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THE KEY ROLE OF DANIEL 7

RICHARD D. PATTERSON

PERHAPS the most persistent problem with regard to the unity and composition of the book of Daniel has been the relation of its first six chapters to its latter half.[1] Although several divergent views have been held (particularly as to the age and provenance of chapters 1 and 7[2]), these may presently be reduced to a widely held consensus: "The first six chapters of the book contain material which is older than the later chapters, and this material has been re-edited in Maccabean times to attain a redactional unity with the apocalyptic visions of chs. 7–12."[3] This study will suggest that chapter 7 functions not only as a hinge chapter that provides unity to the two primary literary genres in Daniel, but plays a key role in the understanding of biblical eschatology.[4]

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[1] For a sample of diverse opinions, see O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament An Introduction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) 512–19.

[2] Some have argued for these chapters as distinctive compositions, chapter 1 being composed as an introduction to the court tales of 2–6, and chapter 7 being viewed as an independent forerunner to the apocalypses of 8–12. For details, see R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 1106–10; J. A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927) 88–99; W. L. Humphreys, "A Life Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *JBL* 92 (1973): 211–23.

[3] J. J. Collins, "The Court-tales in Daniel and the Development of Apocalyptic," *JBL* 94 (1975): 218; see also P. R. Davies, "Eschatology in the Book of Daniel," *JSOT* 17 (1980): 33–53. Scholars continue to debate whether one author (see, e.g., H. H. Rowley, in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament* [Rev. ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1965] 249–80) or multiple authorship (see, e.g., H. L. Ginsberg, "The Composition of the Book of Daniel," *VT* 4 [1954]: 246–75; M. L. Delcor, *Le Livre de Daniel* [SB; Paris: Gabalda, 1971] 10–13) can best account for the final form of the book. A compromise position has recently been put forward by A. A. Di Lella (in L. F. Hartman and A. A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel* [AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1978] 16) who suggests that an editor-compiler (= the writer of the core apocalypse of chapter 9), utilizing the work of "several like-minded authors" was responsible for the book's final collection. Although the original edition was written in Aramaic, a translator may be assumed to have rendered 1:1–2:4a; 8–12 into Hebrew and subsequently published the "work in its present form as a single book. The date would be ca. 140 B.C."

[4] For discussion of hinging in the Scriptures, see R. D. Patterson, "Of Bookends, Hinges, and Hooks: Literary Clues to the Arrangement of Jeremiah's Prophecies," *WTJ* 51 (1989): 116–17. For Daniel 7 as a hinge chapter, see J. E. Goldingay, *Daniel* (WBC;

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DANIEL 7 TO THE STRUCTURE OF DANIEL

The narrative of Daniel 7, though full of complex details, is simply told. At the onset of the reign of Belshazzar, Nabonidus' son,[5] Daniel has a dream consisting of a series of nocturnal visions.[6] Daniel sees a great sea being driven and tossed by the four winds of heaven.[7] As he looks, four great beasts come up out of the sea, the fourth of which is a frightful appearing animal with iron teeth. It also has ten horns among which ultimately another little horn arises, breaking off three of the existing horns. This little horn on the fearsome and dreadful beast has eyes and a mouth like a man and speaks great boastful words. As he looks further, Daniel catches a glimpse of the Ancient of Days seated on his throne before the assembled courts of heaven. The record books of judgment are opened and the awful beast with the boastful little horn is destroyed. Then Daniel sees "One like a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven" (v. 13—NIV), to whom the Ancient of Days grants an everlasting kingdom and authority, and before whom all men worship.

As the account continues, Daniel, who in the previous court narratives serves as the divine interpreter to the Babylonian court (see 2:25–45; 4:19–27; 5:18–28), is himself overcome by the details of the awesome vision and asks one of the attending angels as to the true meaning of what he has seen. He learns that the four beasts represent a succession of earthly kingdoms that ultimately will be succeeded by that inaugurated by the Most High. Upon further inquiry concerning the fourth beast and the little horn that spoke so boastfully, he learns that these represent the culmination of earthly powers as concentrated in the hands of an evil ruler. This one will gain power through violent means and persecute the saints, enacting oppressive measures aimed at subverting all

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Dallas: Word, 1989) 159. J. F. Walvoord (*Daniel* [Chicago: Moody, 1971] 151) rightly remarks: "Chapter 7 is a high point in revelation in the book of Daniel; and, in some sense, the material before as well as the material which follows pivots upon the detailed revelation of this chapter."

[5]The existence and importance of Belshazzar, once universally denounced by critics as unhistorical, can no longer be doubted. For details, see J. P. Free, *Archaeology and Bible History* (Rev. ed.; Wheaton: Scripture Press, 1962) 233–35; G. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Rev. ed.; Chicago: Moody, 1974) 382–83. E. Yamauchi ("The Archaeological Background of Daniel," *BS* 137 [1980]: 6) remarks: "A recent reexamination of all the relevant cuneiform data has helped clarify the chronology . . . the coregency of Nabonidus and Belshazzar should be dated as early as 550 and not just before the fall of Babylon in 539."

[6]E. J. Young (*The Prophecy of Daniel* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977] 141) terms it "a divinely imposed dream."

[7]The term "great sea" is normally assigned to the Mediterranean Sea in the Scriptures: see Goldingay, *Daniel*, 160; L. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973) 180.

forms of traditional law and order. His time of rule, however, will be terminated at the sovereign direction of God who will then institute his rule in the midst of "the people of the Most High" (v. 27—NIV).

The account lays great stress on the dream itself with its fourfold periodization of "beastly" nations and on the culmination of that succession in the activities of a powerful and sinister figure whose defeat brings the process to its consummation in the blessed rule of God amidst his followers. The structure of the narrative may be conveniently outlined as follows: introductory setting (1), vision (2–14), response (15), interpretation (16–27), response (28).[8]

Chapter 7 has rightly been closely linked with the following material in chapters 8–12 for at least two reasons. (1) Like those chapters, chapter 7, while a dream, is also visionary in character, thus adding to a group of texts comprising a unit of "vision reports."[9] Such prophetic pieces often partake of the more frequent "announcements of judgment"[10] and "kingdom oracles" dealing with universal judgment and promises of ultimate blessing.[11] Their distinctive feature, however, is that they are cast in the form of a vision. Such oracles frequently embellish the customary Old Testament eschatological perspective of God's superintending culmination of earth's history with an emphasis on cosmic scope and supernatural beings who play an important part, and on the presence of a heavenly mediator/interpreter who furnishes needed information or interpretation.[12] (2) Much of the material that is sketched in preliminary form in chapter 7 is filled out in the succeeding

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[8]E. M. Good ("Apocalyptic as Comedy: The Book of Daniel," *Semeia* 32 [1984]: 57) suggests a chiastic structure to the main material in the vision: A—four beasts (v. 3), B—first three beasts (vv. 4–6), C—fourth beast described (vv. 7–8), D—Ancient of Days + court scene (vv. 9–10), C'—fourth beast killed (v. 11), B'—first three beasts prolonged (v. 12), A'—human figure comes with clouds (vv. 13–14).

[9]On the nature of Old Testament prophecy, see my remarks in *A Literary Guide to the Bible*, eds. Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, forthcoming).

[10]See the various discussions in C. Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, translated by H. C. White (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991) 129–98.

[11]See G. Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948) 307–18. C. Westermann terms such prophecies "salvation oracles"; see, e.g., *Prophetic Oracles of Salvation in the Old Testament*, translated by Keith Crim (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991).

[12]The decision as to whether Daniel 7–12 can also be called apocalyptic is not an easy one. Thus, E. Heaton (*Daniel* [TBC; London: SCM, 1967] 34–35) points to the omission of such typical apocalyptic elements as cosmic imagery, great battle scenes, lurid descriptions of the fate of the wicked Gentiles, and highly colored pictures of a final kingdom, a golden age of peace, righteousness, and prosperity centered around a strong Messianic leader. Noting the almost total absence of such typical apocalyptic themes, teachings found in such apocalyptic pieces as I Enoch, the Sibylline Oracles, the Assumption of Moses, and 2 Esdras, Heaton remarks; "What we find in the present work

chapters, thus making it an integral part of the latter half of Daniel. These data are conveniently displayed in Table 1.

Chapter 7 has also been linked closely by some with the court narratives[13] of chapters 1–6.[14] That such a procedure is justified may be

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[Daniel] . . . is not a formal apocalyptic tradition but, rather, a miscellaneous body of prophetic teaching and imagery about the coming kingdom of God."

Likewise, Davies ("Eschatology," 34) feels that "the word 'apocalyptic' has been detrimental to the Book of Daniel," not only because the genre itself is ill-defined but because Daniel reflects the eschatological perspective of the court tales of chapters 1–6 as applied to the Maccabean crisis.

On the other hand, scholars such as A. B. Mickelsen (*Daniel and Revelation: Riddles or Realities?* [Nashville: Nelson, 1984] 24–25) and J. J. Collins (*The Apocalyptic Imagination* [New York: Crossroad, 1984] 68–92) defend assigning the term "apocalyptic" to large portions of Daniel. Citing the importance of angelic activity and heavenly mediatorship of revelation in Daniel, as well as the explicit hope of resurrection in chapter 12, Collins ("Apocalyptic Genre and Mythic Allusions in Daniel," *JSOT* 21 [1981]: 89) suggests that Daniel "has been hindered more fundamentally by the failure of scholarship to examine individual works like Daniel in the context of the genre constituted by the corpus of apocalypses."

Both schools of interpretation can make their point. Certainly current definitions and descriptions of apocalypse do allow distinctive portions of Daniel 7–12 to be viewed as apocalyptic. If, however, one searches for the over-emphasis on cosmic themes, cataclysmic changes in the physical world and the extreme language so characteristic of later Jewish apocalyptic fervor, it is evident that Daniel uses such things sparingly. In any case, Daniel is more closely tied to mainstream eschatology with its emphasis on a sovereign God's active superintendence of the details of history so as to bring them to his final purposes. Daniel may, then, perhaps be better set beside such Old Testament passages as Zeph. 1:14–18 as "emergent apocalyptic." See further my discussion in *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah* (WEC; Chicago: Moody, 1991) 285–88.

[13]Chapters 1–6 are customarily termed "court tales." Such stories have as their central plot an account of the heroic exploits of a godly exile in a foreign court. This person's godly walk and wisdom prove his worth in various tests. He then rises to such personal prominence that he is able to improve the well-being of his people or even effect their deliverance.

These narratives customarily include such elements as: (1) a specific test involving faith, morality, or compromise of covenantal standards, (2) the friendliness of some resident court official, (3) besting the foreigners in contests or conflict, and (4) an unexpected extraordinary resolution to a besetting problem. Typical biblical examples include Daniel (Dan 1–6), Joseph (Gen 37–50), Esther, and, to some extent, Ezra and Nehemiah. Extrabiblical examples may be cited in the apocryphal stories concerning Zerubbabel (1 Esdras 3–4), Tobit, and Judith, as well as the Aramaic story of Ahiqar and the Egyptian Tale of Sinuhe.

For details, see Collins, "Court-Tales," 218–34; J. G. Gammie, "On the Intention and Sources of Daniel I–VI," *VT* 31 (1981): 282–92; Heaton, *Daniel*, 33–53; and Humphreys, "Life Style," 211–23. Humphreys divides such stories into two types: the court contest, in which the hero provides the interpretation to a seemingly insoluble problem and the court conflict, in which the hero's purity is rewarded with deliverance. Humphreys' twofold categorization is perhaps the simplest way to view the court narratives. According to this arrangement, Daniel 2, 4–5 belong with the first type and Daniel 3, 6, with the second.

[14]See, for example, A. Lenglet, "La structure littéraire de Daniel 2–7," *Biblica* 53 (1972): 169–90; J. Baldwin, *Daniel* (TOTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1978) 59–63.

TABLE 1

Daniel 7 with "Apocalypse of Gabriel" (Dan. 8–12)

ELEMENTS	7	8	9	10–12
Subject	4 beasts	2 beasts	70 weeks	3 princes
Vehicle	Dream/vision	Vision	Scrip./Prayer	Revelation
Setting	Dream/Vis. (1)	Vision (1–2)	Study (1–2)	Rev./effect (10:1–3)
Details	Lion (4)		Prayer (3–19)	
	Bear (5)	Ram (3–4)		
	Leopard (6)	He-Goat (5–8a)		
		4 Horns (8b)		
		Little Horn (9–12)		
	4th beast (7)			
	Little horn (8)			
	Consummation (9–14)	Compl. Vis (13–14)		
Mediator	Angel (15–16a)	Gabriel (15–18)	Gabriel (20–21)	1st Angel vis. (10:4–19)
Interp./	Intro. (16b)	Intro. (19)	Intro. (22–23)	Intro. (10:20–11:2a)
Information	4 beasts (17–18)	Ram (20)	70 weeks (24–27)	Persian Kings (11:2b)
		He-Goat (21)	-Purpose (24)	Mighty King (11:3–4)
		-4 horns (22)	-69 weeks (25)	South vs. North (11:5–20)
		-Little horn (23–25)	Post	N. viscious king (11:21–35)
	4th beast (19–23)		69	
	-10 horns (24a)		weeks	
	-Little horn (24b–25)		Coming ruler (26–27)	Willful king (11:36–45)
	Saints deliv. (26)			Saints delivered (12:1–3)
	Final kingdom (27)			
	Closing Formula (28a)	Sealing vision (26)		Sealing scroll (12:4)
Epilogue	Dan. troubled (28b)	Dan. troubled (27)		2d Angel. vis./
				information (12:5–13)

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seen not only in the fact that chapter 7 shares the same language (Aramaic) with 2:4b–6:28, but that, as Lenglet observes, Daniel 2–7 "est ... écrit d'une manière concentrique."[15] Indeed, its structure is finely balanced, forming a neat chiastic arrangement of material, chapters 2 and 7 presenting visions of a fourfold periodization of earth's historical and political succession, chapters 3 and 6 depicting specific adventures (told in characteristic "U shaped" plot) that test the faith of Daniel and his three friends, and chapters 4 and 5 (the centerpiece of the chiasmus) relating details illustrating divine dealings aimed at trying the character of two Babylonian kings.

Structural patterning may also be observed in the balanced progression within the two halves (2–4; 5–7) of the chiasmus. Thus, chapters 2 and 5 relate Daniel's testing in the midst of the Babylonian wise men, chapters 3 and 6 detail the personal trials of Daniel's three friends, and chapters 4 and 7 involve elements of personal testimony with regard to the reception and understanding of revelatory dreams. In addition, the close relationship of chapters 4 and 5 with their stress on royal discipline, the fifth chapter utilizing elements narrated in the fourth, has often been noted.[16] Further, the structure of chapter 7 can be seen to bear close affinities with the preceding court narratives, particularly those in chapters 2, 4, and 5. A still further unifying element can be seen in that chapter 7, like chapters 1–6, features a court scene (vv. 9–10, 13–14, 26–27), this one, however, presided over by a Heavenly Sovereign. These data are illustrated in Table 2.

Building on these findings and adding a consideration of the first chapter, an overall view of the structure of the book emerges that yields a distinctive ABA pattern:

A. Historical Introduction (1) [Hebrew]
B. Historical Information (2–7) [Aramaic]
A. Future Information (7, 8–12) [Hebrew][17]

The importance of this ancient format (observable as early as the Code of Hammurapi[18]) to the unity and composition of Daniël is duly noted by C. H. Gordon:

[15]Lenglet, "La structure," 188.

[16]Gammie ("Intention and Sources," 283) calls attention as well to "the extremely important element of 'prophecy fulfilled' ... in chapters iv and v."

[17]Note that 12:4–13 forms not only a conclusion to the vision report begun in 10:1 but also a concluding summary with instructions that serve, together with chapter 1, to bookend the entire prophecy.

[18]The rendering of the name of the great Mesopotamian lawgiver with a "p" rather than a "b" is now certain, the ambiguous Akkadian syllable sign 𒁉 (= bi or pi) being uniformly treated in this name as a p in Ugaritic (𒉿).

TABLE 2

Daniel: Overview of 2–7

	Chapter					
	2 A	3 B	4 C	5 C′	6 B′	7 A′
Subject	4 metals (Future)	Neb's Proclamation (Faith)	Neb's Writing (Character)	Bel's Writing (Character)	Darius' Proclamation (Faith)	4 beasts (Future)
Perspective	1) Test Daniel (vs) Wisemen	2) Trial Furnace	3) Testimony Dream (Past)	1) Test Daniel (vs) Wisemen	2) Trial Lion's den	3) Testimony Dream (Future)
Structure			*Epistle*			
Setting:	Dream (1–3)	Image and Proclamation (1–7)	Opening (1–3)	Feast (1–6)	Daniel's Promotion (1–3)	Dream (1)
			Body (4–36)			
Crisis:	Wisemen & Daniel (4–24)	Accusation of 3 (8–23)	1) Problem (4–33) ⎧Dream ⎨Interpretation ⎩Fulfilled	Wisemen & Queen (7–12)	Accusation of Daniel (4–18)	Details (2–14)
Resolution:	Interpretation (25–45)	Deliverance of 3 (24–29)	2) Solved Recovery (34–36)	Interpretation (13–28)	Deliverance of Daniel (19–27)	Interpretation (15–27)
			Closure			
Epilog:	Reward (46–49)	Reward (30)	Praise (37)	Reward & Fulfillment (29–31)	Reward (28)	Perplexity (28)

> Hammurapi's Code has a comprehensive literary form. The pro-
> logue and epilogue are in poetry, whose form is parallelistic and whose
> language is archaic. The laws in the middle, however, are in prose, so
> that the whole composition has a pattern, which we call ABA; A being
> poetry, B being prose. This has an important bearing upon other oriental
> compositions including the Bible. . . . Similarly the biblical Book of
> Daniel begins and ends in Hebrew, though the middle is in Aramaic. The
> possibility of an intentional ABA structure deserves earnest consider-
> ation and should deter us from hastily dissecting the text.[19]

Gordon's remark as to intentionality in the ABA pattern adds to the
impression gained by noting the book's structural refinements. The
cumulative effect has important implications for the unity and compo-
sition of Daniel. Rather than pointing to the unifying work of a late
redactor/compiler who stands at the end of a long line of editorial
activity, Daniel is best explained as supporting Gooding's contention
that "we must take seriously the book's internal proportions, as having
been deliberately planned by the author."[20]

The key role of chapter 7 to the book of Daniel is thus readily
apparent. Its central location and close correspondence with the two
major portions make it evident that Daniel 7 is in many respects the
key that unlocks the door to the problem of the unity, as well as the
understanding, of the book. Baldwin remarks: "Looked at in relation to
the Aramaic section this chapter constitutes the climax, and it is the
high point in relation to the whole book; subsequent chapters treat only
part of the picture and concentrate on some particular aspect of it."[21]

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[19]C. H. Gordon, *The Ancient Near East* (3d ed.; New York: Norton, 1965) 83–84.
ABA structure is, of course, a familiar feature of Old Testament writing style. See
W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (JSOTS 26; Sheffield: University of
Sheffield, 1986) 204–7.

[20]D. W. Gooding, "The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel and Its Implica-
tions," *TB* 32 (1981): 68. Gooding's analysis, however, proceeds along ;more thematic,
rather than literary, lines so that his suggested structural arrangement differs significantly
from the consensus of Old Testament scholarship.

Authorial intention in the ABA structural pattern would appear to be vindicated fur-
ther by the witness of Qumran. Contrary to the view of some scholars who hold that the
complete Daniel was originally written in Aramaic with sections subsequently translated
into Hebrew, manuscripts from both Cave One and Cave Four validate the change from
Hebrew to Aramaic at 2:4b and the change from Aramaic to Hebrew at 8:1. Thus, G. Ha-
sel ("New Light on the Book of Daniel from the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Archaeology and
Biblical Research* 5 [1992]: 50) remarks: "The Hebrew/Aramaic Masoretic text of the
book of Daniel now has stronger support than at any other time in the history of the in-
terpretation of the book of Daniel."

[21]Baldwin, *Daniel*, 137.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DANIEL 7 TO DANIEL'S ESCHATOLOGY

The strategic structural position of chapter 7 provides a key not only to the form of the book but to the understanding of Daniel's eschatology. Together with the bookending chapter of its first part (chapter 2), it gives a picture of earth's political future from Daniel's day onward. As noted above, that prophesied future falls into a four-fold periodization that begins with Babylon (2:36–38) and proceeds with generally deteriorating political cohesiveness but increasing ferocity through two more kingdoms to a fourth era, toward the end of which a fearsome leader arises.[22] During his time, the saints will be sorely oppressed but God will accomplish his defeat and rule through his designated leader who will reign in the midst of the saints forever (7:13–14, 18–27).

This general overview undergirds and circumscribes the further complementary revelations that follow in chapters 8–12.[23] Particularly troublesome to harmonizing the data of those chapters with the basic format of chapters 7 and 2 is the twofold problem of (1) the identification of those kingdoms/eras that succeed Babylon and (2) the understanding of the discussions concerning the little horn and the willful king that figure so prominently in chapters 8 and 11.

As for the former problem, chapter 8, which is set in the third year of Belshazzar, would appear to describe two kingdoms that will succeed Babylon, kingdoms that are identified as Medo-Persia and Greece (vv. 20–21). The vision of this chapter also tells of the rise and fall of Greece's most prominent king (= Alexander the Great), the parceling out of his kingdom after his demise, and the subsequent rise and destruction of a wicked king (= Antiochus Epiphanes) who opposes God's people (vv. 8–12, 22–25).

As for the latter problem, since the prediction concerning the wicked king (= the little horn that grew up on the he goat) at first sight seems to parallel that of the wicked king (= the little horn that grew up on the fearful beast) of chapter 7 (vv. 19–25), the question arises as to whether these two chapters are speaking of the same person. The difficulty in deciding affirmatively for such an identification is that the

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[22]The allocating of prophetic history into episodic schemes is well known in the ancient Near East, being attested in the Sibylline Oracles (4:49–101) and Tobit, as well as in Greek, Roman, Persian, and Mesopotamian traditions. For details, see J. Baldwin, "Some Literary Affinities in the Book of Daniel," *TB* 30 (1979): 90–92; *Daniel*, 55; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 40–41; Di Lella, *Daniel*, 29–33; and J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983) 1:382.

[23]For the juxtapositioning of complementary revelations as a feature of apocalyptic literature, see Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 85–86.

little horn of chapter 7 arises in the era of the fourth kingdom, while
that in chapter 8 apparently belongs to the third. To solve that problem,
many expositors suggest that the two-horned ram in the vision of chap-
ter 8, representing Media and Persia, should be harmonized with the
four kingdom sequence of chapter 7 by taking the ram as symbolizing
two successive kingdoms. The resultant four kingdom sequence can
therefore be understood as Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. Thus,
Di Lella remarks:

> Whereas in ch. 2 and ch. 7 there is one symbol for the kingdom of
> the Medes and another for that of the Persians (2:39; 7:5–6), in ch. 8
> there is a single symbol, the ram, for both these kingdoms (8:3–4, 20).
> But this does not mean that the author of ch. 8 is ignorant of the "four
> kingdom" concept of the rest of the book. On the one hand, both ch. 6
> and the Book of Esther treat the Medes and the Persians as kindred peo-
> ples in a coalition (Dan 6:9, 13; Esther 1:3; 2:14, 18; etc.); while on the
> other hand, ch. 8, in which each of the two large horns of the ram sym-
> bolizes a separate kingdom (cf. vs. 20), makes a distinction between the
> "longer and more recent" horn, Persia, and "the other," Media (vs. 3).[24]

Such a decision, however, runs counter to Daniel's consistent
symbolic scheme. For elsewhere each animal depicts a given kingdom/
era and, while the parts of an animal may signify different persons/
events/segments within a particular kingdom/era, they never appear to
be able to be understood of entirely different kingdom/eras. Further,
within the last vision (chapters 10–12), set in the days of the second or
Persian kingdom (10:1), attention is focused once again on only the
two kingdoms of Persia and Greece (11:2–4). It would appear, then,
that while chapter 7 (combined with chapter 2) provides the basic four
epoch prophetic framework for the future, the visions of chapters 8 and
11 amplify details relative to the nearer historical scene in the days of
the second and third kingdoms.

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[24]Di Lella, *Daniel*, 234; see also 212–14. Actually, those who decide for the first
and fourth kingdoms as referring to Babylon and Greece respectively are far from unan-
imous as to the identity of the second and third kingdoms. Goldingay (*Daniel*, 175, 176),
sensing the inherent difficulty in the problem and having surveyed various solutions to it,
concludes: "It is as certain an exegetical judgment as most that the contextual meaning
of Dan 7 is that the first empire is Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, the fourth is Greece.
There is less certainly about the identity of the second and third kingdoms. . . . There is
little evidence to go on in identifying the second and third kingdoms, and each interpre-
tation gives a slightly artificial result. This reflects two facts. First, Daniel is not really
interested in the second and third kingdoms, and perhaps had no opinion regarding their
identity. Second, the four-empire scheme as a whole is more important than the identifi-
cation of its parts. Dan 7 is applying a well-known scheme to a period that has to begin
with the exile and end with the Antiochene crisis."

The result of these considerations is that the twofold problem can be solved by concluding that (1) the proper identification in the four kingdom periods is Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and a concluding fourth kingdom/era, and (2) the little horn of chapter 8 must "be distinguished from the little horn of chapter 7, which came up among the ten horns of the indescribable beast. Though they have a superficial similarity, there are many differences between them and they do not belong to the same era."[25]

It may be added that the fourth of these kingdoms/eras most likely began with Rome and stretches on to the divinely instituted kingdom.[26] The appearance of the figure of a little horn in both the third and fourth kingdoms indicates that the person involved in the third (unanimously identified as Antiochus Epiphanes) stands either as a type or prophetic precursor to his antitype in the fourth kingdom. Thus, chapter 8 can be viewed as "historically fulfilled in Antiochus, but to varying degrees foreshadowing typically the future world ruler who would dominate the situation at the end of the times of the Gentiles"[27] or by seeing chapter 8 as prophetic fulfillment without consummation. Consistency of approach also predisposes one to treat chapter 11 in similar fashion. Baldwin rightly affirms:

> There are reasons for thinking that, although the chapter finds its first fulfillment in the character and reign of Antiochus IV, the matter does not stop there. Notice that (i) there are details which do not apply to Antiochus if our information about him from other sources is accurate. (ii) The emphasis throughout is less on the king's deeds than on his character which prompts his deeds. (iii) The account keeps returning to the persecution which will be directed against the godly people and the covenant. (iv) Throughout the book the proud are manifestly brought low or suddenly cut out of the picture by death. God's sovereign way of

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[25]Baldwin, *Daniel*, 24.

[26]The overwhelming consensus of Jewish and Christian interpreters holds to a four kingdom sequence culminating in Rome. See the helpful excursus of C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954) 245–68.

[27]Walvoord, *Daniel*, 196. Many expositors suggest that chapter 8 prophesies events relative to both Antiochus Epiphanes and the Antichrist. Thus, Wood (*Daniel*, 223) "sees the angel Gabriel as now giving the meaning of the vision by showing, not only the significance involving Antiochus of ancient history, but also that of the one whom Antiochus foreshadowed, the Antichrist of future history. That is, Antiochus' oppression is seen to provide a partial fulfillment of the prophetic vision, but that of the Antichrist the complete fulfillment."

An interesting parallel may be seen in D. L. Turner's conclusion ("The Structure and Sequence of Matthew 24:1–41: Interaction with Evangelical Treatments," *GTJ* 10 [1989]: 16–17) that our Lord's discussion of the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy concerning the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15–28) relates both to the A.D. 70 destruction of Jerusalem and to the eschatological Antichrist.

bringing this about is a marked emphasis in the case of Nebuchadrezzar, Belshazzar, Alexander and his successors. (v) These rulers become progressively more anti-God as the book draws to its conclusion. (vi) The chapter takes up the point made in 8:17, where the vision was 'for the time of the end'.[28]

One final problem within the book of Daniel has to do with the relation of the framework of chapter 7 to the prophecy of the seventy weeks in 9:24–27. Final interpretation of this passage has eluded the best efforts of expositors of all ages. Indeed, Montgomery calls it the "Dismal Swamp of O.T. criticism."[29] The many diverse views and the multifaceted interpretative problems resident in the passage need not be rehearsed here. For our purposes, it can simply be pointed out that by remembering that 9:24–27 is set in a context largely made up of apocalyptic literature and by allowing chapter 7 to exercise its full regulatory constraints on all subsequent chapters in the book, a satisfactory harmonization of all the data in chapters 7–12 (as well as chapter 2) can be achieved.[30] The resultant picture is demonstrated in Table 3.

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[28]Baldwin, *Daniel*, 199–200. Many commentators suggest that the shift from Antiochus Epiphanes to the future wicked ruler comes at 11:36. See, e.g., Walvoord, *Daniel*, 270–80; Wood, *Daniel*, 304–14; and R. D. Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days* (New York: Revell, 1954) 163–71. Culver (167) takes a reverse approach in observing, "So, while I feel that Antiochus' career (chapter 8, 11:21–35) is adumbrative of Antichrist's, it also appears that the prophecy of Antichrist (11:36–45) may be reflected backward to Antiochus. To one acquainted with the technique of the prophets this will not appear strange. It is one of the commonest of phenomena to find events of similar nature, but separated widely in time, united in one prophetic oracle."

[29]Montgomery, *Daniel*, 400. Montgomery concludes his long discussion of the passage (372–401) by affirming: "The trackless wilderness of assumptions and theories in the efforts to obtain an exact chronology fitting into the history of Salvation, after these 2,000 years of infinitely varied interpretations, would seem to preclude any use of the 70 Weeks for the determination of a definite prophetic chronology."

[30]The position taken here takes into account the full weight of the symbolism of the numbers seventy and seven so prevalent in the Old Testament and the intertestamental literature. The apocalyptic nature of this portion of Daniel lends further expectation to a symbolic use of numbers here (and in varying degrees throughout chapters 7–12). See M. S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalyptics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988 reprint) 20–21; D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964) 195–202; L. Morris, *Apocalyptic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) 34–37.

The passage may be conveniently divided into "seven weeks," capped by the coming of Messiah, "sixty-two weeks" of Israelite history, and a final "seventieth week" of great affliction for Israel. This latter "week" is dominated by the appearance of the Antichrist, whose godless and oppressive tactics are terminated when God's decreed end is levied upon him. For a similar division of the seventy weeks, but with different conclusions, see M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985) 482–87.

The approach suggested here has three benefits. (1) It avoids the problems inherent in finding the seventy weeks of years either as fulfilled in Christ or as punctuated with an

TABLE 3

Daniel's Framework for the Future

Chapters:	2	7	8	9	10–12
Date:	Nebuchadnezzar's 2d year	Belshazzar's 1st year	Belshazzar's 3d year	"Darius'" 1st year	Cyrus' 3d year
Kingdoms/Eras			Data/Elements		
Babylon	Head of Gold	Winged Lion			
Medo Persia	Chest of Silver	Bear	Ram w/2 horns	Seven	Add. 4 kings
Greece	Belly/thighs of bronze	Leopard w/4 wings/heads	He goat w/large horn 4 horns appear		Mighty king + successors
(Antiochus Epiphanes)			Little horn	Sevens	King of North
Rome	Legs of Iron feet/toes of iron/clay	Dreadful beast w/10 horns		62 Sevens	
(Antichrist)		Little horn		1 Seven	Willful king
Final Kingdom	Rock cut out of mountain	One like Son of Man, coming with clouds			Resurrection and Felicity

THE FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE OF DANIEL 7

Because Daniel was an heir to a long tradition of mainstream pro-
phetic activity, with which he often interacted (e.g., cf. Jer. 25:8–14;
29:10–14 with Dan. 9), his own prophetic outlook can be taken as nor-
mative when attempting to determine Hebrew eschatological perspec-
tive near the end of the Old Testament revelation. Indeed, it must
provide the framework for such important prophesied events as the
regathering of Israel, the period of Israel's persecution involved in the
teachings concerning the Day of the Lord, the great final battles of
earth's history, the coming and reign of Messiah, and the everlasting
felicity of God's people. The key role of chapter 7, so important to the
full teaching of Daniel, thus gains wider significance as an interpreta-
tive key for Old Testament eschatology.

The limited corpus of subsequent Old Testament revelation makes
specific examples of the use of Daniel 7 by later authors to be scanty at
best. The influence of Daniel 7, however, may possibly be felt in
Zechariah's report of a night vision (cf. Dan 7:7, 13 with 2:19) featur-
ing the number four (Dan 7:2–3; Zech 1:8; cf. 6:1–8). It is interesting
to note that much like Daniel's night vision, which bookends the chias-
tically designed section of Aramaic court narratives, Zechariah's vision
reports are arranged in chiastic form. Moreover, much like Daniel (7–
12), Zechariah makes great use of apocalyptic and groups his vision
reports together anthologically (1–6, 9–12). Zechariah's editorial deci-
sion may possibly have been directly influenced by Daniel.[31]

While the unquestioned instances of the continued use of Daniel 7
during the intertestamental era are few (but note such important cases
as I Enoch 69:26–71:17; 90:9–13a, 20–27; Sibylline Oracles 3:388–
400; Testament of Joseph 19:6–12; 1QM 17:6–8),[32] the fact that this
chapter provides a quarry from which many exegetical stones have been
hewn by writers of the Christian era demonstrates that its influence

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indeterminable gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks for which there is no
exegetical justification. (2) It keeps the Jewish perspective in focus. (3) It allows the full
weight of biblical evidence and apocalyptic literary interpretation to be felt. The time
perspective of Daniel is thus one of chronography, not chronology.

[31]If the proposed Danielic influence on Zechariah is allowable, it further strengthens
the contention that apocalyptic had likely already emerged by the days traditionally asso-
ciated with Daniel, the sixth century B.C. Having arisen out of eschatological prophecy, the
apocalyptic form was thus an inner-Jewish development that reached the full status as a
genre in the Intertestamental Period. Note (though he assigns a late date to Daniel) the
similar concession by D. Aune (*Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediter-
ranean World* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983] 112): "Prophecy appears to have gradu-
ally merged into apocalyptic. . . . Apocalyptic is therefore an inner-Jewish development."

[32]Many of the themes and images in Daniel 7 do occur often, such as God's fiery
throne, the "Holy Ones," "One like a Son of Man," and the ten horns.

must have continued to have been felt.[33] Certainly the Lord Jesus employs it in his Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:29–31; cf. Mark 13:26–27; Luke 21:25–28). Referring to Daniel 7:13–14 and linking it with Zechariah 12:10–12, he points out that these prophecies find their consummation as he, the Son of Man, comes in splendor and power on the clouds of heaven to gather the elect from all quarters, much to the consternation of the unbelievers of earth. In his final appearance before the Sanhedrin (Matt 26:64; cf. Mark 14:62; Luke 22:20), Jesus again draws upon Daniel 7:13, this time combining it with Psalm 110:1. Here he uses the Old Testament to emphasize his rightful place not only as the expected King Messiah, but as the sovereign judge.

It is in the Apocalypse, however, that the weight of Daniel 7 is more keenly felt. In a thorough study of the influence of the book of Daniel upon the book of Revelation, Beale demonstrates that Daniel 7 is the controlling source for large portions of Revelation (e.g., 1:4–7, 11–12; 4:1–5:14 [especially 5:2–14]; 13:1–8, 11–18; 17:5–16a).[34] It is particularly important to note the use and crucial placement of Revelation 13 and 17 in the structure of the book. After the prologue (1:1–8) and section dealing with the seven letter scrolls (1:9–3:22), the majority of the book is devoted to a discussion of the heavenly scroll (4:1–22:5). During the course of heavenly worship (4), a sealed scroll is seen in God's hand that none is found worthy to open except the victorious Lamb (5). Before the scroll can be read, each of the seven seals is opened (6:1–8:1) and seven trumpets are sounded (8:2–11:19). Now the message of the scroll can be received. It is an awesome message of the apparent reign of evil for a period of time, an era in which God's people will be sorely afflicted. Ultimately, however, the Messiah King, Jesus Christ, descends with his armies to defeat and judge the forces of evil, reign in triumph for a thousand years, and then, having put down a last Satanic insurgency, rules over a new heaven and earth.

The record of events on the scroll itself is presented in two stages termed signs, the first depicting general conditions (12–14) and the second describing specific events (15:1–22:5). The material drawn from Daniel 7 figures prominently under each of the signs. Chapter 13 tells of the rise and reign of terror of the Antichrist; chapter 17 identifies the location of his base of operations. In these chapters many of the themes and much of the phraseology of Daniel 7 may be found,

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[33]In addition to New Testament examples may be noted Sibylline Oracles 4; Apocalypse of Elijah 2; 5; 2 Esdras 12:10–12; 2 Baruch 39:5–8; 4 Ezra 12:10–39; 13:1–13a; I Enoch 46–47 (though the date is disputed, much as the case of 69:26–71:17).

[34]G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (New York: University Press of America, 1984) 154–267. Helpful summaries of Beale's research can be found on pp. 170–77; 202–3; 222–28; 244–48; 265–67.

such as the appearance of a dreadful ten horned beast (Rev 13:1–2; 17:3) who boasts great things and blasphemes God (Rev 13:2, 7, 25; 17:14) and opposes the saints (Rev 13:7; 17:6) and who has supreme authority for three and a half years (Rev 13:5). Noting these and other allusions to Daniel 7, Beale remarks:

> These parallels demonstrate a close association between chaps. 13 and 17, and are striking especially because most are the result of Daniel 7 influence. Our proposal that Daniel 7 is the controlling pattern for Revelation 17 receives more support in that chap. 13 exhibits the clearest Danielic *Vorbild* in Revelation (especially in 13:1–8, from which all but one of the above parallels are found).[35]

It is of crucial importance to note that in detailing the events of these future end-time days, John draws upon the material presented under Daniel's predictions relative to the fourth kingdom/era. Thus it may be seen that Daniel's fourth kingdom/era prophesies not of Greece (as suggested by many), which, of course, was past by the time when John wrote the Revelation, but of Rome. However, this era stretches beyond historic Rome through all its successors on to the distant period of the Great Tribulation and beyond. John's use of the material and format of Daniel 7 to portray the events of the future Tribulation Period and following reinforces the view which holds that the deeds first enacted historically under Antiochus Epiphanes will be reenacted in even more savage degree by the Antichrist. Keil rightly observes:

> Antiochus, in his conduct towards the Old Testament people of God, is only the type of Antichrist, who will arise out of the ten kingdoms of the fourth world-kingdom (ch. vii.24) and be diverse from them, arrogate to himself the omnipotence which is given to Christ, and in this arrogance will put himself in the place of God.
>
> The sameness of the designation given to both of these adversaries of the people of God, a *"little horn,"* not only points to the relation of type and antitype, but also, as Kliefoth has justly remarked, to "intentional and definite" " parallelism between the third world-kingdom (the Macedonian) and the fourth (the Roman).[36]

The broad use made of Daniel 7 by the extra-biblical authors as well by Jesus and John testifies to its continuing influence and its importance to future expectations. Daniel 7, then, provides an important setting for biblical eschatology.

[35]Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 267.
[36]Keil, *Daniel*, 260–62.

CONCLUSION

Because all of the Bible is God's inspired objectively verifiable revelation, all of it is important. Nevertheless, it is obvious that certain verses, passages, and books provide distinctive keys to the arrangement and understanding of given portions or of the Scriptures in their entirety.

The seventh chapter of Daniel takes its place among these scriptural keys. Not only is it the key to the structure of the book but it provides the framework by which the prophecies of Daniel may be understood. Further, facets of its eschatology remained normative for both subsequent orthodox Judaism and Christianity. While additional details beyond Daniel's purview have been added in the New Testament revelation, its epochal orientation and predicted events remain as basic tenets of biblical eschatology.

It is, then, a key chapter. As such it provides a meeting place for Jews and Christians, although each may differ on matters of soteriology. For both look forward to that day when after the Tribulation that stands near the end of this age, the Messiah and our Lord shall reign in the midst of his people over a refreshed and glorified earth forever.

I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."[37]

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[37]Daniel 7:13–14; Revelation 11:15 (NIV).