled visions (Nebuchadnezzar's and his) that announce the coming of the kingdom and king. Furthermore, Daniel and his companions have experienced suffering because of their faith in the God of Israel, and the God of Israel has used this suffering as a witness to Gentile kings and other nations. The Old Testament's pattern of righteous and redemptive suffering occurs in the book of Daniel. So then, linking the anointed one in Daniel 9:26 with the realisation of the six objectives in Daniel 9:24 hardly strain the grammatical method of interpretation.

Jesus taught his disciples to read the Old Testament in view of God's program of redemption that reaches every person and work (Lk 24:26-27, 44-47). The New Testament writers did just this. They may not cite every verse and explain how it is fulfilled in Jesus. Instead, they assumed that their readers knew Jesus' hermeneutic of their Christ-centred reading of the Old Testament, and could handle the rest of the Old Testament in a similar way. If associating the anointed one in Daniel 9:26 with the six objectives in Daniel 9:24, especially the first three, is done in a hermeneutical sense without Jesus' lesson in Luke 24, that association by generations of Christians after him is certainly understandable. God uses his anointed ones, especially Jesus the antitype of redemptive suffering, to solve the problem of sin.

The New Testament further explains how God answered the two requests of Daniel's prayer: mercy for sinners and glory for his name. Firstly, God in Jesus treated his people mercifully by providing atonement at great cost to himself. In doing so, he poured out his wrath onto Jesus who absorbed it along with sin's just penalty. A righteous God propitiated his righteous people by providing the consequence of sin without destroying the sinners (Dn 9:16). Secondly, God brought glory to his name through the means of redemption that climaxed at the cross of Jesus. Humans might not pursue glory through redemption, but God's glory is great and awesome (Dn 9:4). He exists in a league by himself and answers prayers in view of his glory. Humans can only marvel at 'the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God' which is regenerated through death.

### **The fourth objective**

The fourth objective promises everlasting righteousness. Daniel's prayer of confession, which was prophesied in Jeremiah, acknowledges in Daniel 9:7 that God is righteous (■ ■ ■ ■) and that his people, in effect, are unrighteous. In fact, they are covered with shame because of their wilful violations of God's commands. Those who are under the covenant that He made with Israel through Moses (Dn 9:4-15). This covenant may have provided the strength for a people already redeemed by putting their faith in the blood of the Passover lamb; nevertheless, the power of regeneration within it (Baker 2010:74; Ridderbos 1975:153; Williams 2005:151; Wright 2004:27) is not the blood of animals can neither atone for sin nor change the heart (Heb 10:1-4). Instead, the blood of the Passover lamb typologically anticipated the blood of the Lamb of God that efficaciously takes away the sin of the world. The power to transform the heart belongs exclusively to Jeremiah's new covenant in Jesus' blood (Lk 22:20). The New Testament saints experienced that power proleptically by believing God's promise regarding the blood of the Lamb.

Calvin (1981), as seen in his comments on Jeremiah 31:33, recognised this truth. He said:

the Fathers [Old *Testament saints*], who were formerly regenerated, obtained this favor through may say, that it was as it were transferred to them from another source. The power, then, to penetrate heart was not inherent in the law, but it was a benefit transferred to the law from the Gospel. (p.

God's grace comes ultimately through Jesus the anointed one. Only the Spirit of Jesus can apply the blessing and passive obedience to believers and thereby regenerate and transform their hearts. From a historic *Testament saints* experienced this work of Jesus' Spirit proleptically, and New *Testament saints* receive

Transforming grace is the basis for everlasting righteousness. Because Jesus kept the law of God with the righteous one who can satisfy the justice of God by paying sin's penalty. The resurrection proves God's work. Not only does the resurrection vindicate Jesus as the Righteous One (Ac 2:24, 33; Rm 1:4; 1 Tm 3:16) but also able to share his righteousness with those who believe in him (Beale 2011:253-254, 262-263, 473-477, 481-482; 1987:89-92, 114-117, 120-129;

Vos 1980:107, 109-114; Vos 1986:151). The Spirit of Jesus graciously applies the righteousness of Jesus to believers, who become positionally and progressively conformed to his likeness through justification, sanctification, and glorification. As they reflect his righteousness in character and conduct, righteousness spreads throughout their areas of influence. As the kingdom of God advances on earth as God's people exhibit the righteousness of Jesus that the Spirit of God works and grows in them.

The Mosaic covenant had to do with the sanctification and mission of an already redeemed people. It was given to Israel righteously in response to God's preliminary and anticipatory provision of redemption in the Exodus. Paul's association of the law with love (Rm 13:8-10), the Mosaic instruction continues to have the same purpose for New *Testament saints*. It defines how a royal priesthood carries out its mission to model a redeemed and righteous people. The disobedience of God's revealed will that characterises this present evil age. The observance of dietary laws may require adjustment because of the movement of redemptive history, but the abiding truths remain in effect.

Jesus who kept the law in order to perform Israel's priestly mission, enables his people to keep it for an evangelistic purpose (cf. 1 Pt 2:9-3:17).<sup>5</sup>

If Daniel's reading of Jeremiah's recalls the new covenant that makes righteousness possible through God's law, Jeremiah also expected a future king named *Yahweh Is Our Righteousness* (Jr 23:5-6; 33:15-17). David would act righteously and establish righteousness. No such king appeared after Jeremiah's ministry, but certainly Jehoiakim, the only Davidic descendant mentioned in Daniel, failed to exemplify righteousness. In identifying Jesus the anointed one as the son of David, the first verse of the New *Testament* signals that the Righteousness has arrived. Through him, God fully answered Daniel's prayer by turning away his anger and restoring righteousness (Dn 9:16). Jesus the righteous king saved his people from divine judgement by living sinless, paying the penalty, and breaking sin's power. He defeated their enemies - internal and external, earthly and spiritual, demonic, seen and unseen. Jesus also claimed to be Daniel's Son of man who is said to receive dominion over the kingdom (Dn 7:13-14). As such, Jesus inherited and realised the royal commission given to Adam, the first king, and later to the Davidic kings (Ps 72). He rules righteously over the creation for God's glory, the benefit of the good of God's other creatures.

One other point should be made in connection with the fourth objective. Daniel 2:37 says that the God gave dominion to Nebuchadnezzar, but not forever. Three other kingdoms follow his. Moreover, verse 38 lists the rule to humans, beasts, and birds - creatures that dwell on earth. Verse 39 even explicitly says that the God rules over all the earth. None of the four kingdoms, however, rules over heaven. So then, Daniel 2 contrasts the human kingdom on earth and God's kingdom of heaven (Pennington 2009:272). That focus is especially seen in Matthew's use of the phrase *kingdom of heaven* instead of *kingdom of God*.<sup>6</sup> Mark 1:15 reports that Jesus began his ministry by proclaiming, 'The time has come; the kingdom of God is at hand'. Curiously, Matthew 4:17 (a parallel verse in Matthew refer to the kingdom of God as the kingdom of heaven. According to Pennington (2009) the writer of Matthew did not use a 'reverential circumlocution' to avoid direct reference to God (as was done in Second Temple Judaism) but, instead, applied to Jesus the contrast in Daniel 2 between the human kingdom on earth and the divine kingdom of heaven. This contrast involves not only ontology (Jesus in contrast to the kings in I

human) but also ethics (Jesus' reign is characterised by righteousness). Pennington (2009:209) says, 'I sharp distinction between two realms: one represented by the earthly world and its unrighteous inhabitant, God', who, of course, embodies righteousness and sends his eternal Son in human dress. The Son in his humanity has the attribute of righteousness and then reflects it as the image of God in his humanity. Each person, then, is faced with the choice of about serving one of two possible masters (Mt 6:24), and the outcomes in terms of conduct and consequences are starkly different.

At this point, it is hard not to think that Matthew's contrast between heaven and earth constitutes his view of the two ages that characterise New Testament eschatology as a whole (e.g. Gl 1:4).<sup>7</sup> Although Matthew prefers to speak of two realms - an earthly realm (characterised by disobedience to God's commands) and a heavenly realm (characterised by willing submission to King Jesus) that remain in tension until the eschaton - he recognises the awareness of moral duality (good versus evil) and eschatological duality (this age and the age to come). We live in this present evil age that lives without reference to God and so suffers the deleterious consequences of its thought and conduct, the kingdom of heaven has to do with the age to come that interrupts into this present age. The person and work of God's incarnate Son. These two incompatible ages run concurrently between the first and the last of Jesus until God's kingdom and king overthrow the evil regimes of human history and cause righteousness to reign on human hearts and upon the earth - the fourth objective of Daniel 9:24.

### **The fifth objective**

The seventy sevens disclose what God will do in the future in order to answer Daniel's twofold prayer for glory for God. Stated differently, the seventy sevens announce God's promises and state his intention to fulfil them. Sealing prophetic vision, which is the fifth objective, has to do with promise and fulfilment. Promise and fulfilment are God's continued activity in history to work out his plan of redemption. Gabriel assures Daniel that God's promises to his people did not end in exile. God still has more in store for them, and he will finish what he has announced. Of course, do not constitute the first promise of God in the Old Testament. By the time that Gabriel appeared, he already had an established track record of announcing his intention and then performing his word. The story ends with an incomplete story and some promises unfulfilled.

Not surprisingly, then, the New Testament opens with Matthew's announcements of fulfilment. Whilst Old Testament citations were not predictions in their Old Testament context, Matthew considered the whole of the beginning of God's story that foreshadows the climax and consummation in the person and work of Jesus (see Wright 1992:63). Matthew was not alone in reading the beginning of the story in view of the end, for other New Testament hermeneutics lesson on Easter Sunday (Lk 24:25-27, 44-47). Jesus changed the way that they read the Old Testament. They realised that the Spirit who inspired the prophets was talking about something or someone that they could not comprehend at the time (1 Pt 1:10-12). The authors of the New Testament drew the strands of Old Testament prophecy so that they converged on Jesus, as God had intended. Jesus fit the pattern that the Old Testament introduced. He was the climax and fulfilment of God's eternal plan.

Daniel 9:24 is not the only reference to sealing in Daniel. Daniel is also told to seal a vision (Dn 8:26) at the time of the end. The contents of both are a mystery that only Jesus, according to the New Testament, could reveal. The messenger of God, Jesus came in the fullness of time to inaugurate God's kingdom on earth alone, by virtue of his death for sin, has the right to open the seals on the revelation of God's salvation (Rv 5:9-10). Moreover, Jesus alone, by virtue of his resurrection that attests to the satisfaction of divine justice, has the authority to announce the victory of God's kingdom over evil and God's vindication of those for whom Jesus died.

### **The sixth objective**

Gabriel informed Daniel that the seventy sevens would anoint the most holy one (either a place or a person) in view of the restoration of God's desolate sanctuary (Dn 9:17), the sixth objective would seem to have a person in view. The Old Testament and intertestamental literature may never record the return of God's temple, but the Gospel of John does. John 1:14 says that the Word, earlier identified as God, took a human form on earth amongst *us* people. The Greek verb *ἐσθίεν* that is translated *lived*, more literally means 'to live in a tent'. The verb, *ἐσθίεν* [tent], is regularly used in the Septuagint for the Hebrew *מִשְׁכָּן* [tabernacle]. John says that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and the glory of the one and only (*μονογενής*) who has come from God. Moreover, John 2 records Jesus' cleansing of the temple.

confronted by the Jews about his authority, Jesus said that he would destroy the temple and raise it in adds that Jesus had the temple of his body in mind, not Herod's temple. The first two chapters of John with the tabernacle and temple. The glory of God returned to take up residence not in the ■■■■■ of Herod's temple but in a new ■■■■■, viz., Jesus' body (cf. Meadowcroft 2001:448; Spatafo

As Immanuel, which means *God with us* (Mt 1:23), Jesus is Daniel's anointed ■■■■■ and Ez Gruenthaner 1939:47-48).

The parallels between Ezekiel 40-48 and Jesus continue in John. In John 4, Jesus meets a Samaritan woman and starts a conversation with her by asking for a drink. Astonished that a Jewish man would pay attention to talking to her. Jesus responds by saying that she, if she knew who he was, would ask him for a drink of water. Confused and even offended, she asks how Jesus can give her water. Jesus says that his water reproduces a spring of eternal life within those who drink it. If John has already identified Jesus as the new temple, the conversation with the Samaritan woman further establishes him as the source of the river of God's grace from Ezekiel's new temple (cf. Spatafo 1997:114). Jesus will do no less than transform creation, not by draining the Dead Sea but by reversing the curse and restoring paradise. Moreover, the river of God's grace that the Samaritan woman makes her a temple of the Holy Spirit. The glory of God now dwells in her, and she, in Christ, becomes the new temple and Daniel's ■■■■■. All who believe in Jesus, not just the Samaritan woman, drink from the new temples of the Spirit of Jesus (Jn 7:37-39; 1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:22; 1 Pt 2:5).

Revelation 21:22 goes so far as to say that no temple is in the New Jerusalem. This observation might be compared to Daniel and Ezekiel, but not really. Ezekiel 48 expands the *Most Holy Place* to include the new city (cf. Blum 2003:223; Mathewson 2003:111-115, 223-224). John recognised this truth and combined it with his belief that the residence in Jesus. Jesus and those who believe in him become the most holy one. For this reason, Revelation 21:3 says the New Jerusalem is made of pure gold. Gold in the city recalls the gold interior of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20-21). The whole city becomes a ■■■■■ (cf. Beale 2011:553-554, 640; Mathewson 2003:153-154). Revelation 21:3 says because God through Jesus resides without impediment in the midst of his people (cf. Spatafo 1997:223). Revelation 21:3 says the temple that has become a people in an unbounded place (i.e. everywhere) rather than a circumscribed place. Revelation 21:3 says a multitude of people (Gundry 1987:254-264).

The writer of Daniel may not have been able to make all of these connections, and one wonders how Revelation 21:3 was understood of his geographical discussion of radiating righteousness. In fact, 1 Peter 1:10 says that the people of the Old Testament struggled to understand what they were saying, but under the direction of the Holy Spirit they understood more than they knew. With the benefit of Jesus' teaching in Luke 24, the apostles could say that what the prophets had said was being realised in Jesus. Jesus is the new temple, the Holy of Holies, Immanuel, and the glory of God. Jesus atones by atoning for it. He establishes righteousness in his people and throughout the world by imputing his righteousness to his people and satisfying the justice of God by his vicarious death for the sins of his people. Moreover, he restores communion between God and his creation. In sum, Jesus can be viewed as the fulfilment of Daniel's prayer for the mercy and glory of God. He accomplishes the six objectives of the seventy seven Jubilees of Jubilees.

## The six objectives and New Testament eschatology

Gabriel informed Daniel that the objectives of the six infinitives would take seventy sevens to reach their fulfilment. The seventy seven are understood more literally as 490 years or more symbolically as ten jubilee cycles, but the fact that we can escape the reality that arguably five of the six objectives have yet to achieve complete fulfilment. The first objective is the third objective. Jesus has already made the final and definitive sacrifice for sin. His atoning death paid the price for the sins of his people, regardless of their place in history. Jesus died once for all (Heb 9:12, 24-28). That the Holy Spirit benefits of Jesus' work down through history to individual believers so as to regenerate and sanctify them is made possible by Jesus' affirmation on the cross, 'It is finished'. The on-going ministry of the Holy Spirit, both before and after the cross, is made possible by the finished work of Jesus.

As for the other objectives in Daniel 9:24, they have an 'already-not yet' quality to them. Regarding the

neither the Maccabean crisis nor the first coming of Jesus put an end to sin (cf. Kaiser 2011:105-106; R 1996:659). People, whether Christian or not, still sin by breaking the Ten Commandments. Even Paul, sin would no longer master them (Rm 6:14), admitted that he did not always do the good that he wanted he loathed (Rm 7:19). Moreover, Paul had to reprimand Peter for reverting to his former Jewish exclusivity. Gentile Christians out of fear of a small group of Judaisers (Gl 2:11-14). The apostles did not achieve peace neither does anyone else. Since Daniel received a visit from Gabriel, the human race in general and Gentiles persist in failing to love one another in thought, word, and deed. Children still disobey and dishonour their parents, still cheat on one another and steal from someone else what is not theirs by right of marriage. People still lie in truth to protect themselves or to gain some advantage. God's world has not yet been fully reconciled to God. Evidence abounds that the world is not yet the way it is supposed to be. It still labours under the effect of the curse in Genesis 3.

The presence of sin in the world, of course, means that the fourth objective (everlasting righteousness) has not yet been fulfilled. As Jeremiah's righteous king, the sinless Jesus may impute his righteousness to those who trust in him. In every Christian's experience lags behind his or her position. Paul remarkably claims that Christians are already in the heavenly realms (Eph 2:6), but the same letter tells its recipients to eliminate all bitterness, rage, and slander (Eph 4:31). The imperative would not be necessary if none of this unrighteous behaviour existed among Christians.

As for the fifth and sixth objectives, they, too, await complete fulfilment. Not all prophecy has yet come to pass. The fourth objective. For example Isaiah's expectation of a new heaven and earth, purged of the effects of the curse, has not yet been fulfilled. The prophetic threats against the enemies of God and his people. Jesus, for example stopped short of vengeance in Isaiah 61:2 found fulfilment *today* in the Nazareth synagogue (Luke 4:19). Instead, he merely announced when he would come in glory to judge the sheep and the goats (Mt 25:31-46). Referring to the same event, Paul would inflict vengeance on those who neither know God nor obey the gospel (2 Th 1:8). If accomplishing the sixth objective, involves expanding the perimeter of the Most Holy Place so that it fills the earth, then the temple would become a sanctuary of pure worship. From a biblical point of view, much false and abominable worship exists in the world. Moreover, those who believe in Jesus may be temples of the Holy Spirit, but the Corinthian Church applied the description kept him busy with pastoral care. Similarly, church history up to the present of unchristian conduct.

So then, what the prophets in general expected after the exile and what Gabriel in particular announced has progressively but partially materialised in history. Some difference, though, exists between the future expected by the prophets (including Daniel) on the one hand, and the New Testament on the other (cf. Beale 2011:161-162). The prophets looked ahead to one coming of God that would set matters right in a fallen world. God would judge the wicked and vindicate the righteous. He would save his people from their sins and restore his creation from the curse. For the writer of Daniel, the future began in 539 bce when the seventy sevens started counting down. In the 2nd century, God had not come, and the six objectives of the seventy sevens had not reached fulfilment. The New Testament then reports the first coming of God in Jesus. It looks not only back at what God began to do in Jesus but also forward to what he will finish at the second coming of Jesus. It recognises that not every objective of the New Testament hoped became reality in the first century ce. Whereas the Old Testament expected one coming of God, the New Testament informs its readers that there will be two. The period in between the two comings provides time for God to continue to fulfil his promises. The second coming of Jesus will mark the full realisation of the six objectives of the seventy sevens.

Recognising the difference between Old Testament eschatology and New Testament eschatology help interpreters who read Daniel 9:24-27 with reference to the Antiochene crisis (the standard scholarly view), the first coming of Jesus (the standard reformed and perhaps evangelical view), or a seven-year period of tribulation for Israel before the second coming of Jesus (the dispensational view) have something to contribute to the discussion of the seventy sevens, which run from the end of the Babylonian exile to the end of Antiochus IV, can speak meaningfully to church history because they contribute to a pattern that appears throughout the Christian Bible. That pattern is the progressive and organic accomplishment of the six objectives of Daniel 9:24 throughout the events of the seventy sevens. Stated differently, jubilee comes in stages.

For this reason, both Old Testament eschatology and New Testament eschatology feature tension between

already done in fulfilment of his promises and what still awaits realisation. The so-called tension between what has been done and what is yet to be done does not characterise New Testament eschatology alone. Postexilic literature is especially aware of this tension, but not wholly future, restoration (cf. Bright 1975:206-208). God started to do Isaiah's *new thing* in 539 bce. Daniel's seventy sevens also began counting down at that same time. But God did not finish Isaiah's objectives of Daniel's seventy sevens by the completion of the second temple in 516 bce, the erection of the temple in 516 bce, the Maccabean victory in 164 bce, the death of Jesus about 30 ce, or the destruction of Herod's temple in 70 ce. Millenniums later, he is still ushering in Isaiah's new thing and accomplishing the six objectives of Daniel's seventy sevens (though the sevens are no longer counting down). From 539 bce to the present, God's people have been experiencing the tension between what God has promised and what God has so far done. If the prophecy of Daniel's seventy sevens is taken with this tension in mind, then one can learn from the major approaches and yet recognise that none of them has fully resolved the tension.

Meanwhile, the New Testament emphasises the tension by referring to followers of Jesus as aliens and sojourners in a hostile and evil age (1 Pt 2:11). Like the Israelites in Egypt, in Babylon, and under the rule of Antiochus IV and Herod, Christians await the Jubilee of Jubilees. They may have experienced a foretaste of jubilee by means of what Jesus has done, but the fullness of jubilee (i.e. the complete enjoyment of the six objectives of Daniel 9:24) remains to be seen, which Christians wait with longing as well as joy (1 Pt 1:6-9). Whilst one could read Daniel 9:24-27 with a view to the jubilee never coming in the second century and has not come since, Antiochus IV did die and so also did Herod. Moreover, none of them came back to life. By contrast, Jesus demonstrated righteousness in life and then died for his righteous life as an atoning sacrifice for sin. As proof of God's satisfaction with his redemptive work, Jesus was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and promised to return in majesty. Not to be missed is the exceptional in the New Testament, is an anointed one who exercises the offices of king and priest by carrying out his ministry through personal sacrifice. Antiochus IV and the Hasmonean rulers knew nothing of such unselfish ministry for the people, unlike most other political leaders.

## Summary

This article has focused on what Daniel 9:24-27 means in the New Testament period and beyond. It is clear that the New Testament never explicitly cites Daniel 9:24. Still, Jesus is another anointed one and the final Anointed One. He fulfils the six objectives of Daniel 9:24: he considers the death of Jesus the definitive solution to sin (the first three objectives). Jesus makes believe that they can act righteously (the fourth objective). He fulfils prophecy (the fifth objective) by bringing about the Kingdom of God on earth, which is his exaltation through the salvation of his people. Moreover, he, as Immanuel (God with us), sanctifies the whole world (the sixth objective). By finishing the accomplishment of the six objectives of Daniel 9:24, Jesus brings the fullness of jubilee.

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<sup>1</sup> See also Ulrich (2015).

<sup>2</sup> Collins (1984:39, 82; 1993:61; 1998:17, 51) considers the recognition of patterns in history (i.e. typology, vagueness and symbolism of apocalyptic literature, of which Daniel 7-12 is an example. Typology, how apocalyptic literature. Regardless of genre, Jewish and biblical typology presupposes God's control of accomplishment of his plan of redemption. For more on typology, see Baker (2010:217, 274), Beale (2000:177-47-48), Lucas (2002:254), Meadowcroft and Irwin (2004:201), Osborne (2006:328), and Patte (1977:328-329).

<sup>3</sup> Grabbe (1997:596) says, 'Not unexpectedly, most early Christian writers give a Christological interpretation of the seventy weeks with the coming of Jesus.' For surveys of the Early Church, see Adler (1996:218-238), Beckwith (1996:239-243), Hess (2011:320-321), Knowles (1944:136-160), Tanner (2009:185-198), and Van Kooten (2009:185-198). Representatives of this approach include Gentry (2010:38), Hess (2011:330), Kline (1974:462-469), Robert Young (1949:199, 201).

[4](#) As argued by Atkinson (2004:134-149), precedent for comparing Antiochus IV and Herod the Great is *Moses* 8-9. Matthew may not liken Herod to Antiochus IV, but Herod's foreignness and cruelty certainly of a hostile ruler and could arouse in God's people a longing for a righteous descendant of David.

[5](#) On Jesus as the new Israel that recapitulates the mission of old Israel and performs it, see Beale (2001:23-24, 154-155, 219), McCartney and Enns (2001:103), Meyer (1979:240-241), and Wright (1996:59).

[6](#) The phrase *kingdom of God* is not completely absent in Matthew. It occurs in Matthew 12:28; 19:24; 23:13; 23:17; 23:19; 23:23; 23:26; 23:29; 23:33.

[7](#) On the two ages in New Testament eschatology, see Hoekema (1979:13-75), Ladd (1974:68-69, 302-303, 573-577, 591, 595-597), Ridderbos (1957:63-70; 1975:44-53, 91-93), and Vos (1986:1-41).

[8](#) Cf. Wallace (1984:165) who considers the Antiochene reading of Daniel 9:24-27 sensational with Merkle. He uses the word *penultimate* for apocalyptic visions.



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