

When Gabriel Speaks: The Revolutionary Words of the Angel to Daniel and Mary

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“I believe that the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages; for I cannot persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world should cover its true meaning in any such mystery and doubt that none but critics and philosophers can discover it” (Daniel Webster)

Gabriel is listed in Jewish literature as one of seven archangels, holding the highest rank after Michael. In Scripture he is instrumental in the most momentous divine interventions, to explain great events in the ongoing Kingdom/immortality Plan of the “God of Israel our father” (I Chron. 29:10). Gabriel (“man of God”) appears in Daniel 8:15ff to interpret the dramatically interesting vision of the end-time concerning the ram and goat, and again in Daniel 9:21ff in response to Daniel’s impassioned plea to the God of Israel for restoration of the city and people of Israel. In the NT he foretells the birth of John the Baptist to his father Zechariah and follows this up with his astonishing visit to the probably 13- or 14-year-old Jewish girl, Mariam, the one who is distinguished by being the only human female to conceive a son without a human father, and who rightly sang, “the Mighty One has done great things for me.”

But Gabriel’s concise, information-packed messages have been clouded and obfuscated by the oceans of confusing words written to expound them. I hope that the following will dispel some of the gloom! And I offer these remarks aware that other systems have been proposed. The major deterrent to getting Gabriel’s words clear is I think failure to recognize Daniel’s vision of the Kingdom of God and above all a large-scale rejection of Jesus as Son of God, and his replacement by God the Son. What then did that magnificent super-being have to say to us as one commissioned to minister to the heirs of salvation in the Kingdom? (see Heb. 1:14).

In Daniel 9, Daniel has discovered Jeremiah’s prophecy about the 70 years during which Jerusalem is to lie desolate: “In the first year of Darius, son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent) who was made ruler over the Babylonian Kingdom — in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel [not the fictitious pseudo-Daniel of the second century substituted by so many liberal scholars] understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet that the desolation of Jerusalem would last 70 years” (9:1-2). Discovering this precious information, Daniel resolved to pray the great prayer of chapter 9. He begged God to fulfill His undertaking to restore Jerusalem, the capital city of the Kingdom, and the people of Israel (9:9-14). Probably about 67 years of the allotted punishment had elapsed. It was 538 BC, 67 years after Daniel himself had been deported to Babylon (in 605). Here is what Daniel had read: “This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for 70 years. But when the 70 years are fulfilled I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of Babylon, for their guilt...and will make it desolate forever” (Jer. 25:11-12). More specifically: “This is what Yahweh says: ‘When the seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have

banished you and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile” (Jer. 29:10-14).

I stress the *background* to the marvelous revelation given by Gabriel because it bears directly on the way we read the “70 sevens” (*shavuim*) prophecy (not strictly 70 “weeks” but seventy units of seven defined by the context). The question at hand and the prayer of Daniel concern the restoration of Israel and its capital city. Granted that the revelation of Gabriel has information about the first coming of Messiah and his atoning death, nevertheless the overarching parallel between the 70 years of captivity about to end when Daniel prayed, and the promise of a **7 times 70** period of 490 years, or ten jubilee periods of 49 years must always be kept in mind. The first consideration, if we are not to misunderstand Gabriel, is that the principal topic of both the prayer, and its answer in the revelation of the angel, is the restoration of the people of Israel and of the city of Jerusalem. Such a prophecy cannot, I think, possibly be rightly understood, if it is to *end* with a destruction of Jerusalem! (See the chart for the two systems by which this prophecy has been read.)

The real terminus is parallel to the terminus of the 70 years prophecy out of which it arises, and thus whenever the 490 years are over it will be time for restoration, and national restoration, including the city of Jerusalem. To think otherwise suggests that we are using a more allegorical method, by which words do not have their primary grammatical meaning. That method is alien to our premillenarian reading of eschatology which takes literally the restoration of the land to Abraham and his seed. Though allegorically Paul can speak of Sarah and Hagar as symbols of two covenants, in the case of Daniel 9:23-27 there is no such suggestion. We are to think politically of the great terminus to which all the prophecies of Daniel lead, and indeed the whole Bible, the restoration of Acts 3:21, the *apokatastasis* which is the putting back in order of everything about which the prophets spoke. This prospect has been the life-blood of Abrahamic Christians.

I think that on this point the Dispensationalists have a lesson to teach us. They are staunch supporters of the “futurist” reading of Daniel 9:24-27. It is at Dallas Theological Seminary that they insist that the Kingdom is going to be restored literally to Israel and Jerusalem and that that Kingdom will be on this planet. Tragically, though, having gained that insight they have then confused and obscured it by offering two *separate* salvation programs for Israel and the church, **thus restricting the Kingdom on earth and — worst of all — the Gospel of the Kingdom to Jews, making Jesus a preacher of the Kingdom to Jews only and saying that Paul introduced a different “death and resurrection” Gospel for non-Jews.** But this is to shatter the unity of the NT and make Paul contradict the Great Commission! Did not Jesus say effectively: Go everywhere and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom which I preached to Jews to everyone? (Matt. 28:19, 20).

Acts 20:24, 25 obviously, as F.F. Bruce confirms, tells us that the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom is *identical with the “gospel of grace.”* Not so Dr. Swindoll’s massive *Understanding Christian Theology* (Nelson’s, 2003) which omits all reference to Acts 20:25, the Kingdom Gospel, but is keen to tell us about the Gospel of grace in v. 24.

I will not deal in detail with the historical part of Gabriel’s words. The terminus from which we begin the 490 years is the decree to rebuild the city and from that date until the arrival of *Mashiach Nagid*, prince Messiah, will be 483 years (62 plus 7 or 69 “sevens”). Most interestingly Gabriel continues by saying not “*in* the seventieth ‘seven’” the next events will occur, but “*after* the 69 ‘sevens.’” This clue hints at the chronological gap which is to be placed between “week” 69 and the 70th “week.” That view is by no means odd since the original words

of Gabriel were that 70 “weeks” have been “cut off” or even “cut out” for the events of the prophecy. Clearly God does not tell us about every year of the history of Israel, but He has chosen to pick out from history 70 “sevens” of crucially important time. And what could be more significant than the date of the first coming of Jesus and then that critical last period leading up to his second coming and the final restoration of Israel under the Kingdom of the saints.

With the earliest premillenarian church fathers who wrote on the end times, I take the end of the 490 years to be the final “week” of this present evil age, to be followed by the restoration of Israel and the bringing in of “everlasting righteousness” which in a Danielic context is the Kingdom of God worldwide at the Parousia. All the other four great prophecy chapters end with the glorious coming Kingdom on earth and so I think does chapter 9. To end it in around AD 33 (where no certainty over chronology is any way possible) and then to extend it another 40 years to AD 70 seems to many of us to be highly problematic. Would that not turn the whole thing into a “70 weeks plus 40 years prophecy”? I think that that the weight of exegetical evidence leans heavily in favor of the so-called futurist reading of Gabriel’s words. Israel was used to Sabbatical weeks of years and was also taught to think of a final Jubilee after 49 years. Gabriel then suggests strongly that the ultimate Jubilee will begin at the end of the 490 years, when the 10 times 49 periods will be over and it will be time for celebration and final restoration. A promise of sevenfold punishment will be fulfilled. Jerusalem will be forever free. Jesus came to announce that famous Jubilee, the acceptable year of the Lord, the coming Kingdom (Luke 4:19).

Gabriel informs us of 6 major accomplishments in the allotted period of 490 years. “Your people and your city” are the first beneficiaries of this amazing prophecy. Though it is true in the NT that some of the statements about Israel are fulfilled in the church, it is also equally true that God has not forsaken forever the national Jew. Daniel is concerned about the ruined city and sanctuary and Gabriel points to the end of trouble for city and sanctuary, a process which along the way includes the coming and the death of the Messiah for sin. Transgression is to be finished, sin is to have an end and wickedness is to be atoned for. Those are the first three of the six events predicted. Then come three more, directed to the Kingdom of God: “to bring in everlasting righteousness,” “the righteousness of the ages,” to seal up vision and prophecy and anoint the most holy place. This will be the complete answer to Daniel’s prayer for his people and the city. Certainly an atonement for sin has been made, but Israel remains in rebellion until finally her remnant welcomes the Messiah at his return. He will then reign in righteous judgment over the whole earth, and Israel’s sin will be no more. Righteousness is characteristic of the coming age of the Kingdom of God. The anointing of the most holy place could refer to the millennial temple or possibly to Jesus himself. When the 490 years of punishment are over, the Abrahamic, Davidic, and Jesuanic covenants will reach their final goal. Both the sufferings and the glory of the Messiah will have been accomplished. Until then we wait, as did Joseph of Arimathea, for the coming of the Kingdom on earth (Mark 15:43).

Space does not allow for a detailed account of the grammatical issues involved in the still future part of the prophecy in Daniel 9:26, 27. But I now give you Keil’s translation of the Hebrew which I think most successfully deals with the detail of the language (an appendix at the end will allow you to look at the reasons for translation at certain points). Keil’s resultant version of the message of Gabriel to Daniel in 9:26, 27 is as follows:

“The city, together with the sanctuary, shall be destroyed by the people of the prince who shall come, who shall find his end in the flood; but war shall continue to the end, since destruction is irrevocably decreed. That prince shall force a strong covenant for one week on the mass of the people, and during half a week he shall take away the service of sacrifice, and borne

on the wings of idol abominations [cp. Ps. 18:10, where the true God is also borne on wings] shall carry on a desolating rule, till the firmly decreed judgment shall pour itself upon him as one desolated” (*Commentary on Daniel*, p. 373).

Many versions take the last word to be “the desolator” (*shomem*), but the overall sense is not affected. At all events the wicked person comes to his final destruction as the 70th “week” ends. Jesus, in preaching the acceptable year of the Lord as the much anticipated Jubilee or Kingdom of God, saw the end of the final heptad and the beginning of the time of final liberation. “Never again will Israel trust in the one who struck them” (Isa. 10:20).

Critical in this translation above is the matter of the prince who comes to his end. I think that the obvious antecedent to “end” is the nearest masculine noun which is the people or the prince. The death of the wicked person in the final events of the prophecy points definitely to the death of the future antichrist and not to the events of AD 70. Furthermore the language of Daniel 9:27b, “a complete destruction, one that is decreed,” is found verbatim in the earlier prophecy of Isaiah 10:22, 23; cp 28:22, and Paul takes up that same phrase in Romans 9:28 to tell us about the yet future restoration of a remnant of Israel in the end-time. Paul, Daniel and Isaiah thus seem to agree about the reference of the seventieth week to the future. Desolations are coming finally to an end, and the 490 years will be over, just as relief came at least in part to Israel historically at the end of the 70 years of desolation under Babylon. Of course the “42 months,” “1260 days,” “time, times and half a time,” mentioned 5 times in Revelation, I think, has its source in Daniel and the final half of that seventieth “heptad.” This is its obvious location. Jesus and John, in other words, are reading the 70th week as future to us. Jesus also reads the Abomination of Desolation, located in Daniel’s 70th week, as an event initiating the final great tribulation immediately prior to the Second Coming (Matt. 24:21, 29-31).

If this is right, then we may expect a concentrated time of Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21 = Dan. 12:1) in Israel ended by the coming of Jesus and the resurrection of the faithful of all the ages to the Life of the Age to Come, the *Hayé Olam* of Daniel 12:2. What a blessed privilege to be allowed in on the secret of God’s marvelous working in our world as we “track with” His immortality restoration program. Truly as David sang in Psalm 25:14, God will make known His covenant to those with whom He shares His intimate counsel. And all this reminds us of the parable of the sower and the priceless pearl — understanding the Mystery of the Kingdom — without which life is ultimately meaningless.

Gabriel’s Visit to Mary

^{NRS} **Luke 1:35** The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born [or *begotten*, RV] will be holy; he will be called the Son of God.”

Six hundred years later, Gabriel was dispatched to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man of the royal house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mariam.¹ The Roman Catholic expositors,² despite their excessive admiration for Mary and

¹ A number of commentators suggest that the phrase “of the descendants of David” refers to Mary who is the main subject of Luke 1:27, 28.

² Raymond Brown’s highly acclaimed *The Birth of the Messiah* (Doubleday, 1979) and Joseph A. Fitzmeyer’s commentary on Luke in the *Anchor Bible* (Doubleday, 1981) provide wonderful exposition of the Annunciation to Mary, and completely undermine the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Second Member of the Trinity. See also the excellent confirmation of “Socinian” Christology in Karl-Josef Kuschel’s tome, *Born Before All Time? The Dispute Over Christ’s Origin* (Crossroad, 1992) and the Abrahamic Christology of James Dunn (from the Protestant camp)

coupled with the misleading idea that souls are immortal and thus that Mary must be alive and able to intercede with her Son, who they say is actually God, have done brilliant work in giving the sense of these wonderful words of Gabriel. (I should mention, however, that they distorted the biblical portrait of Mary badly when they insisted that she never intended to have any children, and thus had no children by Joseph, and that Jesus had cousins and not brothers and sisters.)

How thankful I am for the concise, to the point, no-nonsense communication of the angel to Mary. In 18 Greek words (Luke 1:35), Gabriel, if anyone bothers to listen to him carefully, has demolished the Incarnation which is supposed to be the hallmark of true Christianity, and in so doing has offered us a giant step forward towards the uniting of Muslims, Jews and Christians in the belief that God is truly one (*echad*, which is the Hebrew numeral one). I believe that we have here in Luke 1:35 a transparently simple proposition, with staggering implications as a corrective of hallowed misconceptions about “God the Son,” a non-existent figure for Gabriel. I had no idea of the treasure lying in this verse until over some months and years I began reading everything I could find on it. Fitzmeyer, the Roman Catholic expositor, makes an amazing admission about what the Church has done by way of blocking the precious information given by the angel: In his massive commentary on Luke in the *Anchor Bible*, he first confirms what is obvious to any reader, that the mention of holy spirit means that God is here engaging in creative activity: “God’s creative and active power present to human beings. The parallelism is reminiscent of Hebrew poetry...power and spirit are used in conjunction.” With this observation about “holy spirit” (no definite article) and “power of the Highest” being synonymous and parallel statements, Fitzmeyer undoes centuries of tangled orthodox argumentation which sought to uphold the idea that “the power of the Highest” was in fact the second member of the Trinity, the Son, bringing about his own Incarnation — uniting himself with “human nature,” assuming as they eventually said “impersonal human nature”! With this amazing twist of Gabriel’s words the personality of Jesus became the subject of endless complex wrangles and disputations and some very cruel treatment of dissenters.

Fitzmeyer’s amazing and revealing admission about the damage the Church has done to Luke 1:35 deserves the widest press: “Later church tradition *has made something quite other* out of this verse.” In other words the Church has demolished the truth of Gabriel’s Christological revelation and hidden the Biblical Christ. The expression “later church tradition” is a seemingly innocent reference to the fact that the Bible was abandoned by that later tradition. We may well ask, how did the church “make something quite other out of this verse”? Fitzmeyer: “Justin Martyr (150 AD) wrote, ‘It is not right therefore to understand the Spirit and the power of God as anything else than the Word [capital W] **who** is also the **firstbegotten of God**’ (*Apology*, 1:33). In this interpretation the two expressions are being understood of *the Second Person of the Trinity*. It was however scarcely before the 4th century that the “holy Spirit” was understood as the third Person...It is moreover to be noted that there is no evidence here in the Lucan infancy narrative of Jesus’ preexistence or Incarnation. Luke’s sole concern is to assert that the origin of God’s Messiah is the effect of his creative Spirit on Mary.”³

in regard to Paul in *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (Westminster Press, 1980). The Roman Catholics are leading the field by far in exposing the true origin of the Trinity as post-biblical. For example (still only in German) Karl-Heinz Ohlig’s *Ein Gott in Drei Personen? Vom Vater Jesu zum Mysterium der Trinität (One God in Three Persons? From the Father of Jesus to the ‘Mystery’ of the Trinity)* (Matthias-Grunewald Verlag, 2000). This latter is a kind of German equivalent to Dr. Rubenstein’s *When Jesus Became God: The Epic Fight over Christ’s Divinity in the Last Days of Rome* (Harcourt Brace, 1999).
³Commentary, pp. 351, 352.

Wow! Firstly there was no Trinity before the fourth century, and secondly Justin has so misread Gabriel's words as to make the preexisting Son the engineer of his own conception! We have entered a world of fantasy which tragically later became permanently enshrined in inflexible dogma. The *Son*, so taught Justin, came over Mary and the Son took on flesh in the womb. The Son, according to Justin, came *through* and not from Mary. But this is exactly what the Gnostics were saying also: "The Son came through Mary as water through a pipe."⁴ By saying that the Son was the "power of the Highest," Jesus was his own Father, and the Son is older than his mother, meaning that he is no longer the *descendant* and offspring of David, or of Eve, or even of Mary! God's superlative act in the creation of the New Man, the Second Adam, is buried in an incomprehensible account of a preexisting Son taking on "impersonal human nature." But how can one preexist oneself? How can you *be* before you *are*? And can the same line begin from two different points? Surely a single person can have only one origin. If you are pre-human you cannot also be human. If no new person comes into existence in Mary, then the lineal descendant of David is obliterated and replaced by an extraordinary hybrid, God/Man or as the Witnesses think, Angel/Man. In neither case is this a human being, nor the blood descendant of David. Thus, while it pays lip service to the royal son of David, the dogma of the Incarnation makes a human *Messiah* Jesus impossible. Is orthodoxy in fact an attenuated form of Gnosticism in regard to the Person of Jesus? Though the church rejected the blatant Gnosticism which said that Jesus was not human at all, did it not embrace a milder form of Gnosticism?⁵

In our time the result of this development emerges when Chuck Swindoll quotes with approval Max Lucado's statement that "Mary changed God's diapers," or the Catholic priest's assertion that "God came to Mary and said 'Will you please be my mother?'"

Gabriel's statement is as concise as it is beautiful and logical. "Therefore, the holy one to be begotten will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Fitzmeyer: "Therefore (*dio kai*) expresses a *causal connection* between the virginal conception and the divine Sonship. It is another indication that Luke does not have a notion of Jesus' preexistence." Raymond Brown is equally candid: "Matthew and Luke press [the question of Jesus' identity] back to Jesus' conception. In the commentary **I shall stress** that Matthew and Luke show no knowledge of **preexistence**; seemingly for them the conception was the **becoming [coming into existence] (begetting) of God's Son.**"⁶ "The reader should not assume that either Matthew or Luke has developed a theory of the Spirit as a person, much less the 3rd Person of the Trinity. Behind such a conception would be images of the spirit as God-given breath of life [cp. Gen. 1] (Ps. 104:30); Matt. 27:50 as the force which moved the prophets to speak (Matt. 22:43) and as the animating principle of Jesus' ministry which descended on him at baptism and was communicated by him to his followers after the resurrection (Jn. 20:22; Acts 1:8). **Early English Protestant Bibles capitalized neither**

⁴ "The Valentinian [Gnostic] view is that Mary was only a 'place of passage,' 'a channel' for Christ" (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1, 2, Campenhausen, *The Virgin Birth in the Theology of the Ancient Church*, 1964, p. 44).

⁵ Cp. Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism* (Harper & Row, 1983), 372, emphasis added: "The early Christian Fathers, foremost Irenaeus and Tertullian, strove hard to find forms which make intelligible in a non-gnostic sense the prevailing division of the one Jesus Christ. Strictly speaking they did not succeed. Already Harnack was forced to say: 'Who can maintain that the Church ever overcame the gnostic doctrine of the two natures or the Valentinian docetism?' Even the later councils of the Church which discussed the Christological problems in complicated, and nowadays hardly intelligible, definitions did not manage to do this; *the unity of the Church foundered precisely on this*...It has often been forgotten that gnostic theologians saw Christ as 'consubstantial' with the Father, before ecclesiastical theology established this as a principle, in order to preserve his full divinity."

⁶ *Birth*, p. 31.

holy nor spirit. The Rheims Catholic edition capitalized both, the AV only Spirit until the 18th century.⁷ Luke 1:35: “‘Therefore’ — Of the nine times *dio kai* occurs in the NT, three are in Luke/Acts. It involves a certain causality, and Lyonnet, ‘L’annonciation,’ 61.6, points out that this has **embarrassed** many orthodox theologians since **in preexistence Christology a conception by the holy spirit in Mary’s womb does *not* bring about the existence of God’s Son**. Luke is seemingly unaware of such a Christology; conception is causally related to divine Sonship for him.”⁸

Gabriel in Luke 1:35, as a master systematic theologian, provides in 18 words a sufficient explanation of what Son of God means and could have prevented centuries of unresolved argument about who Jesus is.

Luke, Gabriel, and Mary could not possibly have been either Jehovah’s Witnesses or “orthodox” Christians. They did not in other words believe in the Trinity. They understood the Son to be a created being, thus committing unspeakable heresy against what later was deemed to be essential orthodoxy. Luke, Gabriel and Mary — let it be made clear — could not have signed present doctrinal statements and would not have come under the umbrella of what is now considered to be orthodox. John of course belonged to the same school of thought, as did Jesus. Jesus is reported as saying constantly that God was his Father and that God “had made him holy and sent him into the world” (John 10:36) which is no different from Peter’s teaching that God had “raised up Jesus and sent him” (Acts 3:26).⁹ “Raised him up” refers to the divine begetting and “sending” means “commissioning him to preach the Kingdom,” not sending him from a preexistent life in heaven. In both cases the Son is first created by God and then dispatched on his life-saving mission to the world. And all this is exactly the view introduced by Gabriel. The Son of God is a created being. Until the KJV added to the text in Acts 13:33 “again,” it would have been clear that Paul applied the famous “today I have begotten you” text which he cites from Psalm 2:7 to the creation of the Son in time. Verse 34 by contrast describes his raising *from the dead*. The Dead Sea Scrolls tell us in IQSa 2:11, the Charter for Israel in the Last Days, that God is expected to “father, beget” the Messiah (cp. Ps. 110:3, LXX).

There was definitely a time (and here Arius was right, although the moment of time he referred to was not in line with Luke 1) when the Son did not literally exist. There was a time, only some 2000 years ago, when he was miraculously begotten in the human biological chain, thus being the descendant, not the ancestor of Eve, and the descendant of Abraham and David (biologically via Nathan, son of David, Luke 1). The son of Mary is thus not an “impersonal human nature” of the Trinitarian theology but a lineal descendant of Adam and David with God as his Father and creator. The God of Israel is thus “the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ,” as well as the “our Father” of the Lord’s prayer, and Jesus, if you had met him personally, would assure you that he had no father except God. That gets my attention!

The churchgoing world seems not to ponder the impossible notions introduced by the doctrine of the Incarnation, which resembles transmigration or transmutation rather than the creation of a unique human being, the Son of God. Historians have documented for us the process by which Jesus became God. Before Dr. Rubenstein invited the public to look at the facts, Harnack had pointed out that preexistence and virginal conception/begetting are mutually

⁷ Ibid., p. 125.

⁸ Ibid., p. 291.

⁹ Note that John the Baptist was equally “sent from God” (John 1:6).

exclusive ideas which cannot be harmonized.¹⁰ But the church had for centuries glossed over the contradiction. Later Pannenburg made the same point: “It is indeed compatible with the idea of a Sonship existing formerly that it only became effective and was revealed at a particular, definite point in the life of Jesus. However, it — preexistence — is irreconcilable with this that the divine *Sonship as such was first established in time. Sonship cannot at the same time consist in preexistence and still have its origin only in the divine procreation of Jesus in Mary.*”¹¹ (You cannot be eternally begotten as Son and also be begotten in the days of Herod.)

He contested Barth’s efforts to make the Virgin Birth fit with the Incarnation: “The virgin birth is precisely *not* the sign of the secret of the Incarnation of the preexistent Son of God. It does not point towards the secret, but stands in *contrast to it* in its conceptual structure.”¹²

Luke 1:35 and Daniel 9:24-27 have a wonderful future when eyes are open to the staggering implications of God’s gracious messages to us as mediated by the angel Gabriel, whose voice needs to be heard in our times, when vast blocks of humanity, Jews, Muslims, orthodox Catholics and Protestants, are divided over who God is and who the Son is in relation to the One God, our Father. I hope that a Christological revolution may be at hand and a return to the God of Israel and His Messiah Jesus. We should surely employ the wonderful tools of communication available in the internet age to alert the public to the damage which has been done to God’s Messengers and their Message. We may have to take some risks because as Voltaire said: “It is dangerous to be right in matters on which the established authorities are wrong.”

But Canon Goudge’s dictum about what has happened to Christianity serves as a watchword and encouragement. He was alerting us to the catastrophe that occurred when the Jewish background to the NT was abandoned by philosophically minded theologians. “The great people of God’s choice were soon the people least adequately represented in the Catholic Church. That was a disaster to the Church itself. It meant that the Church as a whole failed to understand the Old Testament, and that the Greek mind and the Roman mind in turn, instead of the Hebrew mind, came to dominate its outlook: from that disaster the Church has never recovered, either in doctrine or in practice. If today we are again coming rightly to understand the Old Testament, and thus far better than before the New Testament also, it is to our modern Hebrew scholars and in part to Jewish scholars themselves, that we owe it.”

There is no better place to start than the words of Gabriel to Daniel and Mary to sharpen our view of God’s great Plan.

¹⁰ “The miraculous genesis of Christ in the Virgin by the Holy Spirit and the preexistence are of course mutually exclusive. At a later period, it is true, it became necessary to unite them in thought” (*History of Dogma*, Vol. 1, Eng. trans.)

¹¹ *Jesus God and Man*, pp. 141ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

APPENDIX: Daniel 9:26, "his end"

**“Jesus puts the abominable horror in the future yet;
In Daniel’s 70th week the abomination will be set.
That the 70th week is future, therefore, let us not forget.”**

A Key to Understanding

New Jerusalem Bible: Daniel 9:26 And after the sixty-two weeks an Anointed One put to death without his...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: Daniel 9:26 Nach den zweiundsechzig Wochen wird ein Gesalbter umgebracht, aber ohne (Richterspruch). Das Volk eines Fürsten, der kommen wird, bringt Verderben über die Stadt und das Heiligtum. **Er findet sein Ende in der Flut;** bis zum Ende werden Krieg und Verwüstung herrschen, wie es längst beschlossen ist.
(Translation: "He will find his end in the flood.")

French Jerusalem Bible: Daniel 9:26 Et après les 62 semaines, un messie supprimé, et il n'y a pas pour lui... la ville et le sanctuaire détruits par **un prince qui viendra. Sa fin** sera dans le cataclysme et, jusqu'à la fin, la guerre et les désastres décrétés.
(Translation: "...a prince who will come. His end will be in the cataclysm.")

Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible, 1988: Daniel 9:26 Et après soixante-deux septénaires, un oint sera retranché, mais non pas pour lui-même. Quant à la ville et au sanctuaire, le peuple d'un **chef à venir les détruira; mais sa fin viendra** dans un déferlement, et jusqu'à la fin de la guerre seront décrétées des dévastations.
(Translation: "...a prince to come will destroy them, but his end will come...")

Bible en Francais Courant, 1997: Daniel 9:26 A la fin de ces soixante-deux périodes, un homme consacré sera tué sans que personne le défende. Puis un chef viendra avec son armée et détruira la ville et le sanctuaire. Toutefois **ce chef finira** sous le déferlement de la colère divine. **Mais jusqu'à sa mort** il mènera une guerre dévastatrice, comme cela a été décidé.
(Translation: "However this ruler will come to his end...")

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" (Dan. 9:26).

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: "The suffix 'HIS' refers simply to the hostile prince whose end is emphatically placed in contrast to his coming. Preconceived views as to the historical interpretation of the prophecy lie at the foundation of all other references" (*Comm. 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.

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 and 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."
- 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.
- 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 Genesis 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."

I believe therefore that Keil is right when he says 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.

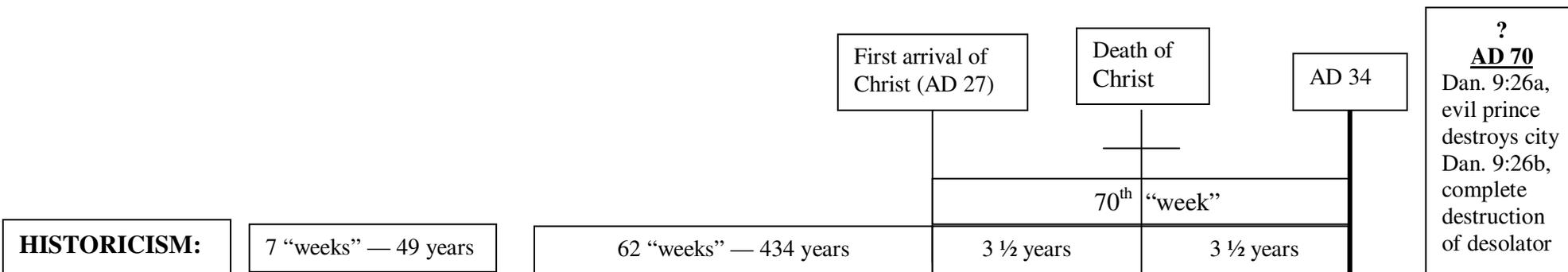
I maintain, therefore, with many commentators that Daniel 9:26 cannot be a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 since Titus, the leader of the attack, did not come to HIS END in that event. But the evil ruler will come to HIS END (Dan. 11:45) in the holy land just before the resurrection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

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 is the most obvious."

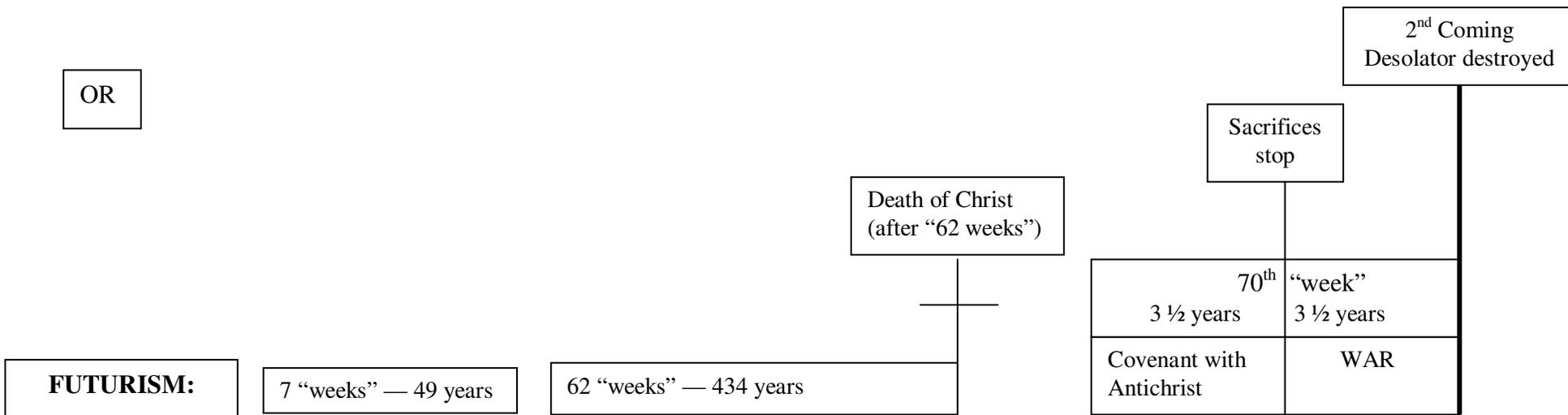
I note also the comment in *Lange's Commentary on Daniel*: "The suffix in 'his end'^[1] doubtless refers to the prince...The subject of 'he shall confirm a covenant' is beyond all question 'the [evil] prince,' which governs the preceding sentence as a logical subject, and is finally included in 'his end,' and is the prominent subject of consideration from verse 26b."

^[1] Strangely, Lange thinks that "his end" means "the end inflicted by the prince" rather than his own death.

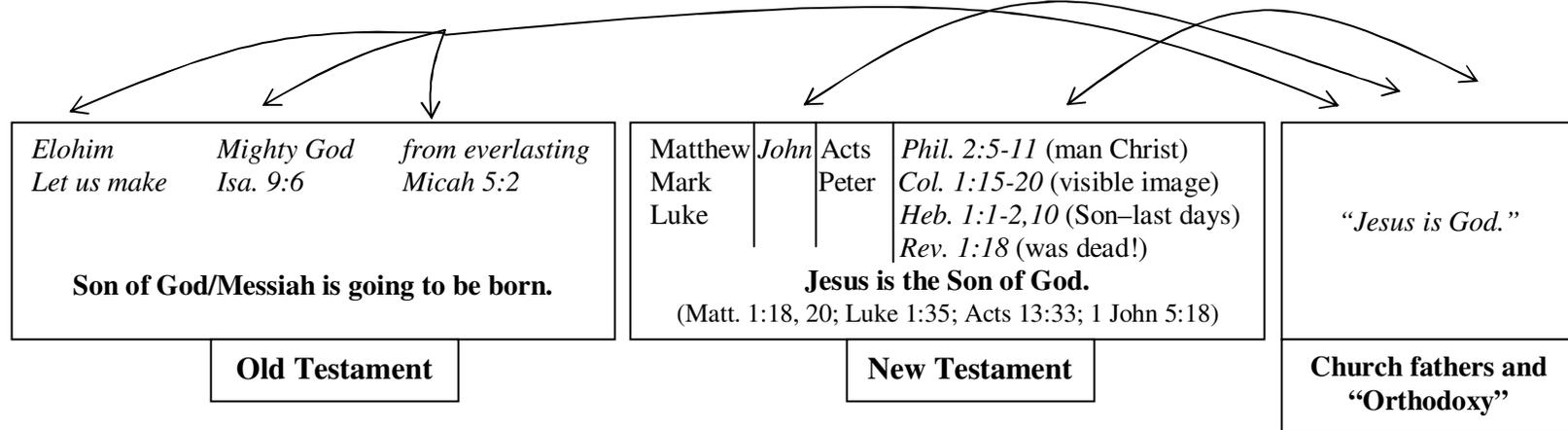
70 Weeks Prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27)



OR



How Jesus Was Turned into God



Ignoring:
 20,000 singular pronouns
 Scholarly consensus that there is no Trinity in the OT
 Jews were unitary monotheists
Elohim does not have a plural meaning when referred to God. A single pagan god is also called *Elohim*.
 Psalm 110:1 says Messiah is not God
 50 statements that God was the sole creator, unaided (Isa. 44:24)
 Mistranslation in Micah 5:2. Should read “from ancient times,” not “from everlasting” (KJV).
 “Mighty God” = divine hero (Brown Driver Briggs Lexicon of OT Hebrew, “el”)

Ignoring:
 There is no occurrence of word “God” which means “God in Three Persons”
 “ὁ θεός = Father of Jesus, over 1300 times
 Jesus is the Messiah, the lord *adoni* (not *adonai*) of Psalm 110:1. *Adoni* is never in all of its 195 occurrences a title of Deity. Psalm 110:1 is the controlling Christological text of the NT (see Acts 2:34-36 and “my lord” in Luke 1:43; “Lord Jesus,” “Lord Christ,” Luke 2:11, “Lord Jesus Christ,” multiple times)

New language: Church fathers:
 Jesus came *through* Mary
 NT: begotten *from* and *in* Mary
 Moses was “prepared from the beginning of the world to be mediator” (Testament of Moses, Pseudepigrapha)
 “God created the world on behalf of His people” (Testament of Moses)
 The new creation is through Jesus and God made the world with Jesus as the occasion of creation. God created alone (Isa. 44:24) and He rested, not Jesus, from His work (Heb. 4:4).
 “Polytheism entered the faith camouflaged with Justin Martyr.” (Loofs)