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AN EXAMINATION OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION OF TWO TIME PROPHECIES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL - THE 2300 DAYS OF DANIEL 8 AND THE 70 WEEKS OF DANIEL 9.

ASSUMPTION 19

The structure of Daniel's prophecies (e.g., vision, then explanation with a time period) dictates that Dn9 is not a separate vision, but rather is the completion of the explanation of Dn8 (i.e., it is an appendix to Dn8)

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The Purpose of This Assumption

This assumption is a fairly recent addition to the bevy of links between Dn8 and Dn9 proposed by SDA historicists. This assumption is proposed by Shea (1981). The purpose of this approach is to strengthen the idea that there is a distinction in the nature of material Shea calls “vision” and “explanation.”

The Method of This Assumption and its Associated Problems

Below is an extended extract from Shea’s work, since the concept is his. After quoting this lengthy statement, I will examine his proposals more closely and highlight the problems of his concepts.

Although ch 2 is related to the later prophecies of Daniel by content, we exclude it from this discussion because it was in actuality Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and not Daniel’s. Although it is true that God gave the interpretation of the dream to Daniel, in this case he served as a divinely inspired wise man who interpreted the dream, not as a prophet in the primary sense of the word. Because of this difference we have limited our discussions of the pattern of the prophecies given to Daniel to those given directly to him as recorded in the second half of his book – chs 7 to 12. Within this section there is an overall plan to this distribution of prophetic materials recorded there, and that plan is relatively straightforward.

Four elements are found in Dan 7, the first of these prophetic messages: (1) an initial lengthy vision – vs2-14, (2) an initial intravisional explanation – vs17-18, (3) a lengthy prophetic inquiry - vs21,22, and (4) a second and more lengthy explanation – vs23-27. The second and more lengthy explanation deals particularly with the activity of the fourth beast and its most prominent horn, and the giving of the kingdom to the saints of the Most High as a result of the judgment. Already, then, in this first prophetic passage we see the principle of the elaboration, in more detail, of selected portions, not of all the elements, of the preceding comprehensive vision; and this elaboration directly involves the fate of God’s people (v27). When the component parts of Dan 7 are reduced to their main elements, what we see is (1) a vision, followed by (2) an intravisional explanation.

The pattern of the contents of Dan 8 differs somewhat from the pattern of the contents of Dan 7. In Dan 8 we have a lengthy vision (vs2-12) followed by a short intravisional explanation (vs13,14), which was followed in turn, for the first time recorded in the book, by a lengthy extravisional explanation (vs17-26). This extravisional explanation was given to Daniel personally by the heaven-sent interpreter and messenger, Gabriel, i.e., an angelophany. The return of Gabriel with more information for Daniel, as recorded in 9:21-27, continues the *third* element found in Dan 8 – an extravisional explanation.

It is important for our purposes here to note that Dan 9 is the only one of the four main prophetic sections found in the last half of the book of Daniel that does not have an immediate preceding vision directly connected with it.

The prophecy covering the last three chapters of Daniel (10-12) begins with the vision of God (10:5-9). This vision is followed by the most lengthy extravisional explanation of the book (10:10-12:13). Although the vision of God obviously was of great importance at the time, we may disregard it here because it applied to a local problem of the sixth century B.C., i.e., struggling with Cyrus over rebuilding the temple as Yahweh's dwelling place, to which He wished to return. (Compare this picture with Yahweh's departure from His temple at the beginning of the exile as described in Eze 10.) Thus what we have in Dan 11-12, where the more apocalyptic type of materials are presented, is – in essence – a lengthy extravisional explanation.

The larger picture of what has been described thus far can now be summarised, with some simplification, including the additional information of the dated when Daniel received these visions and explanations:

Text	Date	Contents
Dan 7	1 st yr Belteshazzar	Vision & Explanation
Dan 8	3 rd yr Belteshazzar	Vision & Explanation
Dan 9	1 st yr Cyrus	Explanation only
Dan 10-12	3 rd yr Cyrus	Explanation only

At first glance it might appear that the second explanatory prophecy of Dan 11-12 is preceded by a vision in ch10, as is the case in chs7 and 8, where the structure of vision (explanation) is evident. The relationship of Dn11-12 to ch10 however, differs from the relationships evident in chs7 and 8. Daniel's view of God in 10:5-7 was primarily connected with a contemporaneous issue, that of rebuilding God's temple in Jerusalem; whereas, the lengthy prophecy which follows in chs11 and 12 deals with the course of history through the rise and fall of successive kings and their kingdoms.

A difference in technical prophetic terminology is also involved here in that Daniel's view of God in 10:5-7 was described as a *mar'ê* (appearance); whereas, his view of the rise and fall of kingdoms was described as a *hazôn* (vision). The differences involved in the use of these terms is discussed below. Cf. pp.232-39.

With this qualification in mind it can be seen from the brief outline presented above that what we have here is a parallel pair of visions with their accompanying explanations given two years apart, followed by a decade or so later by another parallel pair of explanations also given two years apart.

Such a precise structure clearly links the latter parallel pair of explanatory prophecies with their earlier parallel pair of prophecies presented by way of visions because the two parallel pairs form a couplet. Thus an examination of the overall structure of the prophetic section of the book of Daniel underscores the importance of *both* Dan 9 and 10-12 as supplying more detailed explanations of the visions given previously in Dan 7 and 8.

The position the prophecy of Dan9 occupies in this overall structure is of some importance for our discussion here because it stands first in the latter, or explanatory, subdivision of the prophetic section of Daniel and as mentioned above, it is the only one of the four major lines of prophecy here that was not immediately preceded by a vision.

These two factors forge a strong link between the vision of Dan 8 and the continuation of its extravisional explanation by Gabriel between Dan 8 and 9. This continuity of explanation into the second subdivision of the prophetic section of Daniel is also indicated by the way in which the explanatory prophecies of Dan 9 and 11-12 were introduced by Gabriel. In the first instance, he commanded (Dan 9:23): "Consider the word [that I bring you] and understand the vision [that you have seen]." On the second occasion he informed Daniel, "I... came to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come" (10:14).

The technical terms used for Daniel's visions in these verses and elsewhere in the book are discussed in more detail in the next major section of this study.

The Distribution of the Element of Time in the Prophecies of Daniel

Because an important part of what we are dealing with here involves the 2300 evenings-mornings of Dan 8 and the 70 weeks of Dan 9, some attention should be given to the distribution of this kind of chronological information in the prophecies of Daniel as a whole. The first time element, or chronological datum, to appear in these prophecies occurs at the end of ch 7. In v25 of that chapter, which falls in the second intravisional explanation, or at the end

of that prophecy, we find that the little horn was to hold sway for 3 ½ times. The very same time period is referred to, now in Hebrew instead of Aramaic (Dan 12:7), at the end of the last prophecy of the book. (The further chronological details given in Dan12:11-12 are given as a result of Daniel's final question.) Thus these two references to the 3 ½ times of this prophetic period in Dan 7:25 and 12:7 form a chronological inclusion around the prophecies of this section of Daniel's book.

More importantly for us to notice here is that these chronological details, in 7:25 and 12:7 and at the end of ch12, all come at the end of their respective prophecies. This is another way of saying that the vision, or prophecy, was given first and then it was calibrated in terms of time. The same thing can be said for the 2300 evenings-mornings in Dn8:14 inasmuch as that chronological datum comes from the last statement made in the intravisional explanation of the prophecy in that chapter. This was followed by an extravisional explanation, but that extravisional explanation did not return to this chronological point, which suggests yet another link between the prophecies of chs 8 and 9. From this review thus far it can be seen that the chronological material presented in the prophecies of chs7, 8, and 11-12 come at the end of their respective prophecies.

The chronological pattern followed in the prophecy of ch 9 is exactly the opposite of the other three lines of prophecy in this section of the book. In this case presentation of chronological data commences at the very outset of the prophecy and continues by way of subdivisions through the time period covered by the initial chronological statement. What this arrangement does, then, in terms of the overall pattern of Daniel's prophecies, is to juxtapose this time element, with which the prophecy of ch 9 begins, alongside the time element with which the vision of ch 8 ends, the latter coming at the end of the intravisional explanation of ch 8 and the former coming at the beginning of the extravisional explanation of ch 9.

(1981, p.228-232)

In the above quote Shea is saying that in order to develop a relationship of Dn9 with Dn8 which defines Dn 9 as a continuation of the explanation, Shea proposes a structural analysis of Dn7-12 containing two parallel pairs of couplets. Dn7 and 8 are a parallel pair of "vision + explanation;" whereas Dn9 and Dn10-12 are a parallel pair of "explanation only."

He then proposes that although both Dn9 and Dn10-12 supplies "more detailed explanations of the visions given previously in Dn7 and 8" (p.230), because Dn9 stands first in the second parallel pair of "explanation only," and because "it is the only one of the major lines of prophecy" which "was not immediately preceded by a vision" (p.231), "these two factors forge a strong link between the vision of Dn8 and the continuation of its extravisional explanation by Gabriel between Dn8 and 9." (Ibid)

Shea says that we ought to disregard the visions given to Daniel in ch10 because it deals with "a local problem," (p.228) thus allowing Shea to omit it in his structural analysis, he now turns around and analyses the parallel pairs of Dn9 with Dn10-12 with the vision of Dn10 included.

Here is his faulty attempt to rationalise the structure of Dn10 away:

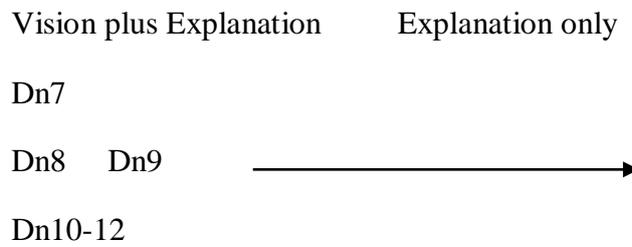
"At first glance it might appear that the second explanatory prophecy of Dan 11-12 is preceded by a vision in ch10, as is the case in chs7 and 8, where the structure of vision (explanation) is evident. The relationship of Dn11-12 to ch10 however, differs from the relationships evident in chs7 and 8. Daniel's view of God in 10:5-7 was primarily connected with a contemporaneous issue, that of rebuilding God's temple in Jerusalem; whereas, the lengthy prophecy which follows in chs11 and 12 deals with the course of history through the rise and fall of successive kings and their kingdoms.

"A difference in technical prophetic terminology is also involved here in that Daniel's view of God in10: 5-7 was described as a *mar'ê* (appearance); whereas, his view of the rise and fall of kingdoms was described as a *hazôn* (vision). The differences involved in the use of these terms is discussed below. Cf. pp.232-39." (Shea, Ibid)

Shea's reason for discounting the vision in Dn10 as not applicable because it is not a *hazôn* or because it does not deal with "the rise and fall of nations" is implausible. If it is a "vision" be it a *hazon* or a *mar'eh*, it is irrelevant. If the text says it is a vision, it is a vision. He is reasoning in a circle again. He wants only *hazôn*-visions to start the couplet, not *mar'ê*-visions. That way, he can cite Dn7 and Dn8 as the first couplet. That Dn9 and Dn10-12 start in different ways upsets this effort at finding parallel pairs, so the *mar'ê*-vision is discounted its significance. What he has also failed to notice (or does not want to notice), is that Dn10:1 and 14 call Dn11-12 both a *mar'ê*-vision (v.1) and a *hazôn*-vision (v.14).

In this he is hardly consistent with himself. He then says that since Dn9 is not preceded by a vision, Dn9 must be connected with Dn8, so that it can be seen to be connected with a vision.¹

What Shea is really saying here is that Dn9 and Dn10-12 is really *not* a parallel pair because, when it comes down to the bottom line, Dn10-12 *is* preceded by a vision – the vision in Dn10 CHECK THIS.. Thus the structural analysis should be something like this:

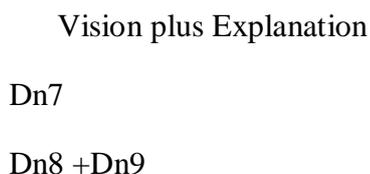


Shea could argue that Dn11-12 doesn't really explain the vision of Dn10, but it can be said that since the vision of Dn10 deals with "the struggling Cyrus rebuilding the temple as Yahweh's dwelling place," (p.229) Dn11-12 is really just a continuation of this theme as Dn10:21 clearly shows:

Then said he: Knowest not wherefore I come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the Prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.

Dn11:3,4 take up this very point and carries it on from there. Thus Dn11-12 can quite legitimately be seen as the continued explanation of the "local problem," yet now extended and carried forward to its ultimate climax.

By saying that Dn9 is the only unit "that was not immediately preceded by a vision" (p.231), and that this indicated " a strong link between the vision of Dn8 and the continuation of its extravisional explanation by Gabriel between Dn8 and 9," (*Ibid*) the structural analysis he is proposing should be diagrammed thus



¹

Dn10-12

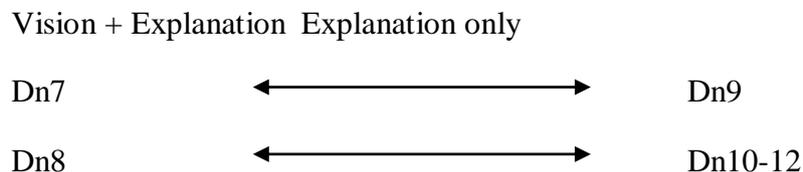
Thus he is not really proposing a structure at all. He is just saying that the “vision plus explanation” equation is the “pattern of contents” (p.229), which all three units comply with. There is no couplet, and there is no parallel pair between Dn9 and Dn10-12 using these criteria.

Returning to Shea’s structural analysis (p.230) again, a further question needs to be asked. Since, according to Shea, we have here a series of couplets, why not connect the first “Vision plus Explanation” unit (Dn7) with the first “Explanation only” unit (Dn9)?

Surely this is just as feasible? Dn 10-12 can then be linked with Dn8 thus completing the symmetry. Shea says:

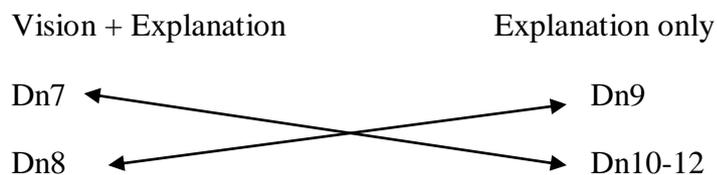
Such a precise structure clearly links the latter parallel pair of explanatory with the earlier parallel pair of prophecies presented by way of visions because the two parallel pairs form a couplet. Thus an examination of the overall structure of the prophetic section of the book of Daniel underscores the importance of *both* Dan 9 and 10-12 as supplying more detailed explanations of the visions given previously in Dan 7 and 8. (p.230)

Since the two parallel pairs form a couplet, it would be natural for them to “supply more detailed explanations” of each other. Thus we have the first vision in the first couplet – Dn7 being “supplied with more detailed explanations” from the first explanation in the second couplet - Dn9, and the second vision in the first couplet – Dn8 being “supplied with more detailed explanations” from the second explanation in the second couplet – Dn10-12. This is a very precise structure!! I’m not sure Shea would want to promote this view. His structural proposal argues against the link between Dn8 and 9. Expressing this tabularly, we would have:

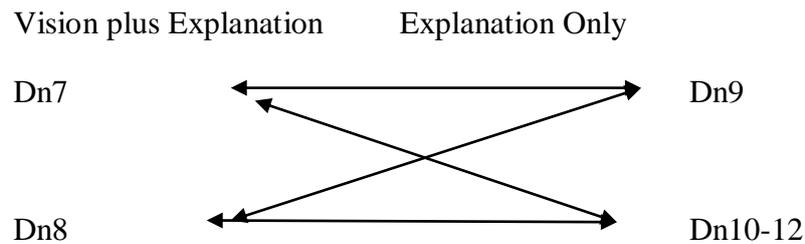


Assuming that Shea wants to link Dn9 with Dn8, why then hasn’t he argued that Dn10-12 is a continued explanation of Dn7, as this would be the only option for Dn 10-12 given the reversal structural analysis that he is proposing?

Expressed tabularly, we would have:



Shea has another problem on his hands which he hasn’t addressed in his paper. If both Dn9 and Dn10-12 “supply more detailed explanations of the visions given previously in Dn7 and 8,” (p.230) to be consistent with his own assertions, Shea has to link Dn9 with Dn7 and 8, and he also has to link Dn10-12 with Dn7 and 8. Expressed tabularly, we would have:



The conviction seems to be growing that Shea's structural analysis is losing credibility. Another question that needs to be asked: if Dn7 and 8 are a parallel pair, yet Dn8 needs to have an explanation appended to it from Dn9, in what way are they a parallel pair? Surely Dn7 would also need another explanatory chapter appended to it for it to be parallel? Shea admits on p.229, "Dan 8 differs somewhat from the pattern of the contents of Dan 7." Yet despite this, he still goes ahead and proposes a "parallel pair." It seems that he is desperate to prove that his proposed structure is valid, regardless of the occasional twisting of the plain facts that appear in these four chapters.

To change my last question into a statement, since Dn7 and 8 are a parallel pair, and since Dn7 doesn't need an explanatory appendix, Dn8 can also stand on its own without an explanatory appendix, thus eliminating the need to link Dn9 with Dn8. Dn9 and Dn10-12 can then stand by themselves since the vision of Dn10 is not really an eschatological vision in Shea's schema in the same genre as Dn7 and 8. This is the obvious outcome from Shea's own analysis, but it is not a conclusion that Shea would want to propose. Thus Shea's own analysis has defeated the purpose for which it was proposed. He has had to propose a very questionable rationale to try and make Dn9 link with Dn8 at a structural level. The result is a contrived analysis which should not be taken all too seriously.

But Shea's analysis can be refuted at other points beside the inherent weaknesses in his own proposal. The first point which mitigates against the value of this structural analysis is that it cannot stand on its own. It is dependent upon Shea's own unique definition of hazôn, mar'ê and debarîm (p.235) Although the structural analysis proposed by Shea is not thereby verified if his distinction between these three words is valid, his analysis does dissolve if, as has been argued in this paper, his tripartite distinction between hazôn, mar'ê and d^ebarîm is not valid.

I have shown in my papers on Assumption 1-3 that the concept of "vision" and "explanation" in Dn8 does not hold, but that rather than both "vision" and explanation" is referred to as "vision." (Dn9:21; Dn8:1,2,2) Second, I have shown that Dn9 can quite legitimately be called a mar'ê vision (Dn9:23) as well as a dábár. This means that Dn9 can be categorised as a vision. Thirdly, I have shown that dábár and mar'ê in Dn10:1 refers to either Dn10:5 to 12:13 or Dn11:3 to 12:13, which is properly called a hazôn, (Dn11:14), and is most certainly called d^ebarîm (ch12:4). Thus from the evidence in Dn10-12, the revelation there is referred to as a mar'ê-vision, as well as d^ebarîm and hazôn.

Given then the validity of these points, Shea's structural analysis dissolves. But there is a second point concerning the structure of the revelations in Dn7-12 which offer a better analysis of these revelations than that offered by Shea.

The salient ingredient in the revelations of Dn7 and Dn8 are that they are God-Spontaneous Revelations. There is no request on the part of Daniel for their being revealed. God spontaneously gives these to His people through the prophet Daniel by his own will and design. The best way to highlight the difference between Dn7 and Dn8 when compared to Dn9 and Dn 10-12 is to consider their introductory statements:

Dn7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his head upon his bed then he wrote the dream (and) told the sum of the matters.

Dn8:1 In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, (even unto) me Daniel after that which appeared unto me at the first.

Dn9:1-4a In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

And I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes;

And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession....

Dn10:1-5 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel whose name was called Belteshazzar, and the thing (was) true, but the time appointed (was) long; and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

In those days I Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.

I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither, did I anoint myself at all, till three weeks were fulfilled.

And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;

Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain men clothed in linen, whose loins (were) girded with fine gold of Uphaz.

From a consideration of these four units, in special regard to the direction of analysis indicated by the introductions to these units, Dn7 and Dn8 can be grouped together in contrast to Dn9 and Dn10-12. But the difference between these two pairs, as well as their commonality is not that proposed by Shea.

The salient ingredient in the revelations of Dn9 and Dn10-12 is that they are God's Response to Daniel's Request and His prayer. Notice Dn9:23:

"At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew (thee)...."

And Dn10:12:

Then he said unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

In the first set, Daniel does not present himself as seeking God; he was not fasting or mourning and seeking the Lord as he was in the second set. Expressed tabularly, the analysis would be:

First Couplet Second Couplet

God-initiated Revelations Daniel-initiated Revelations

Dn7 (hezey) Dn9 (dábár / mar'ê)

Dn8 (a hazôn /mar'ê) Dn10-12 (dábár / mar'ê /hazôn)

If this analysis is correct, there is nothing in the structural analysis of these units of revelation that implies that Dn9 is an appended explanation to Dn8. On the contrary, Dn9 is seen as an independent revelation, which can stand by itself, and which has closer links with Dn10-12 than it had with Dn7 and 8.

It should be observed however, that although this analysis of Dn7-12 is not based on terminology as is Shea's analysis, the words associated with each vision above are used given the validity of the proposals in this paper regarding their meaning.

This analysis concerning the intrinsic completeness of Dn9 is further supported by the fact that the unit of time expressed ("seventy") is more closely associated to the "seventy" years of Babylonian exile referred to by the prophet Jeremiah which is discussed in Dn9:1,2, than it does to the 2300 evening-mornings of Dn8:14. Thus the time units in Dn9:24-27 have an explicit relationship with Dn9:1,2 thus eliminating any need to look elsewhere to justify the way in which the time period of "seventy" weeks was expressed. I have previously discussed Shea's arguments in this regard. It is strange then, that he should turn around and argue in favour of the 70 weeks being associated with the 2300 day period. This can only be done if Shea assumes that the starting point for the 2300 day period of Dn8 is not given. It could be said by him that although the 70 week period is expressed in a form that had close parallels with the seventy years period of Dn9:1,2 this does not necessarily negate its relationship with the 2300 days of Dn8. Shea would say that there are other considerations, apart from the quantity of the period ("seventy"), which refers the 70 week period to the 2300 day period of Dn8. He would then elaborate on the multiple assumptions which this paper deals with, assumptions that supposedly link the time periods of Dn8 and Dn9.

As the reader has seen from the material presented in this paper, this writer questions the validity of Shea's structural analysis. Furthermore, there is a much more natural structural analysis, as proposed above – a structure which allows Daniel 9, and 10-12 to be all that God intended them to be without the artificial constraints that Shea would like to impose upon them.

Other SDA Writers See Dn8:15-26, Dn9, and Dn10-12 as Vision.

There are SDA scholars who call the material referred to as "explanation" by Shea as a "vision." Even Shea has difficulty at times in refraining from calling these revelations or prophecies "vision." Here are a number of samples where SDA historicists are not afraid to call these sections "vision":

Uriah Smith says:

Again the prophet is rapt in vision; and a heavenly messenger appears upon the scene. We ask the reader to consider carefully who this is. We last beheld Daniel in converse with Gabriel. The angel was explaining to him the things he had seen in compliance with the mandate of One qualified to command even so high an angel as Gabriel, "Make this man to understand the vision." He had explained all but the time, when Daniel's powers gave way, the prophet fainted, and he was obliged to desist. Thus the 8th chapter leaves us, Gabriel departing Heavenward, his work unfinished, and Daniel, though sufficiently recovered to attend the king's business, wondering at the vision but not understanding it. **This vision of the ninth chapter is**

the very next vision, so far as we have any account, which the prophet had. Again he is honored with the presence of a heavenly guest. And who is it? “*Gabriel*,” exclaims the prophet; and that there may be no doubt as to his identity, Daniel adds, “whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning.” Thus our minds are carried directly back to the vision of chapter 8, and the prophet declares that the very same angel he had seen at that time was with him again.

The vision of chapter 9 therefore opens as the vision of chapter 8 closed, Daniel and Gabriel in communication with each other. And there is no intervening vision to cut off the connection between the two scenes. And here we behold two of the manifold links that bind these chapters together: the same vision called up, and the same angel introduced whom we there beheld. (1876, p.507) (Emphasis mine.)

Smith says the same thing in his book “Looking unto Jesus:”

“We remember, as Daniel doubtless did, that the 2300 days ended with a promise respecting the sanctuary... In this it was necessary that he now be set right; and for this purpose the angel again visits Daniel. Again the prophet is rapt *in vision*; and a heavenly messenger appears on the scene. We ask the reader to consider who this is. ..This *vision* of the ninth is the very next chapter [after Gabriel’s first visit] so far as we have any account, which the prophet had... The *vision* of chapter 9, therefore, opens as the vision of chapter 8 closed, Daniel and Gabriel in communication with each other And there is no other intervening vision between, these two visions.” (1898, p.170 Emphasis mine)

Goldstein, classifies unwittingly Dn9 with the *mareh* of Dn8:13,14:

How interesting too, that the *mareh* of Daniel 8:14, unlike the rest of the *hazôn*, constitutes an audition, something that Daniel *hears*, as opposed to something he *sees*, as in the rest of the vision. Read Daniel 8; the *mareh* of the 2,300 days is revealed in words, not in visible symbols. In Daniel 9, when Gabriel returns and gives him the explanation, he doesn’t give Daniel a vision of rams, goats, little horns etc.; he gives him something to hear, an audition, as with the *mareh* of chapter 8. (2003, p.78)

Goldstein also quotes Shea, who inadvertently admits the same:

Also in the same volume, Dr. William Shea (“Unity of Daniel”) not only *writes* that the **visions** of chapters 8 and 9 are closely linked, being for all practical purposes one vision” – he *proves* that they are. (2003, p.74) [Goldstein footnotes: “*Symposium on Daniel*, Frank Holbrook editor, (Biblical Research Institute, Silver Spring, MD) 1986, p.221.”] [Emphasis mine]²

Hasel has called Dn8: 13,14 an auditory revelation, and on pp.384 and 437 (1986) Hasel specifically refers to mar’eh as “vision.” Thus for Hasel, an auditory revelation is a vision. To be specific, he calls it a mar’eh-vision. How one can call it a mar’eh-vision, and yet say it is not a vision has yet to be explained by Hasel. Perhaps he has purposely create d confusion where none exists. Although he calls Dn9:24-27 an auditory revelation, he refuses to call it a vision (mar’eh). Perhaps the statement “Dn9: 24-27 contains no vision...” should be read as referring to hazôn rather the mar’eh. But even so, there is vision (mar’eh) in Dn9: 24-27 if there is auditory revelation, according to Hasel’s own definition. Let us pause for a moment and consider some of the implications of Hasel’s definition of the revelation in vs24-27. If, according to Hasel’s reasoning, Dn9: 24-27 is an auditory revelation (which in the case of Dn8:14 is also a mar’e), then Dn9: 24-27 can quite rightly be referred to using his criteria as the mar’e of Dn9: 23. (Assumption 13)

² Shea’s words are: “however, the vision in chapter 9...”; “the close links between these two visions [chs. 8 & 9]...”; “in comparing the visions of chapters 7-9...” (pp.220-221)

Doukhan:³

Doukhan surprises us in his important study on the “Seventy Weeks of Daniel9: an Exegetical Study” by explicitly referring to Dn9:24-27 as a vision in its own right. He also calls it a prophecy a number of times. Here are a sample of his statements:

It is in this context that one should understand the first words of the prophecy: “70 weeks are decreed concerning your people and your holy city.” The vision has two sides. The first concerns the people; it is on a level of man, and it will speak of atonement and salvation. The second concerns the holy city, Jerusalem... (p. 257)

His next subsection is entitled “The Vision” and he then proceeds to discuss verses 25-27 under that heading. Clearly Doukhan’s work endorses the view, perhaps unwittingly, that the command to “understand the vision” in Dn9:23 refers to the vision in vs24-27.

Woolsey:

The remaining three chapters of Daniel [ch10-12] constitute one vision. Not surprisingly, this vision covers the same ground as the earlier ones. In chapter 11 the angel outlines for Daniel the main part of the vision. An interesting aspect is immediately noticeable—the nations are no longer referred to by means of symbols. Daniel is an experienced prophet now; we too have had the benefit of the interpretations given to his earlier visions. So now the angel can speak plainly. (2001, p.52)

Right away we must determine the relationship between this appearance [in Dn9] and the vision of chapter 8. In that earlier vision [Dn8]...p.47

But back to the original vision [Dn9]. Gabriel told Daniel the 490-year period would be “cut off” (Daniel 9:26)...(Ibid, p.49)

Thus the vision of Daniel 8 and 9 ends on the same triumphant note as the vision of Daniel 7 and the dream of Daniel 2. (Ibid, p.50)

Pfandl:

Dr. Gerhard Pfandl, author of the 2004 Sabbath School Lesson Guide, also produced a book on the topic to accompany the lesson. In one section, he discusses the concept of vision and explanation:

Explanation. The vision in Daniel 8:1-14 is the climax of the symbolic presentations in the book. What follows from Daniel 8:15 to the end of the book is supplementary to the vision of chapter 8. The end of chapter 8 tells us that Daniel did not understand (verse 27). In chapter 9, therefore, Daniel seeks further understanding (verse 3), and the visiting angel admonishes him to “understand the vision,” saying, “I have now come forth to give you skill to understand” (see verses 22-25). (2004b, p.77)

What is peculiar in this statement from Pfandl is that although he leads us to believe the material subsequent to chapter 8 is explanation supplementary to chapter 8, he refers to Dn10-12 as *vision*. Notice these statements:

The last *vision* in the book of Daniel has three sections: (1) the prologue in chapter 10; (2) the vision proper in Daniel 11:2-12:4; and (3) the epilogue in Daniel 12:5-13 that concludes not only the chapter but the whole book of Daniel. In this *vision*, given about two years after the return of the Jews from Babylon, God lifted the veil of history and showed Daniel some of the background to the conflict going on between the forces of good and evil.

³ Lifted from Assumption 13. See further there.

The last *vision* in the book of Daniel contains the most detailed prophecy of future events in the Old Testament. We do well to remember, therefore, that the great prophecies in Daniel are given according to the principle of repetition and enlargement. They begin either in the days of Babylon (Daniel 2 and 7) or Medo-Persia (Daniel 8 and 12), but they each climax in the establishment of the kingdom of God. Daniel 2, 7, and 8 all deal with the same powers. Chapter 7 enlarges Daniel 2, and Daniel 8 expands Daniel 7. We can expect therefore that the vision of Daniel 10-12 will enlarge the outline of Daniel 8. (Pfandl, 2004b, pp.103, 105, emphasis mine)

So in effect, Pfandl is proposing, contrary to the opinion of other SDA historicists like Hasel and Shea, that visions can be seen as explanations of previous visions; in that the material in Dn10-12, although explanatory material of earlier visions, is visionary material in itself. In addition, the concept of vision and explanation is not as clear-cut as some other SDA historicists would make out.

The Conclusion

Thus in conclusion, it can be said that in examining the structural nature of Dn7 to 12, Dn9 is complete in itself, since the unit of time used in Dn9:24 refers, not to Dn8:14, but to Dn9:1,2. This then eliminates the need to look elsewhere to justify the use of “seventy” in the time period of Dn9:24. Thus, at a structural level, there is as yet, no evidence to support the position that Dn9 is not a vision in itself, but is rather, only an explanation appended to Dn8.

The Assumptions used in this assumption

The following assumption are used by Shea in the development of his structural analysis. As the reader glances through them with a knowledge of what is written elsewhere in my papers, he will immediately see that these are invalid.

Vision and explanation are separate entities in a revelation. (p.220);

Dn8:15-26 is an explanation and is not in the vision proper(p.229);

There is no preceding vision to Dn9 (p.229);

Dn10-12 begins with a vision and then there is an explanation that is not in a vision proper (pp.229f);

The difference in the words for “vision” (hazôn, mar'ê and d^ebarîm) are significant and confirm Shea’s parallel-pair definition (p.230);

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