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Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A STUDY OF  
THE LANGUAGE SHIFTS IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL:  
A COMPARATIVE NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 1 AND 2, 7 AND 8

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
Laura K. Morrow

May 2022

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## ABSTRACT

Title: A STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE SHIFTS IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL:  
A COMPARATIVE NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF DANIEL 1 AND 2, 7 AND 8

Name of researcher: Laura K. Morrow  
Name of faculty adviser: Jiří Moskala, PhD  
Date complete: May 2022

### Problem

The problem this dissertation seeks to address is the use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel. Previously, scholars have utilized diachronic methods to explain the phenomenon of bilingualism in Daniel and have concluded that it is the product of compositional redaction. However, such studies have not produced a consensus in scholarship. In the last 40 years, several studies have emerged that conclude the use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel may best be explained as a rhetorical device. In contrast to the diachronic methodologies of prior studies, these examinations utilized methodologies that addressed rhetorical elements. Chapter One of this study briefly addresses the background to the problem of the use of bilingualism in Daniel and reviews five studies that conclude the occurrence of bilingualism is best explained as an intentional rhetorical device.

### Methodology

In response to the positive results of the five studies noted above, this study uses a synchronic method, narrative analysis, to analyze the rhetorical use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel. This analysis seeks to determine whether the language shifts in Daniel affect the narratives that occur before and after the shifts, specifically in Daniel 1 and 2 (Daniel 2:4b; Hebrew to Aramaic) and Daniel 7 and 8 (Daniel 8:1; Aramaic to Hebrew). Chapter Two includes a brief overview of the narrative elements in the book of Daniel and of the prior use of narrative analysis in Old Testament studies and in the study of the book of Daniel. Since there exists a variety of views regarding the elements of narrative analysis, the methodology used in this study follows the narrative analysis outlined in Shimon Bar-Efrat's book, *Narrative Art in the Bible*. An outline of this study's methodology is delineated at the end of the chapter.

### Analysis

In Chapter Three, an analysis of plot and character in the narratives in the chapters located before and after the first language shift at Daniel 2:4b (Daniel 1 and 2) is presented. The results of the analysis are reviewed and the existence of a narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the first language shift is identified. Next, the subsequent chapters in Aramaic (Daniel 3-7) are examined to determine whether the narrative shift is repeated throughout the Aramaic section. In Chapter Four, an analysis of plot and character in the narratives located before and after the second language shift at 8:1 (Daniel 7 and 8) is presented. The results of this second analysis are reviewed and the existence of a narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the second language shift is identified. Afterwards, the ensuing chapters in Hebrew (Daniel 9-12) are

examined to determine whether the narrative shift is repeated throughout the Hebrew section.

### Findings

Chapter Five consists of a discussion of the findings of this study. According to this study's analysis, the two language shifts at Daniel 2 and Daniel 8 correspond to two narrative shifts at the same location. First, as the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic (and as one moves from Daniel 1 to 2), a narrative shift in plot and character emerges. Furthermore, the ensuing chapters in Aramaic (Daniel 3-7) repeat several plot and character elements that emerge in the narrative emphasis identified in Daniel 2. Second, as the language shifts from Aramaic to Hebrew (and as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8), a narrative shift in plot and character emerges. Furthermore, the ensuing chapters in Hebrew (Daniel 9-12) repeat several plot and character elements that emerge in the narrative emphasis identified in Daniel 8.

As a consequence of this study's findings, narrative and theological conclusions may be noted. In a narrative sense, this study suggests three conclusions. First, Daniel 2 and 8 function as points of narrative reconfiguration. Specifically, in Daniel 2 and 8 narrative elements in the previous chapters (Daniel 1 and 7) are appropriated and reconfigured (primarily through the use of a dream/vision) to create a specific narrative emphasis. Second, the narrative emphases identified in Daniel 2 and 8 are repeated in the subsequent chapters, namely Daniel 3-7 in Aramaic and Daniel 9-12 in Hebrew. This repetition creates a complex narrative progression that reaches a climax at the point at which each language concludes, specifically at Daniel 7 for the Aramaic section and at Daniel 12 for the Hebrew section. Thus, the book of Daniel consists of a complex narrative progression that is engendered by the language shifts. Therefore, although the chapters in the book of Daniel are self-contained narratives, the repetition of the narrative elements identified in Daniel 2 and 8 functions as a narrative progression through repetition that reaches a climax at the end of each progression in the respective languages. Third, within the complex narrative progression engendered by the language shifts, Daniel 7 performs three narrative functions. First, it functions as a climax for the Aramaic section, second, it functions as a central point of reconfiguration between Daniel 2 and 8, and third, it functions as the narrative source for the reconfiguration in Daniel 8. Such conclusions are compatible with prior research on the book of Daniel, which notes that Daniel 7 is the center of the book.

In a theological sense, this study suggests two conclusions. First, the complex narrative progression that the language shifts engender depict God's resolution to the problem of the divine-human conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2. In these programmatic introductory verses, the conflict between kingly-cultic pride and God's sovereignty is broadly presented. Subsequently, the complex narrative progression noted in the language shift-narrative shift correspondence (LS-NSC) depicts God's resolution to this conflict. In the Aramaic section (Daniel 2 and 3-7) the narrative of conflict between kingly-cultic pride and divine sovereignty emphasizes the kingly context. In the Hebrew section, (Daniel 8 and 9-12) the narrative of conflict between kingly-cultic pride and divine sovereignty emphasizes the cultic context. In both contexts, divine judgment resolves the overriding

divine-human conflict. Second, within this overall context of conflict, God's representatives experience religious and mortal threats. However, as they align themselves with God through their faithfulness in the Babylonian exile and in the extended exile depicted in the Hebrew section, they experience the positive results of God's sovereignty, depicted through his acts of deliverance and judgment. Finally, this study concludes with Chapter 6, which consists of a summary and conclusion, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALBO	Analecta lovaniensia biblica et orientalia
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ATS	Adventist Theological Society
AUSDDS	Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series
AUSS	Andrews University Seminary Series
AYBD	Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary
BDB	A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BRI	Biblical Research Institute
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentn Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CurBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>EvJ</i>	<i>Evangelical Journal</i>
HALOT	Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
IDBSup	Interpreters Dictionary for the Bible: Supplementary Volume
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JATS</i>	<i>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</i>

<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JNSL</i>	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
KD	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology Series
<i>NRT</i>	<i>La nouvelle revue théologique</i>
<i>OrSuec</i>	<i>Orientalia Suecana</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RTL</i>	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>Sem</i>	<i>Semitica</i>
ST	<i>Studia theologica</i>
TDOT	The Dictionary of the Old Testament
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
<i>TRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i>
<i>TTZ</i>	<i>Treirer theologische Zeitschrift</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestament Wissenschaft</i>



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background to the Problem

##### Past Studies on Bilingualism in Daniel

Bilingualism is considered to be one of the most unique and enigmatic features of the Masoretic Text of the book of Daniel.<sup>1</sup> Scholarship has predominantly explained the presence of Hebrew (1:1-2:4a and 8:1-12:13) and Aramaic (2:4b – 7:28) in the context of the composition or translation history of the text, but such explanations have “led to an

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<sup>1</sup> Newsom states that the bilingualism in the book of Daniel is “...one of the most striking features of the book...” Carol Newsom, *Daniel*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 7. Valeta similarly suggests, “The presence of Aramaic in the Masoretic text of Daniel is undoubtedly one of the most puzzling aspects of this book.” David M. Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions, A Satirical Reading of Daniel 1-6* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 29. Hill further concludes, “The reason for the shift from Hebrew to Aramaic and then back to Hebrew in the book of Daniel remains an open question.” Andrew E. Hill, “Daniel,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* 2/8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 8:19-212, 38. Collins concludes, “One of the more conspicuous problems in the Book of Daniel is the fact that it is bilingual, being partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic.” John J. Collins, *Daniel Hermeneia* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 12. See also John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 575; Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, ConcC (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2008), 5; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, TOTC (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity, 1978), 29-35; Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*, ApOTC (Leicester, UK: Apollos, 2002), 312; Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, NAC 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 30; C. L. Seow, *Daniel*, WBC (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 7-9; Andre Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 29-30; *Daniel in His Time* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 8-12; Tremper Longman, *Daniel*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 19, n. 1; James A. Montgomery, *The Book of Daniel*, ICC (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1927), 90-92; Klaus Koch, *Das Buch Daniel*, *Erträge der Forschung* 144 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 34-35; Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel*, OTL 23 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), 40; Samuel Wells and George Sumner, *Esther and Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2013), 97; P. R. Davies, *Daniel*, OTG (Sheffield: JSOT, 1985), 35-39; Paul L. Reddit, *Daniel*, NCB (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 18-20; W. Sibley Towner, *Daniel*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1984), 5-6; Donald E. Gowan, *Daniel*, AOTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 22-23. The Church Fathers relied on the Greek text of Daniel, which is a monolingual text. Therefore, the question of bilingualism did not receive extensive study. By the fourth century the Church Fathers relied on the Theodotion text of Daniel over against the Septuagint text. See C. Thomas McCullough, “Introduction to Daniel” in *Ezekiel, Daniel*, ACCS OT XIII, ed. Kenneth Stevenson and Michael Glerup, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 149-150.



impasse.”<sup>2</sup> In the last forty years, however, several studies have sought to address bilingualism in Daniel (and Ezra) through a variety of methods other than source or redaction criticism. Several of these studies concluded that the use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel has a rhetorical function, namely that it is used to communicate meaning to the reader through the use of a literary device.<sup>3</sup> Despite such new insights, the persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7 and the shift to Hebrew after Daniel 7 continue to defy explanation.

The shift in language in the book of Daniel has been attested to since antiquity, but it has not always been the subject of investigation. The copies of the book of Daniel found at Qumran attest to the occurrence of the two languages in the Masoretic Text.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the Septuagint contains a monolingual text of the book in Greek.<sup>5</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 179.

<sup>3</sup> Abrams offers a more detailed explanation for the term “rhetorical.” He states it is the use of literary devices “to inform, to achieve imaginative consent, and to engage the interests and guide the emotional responses of the reader to whom, whether deliberately or not, his literary work is inevitably addressed.” M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981), 160.

<sup>4</sup> The shift in language in Dan 2:4b is contained in *IQDan<sup>a</sup>* although it is missing the term “*aramit*,” which is found in the Masoretic Text. The language changes from Hebrew to Aramaic despite this omission. In addition, *4QDan<sup>a</sup>* and *4QDan<sup>b</sup>* contain the same incidence of Aramaic throughout the text as is found in the Masoretic Text. The shift back to Hebrew is also contained in *4QDan<sup>a</sup>* and *4QDan<sup>b</sup>*, in addition to the same incidence of Hebrew as is found in the Masoretic Text. See O.P. Barthelemy and J.T. Milik, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert I: Qumran Cave I* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 150-152; Eugene Ulrich et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XVI: Qumran Cave 4 – 9, Psalms to Chronicles* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 239-289. Other Daniel related texts from Qumran include the three *Pseudo-Daniel* fragments and the *Prayer of Nabonidus*. See Peter W. Flint, “The Tradition at Qumran,” in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Peter W. Flint (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 41-60.

<sup>5</sup> The Old Greek and Theodotion versions of the book of Daniel are monolingual texts; therefore, they do not retain the shift in language. In Daniel 2:4b, where the shift from Hebrew to Aramaic occurs, the word “*aramit*” is translated as “*Euristi*” in both versions. See Tim McLay, *The Old Greek and Theodotion Versions of Daniel* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 66. See also *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (NETS) International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and Alfred Rahlfs and Robert Hanhart, *Septuaginta: Editio Altera*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006).

investigation of bilingualism was infrequently addressed by the writings of the Church Fathers<sup>6</sup>, ancient Jewish writers, medieval rabbinic commentators<sup>7</sup>, and the Reformers.<sup>8</sup> It

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<sup>6</sup> One of the earliest commentaries on the book of Daniel was written by Hippolytus of Rome (170-235 CE). Schmidt states it may be one of “the earliest Christian works of...commentary that we have extant.” *Hippolytus of Rome*, Thomas C. Schmidt (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2017), 2. He served as bishop of Rome and was the last of the western Church Fathers to write in Greek. Hippolytus was a prolific writer and is best known for two works: *Refutatio omnium haeresium* (Refutation of All Heresies) and *Traditio apostolica* (Apostolic Tradition). Although his commentary on the book of Daniel (c. 230 CE) is one of the earliest commentaries by a father of the church, only fragments remain. The extant parts are a mixture of commentary and scholia (explanatory comments on particular texts). The commentary begins with a short synopsis of the historical context of the book and then focuses on Daniel 7-12 and gives explanations for the visions and revelations. The shift in language is not noted in the commentary. Hubertus R. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*, trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 122. Jerome’s commentary on Daniel is one of the few from antiquity that has been completely preserved. His main purpose is to defend the traditional interpretation of the book of Daniel, specifically in light of the writings of the third century neo-platonist Porphyry. Although Jerome states that, “it is not our purpose to make answer to the false accusations of an adversary...but rather to treat of the actual content of the prophet’s message for the benefit of us who are Christians...,” he consistently addresses Porphyry’s claims throughout his commentary. *Jerome’s Commentary on the Book of Daniel*. Translated by Gleason L. Archer, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1958), 15. According to Ariane Magny, Jerome “is our main source for Porphyry’s *Against the Christians*, for he provides even more material than Eusebius and Augustine.” Ariane Magny, *Porphyry in Fragments: Reception of an Anti-Christian Text in Late Antiquity*. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 14. Magny proposes that, “Porphyry’s critique is shaped by the historical contexts, the writing style, and the agenda, of the authors who cite him.” Magny, *Porphyry*, 2. Jerome comments on the shifts in language, but does not write extensively on the subject. He only states that the language shifts to “Chaldee” from Dan. 2:4 to the end of ch. 7. *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*, 25. Theodoret of Cyrus lived during the fourth/fifth century CE (393-457). His commentary on Daniel, which was possibly written in 433 CE, was written to refute the Jewish canon’s placement of the book in the Writings rather than in the Prophets. It was instrumental in influencing the retention of the placement of the book among the Major Prophets in the Christian Bible. Robert C. Hill, *Theodoret of Cyrus: Commentary of Daniel* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), xii. Theodoret is understood to be “among the most prolific and most significant theologians of the Greek church, especially on account of his historical, exegetical, and dogmatic works.” He may also be considered the “greatest biblical scholar of the Antiochene school,” over against Theodore of Mopsuestia. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 473, 474. Theodoret discusses the shift in language from Hebrew to Aramaic in Dan 2:4, but the shift back to Hebrew is not mentioned. This may be due to the fact that the Greek version of the Old Testament was used instead of the Hebrew/Aramaic text. Theodoret knew Syriac but he did not know Hebrew, so he probably did not consult the Hebrew/Aramaic text. He states that the shift to Aramaic represents the fact that although the wise men were from different nations “they all used Aramaic in common in their wish to convey a unanimous reply.” Hill, *Theodoret of Cyrus*, 35-37.

<sup>7</sup> In classical rabbinic literature, which consists of the Mishnah, the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds and compilations of ancient Jewish midrash, there is a paucity of commentary on the shifts in language in the book of Daniel. The few statements that exist suggest that the shift in language is a result of the view that Aramaic was a language used together with Hebrew, so it was acceptable to use in sacred writings. The Mishnah does not focus on biblical commentary; therefore, midrash was developed to fill this vacuum. Gary G. Porton, “Rabbinic Midrash,” in *A History of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 1:198-224, 207. Porton states that Neusner “argues that the crisis produced by the Mishnah’s unique style engendered not only the gemarot, those parts of the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds which comment upon the Mishnah, but also midrash.” Also, Rimon Kasher notes that the works

was not until the hermeneutical changes engendered by the Enlightenment that the investigation of bilingualism became a perennial and pronounced aspect of the study of the book.

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of the Mishnah, Tosefta, and the two Talmuds do not have Bible commentary as their primary purpose, as do the works of midrash. See Rimon Kasher, "The Interpretation of Scripture in Rabbinic Literature," *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, eds. Martin Jan Mulder and Harry Sysling (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 547-594, 547. See also Robert A. Harris, "Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis," in *A History of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 2:141-171, 146. Harris notes that there is no "midrash Isaiah." The important midrashic compilations include Tannaitic Midrashim (composed during the Tannaitic-early Amoraic periods of the first to the fifth centuries CE), Midrash Rabbah ("Aggadic midrashim on the Pentateuch and the Megillot" that only include the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther), and later compilations from various centuries from the first to the fourteenth century. See also Carol Bakhos, "Midrashic Interpretation in Antiquity and the Middle Ages" *A History of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:113-140, 116-117. Some Jewish medieval commentators produced commentaries on the book of Daniel, yet they did not address the matters of the shift in language. For example, Rabbi Saadia Gaon's commentary on the book does not mention the shift in language in his discussion of the corresponding texts. Joseph Alobaidi, *The Book of Daniel: The Commentary of R. Saadia Gaon, Edition and Translation* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006). In addition, both Rashi (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac; 1040-1105 CE), and Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164 CE) wrote commentaries on the book of Daniel, but neither extensively addressed the matter of the shifts in language. Maurice Liber notes that "Rashi wholly ignored what modern criticism calls the Introduction to the Scriptures, that is to say, the study of the Bible and the books of which it is composed from the point of view of their origin, their value, and the changes they have undergone." Maurice Liber, *Rashi*, translated from the French by Adele Szold. (New York: Hermon Press, 1905), 130. See also *Mikraot Gedalot* (New York: Hostsa'at Malkut, 1969).

<sup>8</sup> Martin Luther did not complete a standard commentary on the book of Daniel, but his preface to the book in his translation of the Old Testament offers an extended commentary on several topics. However, his work focuses primarily on the contents of the narrative as well as the historical background, and the content and interpretation of the dreams and visions. He does not mention the shift in language. E. Theodore Bachmann, *Luther's Works*, vol. 35, *Word and Sacrament I* (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg, 1960). Luther also wrote a treatise on the book of Daniel, namely, *Kurze erelerung uber de Propheten Danielem (Short Explanation on the Prophet Daniel)*, 1544. See also Winfried Vogel, "The Eschatological Theology of Martin Luther, Part II: Luther's Exposition of Daniel and Revelation," *AUSS* 2 (1987), vol. 25, 183-199. John Calvin completed a commentary on Daniel that consists of a set of lectures he presented from June 12, 1559 to April 1560. His commentary, however, does not follow the contemporary form, as it now stands. He did not use lecture notes, and his lectures were "recorded verbatim" by three stenographers. Afterwards, these recorded notes were printed along with any necessary corrections. Calvin's extemporaneous lectures on the book do not offer a measured study of the text, but his insights are nonetheless weighty since he addresses philological, historical, and interpretive matters. No comments are made concerning the shift in language. All of Calvin's commentaries on the prophets, except for the book of Isaiah, are a record of his lecture notes to young students preparing for the ministry. T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*, vol. 20, *Daniel I* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002). See also Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008). Donald K. McKim, *John Calvin: A Companion to His Life and Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015).

The Enlightenment brought new ideas and new methods to biblical research.<sup>9</sup>

Both the rise of the historical-critical method and the idea that the Bible could be studied like other ancient texts influenced Biblical studies, and by extension, the investigation of the book of Daniel. From the time of the Enlightenment until today, biblical scholarship has investigated the bilingualism in Daniel. These studies have invariably linked the change in language to the compositional or translational history of the text.<sup>10</sup> This may be the reason for the frequent use of source and redaction criticism. Such studies have

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<sup>9</sup> Benedict Spinoza's philosophical work *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670) was indicative of the new ideas that arose during the Enlightenment. In his book he addressed matters of politics and religion, which challenged the common perceptions of the time and therefore was virulently opposed. He offers one of the first critical evaluations of the biblical text and most notably of the book of Daniel. For Spinoza the shift in language, was evidence that pointed to the compositional history of the text. He states that chapters 8-12, "...undoubtedly contains the writings of Daniel himself, but I do not know whence the first seven chapters were derived. Since they were written in Chaldaic except for the first chapter, we may surmise that they were taken from the chronicles of the Chaldeans." Baruch Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, Gebhardt Edition, 1925, translated by Samuel Shirley with an Introduction by Brad S. Gregory (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1989), 189. Spinoza's work was poorly received and the public and his friends reacted violently to his work. He was accused of being an atheist or even Satan, and it was stated that, "by this method and arguments the authority of all Holy Scripture is infringed, and is mentioned by the author only for form's sake." Gregory, *Introduction*, 28.

<sup>10</sup> Collins notes that the relation between the compositional history of the book of Daniel and its bilingualism is inevitable since the latter points to broader questions related to composition and generation. Collins, *Daniel*, 12.

resulted in a plethora of theories.<sup>11</sup> Yet, such studies have not necessarily addressed the reason for, motivation behind, or persistence of bilingualism.<sup>12</sup>

The theories put forth to explain the occurrence of bilingualism in Daniel can be categorized into four types: 1) Single author – one author composed the work in two languages<sup>13</sup>, 2) Hebrew book – the book was originally written in Hebrew then translated into Aramaic; part of the Hebrew was lost and replaced by the Aramaic translation<sup>14</sup>, 3) Aramaic book – the book was originally written in Aramaic; Hebrew sections were added

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<sup>11</sup> For example, according to Barton, “Towards the close of the last century and in the early part of the present, the idea that Daniel is not a unity was revived by Michaelis, Eichhorn, and Bertholdt. J. D. Michaelis...held that ch. 3-6 did not belong to the original work... (Johann Gottfried) Eichhorn divided the book into two parts, ch. 2-6 forming one, and ch. 1, 7-12 the other. The former part, he held, was a tradition concerning Daniel written by an earlier Jew, upon which the latter part was engrafted by a Jew of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. (Leonhard) Bertholdt...divides Daniel among nine different authors...Meinhold in three different publications has...revived the theory of Eichhorn.” George A. Barton, “The Composition of the Book of Daniel,” *JBL* 1898, 62-86, no. 1 v. 17, 63. See also Harold H. Rowley, “The Unity of Daniel,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 23 (1951) or “The Unity of the Book of Daniel,” in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament* (London, Lutterworth, 1952); “The Bilingual Problem in Daniel,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (ZAW), 50 1932, 256-268. These new perspectives were not met without some challenges. Several authors challenged these ideas and presented a defense of the traditional position regarding the book of Daniel. Edward Pusey’s response to the new perspective was extensive and is well known today for his ubiquitous quote, “The book of Daniel is especially fitted to be a battlefield between faith and unbelief. It admits of no half-measures. It is either Divine or an imposture.” Edward Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1885), 75. Pusey rejected Eichhorn’s evaluation of the shift in language. He maintains that the division of languages is a reflection of the historical events of the time. Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the empire; therefore, its inclusion represented this historical datum. Additionally, the visions written in Hebrew were specifically for the people of Israel and the history written in Aramaic had non-Israelite content. Furthermore, the inclusion of Daniel 7 in the Aramaic section can be explained by its connection to chapter two because of its similar content. Finally, Pusey postulates that the Hebrew and Aramaic texts are from the same time period.

<sup>12</sup> Snell concludes, “The reason for the existence of Aramaic in the Bible is not explained if we assume that either the Hebrew parts or the Aramaic parts of the books are translated from the other language. The loss of manuscripts recording the original language is possible, but it does not seem likely that the loss would not have been restored by a retranslation. There must in short be some motivation for the persistence of bilingualism regardless of how that bilingualism originally arose.” Daniel C. Snell, “Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?” *JSOT* 18 (1980): 32-51, 32.

<sup>13</sup> This was the traditional theory, which was accepted by ancient Jewish and Christian authors. The explanations for bilingualism can take several forms. In general, this theory is linked to the idea of “unity of authorship,” which is supported by those who espouse either a sixth century or a second century date. Collins, *Daniel*, 12.

<sup>14</sup> Few accept this theory today, although it was “proposed vigorously” in the nineteenth century. Collins, *Daniel*, 12.

so that the book could be placed in the canon<sup>15</sup>, and 4) Older Aramaic material – Hebrew material was added to older Aramaic material to create the final form. Today, the last theory has been accepted by some scholars and, according to Collins, “The arguments for this position derive from source and redaction criticism...”<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, none of the theories mentioned above has generated scholarly consensus. Moreover, these theories do not address the important problem of the retention of Aramaic.<sup>17</sup> Thus, Collins concludes, “The use of two languages in the composition of Daniel can be explained from the diachronic development. The retention of the two languages in the final edition of the book, however, must be explained in terms of the structure as a whole.”<sup>18</sup>

In the last four decades several studies have generated new insights regarding the use of bilingualism in Daniel by using a variety of methods other than source or redaction criticism. The studies used the following methods: 1) comparative analysis (Snell, Wesselius), 2) literary/linguistic theory (Arnold), 3) genre analysis (Valeta), and 4) socio-linguistic analysis (Portier-Young). Overall, the studies reached the conclusion that bilingualism in Daniel is used as a rhetorical strategy. Therefore, the studies conclude that the use of two languages tries to communicate or inform the reader as it mimics older biblical source material (Snell and Wesselius), or as it structures the two languages

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<sup>15</sup> This theory has arisen several times over the centuries and is supported by philological arguments. The argument regarding the change to Hebrew for canonical inclusion is “anachronistic.” Collins, *Daniel*, 13.

<sup>16</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 13. Koch offers a brief overview of the various theories. Klaus Koch, *Das Buch Daniel* (Erträge der Forschung 144; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 49-52. Collins also presents a helpful summary of the four major categories of theories. Collins, *Daniel*, 12-13, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, FOTL (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 30.

<sup>18</sup> Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, FOTL, 30.

according to two perspectives (Arnold), two ideologies (Valeta), or as it is used as a means of persuasion to maintain covenant identity (Portier-Young).<sup>19</sup>

### Recent Studies on Bilingualism in Daniel

#### **Daniel C. Snell**

In 1980 in the article, “Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?” Snell addressed the question of Aramaic not only in the book of Daniel but also in the Bible as a whole.<sup>20</sup> His analysis was built on the conclusion of Otto Eissfeldt, who “suggested that the reason for the Aramaic in Daniel is ‘that the compiler took as his model books like Ezra and Nehemiah which...quote the documents which they offer in the Aramaic original.’”<sup>21</sup>

Snell thus concludes that the presence of Aramaic in Daniel was modeled after its use in the book of Ezra.<sup>22</sup> He further suggests that, “the motivation for Aramaic in the Bible can usually be discerned to be to give a sense of authenticity to the documents and stories by presenting them in the language in which they are likely first to have been composed.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> In 1933 Rowley developed a theory that suggests two audiences as a motivation for bilingualism in Daniel. He argued that the two languages were used for two different audiences. He stated that “Daniel was a legendary hero concerning whom popular stories were current in the post-exilic period, and that a Maccabean author worked up some of these stories and issued them separately in Aramaic for the encouragement of his fellows.” After Daniel 7 was issued in Aramaic the author saw that it was not suitable for a larger audience, so he wrote the subsequent chapters in Hebrew for a more educated elite. When the author wanted to issue a more complete book he decided to write an introduction that would incorporate the entire book, which became chapter one. “The Bilingual Problem,” *ZAW* 50 (1932), 257; see also “The Unity of the Book of Daniel,” in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), 249-280. Rowley’s theory arose as a result of his argument for the unity of the book of Daniel.

<sup>20</sup> Snell, “Why Is There Aramaic in the Bible?” 32-51.

<sup>21</sup> Snell, “Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?” 32. Quotation from Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, An Introduction* (NY: Evanston, 1966), 516.

<sup>22</sup> This conclusion is based on a second century composition date for the book of Daniel.

<sup>23</sup> Snell, “Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?” 32.

To support his conclusion, as well as Eissfeldt's foundational argument, Snell reviewed "...the junctures between Hebrew and Aramaic in Ezra and Daniel to see if there is some motivation for the language change..."<sup>24</sup>

Snell identifies several common elements in Ezra and Daniel that occur at the juncture of the transition between the two languages. First, the transition to Aramaic coincides with the term *aramit* (Aramaic) and the incorporation of an official document or reported speech (Ezra 4:7; Daniel 2:4). Thus, Snell concludes, the motivation for the transition is authenticity. He also notes, however, that the Aramaic continues after the letter or reported speech ends. Snell labels this occurrence as "an instance of attraction of material closely related to an Aramaic document into the Aramaic language."<sup>25</sup> Next, he concludes that the transition back to Hebrew does not have a clear reason, but the content of the subsequent section may hint at the motivation behind it (Ezra 6:19; Daniel 8:1).<sup>26</sup>

As a result of his study of Ezra and Daniel, Snell draws the following conclusions about the language transitions: 1) both Ezra and Daniel exhibit the mention of the term for Aramaic at the first juncture of transition; 2) the transition is motivated by an attempt to record a written document or official speech that was probably originally in Aramaic,

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<sup>24</sup> Snell, "Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?" 33.

<sup>25</sup> Snell, "Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?" 34.

<sup>26</sup> Regarding the second instance of Aramaic in Ezra at 7:12, Snell identifies another official letter, from King Artaxerxes. The Aramaic and the letter come to an end at 7:26, so the Aramaic once again is linked to an official document. (The term *aramit* is not found here, as in Ezra 4:7, but the letter is introduced in verse 11.) Ezra 7:27 transitions back to Hebrew and contains an exclamation of blessing to God by Ezra. Thus, as in the first transition back to Hebrew, the topic or content of the text implies the motivation for the change back to Hebrew.



3) in both books Aramaic persists after the recorded document or the recorded speech, and 4) Aramaic ends when the text introduces a new theme or section.

Snell's analysis is helpful in several ways. First, he identifies several commonalities between Ezra and Daniel regarding their use of Aramaic, especially at the junctures which the language transitions to Aramaic. In addition, he views the use of Aramaic within the larger context of the biblical canon rather than according to one biblical text. Finally, he sees the languages as intentionally integrated into the text, rather than haphazardly brought together. However, Snell does not offer a definitive answer for the second shift in language from Aramaic to Hebrew. He simply states that it is due to a change in content. In addition, Snell's conclusions rely more heavily on the use of Aramaic in Ezra than in Daniel. The reported speech in Daniel is not consonant with the official documents in Ezra.<sup>27</sup> Such a conclusion overemphasizes the commonalities between the two books. Finally, regarding a major difference between the two books, the use of Aramaic in Daniel is more extensive and continuous, with no interruptions, when compared to the use of Aramaic in Ezra.

### **Bill T. Arnold**

In 1996 Arnold published an article that revisited the problem of bilingualism and its retention in the books of Ezra and Daniel.<sup>28</sup> He argued that, "The question of

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<sup>27</sup> G. Maier suggests a theory that sees the Aramaic section as official state documents from the royal archive. He sees 1:1-2:4a as notes from Daniel's personal journal when he was a youth, but he sees 2:4b-7:28 as official Aramaic state documents. He also sees the use of Hebrew in Daniel 8-12 as evidence of Daniel's waning status in the government; thus he reverts to the language of his youth. G. Maier, *Der Prophet Daniel* (Wuppertaler Studienbibel; Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1982), 98-100.

<sup>28</sup> Bill T. Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible: Another Look at Bilingualism in Ezra and Daniel," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*, 22/2, 1996, 1-16. Joshua Berman offers a

bilingualism in Ezra and Daniel has never been satisfactorily answered. Attempts to explain the use of Aramaic in these books have usually assumed a translational history, or some elaborate source theory. But the problem of retention remains.”<sup>29</sup> He suggests that a synchronic approach is warranted since diachronic methods have failed to explain the retention of the two languages in these canonical books. He further suggests that Snell’s conclusion “is not entirely incorrect,” yet he argues, “the authors were not merely using Aramaic to buttress the believability of the narratives.”<sup>30</sup> To explain the retention of the two languages, Arnold uses a “genuinely synchronic approach in order to discern specific literary techniques used in transition from Hebrew to Aramaic.”<sup>31</sup> His chosen approach comes from literary criticism and the work of Boris Uspensky, who developed a literary theory on point of view from the study of structural semiotics.<sup>32</sup>

Arnold briefly summarizes the two important aspects of Uspensky’s theory that he uses in his analysis. He explains that Uspensky developed four levels of point of view to help identify and delineate indicators of compositional structure. He used these levels

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detailed analysis of the first language shift in Ezra that builds on the work of Arnold in “The Narratological Purpose of Aramaic Prose in Ezra 4.8 – 6.18” *Aramaic Studies* 5.2 (2007): 165-191.

<sup>29</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 1. Collins also contends, “The use of two languages in the composition of Daniel can be explained from the diachronic development. The retention of the two languages in the final edition of the book, however, must be explained in terms of the structure as a whole.” *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 30.

<sup>30</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 2.

<sup>31</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 2.

<sup>32</sup> “...Uspensky was a literary theoretician bred in the climate of modern Russian semiotics...” Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic...”, 2, n 6. See also Boris Uspensky, *A Poetics of Composition. The Structure of Artistic Text Typology of A Compositional Form* (Berkeley, 1973). Arnold notes that the work of Uspensky influenced the study of biblical narratology, especially in the work of Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), Tremper Longman, III, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), and Meier Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).

“as a means of extracting from the surface structure of the text certain indicators of its compositional structure.”<sup>33</sup> Only two of the four levels of point of view, however, are used in Arnold’s research. First, the ideological plane is “the system of ideas that shape the work and comprise the ‘deep compositional structure, as opposed to the surface compositional structure which may be traced on the psychological, spatio-temporal, or phraseological levels.’”<sup>34</sup> This point of view coincides with that of the narrator. Next, Arnold describes the phraseological level, or the “plane of speech characteristics.”<sup>35</sup> According to this level, the author uses different types of speech, reported speech or different diction, to describe various characters. This level is the most relevant for Arnold’s work.

In the book of Daniel (and Ezra) Arnold identifies transitions in point of view that coincide with the language transitions.<sup>36</sup> At the juncture of the first transition in the book of Daniel, from Hebrew to Aramaic, Arnold explains that there is a shift in point of view, from internal to external. This transition begins in 2:1, in which the royal date formula identifies the chronological context of the chapter as the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar. Arnold suggests that this royal date formula contrasts that found in Daniel 1:1, which refers to the third year of a Hebrew king, Jehoiakim. Thus, the new

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<sup>33</sup> Surface structure refers to linguistic structure. Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 2.

<sup>34</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 3.

<sup>35</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 3.

<sup>36</sup> Arnold stresses one significant difference between the use of Aramaic in the books of Ezra and Daniel, namely that the book of Daniel does not contain official documents. Therefore, he posits that the reason behind the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic is not as obvious as in Ezra. Thus he concludes that the transition has a “much more rhetorical impetus when compared to the switch in Ezra.” Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible...” 9.

chronological context is the beginning of the text's movement away from the internal Hebrew point of view found in Daniel 1 to the external Babylonian context found in chapter two as well as the ensuing chapters.<sup>37</sup> The climax of the transition occurs in Daniel 2:4 where the language changes from Hebrew to Aramaic. Consequently, Arnold argues that Daniel 2:1-4 is a "transitional paragraph like that in Ezra leading up to the use of Aramaic... This opening paragraph makes complete a scene shift in which the narrator's point of view changes from that of chapter 1."<sup>38</sup>

However, Arnold finds the reason behind the transition from Aramaic to Hebrew more elusive. He states that the continuation of the Aramaic in Daniel 7 is "surprising for several reasons."<sup>39</sup> First, the chapter coincides with a change in genre, so one would assume that the language would correspond to such a transition, yet it does not. Next, the chapter is a first-person speech by Daniel, which would seem to be an expression of the internal point of view. Arnold states, "The emphasis in this article on point-of-view as a literary convention, while not completely resolving this problem, may take a step in that direction."<sup>40</sup> His partial solution is that the transition from Aramaic to Hebrew coincides with the process of Daniel becoming the narrator, which Uspensky calls "concurrence." Consequently, Daniel and the narrator become one and possess the same point of view. As a result of Arnold's analysis, he concludes that the bilingualism of Daniel (and Ezra)

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<sup>37</sup> The internal point of view of chapter one is expressed through the conflict of worldviews, the introduction and background of the Hebrew characters (1:3-4), the Hebrew names of the characters (1:6), the positive assessment of the four Hebrews (1:8), and God's blessings on them (1:17).

<sup>38</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible..." 11. He also notes that the use of the idiosyncratic phrase "O King, live forever," in 2:4 also coincides with an external, Babylonian context.

<sup>39</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible..." 12.

<sup>40</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible..." 12.

is a rhetorical device used to portray the point of view of the narrator. Furthermore, he argues that such a device was integral to the composition of the text.<sup>41</sup>

Arnold's study offers several helpful insights with respect to the problem of bilingualism and its retention. Similar to Snell, Arnold looks at the use of Aramaic in a wider context, but he also provides a nuanced understanding of its use. Most notably, he sees language as social location for those who are faithful to Yahweh as well as for those who are foreign to the worship of Yahweh. Thus, language is used to express a perspective or point of view. He also analyzes the movement of the text prior to the transition to Aramaic and identifies a transitional paragraph in both Ezra and Daniel. Consequently, he concludes that the text is aware of the shift from Hebrew to Aramaic, thus it intentionally prepares the reader for the shift. Arnold also sees the shifts in language as intentional literary artistry.<sup>42</sup>

Arnold's conclusions for the first language shift are plausible. However, it would have been helpful if Arnold had explained how Daniel 2:2-3 also furthered his theory regarding Daniel 2:1-4 as a transitional paragraph, as he did with the transitional paragraph in the book of Ezra. It is clear that the royal date formula in Daniel 2:1 signals a transition from Jerusalem to Babylon, but it is not clear how the ensuing verses that record the king's experience with the dream and his command to call the wise men are also transitional. Moreover, Arnold has difficulty accounting for the continuation of

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<sup>41</sup> He further states that a synchronic analysis of the transition in language supplements and informs a diachronic analysis. He also suggests that his conclusions may indicate that the two languages were incorporated simultaneously rather than separately.

<sup>42</sup> Other scholars concur with this conclusion. See John Goldingay, "Story, Vision, Interpretation: Literary Approaches to Daniel," in *The Book of Daniel in Light of New Findings*, A. S van der Woude, ed. (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 1993) 295-313; André Lacocque, *Daniel in His Time*, 8-12; and Adrien Lenglet, "La structure littéraire de Daniel 2-7," *Biblica* 2 (1972): 169-190.

Aramaic to Daniel 7 and for the shift from Aramaic to Hebrew in Daniel 8, but he does offer a possible solution.

### **Jan-Wim Wesselius**

In 2001 Jan-Wim Wesselius followed and expanded upon the work of Snell (and Eissfeldt) in his article “The Writing of Daniel.”<sup>43</sup> In his study, he argues that the shift in language in the book of Daniel is an example of “discontinuity” (like the shifts in genre, person, and chronology). Wesselius suggests this discontinuity is an intentional rhetorical strategy that serves two purposes, first “it indicates the literary character of the work as an ancient dossier, left unmodified by later redactors.”<sup>44</sup> Second, the discontinuities build upon the “characteristics of other works that served as sources for the present one – and thus paradoxically indicate continuity on a higher level.”<sup>45</sup>

For Wesselius, the book of Ezra serves as the source book for the book of Daniel. He points to several continuities between the two books. For example, he notes similar literary features such as a six-to-four-episode break, “comparable distribution of Hebrew and Aramaic parts; and the use of Aramaic to link effectively the two halves, with five Aramaic documents before and one after the separation between the two parts.”<sup>46</sup> The shifts in language, however, function differently for each book. In Ezra, the Aramaic is

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<sup>43</sup> Jan-Wim Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel, Composition and Reception*, eds. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint (Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 2:292-310.

<sup>44</sup> Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” 298.

<sup>45</sup> Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” 298.

<sup>46</sup> Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” 299. Thus, Ezra 1-6 are the first six episodes of that book and Ezra 7-10 are the last four. In Daniel there are six narrative episodes (chs. 1-6) and four dreams/revelations (7, 8, 9, 10-12).

primarily linked to official documents, even though the Aramaic occurs beyond the documents. In addition, the Aramaic does not occur continuously, as Ezra 7 begins in Hebrew (vv. 1-11), shifts to Aramaic for Artaxerxes' decree (vv. 12-26), and then finally shifts back to Hebrew with Ezra's words of blessing (vv. 27-28). In contrast, in the book of Daniel, Aramaic is not linked to official documents and is not interrupted by Hebrew. It is one continuous unit. Despite such differences, Wesselius finds more commonalities between the two books regarding the use of the two languages than dissimilarities. Consequently, Wesselius concludes that both books were composed in the literary form of a dossier; therefore, the bilingualism has a literary background "instead of a linguistic or a historical one."<sup>47</sup>

The work of Wesselius expands upon the insights of Snell. Like Snell, he sees the bilingualism in Ezra as a model for Daniel; however, he argues that the bilingualism is part of a sequence of what he calls "discontinuities" within the book. Through his use of this term and its relation to his analysis, Wesselius is able to offer a more comprehensive treatment of the peculiarities of the book of Daniel than Snell. He concludes that these discontinuities are intentional and point to a common structure with Ezra.

Wesselius's analysis notes the differences between the two books in their use of Aramaic, but he does not address the reasons behind such differences. For example, the Aramaic in Daniel is not linked to official documents. Thus, his analysis does not account for the unique genre found in the Aramaic section in Daniel. Furthermore, Wesselius' conclusions may suffer from the same problem that arises in Snell's analysis, specifically that he overemphasizes the commonalities between the two books.

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<sup>47</sup> Wesselius, "The Writing of Daniel," 309.

## David M. Valeta

In 2007 Valeta in his work, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” expanded upon the basic ideas of Sérandour, Rouillard-Bonraisin, and Arnold, who approached the problem of the shift in language from a sociological and ideological perspective.<sup>48</sup> He argues that the shift in language can best be explained by applying the literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian literary critic.<sup>49</sup> He postulates that identifying Daniel 1-6 as menippean satire would allow for a reappraisal of how the shift in language is perceived. Such a designation suggests that the text is a “multistyled, multitoned, and/or multivoiced work that is dialogic and is based on the premise of multiple genres, voices, and/or multiple languages.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the existence of two languages is an intentional rhetorical strategy used to express two different ideologies in conversation and/or conflict.

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<sup>48</sup> David M. Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 91-108 in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies* ed. Roland Boer (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007). Arnaud Sérandour, “Hebreu et Araméen dans la Bible” *REJ* 159 (2000): 345-355. Serandour argues that Hebrew is a sacred, local language of the Jews and Aramaic is a political, international language. Hedwige Rouillard-Bonraisin, in “Problèmes du bilinguisme en Daniel” in *Mosaïque de langues, mosaïque culturelle: le bilinguisme dans le Proche-Orient ancien*, ed. Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet (Paris: Jean Maisonneuve, 1996), 145-170, concludes Hebrew was the language of secrecy or enigmas, therefore it was used for a small, elite audience; in contrast Aramaic was the language of revelation or illumination, thus it functioned as a language for a wider audience. In contradistinction, Valeta argues that, “It may be an overstatement on Rouillard-Bonraisin’s part to consider Hebrew as a language for keeping secrets and thus inaccessible to others.” Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 180. Valeta states that both Sérandour and Rouillard-Bonraisin “acknowledge that when two or more national languages exist in a culture they each embed an ideology, as Bakhtin proposes. In the multicultural, polyglottal world of the Hellenistic Judea, language was an important indicator of self-identity.” Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 180.

<sup>49</sup> See Roland Boer, “Introduction: Bakhtin, Genre and Biblical Studies” 1-8, and Carol Newsom, “Spying Out the Land: A Report from Genology” 19-30 in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies*, ed. Roland Boer (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2007) for a brief introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin, his work, and his influence on biblical studies. (Newsom’s work is a reprint from *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients* eds. R. Troxel, K. Friebel, and D. Magary (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 437-450.

<sup>50</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 94. See also *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 182.



According to Valeta, “Language is inherently ideological because it is an expression of contextualized social interaction and embodies a distinct view of the world.”<sup>51</sup> Consequently, the existence of two languages indicates the existence of two ideologies and/or multiple voices, one of the two characteristics of prenovelistic literature (of which menippean literature is a subcategory). He argues, in contrast to Snell, Wesselius, and Arnold that the Aramaic is used in a “creative and sarcastic manner.”<sup>52</sup> He continues, “the Aramaic text with its few Greek inserts is a highly complex creation designed to judge king and empire.”<sup>53</sup>

In 2008, in his expanded genre study of Daniel 1-6, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, Valeta attempts to account for the persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7 by his proposed structure of the book, a 1.5/1.5 (chs. 1, 2-6 and 7, 8-12) structure that he calls a “doubled pattern,” or “twinning pattern.”<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, chapter 1 is written in Hebrew as a reversal of the pattern in chapters 2-6 so that the reader is forced to attend to the ideologies that undergird the language. In addition, chapter 7 is written in Aramaic to parallel chapter 2 and jolt the reader as she reads the sacred language of 8:1. Ultimately,

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<sup>51</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia,” 94. He further states that, “Language is the medium through which an alternative reality may be experienced.” *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 182. Regarding the book of Daniel, he argues, “The tension between majority and minority cultures created an especially fertile environment where those under subjugation developed various strategies, including literary ones such as serio-comical compositions, to subvert the dominant structures of their time. The reanimation of Hebrew literature in periods of crisis mirrors this peoples’ constant reclaiming of their linguistic roots even while they were forced to learn and use the language of the dominant culture. It is therefore quite plausible to maintain that a prenovelistic literary composition of the time could be macaronic. The book of Daniel is an example of one such instance (186-187).”

<sup>52</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 188.

<sup>53</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 188. He continues, “. . . This manifestation of heteroglossia underscores how language can be employed to destabilize and delegitimize control (188-189).”

<sup>54</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 190.

Valeta deduces that the existence of two languages may be explained as a function of the generic designation of menippean satire. Consequently, he also concludes that both languages are original to the text rather than the product of translations.<sup>55</sup>

Valeta's unique generic analysis of the first six chapters of Daniel offers an insightful and new perspective on the bilingualism in Daniel, which in some ways expands on Arnold's view of language as social location. Essentially, he argues that the two languages, as well as the occurrence of wordplays and humor, are used to express social ideologies in the context of oppression. In essence, he sees language as a tool used by the oppressed to challenge and overcome the oppressor. Therefore, for Valeta, language is a social entity used to empower the marginalized. Such ideas are consonant with postcolonialism's analysis of texts. Additionally, he views language as a tool of judgment for both parts of the book. Such a conclusion incorporates a theme commonly found throughout the book of Daniel.

Unfortunately, Valeta's analysis is limited and does not address the Hebrew section, Daniel 8-12, sufficiently. Furthermore, he only briefly addresses the continuance of Aramaic in Daniel 7, which is a recurring problem for theories about bilingualism in Daniel. Yet, his proposition corresponds to an evident structure in Daniel; however, Valeta does not give much space to the reason behind the structure. More space is needed

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<sup>55</sup> Valeta notes that, "The presence of wordplays in both Hebrew and Aramaic also helps resolve another aspect of the language conundrum of Dan 1-6. The wordplays are one of the most important indices that neither the Hebrew nor Aramaic portions of Dan 1-6 were translated out of an original in the other language. Most wordplays do not translate well. It is extremely difficult to emulate in the receptor text any acrostics, alliteration, anagrammatical wordplays, antanaclasis, homonym wordplays, onomatopoeia, paronomasia, puns, and rhyming that appears in a source text. Such phenomena literally get lost in translation. Although Aramaic and Hebrew are cognate languages with great similarities, it remains impossible to translate the large number of wordplays in Dan 1-6 effectively across the two languages. It is for this reason as well that translation theories regarding the presence of the two major languages in Daniel fail." Valeta, "Polyglossia," 105.

to explain whether the persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7 is a factor of the 1.5/1.5 structure that Valeta proposes or, according to Collins, is simply present for the sake of continuity and unity.<sup>56</sup>

### **Anathea Portier-Young**

In 2010 Anathea Portier-Young produced a study in which she applied a sociolinguistic theoretical framework to the bilingual Masoretic Text of Daniel. She states that, “Sociolinguistics provide a theoretical framework for viewing the bilingualism of Daniel as a deliberate rhetorical strategy.”<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, she explains that the shift in language is an attempt by the author(s) to help the readers identify with a context that is no longer bound by the claims of empire and that is connected only to the claims of covenant. This allows the reader to position herself in opposition to the Seleucid Empire and in solidarity with the community of covenant.

Portier-Young notices the similarities between her study and Valeta’s, so she distinguishes her work from his by delineating at least two differences. First, she states that Valeta views Daniel as an example of a context in which the “reanimation of Hebrew literature in periods of crisis mirrors this peoples’ constant reclaiming of their linguistic roots even while they were forced to learn and use the language of a dominant culture.”<sup>58</sup> In contrast, Portier-Young sees the use of Aramaic as “evoking a history of imperial rule, a complex colonial identity, and the interweaving of Judean (and Jewish) life within the

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<sup>56</sup> Collins asserts, “The fact that chap. 7 was in Aramaic served to bind the material from the Maccabean period to the older tales.” *Daniel*, 24.

<sup>57</sup> Anathea Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity and Obligation: Daniel as Bilingual Book” *VT* 60 (2010): 98-115.

<sup>58</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia,” 98.

world of empire. It gestures to a space of interaction and interdependence that also entailed collaboration.”<sup>59</sup> Second, Portier-Young further states that Valeta concludes that the “Aramaic of chs. 2:4-6:28 serves in large part ‘to lampoon the king.’”<sup>60</sup> Overall, Portier-Young concurs with Valeta and concludes that he successfully argues his point. However, she further concludes that the abovementioned chapters, along with the rest of the book, have another function, namely, to depict “the given-ness of life under empire as well as the choices and positioning of Daniel’s audience, including a collaborationist stance...”<sup>61</sup> She maintains that the presence of Aramaic is indicative of the reality of empire and of the acceptability of collaboration within a Jewish theological context.<sup>62</sup>

Building on the work of socio-linguists R. B. Le Page and Andrée Tabouret-Keller, Portier-Young asserts that language use reveals and creates identity. In addition, language switching or bilingualism is an intentional choice that “plays a significant role in projecting identity and in revealing, constructing, and defining relationships with others.”<sup>63</sup> She applies this idea to the book of Daniel and argues that the author, through

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<sup>59</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 103.

<sup>60</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 103; Valeta, “Polyglossia,” 98.

<sup>61</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 103

<sup>62</sup> Portier-Young’s thesis consists of themes reminiscent of postcolonial ideas. Newsom also echoes ideas of postcolonialism in her conclusions about Daniel 1-6. She concludes that there is a complex use of hybridity rather than simple collaboration with regard to the relationship between the exiles and the foreign kings. She states “What both Humphrey’s and Smith-Christopher’s approaches only partially perceive is the complex relationship between imperial and colonized discourse, the phenomenon that Homi Bhabha designated as ‘hybridity.’ The discourses both of imperial power and of the subordinated peoples must be worked out in relation to one another. The colonized often make use of intellectual and literary forms developed by the dominant culture but do not simply appropriate them. They hybridize them in an attempt to make space for their own agency, even as these forms may delimit the space of agency.” Therefore, she suggests, Dan 1-6 is an example of literature that expresses “cultural negotiation.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 16.

<sup>63</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 104.

language, attempts to “project a universe and invite others to share it.”<sup>64</sup> The application of a sociolinguistic framework lays the foundation for Portier-Young’s conclusion that the sequence of the language shifts is intentional and conveys meaning with respect to ideology and identity. She asserts that the choice of a particular sequence for the language shifts creates meaning in relation to the language that precedes or follows. In Daniel, the sequence of Hebrew-Aramaic-Hebrew presents a specific “construction of the world,” calls the reader to identify with a particular position or identity within that world and establishes “a set of rights and obligations counter to those of the Seleucid Empire.”<sup>65</sup>

Portier-Young proposes that there are four shifts of meaning that occur in Daniel that correspond to the shift in language and, indirectly, to the shift in genre. First, Daniel 1 frames identity within the context of Israel’s covenantal past and establishes the complicated and complex relationship between the Hebrew youths and the foreign empire. Here, the reader is persuaded to identify with the identity of the Hebrews as heroes of the story. Second, chapters 2-6 present the often dangerous interaction between the Hebrews and empire, where they must carefully balance their loyalty to the king and their allegiance to the God of the covenant. Third, Daniel 7 provides a new perspective on empire that functions as a “structural bridge between the stories and visions of chapters 8-12.”<sup>66</sup> Finally, chapters 8-12 reorient the reader to a context of covenant, which was introduced in chapter 1. In Daniel 8:1 the author asks the reader to stand in solidarity with the covenant community against the oppression of an external empire.

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<sup>64</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 106.

<sup>65</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 107.

<sup>66</sup> Portier-Young, “Languages of Identity,” 112.

Portier-Young's treatment of bilingualism in Daniel offers a sound sociological basis for the inclusion of bilingualism in a text. Her application of sociolinguistics provides a sociological explanation for language switching. Furthermore, her analysis accounts for the persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7. She also addresses both the language shifts and the shift in genre. Finally, she applies her method to the text itself, citing several texts to support her theory relating to her emphasis on covenant.

Although Portier-Young cites terminological data regarding covenant in Daniel 1, she does not account for the covenant-keeping actions of the four heroes in Daniel 2-6, the Aramaic section up to Daniel 7. The three youth's refusal to bow to the image in Daniel 3 (possibly an example of keeping the second commandment: not bowing down to idols) and Daniel's persistence in prayer towards Jerusalem in Daniel 6 (possibly a link to Solomon's liturgical prayer in 1 Kings 8) hint at their allegiance to covenant. Although these actions are depicted in the Aramaic section, it does not preclude their actions from being examples of covenant allegiance. These occurrences in the Aramaic section coincide with Portier-Young's inferences about the occurrence of Aramaic in Daniel 2-6, in which she states the heroes must balance their loyalty to the king and God. In addition, it would have been helpful if she had explained how the theme of covenant informs or develops in the Hebrew section.

Interestingly, she also does not attend to God as a character in the text (although her study may imply as much with a focus on covenant). This is also a common omission in the other studies discussed above. For example, Portier-Young offers several plausible textual points from Daniel 1 that support her theory, but she does not address the most prominent element in the chapter, the thrice-repeated act of God giving (1:2, 9, 17).

Goldingay notes that these acts basically structure the chapter.<sup>67</sup> If this is so, then the acts of God are equal to or more important than the acts, events, or characteristics related to Daniel and his friends. In the previously mentioned studies, the historical, sociological, and ideological context of the human characters, the narrator(s), and the proposed audience are addressed, but the acts of God (or the theological context) are not discussed in much detail. Yet, as Humphreys rightly avers in his study of the court tale genre and the books of Daniel and Esther, “Aspects characteristic of the piety of the Jew are stressed in this connection (to God). In this stress on the devotion of the hero characteristic elements in the tale of the courtier are submerged. The God of Daniel is the central figure and not the courtier.”<sup>68</sup>

#### Overview of Recent Studies

The studies presented above provide new and constructive conclusions regarding the use of bilingualism in Daniel. This was accomplished through the use of different non-diachronic methods, which is a departure from the past use of source and redaction criticism. Overall, the studies found that bilingualism is a rhetorical device that is integral to and integrated into the text. As a result, one may assert that bilingualism is a literary device that communicates to the reader a sense of authenticity and mimicry of older biblical source material (Snell and Wesselius), a structure for social location (Arnold), an expression of ideology (Valeta), or a call to the preservation of covenant identity within the context of empire (Portier-Young).

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<sup>67</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 144.

<sup>68</sup> W. Lee Humphreys, “A Life-Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel,” *JBL* 92 (1973): 211-223, 220-221. This observation remains whether one accepts the court tale as the primary genre designation of the first six chapters of Daniel or not.

Unfortunately, these studies also possess several shortcomings. First, Snell and Wesselius's studies overemphasize the commonalities between Ezra and Daniel by overlooking the unique genres in Daniel and evince some difficulty in addressing the continuance of Aramaic, especially up to and including Daniel 7. Next, Arnold's study does not offer a definitive conclusion regarding the shift from Aramaic to Hebrew in Daniel 8:1. In addition, Valeta and Portier-Young's studies could have benefited from addressing the Hebrew section in greater detail. Furthermore, all of the studies omit the actions or presence of God as a character, thereby not attending to the theological element within the text, which Humphreys asserts is very prominent.

As a result of these findings, it may be helpful to conduct a study that addresses the unique genres of the book of Daniel, the persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7, the Hebrew section in Daniel 8-12, and the importance of God as character. Such a study would further contribute to understanding the use of bilingualism in Daniel and, in a larger sense, possibly further contribute to understanding the book of Daniel.



Table 1:1 Overview of Recent Studies on Bilingualism in Daniel

<b>Author</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Shortcomings</b>
<b>Snell</b>	Comparative Analysis	Mimics older source material (Ezra)	Addresses the issue of bilingualism holistically	Overemphasizes Daniel's links to Ezra; omission of God as character
<b>Arnold</b>	Literary/Linguistic Theory	Creates structure for social location	Addresses broader issue of language as social location; Shows intentionality of language shifts	Lacks rationale for 2 <sup>nd</sup> language shift at 8:1; omission of God as character
<b>Wesselius</b>	Comparative Analysis	Mimics ancient dossier; points to parallels to Ezra	Builds on the work of Snell; further addresses issue of bilingualism holistically	Overemphasizes Daniel's links to Ezra; omission of God as character
<b>Valeta</b>	Genre Study	An expression of two different, conflicting ideologies (oppressor vs. oppressed)	Addresses the broader issue of language as a tool that expresses ideology; accounts for the generic idiosyncrasies of Daniel	Limits scope of analysis to Aramaic section; omission of God as character
<b>Portier-Young</b>	Socio-linguistic Analysis	Creates a literary universe in which the author calls for the preservation of and faithfulness to Jewish identity within the context of empire	Addresses the broader issue of language and its social function within empire; accounts for the junctures of the language and genre shifts	Further study of Hebrew section necessary; omission of God as character

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study of bilingualism in the book of Daniel has been enhanced by analyses that use new methods, such as literary analysis or socio-linguistic analysis, to understand the use of two languages. Each of these studies concludes that the use of two languages is a rhetorical device that communicates a variety of things to the reader. Despite such insights, the studies tend to overlook the literary uniqueness of the book of Daniel (or overemphasize its links to Ezra), to omit an explanation for the persistence of the Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7 and the shift to Hebrew at Daniel 8, to omit a study of the Hebrew section, and to omit an analysis of God as an integral and important character. Therefore, further study is warranted that uses a method that addresses some or all of the issues mentioned above.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this dissertation is to address the problem of the use of two languages in the book of Daniel using literary analysis. This literary study will analyze the two shifts in language using a narrative analysis that looks at plot and character. This will be conducted by using a comparative narrative analysis of the two chapters that correspond to the two language shifts, Daniel 1 and 2 (Hebrew to Aramaic) and Daniel 7 and 8 and (Aramaic to Hebrew). In addition, this study seeks to investigate the persistence of the use of Aramaic in Daniel 3-7, the subsequent chapters of the first shift, and the persistence of the use of Hebrew in Daniel 9-12, the subsequent chapters of the second shift. Finally, this study looks at God as an integral character.

The overriding research question for the present study is: How do the language shifts in the book of Daniel affect the narratives in the corresponding chapters? The

following seven research questions will specifically guide this study's analysis: 1) At the chapter level, what happens to the narratives in Daniel 1 and 2 as the language changes from Hebrew to Aramaic? 2) Does the narrative shift that occurs from Daniel 1 to 2 persist in Daniel 3-7? 3) What happens, at the chapter level, to the narratives in Daniel 7 and 8 when the language changes from Aramaic to Hebrew? 4) Does the narrative shift that occurs from Daniel 7 to 8 persist in Daniel 9-12? 5) How do the narrative shifts from Daniel 1 to 2 and Daniel 7 to 8 relate to the shifts in language from Hebrew to Aramaic and from Aramaic to Hebrew? 6) According to the conclusions drawn from this study, what are some plausible explanations for: a. How bilingualism is used in the book and b. The persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7? 7) How do the language shifts-narrative shifts affect and contribute to literary and theological meaning in the book of Daniel?

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The present study does not address the complex issues regarding authorship, historicity, or composition of the text. Furthermore, this study will only use the Masoretic Text and not address the complexities of the different Greek versions of Daniel. In addition, this study will address the text according to its present composition or as it now stands. Finally, this study is not a diachronic analysis of bilingualism in the larger context of the biblical text or the wider context of ancient Near Eastern literature. It is limited to the synchronic chapter level study of the use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> This study only briefly addresses the strategic location of the intra-chapter shift at Daniel 2:4a-b. Other studies have addressed this question and most commentators suggest that the shift from Hebrew to Aramaic at Daniel 2:4a-b coincides with the flow of the narrative in the chapter. See Collins, *Daniel*, 156; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 193; Lucas, *Daniel*, 70. In Arnold's treatment of the problem of the two languages in Daniel he offers a plausible explanation for the shift at Daniel 2:4 (see discussion above).

## Methodology

In Chapter Two methodological concerns of this study will be addressed. First, basic elements of biblical narrative are presented. Next, distinct elements of narrative in the book of Daniel are discussed. Then, the proposed method of narrative analysis for this study is introduced.<sup>70</sup> Finally, the chapter concludes with the methodological outline for the present study.

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<sup>70</sup> In a general sense, Michael J. Gorman states that narrative criticism is “a subset of literary criticism, the quest to understand the formal and material features of narrative texts (stories) or other texts that have an implicit or underlying narrative within or behind them.” *Elements of Biblical Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 14. Specifically regarding the proposed study, the term narrative analysis refers to the literary approach known as Formalism. This approach arose in Old Testament criticism in the 1980s during the rise of literary criticism in Old Testament scholarship. House states, “More than any other work, Robert Alter’s *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (1981) advanced Old Testament literary criticism during the 1980s. Alter primarily followed American formalism, which focuses on examining the main elements of plot, structure, character, and themes in narratives. This approach made literary criticism more accessible to students and teachers unaccustomed to the discipline. Unlike structuralism, the use of formalism requires no extensive specialized vocabulary or philosophical background.” Paul R. House, “The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament,” pp. 3-22 in *Beyond Form Criticism, Essays in Old Testament Criticism*, edited by Paul R. House (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 5. See also the work of Barbara Green “The Plot of the Biblical Story of Ruth,” *JSOT* 23 (1982) 55-68. In addition, for further treatments of narrative analysis in the Old Testament, see Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983); Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative, Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987). See also John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992). The term “narrative criticism” originally referred to New Testament studies. The term was first used by David Rhoads in an article “Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark,” *JAAR* 50 (1982): 411-434; reproduced in David Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004). Modern literary critics and theorists infrequently use the term, but some authors use it interchangeably with the term “literary criticism.” According to Mark Allan Powell, “. . .this movement developed within the field of biblical studies without an exact counterpart in the secular world. If classified by secular critics, it might be viewed as a subspecies of the new rhetorical criticism or as a variety of the reader-response movement. Biblical scholars, however, tend to think of narrative criticism as an independent, parallel movement in its own right.” *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 19. For an overview of this method see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, “Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?” pp. 23-49 in *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992); Daniel Marguerat and Yvan Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories: An Introduction to Narrative Criticism* (London: SCM, 1999); David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999).

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter methodological concerns regarding narrative analysis of the Hebrew Bible, and more specifically of the book of Daniel, are addressed. First, the basic elements of Hebrew biblical narrative are presented. Next, distinctive narrative elements in the book of Daniel are identified. Then, the method of narrative analysis chosen for this study is addressed. To delineate the methodology for this study, the pertinent terminology and corresponding methods are noted. Afterwards, the period in which narrative analysis arose in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies is summarized. Notable studies in narrative analysis of the HB/OT and of the book of Daniel are surveyed. Finally, the section on narrative analysis concludes with its challenges and benefits. The chapter ends with the methodological outline for the proposed study.

#### Basic Elements of Hebrew Biblical Narrative

A narrative can be defined as prose that relates a story, with events that are related to each other “by an explicit or implicit cause-and-effect structure.”<sup>71</sup> Narrative is the

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<sup>71</sup> Tremper Longman III, “Biblical Narrative,” in *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, eds. Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), 69, 70. Leitch suggests a story is a narrative “since no story exists outside or independent of a narrative discourse.” Thomas Leitch, *What Stories Are* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press; 1986), 3. In contrast, H. Porter Abbott suggests just the opposite, namely that narrative discourse and story are distinct entities. He states that a narrative constitutes two elements: story, which is an event or sequence of events (or action), and narrative discourse, which is the event or events represented. H. Porter Abbot, *The Cambridge*

primary form of communication in the Biblical text.<sup>72</sup> “Biblical narrative,” according to Meir Sternberg, “...functionally speaking...is regulated by a set of three principles: ideological, historiographic, and aesthetic.”<sup>73</sup> All three of these principles work together to form biblical narrative. The historiographic and aesthetic (literary) impulses of the text are equally important and help to form and inform the ideological (or theological) element. Long suggests the representation of history in Biblical narrative “involves a creative, though constrained, attempt to depict and interpret significant events or sequences of events from the past.”<sup>74</sup> Therefore, although biblical narratives are stories, they seek to represent historical events from a theological perspective. This makes interpreting such narratives complex and complicated because one must not only understand the inner workings of story or narrative but also understand the historical and theological context of the narrative as well.

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*Introduction to Narrative* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; 2002), 16. Compare Jerome T. Walsh’s uncomplicated explication of story, “...the term ‘story’ simply categorizes a work as a narrative with a plot in which characters are involved in events that take place in settings.” Jerome T. Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative: A Guide to Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 209, n. 3. For an extensive treatment of the subject see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978).

<sup>72</sup> Longman, “Biblical Narrative,” 69. Waltke states that forty percent of the Bible is narrative. Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 94. See also Berlin, who states “Narrative is the predominant mode of expression in the Hebrew Bible.” *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 13. For a detailed treatment of Biblical narrative see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative, Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987); John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992); Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, eds., *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1987); *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible* Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman, III eds.

<sup>73</sup> Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 41. Sternberg’s “ideological” principle can also be understood as a “theological” principle and his “aesthetic” principle can be viewed as literary “artistry.” For a thorough treatment of the issue of history and narrative in the Bible see V. Philips Long, *The Art of Biblical History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 86.

<sup>74</sup> Long, *The Art of Biblical History*, 87.

Leland Ryken offers five unique qualities that distinguish biblical narrative from other forms of narratives: 1) literary realism, 2) literary romance, 3) integration of realism and romance, 4) economy of language, and 5) distinctive use of modes of narration.<sup>75</sup>

### **Literary Realism**

First, biblical narratives have the quality of realism. Ryken states, “The impulse of the storytellers in the Bible is to give a circumstantial and factual basis to their stories...Literary realism shares with history and biography the quality of being empirical (rooted in observable reality).”<sup>76</sup> Biblical narratives further demonstrate realism through detailed and specific depictions of reality and their focus on common or shared human experiences.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Leland Ryken, *Words of Delight, A Literary Introduction to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 36. Ryken’s perspective of Biblical narrative seems to support the historical nature of the text. The debate regarding whether Biblical narrative is story or history has been sharp and ideologically polarizing. Scholars such as Collins and James Barr propose a radical historical-critical perspective for Biblical theology. See Collins, “Is A Biblical Theology Possible?” in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters*, edited by William Henry Propp, Baruch Halpern, and David Noel Freedman, (Winona Lake, IN: 1990), pp. 1-17 and James Barr, *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, and Scripture* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1983). In contrast, Brevard Childs, and those that espouse a literary approach, tend to see a less critical approach that is inclusive and wholistic with regards to the historical character of the narratives. Notably, Sternberg states regarding form that “There are simply no universals of historical vs. fictive form” *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 30. He states that only the overall purpose or goal of a passage can distinguish that nature of the text. He also argues that Biblical narratives are, “historiographic, inevitably so considering its teleology and incredibly so considering its time and environment (30).” Thus, Sternberg concludes that the ancient context (historical and cultural) in which the text was written influences its purpose and thus its genre and form. He further sees the omniscient narrator in Biblical narrative as a characteristic of its ancient context. Similarly, Jeffrey Niehaus argues that the Biblical text is an example of ancient historiography that is based upon the ancient understanding of covenant. He states, “One thing that ancient Near Eastern historiography and biblical historiography do have in common...is the covenantal foundation that informs both.” *When Did Eve Sin? – The Fall and Biblical Historiography* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 5.

<sup>76</sup> Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 36.

<sup>77</sup> Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 37.

## **Literary Romance**

Second, biblical narratives also consist of literary romance, specifically, stories of supernatural miracles and extraordinary events. This characteristic is ostensibly antithetical to the previous quality, but it is concomitant with the existence and immanence of Yahweh and his interaction with the world. This fact is foundational for most or even all biblical narratives, and even more so for the narratives in the book of Daniel.

## **Integration of Realism and Romance**

The third characteristic of Biblical narratives is related to the two previous qualities. The stories of the Bible “combine the two tendencies of narrative... These stories are both factually realistic and romantically marvelous.”<sup>78</sup> Ryken notes that Biblical stories bring together “reason and imagination,” which explains the Bible’s appeal to diverse audiences.<sup>79</sup> As a result, the Bible requires both a simple or basic and complex literary response. On the one hand, the stories in the Bible are easy to comprehend because one can follow the plot or storyline. On the other hand, the stories in the Bible are difficult to comprehend because they address complex issues of faith, worship, life, and death, and depict complex characters who are both good and evil or inscrutably ambiguous.

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<sup>78</sup> Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 39.

<sup>79</sup> Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 39.



## **Economy of Language**

Biblical narratives are also noted for their economy of language. Their brevity also makes them both accessible and difficult to interpret. The short length of the stories and the plain style make them accessible to any reader. Audiences can quickly grasp the basic meaning and events in the story. However, in contrast, economy of language can also make the task of interpretation more complicated. Since the Bible leaves much unstated and rarely utilizes direct commentary, the interpreter must draw conclusions through a careful and detailed investigation of the sparsely embellished stories. Ryken appropriately states that, “Clarity and mystery mingle as we move through these stories.”<sup>80</sup>

## **Distinctive Use of Modes of Narration**

Finally, biblical narratives uniquely use four modes of narration. A narrative consists of three basic elements: 1) setting, 2) character, and 3) plot. A narrator can present these three elements in four different ways: direct narrative, dramatic narrative, description, and commentary. Biblical narratives primarily use the first two and rarely use the last two. Biblical stories use direct narrative to introduce and conclude dramatic narrative, which is the most prevalent mode of narration. Description is only used to initiate a character into the action of the story. Commentary only occurs to address a specific detail in the story rather than completely explain the meaning of the action.

In conclusion, HB/OT narrative is the most prevalent form of communication and expression in the Bible. It is regulated by a set of three principles: ideological,

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<sup>80</sup> Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 43.

historiographic, and aesthetic. Furthermore, it is simultaneously creative and constrained in its attempt to depict significant events in the past. It consists of literary realism and literary romance and combines the previous two elements to form a narrative that is simultaneously simple and complex. Stylistically, these narratives demonstrate an economy of language that makes the stories both accessible and difficult to interpret. Finally, biblical narrative primarily uses direct and dramatic narration to present the basic elements of narrative, but rarely uses description and commentary.

### Distinctive Narrative Elements in the Book of Daniel

The book of Daniel contains narratives that possess a distinct form that is in contrast with other biblical narratives. The first six chapters contain narratives that exhibit similarities to a court story, an ancient Near Eastern literary genre.<sup>81</sup> However,

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<sup>81</sup> Andrew Hill states, "Scholars dating Daniel to the Maccabean era prefer the rubric 'court tale' for these narratives since they do not recognize this subgenre as reporting history. Instead, the court tales are considered fictive since they adhere to stereotypical literary patterns characteristic of folklore and legendary literature. In addition, they introduce 'marvelous' or miraculous elements, another indicator of the ahistorical nature of the Daniel court tales for the mainline scholar." Andrew E. Hill, "Daniel," in *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 8. (Grand Rapids: MI; Zondervan, 2008), 30. For further details about Daniel and court tales, see W. Lee Humphreys, "The Life-Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," 211-233, *JBL* 92 (1973). The tale of Ahiqar was a popular type of courtier tale during antiquity. Humphreys notes that an Aramaic version of that tale was discovered among the documentary remains of the Jewish garrison at Elephantine in Egypt (213). He concludes that the story of Esther and Mordecai and the story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50) are also examples of courtier tales. Prior to the work of Humphreys, Gerhard von Rad and Shemaryahu Talmon identified Genesis 37-50 and Esther respectively as stories that exhibit "wisdom values reflected in the works and the paradigmatic role of the protagonist as embodying those values." Gerhard von Rad, "The Joseph Narrative and Ancient Wisdom," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 292-300; Shemaryahu Talmon, "Wisdom in the Book of Esther," *VT* 13 (1963) 419-55. The latter compared the story of Esther with analogs in ancient Near Eastern literature. See also Lawrence M. Wills, *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990) for a summary of the development of the study of the court legend genre of Daniel 1-6. Collins notes, "The affinities of Daniel 1-6 with the stories of Joseph, Esther, and Ahiqar are widely recognized, but there is no corresponding consensus on the proper designation and delimitation of the literary genre." He further states, "The genre of the conflict tale admits of description in other terms, however, whereas the 'tale of court contest' is in need of nuancing and further distinction." John J. Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1993), 42, 45. Wills further defines the genre and designates Daniel 1-6 as a court legend or wisdom court legend (12-38), which he identifies as a cross-cultural genre in antiquity (39-70). *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King*.

despite several similarities to this genre, the narratives in Daniel also exhibit unique literary characteristics. The last six chapters contain apocalypses, a revelatory type of literature that has a narrative frame. The narrative frame consists of dreams or visions that present symbols or imagery in the context of a storyline.

### **Daniel 1-6: Court Stories**

In a general sense, the stories in Daniel 1-6 are similar to court stories. The stories can be divided into two categories, stories of court contest (Daniel 2, 4, 5; possibly Daniel 1) and stories of court conflict (Daniel 3 and 6). The basic shape of the stories of court contest can be separated into four parts: 1) the king has an insoluble problem; 2) his sages cannot help him; 3) the hero is called in and solves the problem; and 4) the hero is elevated to a high position. The basic shape of the stories of court conflict can be separated into five parts: 1) the hero is prosperous; 2) he is conspired against by his court enemies; 3) the hero is condemned; 4) the hero is released; and 5) he returns to his prosperous position.<sup>82</sup> The formulaic shape of such stories suggests stylized plots and characters.<sup>83</sup>

Notwithstanding these court story elements, the narratives in Daniel also exhibit unique literary characteristics. Biographical depictions of Daniel and his friends give the stories a quality of realism. For example, the depiction of Jewish observance of dietary laws and of the heroes' acts of piety (prayer) gives "a more graphic presentation of their

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<sup>82</sup> Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*. ApOTC. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 26.

<sup>83</sup> See also Talmon, "Daniel," 343-356 in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, 350. Talmon identifies a "type-plot of 'the successful exile' in these narratives. He suggests their basic shape consists of a "destitute...young Judean or Israelite exile who rises to an unprecedented height at a foreign court." In the course of the plot, the wise courtier must overcome adversarial court staff and other obstacles to attain to the heights of the king's court.

religious way of life.”<sup>84</sup> Another unique characteristic of the narratives of Daniel that relates literary realism is the depiction of Nebuchadnezzar’s character growth and development. The king is not depicted as a type character, but as a character that grows, faces conflict, and is finally transformed. One of the most significant characteristics that distinguish the narratives in Daniel is the immanence of God or the inordinate influence of God upon events and characters. This characteristic decidedly infuses the stories with theological meaning, which suggests the court story genre is shaped and molded according to the Yahwistic context of biblical narratives. For example, the success of Daniel and his three friends is explicitly due to God’s act of giving, whether it is the gift of favor or the gift of wisdom and understanding. In addition, God’s acts of deliverance are integral to the survival of the protagonists. Moreover, all of the miraculous and fantastic incidents are related to divine deliverances or divine judgments.

### **Daniel 7-12: Apocalypses**

The last six chapters of the book of Daniel contain a type of revelatory literature that is not a narrative in the strictest sense of the term but that manifests a narrative form and narrative qualities. An apocalypse is defined as

...a genre of revelatory literature with a *narrative framework*, in which revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Talmon, “Daniel,” 334. He further notes, “The ‘Jewishness’ of the chronicle of Daniel and his friends comes even more to the fore because of its biographical character...The divine immanence, the young men’s reliance on Israel’s God, and their trust in his efficacy pervade the narrative.”

<sup>85</sup> John J. Collins, ed. *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* Semeia 14 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1984), 9 (Italics supplied). See Collins’ discussion on this definition in *The Apocalyptic Imagination*

Collins expounds upon the term “narrative framework.” He states, “The form of the apocalypses involves a narrative framework that describes the manner of revelation. The main means of revelation are visions and otherworldly journeys, supplemented by discourse or dialogue and occasionally by a heavenly book.”<sup>86</sup> In the book of Daniel the means of revelation are dreams (Daniel 2 and 7), visions (Daniel 8 and 10), and revelations (Daniel 9 and 11). Therefore, the form of apocalypses is the narrative while the means of revelation is visionary.

Susan Niditch also identifies the narrative qualities of the dreams and visions in the book of Daniel. She analyzes the development of the symbolic vision in the biblical text and notes several narrative characteristics of Daniel 7 and 8.<sup>87</sup> She states

Stage III of the symbolic vision form is represented by Daniel 7 and 8...Daniel 7 and 8 further extend the *narrative quality of the vision* ...The dreaming aspect of the vision is all the more emphasized as *the symbols themselves become intricate and*

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(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 3-14. For an examination of the approach and findings of the Apocalypse Group see Newsom, “Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology,” 437-450 in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients*. Ronald L. Troxel, Kelvin G. Friebel, Dennis R., eds. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005). Also, for Collins’ response see “The Genre Apocalypse Reconsidered” in his book *Apocalypse, Prophecy, and Pseudepigraphy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 1-20. For the wide range of views on the genre see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Apocalypses and Apocalypticism in Antiquity, Part 1,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 5/2 (2007) 235-286. For further discussion see also Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End* (Leiden, Brill, 1996), 1-12. Other important studies include P. D. Hanson, “Apocalypse, Genre” in *IDBSup*, ed. Keith Crim (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 27-28; Louis Hartman, “Survey of the Problem of Apocalyptic Genre,” 329-344 in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, D. Hellholm, ed. (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983); E. P. Sanders, “The Genre of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypses,” in *Apocalypticism*, 447-460; M. E. Stone, “Apocalyptic Literature,” in M. E. Stone (ed.) *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (CRINT, 2/2) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 383-441. D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964). Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, trans. M. Kohl, SBT 2/22 (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1972). For a bibliography of works on apocalyptic literature see D. Brent Sandy and Daniel M. O’Hare, *Prophecy and Apocalyptic* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007).

<sup>86</sup> Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 6.

<sup>87</sup> Susan Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980). Italics supplied.

*dramatic scenes* observed by the seer. The style of Daniel 7 has a *rhythmic storytelling quality*. The length of some of the motifs is of note.<sup>88</sup>

Thus, the symbolic visions in Daniel 7 and 8 have a “narrative quality” and the “symbols themselves become intricate and dramatic scenes.” Niditch further comments that there are also “narrative elements” that “frame” the core elements of the dream, namely “the prophet’s fear, the night time setting, and the use of the date-line.”<sup>89</sup> Therefore, according to Niditch, Daniel 7 and 8 consist of a narrative frame of the seer and a symbolic dream/vision that has narrative qualities. In addition to Collins and Niditch, other commentators have also noted the narrative quality of apocalypses.<sup>90</sup>

Daniel 7 and 8 can best be described as apocalypses; however, the forms of Daniel 9 and 10-12 are unique.<sup>91</sup> Despite this uniqueness, these chapters also possess narrative qualities similar to that found in the apocalypses. For example, the narrative of the seer and the angelic interpreter found in Daniel 8 can be found in Daniel 9, 10, and 12. Although, these chapters do not contain dreams or visions, divine revelations with a narrative form can be found in them.

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<sup>88</sup> Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision*, 11-12.

<sup>89</sup> Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision*, 187.

<sup>90</sup> See John Goldingay, *Daniel* WBC 30. Revised edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019) 338-352, 408-413; Carol A. Newsom, and Brennan W. Breed *Daniel*, OTL. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014) 217-220, 258-259; Lucas, *Daniel*, 163-166.

<sup>91</sup> See Lucas for his structure for Daniel 9 and 10-12, *Daniel*, 35.

## Introduction

Narrative analysis as a method in HB/OT studies came to prominence during the “literary turn” in biblical studies in the 1970s. Although the term literary criticism is used as a broad term for the literary method of interpretation in biblical studies, it is possible to distinguish specific literary methods such as rhetorical, structural, and reader-response analysis.<sup>92</sup> Narrative analysis is a literary method (or methods) of interpretation that addresses the narrative elements of a text. This brief discussion on narrative analysis in HB/OT studies looks at four aspects of narrative analysis: terminology and methods, period of prominence, notable studies, and challenges and benefits.

## Terminology and Methods: Narratology, Narrative Criticism, and Formalism

At least three different terms can be identified with respect to the study of narratives in the Bible: narratology, narrative criticism, and formalism. The terms are used in a very fluid manner at times (especially the last two).<sup>93</sup> However, it is possible to

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<sup>92</sup>Gunn and Fewell acknowledge that literary criticism is a “broad movement in recent biblical studies that has broken with the historical-critical tradition in significant ways.” David M. Gunn and Danna Nolan Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 9. See also David Jasper, “Literary Readings of the Bible,” 21-34 in *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*, John Barton, ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Adele Berlin gives a “broad definition of what literary approaches are and what they are trying to accomplish. The overarching purpose of a literary inquiry is a better understanding of the text – its construction, its forms of expression, its meaning and significance, and/or its relationship to non-textual events or to other texts. . . . A literary interpretation of the Bible probes the Bible’s construction of the world and analyzes the forms of expression through which that world is constructed. It examines biblical modes of discourse, literary conventions and assumptions, and context. It seeks to show how the Bible imagines the world and what message that image conveys.” “Literary Approaches to Biblical Literature,” 45-75 in *The Hebrew Bible New Insights and Scholarship*, Frederick E. Greenspahn, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 46.

<sup>93</sup> The term narrative criticism is sometimes used interchangeably with narratology (D. Francois Tolmie) and with literary criticism (James L. Resseguie). For example, Tolmie states, “Many exegetes

detect distinctions among them. Therefore, this study will treat narratology, narrative criticism, and formalism, as distinct but similar terms.

According to David J. Clines, narratology is defined as

a systematic analysis of narrative: its interests are in plot and plot devices, in identifying and distinguishing narrators from implied, ideal and actual authors and readers, and in distinguishing the ‘story’ (or, ‘fabula’, the sequence of events) from the ‘discourse’ (the manifestation of the story in a text).<sup>94</sup>

John Barton explains that narratology began when French critics started to apply Vladimir Propp’s work on oral forms to narrative texts. He further notes that such critics were basically structuralists moving away from a humanistic analysis to a “quasi-scientific” analysis.<sup>95</sup> Thus, one may conclude that narratology has close affinities with structuralism. Adele Berlin offers a more hierarchical definition and states,

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prefer the term ‘*narrative criticism*’, but I prefer the term ‘*narratology*.’” D. Francois Tolmie, *Narratology and Biblical Narratives* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999), 10. He defines narratology according to Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires’ definition, which states “Narratology studies narrative as a general category of texts which can be classified according to *poetics*, the set of identifiable conventions that make a given text recognizable as a narrated story.” Cohan and Shires, *Telling Stories. A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 53. This definition is similar to Berlin’s definition (see above). In addition, the term narrative criticism is sometimes used as a broad term. For example, in the book *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005)*, 8 n. 4, James L. Resseguie states “Narrative criticism and literary criticism are used interchangeably in this book since secular modern literary critics and theorists do not use the term ‘narrative criticism.’” As a result of such fluidity, David Gunn asserts, “The term ‘narrative criticism’ in biblical studies is a loose one, more found in New Testament than in Hebrew Bible studies. Since the late 1970s, it has sometimes been used broadly of literary-critical, as opposed to historical-critical, analysis of biblical narrative, from a variety of methodological standpoints...More specifically the term has been used of formalist analysis, especially in a New-Critical vein...” “Narrative Criticism,” in *To Each Its Own Meaning*, eds. Steven L. McKenzzie and Stephen R. Haynes (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 201-229, 201.

<sup>94</sup> David J. A. Clines, “Contemporary Methods in Hebrew Bible Criticism,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, The History of Its Interpretation*, vol. III, part 2, ed. Magne Saebo, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 148-169, 153.

<sup>95</sup> John Barton, “The Legacy of the Literary-critical School and the Growing Opposition to Historico-critical Bible Studies. The Concept of ‘History’ Revisited – *Wirkungsgeschichte* and Reception History,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, The History of Its Interpretation*, vol. III, part 2, ed. Magne Saebo, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2014), 96-124, 113.



The study of narrative, or narratology, is a subdivision of poetics. Poetics, the science of literature, is not an interpretive effort – it does not aim to elicit meaning from a text. Rather it aims to find the building blocks of literature and the rules by which they are assembled. In order to explain poetics as a discipline, a linguistic model is frequently offered: poetics is to literature as linguistics is to language. That is, poetics describes the basic components of literature and the rules governing their use.<sup>96</sup>

She distinguishes poetics from literary criticism or interpretation, which she sees as eliciting meaning from a text. She also states that her analysis and conclusions are only applicable to biblical narratives, not to all narratives at all times. Her definition is similar to that of M. H. Abrams, who states the study of narrative is the “...critical interest in the theory and techniques of narrative fiction, as ‘the poetics of fiction’ or (in a term coming into widespread use) narratology.”<sup>97</sup> Thus one may conclude that narratology is the technical or empirical study of the mechanics of narratives.

The term narrative criticism arose as a literary method of interpretation that originated in the area of New Testament studies. In his book *What is Narrative Criticism?*, Mark Allan Powell argues “Secular literary scholarship knows no such movement as narrative criticism...this movement developed within the field of biblical studies without an exact counterpart in the secular world.”<sup>98</sup> Powell states that it grew out of the secular literary movement called New Criticism, which was a reaction against the work of literary critics that interpreted literature according to the historical, social, and psychological context of the author. New Critics believed all of the necessary information

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<sup>96</sup> Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, 15.

<sup>97</sup> Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 61.

<sup>98</sup> Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 19. For a brief but informative overview and application of narrative criticism see Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament*. See also Norman R. Petersen, *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978).

for interpreting a text is found only in the text, so they conducted a close reading of the text.<sup>99</sup>

Powell further explains, “The goal of narrative criticism is to read the text as the implied reader.”<sup>100</sup> The implied reader is a hypothetical concept that influences how a text is read. Narrative criticism looks at “story-as-discourse,” in which the implied reader is guided by the implied author’s “devices intrinsic to the process of storytelling.”<sup>101</sup> This includes a narrative evaluation of events, characters, and settings. Notably, the term narrative criticism mostly occurs in relation to the New Testament. In that context, the term refers to a way of reading or interpreting the text that builds upon the work of secular literary critics, specifically New Critics. It focuses on the perspective and understanding of the implied reader and, as such, attempts to understand the storytelling devices in the text, such as events, characters, and settings.

Formalism shares several characteristics with narrative criticism. New Criticism or American Formalism also influenced formalism in HB/OT studies.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, formalism emphasizes narrative elements in the text. House states that formalists “tend to

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<sup>99</sup> Resseguie defines close reading as “‘the detailed analysis of the complex interrelation and ambiguities (multiple meanings) of the verbal and figurative components within a work.’ It pays attention to the words on the page rather than to the contexts that produced those words.” Quote from M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College, 1999), 181.

<sup>100</sup> Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 20.

<sup>101</sup> Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 23.

<sup>102</sup> The term Formalism was originally a derogatory term given to Russian literary critics that stressed the “formal patterns of sounds and words instead of the subject matter of literature.” Their work with poetry has been well-received, especially the work of Jacobson and others. The American literary method New Criticism was called formalist since its proponents stressed that the text was “a self-sufficient object, independent of any reference to ‘external’ world or to social and literary history.” In contrast to Russian or European Formalists, American Formalists did not apply linguistic theory to literature, but attended to the “ironic, paradoxical, and metaphoric aspects of the meanings of its language.” Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 165-167.

focus on the interpretation of narrative. Therefore, many studies of structure, plot, characterization, narration, and genre have appeared. Structure and plot are vital elements in narrative.”<sup>103</sup> In contrast to narratology, which as noted above is the study of the mechanics of narrative (a subcategory of poetics), both narrative criticism and formalism are interpretive methods or ways of reading a text. As a result of these affinities between narrative criticism and formalism, among other commonalities, some scholars do not distinguish between them.<sup>104</sup> However, formalism appears to be distinct from the narrative criticism defined by Mark Powell and used in New Testament scholarship. First, formalists do not seem to emphasize the hypothetical device of the “implied reader.” This does not mean that formalism does not accept such a construct, but it does not appear to be the primary thrust of the method. Second, formalism analyzes and emphasizes the literary structure of texts as well as other narrative elements. Third, formalists are concerned about narratology, namely the mechanics of narrative, notably HB/OT biblical narrative.<sup>105</sup> Therefore, their studies are applicable to the type of narrative to which they attend to rather than to all narratives at all times. Finally, as noted above, formalism (at least the term) is used more in HB/OT studies than in New Testament studies. As a consequence of formalism’s emphasis on HB/OT narratives and its unique qualities, this

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<sup>103</sup> Paul R. House, “Introduction” in *Beyond Form Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 164-165, 164.

<sup>104</sup> See Resseguie, who includes the work of Robert Alter, Michael Fishbane, and Phyllis Trible as examples of close readings. *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament*, 24.

<sup>105</sup> House states in his introduction to formalism, “Adele Berlin...chooses this neglected emphasis (characterization) to examine some neglected Old Testament personae – David’s wives. Her essay illustrates how literary analysis can illuminate forgotten details in biblical texts. *Narratology* has grown in importance in all literary criticism during the past twenty-five years. Meir Sternberg...argues that narrators are not neutral. Rather, they champion persons, causes, and ideologies.” “Introduction,” *Beyond Form Criticism*, 164-165. Thus, House states that formalists focused on narratology, or the empirical study of the mechanics of narratives.

study refers to formalism when using the term narrative analysis as the proposed method of this study.

### **Period of Prominence**

Narrative analysis (or formalism) came to prominence in the United States during the 1980s due in large part to the success of Robert Alter's book, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (1981). House gives an overview of the period and states, "Formalism popularized Old Testament literary criticism during the 1980s."<sup>106</sup> He further argues that Alter's book "set the recent agenda for formalistic analysis of the Old Testament in at least two ways," specifically definition and visibility.<sup>107</sup> Alter defines formalistic analysis as "'attention to the artful use of language' that explains a literary piece's 'ideal, conventions, tone, sound, imagery, narrative viewpoint, compositional units, and much else.'"<sup>108</sup> In addition, the widespread popularity of Alter's book influenced other scholars to produce similar studies. Another way Alter's book influenced future studies is that he stated biblical narratives had unique characteristics, so "biblical literary critics must develop unique theories as to how an Old Testament narrative works."<sup>109</sup> House considers the period of 1981-1989 to be the "flowering" of literary criticism and formalism as well.

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<sup>106</sup> House, "Introduction," *Beyond Form Criticism*, 164.

<sup>107</sup> House, "Introduction," *Beyond Form Criticism*, 164.

<sup>108</sup> House, "Introduction," *Beyond Form Criticism*, 164.

<sup>109</sup> House, "The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament," *Beyond Form Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 3-22, 16.

Furthermore, the accessibility of the formalist method also helped to increase its use. Prior to the rise of formalism, structuralism's appeal began to wane as a consequence of its "specialized vocabulary and philosophical orientation."<sup>110</sup> Such complexities created a barrier for those that tried to use the method. Such a barrier did not exist with formalism. House states the use of the formalist method was fairly widespread and accessible in the United States as it was used frequently in college literature courses.

### **Notable Studies in Narrative Analysis of the HB/OT**

The works of Robert Alter, Adele Berlin, Meir Sternberg, and Shimon Bar-Efrat, are some of the influential and notable studies that outlined and demonstrated formalist methods in their analysis of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>111</sup> Other works instrumental in furthering the use of narrative analysis include journals, a supplement series, and a book edited by Danna Nolan Fewell and David Gunn.

As stated above, Robert Alter's book *The Art of Biblical Narrative* was a pivotal study in the field. In addition to his work the work of Adele Berlin, most notably *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative (1983)*, also furthered the use and study of formalism. She analyzed characterization and point of view. Her work "introduced several of the developments in Israeli studies of biblical narrative (including Bar-Efrat's) to the English speaking world."<sup>112</sup> Her work may have also supplemented (at times even corrected) the work of Alter, Sternberg and Bar-Efrat.

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<sup>110</sup> House, "The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament," 11.

<sup>111</sup> See Gunn, "Narrative Criticism," for a detailed enumeration of notable works.

<sup>112</sup> The title of Berlin's book is telling. "Where Alter spoke of art, Berlin speaks of poetics 'the science of literature, ...which seeks its rules and principles from within without recourse to sciences

Meir Sternberg produced an extensive and detailed study on the mechanics of biblical narrative, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (1985), and proposed a “systematic reconstruction,” of the inner workings of biblical narrative.<sup>113</sup> He moved away from terms such as *fiction* and *literary* that were used by Alter (and Berlin) to describe biblical narratives and decided to “seek biblical categories” to describe and define the nature of biblical narrative.<sup>114</sup> For Sternberg, biblical narratives were ideological texts not literary fiction. House states, “he argues that the Old Testament fuses both what moderns call history and fiction to make ideological points.”<sup>115</sup>

Shimon Bar-Efrat’s book *Narrative Art in the Bible* (English translation, 1989) is an extensive and detailed introduction to the basics of Hebrew biblical narrative. Heard concludes it “is essentially a catalog of the elements of Hebrew narrative technique...The book is an excellent primer on reading Hebrew narrative.”<sup>116</sup> Gunn and Fewell call it “a meticulous analysis of narrator, characters, plot, time and space, and style, replete with copious examples.”<sup>117</sup> In addition, they assert that it is written in a style that is accessible

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outside of literature, such as psychology, sociology...To pull biblical interpretation out of the sphere of the natural and social sciences and into the sphere of ‘the science of literature’ is a new twist...which attempts to demarcate acceptable lines of inquiry just as sharply as any other such attempt.” R. Christopher Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures: A Review and Assessment,” *Restoration Quarterly*, 38/1 (1996): 32.

<sup>113</sup> Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 9.

<sup>114</sup> House, “The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament,” 17.

<sup>115</sup> House, “The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament,” 17. House summarizes Sternberg and further explains, “Historical and literary critics alike must pay attention to the text’s historical and artistic components. Therefore, he declares: ‘Here in lies one of the Bible’s unique rules: under the aegis of ideology, convention transmutes even invention into the stuff of history...So every word is God’s word. The product is neither fiction nor historicized fiction nor fictionalized history, but historiography pure and uncompromising.’” House quotes Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 34-35.

<sup>116</sup> Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures: A Review and Assessment,” 31.

<sup>117</sup> Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, xi.

to the beginner. In contrast, Alter negatively critiques Bar-Efrat's work for its accessibility and states, "too much space is devoted to belaboring the obvious, especially in regard to basic matters of how literary narratives work."<sup>118</sup> Yet, Alter favorably evaluates Bar-Efrat's analysis of various biblical texts and his identification of "general principles."<sup>119</sup>

The Oxford Bible Series book, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (1993), edited by David M. Gunn and Danna Nolan Fewell, offered a compilation of theoretical and practical studies on Hebrew narrative. It builds on Alter's work and attempts to contribute to an understanding of the "mechanisms of narrative."<sup>120</sup> Yet, in contrast to the work of Alter, Berlin, and Sternberg, Gunn and Fewell believe interpretation is a reader-centered process rather than a text-centered process. They state that the book

"tries to address a wider range of narrative features than either Alter or Berlin. It strikes a different balance between discussing 'mechanics' and presenting 'interpretations' from that found in Bar-Efrat - less of the former, more of the latter. Most significant, however, it differs from all these books in its hermeneutical assumptions. Unlike the others, including Sternberg, our book understands interpretation to hinge crucially upon the reader, and not just in terms of a reader's 'competence.' Meaning is not something out there in the text waiting to be discovered. Meaning is always, in the last analysis, the reader's creation, and reader, like texts, come in an infinite variety. No amount of learning to read biblical narrative 'correctly' will lead inexorably through the 'given' poetics of the text to the 'correct' interpretation."<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 16. Alter's critique may not necessarily be negative if Bar-Efrat's intention was to create an introductory text.

<sup>119</sup> Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 16.

<sup>120</sup> Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, ix.

<sup>121</sup> Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, xi.

Such a statement may coincide with a reader-response perspective, but the work of Gunn and Fewell continues to focus on biblical narrative and elements such as plot, characters, narrators, language, as well as readers.

Alongside the above full-length treatments of formalistic analysis, a few journals and their supplement series provided an outlet for new studies. First, in 1974 *Semeia* was started “as an experimental journal dedicated to exploring new means of interpreting Scripture.”<sup>122</sup> Second, in 1976 three scholars in England (David Clines, Philip Davies, David Gunn) started the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*. Paul House asserts methodology was an underlying reason the editors decided to create such a journal; he states that they were “moving toward literary analysis themselves, and hoped to encourage others in the same direction.”<sup>123</sup> In addition to those two journals, literature and supplement series were also vehicles for early formalistic studies. For example, the Bible and Literature series (Almond), JSOT supplement series, *Semeia* supplement series (Scholars Press), and the Indiana Series in Biblical Literature (Indiana University Press) produced several works that used and promoted the formalist method.

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<sup>122</sup> House, “The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament,” 9. House notes that the initial founders of the journal (Robert Funk was the motivation behind its publication) were interested in New Testament studies, specifically in Gospels; however, the third issue of the journal included Old Testament topics. Subsequently, the journal became a vehicle for both Old and New Testament studies.

<sup>123</sup> House, “The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament,” 14. The editors themselves state more practical reasons for the establishment of the journal: 1) paper backlog of accepted studies at other journals, 2) the cost of a journal, and 3) the absence of periodicals that accept works in progress (14).



## Notable Studies in Narrative Analysis of the Book of Daniel

Several studies of the book of Daniel have used a literary approach or a form of narrative analysis to interpret the text. Gunn and Fewell, in the book *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (1993), analyze Daniel 3 using a literary approach that emphasizes narrative elements, specifically the use of language (repetition, word plays, patterns, and images). Their methodology is similar to that of Alter, Berlin, Bar-Efrat, and Sternberg, but there are also differences. Gunn and Fewell state that they try to address a “wider range of narrative features” and to strike a balance between mechanics and interpretation that leans more towards the latter.<sup>124</sup> Finally and most importantly, they adhere to different hermeneutical assumptions, namely that interpretation depends upon the reader rather than the text. For Gunn and Fewell, the reader rather than the text creates meaning.

Fewell explores the first six chapters of Daniel using a literary approach in her book *Circle of Sovereignty* (1988).<sup>125</sup> She states that her study uses “some relatively new theories about narrative poetics and the reading process.”<sup>126</sup> She further explains that her reading of the stories is “informed by several different ideas and methodologies.” Fewell identifies four different methodologies: form criticism, literary-critical influences (New Criticism, Structuralism, Deconstruction, and Reader Response), narrative poetics, and the mechanics of reading. Under narrative poetics Fewell identifies plot structure, characters, point of view, language, and narrative tempo. Consequently, her interpretive method could be deemed an “eclectic” or “pluralistic” literary approach.

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<sup>124</sup> Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, xi.

<sup>125</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*.

<sup>126</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 9.

John Goldingay uses a literary approach in his commentary on the book of Daniel. He states that he deems it “worthwhile” to undertake the writing of another commentary on Daniel because “our period (1987) is also one that is seeing the development of a number of suggestive approaches to Daniel, whose fruitfulness for our understanding of the book as a whole I hope emerges in the pages that follow.”<sup>127</sup> Similarly, Philip Davies stated in his commentary, “In the light of current trends in biblical scholarship, the remedy for this deficiency is probably to be sought in a greater appreciation of the literary qualities of Daniel, beginning with the recognition that it is unique composition, and one of the most remarkable within the Bible.”<sup>128</sup> (The “deficiency” Davies points to is the lack of progress in theological studies in Daniel.) Donald E. Gowan proposes in his commentary on Daniel that the book is a work of literature, thus he suggests, “Awareness of the special qualities of these two types of literature (story and vision accounts), as they are used in Daniel, will add to the appreciation of the book.”<sup>129</sup> His analysis of the text includes literary analysis along with exegetical and theological analysis. In his literary analysis, Gowan seeks to

...introduce the passage with particular attention to identification of the genre of speech or literature and the structure or outline of the literary unit under discussion. Here also, the author takes up significant stylistic features to help the reader understand the mode of communication and its impact on comprehension and reception of the text.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel, WBC*, ix. One may conclude that he may have referred to the literary approaches that constituted the “literary turn.”

<sup>128</sup> Davies, *Daniel*, OTG, 18.

<sup>129</sup> Gowan, *Daniel AOTC*, 24.

<sup>130</sup> Gowan, *Daniel*, AOTC, 10.

W. Sibley Towner assesses the first six chapters as diaspora stories about Daniel and analyzes the motifs, imagery, and setting of the last six chapters in his commentary on the book.<sup>131</sup>

### Challenges and Benefits

R. Christopher Heard presents an overview of the challenges and benefits to using narrative analysis as a method for biblical interpretation.<sup>132</sup> He explains that “‘narrative criticism’ is not all of a piece.”<sup>133</sup> As one reviews the different proponents of formalism or narrative analysis, it is evident that there are divisions over basic issues. Heard lists and discusses three issues: 1) narratorial reliability, 2) texts, contexts, readers, and 3) the implications of interpretation. First, narrative critics disagree on whether biblical

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<sup>131</sup> W. Sibley Towner, *Daniel Interpretation* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1984).

<sup>132</sup> See also Gunn’s critique of formalism or narrative criticism, “Narrative Criticism,” 226-228. Regarding the literary approach in general, Longman identifies five “pitfalls” and “promises,” related to using the literary approach. The five pitfalls are: 1) contradictory approaches, 2) “obscurantist” theories, 3) imposition of western literary paradigm, 4) elimination of author, 5) and denial of referential function for literature. The three promises are: 1) delineate the conventions of biblical literature, 2) stress whole texts, and 3) focus on the reading process. Tremper Longman III, “Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation,” in *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 95-192, 124-131. See also Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1991), 164-168. He lists eight challenges to using narrative analysis as a method: “(1) a dehistoricizing tendency, 2) setting aside the author, 3) a denial of intended or referential meaning, 4) reductionistic and disjunctive thinking, 5) the imposition of modern literary categories upon ancient genres, 6) a preoccupation with obscure theories, 7) ignoring the understanding of the early church, 8) a rejection of the sources behind the books.” Several of Osborne’s criticisms are the same as or similar to those of Longman’s and Gunn’s criticisms. For other critiques of literary or synchronic approaches see John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament, Method in Biblical Study* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996); John Barton, “Reading the Bible as Literature: Two Questions for Biblical Critics,” in *The Old Testament: Canon, Literature, and Theology, Collected Essays of John Barton* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 109-126; see also Johannes C. De Moor, ed. *Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis* (Leiden, EJ Brill, 1995).

<sup>133</sup> Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures: A Review and Assessment,” *ResQ* 38 (1996): 29-43, 36. Heard uses the term narrative criticism instead of formalism. As noted above, the term narrative criticism has been used interchangeably with formalism. It appears the term is beginning to be used in Old and New Testament studies. Since Heard’s article was published in 1996, the term probably started to refer to both disciplines by the 1990s. See also Gunn, “Narrative Criticism,” in *To Each Its Own Meaning*. Gunn’s chapter focuses only on Old Testament narrative.

narrative consists of a “straightforward, omniscient, reliable narrator.”<sup>134</sup> Heard concludes, “Epistemologically, the problem is undecidable: readers cannot know whether narrators know more than they tell, since readers’ only indication of the scope of narrators’ knowledge is what narrators actually tell.”<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, the presence of ostensible “incongruities and contradictions in biblical narrative must be explained.”<sup>136</sup> Alter, Bar-Efrat, Berlin, and Sternberg favor narratorial omniscience and reliability, but Gunn and Fewell reject both.

Second, narrative critics who are influenced by formalism limit meaning and interpretation to the immediate literary context, but narrative critics not bound by formalist leanings do not limit the context of a text to such a boundary. They see multiple contexts that influence the meaning of the text. For example, beyond the immediate literary context is the compositional context as well as the reception context. All of these contexts are valid in relation to the text and its meaning. Therefore, Heard identifies three broad views regarding meaning, text, and context. Such complexities raise questions concerning the boundaries of narrative analysis.

Finally, narrative critics are beginning to ask ethical questions of the implications of an interpretation. The multiple contexts of a text can lead to multiple meanings. Thus, the question arises, what are the ethical implications of one interpretation over another? Adele Berlin, in her review of the development of the literary approach in biblical studies, demonstrates a move toward the allowance for or acceptance of different

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<sup>134</sup> Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures,” 36.

<sup>135</sup> Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures,” 36.

<sup>136</sup> Heard, “Narrative Criticism and the Hebrew Scriptures,” 37.

meanings for a text.<sup>137</sup> Each interpretive system is able to justify a different meaning for the same text.<sup>138</sup>

Nevertheless, and despite the above challenges, Heard states some of the hermeneutical advantages of using narrative analysis, namely: 1) careful attention to and respect for the text, 2) attention to the text as a literary whole, and 3) reader accessibility. First, Heard notes that narrative analysis attends to the details of the text and uses careful investigation of the text to interpret and understand it. Second, formalism looks at the text as a literary whole, which is similar to the traditional use of Scripture that sees the book as possessing an overarching story. Finally, the narrative method of analysis is accessible to the beginning interpreter since it does not require technical or esoteric vocabulary or processes.

In conclusion, specialists in narrative analysis must come to terms with questions about narratorial reliability, multiple contexts for text and meaning, and ethical questions about the implications of an interpretation. However, the method offers the advantages of text-centered analysis, attention to the text as a whole, and reader accessibility.

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<sup>137</sup> Adele Berlin, "Literary Approaches to Biblical Literature," 64.

<sup>138</sup> In her study, Berlin used Gen. 34 (the story of Dinah) as a litmus test to trace the trajectory and influence of literary theories over the years. She concluded that there has been a movement from one specific meaning in the text toward multiple meanings where meaning is situated with the reader. This is different from Sternberg, who argued that a text has one meaning that must be discovered by the reader. The movement toward multiple meanings may be indicative of the influence of postmodernism and reader response theory.

## Methodological Outline

This study will follow the method of narrative analysis outlined in Shimon Bar-Efrat's book, *Narrative Art in the Bible*.<sup>139</sup> As noted above, Bar-Efrat's work was similar to that of Alter, Berlin, and Sternberg, regarding his emphasis on narrative analysis. He was an Israeli Old Testament/Hebrew Bible scholar (1929-2010) who is primarily known for *Narrative Art in the Bible*. He also wrote commentaries on 1 and 2 Samuel. His book on narrative analysis of the Hebrew Bible has several benefits as a methodology, but also some problems. His work provides a clear and thorough introductory treatment on basic

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<sup>139</sup> Bar-Efrat defines plot as consisting "of an organized and orderly system of events, arranged in temporal sequence." *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 93. These events are selectively chosen to create a "logical, planned development..." Longman similarly states, "The plot of a literary narrative is the succession of events, usually motivated by conflict, which generates suspense and leads to a conclusion. Abrams calls it a 'structure of actions'...and points out that plot analysis is not a simple recitation of the episodes that make up a story, but happens 'only when we say how this is related to that'...In other words, the reader must decide how each part contributes to the whole. This narrative trait of plot is so pervasive that readers will automatically attribute causation between narrative episodes even if they are not explicit in the text itself." Longman, "Biblical Narrative," 71. The development of the plot centers on the conflict or "collision between two forces, whether these be two individuals, a person and his or her inner self, a person and an institution, custom or outlook, or an individual and a superhuman force, such as God or fate." *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 94. Bar-Efrat evaluates a plot according to its unity or coherence, which he determines through the analysis of scenes. He organizes scenes according to the characters in the scene and their conversations. He further states that a scene in biblical stories generally consist of two characters, so conversations are what he denotes as "duologues." The scenes and dialogue in the book of Daniel do not correspond to the scenes often found in other biblical stories. The conversations are more stylized. Therefore, it is not possible to analyze the plot according to the character composition of scenes. Regarding character, the views, values, ethics, and norms of the narrative are transmitted through the characters, in their speech and life choices. Characters also transmit this information to the reader since they are usually the center of attention in the story. Bar-Efrat notes, "Their personalities and histories attract the reader's attention to a greater extent than do other components of narrative (explanations, settings, etc.)." *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 47. The reader is always moved by the character, whether positively or negatively. According to Bar-Efrat, biblical narratives use two types of techniques to depict a character, direct and indirect shaping. Direct shaping is comprised of descriptions of outward appearance and inner personality. Indirect shaping is comprised of speech and actions (telling and showing) and minor characters. *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 48-92. Alter suggests a "scale of means, in ascending order of explicitness and certainty, for conveying information about the motives, the attitudes, the moral nature of characters." He places at the "lower end of this scale" characterization through actions or appearance, which essentially "leaves us substantially in the realm of inference." Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 116-117. At the higher end of this scale he places direct speech and the narrator's comments. Berlin proposes a limited list of characterization methods, notably description, inner life, speech and actions, contrast, and a combination of the former. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, 34-41. Overall, the three authors offer a list of methods of characterization that are very similar.

elements of Biblical narrative. In addition, it offers ample examples from the Biblical text. Furthermore, it draws its methodology from the Bible itself rather than imposing an external or anachronistic methodology upon the ancient text. Finally, his terminology is fairly accessible. In contrast, two main weaknesses of his work are that he does not address foundational issues regarding authorship, the Bible as history, and the Bible as literature. Similarly, he does not elaborate upon foundational matters such as divine inspiration and revelation.

The analysis will emphasize the narrative elements of plot and character. This emphasis on plot and character.<sup>140</sup> Character and plot are two elements of narratives that give a broad, all-encompassing, and foundational perspective regarding the flow, working, and meaning of narratives. Therefore, these two elements of narrative provide significant, foundational, and meaningful information for an analysis of a narrative.

According to Bar-Efrat, characters are the soul of the narrative.<sup>141</sup> He states, “Many of the views embodied in the narrative are expressed through the characters, and more specifically, through their speech and fate.”<sup>142</sup> He continues, “Not only do the

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<sup>140</sup> Resseguie highlights the difficulties in defining plot and states that, “‘Plot’ is an elusive term and any definition is likely to be incomplete. Nevertheless, an understanding of plot is important to determine structure, unity, and direction of a narrative. It is the designing principle that contributes to our understanding of the meaning of narrative. More concretely, the plot is the sequence of events or incidents that make up a narrative. Events include actions (or acts) that bring about changes of state in the characters. Or the action of characters may bring about changes of state in the narrative events. A character’s acts are his or her physical actions, speech, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. When we ask, ‘What do characters think, feel, or do, and how does this change the characters themselves?’ we are asking a question about plot. Or when we ask, ‘What do characters think, feel, or do, and how does this bring about a change in narrative events?’ we are once again exploring plot. By and large, a character is the *subject* of acts; she or he initiates acts that bring about changes in the plot.” James L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament*, 197.

<sup>141</sup> *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 47.

<sup>142</sup> *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 47.

characters serve as the narrator's mouthpiece, but also what is and is not related about them...all reveal the values and norms within the narrative..."<sup>143</sup> Bar-Efrat also notes regarding plot, "If the characters are the soul of the narrative, the plot is the body."<sup>144</sup> Plot encompasses all the events within the narrative and depicts its shape or organization. The overall narrative imbues the events with meaning and, as such, an analysis of plot offers foundational and comprehensive information.

Chapter Three consists of a narrative analysis of plot and character of Daniel 1 and 2. The two analyses are compared and contrasted, then a narrative shift between Daniel 1 and 2 is delineated and identified. Next, a comparative analysis will be conducted between the identified narrative shift and similar narrative elements in Daniel 3-7 to determine whether the identified narrative shift persists to the end of the Aramaic section.

Chapter Four consists of a narrative analysis of plot and character of Daniel 7 and 8. The two analyses are compared and contrasted, then a narrative shift between Daniel 7 and 8 is identified. Next, a comparative analysis will be conducted between the identified narrative shift and similar narrative elements in Daniel 9-12 to determine whether the identified narrative shift persists to the end of the Hebrew section.

Chapter Five consists of a discussion of the study's findings and their relation to the problem of bilingualism in the book of Daniel. In addition, implications of the study's findings for meaning and theology are discussed. The study concludes with Chapter Six, in which the summary and conclusions of the study are presented.

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<sup>143</sup> *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 47.

<sup>144</sup> *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 93.





## CHAPTER THREE

### LANGUAGE SHIFT-NARRATIVE SHIFT CORRESPONDENCE

#### BETWEEN DANIEL 1 AND 2

Chapter Three is divided into two parts. In Part I, the first language shift at 2:4b and its relation to the narrative in Daniel 2 is presented. Then, the plots and characters of the narratives in the two chapters located at the first language shift (Daniel 1 and 2) are analyzed and compared using a narrative analysis. From this data, a narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the shift in language is identified.

In Part II, the language shift (LS) – narrative shift (NS) correspondence (LS-NSC) identified in Part I is traced in the subsequent chapters (Daniel 3-7) as it repeats in the rest of the Aramaic section (up to and including Daniel 7). At the end of the chapter, the summary and conclusions of the chapter are presented.

#### **Part I: Identifying the Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence**

##### **Between Daniel 1 and 2**

###### A. Introduction

###### **1. Language Shift at Daniel 2:4b**

The location of the first language shift, from Hebrew to Aramaic, does not occur at the beginning of Daniel 2. Instead, it occurs in the middle of the verse at Daniel 2:4b, where the Chaldeans begin to speak to King Nebuchadnezzar. Although the chapter and

verse divisions were added after the text was written, one may see that the shift in language occurs after an evident “chapter beginning” at Daniel 2:1. Specifically, it is possible to see that Daniel 2:1 is the beginning of a separate section that is delineated from Daniel 1. The introductory phrase, “In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,” in Daniel 2:1 contains similar introductory elements that are found in Daniel 1:1. Therefore, one may conclude that the placement of the first language shift is placed after the beginning of the narrative in Daniel 2.

In a general sense, it has been noted that the point at which the language transitions does not create a break in the narrative, but actually “provides the occasion for the switch to Aramaic (although the king surely would not have spoken Hebrew).”<sup>145</sup> Several studies that have sought to further explain the reason or motivation behind the positioning of the language shift at 2:4b are presented in the discussion below.

#### Possible Explanations for the Language Shift at 2:4b

According to the studies noted in Chapter One of this study, the location of the language shift can have several different motivations: authentication, a new point of view, a reference to an earlier text, a rhetorical device to depict irony, or a new sociolinguistic context or setting for the main characters.

#### **Daniel C. Snell’s Theory - Authentication**

Snell observes three elements in the language shift at 2:4b (in his comparison of the languages shifts in Ezra and Daniel). First, he states, “the change in languages

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<sup>145</sup> John J. Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1993), 156.

appears to be motivated and smooth.”<sup>146</sup> Second, he also notes that the same language shift occurs in the Daniel text of the Qumran document, but the term “תַּרְגֻּמוֹת,” which is located just before the shift to Aramaic in the MT, does not occur. However, at the juncture of the shift there is a blank space that is approximately the same size as the term. Finally, he observes that the location and nature of the language transition (introduced by the term “in Aramaic”) is similar to that of the book of Ezra (4:8). As a consequence of these three factors, Snell concludes that the motivation for the language shift appears to be “to strive for authenticity in reporting the speech of foreigners.”<sup>147</sup> Snell’s suggestion has merit, as it derives from a comparison with the book of Ezra and considers its appearance in the documents from Qumran. Nonetheless, if the book of Daniel used the language shift for authenticity, then why did it not take place at Daniel 1:10 when the chief of the eunuchs spoke to Daniel? At that point, Daniel and his friends were in Babylon, under the care of the king. Therefore, the language could have shifted there. If the language shift could only originate in Daniel 2, then why did it not take place when the king spoke to his wise men? It would not be probable that the king would speak in Hebrew. Therefore, Snell’s conclusions may not completely account for the motivation behind the language shift in 2:4b.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Daniel C. Snell, “Why is There Aramaic in the Bible?” *JSOT* 18 (1980), 35.

<sup>147</sup> Snell, “Why is there Aramaic in the Bible?” *JSOT* 18 (1980): 32-51, 36.

<sup>148</sup> Arnold also finds shortcomings in Snell’s conclusion and thus states, “we should stress one significant difference between the use of Aramaic in Daniel and Ezra. Unlike the original Aramaic sources in Ezra, it seems obvious that in Daniel we are not dealing with authentic Babylonian or Achaemenid sources for the Aramaic sections...the incentive in Daniel is less obvious because we lack a self-contained Aramaic source for chapter two with its own introduction. In other words, the switch to Aramaic in Daniel 2:4b appears to have a much more rhetorical impetus when compared to the switch in Ezra. This suggests the switch to Aramaic at 2:4b was because of literary conventions, and not because the editor was

## Bill T. Arnold's Theory – A New Point of View

Arnold follows Snell in comparing the language shift in Daniel to that in Ezra. He concludes the language shift is the result of a shift in the ideological plane of the text. He states,

The emphases in this paper on point of view and characterization suggest two reasons why the author used Hebrew until 2:4b. First, 2:1-4a is a transitional paragraph like that in Ezra leading up to the use of Aramaic... This opening paragraph makes complete a scene shift in which the narrator's point of view changes from that of chapter 1... beginning in 2:1, the narrator has a new point of view, and the first four verses of the chapter gradually move to this position.<sup>149</sup>

For Arnold, in Daniel 1:8-20, the narrator's point of view is internal with regards to the events in the narrative. It also lays the foundational narrative groundwork for Daniel 2. The narrator's point of view begins to transition from an internal one to an external one at 2:1. Arnold further states that at the language shift at 2:4b the royal formula "O King, live forever!" has an important function. He states, "Use of the formula makes complete the distance between the speaking character and the narrator or distanced observer."<sup>150</sup>

Arnold's theory has merit in that he, like Snell, reaches his conclusion by a comparative analysis of the use of Aramaic in Ezra and Daniel. Moreover, Arnold's work is one of the few that follows the movement of the text prior to the shift in language. He

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incorporating an Aramaic source." Bill T. Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible: Another Look at Bilingualism in Ezra and Daniel," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*, 22/2, 1996, 1-16, 9.

<sup>149</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible," 11.

<sup>150</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible," 12.

tries to address the prior three verses (2:1-4) that precede the location of the language shift at 2:4b, which is very helpful in understanding what occurs in the text.

Nevertheless, Arnold's theory does not completely address the first language shift. He claims that the Hebrew in Daniel 1 is an expression of the internal point of view of the narrator, who positions himself in alignment with the characters. In Daniel 2:1, the narrator begins a transition to a "detached, objective, and uninvolved observer."<sup>151</sup> For Arnold, the narrator's transition to a detached observer begins at 2:1 and is complete at 2:4b. Yet, it is difficult to suppose that the narrator becomes detached at this point when Daniel 2-7, the Aramaic section, consists of narratives that consistently depict kings that are destabilized by God's acts of deliverance and judgment. It appears that the Aramaic section, or the narrator's point of view in the Aramaic section, according to Arnold, has a similar ideological location as the narrator in Daniel 1. Furthermore, the narratives in Daniel 3 and 6 depict the four Hebrew characters as martyrs that hold to their ideological beliefs (concerning bowing to idols [Dan. 3] and prayer [Dan. 6]), which were first expressed in Daniel 1. Notably, these narratives are also in Aramaic, not in Hebrew. Consequently, despite the merits of this theory, Arnold's conclusions do not completely address the motivation behind the first transition.

### **Jan-Wim Wesselius's Theory – Reference to An Earlier Text**

According to Wesselius, who builds on the work of Snell, the location of the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic suggests that the book of Daniel is dependent on the book of Ezra. He theorizes,

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<sup>151</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible," 3.

it seems highly significant that in both Daniel and Ezra the Aramaic part is introduced, a few verses after the beginning of an episode, with . . . , “in Aramaic” (Dan 2:4 and Ezra 4:7). While seemingly introducing only the document or speech directly following it, this term effectively serves as an introduction to a long section in Aramaic, which ends at or near the end of the first episode of the second half of the book.<sup>152</sup>

Wesselius sees the language shift at 2:4 as an “intentional” reference to Ezra 4:8, where the term for “in Aramaic” (4:7) also occurs prior to the language shift.<sup>153</sup>

Wesselius’s comparison of Daniel and Ezra is very detailed and offers several insights into their connection. Yet, one would need to explain why the book of Daniel seeks to link itself to the book of Ezra. For example, do these connections help to interpret the text of Daniel or are such connections allusions to specific texts in Ezra that may or may not illuminate the book of Daniel. Wesselius sees the comparisons as primarily for authentication purposes, therefore, the rhetorical strategy does not provide meaning to the text at this point. Thus, although Wesselius offers significant comparative data regarding Daniel’s relation to Ezra, it is difficult to suggest that an intentional reference to Ezra is the only or even primary reason for the location of the language shift at 2:4b.

### **David M. Valeta’s Theory – A Rhetorical Device for Irony**

According to Valeta, Mikhail Bakhtin’s “concept of heteroglossia/polyglossia provides . . . a more satisfying explanation for the presence of multiple languages in this

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<sup>152</sup> Jan-Wim Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel, Composition and Reception*, eds. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint (Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 2:292-310, 300.

<sup>153</sup> Wesselius, “The Writing of Daniel,” 309.

text.”<sup>154</sup> In contrast to Arnold, Valeta suggests the language transition at 2:4b is “more than a mere signal of the shift of the narrator’s point of view.”<sup>155</sup> For Valeta, the language shift “is an indication that the Aramaic language is being used in a creative and sarcastic manner...the language change is part of a calculated rhetorical strategy.”<sup>156</sup> He argues that the narratives in the Aramaic section are Menippean satires that use sarcasm and parody to ridicule and judge foreign kings in their courts. The words of the Chaldeans at the point of the transition, “O King, live forever,” “serve as an ironic statement that sets the predominant satirical tone of Dan 1-6.”<sup>157</sup> Consequently, Valeta sees the transition in language as part of a larger literary intentionality that uses heteroglossia, wordplays, and other literary devices to judge and denigrate the foreign kings in their court.

Valeta assiduously details the recurring literary devices of wordplay, irony, and satire that are used to denigrate the foreign kings and that work in tandem with the recurring acts of divine judgment against foreign kings. However, Valeta states the wordplays also exist in Daniel 1. He explains, “the literary creativeness using wordplay is found in all the court tales regardless of language.”<sup>158</sup> Such a conclusion seems to contradict his explanation for the language shift at 2:4b. He does state that the phrase “O king, live forever,” sets the ironic tone for the rest of the chapters in Aramaic, which may

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<sup>154</sup> David M. Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies* ed. Roland Boer (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 91-108, 108.

<sup>155</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 99.

<sup>156</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 99.

<sup>157</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 98.

<sup>158</sup> Valeta, “Polyglossia and Parody: Language in Daniel 1-6,” 99.



account for the location of the transition. However, the destabilization of the king begins in 2:1 with the king's dream and its effects upon him. Therefore, Valeta does not account for any differences between Daniel 2:1 and 2:4b, specifically he does not explain why the language shift occurs specifically at this particular point.

### **Anathea Portier-Young's Theory – A New Sociolinguistic Context**

Portier-Young's argument, which is similar to Valeta's, suggests that Aramaic is the language of empire. However, in contrast to Valeta, she sees bilingualism as more than a literary device used to parody and judge foreign kings. She sees it as part of a sociolinguistic construct that is the context in which Jews faithful to their covenantal identity prosper in the setting of empire. As the language of empire, Aramaic is the space in which Jews demonstrate their fealty to God, the superiority of their God, and the limits of the power of foreign kings and kingdoms. According to this theory, the language shift at Daniel 2:4b opens with a "courtly formula...marking the Aramaic language as one of deference and subservience...As in the book of Ezra, so here, Aramaic is the scripted language of empire, the language one uses to address the king."<sup>159</sup> She, along with Valeta, sees the phrase "O king, live forever," as an important turning point in Daniel 2. She further concludes,

The switch of language in 2:4 from Hebrew to Aramaic creates and marks for the reader a new context, a space in which faithful Jews would be called on to negotiate and interact with kings and to interpret dreams and messages in order to demonstrate

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<sup>159</sup> Anathea Portier-Young, "Languages of Identity and Obligation: Daniel as Bilingual Book" *VT* 60 (2010): 98-115, 111.

and communicate God's power and will to the agents of the empire, and in so doing to witness to the limits of imperial authority.<sup>160</sup>

Portier-Young's conclusion develops a social context for the language transition that addresses the wider issue of the function of language within empire and its meaning to those that experience forced migration.<sup>161</sup> Nevertheless, her theory, like Valeta's, does not take into account that in Daniel 1, the four Hebrews are also depicted as faithful Jews that "negotiate and interact" with the king's servants to demonstrate the limitations of the king's authority over their diet. Although the characters do not interact with the king directly (at least not until 1:18-20), they (Daniel) wisely negotiate their covenant faithfulness to cultic purity before secondary characters that follow or represent the king's power and authority. Thus, the Hebrew characters affirm their covenantal fealty in the context of the land of their exile (prior to entering the kingly court) even in the introductory Hebrew section. Therefore, one must ask, what necessitates the placement of the language shift at 2:4b? Moreover, neither Portier-Young nor Valeta explain the differences between Daniel 2:1-3 and 2: 4b. It would be helpful to understand what transpires between those verses so that one may understand the nature of the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic.

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<sup>160</sup> Portier-Young, "Languages of Identity and Obligation: Daniel as Bilingual Book," 111. She further explains the possible audience for the narratives, she argues, "This is the context for all the tales of Daniel...Each story explores a different dimension of the complex negotiation of identity and obligation in the space between God and empire. If we seek an audience for this book, we might do well to look among Jews for whom these stories already held currency: Jews trained in two worlds, who found themselves negotiating their identity and obligations in relation both to the sacred covenant and to the temporal powers that ruled Judea...They would have seen that Daniel and his friends could resist and critique empire, and suffer at its hands, but they could also stand in its courts and at the very gate of the king (111)."

<sup>161</sup> See Mark J. Boda, Frank Ritche Ames, John Ahn, and Mark Leuchter eds., *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration* (Atlanta: SBL, 2015) for studies on exile or forced migration in the Hebrew Bible.

From the above discussion, one may conclude that a consensus on the explanation for the motivation behind the placement of the language shift at 2:4b is elusive. However, some helpful similarities exist. Both Snell and Wesselius see the location of the language shift several verses after the beginning of the narrative as a link to the book of Ezra, which Snell concludes uses language shifts as a form of authentication and Wesselius concludes is a reference to the book of Ezra. Arnold, Valeta, and Portier-Young see the shift as a rhetorical device, but each theory progressively moves to a larger or broader motivation for the location of the shift, specifically as a rhetorical device depicting a new perspective of the narrator (Arnold), or depicting a new context in which foreign kings are judged through the literary devices of sarcasm, irony, and wordplays (Valeta), or depicting a new sociolinguistic context indicative of the limits and challenges of empire for the Hebrew youths (Portier-Young). Each of these conclusions assist in clarifying the reasoning behind the location of the placement of the narrative shift at Daniel 2:4b, however, further understanding may be achieved by following Arnold's theory of a transitional paragraph. Thus, it is necessary to follow the movement of the text from 2:1 to 2:4b, specifically in relation to the movement of the narrative.

## **2. Language Shift and Narrative Shift**

### **a. Transitional paragraph prior to language shift**

It is notable that Arnold's explanation for the location of the first language shift in the book of Daniel offers an analysis that explains the relation between Daniel 2:1-4a and 2:4b. He sees the previous verses as a transitional paragraph that indicates a shift from an internal to an external viewpoint and that precedes and prepares for the language

transition at 2:4b. He first noted such a transitional paragraph in his analysis of the use of Aramaic in the book of Ezra.

In Ezra 4:1-7 Arnold explains that a change in viewpoint that corresponds to the language shift occurs gradually in stages. First, 4:1-3 introduces the theme of opposition between the people of the land and the returnees. Next, verses 4-5 consist of further “distancing” terminology, for example, the phrase “the people of Judah” is now used to describe the returnees, and the Persian kings Cyrus and Darius are mentioned.<sup>162</sup> In verses 6-7, it states that Judah’s enemies wrote letters to the Persian king against them. Notably, in Ezra 4:7 the phrase “אַרְמִית וּמִתְרָגָם אַרְמִית כְּתוּב” occurs and is used to formally introduce the letter. Finally, in v. 8 the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic and the opening introduction to the letter follows.

It is possible to notice a similar construction in Daniel 2:1 to 2:4a. Arnold explains that Daniel 2:1-4a functions as a transitional paragraph. Although the book of Daniel does not use ancient epistolary source material, it does use language shifts. Arnold sees Daniel 1 as an introductory unit that prepares for the change to Aramaic in Daniel 2. He breaks Daniel 1 into three sections, vv. 1-2, 3-7, 8-20 (21) and suggests the main themes and characters are introduced in this chapter. This introduction sets up the transition to Aramaic in Daniel 2. Arnold states, “...2:1-4a is a transitional paragraph like that in Ezra leading up to the use of Aramaic...beginning in 2:1, the narrator has a new point of view, and the first four verses of the chapter gradually move to this position.”<sup>163</sup> Arnold does not delineate the sections of the transitional paragraph in Daniel, but his

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<sup>162</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible,” 6.

<sup>163</sup> Arnold, “The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible,” 11.

study is helpful in understanding the location of the first language shift and the gradual movement toward that location. Even if one disagrees with Arnold's conclusions regarding internal and external points of view, it is possible to see Daniel 2:1-4a as a transitional paragraph that leads up to the language shift due to several factors.<sup>164</sup>

One may conclude that prior to the language shift at Daniel 2:4b a transitional paragraph occurs that leads up to the language shift. This is identified by two elements: 1) transition in royal date formula and 2) terminological links to 1:18-20. First, if one compares the introductory narrative elements in Daniel 1 and 2, it is possible to note a transition. For example, in Daniel 1:1, the narrative begins within the kingdom of Judah, in the capital city of Jerusalem. The time is in the third year of the reign of the Judean king, Jehoiakim. From this introductory setting, the narrative moves away from this point and moves into Babylon (1:2). This transition is complete as one moves to Daniel 2:1. At the point of Daniel 2:1, the narrative is situated within a new setting. Time is now expressed according to the reign of a Babylonian king. This change is permanent. Dates will never again be linked to a Judean king in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 2, the setting takes place in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Arnold states, "Ordinarily, Jewish authors writing during the Neo-Babylonian period dated events to the imprisonment of Jehoiachin. But the author's free use of Nebuchadnezzar's date formula is part of his shift in point of view."<sup>165</sup> In Table 3.1 it is possible to see that Daniel 2 starts with a new date (time), a new king, and a new location.

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<sup>164</sup> John Goldingay proposes a plausible argument for 2:1-4 as a passage that looks both ways. He suggests it is more useful than the idea of preparation (based on email recommendation).

<sup>165</sup> Arnold, "The Use of Aramaic in the Hebrew Bible," 10.

Table 3.1 Narrative Introductions of Daniel 1 and 2

	Daniel 1:1	Daniel 2:1
1. Year	Third	Second
2. King	Jehoiakim	Nebuchadnezzar
3. Location	Judah (Jerusalem)	Babylon (Implied)

b. Terminological continuity prior to the language shift

In addition to its transitional function, Daniel 2:1-4a also consists of terminological links to the Hebrew at the end of Daniel 1. For example, as shown in Table 3.2, the Hebrew term for “to come” occurs in Daniel 1:18 and 2:2. Next, the Hebrew phrase “stood before the king” occurs in 1:19 and 2:2. Finally, the terms for the various groups designated as wise men occur in 1:20 (magicians and enchanters) and 2:2 (magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, Chaldeans).

Table 3.2 Terminological Links Between Daniel 1:18-20 and 2:1-2

	Daniel 1:18-20	Daniel 2:1-2
1. Come	לְהִבְיֵאֵם (v. 18)	וַיָּבֵאוּ (v. 2)
2. Stood before the king	וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ (v. 19)	וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ (v. 2)
3. Wise men	הַחֲרֻטְמִים הָאֲשָׁפִים (v. 20)	לַחֲרֻטְמִים וְלֹאֲשָׁפִים וְלִמְכַשְׁפִּים וְלַכְּשָׁדִים (v. 2)

These terminological links may foster continuity between the end of Daniel 1 and the beginning of Daniel 2, which is in Hebrew. This attempt at continuity may suggest, absent the existence of chapters and versification, an intentional terminological preparation for the shift in language prior to the language shift. Specifically, these

terminological links may reach beyond the introduction in 2:1 so that continuity may be established prior to the language shift.

In summary, the language shift at 2:4b is preceded by a transitional paragraph that begins at 2:1, according to Arnold's theory. Specifically, Daniel 2:1-3 demonstrate a shift in year (time), king (rulership), and location. Moreover, terminological links between 1:18-20 and 2:1-3 also occur prior to the language shift. The absence of chapters and versification may necessitate such a link between the two chapters to demonstrate continuity prior to the subsequent language shift.

### **3. Relation Between Language Shift and Narrative Shift**

The transitional paragraph prior to the language shift at 2:4b may also be seen as the beginning of a narrative shift that moves away from the narrative of Daniel 1. The shift in date, king, and location is a shift in the narrative element of setting. It is a setting that shifts from the emphasis on the movement into exile to an emphasis on the events within exile, in the king's court, which begins to depict and emphasize the destabilization of the foreign king. Thus, this transitional paragraph may also be deemed the beginning of a narrative shift.

In addition, according to the placement of the language shift, after or near the narrative shift, one may also conclude that the language shift follows (or is subsumed under) and corresponds to the narrative shift. The language shift does not create a break in the narrative. On the contrary, the language shift follows the shift in narrative. The narrative shift occurs prior to the language shift and details a significant shift in narrative setting away from Daniel 1, specifically in time, king, and location. The language shift occurs after the narrative shift, but it amplifies the narrative shift at 2:1 in that, for the

reader (particularly a bilingual reader), it highlights and emphasizes the transition from Daniel 1 to 2 with even greater force. The reader observes two notable shifts in Daniel 2, 1) the significant shift in narrative at 2:1, and 2) a corresponding shift in language at 2:4b. This correspondence between the narrative shift and the subsequent language shift at Daniel 2 may be a harbinger that prepares the reader for a larger narrative shift of plot and character. The language shift may correspond to and cooperate with the larger shift in narrative. This larger correspondence between the language shift and narrative shift may be observed in the analysis below, which presents a comparative narrative analysis of Daniel 1 and 2 that focuses on plot and character.

#### B. Analysis of Plot in Daniel 1 and 2

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2 a shift in language from Hebrew to Aramaic occurs, namely at 2:4b. Corresponding to this language shift, a narrative shift in plot also occurs. Concerning plot, in Daniel 1 the narrative is centered upon a conflict between two powers and two religious ideologies that lay claim to absolute sovereignty, namely God and the King of Babylon. The main characters are placed within this conflict and are forced to maintain their religious integrity in a hostile environment. In contrast, the plot in Daniel 2 is driven by the king's search for knowing (or knowledge and wisdom), specifically about his mysterious dream and its revelation. The king is no longer a powerful monarch. He is a destabilized king in search of knowing. His search for knowing engulfs the characters in the narrative and drives the tension in the plot. Once revealed, the dream discloses what the king did not know in Daniel 1, that only God has absolute sovereignty. Due to the occurrence of the narrative shift in plot between Daniel 1 and 2, with the latter being the location of the language shift, one may conclude that a



language shift-narrative shift correspondence exists between Daniel 1 and 2. This conclusion may suggest that the language shift has not only a rhetorical function but specifically also a rhetorical-narrative function.

### **1. Daniel 1<sup>166</sup>**

The plot of the narrative in Daniel 1 is made up of connecting acts arranged in a cohesive pattern around a conflict. The conflict is between two powers and two religious ideologies that lay claim to absolute sovereignty. One has absolute sovereignty, God, and the other, the king of Babylon, grasps after absolute sovereignty. In 1:1 the king of Babylon grasps for power and comes against Jerusalem and besieges it. However, Daniel 1:2 reveals that God gave the king of Judah and some of the vessels of the house of God into Nebuchadnezzar's hand. Consequently, the text reveals that God, not King Nebuchadnezzar, is the sovereign power behind the king's victory. Nevertheless, the king is not aware of this reality and seeks to impose his power upon the four main characters through acts of "coming" "besieging," and "appointing (1:1, 2, 3, 5)." Through his violent and controlling actions, he attempts to grasp at sovereign power that belongs only to God. Daniel and his three companions resist the king's power and align themselves with their God as they resist defilement from the king's rations. In response, God's divine acts of giving (1:9, 17) bestow covenantal favor and wisdom upon the four Hebrew youth and facilitate their success in the king's court. Complete resolution to the conflict is only

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<sup>166</sup> The above plot analysis follows the general definitions of plot identified in Bar-Efrat's explanations. Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 96, 278-279. Since, in the book of Daniel, the conversations are stylized according to the context of the king's court (66-67), the scenes in Daniel are somewhat different from the common scene structure in other Biblical narratives. However, this plot analysis has affinities with Bar-Efrat's general explanation on plot analysis (93-95) and his final example of narrative analysis (239ff).

implied in the last verse, which points to the rise of a divinely ordained king (Isa. 45: 1; Cyrus) who will end the reign of Babylon and liberate the Judean exiles. The chapter can be delineated into five units: 1) Prologue (1:1-2), 2) Act One (1:3-7) 3) Act Two (1:8-17), 4) Act Three (1:18-20), and 5) Epilogue (1:21).<sup>167</sup>

a. Beginning of the conflict (1:1-2)

The conflict begins in the prologue (1:1-2) and is depicted through the terms “come” (בוא) and “gave” (נתן). King Nebuchadnezzar “comes” against Jehoiakim and besieges Jerusalem (1:1). Thus, the conflict begins at the national or kingdom level as a political act in history.<sup>168</sup> The nature of the conflict changes when the subject shifts to God, who “gave” Jehoiakim and the vessels of the house of God into Nebuchadnezzar’s hand (1:2).<sup>169</sup> Thus God’s giving is the cause behind the king’s attack (coming). God is

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<sup>167</sup> See also Goldingay who suggests the “story’s plot tension builds through the first three panels, which occupy the opening two-thirds of the chapter (verses 1-14). It is (largely) resolved by the latter three panels in the closing third (verses 15-21).” Thus, Goldingay states that the tension of the Babylonian defeat of Judah (verses 1-2) is mostly resolved by Daniel’s triumph in his food test (v 15-16), subsequent victory over the wise men (17-20), and existence beyond the Babylonian kingdom (v 21). John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30 (Dallas: Word, 1987), 8.

<sup>168</sup> The emphasis on kings in Daniel 1:1, 2 and Daniel 1:21 denotes the central focus of kingship in the chapter, and also in the rest of the book. Newsom states, “...the focus on the encounter between the two kings foregrounds the author’s concern with kings and kingdoms. (The term ‘king’ occurs some 187 times in Daniel and the related word ‘reign’ 69 times...)” Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel* OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 40.

<sup>169</sup> Danna Nolan Fewell states that these shifts in subjects refer to two points of view. She writes, “First, there is the perspective of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. As far as he is concerned, the conflict reported in vv. 1-2 primarily involves himself and Jehoiakim king of Judah...According to the narrator, Nebuchadnezzar does not defeat Jehoiakim through his own skill or power. Nebuchadnezzar’s self-image of aggressor is overshadowed by the narrator’s view that the Babylonian king is but a passive recipient: Adonai gives Jehoiakim into Nebuchadnezzar’s hand. Thus, the narrator and the reader know something that Nebuchadnezzar does not.” Fewell suggests also that this is an example of dramatic irony. *Circle of Sovereignty* (Sheffield: Almond, 1988), 35. Similarly, Newsom concludes, “Throughout the rest of the story, Nebuchadnezzar and his officials are associated with the verb *bô’* (vv. 3, 18 [twice]), whereas God is consistently associated with the verb *nātan* (vv. 9, 17). Thus, the reader knows what Nebuchadnezzar does not know: the God of Israel is the effective agent in history, not Nebuchadnezzar.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 41. The phrase “into his hand” is predominantly found in the books of Judges and Ezekiel. It refers to an act of

the sovereign power behind history and behind the king's victory. This places the nature of the conflict on a spiritual and a political level. The king, however, does not know God as sovereign. (This will change in Daniel 2.)

The text highlights two entities the king carries away to Babylon, namely the king of Judah and some vessels from the house of God. This emphasizes the importance of both the kingly and cultic/religious context of the conflict. It also associates the king with the act of grasping after emblems of both the kingly and cultic sphere. The text emphasizes the fate of the vessels,<sup>170</sup> which the king places in the treasure house of his gods.<sup>171</sup> This emphasis also colors the conflict as it now involves two religious identities or two forms of worship (the house of God and the house of his gods).<sup>172</sup> This is the

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defeat or victory or an act of divine judgment. In Ezekiel it primarily means an act of divine judgment against Israel and Judah, which corresponds to the overall theme of the book. In Judges it can refer to either divine judgment against Israel or God's act of favor for Israel. In the book of Jeremiah, there is a connection with this phrase and Nebuchadnezzar or the king of Babylon (Jer. 14x – 20:4; 21:7,10; 27:8; 29:21; 32:3, 25,28,36; 34:2; 37:17; 38:3; 44:30; 46:26). It refers to God's act of or fulfillment of judgment against Judah.

<sup>170</sup> The vessels are especially emphasized as the term “vessels” is syntactically located at the beginning of the last section of 1:2 to emphasize what happens to them (וְאֵת־הַכֵּלִים הַבְּיָא בֵּית אוֹצָר אֱלֹהֵיָו).

<sup>171</sup> The phrase “the house of his gods” contrasts the phrase “the house of God,” Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 69, 72-77. John Goldingay, *Daniel* WBC 30 revised edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 153. See also J. S. Bergsma, “Cultic Kingdoms in Conflict,” *Letter and Spirit* 5 (2009): 47-83, 48.

<sup>172</sup> The expression “Shinar” is infrequently used in the biblical text for Babylon, thus its occurrence here points to a special meaning. Goldingay suggests it is an “archaism” that “suggests a place of false religion, self-will, and self-aggrandizement (Gen. 11:1-9; Zech. 5:11).” Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 154. The term “Shinar” does not appear in Gen. 12: 1-9, as Goldingay states, but it does appear in Gen. 11:2, the story of the Tower of Babel. However, one could see the connection between the events in Gen. 12:1-9 and the events in Dan. 1:1-2. The use of the term Shinar, the repetition of the phrase “the house of [his] gods,” and the emphasis of the term “the vessels” (1:2) points to a thematic emphasis in the book of Daniel, namely the conflict between two types of worship. Goldingay notes, “The reference to them, coming at the beginning of the book, is the first indicator of a concern with the temple and its worship that runs through both stories and visions in Daniel. This is going to be ‘a book about the conflict between true worship of the true God, represented by the Temple vessels, and false worship of a false god, represented by Nebuchadnezzar's temple and god.’” For a detailed analysis of allusions to Genesis 11:1-9 see Enrique Báez, “Allusions to Genesis 11:1-9 in the Book of Daniel: An Exegetical and Intertextual Study (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2013).

background to and nature of the conflict that develops in the rest of the chapter and possibly throughout the rest of the book.<sup>173</sup>

b. The conflict expands to the four Hebrews (1:3-7)

In Act One (1:3-7) the conflict moves from the national/spiritual level to the individual/spiritual level. The king continues his violent act of grasping after absolute power when he commands his chief official to carry (בוא) Hebrew youth to Babylon to serve the king (1:3). These youth are noted for their royal or noble status and physical purity.<sup>174</sup> (The latter trait hints at a continuation of the emphasis on cult/worship noted in 1:2.) However, the king's search emphasizes wisdom as his primary criteria.<sup>175</sup> This

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<sup>173</sup> A similar occurrence is depicted in 1 Samuel 4:11; 5 where the Philistines capture the ark of God, which like the vessels is a (representative) part of the temple. God's giving, which is depicted in the prologue, and the capture of the vessels of the temple may imply the king of Babylon may experience the same or similar consequences that the Philistines experienced.

<sup>174</sup> The youth are described as ideal characters, similar to kings or priests. They are "from the seed of the kingdom," (מִן־רֵעַ הַמְּלִיכוֹתָהּ) which is translated as royal family or offspring; they are also described as coming "from the nobility," (מִן־הַפְּרִתְמִים), which is an Old Persian loanword that means nobles and may not necessarily refer to royal descendants. It occurs only 3 times (Esth. 1:3; Esth. 6:9; Dan. 1:3) and is a loanword from Old Persian, *fratama*, (first) Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *BDB*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907) Reprinted by Hendrickson; 832c. The plural means aristocrat or noble at the Persian and Babylonian court, Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm *HALOT* trans., edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson, 2 vol. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), s.v. "פְּרִתְמִים". Moreover, the youth must have no blemish (מָאֵם). This noun is a variant (common spelling, מָאֵם) and means blemish or defect. It refers to a physical defect (Dan. 1: 4;) but can also refer to a figurative, or moral stain (Job 31:7). The physical defect can be found in man, as excluding him from priestly service. It also can refer to a disfigured man or woman. In addition, it points to disfiguring as caused by man upon man. It can also refer to a defect in beasts. Figuratively, it points to a moral blemish, of shame or repulsion (*BDB*, 548c). The noun occurs 22 times (10 times in Leviticus). In Leviticus, it refers to the descendants of priests (21:17, 18, 21, 23), sacrificial animals (22:20, 21 [2 times], 25), and injured persons (24:19, 20). Next, the youth were to be "of good appearance" (טוֹבֵי מַרְאֵה). The phrase occurs 9 times with 4 occurrences in Esther. This phrase almost always refers to a woman's beauty (Rebekah, Bathsheba, Vashti, young virgins, Esther; except in Eccl. 11:9).

<sup>175</sup> The description of their wisdom consists of a tripartite group of participial phrases, "skillful in all wisdom, knowing knowledge, and understanding learning," (מְשֻׁפְּלִים בְּכָל־הַחֵמָה וְיָדְעֵי דַעְתוֹמְבִינֵי מְדַע). The three phrases together may point to a comprehensive form of wisdom. Although some of the words are interchangeable, the use of all three of the phrases may be intentional to suggest the highest or most complete form of wisdom. According to Ringgren, "When it has the meaning 'to understand,' *hebhîn* is

carrying away situates the four Hebrew youth within the conflict (1:4, 6) introduced in 1:1-2. They are faced with three years of Babylonian enculturation (new food, education, and names<sup>176</sup>) that attempts to separate them from their religious identity (1:5-7). The king oversees the process of Babylonian enculturation, which further denotes his attempt to grasp at absolute sovereignty, in this case over the lives of the main characters. The new education, new names, and especially the new diet feature prominently in this process, through which the king seeks to place his personal seal on to the lives of the four Hebrew youth, and thus separate them from their allegiance to the Lord.<sup>177</sup> Notably, the end result of Babylonian enculturation is for the four youth “to stand before the king,” which carries the undercurrent of cultic service.<sup>178</sup> Consequently, the tension in the narrative increases as two questions emerge: 1) what will be the result of Babylonian

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frequently connected with *yada*, ‘to know.’ Thus Mic. 4:12 says: ‘(The foreign nations) do not know (*yada*) the thoughts of Yahweh, and they do not ‘understand’ his plan’ (he will destroy them). This combination is quite frequent in the Wisdom Literature, e.g., in Prov. 1:2: ‘That men may know (*yada*) wisdom and instruction, ‘understand’ words of insight (*binah*) (cf. 1:6, ‘to understand a *mashal*, ‘proverb,’ and a *melitsah*, ‘figure’). In Dan. 1:4 the king commands that the young men be gathered ‘who were skillful in all wisdom’ (*maskilim bekhoh chokhmah*), who were endowed with knowledge (*yodhe’e dha’ath*), and who understood learning (*mebhine madda’*) – thus the entire Wisdom terminology!’ Helmer Ringgren, “יָדָע,” *TDOT* 2:99-107.

<sup>176</sup> The Hebrew names are theophoric. See Andrew E. Steinmann *Daniel*. Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2008), 88-89;

<sup>177</sup> The king is depicted as appointing (1:5, מָנָה) the nourishment of the youth. Consequently, he will be the source of their ability to serve as the king’s servant. This act is a depiction of the king supplanting the place of God. The verb is in the Piel form. Conrad states the Piel means, “to distribute, allot, commission, install in office.” J. Conrad, “מָנָה,” *TDOT* 8:396-401. “The characteristic feature of all the occurrences in the Piel or Pael is that they variously bring to expression the powers of command of highest authority.” “Both in the Biblical Aramaic texts and in Dn. 1, the reference is to the powers of disposal of the Babylonian or Persian kings as the highest human authority (Ez. 7:25; Dan. 1:11).” “The remaining occurrences refer to Yahweh’s own powers of disposal, powers transcending all human possibilities and comprehension.” J. Conrad, “מָנָה,” *TDOT* 8:396-401. “According to the book of Jonah, he (God) is able to commission natural forces like servants (Jon. 2:1[1:17]; 4:6-8), his sovereignty impressively underscored by the fourfold occurrence of the form *wayeman*. He is also the logical subject in Job 7:3, as the continuation of the chapter shows (cf. vv. 12ff); i.e., for Job it is he who assigns a person his destiny and who in so doing incomprehensibly leads him into distress and misery.”

<sup>178</sup> See Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel* (Nampa, ID: Review & Herald, 2000), 18.

enculturation on the religious integrity of the four youth, and 2) what will be the result of the three years of preparation for the king's service? Essentially, will the four youth be forced to compromise their religious integrity to succeed after the three years of preparation for service in the king's court?

c. Daniel identifies with God in the conflict (1:8-17)

A turning point occurs in the story in Act Two (1:8-17). For the first time Daniel, the central character, acts and speaks and thus displays agency. Through his actions one of the two tensions is resolved as he acts to maintain his religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation.

Daniel resolves<sup>179</sup> to resist defilement from the king's food,<sup>180</sup> so he makes an official request to the chief of the eunuchs (1:8). (The Hebrew term translated "to defile" further hints at the cultic undertones of the narrative.) His act of covenant fidelity precipitates the events and incidents that begin to resolve the conflict started in 1:3. In support of or possibly in response to Daniel's fidelity, God gives (יָנִחַ) Daniel the

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<sup>179</sup> The verb translated as "determine" or "resolve" (דָּיַשׁ) occurs in 1:8 and in 1:7. In 1:8 it has a different meaning than the one found in 1:7 (to set or give a name). This example of paronomasia contrasts the action of Ashpenaz in 1:7, who removed Yahweh when he changed the names of the four youth, and the action of Daniel, who re-centers the place of Yahweh in the lives of the four youth through his proposed diet. Wordplay "offers an effective and aesthetically pleasing means of indirectly drawing attention to particular words of phrase." V. Philips Long, *The Reign and Rejection of King Saul* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 27. For an extended treatment of this subject see Bill T. Arnold, "Wordplay and Characterization in Daniel 1," in *Puns and Pundits* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2000), 231-248.

<sup>180</sup> The object of the prepositional phrase after the verb "to defile" is the phrase "with the king's food and with the wine he drank" (בְּכֶסֶף וּבְכֶסֶף וּבְכֶסֶף וּבְכֶסֶף). The exact phrase is also found in 1:5. This may suggest that Daniel is not responding specifically to the name change, as one might assume from the repetition in 1:7, 8, but to the king's attempt to act as the source of sustenance and growth for the youth. Consequently, the food is directly connected to Nebuchadnezzar's attempt to supplant the place of God by appointing their daily rations.

covenantal emblems of favor and mercies before the chief official (1:9).<sup>181</sup> This is God's second act of giving, but in contrast to his first act, he now favors his faithful followers. The phrase "favor and mercies" is a common phrase for God's protection for his people when they are in foreign contexts.<sup>182</sup>

Despite God's favor, the chief official rejects Daniel's request because he fears the power of the king.<sup>183</sup> Although the king is not present, his power still influences the actions of the characters. Unperturbed, Daniel is able to persuade the steward to test the

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<sup>181</sup> God gives to Daniel two qualities that are found in the context of covenantal language, so he may be responding to Daniel's covenantal wisdom or faithfulness. First, God gives him *chesed* (חֶסֶד). This noun means "goodness, kindness, or mercy" and it can refer to kindness between humans, especially as extended to the lowly, needy, and miserable. *BDB*, 338c-339b. The word occurs over 200 times with 129 occurrences located in the Psalms. Infrequently it refers to affection of Israel to Yahweh and in some instances it means lovely appearance. It primarily refers to God's kindness or lovingkindness in condescending to attend to the needs of his creatures. Interestingly, prior to the exile, Jer 16:5 stated that the Lord had taken away his peace or "steadfast love and mercy" from his people. Second, God gives him "compassion" (רַחֲמִים). This noun is in the plural form, which expresses intensity. It means compassion usually with reference to God. In this context, it may refer to 1 Kgs 8:50, in which Solomon prays that the Lord would, "...forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you, and grant them *compassion* in the sight of those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them." In this verse the word "compassion" is joined with the prepositional phrase "before" (לְפָנַי) and linked with a *lamed*. This is the exact construction found in 1:9. *BDB*, 933b. This construction may point to God's mercy within the context of exile or captivity.

<sup>182</sup> 1) Gen 43:14; 2) 1 Kgs 8:50; 3) Ps 106:46; 4) Dan 1:9; 5) Ne. 1:11; 6) 2 Chr 30:9. (1. Joseph in Egypt [he appears to be foreign to his brothers]; 2. Solomon's prayer for the people in their future captivity; 3. God's people pitied before their captives (summary of the history of God's people); 4. Daniel before the chief of the eunuchs; 5. Nehemiah before Artaxerxes; 6. Reference to captivity of Northern kingdom.) The Hebrew construction noted here occurs at least 6 times in the Bible and all of the verses are either within narratives in which an Israelite is before a foreign ruler, and/or in captivity, or referring to exile. A similar sentiment is expressed in Ezra 9:9, but with the words "lovingkindness" and "before." God "extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to grant us some reviving to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us protection in Judea and Jerusalem."

<sup>183</sup> Newsom and Goldingay suggest the chief official's statement left Daniel with an opening. Newsom states, "At the same time, by focusing only on the criterion of Daniel's appearance rather than explicitly denying Daniel's request, he gives the courtier's equivalent of a wink." *Daniel*, 49. See also Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 159. Furthermore, in his speech the official refers back to the king's act of appointing the food (1:5) and outlines the mortal consequences of any change. This is the second time the king's appointing is mentioned. This may imply again the reason behind Daniel's decision to resist defilement.

four youth on an alternative diet for ten days (1:10-15).<sup>184</sup> The alternate diet Daniel suggests is indicative of his decision to align himself with God rather than the king of Babylon.<sup>185</sup> At the end of the ten days,<sup>186</sup> the four youth appear healthier than the other youth on the king's diet, so they successfully resist defilement (1:16). Therefore, the tension regarding their religious integrity is resolved. This resolution occurs without the knowledge of the king, who appointed the youth's food. Thus, Daniel is able to undermine the authority of the king without the king's knowledge. Possibly, in response to the four youth's success or in addition to it, God's third and final act of giving occurs (1:17). He gives the four youth wisdom and understanding, and he gives Daniel the ability to understand dreams and visions. This gift prefigures Daniel's wisdom, which is displayed in the subsequent chapters. God's third and final act anticipates resolution of the second tension, the result of the three years of preparation for the king's service.

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<sup>184</sup> Here, Daniel's words (1:12-13) occur in direct speech. The length of his speech suggests its importance. Daniel proposes that the steward test the four youth using an alternative diet. The term for "to test" (נִסָּה) occurs twice here, in 1:12 and 1:14, which frames Daniel's interaction with the steward. It only occurs in the Piel form and means "test, try, or prove or to put someone to the test." *BDB*, 650b; *HALOT*, s.v. "נִסָּה." "The goal of testing is an understanding of...what one really has in oneself, and who one is." F. J. Helfmeyer "נִסָּה," *TDOT* 9:443-455. See also Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3; Judg. 2:2; 3:4.

<sup>185</sup> See Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 19; Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 40.

<sup>186</sup> The idea of a ten-day trial is also found in Rev. 2:10. Collins suggests the book of Daniel may have been its source. Collins, *Daniel*, 144. Goldingay agrees that Revelation is dependent on Daniel and also states "'Ten days' does not imply that ten is a symbolic number, nor is ten days a common period for a trial" *Daniel*, rev. ed., 160. It can be conceived as the largest possible number (1 Sam. 1:8; Gen. 24:22) or the minimum (Amos 6:9; 5:3; Gen. 18:32). It is found in the letters of Tel el-Amarna as hyperbole (fourteenth century). André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Eugene: Cascade, 2018 ), 48. Lucas sees it just as a "round number" that offers a safe and effective duration. Ernst Lucas, *Daniel, ApOTC* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 55.



d. The four Hebrews are victorious in the conflict (1:18-20)

The resolution of the second tension is depicted in Act Three (1:18-20).<sup>187</sup> At the end of the three years, the king summons the four Hebrews and investigates their wisdom. He finds them ten times wiser than the Babylonian wise men and places them in his service. Thus, the second tension in the story is resolved. Again, the king is unaware that another power is responsible for the wisdom of the four youth. The king's lack of awareness or knowing of the four youth's alternate diet and God's gift of wisdom is an example of dramatic irony. From the beginning of the conflict (1:2), God's giving, unbeknownst to the king, has undermined his power and authority. When the four youth aligned themselves with God, he helped them to undermine the king's authority also (1:9, 17) and be exalted before their enemies. Through their faithfulness and God's giving, Daniel and the four youth, despite being exiles, are able to reverse their subjugation and become successful courtiers in Babylon. (This type of reversal is common in court stories; however, in Biblical court narratives God is usually the primary cause behind the reversal.)

e. The promise of conflict resolution (1:21)

Although the two tensions of the narrative have been resolved, the initial and overriding tension regarding the spiritual conflict between two sovereignties that was historically expressed through the Babylonian exile has not been resolved. Its resolution

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<sup>187</sup> This is also exhibited in repetition that links Act Three to Act One. For example, the end of the three-year duration of the search (1:5; וּמְקַצֵּתָם) is referred to in 1:18 (וּלְמַקְצֵת הַיָּמִים). The king's command to Ashpenaz to bring the youth (1:3; רַב סָרִיסוֹ לְהַבִּיאַם) is repeated in 1:18 (וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַשְׁפֶּנֶז רַב סָרִיסוֹ לְהַבִּיאַם). The same chief official (1:3, 6, 7; רַב סָרִיסוֹ) is mentioned in 1:18 (שָׂר הַסָּרִיסִים). Finally, the ultimate goal of the king's search, "to stand before the king" (1:5; וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לְפָנַי הַמֶּלֶךְ) is repeated in 1:19 (וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לְפָנַי הַמֶּלֶךְ).

is expressed implicitly in the epilogue (1:21), where it states that Daniel continues until the first year of the reign of King Cyrus. In contrast to King Nebuchadnezzar, King Cyrus will bring about the deliverance of Judah from exile and the fall of Babylon.<sup>188</sup> This is the final and most dramatic reversal of fortune, not only for the main characters but also for the people of God.

## **2. Daniel 2**

As noted above, at the chapter level, as one moves from Daniel 1 to 2 a shift in language occurs from Hebrew to Aramaic. This language shift occurs in the middle of Daniel 2:4. As was noted above and in several studies, this language shift in the middle of the verse does not break the flow of the narrative. It occurs in a context that coincides with the movement of the narrative, namely when the wise men begin to speak to the king. However, the use of Aramaic does not end when the wise men end their speech. It continues to the end of Daniel 7; therefore, the use of the language may have a broader function than relating the wise men's speech. It is the contention of this study that at the chapter level, specifically as one moves from Daniel 1 to Daniel 2, the language shift corresponds to a narrative shift. This may be identified as the language shift-narrative shift correspondence. Thus, the shift in narrative (plot and character) from Daniel 1 to 2 corresponds to the shift in language at 2:4b, which may amplify the narrative shift.

In contrast to Daniel 1, the plot of the story in Daniel 2 is made up of connecting acts arranged in a cohesive pattern around the king's search for "knowing" (or wisdom)

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<sup>188</sup> Newsom states, "The final chronological notice marks as a narrative horizon the end of the Judean exile, which in Jewish understanding was also not the result of mere imperial political calculations but the effect of God's intentions expressed through Cyrus (Isa 45:1-8; Ezra 1:1-4; 2 Chr 36:22-23)." Newsom, *Daniel*, 52.

concerning his enigmatic dream and its revelation. In Daniel 2 the possession of wisdom and knowledge becomes the determining factor of whether or not a character possesses power.<sup>189</sup> Through the king's search he and the Babylonian wise men are destabilized and revealed to be powerless and "unwise," respectively, because they lack the required "knowing" to reveal the dream. In contrast, Daniel is elevated and revealed to be the supreme wise man because he has the requisite knowing to reveal the dream. God is depicted as the source of Daniel's "knowing" and thus absolute sovereign.

Besides the search for the dream, the dream itself encompasses approximately two thirds of the chapter (2:31-45), thus its revelation and interpretation are as important as the search. The dream is an embedded narrative that offers divine commentary on what the king should know. It depicts divine judgment against the pride and power of human sovereignty. This is divine commentary regarding the king's attempt to grasp at absolute sovereignty, in Daniel 1, in particular, and against the pride and power of human kingship as a whole. This is the wisdom that God ordains that the king must "know" and understand, that God alone is sovereign. The plot develops in four acts: Introduction (2:1), Act One (2:2-12), Act Two (2:13-23), Act Three (2:24-30), Act Four (2:31-45), and Conclusion (2:46-49).

a. King Nebuchadnezzar's disturbing dream (2:1)

The tension in the story begins immediately in the Introduction (2:1) with a new main character, King Nebuchadnezzar. In Daniel 1 the king was a powerful character that

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<sup>189</sup> Newsom asserts, "...Dan 2 is no simple court tale but a highly sophisticated exploration of the relationship between knowledge and power. The interplay between these two phenomena is what drives the plot, but it is also the way in which the story serves to negotiate real tensions in the social world of the Jewish Diaspora." *Daniel*, 65.

worked in the background through his representatives to influence events.<sup>190</sup> In Daniel 2 the king is a primary character, but now he is no longer powerful. In 2:1 it is related that in the second year of the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar he had a disturbing dream. The dream causes him so much emotional and physical anxiety that he is unable to sleep.<sup>191</sup> Thus the king is physically and emotionally destabilized from the beginning of the chapter by the enigmatic dream. This incident precipitates the subsequent search for the dream and the tension rises and falls in relation to its revelation.

b. King Nebuchadnezzar's search for the dream (2:2-12)

In Act One (2:2-12) the king attempts to resolve the tension regarding his dream by calling the Babylonian wise men to his court. However, this only ends in failure because the king's powerlessness and his wise men's lack of wisdom are revealed instead. Therefore, rather than resolving the tension, Act One creates greater tension in the story.

In 2:2 the king commands that his wise men come before him, and he states that he had a dream, and his "spirit is anxious to know the dream (2:3)."<sup>192</sup> The term "to

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<sup>190</sup> Goldingay states, "Nebuchadnezzar as an individual stood in the background in chap. 1; his figure now comes into sharper focus." Goldingay, *Daniel*, 52. The king is the main subject of most of the verbs in the introduction. First, in 2:1 he has dreams (חלם), is troubled (פעם), and loses his sleep (היה). Second, in 2:2 he commands (אמר) and calls (קרא). The wise men act (בוא, עמד) only in response to the king's commands. Finally, in 2:3 he speaks (אמר) to the wise men and declares that he has had a dream and that his spirit is troubled to know it. This is the first occurrence of direct speech for the king.

<sup>191</sup> The tension in Daniel 2 is recorded in 2:3 where the king states that, "...my spirit is troubled to know the dream." Repetition of the verb "disturbed" (or troubled, פעם) appears at the beginning (2:1) and end of the introduction (2:3), which possibly denotes the threatening/menacing nature of the dream.

<sup>192</sup> Here the wise men are contrasted with the four Hebrew youth in Daniel 1. For example they come (בוא) and stand (עמד) before the king, which are the same actions of the four Hebrew youth in 1:5, 18. Furthermore the phrase "stand/stood before the king" (ויצמדו לפני המלך) in 2:2 refers to a type of service. It last appeared in 1:19, in which the four youths commenced their service before the king.

know” (יָדָע) becomes a key word or *leitmotif* in the chapter, occurring approximately 17 times in Daniel 2.<sup>193</sup> It is primarily linked to the attempt to make known the king’s dream. Knowing and the power to make known is central to the story. Consequently, the absence of “knowing” becomes a liability, but the presence of knowing can translate to success and power.<sup>194</sup> In Aramaic, the term “to know” is frequently used in connection with interpretation of dreams or riddles.<sup>195</sup> Several other terms related to revelation and mantic wisdom occur frequently in the king’s dialogue with the Chaldeans (2:4-11). For example, the term “declare” (דָּבַר) frequently occurs (8 times) in the dialogue between the

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<sup>193</sup> The word “to know” (יָדָע) means “to know, have understanding.” The participle occurs in a parallel construction with the term “wise men.” It can also mean “sensible” or, in negative terms, “to be ignorant.” See also Job 34:2; 13:2; Isa. 1:3; 44:9; 45:20; 56:10. *HALOT*, s.v. “יָדָע I.”

<sup>194</sup> Newsom explains, “The drama of the stories can be grasped in terms of whether and how the Gentile king will recognize the true nature of eternal divine sovereignty and the actual source of his own delegated authority.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 33. One could suggest that the recognition to which Newsom refers is similar to the kings’ ability to “know” God as sovereign.

<sup>195</sup> It occurs 36 times in the book and is predominately found in chapters two, four, and five, in which a dream or riddle is found. It is also found in Daniel 7 in connection with the interpretation of Daniel’s dream (7:16). Primarily, it refers to the revelation of a dream or riddle, but it also refers to an individual knowing or understanding a situation or information (4:22 [MT]). In the dialogue between the king and the wise men, a form of the term “to know” is used throughout. The king uses it to demand knowledge of the dream (2:3, 5, 9) and to assert his knowledge of the true character of the wise men (2:8, 9). In the first instance, the verb is in the Haphel form, which means that the king expected the wise men to cause him to know the dream. In the second instance, the verb is in the Peal form, which expresses the king’s declaration of his personal knowledge of the wise men’s character. In Daniel 2, 4, and 5, the term is frequently used by the king to request that the wise men reveal a dream or piece of writing to him. For example, in Daniel 2 and 4, King Nebuchadnezzar seeks to know the dreams found in the respective chapters. In Daniel 5, King Belshazzar seeks to know the mysterious writing on the wall. This usage is almost always in the Haphel form. Thus, in half of the chapters in Daniel 1-6, the king searches for knowledge of a dream or riddle. However, in a few instances, the term “to know” also refers to the king’s ability to understand. In Daniel 2, the king states that he knows the true character of the wise men (2:8, 9). Notably, in Daniel 4 (vv. 14, 22, 26, 29 [MT]) and 5 (vv. 21, 22) the word is also used with reference to the knowing of the king. In Daniel 4, the king would not receive his sanity until he “knew” that God reigned in the affairs of men. Similarly in Daniel 5, the king is reprimanded because he “knew” all the things that happened to Nebuchadnezzar, but he still did not humble himself before the God of heaven. In these instances, the term “to know” is in the Peal form and refers to the king’s ability to know, understand, or discern.

king and the wise men. It means, “to make known” or “interpret.”<sup>196</sup> The term “interpretation” (פְּשָׁר) occurs 13 times and first occurs in 2:4.<sup>197</sup> In the book of Daniel, the term primarily means “interpretation (of dreams).”<sup>198</sup> Finally, the term “the mystery” (רְזֵזָה) occurs 8 times and refers to something hidden.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> HALOT, s.v. “חֹהֵה.” Valeta asserts that it is “a technical term with the nuance to interpret.” David M. Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 74. In Qumran literature, “As a rule...the theme is not the conveyance of mundane information, but the significant revelation of something otherwise hidden.” D. Schwiderski, “חֹהֵה,” *TDOT* 16:252-254. In Biblical Aramaic it is only attested in the book of Daniel. The wise men use this term when they respond to the king’s request regarding his dream. They never use the term “to know” in the context of their ability to interpret the dream. This may suggest that they understood his request to refer only to interpretation. Thus, the theme of knowing and revelation are central to this interchange.

<sup>197</sup> The term is found 31 more times in the book of Daniel. In Biblical Hebrew it is used once in Eccl. 8:1, *BDB*, 833d. Notably, “...apart from Gen. 40-41, (פְּשָׁר) occurs only in late OT texts, in Qumran, and in rabbinic literature...The contextual situation is surprisingly uniform in all these passages, since they all involve the interpretation of a problem presented by a king, and almost always the interpretation of one of the king’s dreams.” Concerning the book of Daniel the symbolic dream, “articulates a future reality, and the פְּשָׁר itself anticipates that reality as viewed in the dream.” H. J. Fabry - C. Dahmen, “פְּשָׁר,” *TDOT*, 12:152-158. The first two chapters in which the term is found (two and four) include mysterious dreams that could not be interpreted by the wise men of Babylon. The third chapter (five) does not include a dream, but consists of mysterious writing on the wall. It occurs seven times in Daniel 5. Finally, it occurs once in 7:16 in connection with Daniel’s dream. Essentially, in the book of Daniel the term is attached to secret dreams or riddles that need to be solved.

<sup>198</sup> *BDB*, 1109a. It is derived from the Akkadian term *pišru(m)*, which means interpretation, solution, or meaning. HALOT, s.v. “פִּשָּׁר.” Oppenheim proposes that, in the context of dream interpretation, it may be used for “(1) reporting a dream, (2) interpreting it, or (3) dispelling its effects.” A. Leo Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1956), 219. In Qumran it is a technical term for Biblical commentary and thus loses its special correspondence to dreams and riddles. Collins, *Daniel*, 157. However, the Qumran community may have considered the Biblical texts that they interpreted hidden or encoded texts that needed to be decoded.

<sup>199</sup> It first appears when Daniel seeks the mystery from the God of heaven (2:18, 19). The next three occurrences are found later when Daniel gives his preliminary speech before the revelation, where he describes the nature and content of the dream (2:27, 28, 29, 30). Finally, in the conclusion, it occurs in the king’s response to the revelation (2: 47 [2 times]). This term is a Persian loanword that means “mystery.” *BDB*, 1112d and HALOT, s.v. “רְזֵזָה.” It is found in Avestan (*razah*), in Middle Persian (*raz*), and New Persian (*raz*). Over time it came to denote “a technical term for an enigma that can only be interpreted by God’s revelation, and particularly for God’s hidden purpose at work in history despite human sin.” Goldingay, *Daniel*, 47. This usage is found in the writings of Qumran, where it carried the connotation of “cosmological...or eschatological...mysteries.” Collins, *Daniel*, 159. See the following Qumran documents: 1QH 1:11-12 and 1QM 14:14; 1QS 11:3-4.

In the highly stylized and formal dialogue between the king and the Chaldeans, the king demands three times to know his dream and its interpretation (2:3, 5, 8). His statements progressively become more violent as he realizes the Chaldeans' lack of knowing. He threatens to destroy the Chaldeans and their homes (2:5), he accuses them of lying (2:8, 9), and he commands their complete destruction (2:12-13). The king's rage is an expression of his powerlessness to know or resolve the problem of his enigmatic dream. In response to the king's rising anger, the Chaldeans' responses become more ineffective as the dialogue progresses.<sup>200</sup> From the beginning of the dialogue the Chaldeans are depicted as ineffective. First, significant miscommunication between the king and the Chaldeans is demonstrated.<sup>201</sup> The Chaldeans presume the king wants them to give him the interpretation of his dream, but the king wants them to reveal the dream as well as its interpretation (2:4, 7). Next, once the Chaldeans understand the king's request, they admit to the utter impossibility of fulfilling his request (2:11). Their statement is enhanced by a triple negation in Aramaic, which strongly denotes the impossibility of the task (see Table 3.1). This negative statement is strategically located at the end of the dialogue to function as its climax. It offers a final negative commentary

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<sup>200</sup> In noting the element of satire or comedy in the chapter, Valeta suggests, "The way the conversation develops as the king and advisors volley requests back and forth has a slapstick quality...Both the intransigence of the king and the fecklessness of the advisors become more apparent as the conversation progresses." Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 73-74.

<sup>201</sup> The king uses the verb "to know" (ܘܘܟܘܢ) in his demand to the Chaldeans, but they respond using the verb "to declare" (ܘܘܟܘܠ) instead (this could be due to the shift in language, but ܘܘܟܘܢ is also used in Aramaic). The king links the verb "to know" to the dream and its interpretation two more times (2:5, 9) in his ensuing responses. This may suggest that the king and the wise men have different perspectives on the nature of the request. Even when the Chaldeans finally understand the nature of the king's request, they continue to use the verb "to declare" (ܘܘܟܘܠ). Valeta states, "When the king asks the counselors to tell him the content of his dream, he uses a form of the verb to know...in vv. 3, 5, and 9. His counselors respond numerous times with a form of the verb to declare..., a technical term with the nuance to interpret (vv. 4, 7, 10, 11). The shifting use of these synonyms highlights the cross-purposes of the king and his advisors, and the entire scene takes on a humorous tone." Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 74.

on the failure of Babylonian wisdom. This also sets the stage for the exaltation of Daniel and his God.

Table 3:3 – Negation of the Particle of Existence

Location	Negation
2:10	(1) "... <i>there is not</i> a man on earth..." (לֹא־אִתִּי אָנֹכִי עַל־יְבִשְׁתָּא)
2:11	(2) "...and <i>there is no one</i> who can declare it before the king" (לֹא אִתִּי דִּי יְחַוְנַה קְדָם מְלָכָא)
2:11	(3) "...except the gods whose dwelling <i>is not</i> with flesh." (לְהוֹן אֱלֹהִין דִּי מְדַרְהוֹן עִם־בְּשָׂרָא לֹא אִיתּוּהִי)

In response to such an explicit negation, which is also a condemnation of Babylonian wisdom, the king becomes enraged (2:12). His rage depicts a common character flaw in court stories – the irrational and unstable foreign king. In his rage the king commands that all the wise men be destroyed (2:12).<sup>202</sup> Consequently, Act One ends at a point of heightened tension where the lives of the wise men hang in the balance. As a result, two tensions now drive the plot: 1) the king’s death decree against all wise men and 2) the search for the king’s dream.

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<sup>202</sup> According to the terms used, (to slay (לְהַתְּקַטֵּל) and to kill (מְתַקְטֵלִין)), it is not clear if the order to kill the wise men is being carried out (present) or will be carried out (future). The use of the participle could point to the act of execution taking place (present). This would also indicate the immediacy of the king’s decision.



c. Daniel's search for the king's dream (2:13-23)

Act Two (2:13-23) is the turning point in the plot as Daniel enters the narrative and begins to resolve the tension. He brings resolution to the two tensions in the story: 1) the king's death decree against the wise men, and 2) the search for the king's dream. In addition, his actions lead to the exaltation of God. Moreover, the depiction of the success of Daniel serves as a contrast to the depiction of the failure of the Babylonian wise men.<sup>203</sup>

As wise men, Daniel and his three friends are caught in the king's decree to kill all the wise men (2:13). Daniel speaks to Arioch, the king's executioner, with characteristic discretion and prudence (2:14).<sup>204</sup> Through this functional character, Daniel discovers the king's matter (2:15) and goes to the king to request a set time to reveal it (2:16). He returns home to his friends and requests that they pray to the "God of heaven" to importune his mercies so that the dream would be revealed, and their lives spared (2:17-18). The term for mercies is the same as that found in 1:9. Consequently, one may expect Daniel and his friends to receive a positive answer from God since he vouchsafed the same element to the four youth in Daniel 1 without their pleas.

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<sup>203</sup> Daniel is contrasted with the wise men of Babylon. For example, after he makes a request of the king to discover the dream, he is given a "time" (2:16,  $\eta\eta\eta$ ) to give the interpretation. This is in contrast to the wise men's misuse of time. In 2:8 Nebuchadnezzar accused the Chaldeans of "gaining or buying time" ( $\eta\eta\eta$ ). In addition, in 2:9 the king also states that they were trying to wait until "time" ( $\eta\eta\eta$ ) changes. However, the word for "time" in 2:16 differs from the word for "time" in 2:8, 9. The former refers to a specific point in time while the latter refers to duration (similar to the meaning found in 2:21 and 7:12).

<sup>204</sup> Fewell considers Arioch a transitional character. She notes, "The executioner is the transitional figure who takes us from the presence of the king to an encounter with Daniel in an unidentified location...On the mechanical level of the plot, he is an agent who mediates knowledge as well...Arioch is the informant who insures the continuation of the plot." She further suggests the functionality of Arioch and the chief eunuch of ch. 1, "In terms of the story's mechanics, Arioch is, like the chief eunuch and the guardian in ch. 1, basically a functional character." Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 52. Newsom sees Arioch as, "...reminiscent of the cooperative officials who assist Daniel in ch. 1. There, as here, Daniel's ability to speak diplomatically prevents misfortune." Newsom, *Daniel*, 71.

In a night vision Daniel receives the dream (2:19), and as a result he praises God as the source of wisdom and power and for giving him wisdom and power. The repetition of the terms “wisdom and power” at the beginning and end of the hymn (2: 20, 23) demonstrates the theme of the hymn. The location of the hymn in the narrative points to its importance and consequently the centrality of the dual theme of wisdom and power.<sup>205</sup> As noted above, the possession of the former brings the latter. Here, the exaltation of God leads to the exaltation of Daniel as a consequence of God’s gift of wisdom and power. This divine act of giving prefigures and leads to the resolution of the two tensions in the narrative.

d. Daniel comes before the king to reveal his dream (2:23-30)

Act Three (2:23-30) prefaces the dream’s revelation and interpretation. In it Daniel glorifies God as the source of his wisdom, condemns Babylonian wisdom, and explains and emphasizes the eschatological nature of the king’s dream. Furthermore, it holds the reader in suspense as the revelation of the dream is delayed.

Daniel goes to Arioch and urgently requests that the wise men not be killed (2:24) since he is able to reveal the king’s matter.<sup>206</sup> Thus one of the tensions, the king’s death

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<sup>205</sup> For a detailed treatment of the hymn of praise in Daniel 2 as a prayer to God, as well as an analysis of the rest of the prayers in the book of Daniel, see Paul Petersen, *The Theology and Function of Prayers in the Book of Daniel* (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1998).

<sup>206</sup> The syntactical construction of Daniel’s request to refrain from destroying the wise men (2:24) may suggest that they were already being killed. For example, the negation may suggest that the phrase could be translated as “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon.” Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Aramaic* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 71. The negative particle in Daniel’s plea occurs only four times in the book (Dn. 2:24; 4:16; 5:10 [2 times]). The negative particle 𐤍𐤒 occurs more often (82 times). However, since the verb is a Haphel imperfect jussive, it may be possible to translate the phrase as “Please stop destroying the wise men!” Therefore, it may refer to a specific negation of an action that is occurring (stop) rather than a general negation of an action that has not occurred (do not destroy). This may also explain the urgency of the situation. In addition, the repetition of the verb “to destroy” as well as the

decree against all wise men, is dramatically resolved by Daniel's urgent request. Arioch again brings Daniel to the king, and then takes credit for finding him (2:25). The king asks Daniel if he can reveal the dream and its interpretation (2:26). At this point Daniel gives a speech (2:27-30) that emphasizes the following: 1) the wise men's inability to reveal the dream, 2) God's ability to reveal mysteries, 3) and the eschatological nature of the dream. The eschatological nature of the dream is repeated several times in vv. 28, 29 (twice) in which are the phrases "what would come to pass after this" and "what will be after this" and "what will be."<sup>207</sup> Given with humility, Daniel's speech also reveals the source of his wisdom. He assiduously points to God as the source of his wisdom and takes no credit for being the messenger of the "God of heaven."<sup>208</sup>

e. Daniel reveals the king's dream (2:31-45)

In Act Four (2:31-45) Daniel resolves the overriding tension in the chapter by making known the king's dream and its interpretation. The king's search for knowing, which includes all the previous events, leads up to this point in the narrative. The emphasis on knowing in the chapter refers primarily to the king. He is the one who received the dream, who was anxious to know it, who called the wise men before him to

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inclusion of the prepositional phrase for "in or with haste" (בְּהַתְּבָהֳרָה) (2:25) also point to the urgency of the situation.

<sup>207</sup> Gerhard Pfandl concludes, "Thus 'the latter days' . . . , in some texts, have an implied . . . or explicit . . . eschatological meaning. In other texts, this expression simply refers to a future period within the history of Israel without eschatological intent . . . The fall of Jerusalem . . . and the Babylonian exile . . . belong to the field of national eschatology within history . . ." He further states, "In Dan 2:28 and 10:14 'the latter days' embrace the whole sweep of human history from Daniel's time until the final eschaton." Pfandl, *The Time of the End in the Book of Daniel* (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Society, 1992) 312, 315.

<sup>208</sup> This epithet for God was first used in 2:18. It is a common epithet for God in Daniel that is used by both Judean and non-Judean characters in the books of Daniel and Ezra. Through this phrase, the domain of God expands from Jerusalem to the rest of the world.

make him know the dream, and before whom Daniel stands to reveal the dream. God gave the dream to the king; thus, God wills that the king knows and understands the dream.

However, some commentators ask why God would give a dream about four future world kingdoms to a Gentile king.<sup>209</sup> In 2:29 Daniel explains that the king's thoughts focused on "what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be." Also, in 2:30 it states, "...in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind." Both verses explain that the dream is a response to the king's personal thoughts or interest in the future. Therefore, God gives the king an eschatological dream that reveals the future. However, in addition to this explanation, one must also consider the narrative function of the dream. Specifically, what is the purpose of the dream in the narrative flow of events thus far? What is the purpose of the dream in the overall narrative? Thus, since knowing the dream is the primary tension driving the plot, what does God (the author of the dream) want the king to know in the dream?

In Daniel 1 the king did not know that God was the sovereign power behind his victory and rise to power. God's three acts of giving occurred behind-the-scenes, without the king's knowledge. In opposition to God's absolute sovereignty, the king sought absolute power over the four Hebrew youth. Now in Daniel 2, God sends the king a

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<sup>209</sup> For example, Newsom asks, "Why is it so important to the author that Nebuchadnezzar be the recipient of this divine revelation?" She asserts that the king's reception of the dream is linked to the conclusion that, "...the narratives in Dan 1-6 contribute to this effort of imaginatively appropriating the Gentile monarchies for the religious and political self-understanding of emergent Judaism by representing Nebuchadnezzar not only as a proud and arrogant monarch who ultimately comes to understand and publicly acknowledge the supreme sovereignty of Israel's God but also as someone to whom God entrusts knowledge of the plan for the epochs of world history that Nebuchadnezzar has initiated." *Daniel*, 74.

dream to know and understand God's sovereignty, human sovereignty, and the inherent conflict between the two. Therefore, God shapes the eschatological dream into a lesson specifically for the king. This can be understood if one sees the dream as a narrative within a narrative or a rudimentary or embryonic embedded narrative.<sup>210</sup> If we consider the symbolic imagery as characters and the actions in the dreams as narrative incidents it is possible to see a narrative function for the dream.

Through this embedded narrative, the king "knows" or learns about heaven's view of human kingship. Heaven's view of human kingship consists of three elements: 1) inherent arrogance, 2) transitory and derivative power and wealth, and 3) divine-human conflict over God's absolute sovereignty. These three elements are depicted through the use of symbolism in the dream, specifically 1) arrogance = verticality, 2) transitory power = succession of precious and strong metals; derivative power = God-given power; 3) divine-human conflict = great image and stone conflict. Therefore, to understand this divine view of human kingship, it is necessary to look at two aspects of the dream as an embedded narrative, 1) Embedded narrative characters: a) great image and the stone/mountain, and 2) Embedded narrative events.

### **1) Embedded Narrative Characters: Great Image and Stone/Mountain.**

a) The Great Image - Verticality. The great size of the image symbolizes heaven's commentary on the arrogance of human kingship. It teaches what the king must know

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<sup>210</sup> Fewell explains, "The dream that Daniel recounts to Nebuchadnezzar is a narrative within a narrative. Daniel takes us back to the moment of Nebuchadnezzar's dreaming by telling the dream from the king's point of view... Though Daniel verbalizes the dream, we see the dream as Nebuchadnezzar had seen it on that restless night." *Circle of Sovereignty*, 57. For an extended discussion on embedded narratives see Willaim Nelles, *Frameworks: Narrative Levels and Embedded Narrative* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997). For a discussion on dream narratives in ancient literature see Jean-Marie Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999).

about the dangers of kingship. In Daniel 2:31 the image is noted for its “great” (אִגְוֹ, v. 31) size. This term is also used in the description of the tree in Daniel 4:10 (ET), in which the height of the tree is described as “great.” In addition, the term “image” (דְּלִצָּ) is also used in the description of the golden image in Daniel 2, where the dimensions of the image represent an inordinately tall figure (3:1, sixty cubits in height and six cubits in width). It is possible that the “great image” here is the first of three repeating figures (literally in Daniel 3, oneiromantically in Daniel 4, and figuratively in Daniel 5) of great size or height. In the Bible, such a figure is a common symbol for kingly arrogance (see Table 3.2 below).<sup>211</sup>

Another biblical example of the use of images of great height as symbols of pride is Ezek. 31, where God compares Egypt to Assyria. Assyria is depicted as a tree, a “cedar in Lebanon” (v. 3) in “the garden of God” (v. 9). Commentators note links between Ezekiel 31 and Daniel 4, where Nebuchadnezzar is represented as a great tree. Collins, commenting on Daniel 4:8, states “The human attempt to scale heaven is a recurring biblical metaphor for hubris, beginning with the tower of Babylon in Genesis 11...The motif of inordinate exaltation figures prominently in the second half of Daniel (8:10-11; 11:36).”<sup>212</sup> However, the foundation for the metaphor that Collins addresses in Daniel 4

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<sup>211</sup> For example, in Isa 2:5-22 (especially vv. 12-18) it states the “Day of the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up – and it shall be brought low (v. 12).” In vv. 13-17 several vertically large items are mentioned: cedars of Lebanon, oaks of Bashan, lofty mountains, uplifted hills, and a high tower. Even more striking is Isa. 10:33, where it states, “the great in height will be hewn down” by the Lord. In this verse the term “great in height” is the phrase (רָמֵי הַקְּוֹמָה). These are terms that frequently occur in the Aramaic of Daniel. Regarding the great image, Valeta states, “Enormous statues and trees, both visionary (Dan 2.31; 4.10) and real (Dan 3.1), arouse reactions of awe and fear...” and produce imagery of “satire and judgment” in the book of Daniel. Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 134. This connection between Isaiah and Daniel 2 is not random. Goldingay cites Isaiah 40-66 as the background for Daniel 2. Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 184.

<sup>212</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 224.

is the great image in Daniel 2:31-45.<sup>213</sup> It is the starting point of a sequence of repeating literal and figurative images of kingly hubris or “inordinate exaltation” (see Table 3.4 below). For Nebuchadnezzar, specifically, Daniel 2, 3, and 4 depict narratives in which he learns or comes to know the danger of kingly hubris. The king must experientially come to know the lesson of the great image, which is divine commentary against kingly hubris. Fewell declares, “The image is an idol, not of a divine being, but of humanity. The top-heavy image is a symbol of a humanity that has over-reached itself.”<sup>214</sup>

Table 3.4 Examples of Repeating Images of “Inordinate Exaltation”

	Inordinate Exaltation in the Book of Daniel
Daniel 2:31-45	<b>Nebuchadnezzar and the “Great image”</b> (v. 31)
Daniel 3:1	<b>Nebuchadnezzar and the golden image</b> (60 cubits in height and 6 cubits in width)
Daniel 4:10-12 (ET)	<b>Nebuchadnezzar and the great tree;</b> (“A tree in the midst of the earth; and its height was great...its height reached to the heavens and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth” [vv. 10-11])
Daniel 5:5, 23	<b>Belshazzar and his gods</b> (repetition of the materials of the great image; “They drank wine, and praised the gods of <i>gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone</i> ” v.4; “You have <i>lifted yourself up</i> [הִתְרַוּמְמַתָּ] against the Lord of heaven” v. 23)

<sup>213</sup> Commentators primarily argue this point in relation to the images in Daniel 3 and 4. Yet, the strong link between Daniel 2 and 3 indicates a link between the metaphorical meanings of both statues. See Hebbard, *Reading Daniel as a Text in Theological Hermeneutics* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009) 93-94 where he states, “Two distinct factors work to establish congruity between this story (Daniel 3) and the former episode concerning the dream of the statue (Daniel 2). The large ninety by nine foot golden image that is erected creates a link with the enormous dream-statue with a golden head of the previous chapter. Additionally, the Narrator does not cite a new time in which this story takes place, and therefore the reader is led to believe that this episode is connected with the previous one.” See also Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 65 in which she asserts, “Unlike the stories in Daniel 1 and 2 which ease the reader into their worlds with temporal and situational orientations, Daniel 3 begins abruptly with catalytic action...This first sentence signals that we are to read the story as a continuation of what has preceded.” Seow also remarks, “Because the story comes immediately after the account of the statue of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in the preceding chapter, one may be inclined to think of the image in the dream, as many interpreters from ancient times have done.” *Daniel*, 53.

<sup>214</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 59.

Here again, as in Daniel 1:2, there is an undercurrent of cultic/religious imagery associated with the king. In the dream the four-kingdom schema is shaped into or presented as a cultic/religious image. (The term for image [דָּלִיָּצָה] can refer to humanity made in God's image [Gen. 1:26; 9:6] or to idols/images of gods or creatures [Num. 33:52; 2 Kgs 11:18; Ezra 7:20; Amos 5:26]). This merging of kingly and cultic imagery may suggest that human kingship grasps beyond its natural boundaries to reach after absolute kingly and cultic/religious power. Thus, the absolute sovereignty that human kings grasp after affects both the kingly and cultic sphere, which naturally places human kingship in conflict with God's absolute sovereignty (which encompasses both the kingly and cultic sphere). This undercurrent of cultic/religious imagery and its association with king/kingdoms will continue in the subsequent chapters (Daniel 3: king commands worship of golden image; Daniel 4: king linked to heaven/earth polarity with regards to the great tree; Daniel 5: king uses vessels of the house of God to praise his gods; Daniel 6: no one may petition a god or man other than the king). However, in Daniel 8 and the ensuing chapters in Hebrew, this undercurrent becomes more prevalent.

b) The Great Image - Material (The Four Kingdom Schema). The constitutive material of the great image, the four metals and clay, also point to elements of the dream that the king must know and understand. The gold, silver, bronze, and iron represent four world kingdoms throughout history.<sup>215</sup> The iron and clay kingdom points to a mixed or

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<sup>215</sup> In the Bible, the four metals can be found listed together in Josh. 6:19 and 1 Chr 29:2, 7. In Joshua 6:19, the Israelites were about to attack the city of Jericho. Joshua stated that all the silver, gold, bronze, and iron in the city should be saved for the Lord's sanctuary, for they were holy to the Lord. In addition, in 1 Chr 29:2, 7 the four metals are listed in the same sequence found in Daniel 2. The verse describes the freewill offerings given for the temple service. The two verses suggest that the metals were of such value that they could be used in the Lord's service. The order of the metals may suggest the statue's elements decrease in value as one moves from the head to the toes. Yet, some authors do not agree with this



dichotomous kingdom at the end of human history. Through this symbolism, human kingship is portrayed as powerful and wealthy.

In the Bible, gold and silver are literal and figurative emblems of wealth and riches. Moreover, bronze and iron are literal and figurative emblems of strength, power, and tools.<sup>216</sup> Fewell explains that the image, “is composed of elements usually worked by human hands and valued by human society – gold and silver that adorn and vie for economic power, bronze and iron that make tools and weapons...”<sup>217</sup> However, the last two materials of the image, the iron and clay, are materials that are diametrically different. The iron may be categorized with the other materials, but the clay cannot.<sup>218</sup> The introduction of the clay is a hint towards a later expression of the characteristics of human kingly/cultic hubris demonstrated later in the book. (Such a characteristic,

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conclusion. See Lucas, *Daniel*, 75, and Goldingay, *Daniel*, 50. Both authors base their conclusions on the descriptions of the kingdoms in Dan. 2 rather than simply the characteristics of the materials.

<sup>216</sup> Biblical texts depict gold and silver as metals of wealth and bronze and iron as symbols of strength and power. Gold and silver are commonly found together in the Bible (e.g., Gen 13:2; 44:8; Exod 3:22; 11:2; Num 22:18; Deut 7:25), *BDB*, 262c. The word for “silver” can also be translated as “money,” thus it is perceived as having great value, *BDB*, 494a. Both words can refer to wealth and are frequently paired together when defined as such. Bronze and iron are generally perceived as metals related to strength. Bronze is the material for armor (1 Sam 17:5) or utensils (2 Kgs 25:14). It was also used to build the tabernacle and temple (Exod 38:30). It can also be used for chains (2 Sam 3:34). In Isa 60:17 it is described as of less value than gold, but greater in value than wood, *BDB*, 639a. Similarly, iron is the material for tools, articles of trade, or utensils. Figuratively, it can refer to a barren place or desert (Deut 28:23) or of Egyptian bondage (Deut 4:20), *BDB*, 137b.

<sup>217</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 59.

<sup>218</sup> Lucas states that 2:33 does not refer to clay but “what is made out of it, hence the plural pottery.” *Daniel*, 64. Steinmann notes that 2:41 is translated literally as “clay of the mud.” He continues, “...this construct phrase, which recurs in 2:43, probably signifies ‘common clay’ as opposed to an especially fine grade of clay. English translations are divided in their understanding of this phrase...” *Daniel*, 131. In Hebrew, the term for clay or potter’s clay (רָמָח) can refer to “raw material on the ground” [Isa 41:25], “building material” [Exod 1:14], and “material for making vessels” [Jer. 18:4-6]. The latter usage can metaphorically refer to man as a created vessel before God (Isa 45:9). Such usage is understood by some authors to indicate a link between 2:41-43 and Gen 1 and 2 (see Jacques Doukhan, “Allusions à la création dans le livre de Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel in Light of New Findings*, ed. A. S. van der Woude (Louvain: Peeters, 1993), 285-292 and R. McAllister “Clay in Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream and the Genesis Creation Accounts” *JATS* 18/1 (2007): 122-29.

specifically a kingdom with two distinctly opposite characteristics, becomes central to the divine-human conflict in Daniel 7:8, 20, 24, 25; 8:9-12, 23-25; and even 11:21ff.)

However, despite the wealth and power of human kings/kingdoms, their empires are transitory. This is expressed through the rising and falling of the four kingdoms. In 2:39 it states, “But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze...” Thus, the king must understand that his power and glory is transitory and will come to an end. His kingdom will be conquered by another kingdom, and a third kingdom will conquer the second kingdom, and the fourth kingdom will rise and conquer the third. This rising and falling process reveals the transitory nature of all human kingdoms. This is also divine commentary that delimits the power and wealth of human kingdoms.

This process of rising and falling is depicted as under the control of God’s absolute will. Daniel’s interpretation places King Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom within this process of rising and falling. In the interpretation, Daniel alludes to God’s divine act of giving in Daniel 1:2 through the repetition of the term “to give.” This is a key word that is linked to three divine acts in Daniel 1 (1:2, 9, 17). In Daniel 2:37, 38 the term occurs in a context similar to that of Daniel 1:2, in which God gave Jehoiakim and some vessels of the temple into Nebuchadnezzar’s hand. In 2:37 it states that God has “given” King Nebuchadnezzar “a kingdom, power, strength, and glory.” Moreover, 2:38 states that God has “given” into the king’s hand, the children of men, the beasts of the field, and the birds of heaven. Notably, both Daniel 1:2 and 2:28 use the phrase “in his/your hand,” to refer to what God has placed in the king’s power.

Consequently, one may conclude that the dream reconfigures the introductory element in 1:2 and places it within the larger symbolism in the dream of Daniel 2. This reconfiguration depicts God's absolute power over, not only Babylon's rising, but over the entire process of kingly rising and falling that is depicted through the constitutive material of the great image and the terminological link to Daniel 1. Consequently, the king must know the transitory nature of his power and wealth, God's absolute control over its rise and fall, and the derivative nature of his reign (God as its source).

c) The Stone/Mountain. The characteristics of the stone is also knowledge that the king must know and understand. The characteristics of the stone are contrasted with the characteristics of the great image. The stone is "cut out by no human hand," which refers to its divine origin (v. 34).<sup>219</sup> Stone as a material is portrayed in contrast to the metals of the great image. A stone or rock "is a natural object, especially one not shaped by human hands."<sup>220</sup> The great image is made of metal that is usually shaped using tools and thus of human origin. This material contrast is similar to Isaiah's description of the erection of idols (Isaiah 44:9-17) and God's injunction to the Israelites not to use an iron tool or cut stones to build an altar to the Lord (Deut. 27:5, 6). The great image is made of precious metals (gold and silver) and metals used for war that are shaped by tools (bronze and

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<sup>219</sup> The verb "to cut out" (גזר) is in the passive voice, so it may point to a divine act. *HALOT*, s.v. "גזר."

<sup>220</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 77. In 2:45 it states that the stone is cut out from "a mountain." "This detail led early interpreters to interpret the rock as a symbol of the awaited messiah (4 Ezra [2 Esd] 13: 6-7; Luke 20:18; also Irenaeus [Haer. 5.26] and Jerome [on 2:40]..." Newsom, *Daniel*, 83. In Luke 20:17 Jesus quotes from Ps. 118:22, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and in response he states in v. 18, "Whoever falls on that stone will be broken, but on whomever it falls, it will grind them to powder."

iron). The stone is made without tools; it is made without human intervention. Fewell also notes,

The stone is a natural element that does rather unnatural things. It divorces itself from its surroundings, it propels itself against the image, it grows as if an organic entity, into a mountain that fills the entire earth. The mountain, in contrast to the image, is raw and undomesticated. It represents something that cannot be tamed by human power.<sup>221</sup>

Another characteristic of the stone is it comes from and becomes a great “mountain” that occupies the entire earth (2:35; הַטֶּהוֹר). In ancient Near Eastern thought, mountains were points of contact between heaven and earth and represented sacred space; therefore, they had religious overtones.<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, they were also connected to the Lord or other gods.<sup>223</sup> In the Bible the temple, which was Yahweh’s abode, was linked to Mount Zion. Therefore, the king must know that the stone is of divine origin and will establish God’s eternal kingdom on earth after all human kingdoms are destroyed.

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<sup>221</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 60.

<sup>222</sup> According to Vogel, “In fact, the ancients believed that heaven and earth met at a mountain or a tree located at the center of the world – the ‘navel of the earth’ – with its base in or under the earth and its top in the heavens. Where natural mountains are missing, as in the flat plains of Mesopotamia, the ziggurat or temple-tower could assume the role of cosmic mountain. The universe itself was thought of as a gigantic world-mountain stretching from the entrance of the subterranean abyss to the highest reach of heaven, and embracing all the inhabited world. An earthly mountain therefore was a fitting symbol for a dwelling-place of a god.” Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 21. See also Walton, who states, “In Syro-Palestine the temple was the architectural embodiment of the cosmic mountain. This concept is represented in Ugaritic literature as well as in the Bible, where Mount Zion is understood as the mountain of the Lord (e.g., Ps 48) and the place where his temple, a representation of Eden, was built.” John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 127. See also John M. Lundquist, “What is a Temple?” in *The Quest for the Kingdom of God: Studies in Honor of G. E. Mendenhall*, ed. H. B. Huffman, F. A. Spina, and A. R. W. Green (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 205-219 and R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*, HSM 4 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972).

<sup>223</sup> HALOT, s.v. “הַטֶּהוֹר”; see also Exod 19, 20, 24.

## 2) Embedded Narrative Events: The Great Image and Stone Conflict.

Finally, the king must know and understand the narrative context within which the great image is situated in relation to the stone/mountain, specifically the conflict between the great image and the stone. This conflict is depicted using violent terminology. For example, the stone violently “strikes” and “crushes” the image (2:34, 35).<sup>224</sup> In addition, the residual remains of the statue “became like chaff from the summer threshing floors (v. 35).” Such imagery can be found in Hebrew, specifically in connection with the term “to thresh” (שׁוֹרֵף), which is sometimes used in the context of the defeat of one nation over another or of divine judgment (see Judg 8:7; 2 Kgs 13:7; Isa 25:10; 41:15; Amos 1:3; Mic 4:13; Hab 3:12). The crushing of the image is such that the wind is able to carry away any trace of it (v. 35). This act points to God’s judgment against and complete annihilation of human kingship and kingdoms.<sup>225</sup>

This narrative of conflict between the great image and the stone is a continuation of the conflict introduced in Daniel 1, but it is now situated within a broader, more violent, and visual context that is brought to its ultimate conclusion. The two combatants in Daniel 1, the king of Babylon and Jerusalem’s spiritual king (Yahweh), are here in Daniel 2 symbolically depicted using the great image and the stone/mountain. Consequently, the king of Babylon is situated within a broader context, namely the four kings/kingdoms schema. In addition, God is also depicted in a broader context by the

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<sup>224</sup> The term “to crush” (שׁוֹרֵף) also occurs in Hebrew, specifically in the context of the Exodus. Moses “crushed” the golden bull into fine powder and mixed it with liquid, and he made the people drink it (Exod 32:20). In Hebrew the term means to crush, pulverize, thresh; to be fine; *BDB*, 200d; In Aramaic it means to be shattered, fall to pieces; *BDB*, 1089a.

<sup>225</sup> Goldingay notes this action in the dream recalls Isa 41:12-16 and 2:2-3 and 11:9. *Daniel*, 202.

stone (his representative) and the mountain that fills the whole earth (Yahweh/Yahweh's kingdom). Thus, the conflict introduced in Daniel 1 is broadly and visually depicted with greater detail and violence through the use of symbols. The sovereignty of God in Daniel 1 is placed within the broader narrative of God's ultimate sovereignty over and annihilation of human kingdoms and his establishment of his eternal and indestructible kingdom.

This narrative of conflict between human kings/kingdoms and a heavenly figure and/or representative is repeated in the subsequent chapters (see Table 3.3). Similar to the repetition of the great image in subsequent chapters (2, 3, 4, 5), the narrative of conflict coincides with the appearance of the great images (2, 3, 4, 5). Furthermore, although the great image disappears after Daniel 5, the narrative of conflict continues in Daniel 6 to include a conflict between the law of the Medes and Persians and Daniel's religious integrity (or God's law, 6:5 [ET]). Moreover, in Daniel 7 the narrative of conflict is expanded, visually transformed, and then subsequently repeated through to the end of the book (see discussion below).

Table 3.5 Narratives of Conflict in Daniel 1-6

	Narratives of Conflict
Daniel 1:1-2	Babylon vs. Jerusalem (King Nebuchadnezzar vs. God)
Daniel 2:31-45	Great Image vs. Stone (Human kings/kingdoms vs. God) [Embedded narrative]
Daniel 3:14-18	Golden Image vs. Three Hebrews (King Nebuchadnezzar vs. God [3:15])
Daniel 4:28-32 (ET)	Great Tree vs. Heaven (King Nebuchadnezzar vs. God)
Daniel 5:23	Belshazzar vs. God
Daniel 6:5	Law of the Medes and Persians vs. Daniel's Religious Integrity (Law of the Medes and Persians vs. God's law)

In summary, God gives the Gentile king the dream in Daniel 2 to respond to his thoughts and interests about the future, but also to make him know the dangers of human kingship. If one looks at the dream as a rudimentary or embryonic embedded narrative, it is possible to see the dream as divine commentary against the dangers of human kingship. Specifically, God desires that Nebuchadnezzar know and understand that: 1) human kingship is prone to hubris (the great image), 2) human kingly power and wealth is derivative (from God) and transitory (the rise and fall of the four kingdoms), and 3) God's representative will ultimately violently destroy all human kingdoms and establish God's kingdom on earth.

This is the beginning of the king's knowing or divine "education" about human kingship. In Daniel 3 and 4 the king will gain experiential knowledge of this lesson until he comes to fully know this lesson and the God who is teaching him. Thus, as the four Hebrew youth spend three years being educated in Babylon, the king will also be

educated in Babylon, but God will be his teacher. Furthermore, the other kings in the narratives of Daniel 1-6, Belshazzar (Daniel 5) and Darius (Daniel 6), will also come to know God's divine commentary about human kingship. The former will know but refuse God's teaching and suffer complete loss, but the latter will inadvertently misunderstand then learn and accept the lesson of knowing God.

f. The King Reacts to the Revelation of His Dream (2:46-49)

In the closing act (2:46-49) the problem of the enigmatic dream has been resolved and the narrative quickly draws to a close. The king responds to Daniel's revelation and promotes him to ruler over Babylon.

The roles of Daniel and the king are reversed. The king reacts to Daniel's revelation with great awe and reverence. He falls prostrate before Daniel and orders incense to be offered to him (2:46).<sup>226</sup> Daniel the captive receives honor and glory from the king of Babylon. In this role reversal the king's destabilization is complete. The king also praises the God of Daniel for his ability to reveal secrets (2:47). He praises Daniel's God (2:47) as a "God of gods" and "Lord of kings."<sup>227</sup> Daniel also receives gifts and a

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<sup>226</sup> One may see cultic undertones in the king's action; however, the king's actions are a common form of honor in ancient Near Eastern culture, so Daniel does not accept divine worship. Collins, *Daniel*, 172.

<sup>227</sup> Nebuchadnezzar declares that Daniel's God is the "God of gods" (אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהִים). Here the king uses a superlative construction that describes Daniel's God as supreme above other gods. This idea is not uncommon in ancient Near Eastern religion, which conceived of a hierarchy and council of gods. See Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought*, 94-96. The king also states that he is "Lord of Kings" (מְלִכֵי מְרָא). This epithet is "comparable to the attribute of deities" found in Akkadian (*bēl šhārrani*) used for Marduk. *HALOT*, s.v. "מְרָא." Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar ascribes an attribute or name of the highest deity in the Babylonian pantheon to Daniel's God.



promotion that make him ruler over Babylon and the wise men (2:48).<sup>228</sup> Finally, the king even honors Daniel's petition to place his three friends over the administrative affairs in Babylon. This reversal of fortune for the four Hebrew youth is common in court stories.<sup>229</sup> It also reverses the subjugation that took place in Daniel 1. Although 1:18-20 depicts their success over the wise men of Babylon, Daniel 2 depicts their rise to a position of rulership in Babylon. Now they are rulers in Babylon rather than subjugated exiles. This part of the narrative is similar to Joseph's rise to power in Egypt (Gen. 41:37-57).

### C. Comparative Analysis of Plot in Daniel 1 and 2

As one transitions from Daniel 1 to 2 there is a narrative shift in plot that corresponds to the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic. The plot in Daniel 1 coheres around a conflict between two powers and two religious ideologies that influences the subsequent incidents in the narrative, specifically between God as absolute sovereign and Nebuchadnezzar as a king that grasps after absolute sovereignty. The king does not know about God's absolute sovereignty, but the text reveals this knowledge to the reader. This

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<sup>228</sup> Stefanovic sees Daniel's promotion as "twofold" in nature, "The first position given to him is political and administrative in nature – he is made ruler of the capital province in the empire. That means he became a very powerful person, the ruler of Babylon's main province and possibly next in rank to King Nebuchadnezzar. The second position was intellectual and possibly religious in nature." Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 112. Collins also suggests the wise men of Babylon had a religious connotation and that 2:46 ignores this element in Babylonian culture. *Daniel*, 172. Stefanovic sees the promotion of both Daniel and Joseph as political and religious in nature. In regards to Joseph's promotion, he receives political power when he is put in charge of Egypt and he is given religious power when he is given Asenath, daughter of the priest of On, as his wife.

<sup>229</sup> Wills proposes that the post-exilic narratives of Daniel and Esther fit into the overall genre of court narrative, rather than adhering closely to all the attributes of the genre. Overall, he suggests that the two books exhibit general aspects of the genre. First, although the genre is popular, it focuses more on the administrative and entrepreneurial class than the lower class. Second, it celebrates the ethnic identity of the group in that it portrays the wisdom of the group as superior to the ruling class and emphasizes the conflict between the courtiers rather than between the king and the courtiers. This may be a reflection of ethnic tensions. Wills, *The Jew in the Court of the Foreign King*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 197-198.

conflict reaches to the main characters, Daniel and his three friends, who struggle to maintain their allegiance to God in the midst of this conflict.

In contrast, Daniel 2 transitions away from an emphasis on the conflict introduced in Daniel 1 and focuses on the king's search for knowing in relation to his dream. The plot coheres around the king's search for knowledge and understanding regarding his menacing dream. All of the incidents in the chapter inexorably lead up to its revelation and interpretation. The revelation and interpretation of the dream reveals what God ordains Nebuchadnezzar to know, which is what he did not know in Daniel 1, that God is absolute sovereign and human kings have derivative sovereignty. Thus, the revelation and interpretation of the dream return to the conflict in Daniel 1 but reconfigures it so that it is situated in a broader, universal, and more visual context that represents divine commentary against human kingship's grasp after God's absolute sovereignty. Consequently, one may conclude that the language shift at Daniel 2:4b corresponds to a narrative shift or one may state that a language shift-narrative shift correspondence obtains between Daniel 1 and 2.

### **1. Overall Plot: From Conflict to Knowing**

In Daniel 1 the plot emphasizes the conflict between God and the king of Babylon. The king's act of coming against Judah and his carrying away of the King of Judah and some of the vessels of the house of God to Babylon places him in conflict with the true king of Judah, Yahweh. The king does not know God as sovereign, but the narrator reveals God's absolute sovereignty to the reader. God's act of giving (1:2) denotes his absolute sovereignty over the king and ultimately over history. This conflict between two powers sets the stage for the struggle the main characters will face.

King Nebuchadnezzar's command to carry wise youth from Judah to Babylon situates the main characters, Daniel and his three companions, in the middle of this conflict. They are thrust into the spiritually hostile environment of Babylon. Within this context the four Hebrew youth are in conflict with the culture, customs, and religion of Babylon. The loss of their theophoric names and the introduction of a new diet are examples of the social and cultural destabilization they suffer. Despite this conflict, Daniel (and his friends) determines to remain loyal to God and fight against Babylonian enculturation through his determination to prevent defilement from the king's portion. God's acts of giving (1:9, 17) help the four Hebrew youth successfully maintain their religious integrity and succeed as wise courtiers in the king's court.

In Daniel 2 the focus of the plot transitions away from the conflict depicted in Daniel 1 and focuses on the king's search for knowledge with respect to his enigmatic dream. The king's inability to know his dream destabilizes or undermines his power. His search for knowing drives the plot. He first turns to his wise men to make known the dream, but they are incapable of making it known to him. They cannot help him know since they lack divine knowledge, so the king commands their execution. In contrast to the wise men, Daniel is able to make the dream known to the king. This is due to his covenantal relationship with God, who is the source of knowing (wisdom) and power. The problem of knowing the dream is resolved when Daniel makes known the dream and its interpretation to the king.

## **2. Reconfiguration of the Conflict: The Dream in Daniel 2**

Although the plot in Daniel 2 transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on the king's search for knowing his enigmatic dream, the revelation and

interpretation of the dream is a return to and a reconfiguration of the conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2. The dream emphasizes what the king did not know in Daniel 1, that God is sovereign. This is demonstrated by the use of terminological links between Daniel 1:2 and 2:37, 38, especially the use of the verb “to give” with God as the subject.

This terminological link helps to situate the conflict in Daniel 1:1-2 within the wider and broader embedded narrative of the dream. Through the device of the dream, it is possible to see heaven’s commentary on human kingship. The dream portrays human kingship as 1) prone to hubris, 2) derivative of and dependent on God’s power, 3) wealthy and powerful but transitory, and 4) destined for God’s judgment of complete annihilation. This embedded narrative is the starting point for subsequent great images representative of kingly hubris (Daniel 3, 4, and 5) and for the narrative of conflict between human kings and God or his representatives in subsequent chapters (Daniel 3, 4, 5, and 6).

### **3. The Four Youth and Conflict: From Spiritual to Mortal Struggle**

A narrative shift in plot also occurs between Daniel 1 and 2 regarding the incidents surrounding the fate of the main characters, Daniel and his three friends. In Daniel 1 the four Hebrew youth struggle to maintain their religious identity in the face of Babylonian enculturation, which is guided by the king’s commands. In contrast, in Daniel 2 the four Hebrew youth face a more violent struggle, a struggle for their very existence.

In Daniel 1 the four youth are brought to Babylon in response to the king’s command to his chief official to bring wise youth to Babylon. They are placed in a three-year period of training that will prepare them to serve in the king’s court as wise men. In addition, they must eat the king’s portion, which probably would align them with the king

and possibly his gods. Finally, their theophoric names are changed so that the name of Yahweh is erased from their personal identification.

Despite the significance of these struggles, in Daniel 2 the four youth are in mortal danger. The king's death decree for all Babylonian wise men includes them also. In addition, for the first time the youth actively seek God's mercy. In Daniel 1, God gave the four youth favor and mercy without such a request and possibly without their knowledge. In Daniel 2, Daniel asks his three friends to importune the God of heaven for the king's dream for the purpose of saving their lives. Thus, in Daniel 2 the danger that God's followers face as they live in a foreign context becomes more threatening. They will again face such danger separately, Daniel in chapter 6 and his three companions in chapter 3.

#### **4. Summary**

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2, it is possible to discern a language shift-narrative shift correspondence in plot from an emphasis on a conflict between two powers and two religious ideologies, namely between the king of Babylon and the divine king (Yahweh), to a plot that emphasizes Nebuchadnezzar's knowing concerning his dream. Despite this transition, the conflict in Daniel 1 is reconfigured in the embedded dream in Daniel 2, which situates the conflict in the wider and broader context of the four-kingdom schema.

Through the dream, the king comes to know what he did not know in Daniel 1, that only God is absolute sovereign and kings that grasp after God's sovereignty will ultimately be destroyed. In addition, one can also identify a language shift-narrative shift

correspondence in plot regarding the fate of the Hebrew youth, who face the struggles of Babylonian enculturation in Daniel 1 but face a death decree in Daniel 2.

#### D. Analysis of Characters in Daniel 1 and 2

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2 a narrative shift occurs in relation to characters and characterization that also coincides to the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic. In Daniel 1 God and King Nebuchadnezzar are portrayed as opposing powers working in the background, influencing the actions of the characters in the narrative. Daniel and his three friends are the primary characters who are determined to maintain their religious identity and resist the Babylonian influences imposed upon them by the king and his officials.

In contrast, in Daniel 2 the king is no longer an influential power working behind the scenes. He is brought to the forefront of the narrative and becomes a destabilized power in search of knowing in relation to his dream.<sup>230</sup> In addition, the wise men become prominent characters in Daniel 2, although they were only minor or passive characters in Daniel 1. They, along with the king, are also destabilized and depicted as characters without knowing. God is no longer depicted as a purely active agent but is characterized through diverse characters in the narrative; however, he is primarily characterized through the words and deeds of his representative Daniel, whose rise to prominence is more pronounced.

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<sup>230</sup> Newsom identifies differences in the way Nebuchadnezzar is characterized in chapters 1 and 2. In Daniel 1 he is depicted as a powerful monarch, but in Daniel 2 he loses his “sense of control” in response to the disturbing dream. Newsom, *Daniel*, 34..

## 1. Daniel 1

### a. God

In Daniel 1 God is portrayed as sovereign through his three acts of divine giving. Through these acts he is depicted as the source of kingly power (1:2), the source of covenantal grace (1:9), and the source of wisdom and understanding (1:17).<sup>231</sup> God's acts also influence the development of the plot (which also may be a demonstration of his sovereignty since it is a demonstration of his absolute control over the story world).<sup>232</sup> First, in Daniel 1:2 God is portrayed as the source of kingly power through his act of giving (נתן) Jehoiakim and some of the vessels of the house of God into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar. As sovereign, he is the cause behind King Nebuchadnezzar's victory, despite the great power of the king of Babylon. Similarly, as sovereign he is the cause behind Jehoiakim's fall and Judah's exile, which is the result of God's judgment against his people's sinfulness. God determines when kings rise and fall.

In Daniel 1:9 God is portrayed as the source of covenantal grace. God gives (נתן) Daniel favor and compassion (or mercies) before the chief of the eunuchs. God's act occurs immediately after Daniel determines not to be defiled with the king's portion (1:8). Therefore, God's act is a response to Daniel's covenantal faithfulness.

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<sup>231</sup> In Biblical narratives actions or deeds "serve as the foremost means of characterization." Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 77.

<sup>232</sup> Goldingay notes that the chapter is structured as a chiasm with three double panels. In each of the double panels God's act of giving appears once. Therefore, God's actions may structure the story. He also states, "...God's giving lies behind three events that are surprising, for different reasons: Nebuchadnezzar's success in his siege of Jerusalem, Daniel's success in his negotiation with the palace, and the young men's success in their training." *Daniel*, rev. ed. 144. Consequently, God's actions are behind some of the most important, if not the main, events in the chapter. He further notes that the first occurrence (1:2) stands apart from the other two in that it reveals the true meaning of the fall of Jerusalem, which should be understood as a theological event (145).

Consequently, God is depicted as a gracious, covenant-keeping God for those who are faithful to his covenant. This is in contrast to God's judgment against Jehoiakim (and Judah as a nation), who was not faithful to God's covenant. Finally, in Daniel 1:17 God is portrayed as the source of wisdom and understanding. God gives (נתן) the four Hebrew youth wisdom and understanding, and Daniel the special gift of understanding dreams and visions. This occurs immediately after Daniel and his three friends successfully resist defilement from the king's rations (1:16). Thus, God's giving may again be an expression of his covenantal grace.

#### b. King Nebuchadnezzar

In Daniel 1 the king is portrayed as an antagonistic power working behind the scenes to influence the characters and impose his will upon them.<sup>233</sup> He is unaware of God's sovereignty and grasps after absolute sovereignty. The king's actions initiate the attack against Judah as he "comes" against it and besieges it (1:1). The king's act of coming continues as he takes King Jehoiakim and some of the vessels into Babylon (1:2). Moreover, the king commands that his chief official bring (or "come") Judean youth to Babylon where he makes them undergo the antagonistic process of Babylonian enculturation (1:3-5). However, the king's power is secretly undermined by God's sovereign acts of giving (1:2, 9, 17) and Daniel's (and his friends') resolve to resist defilement from the king's food (1:8). Nevertheless, the king's power and influence even extend, in his absence, to his official who fears his anger and power (1:10).

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<sup>233</sup> He is mentioned often (approximately 15 times) in the chapter, primarily with the term "king." King Nebuchadnezzar's actions occur in vv. 1:1, 2, 3, 5, and 18-20.



c. Daniel (and three friends)

Daniel 1 first portrays Daniel as part of a group of exiles, but he is later portrayed as a distinct and prominent figure. In Daniel 1:3-4 Daniel (and his three friends) is introduced as part of an elite and ideal group of Israelites who are carried into exile. The listed attributes of the group are suggestive of ideal characters possessing features attributable to kings, priests, and/or sages. Later in the chapter Daniel is portrayed as a pious and faithful follower of Yahweh through direct and indirect shaping that reveals his intentions, actions, and speech (1:8-16). This portrayal begins in 1:8, where the narrator reveals Daniel's inner thoughts about his determination to keep himself from defilement. Subsequently, Daniel's corresponding words and actions reveal his determination to remain undefiled (1:9-13). His deferential speech before the steward and his proposal to the steward's assistant of an alternate diet to prevent defilement are examples of Daniel's tact as well as his covenant faithfulness. Daniel's preeminence over his three friends is hinted at in 1:17, 21. In the former verse Daniel receives the special gift of interpreting dreams and visions (1:17), and in the latter his tenure lasts until the reign of Cyrus (1:21), the king who will liberate Judah from exile.

d. Wise Men

The wise men are only briefly mentioned in Daniel 1:19 as a group bested by the wisdom of the four Judeans. They are foils for the four Judeans who are depicted in contrast to the wise men of Babylon. This contrast will become more prominent in Daniel 2.

## 2. Daniel 2

### a. God

In contrast to Daniel 1, where God's sovereignty was depicted through his three acts of giving, in Daniel 2 God is portrayed as sovereign through diverse forms of characterization, but primarily through Daniel's words and deeds. He is portrayed as sovereign through his act of deliverance, Daniel's words of praise, the dream and its interpretation, and King Nebuchadnezzar's words. First, God's sovereignty is portrayed through his act of deliverance. He answers the prayer of Daniel's companions, who sought God's mercies in the face of the king's death decree against the Babylonian wise men (2:17-18). They prayed for the king's dream and God gave it to Daniel in a night vision. Here, as in Daniel 1, God's giving denotes his sovereignty (2:19). God as deliverer of his faithful followers will become an integral aspect of God's characteristic sovereignty in Daniel 3 and 6, in which he delivers the three Jews from the furnace and delivers Daniel from the lions' den, respectively.

Second, God's sovereignty is portrayed through his servant Daniel. In response to God's act of deliverance, Daniel offers a hymn of praise (2:20-23) that emphasizes God's sovereignty according to his wisdom and power. Next, Daniel's speech before the king (2:27-30) portrays God's sovereignty according to his ability to reveal secrets (v. 28). Daniel portrays God's wisdom as superior to that of the Babylonian wise men. In addition, in Daniel's revelation of the king's dream and its interpretation, God's sovereignty is portrayed through his delegation (giving) of kingship, specifically to Nebuchadnezzar (2:37-38). Twice Daniel states that God has given him the kingdom. Furthermore, the depiction of God's kingdom as eternal and indestructible is an extension of God's sovereignty. Finally, King Nebuchadnezzar's words praise God as "God of

gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets (2:46).” Here God’s sovereignty is described by the words of a foreign king. This happens several times in the Aramaic section of the book (Daniel 3, 4, and 6).

b. King Nebuchadnezzar

In Daniel 2 the king is foregrounded as a character and portrayed as a violent and impatient monarch who is destabilized due to his lack of knowing regarding his menacing dream. This characterization is depicted through his speech and actions. For example, in his dialogue with the Chaldeans, he threatens them with dismemberment if they do not cause him to know the dream. In response to their failure, he commands a death decree for all Babylonian wise men since they are incapable of causing him to know the dream. Valeta notes a satirical element in the dialogue and suggests, “The way the conversation develops as the king and advisors volley requests back and forth has a slapstick quality...Both the intransigence of the king and the fecklessness of the advisors become more apparent as the conversation progresses.”<sup>234</sup>

The king is also portrayed as a destabilized monarch through his personal reactions and actions. For example, the dream leaves the king anxious and disturbed (2:1, 3). The wise men’s inability to make known the dream to the king leaves him enraged (2:12-13). When the dream is finally revealed to the king, it portrays him as dependent on God’s power for kingship. Seow concludes, “At issue in the exposition, it seems, is kingship, which is what the statue represents. At the outset, the text moves ironically from Daniel’s address of the king as ‘king of kings’ to suggest that his kingship is in fact

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<sup>234</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 73-74.

derived.”<sup>235</sup> Finally, the king’s position of power is completely reversed at the end of the chapter. He reacts to the revelation and bows before Daniel, the one who was able to make the dream known to the king (2:46). The king also praises Daniel’s God who gave Daniel wisdom and power through the revelation of the dream (2:47).

c. Daniel

In contrast to Daniel 1, in which Daniel was the first among four exiled Judeans, in chapter 2 Daniel is elevated to a status and position far above his friends. This is depicted through the frequency and centrality of his speech and actions. First, the narrator describes Daniel as speaking to the official with “prudence and discretion (2:14).” Afterwards, Daniel’s words and actions become more prominent. He requests time from the king to discover the dream (2:16), he asks his friends to pray for God’s mercies (2:17-18) and receives the dream in a night vision (2:19). Daniel’s hymn of praise for God’s gift depicts his piety and worship of Yahweh as the “God of my fathers (2:23).” Moreover, Daniel’s speech to the king suggests that he is humble and a loyal representative of God (2:27-30). His revelation and interpretation of the dream occupies

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<sup>235</sup> Choon Long Seow, *Daniel*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 44. Notably, he also identifies a connection between Gen 1:26 and the description of Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom in 2:38. For Seow, “According to the creation account, humanity has been made in God’s ‘image’ (the same word for the statue in Daniel) and granted dominion over all of God’s creation – the fish of the sea, birds of the air, cattle, wild animals, and creeping things. Humanity was created to represent divine presence on earth, just as a royal statue in an earthly domain might represent the presence of an imperial ruler...his (Nebuchadnezzar’s) dominion is derived from a greater king.” *Daniel*, 45.

almost a third of the chapter (2:31-45). Finally, Daniel's request to the king for positions of power for his friends also shows his humility and concern for his friends (2:48).<sup>236</sup>

#### d. Wise Men

In Daniel 1 the wise men were only minor characters used as foils for the success of the four Judeans. In Daniel 2 they become a prominent group. They are depicted through their speech as "unwise" or men without knowing in contrast to the four Hebrews and especially in contrast to Daniel. The narrator states that the king commanded that the wise men be brought before him (2:3). This action parallels 1:18-19, where the four Hebrew youth were brought before the king and successfully stood in his service. Thus, Daniel 2 sets up a context in which the two groups are compared and contrasted. Throughout the dialogue with the king, the Chaldean's are progressively depicted as lacking wisdom (2:4-9). This characteristic is expressed by the Chaldeans themselves (2:10-11). The Chaldean's statements reveal their lack of knowing or wisdom to solve the king's dilemma and their inability to communicate with the gods regarding the dream. This sets the stage for Daniel's success. Thus, the wise men are used again as foils to highlight God's (and Daniel's) wisdom and power.

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<sup>236</sup> In Daniel 2 the separation between Daniel and the other three is more pronounced. His character receives greater attention in the story and experiences significant promotions in position and power. The first occurrence of Daniel's name appears separate from the other three names (2:13), which are simply identified as his "companions." The names of the three Judean youth first occur in 2:17 and follow the order presented in Daniel 1, but without Daniel (Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah). The names do not occur again in the chapter until the last verse (2:49). The separation that occurs in Daniel 2 between Daniel and his three friends may be in preparation for Daniel 3, in which the three friends become central characters without Daniel.

E. Comparative Analysis of Characters in Daniel 1 and 2

Table 3.6 Comparison of Characters: Daniel 1 and 2

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Daniel 1</b>	<b>Daniel 2</b>
<b>God</b>	God's three acts of giving (1:2, 9, 17) depict him as absolute sovereign	God is portrayed as sovereign through diverse forms of characterization, but primarily through his act of deliverance and Daniel's words
<b>King Nebuchadnezzar</b>	The acts of "coming," "besieging," and "appointing" depict the king as a powerful monarch attempting to grasp after absolute sovereignty and impose his sovereignty over the main characters	The king is depicted as an angry, violent monarch whose power is explicitly destabilized for his lack of knowing, specifically concerning the enigmatic dream
<b>Daniel, 3 friends</b>	The four youth are depicted as ideal in form and character; Daniel's acts (and the actions of his three friends) and words depict his piety and covenantal faithfulness	Daniel's rise to prominence is more pronounced; he is depicted as a wise revealer of dreams; he is also depicted as God's representative before the king
<b>Wise Men</b>	Briefly mentioned; foils for four Hebrews	Wise men are depicted as "unwise" and "un-knowing" thus they are destabilized with the king

As shown in Table 3.5 and in the above discussion, a narrative shift occurs in character and characterization as one moves from Daniel 1 to Daniel 2 that coincides to the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic. Thus, a language shift-narrative shift correspondence obtains regarding characters and characterization as one moves from Daniel 1 to 2. In Daniel 1 God and the king are depicted as sovereign powers that work behind the scenes to influence the actions of the main characters. God is depicted as absolute sovereign through his three acts of "giving" (1:2, 9, 17) while the king is portrayed as a monarch grasping after God's absolute sovereignty through his acts of power (coming, 1:1, 2, 3; appointing, 1:5). Through his acts of power, he attempts to

impose his sovereignty upon the main characters, particularly with regard to their religious identity. Daniel and his three friends are depicted as exiled Jews that must struggle to maintain their religious identity in the face of the king's attempt at Babylonian enculturation. Daniel and his companions display covenantal faithfulness as they determine to align themselves with their God (the absolute king) rather than the king of Babylon.

Daniel 2 transitions away from the depiction of the king in Daniel 1, in which he is portrayed as a powerful monarch. In Daniel 2 the king is a destabilized ruler that lacks knowing or wisdom concerning his enigmatic dream. The dream also causes him physical and emotional distress. His attempt to resolve his problem, through the help of his wise men, destabilizes him even further as he rages against the Chaldeans' lack of knowing. At the end of the chapter his destabilization is completely apparent as he bows before Daniel, who possesses knowing concerning the king's dream.

Similarly, God is portrayed differently in Daniel 2 than in Daniel 1. He is depicted as sovereign through more diverse forms of characterization. In Daniel 1 God's three actions portrayed his sovereign character. In Daniel 2 God's gift of the dream, Daniel's prayer of praise, Daniel's speech before the king, Daniel's revelation of the dream and its interpretation, and even the words of the king portray God as the source of wisdom and power.

The wise men, who were only minor characters in Daniel 1, become important figures in Daniel 2. They, along with the king, are destabilized by the enigmatic dream since they are revealed to be un-knowing wise men. Finally, Daniel's rise to prominence is more pronounced in Daniel 2 than in Daniel 1. Through God's gracious gift of the

king's dream, Daniel receives wisdom and power above the wise men and the king of Babylon.

#### F. Identification of Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence from Daniel 1 to 2

##### **1. Plot and the LS-NSC**

The results of the above comparative narrative analysis of plot and character in Daniel 1 and 2 indicate the presence of a narrative shift in plot and character that coincides with the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic. First, the plot of Daniel 1 coheres around the conflict between God and the king of Babylon. This conflict expands to include the main characters, who strive to maintain their religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation. In contrast, Daniel 2 transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on Nebuchadnezzar's search for knowing about his menacing dream. Despite this transition, the dream in Daniel 2 reconfigures the conflict in Daniel 1 and situates it within a broad, universal, and more visual context.

##### **2. Characters and LS-NSC**

Second, with respect to the characters in Daniel 1 and 2, a shift can also be identified. In Daniel 1 God and Nebuchadnezzar are depicted as behind-the-scenes-powers in conflict. God is depicted as absolute sovereign as he controls and influences the incidents in the narrative through his three acts of giving. The king is depicted as a monarch that grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. However, God's acts of giving and his followers' faithfulness undermine the king's power. Daniel (and his three friends) is a member of the Judean elite taken as a



captive to Babylon. He is depicted as a pious follower of Yahweh who determines to prevent defilement during the three years of preparation for the king's service.

In contrast, in Daniel 2 the characterization of God and the king changes. God is characterized indirectly through various characters rather than primarily through divine actions. Daniel is the primary character through whom God is portrayed. The king, in contrast to his depiction in Daniel 1, is foregrounded as a character and becomes a destabilized power due to his menacing dream. His wise men, who were minor characters in Daniel 1, are also foregrounded as they are portrayed as "unwise" when they cannot reveal the king's dream. Finally, Daniel is elevated exponentially as a character, more so than in Daniel 1, due to God's gift of wisdom and power.

### **3. Delineation of LS-NSC**

As a consequence of these conclusions, it is possible to delineate the overall shape or form of the narrative that is found in Daniel 2, the point at which the narrative and the language shift. As shown in Table 3.5, the narrative that is formed due to the language shift-narrative shift correspondence constitutes two emphases in plot and five emphases in character. The plot emphasizes two elements: 1) the king's search for knowing concerning his enigmatic dream, and 2) the embedded narrative of the dream.

Table 3.7 LS-NSC in Plot and Character from Daniel 1 to 2

<b>Narrative Emphasis Engendered by the LS-NS Correspondence in Plot and Character</b>	
<b>Plot</b>	<p>1) Emphasis on the king’s search for <b>knowing</b> concerning his enigmatic dream;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repetition of terms related to “knowing” and mantic knowledge</li> <li>• Incidents emphasize the centrality of the king’s knowing</li> <li>• King linked to knowing and understanding the revelation of the dream and its interpretation</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>2) Emphasis on <b>embedded narrative of the dream</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search for dream emphasizes content of dream</li> <li>• Content of dream emphasizes what God wills the king should know</li> <li>• Dream is divine commentary on human kingship, which states it is:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1. Proud</li> <li>○ 2. Powerful and rich but transitory and derivative</li> <li>○ 3. In conflict with God</li> <li>○ 4. Linked to cultic/religious sphere</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God depicted as sovereign through indirect characterizations and his act of deliverance</li> <li>• King depicted as destabilized due to lack of knowing</li> <li>• Wise men depicted as un-knowing</li> <li>• Daniel depicted as prominent wise man with knowing (companions are less prominent)</li> <li>• Four Hebrews face death decree</li> </ul>

The language shift-narrative shift correspondence regarding characters and characterization stresses five elements: 1) God as sovereign through indirect characterization and his acts of deliverance, 2) the king as destabilized due to a lack of knowing, 3) the wise men as un-knowing characters, 4) Daniel as a prominent wise man (with his companions less prominent), and 5) four Hebrews under death decree.

## G. Summary for Part I

The results of the above comparative narrative analysis of Daniel 1 and 2 indicate the presence of a narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic. The plot of Daniel 1 coheres around the conflict between God and the king of Babylon with respect to sovereignty. God demonstrates absolute sovereignty while the king of Babylon grasps after absolute sovereignty. This conflict expands to include Daniel and his three companions, the main characters who strive to maintain their religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation.

In Daniel 2 the plot transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on Nebuchadnezzar's search for knowing concerning his menacing dream. All of the incidents and events in the narrative inevitably lead to the king's knowing the revelation and interpretation of the dream. The dream builds upon the conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2 and reconfigures it to situate it within a wider, universal context. The dream itself functions as an embedded narrative that offers divine commentary on human kingship. This is what God wills that the king should know and understand, and it is what he did not know in Daniel 1. According to heaven's view, human kingship is filled with pride. It is also powerful and wealthy, but its power is transitory and derivative. Human kingship is also associated with the cultic/religious sphere, and ultimately doomed to destruction by God's representative.

With respect to the characters in Daniel 1 and 2, a narrative shift corresponding to the language shift also obtains. In Daniel 1 God and Nebuchadnezzar are depicted as behind-the-scenes-powers in conflict. God is depicted as absolute sovereign as he influences and controls the incidents in the narrative through his three acts of giving. The

king is depicted as a monarch that grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. However, God's acts of giving and his followers' faithfulness undermine the king's power. Daniel (and his three friends) is a member of the Judean elite taken as a captive to Babylon. He is depicted as a pious follower of Yahweh that determines to prevent defilement during the three years of preparation for the king's service.

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2, a notable change in characters and characterization can be identified that concomitantly shifts with the language. In Daniel 2 the characterization of God and the king changes. God is characterized indirectly through various characters rather than primarily through divine actions. Daniel is the primary character through whom God is portrayed. The king, in contrast to his depiction in Daniel 1, is foregrounded as a character and becomes a destabilized power due to the absence of knowing about his menacing dream. His wise men, who were minor characters in Daniel 1, are also foregrounded as they are portrayed as wise men without knowing because they cannot reveal the king's dream. Finally, Daniel is elevated exponentially as a character, more so than in Daniel 1, due to God's gift of wisdom and power.

From the above conclusions of the narrative shift in plot and character from Daniel 1 to 2, it is possible to conclude that as one moves from Daniel 1 to 2 the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic occurs concomitantly with a narrative shift in plot and character. Since the language shift to Aramaic continues to Daniel 7, one may ask does the narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift also continue to Daniel 7? To determine the answer to this question it is necessary to compare the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 to the plot and

characters/characterization elements in the subsequent chapters (Daniel 3-7). The results of this comparative analysis will be presented in Part II of this chapter.

## **Part II. Identification of Repetition of Language Shift-Narrative Shift**

### **Correspondence in Daniel 3-7**

#### A. Introduction

To determine whether the language shift-narrative shift correspondence of plot and character in Daniel 2 persists throughout the rest of the Aramaic section, it is necessary to compare it to the plots and characters/characterization in the ensuing chapters (Daniel 3-7). The results of this comparative analysis are presented below.

#### B. Repetition of Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence in Plot in Daniel 3-7

The Aramaic section, specifically Daniel 3-7, consists of four stories (Daniel 3-6) and an apocalypse (Daniel 7) that introduces the apocalyptic section of the book. In these five chapters it is possible to identify the repetition of the language shift-narrative shift correspondence in plot noted above in certain plot elements of Daniel 3-7. The narrative shift in plot, specifically the emphasis on the king's knowing and the emphasis on the embedded narrative of the dream, recurs in various forms in Daniel 3-7.

First, the emphasis on the king's knowing recurs in Daniel 3-6. Newsom suggests Daniel 1-4 "form a kind of *Bildungsroman* for Nebuchadnezzar, a story of his 'education.'"<sup>237</sup> Thus, Daniel 3 and 4 consist of narrative elements that highlight the

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<sup>237</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 33.

developmental process of King Nebuchadnezzar's knowing. However, the term "know" occurs only once in Daniel 3 (3:18). Yet, one may see the king's actions in the plot as an attempt to deal with or confront the knowing he received in Daniel 2.<sup>238</sup> In Daniel 4 God sends the king another dream that sharply confronts the king's "knowing" (the term occurs approximately 8 times). Similarly, in Daniel 5 the king's knowing (Belshazzar) is central to the plot (the term "know" occurs approximately 7 times). In Daniel 6 the term "know" does not occur in relation to King Darius's knowing of God, yet his doxology at the end of the chapter reveals his developed knowledge of God (Daniel 6:28). In contrast to the previous chapters, in Daniel 7 the term "know" is no longer linked to kings. It is linked to Daniel as he seeks to know his dream (7:16).

The emphasis on the embedded narrative of the dream also recurs in various forms in Daniel 3-7. From the embedded narrative, the following four plot elements recur: 1) a tall figure (Daniel 3, 4, 5 [figuratively]), 2) kingly hubris (Daniel 3, 4, 5), 3) conflict between human kings/kingdoms and God/God's representative (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6 [law of Medes and Persians vs. law of God]), and 4) king associated with the cultic or religious sphere (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6).

Finally, in Daniel 7 the imagery of verticality disappears, yet, the four-kingdom schema reappears and is shaped into a new form, from four metals to four beasts. In

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<sup>238</sup> Seow concludes, "The new story (Daniel 3) shows that the king had not in fact understood what he had heard, that he had accepted only part of Daniel's interpretation but not the rest of it, or, perhaps, that he willfully tried to reshape the vision to his own liking." *Daniel*, 52. Fewell similarly asserts, "This first sentence (Daniel 1:1) signals that we are to read the story as a continuation of what has preceded...the narrative links Daniel 3 to Daniel 2 with the image of gold." *Circle of Sovereignty*, 65. See also Newsom, who proposes, "...it (Daniel 3) continues the development of Nebuchadnezzar's character, the exploration of the interplay of power and knowledge, and the difficult negotiation of Diaspora identity in an imperial context...The story focuses on the way in which Nebuchadnezzar's false perceptions about the nature and source of power are progressively dismantled during the course of events." *Daniel*, 101.

addition, the symbols for God and his representative (the stone and the mountain) also disappear, but they reappear in new forms, the Ancient of Days, and the One like the Son of Man. Thus, several aspects of the dream are transformed or reconfigured in Daniel 7. However, the basic elements of the plot remain: 1) (kingly) hubris (7:8, 25), 2) conflict between human kings/kingdoms and God/God's representative (7:9-12), and 3) a king associated with the cultic or religious sphere (7:25).

### **1. Daniel 3**

Four plot elements in Daniel 3 recur from the narrative shift in Daniel 2, specifically: 1) a tall figure, 2) kingly hubris, 3) conflict between the king and God/God's representatives, and 4) king associated with cultic/religious sphere. The fourth element is emblematic of the attempt of human kings to move beyond the limits of their power and to grasp after, not only absolute kingly power, but also absolute cultic or religious power. Moreover, the term "to know" only occurs once, unlike its frequent use in Daniel 2, 4, and 5.

#### **a. Tall Figure: The Golden Image**

Several scholars note the connection between the image in the dream of Daniel 2 and the golden image in Daniel 3. Gunn and Fewell state, "The delicately balanced mass of gold alludes to the preceding story in Daniel 2 in which Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a similar statue with a head of gold."<sup>239</sup> Similarly Valetta notes, "The dream statue of Daniel 2 and the golden image of Daniel 3 provide together a connecting point for these

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<sup>239</sup> David Gunn and Danna Nolan Fewell, "Nebuchadnezzar and the Three Jews: Daniel 3," in *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 174-188, 175.

two stories...”<sup>240</sup> Fewell suggests an even stronger connection between the two chapters; she asserts that the first sentence of Daniel 3 “signals that we are to read the story as a continuation of what has preceded.”<sup>241</sup> She further notes the primary link between the two chapters is the golden image.<sup>242</sup> The repetition of the term for “image” (12 occurrences, **זָלָה**), which occurred five times in Daniel 2, also links the golden image to the image in the dream.<sup>243</sup> Thus, the first connection to the plot of the dream in Daniel 2 is the golden image of Daniel 3.

#### b. Kingly Hubris

As noted above, kingly arrogance is represented by images of inordinate height. As a consequence, the golden image corresponds to the king’s hubris enacted in the narrative. In Daniel 3 the king’s arrogance is depicted through his words and actions. The king’s arrogance is initially intimated in his quest for absolute power. This is

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<sup>240</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 78.

<sup>241</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 65. She further proposes, “Nebuchadnezzar’s dream... is pointed and invites the reader to fill these informational gaps with inferences from Daniel 2.” The “informational gaps” to which she refers is the meaning of the image and the king’s reason for building it.

<sup>242</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 65. She further states that such a link was also identified by the ancient commentator Hippolytus. See T.C. Schmidt, *Hippolytus of Rome Commentary on Daniel and ‘Chronicon,’* (Piscataway, NJ: Georgias, 2017), 79. Montgomery states, “According to Hipp... the idea of such an image was induced in Neb.’s mind by the vision of c. 2.” James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of the Book of Daniel*. ICC (New York: Charles Scribner, 1927), 195. Seow also states, “Because the story comes immediately after the account of the statue of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in the preceding chapter, one may be inclined to think of the image in the dream, as many interpreters from ancient times have done.” *Daniel*, 53. See also Hersh Goldwurm, *Daniel*, ArtScroll Tanach Series (New York: Mesorah, 2006), 112. According to Goldwurm, Jewish commentators agreed that the king’s motive behind building the image is related to the image in Daniel 2. The king is responding to the meaning of the image in Daniel 2, whether the image in Daniel 3 is idolatrous or political (a statue to depict the king’s glory).

<sup>243</sup> Newsom concludes, “While these suggestive connections may explain why the author incorporated the story of Nebuchadnezzar and the image of gold, no attempt has been made to fully assimilate the story to that of Dan 2.” *Daniel*, 103.



demonstrated in his commands. For example, in Daniel 3:2-7 the king commands his officials and subjects to bow down and worship the golden image. Lists of government officials, musical instruments, and kingdom subjects are repeated in this section.

Regarding the repetition of the first list Gunn and Nolan Fewell state,

The list's extent suggests a rather sophisticated political network. The repetition of the list, however, also enacts the power structure of the story world. It shows the king's control of this network. Precisely what the king wills is precisely what takes place. The precise people whom he summons are the precise people who assemble. Thus, through repetition, the narrator pictures (and mocks) a setting in which conformity is normative, disobedience is unthinkable.<sup>244</sup>

This demonstration of complete conformity is also a demonstration of the king's quest for absolute power. It depicts the extensive reach of the king's influence. His power extends even to the music that is played (3:4). Everything and everyone are under his control and will follow his will and command. (The king's attempt to establish his absolute power may be in response to his destabilization in Daniel 2.)

Specifically, however, the king's arrogance is explicitly expressed in his challenge to God in 3:15. In this verse, the king questions the three Hebrews regarding the Chaldeans' accusation (3:12). He gives them a second chance to obey, but states that if they do not, they will be thrown into the burning furnace. He adds to his threat the following statement, "And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?" This statement is a direct challenge to the God of the three Hebrews, namely the God of heaven. It is similar to the King of Assyria's statement in 2 Kgs 18:28-35. The Rabshekah states that none of the gods of the other peoples ravaged by Assyria were able

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<sup>244</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 66. For a study on the use of lists in Daniel see Peter W. Coxon, "The 'List' Genre and Narrative Style in the Court Tales of Daniel," *JSOT* 35 (1986): 95-121.

to deliver them from the power of the King of Assyria. Therefore, the people of Jerusalem should not believe that their God could deliver them out of the hand of the “great king.” Similarly, in Daniel 3 King Nebuchadnezzar challenges God’s power to deliver his people.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar’s statement expresses the king’s belief in his absolute power over everyone including the God of heaven.<sup>246</sup>

### c. Conflict Between King and God/Representatives

The main conflict in Daniel 3 is between the king’s decree to worship the golden image and the three Jews who refuse to violate God’s commandment not to bow down before images. This is evident in Daniel 3:8-11, where the Chaldeans accuse the three men of not responding to the king’s decree. From this point in the narrative, the conflict rises until the three men are thrown into the furnace (3:23). However, according to the king’s challenge in 3:15, the conflict is ultimately between the king and God. Newsom suggests, “His words also serve the storyteller’s purposes by disclosing to the reader that

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<sup>245</sup> The Aramaic term for “deliver” (ܕܠܝܫ) is only used in Daniel 3 (vv. 15, 17, 28) and 6 (vv. 14, 16, 20, 28). In Daniel 3:15 the king questions God’s ability to deliver the three young men, in v. 17 the three Hebrews are certain of God’s ability to deliver them, and in v. 28 the king, after seeing God’s power, proclaims God’s ability to deliver the three men. In Daniel 6:14 the king is unable to deliver Daniel, in 6:16, 20 the king hopes that God is able to deliver Daniel, and in 6:28 the king praises God for delivering Daniel. In both chapters the term is used in a context of divine, miraculous deliverance.

<sup>246</sup> Goldingay does not see his statement as an expression of arrogance. He states, “...the arrogance of his challenge and of the confessors’ reply should not be exaggerated. Nebuchadnezzar may not be seen as purposely slighting God. His skepticism compares with that of the experts in 2:11, and he is not condemned for blasphemy; indeed he is granted a revelation, to which he duly responds (vv. 24-29).” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 234. However, see also Newsom’s assertion, “Nebuchadnezzar’s concluding rhetorical question, ‘And what god is there who can save you from my hands?’ serves several narrative functions. As an intertextual echo of the words of ‘the great king, the king of Assyria’ in 2 Kgs 18:28-35, it serves to characterize Nebuchadnezzar as the type of arrogant king whose pretensions will be exposed. His words also serve the storyteller’s purposes by disclosing to the reader that the true antagonists in the narrative are not Nebuchadnezzar and the three Jews but Nebuchadnezzar and YHWH, as the second intertextual echo underscores. In Deut 32:39 YHWH declares, ‘There is no god besides me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and no one can deliver from my hand.’” *Daniel*, 109. Valeta also sees the king’s statement as a challenge to God. He concludes that the king “mocks” the three men with this statement. *Lions, Ovens, and Visions*, 84. See also Seow, *Daniel*, 55.

the true antagonists in the narrative are not Nebuchadnezzar and the three Jews but Nebuchadnezzar and YHWH...”<sup>247</sup>

#### d. King Associated with Cultic/Religious Sphere

The king is associated with the cultic or religious sphere through his command to worship the golden image. The term “worship” (גָּלַד) occurs 11 times in the chapter. The Aramaic term means “to pay homage to.”<sup>248</sup> The presence of the *lamed* denotes homage to God or an idol and without the *lamed* it refers to homage paid to human beings (Daniel 2:46). In Daniel 3 the term refers to homage or worship of the king’s golden image and the *lamed* is primarily linked with the term for “image.” Therefore, the king commands the people to worship the golden image.

In addition, the golden image, before which the king commands all to fall down and worship, is almost always linked to the king. Whenever the term “image” appears it is almost always linked to the king with the following phrase, “the image which King Nebuchadnezzar set up” (vv. 2, 3 [2 times], 5, 6, 12, 14, 15, 18). He is the one that created the image that he commands the people to worship. Therefore, through his command and his act of creating the image that is worshipped, the king is closely associated with the religious sphere. He grasps after not only absolute kingship, but also absolute cultic/religious worship.

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<sup>247</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 109. See also Lucas, *Daniel*, 90. He states that the king’s statement “brings out the fact that the real conflict is between the king and the God of the Jews.”

<sup>248</sup> HALOT, 1937.

## 2. Daniel 4

Five plot elements in Daniel 4 recur from the narrative shift in Daniel 2: 1) the knowing of the king, 2) a tall figure, 3) kingly hubris, 4) conflict between the king and God (heaven), and 5) the king is associated with cultic/religious imagery.

### a. The Knowing of the King

In Daniel 4 the term “to know” (יָדַע) occurs 8 times (vv. 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 25, 26, 32; ET). Four occurrences (vv. 6, 7, 9, 18) refer to the king’s desire to know his dream. This narrative context is similar to that found in Daniel 2. In the other four occurrences it refers to heaven’s command for the king to know that God reigns (v. 17 uses the general term “living” rather than referring to the king directly).

In Daniel 4, the king claims the glory of Babylon for himself. The king’s claim contradicts Daniel’s revelation in Daniel 2:37-38, which states that God gave the king power and glory. Thus, the king has not developed to the point where he knows God as absolute sovereign. He still seeks to appropriate power that belongs to God. God’s judgment falls upon the king because he does not know that God reigns in the kingdom of men. He will remain a wild animal until he knows “that the Most High rules the king of men and gives it to whom he will (4:25 ET).”

### b. Tall Figure: The Great Tree

The great tree in the king’s dream is another tall image that symbolizes royal arrogance. It is the focus of the central portions of the chapter, as noted in its chiasmic

literary structure.<sup>249</sup> In the king's dream (4:10-18) there is a "tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great (4:10)." The term for "great" (גָּדוֹל) is the same term found in Daniel 2:31, which refers to the appearance of the image in the dream. It occurs three times in Daniel 4 (vv. 10, 12, 21 [ET]) and it refers to the size of the tree and the abundance of its fruit.

Regarding the great tree Valeta states,

The dream account of the mammoth tree in this chapter marks the third time that Nebuchadnezzar and colossal images are intertwined. The dream in Daniel 2 focuses on an immense statue representing various kingdoms of the world, while in Dan. 3 the royal stele is a witness to the great power and might of the king. The tree dominates the middle portions of Dan. 4 and is reflected in the chiasmic literary structure of the narrative... *This recurring motif of large images related to the king and his empire and their ultimate falling accentuates the ongoing conflict between divine and human sovereignty and the ultimate failure of human pretensions of grandeur.*<sup>250</sup>

(Although the golden image in Daniel 3 does not fall, its status as a symbol of the king's power suffers from the challenge of the three Jews and God's final deliverance.)

Several scholars have noted the common symbol of a cosmic tree in "world religion" and in the ancient Near East.<sup>251</sup> The tree's location in the middle of the earth hints at its cosmic nature.<sup>252</sup> This is similar to the location of the tree of life and the tree

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<sup>249</sup> William H. Shea, "Further Literary Structures in Daniel 2-7: An Analysis of Daniel 4," *AUSS* 23 (1985): 277-295. See also Ernst Haag, "Der Traum des Nebukadnezar in Dan 4," *TTZ* 88 (1979): 194-220.

<sup>250</sup> Valeta, *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 91. Italics supplied. See William H. Shea, "Further Literary Structures in Daniel 2-7: An Analysis of Daniel 4," *AUSS* 23 (1985), 277-295, 202 for the location of the tree in the structure of the chapter.

<sup>251</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 223-224; see also Newsom, *Daniel*, 137-138.

<sup>252</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 223. He notes also that its cosmic nature "is more pronounced in the OG, v. 8 ("The sun and moon dwelt in it and illumined the whole earth"), but the Greek text is not necessarily the more primitive for that reason."

of good and evil in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2). However, most scholars see a link between the tree in Daniel 4 and the tree in Ezekiel 31.<sup>253</sup> In that chapter pharaoh is compared to a cedar of Lebanon. The tree was “of towering height, its top among the clouds (31:3).” Ezekiel 31:6 manifests the closest link, “All the *birds of the heavens* made their nests in its boughs; under its branches *all the beasts of the field* gave birth to their young, and under its shadow lived great nations.” In Ezek. 31:10 the meaning of the symbolism of the height of the tree is explained: “...Because it towered high and set its top among the clouds, and its heart was proud of its height.” As a consequence, the height of the tree is linked to its pride. Similarly in Daniel 4, the great tree is also a symbol of the king’s pride.

### c. Kingly Hubris

Daniel relates the interpretation of the dream (4:19-27) and identifies the “tree” as a symbol for the king. Daniel states, “...it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth (4:22).” He also states that the attack against the tree is directed toward him (4:25-26); however, he does not give the reason for the attack. Yet, he does counsel the king “to break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity (4:27).” Such a statement implies that Daniel believes the cutting down of the tree may be in response to the king’s sins, although he does not state the nature of his sin. This information unfolds in the narrative. In 4:30 the king states that he is responsible for the

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<sup>253</sup> Collins also suggests the allegory in Ezekiel 17:1-10 is also relevant to Daniel 4. *Daniel*, 223.

majesty and greatness of Babylon. Immediately after this statement, a voice from heaven declares the decree to drive the king into the wilderness for seven years to live like an animal until he knows that God reigns on earth (4:31-32). The juxtaposition of these two narrative events implies the king's problem is pride or his refusal to acknowledge God's sovereignty on earth. However, in the final verse (4:37) the king explicitly states, in an indirect manner, that pride was his downfall. The king admits, "...and those who walk in pride he is able to humble."<sup>254</sup>

#### d. Conflict Between King and God

The conflict and tension in Daniel 4 are not immediately revealed. The conflict unfolds through the revelation of the dream (4:10-17), its interpretation (4:20-26), the king's arrogant statement, the decree from the voice of heaven (4:28-33), and the king's admission of pride (4:37). The primary tension is the king's search for the interpretation of his dream (4:3-18). After the interpretation the tension turns to the realization of the dream.

The dream depicts the cutting down of a great tree. Conflict is explicitly depicted through the divine judgment against the tree (4:13-17). However, the dream does not explicitly state the reason for the judgment against the tree. The herald in the dream hints at the problem, the "living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men (4:17)." Daniel's interpretation further unfolds the conflict and constitutes a negative message against the

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<sup>254</sup> Goldingay notes the king's sin has been identified as that of pride "and as injustice or unconcern." *Daniel*, rev. ed., 273. He further states, "Nebuchadnezzar is an example, a warning of how not to be led astray by power and achievement, and a model of how to respond to chastisement and humiliation. He is even more a promise that earthly authorities are in the hand of God, not merely for their judgment but for his glory."

king (4:19-27). Daniel makes this evident when he states that the reason for the divine decree is in order that “*you* know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will (4:25).” Valeta contends that Daniel’s interpretation is “scathing” and “portends woe and judgment (vv. 20-26).”<sup>255</sup> Despite Daniel’s judgment-filled interpretation, he never explicitly states that the king is arrogant or is setting himself against God.<sup>256</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar’s arrogant statement occurs a year after Daniel’s interpretation (4:29). He stands at the roof of his royal palace and proclaims that he alone built great Babylon for his glory (4:30). Immediately, a voice from heaven decrees that he will be transformed into a beast until he acknowledges God’s sovereignty (4:31-32). The juxtaposition of Nebuchadnezzar’s statement and the divine message of judgment denote conflict. Finally, the king admits that God is able to humble those “who walk in pride.” Here is the central issue of the conflict in the chapter, the pride and arrogance of the king.

#### e. King Associated with Cultic/Religious Sphere

The king’s association with cultic/religious elements or images is nuanced in Daniel 4, and thus evidence is not as explicit as in the other chapters. Notably, there is a terminological repetition of the terms “heaven” and “earth” that suggests an antithetical relation between the pair.<sup>257</sup> Seow notes, “The heaven-to-earth movement is similar to the

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<sup>255</sup> Valeta, *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 92.

<sup>256</sup> Fewell suggests Daniel changes certain elements in his interpretation to soften the blow of the message. She states, “Daniel’s variations in his interpretation of the dream add up to a substantial softening of the divine decree....The reason for this softening might lie simply in his precarious position as the messenger of doom. However, the reason might also involve a conflict of interest.” *Circle of Sovereignty*, 99. See also Valeta’s conclusions to the contrary. *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 92.

<sup>257</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 255.



one we find in the account of the destruction of the Tower of Babel. Arrogant human beings tried to reach God by building a tower with ‘its top in heaven,’ but God descends to order its destruction.”<sup>258</sup> The tree’s height (“its top reached to heaven,” 4:11 [ET]) suggests an attempt to grasp for or reach into the heavenly sphere. In Daniel 4 the term “heaven” primarily refers to the dwelling place of God or God himself (4:13, 23, 24, 26, 31, 34, 37 [ET]).

### 3. Daniel 5

Four plot elements in Daniel 5 recur from the narrative shift in Daniel 2: 1) the tall figure (figuratively), 2) kingly hubris, 3) conflict between the king and God, and 3) king associated with cultic or religious sphere.

#### a. The Knowing of the King

The term “to know” occurs approximately 7 times (5:8, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23). The first four occurrences refer to the king knowing the mysterious writing on the wall. This narrative context is similar to Daniel 2 and 4. In both chapters the king’s knowing is related to an enigmatic dream. Here in chapter 5, it refers to enigmatic writing on the wall of the palace. The next two occurrences refer to Nebuchadnezzar first then Belshazzar. In v. 21 Daniel revisits the events in Daniel 4 and emphasizes Nebuchadnezzar’s judgment experience, which was due to his lack of knowing the absolute sovereignty of God. In v. 22 it refers to Belshazzar, who knew of God’s humbling of King Nebuchadnezzar but explicitly rebelled against God by defiling the temple vessels. The last occurrence refers

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<sup>258</sup> Seow, *Daniel*, 67. See also Newsom, *Daniel*, 139 where she states, “The phrase ‘its top reached the heavens’ is also evocative of the description of the Tower of Babel with ‘its top in the heavens’ (Gen. 11:4).”

to gods or idols that do not hear or “know.” In Daniel 5, in contrast to Daniel 4, the king knew of God’s absolute sovereignty, but still decided to disgrace and rebel against him. Such an act brings God’s judgment upon Belshazzar, who is killed at the end of the chapter.

b. Tall Figure (Figurative)

Although a tall figure does not appear in Daniel 5, the same material from the great image of Daniel 2 occurs in the same sequence. In 5:4 it states, “They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.” The first four materials are the same elements that constitute the great image of Daniel 2, and they occur in the same sequential order. The types of metal and the sequence of the metals are an echo of the large image in the dream in Daniel 2:31-35, 38-43, 45. Thus, in a figurative sense, the tall image of Daniel 2 is re-constructed in the list of gods that were praised.

c. Kingly Hubris (5:2-4)

Belshazzar’s hubris is explicitly depicted in Daniel 5. During a great feast for his lords the king drinks wine (5:1).<sup>259</sup> After drinking the wine, he commands that the vessels from the house of God in Jerusalem be brought so that he and his lords, his wives, and his

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<sup>259</sup> Valeta notes that the number of lords (1,000) is indicative of the “excesses of royal power and privilege,” which “are designed to trumpet the power and might of the king.” *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 95. Therefore, Belshazzar’s feast is akin to Nebuchadnezzar’s construction of a golden image, both are attempts to demonstrate royal power. Fewell notes several parallels between Daniel 3 and 5. *Circle of Sovereignty*, 114-115. However, Newsom argues, “royal feasts were quite large, and food was often distributed widely.” *Daniel*, 166.

concubines may drink from them (5:3).<sup>260</sup> As they drink, they praise the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone (5:4). The king's act of sacrilege is an act of kingly arrogance in the face of God. Seow states,

The problem...is not that the sacred vessels are now used in a secular manner, but that Belshazzar is showing off and that he and his company are praising their idols even as they are committing sacrilege and blasphemy against the God of the Jews. The sovereignty and power of the God of the exiles are, thus, blatantly called into question.<sup>261</sup>

Belshazzar's act directly attacks God's sacred sphere, as the temple vessels can be viewed as representative of the temple itself. The repetition of the phrase "temple in Jerusalem" in vv. 2 and 3, as well as the insertion of the phrase "house of God" into the phrase in v. 3 may suggest an emphasis on the nature of Belshazzar's act, he was offending the vessels of God's house.<sup>262</sup>

#### d. Conflict Between King and God

The conflict between the king and God is depicted through the king's act of sacrilege (see above), the enigmatic writing on the wall, Daniel's prophetic speech, and

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<sup>260</sup> Valeta states, "The implements once used to serve the Most High God are now used in praise of the gods of these materials..." Collins also notes, "Profanation of cult vessels was an outrage even by pagan standards." *Daniel*, 245. The vessels were representative of the temple or house of God in Jerusalem. Newsom further asserts the importance of these objects, "Because the Judean religion did not have a cult statue of YHWH, the temple vessels play a particularly important role in metonymically representing YHWH and his sovereignty. In the texts relating to the period of the exile, they become, as Ackroyd described them, a symbol of continuity... Like the people themselves, they were taken into exile..., then returned to Jerusalem by the command of Cyrus." *Daniel*, 166-167. Fewell points out that the mention of the "house of God" refers back to Daniel 1:1-2. *Circle of Sovereignty*, 117-118. Newsom suggests one may see a contrast between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar in this reference. Nebuchadnezzar treats the vessels with respect by putting them into the treasury house of his god, but Belshazzar treats the vessels with contempt. *Daniel*, 166.

<sup>261</sup> Seow, *Daniel*, 78.

<sup>262</sup> See Vogel's discussion on the syntactic construction of the phrases in 5:2, 3, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 69-72.

Belshazzar's death. The search for the explanation of the enigmatic writing on the wall drives the plot of the chapter after v. 5. The search for its interpretation becomes a similar plot device as the search for the king's dream in Daniel 2 and 4. Its occurrence immediately after the king's act of sacrilege and the frightful nature of the occurrence suggest its divine origin and its antagonistic nature.<sup>263</sup> The meaning of the writing is only revealed after Daniel's prophetic speech (5:17-28).

Daniel acts as God's witness or prophet of judgment when he reveals God's message of judgment against King Belshazzar. Before Daniel interprets the message on the wall, he condemns the king in a speech.<sup>264</sup> First, he reminds the king of Nebuchadnezzar's conflict with God (5:18-21), which is a summation of the previous chapter. Next, he states in v. 22 "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this." Here, again the term "to know" (יָדָע) occurs, as in Daniel 2 and 4.

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<sup>263</sup> Some studies have seen a comic element in the description of Belshazzar's reaction to the writing on the wall. See Edwin M. Good, "Apocalyptic as Comedy," *Semeia* 32 (1984): 41-70, 53-54. In contrast, other studies do not see the scene as a comic event. Goldingay concludes, "There is perhaps some humor in the description of Belshazzar's reaction to the portent, if it refers to his losing control of his bodily functions, but it is a deadly serious comprehensive description of the physical manifestations of terror, the appropriate response to the prospect of divine judgment." *Daniel*, 288-289. Seow asserts, "This portrayal of fear is as vivid and comical as any in the Bible." *Daniel*, 79. Lucas notes, "His reaction has some similarity to Daniel's reaction to his visions, especially in 10:8. However, it is described even more vividly, and has more similarity to other descriptions of panic, as distinct from religious awe, in Hebrew literature (e.g. Is. 21:3; Ezek. 21:7; Nah. 2:10[11])." *Daniel*, 129.

<sup>264</sup> Stefanovic suggests "Daniel's words of rebuke addressed to Belshazzar are much in line with the function of biblical prophets, who exhibited extraordinary courage when they delivered indictment speeches to Israelite or foreign kings (1 Kings 21:20-24). Typically, such messages were composed of a historical overview and then a list of charges and accusations followed by the verdict." *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise*, (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007) 197. Steinmann separates Daniel's words into two sections, "each beginning with the pronoun... 'you.' The first section (5:18-21) is a short recapitulation of the events of Daniel 4." The second section, (5:22-24), is an accusation of Belshazzar's arrogance. *Daniel Concordia Commentary*. (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2008), 283.

In Daniel 2, God revealed his sovereignty to Nebuchadnezzar through the dream. When he failed to acknowledge God's sovereignty, specifically revealed in the king's actions in Daniel 3, God in Daniel 4 sent him a second dream. When the king acknowledged his own sovereignty, God changed him into a beast until he came to know that God is sovereign over the earth. In Daniel 5, Belshazzar is depicted as knowing but not humbling himself before the sovereignty of God. Even more, he "lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven (5:23)." Here again, despite the fact that there is no tall figure representing the king's hubris, the term "lifted up" points to vertical movement. The term "to lift up" (רָם) with the preposition (עַל) means to "to rise up against."<sup>265</sup> Therefore, although the king knew what God had done to Nebuchadnezzar, he still raised himself up against the God of heaven. This means that Belshazzar's act of sacrilege was a blatant statement against the God of heaven (or a high-handed sin). This may explain the magnitude of the judgment against him. Furthermore, even though Belshazzar knew the God of heaven, he praised the gods of metal, stone, and wood (5:23). This statement is important because in Daniel 2, 3, 4, and 6 all the kings honor and praise God. Belshazzar is the only monarch that does not praise and honor God. This may explain why he is the only monarch in the stories of Daniel that is killed.

After Daniel's speech he reveals the meaning of the enigmatic writing, which prophesies the end of the kingdom of Babylon, God's judgment against Belshazzar, and the rise of the Median/Persian kingdom (5:25-28).<sup>266</sup> (This incident is a partial fulfillment

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<sup>265</sup> HALOT, s.v. "רָם."

<sup>266</sup> For a study of the interpretation of the enigmatic message see Otto Eissfeldt, "Die Menetekel-Inschrift und ihre Deutung," ZAW 63 (1951): 105-114.

of the prophecy of the four-kingdom schema in the dream in Daniel 2.) The conflict between Belshazzar and God ends with the complete destabilization of the Babylonian king (he is killed) and of the Babylonian kingdom (it falls) (5:30).

e. King Associated with Cultic/Religious Sphere

As noted above, Belshazzar's association with the cultic/religious sphere is explicit. He first uses the cultic utensils of the temple, or of the house of God, and then he praises the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. He is thus depicted as directly associated with the cultic or religious sphere. He, like Nebuchadnezzar, grasps after kingly and cultic power. Therefore, he is in direct conflict with the God of heaven.

#### 4. Daniel 6

Only two elements in Daniel 6 recur from the narrative shift in Daniel 2: 1) Conflict between king's officials and God/God's representative, and 2) king associated with cultic/religious sphere. The conflict in Daniel 6 is primarily between the Persian officials and satraps and Daniel.<sup>267</sup> However, this conflict brings the law of the Medes and the Persians in conflict with the law of God.

a. Conflict Between King's Officials and God/God's Representative

The plot of the Persian officials and satraps against Daniel drives the action in the story. They are jealous of Daniel's success, so they come together to plot his downfall (6:4). As the officials plot against Daniel, they find that the only successful course of

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<sup>267</sup> These types of conflicts were not uncommon in ancient courts. Newsom contends, "Such conflicts among courtiers were undoubtedly common at many courts where position and livelihood depended on the favor or disfavor of the king, though they are particularly well documented in Neo-Assyrian letters between scholar-advisers and the king..." *Daniel*, 193.

action will be to set up his fall with respect to “the law of his God (6:6).” Therefore, the religious nature of the conflict is only a means to an end, specifically to cause Daniel’s downfall. Nevertheless, the conflict pits the law of the Medes and Persians against Daniel’s religious observance or God’s law. In previous chapters the conflict was between an arrogant king and God and/or his representatives, but in this chapter the law of the state is a tool used against God’s representative.

#### b. King Associated with Cultic/Religious Sphere

The officials decide to trick the king into signing a decree that prohibits requests of any god or man except the king for 30 days, and whoever defies this injunction will be thrown into the lions’ den (6:6-9). Scholars have wondered at the meaning of the law. Does it refer to the king as a god (deification), or to the king as a priestly mediator, or to the only representative of deity?<sup>268</sup> However, Newsom’s conclusions correspond with the overall tenor of the story. She asserts,

...though the courtiers offer no rationale or purpose for the decree, it can only be understood as an act of flattery toward the king, a symbolic way of marking him out as superior not only to all other humans but even to the gods themselves...Its absurd extravagance, however, effectively captures the issue at the heart of the narratives of Dan 1-6. From the perspective of the Jews, Gentile imperial power effectively represents itself as absolute. The aesthetic and theological work of the narratives is to articulate the lurking contradiction between the claims of that power and the power of the God of the Jews. It is resolved by having the king confront the limits of his power and be led to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Most High God. It does not matter that the king may be personally benign and favorable to a character like Daniel; the danger lurks in

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<sup>268</sup> For the view that the injunction made Darius the only priestly mediator for 30 days see Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*. NAC 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 180; Carl Friedrich Keil, *Daniel*, trans. M. G. Easton (T & T Clark, 1872), 211; Edward J. Young *The Prophecy of Daniel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 133. For the view that the law made the king the only representative of deity see Longman, *Daniel*, 160 and John Walton, “The Decree of Darius the Mede in Daniel 6,” *JETS* 31 (1988): 279-286, 280. Walton builds his theory on the idea that there was a religious struggle during this time between Zoroastrianism and those that followed syncretistic practices.

the very structure of Gentile imperial power and its tendency to absolutize itself.<sup>269</sup>

The law attempts to place the king on the same level as a god. It ascribes to the king the honor of a god. The king's willingness to sign the injunction into law may suggest that the officials' proposal is a form of royal flattery that persuades the king to acquiesce. The story does not suggest that the king was unduly arrogant to sign such an injunction, but it does imply that he may be imprudent or weak. In the stories of Daniel, the kings are usually portrayed as rash and/or angry. Darius may simply be rash and imprudent in this situation. Despite this mitigating factor, the decree suggests the claim of absolute power for a king, even if only for 30 days.

In response to the establishment of the law, Daniel goes to his home, opens the window towards Jerusalem and prays (6:10). This is a direct challenge and a clear violation of the new law. The officials spy Daniel's offending act and report him to the king, who tries but fails to deliver him (6:12-16). Here we see the true limits of Darius' "absolute" power. He does not have the power to deliver Daniel from his own law, which could not be changed (6:15). The king is destabilized because the true limits of his power are revealed. Darius's power is not equal to that of a god. He places Daniel in the lions' den, hoping that Daniel's God will have the true power to deliver him (6:18).

Despite the apparent success of the officials' plot, God delivers Daniel from the lions. The sovereign power of God succeeds where the limited power of the king failed. In addition, God's sovereign power foils the plot of the officials. Therefore, this turn of events causes the plot of the officials to unravel. At the moment the king realizes that

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<sup>269</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 195.



Daniel is safe, the king commands that Daniel be taken up out of the den and the men that plotted against Daniel, along with their families, are thrown into the den of lions (6:24). This was not the decree of God, but such a plot twist is not uncommon in biblical stories. For example, this plot twist is similar to that in Esther, where Haman is hung on the gallows he built for Mordecai. Similarly, the enemies of Daniel receive the fate they set up for Daniel. This is an example of the retribution principle, which frequently occurs in biblical stories to emphasize the justice of God.<sup>270</sup>

## 5. Daniel 7

A significant shift in genre occurs from court narrative to apocalypse after Daniel 6. However, the apocalyptic dream has narrative qualities. Since Chapter Four will address the narrative elements in Daniel 7 in detail, this section will only identify those elements that echo the narrative shift in Daniel 2. Three elements in Daniel 7 echo the narrative shift in Daniel 2: 1) kingly hubris, 2) conflict between king and God/God's representatives, and 3) king associated with cultic/religious sphere.

### a. Kingly Hubris

Several studies have noted the parallels between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7.<sup>271</sup> In Daniel 7 the four metals of Daniel 2 are now four beasts. Both the four metals and the four beasts are representative of four kings/kingdoms (Daniel 2:36-43; 7:17). However,

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<sup>270</sup> John H. Walton and Andrew E. Hill, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 448.

<sup>271</sup> See Shea, "Unity of Daniel," in *Symposium on Daniel*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986), 165-255, 165-182; Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 153; Adrien Lenglet, "La structure littéraire de Dan. 2-7" *Biblia* 53 (1972): 169-190; See also Montgomery, *The Book of Daniel*, 176-177.

the fourth king/kingdom is different from the others (7:7) and it has ten horns. The little horn that comes up among the other horns is portrayed as having “a mouth speaking great things (7:8),” words that are “against the Most High (7:25).” If one considers the horns to be representative of rulers or kings, one could see the little horn as a king that speaks “great things” or arrogant words against the Most High. The king also seeks to change holy law and time.

#### b. Conflict Between King and God/Representatives

The little horn in Daniel 7 is depicted in conflict with the Most High and his saints. The dream depicts the judgment of God (7:9-10) coming immediately after the portrayal of the little horn, which spoke “great things (7:8).” The effects of the judgment are depicted in 7:11-12, where the fourth beast and the little horn are destroyed by fire and the other three beasts have their kingdoms removed. The actions of the little horn in the conflict are depicted in greater detail in the interpretive section of the dream (7:15-28). In 7:25 it states the little horn will speak against the Most High, persecute the saints of the Most High, and intend to change times and law. In 7:26 God’s response to the attack of the little horn is described in judicial terms, “the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever.” Thus, the conflict between the little horn and God/God’s representatives will end with the final destruction of the little horn.

#### c. King Associated with Cultic/Religious Sphere

In Daniel 7:25 the violent actions of the little horn are delineated, and they are primarily directed against the Most High and his saints. First, the little horn speaks “words against the Most High.” In addition, the little horn power persecutes “the saints of

the Most High.” They will be “given into his hand” for a period of three- and one-half times. Finally, the little horn power will “intend to change times and law.” Commentators note that this action refers to an attempt to change a religious law related to time.<sup>272</sup> Thus the little horn power is depicted as grasping after cultic/religious power or authority that is reserved only for God. The horn symbolizes a kingly power that also grasps after cultic/religious power.

## 6. Summary

Several plot elements from the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 identified in Part I recur in various forms in Daniel 3-7. The emphasis on the king’s knowing and the emphasis on the embedded narrative of the dream recur in various forms in Daniel 3-7. First, as shown in Table 3.6, the term “know” occurs most frequently in Daniel 4 and 5. However, Daniel 3 also consists of narrative elements that highlight the developmental process of the king’s knowing. Therefore, despite the infrequency of the term “know” in Daniel 3, the narrative is a continuation of the king’s developmental knowledge of God’s sovereignty. In Daniel 4 God sends the king another dream that sharply confronts the king’s “knowing” (the term occurs approximately 8 times). Similarly, in Daniel 5 the king’s (Belshazzar’s) knowing is central to the plot (the term “know” occurs approximately 7 times). However, despite Belshazzar’s knowing, his actions manifest his explicit rebellion against God’s

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<sup>272</sup> Shea argues the Aramaic word for “time” (*zimmin*) refers to repeated “points in time” since the term is in the plural form. He concludes the term is connected to the law of God concerning time, specifically to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 208. Collins asserts the reference is to “the disruption of the cultic calendar.” *Daniel*, 322; Steinmann proposes the term probably refers to the “worship times appointed in the OT, such as the Sabbath, festival days, and morning and evening sacrifices...Hence the little horn seeks to prevent worship practices ordained by God in his Word.” *Daniel*, 363.

sovereignty, and consequently he is judged accordingly. In Daniel 6 the term “know” occurs twice, but it does not refer to the king’s knowledge of God. However, the doxology at the end of the chapter reveals his developed knowledge of God (Daniel 6:28). In contrast to the previous chapters, in Daniel 7 the term “know” is no longer linked to kings. It is linked to Daniel as he seeks to know and understand his dream (7:16). Second, the emphasis on the embedded narrative of the dream also recurs in various forms in Daniel 3-7. As noted in Table 3.6, the following four plot elements recur in various forms in the narratives of Daniel 3-6: 1) a tall figure (Daniel 3, 4, 5 [figuratively]), 2) kingly hubris (Daniel 3, 4, 5), 3) conflict between human kings/kingdoms and God/God’s representative (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6 [law of Medes and Persians vs. law of God]), and 4) king associated with the cultic or religious sphere (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6).

In Daniel 7 the imagery of the narrative shift disappears, yet, several elements of the embedded narrative recur, such as: 1) (kingly) hubris (7:8, 25), 2) conflict between human kings/kingdoms and God/God’s representative (7:9-12), and 3) a king associated with the cultic or religious sphere (7:25).

Table 3.8 Repetition of LS-NS Correspondence in Plot in Daniel 3-7

Plot Elements in Daniel 2	Daniel 3	Daniel 4	Daniel 5	Daniel 6	Daniel 7
“Know”	1 time	8 times	7 times	2 times	1 time
Tall Figure	Golden Image (3:1)	Great Tree (4:10 [ET])	“...gods of gold and silver... bronze, iron” (5:4)	N/A	N/A
King’s Hubris	Seeks absolute power (3:1-7)	Claims power, honor to himself; pride (4:30, 37 [ET])	King defiles vessels from house of God (5:2-4)	N/A	Speaks great things; attacks Most High 7:8, 25
King in Conflict w/ God	Challenges God’s power (3:15)	Kingly pride; God judges king (4:37 [ET])	King praises gods; God judges king (5:4)	Law of God vs. Law of Medes and Persians (6:5)	Speaks against Most High/persecutes God’s saints (7:9-12, 25)
King Linked to Cultic or Religious Sphere	Commands worship of image (3:5)	“...height reached to the heavens” (4:11 [ET])	King commands vessels from God’s temple be taken (5:2)	No petition to man or god for 1 month (6:7)	Seeks to change (God’s) law and time (7:25)

C. Repetition of Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence of Characters in Daniel

3-7

Regarding characters, it is possible to identify character elements noted above in the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 in Daniel 3-7.

Three characters, as well as their characterization, recur in Daniel 3-7, 1) destabilized kings, 2) God as sovereign through deliverance and judgment, and 3) God’s faithful representatives under death decree or as wise man.

## 1. Daniel 3

### a. Destabilized king

The king is portrayed as a powerful monarch that becomes destabilized in his conflict with God.<sup>273</sup> The power and glory of the king (which is an extension of his kingdom) is related to the golden image. Whenever the golden image is mentioned, it is always linked to its creator, King Nebuchadnezzar (3: vv. 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 18). He seeks to have total submission before the image, and thus indirectly before him. Thus, he summons a large number of officials (3:2, 3), which is a representation of the king's total control ("...this list demonstrates the all-inclusive nature of Nebuchadnezzar's summoning.")<sup>274</sup> The repetition of this list also demonstrates the king's absolute power; all who are called come to the king without exception. His control spans even to the music (3:4, 7, 10, 15). Scholars suggest the excessive repetition of these lists also evinces a satirical portrayal of the king's attempt at absolute power.<sup>275</sup>

The three Jews and their God destabilize the king's attempt at absolute power and oppose his arrogant challenge. The three Jews' resolute words throw the king into a rage (3:19), so much so that his rashness leads to the death of his own military men (3:22). Even more, God's divine deliverance completely undermines the king's power. The king

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<sup>273</sup> Newsom views the first four chapters of Daniel as a kind of character study of King Nebuchadnezzar. She sees the stories as relating the development of the king as a character that learns to accept and respect God's absolute reign. Regarding Daniel 3 she notes, "In the MT the author shifts the focus from the Jewish characters to Nebuchadnezzar. He is the only individual character; all others are collective characters...He is also the only character to undergo change and to display a variety of emotions." *Daniel*, 100-101.

<sup>274</sup> Valeta, *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 80.

<sup>275</sup> Valeta, *Lions, Ovens and Visions*, 78-87; According to Good, in "Apocalyptic as Comedy," 51-52, "Nebuchadnezzar assumes the role of Wicked King much more directly than in ch. 2, and he is assisted by a gang of Chaldean toadies."

becomes astonished when he sees the fourth man with “the appearance of the fourth...like a son of the gods (v. 25).”<sup>276</sup> The miraculous deliverance extends to the clothes of the three men (v. 27). In response to this miracle, the king praises the God of the three Jews and commends the three for their faithfulness. The king even makes a decree protecting their God from verbal slander (v. 29). The king’s demeanor quickly changes throughout the story – he is depicted as enraged (3:13), astonished (3:24), and finally as one who praises God for his miraculous act (3:28).

#### b. God as Deliverer

God’s sovereignty is depicted through his act of deliverance, saving the three Jews from the fiery furnace. The act is viewed primarily through the words of the king. First, the king sees a divine presence walking in the furnace with the three Jews who is “like a son of the gods (v. 23).” (This may be akin to a theophany, which is always depicted as a destabilizing event for the human participant.) After the king calls them out of the furnace, the narrator describes how the clothing of the three was intact and without the smell of smoke. The king’s praise emphasizes God’s act of deliverance, “...for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way (v. 29).”

#### c. The Three Jews

The three Jews experience the king’s death decree. This is due to their covenant loyalty to Yahweh. This is depicted through the words of the Chaldeans, the words, and

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<sup>276</sup> Newsom suggests that here the story is narrated through the king’s point of view. She concludes, “Thus, in contrast to all three of the genres the story invokes, the Gentile king rather than the Jewish courtiers or confessors becomes the protagonist. This role for Nebuchadnezzar is underscored by the placement of Dan 3 amid a series of stories that trace the gradual and at times painful education of the king.” *Daniel*, 101.

actions of the three Jews, and even the words of the king. First the Chaldeans alert the king regarding the three men's refusal to worship the image (3:8-12). Next, the king asks the three if this is so, threatens them, and challenges the power of their God (3:13-15). They respond to the king with resolute words and explicitly make it known that even if they are not delivered, they will still not follow the king's command (3:16-18).<sup>277</sup> Such a response denotes absolute faithfulness to God despite the threat of death. The king admits to the greatness of their witness in 3:28 where he states they "trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God." (This may be an allusion to the first of the Ten Commandments.)

#### d. Secondary Characters

The Chaldeans are depicted as secondary characters that are enemies of the three Jews. They function as enemies that seek to destroy the three Jews and as functional characters that bring the three to the attention of the king. In a less important role, the mighty men of the king's army function as instruments of the king that throw the three Jews into the furnace. Their death serves to depict the king's rash command.

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<sup>277</sup> Fewell sees the scene of the three men before the king as parallel to the scene of the Chaldeans before the king. In this parallel she sees a contrast between the two groups of men. She concludes, "Comparison, however, invites contrast. The Chaldeans stand before the king, portraying loyalty to his highness. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stand before the king confessing loyalty to a higher authority. The Chaldeans adopt the king's religious practices in order to advance themselves personally and politically. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to adopt the king's religious practices even though it means sacrificing not just political station, but life itself. The Chaldeans appear to have nothing to lose...and everything to gain. The Jews appear to have everything to lose and nothing to gain." *Circle of Sovereignty*, 76.



## 2. Daniel 4

### a. Destabilized King

In Daniel 4 King Nebuchadnezzar is portrayed as an arrogant monarch who is subdued and transformed by God's absolute sovereign power. Through this process he also becomes a witness to God's sovereign power.<sup>278</sup> This portrayal occurs through the use of a dream, its interpretation, and the realization of the dream. Moreover, the depiction occurs through a complex use of first person (4:1-18, 34-37) and third person narration (4:19-33).

The beginning of the first-person narration signals a change in the king's demeanor (4:1-3), which is explained by the subsequent story. Next, the king narrates his search for the interpretation (4:4-9) of his dream. His relation of the dream is a form of dramatic irony. Although the king does not understand the dream, the reader may perceive its ominous content. The dream depicts the king as a tall tree. As noted above, such a symbol in the stories of Daniel points to the arrogance or pride of a monarch. In addition, the dream depicts the judgment or cutting down of the tree in response to heaven's decree. This depiction prefigures the king's fall.

Daniel's interpretation (4:19-27), which includes a shift to third person narration, further indicates the king's imminent fall. His interpretation points to the king as the tree and as the one who will live as a beast for seven years, until he knows that the Most High reigns. For a third time the king is depicted as arrogant in the realization of the dream

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<sup>278</sup> Newsom sees Daniel 4 as playing "a climactic role in the sequence of stories in Dan 1-6." It depicts the final transformation of King Nebuchadnezzar from a king that does not know God as sovereign to a king who knows God as the "King of heaven." Newsom suggests the king finally realizes that, "his extraordinary greatness is but a gift from the Most High God." *Daniel*, 127.

(4:28-33). The three repetitions of the content of the dream may indicate the importance of the message.

In the depiction of his fall, the king first ascribes the greatness of Babylon to his power and majesty (4:30). This statement causes an immediate reaction from heaven, which pronounces the decree related in the dream and its interpretation (4:31-32). The king's statement is a disavowal of the heavenly message the king was "to know" in Daniel 2. He has not come to know from the experience in Daniel 2 or in Daniel 3, thus God must completely destabilize the king until he "knows" and "understands" the sovereignty of God. The king's destabilization is pronounced as he is changed from a glorious monarch to a wild beast. This transformation reveals heaven's view of a monarch that does not "know" or acknowledge the sovereignty of God.

In 4:34 the king's first person narration returns and so does his mental faculties. At this point, he is depicted as a king who acknowledges God's sovereignty and power. He praises God (4:34-36), receives greater royal glory, and finally "knows" God as the "king of heaven" who humbles pride (v. 37).<sup>279</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar then becomes a king who "knows" the sovereignty of God.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Lucas asserts that pride is a recurring theme in the book of Daniel. He concludes, "Pride, especially the hubris of rulers who think they can 'play god', is a theme that runs through the book of Daniel. The allusions in this story to the story of the Garden of Eden remind us of the fundamental nature of the sin of pride: it can cut at the root of what it means to be truly human, to live in a proper creature-Creator relationship with God." *Daniel*, 116. For another description of the king's sin see Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 273. See also Collins who similarly notes that, "In the history of interpretation, the chapter has been read mainly as a paradigm of hubris and humiliation. In rabbinic exegesis the passage was often linked with Isaiah 14, where a Babylonian king is taunted as Helal ben Shachar, or Lucifer, son of the Dawn." Collins, *Daniel*, 234.

<sup>280</sup> Goldingay, like Newsom, sees the story of Daniel 4 as a story of character development for the king. He sees the first four chapters of Daniel as a depiction of the progressive education of the king. He states, "The account of Nebuchadnezzar in chs. 1-4 thus comes to a happy ending. It is a coming-of-age story about Nebuchadnezzar's personal and spiritual education and his 'final transformation.' He moves

## b. God as Judge

God is depicted as sovereign through his judgment of King Nebuchadnezzar. This portrayal is depicted through the relation, interpretation, and realization of the dream, as well as through the king's words of praise. As in Daniel 2, God's sovereignty is depicted indirectly. In the dream a "watcher, a holy one" proclaims the decree of judgment against the king. Judgment occurs so that people will know that "the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will (4:17)." This statement depicts God as sovereign over human dominions. This portrayal is repeated in Daniel's interpretation of the dream (4:24-25) and the realization of the dream (4:32). Three times in the chapter God is depicted as the "Most High" who reigns on earth. Thus, God's judgment is linked to his absolute reign or sovereignty. He can judge human kings since he is absolute king.

Finally, the king's words also depict God's absolute sovereignty through judgment. For example, in 4:2 the chapter opens with the king praising God's power as mighty and his kingdom and dominion as everlasting. The chapter closes in the same manner, with the king praising God's eternal dominion and the absoluteness of God's will (4:35). Moreover, in the last verse of the chapter, the king praises God as the "King of heaven" and as one who humbles the proud (4:37). King Nebuchadnezzar finally "knows" God as sovereign, not only over the world, but also over him. He also finally admits to his sin of pride.

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from being the confident victor over Judah to recognizing the smartness of some of the people he transported (ch. 1), from anxiety and heavy-handedness to recognition of Yahweh and his servants (ch. 2), from a demand for the acknowledgement of his stature to an insistence on people's acknowledging Yahweh (ch. 3), and from disdain toward Yahweh's warnings to praise of Yahweh as the God of the heavens (ch. 4)" *Daniel*, rev. ed., 273.

### c. Daniel

In Daniel 4, Daniel is not the main character, but he again testifies to God's sovereignty and his wisdom through a revealed dream, as in Daniel 2. Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream portrays him as the best wise man since the Babylonian wise men could not interpret the king's dream.

### d. Secondary Characters

The wise men (magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, astrologers; 4:7) in Daniel 4 are only passive secondary characters. They are only mentioned as foils to Daniel. Their inability to interpret the king's dream (4:7) is depicted in contrast to Daniel's ability to unravel mysteries (4:8).

## 3. Daniel 5

### a. Destabilized King

In Daniel 5 King Belshazzar is portrayed as a king in direct conflict with God.<sup>281</sup> At first, he is depicted as arrogant through his act of defilement, which is depicted early in the chapter. In 5:2-4 he is depicted as openly offending the God of heaven when he uses the vessels from the house of God to drink wine and praise the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. The egregious nature of the act is noted by the insertion of

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<sup>281</sup> Longman suggests King Belshazzar is the main character in the chapter. He also notes the abrupt change from King Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar. He concludes, "The main character of Daniel 5 is Belshazzar, a king whom we have not yet met and whose presence in the narrative raises interesting and difficult historical questions. The transition from Daniel 4 to 5 is an abrupt one, and Belshazzar is thrust on the stage with no indication of the passage of time or the death of Nebuchadnezzar." Tremper Longman, III *Daniel NIVAC* (Grand Rapids, MI: 1999), 134. The abrupt change from Daniel 4 to 5 may suggest a comparison and contrast between the two monarchs, which occurs in Daniel's speech to King Belshazzar. Longman notes this comparison when he states that Daniel, "uses Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar's predecessor and by far superior, to redress the upstart, who is not only probably young and really the second in command to his father Nabonidas, but is also on the brink of disaster (141)."

the phrase “house of God” in between the repeated phrase, “temple in Jerusalem (5:2, 3).”

Immediately after this scene, the king’s abject terror at the divine appearance of the detached hand and the enigmatic message depicts him as an undermined and destabilized king. From this point on in the story, the king’s power is consistently undermined. His destabilization again occurs when the wise men cannot interpret the writing on the wall (5:8-9). The king becomes “greatly alarmed.”

Daniel’s speech prior to his interpretation of the message also destabilizes the king in that it is an indictment of the king’s behavior (5:17-23). In the manner of HB/OT prophets, Daniel condemns Belshazzar for not learning from Nebuchadnezzar’s experience.<sup>282</sup> Although Belshazzar knew the story in Daniel 4, he placed himself above the God of heaven. Here we have a king that “knows” God’s sovereignty and blatantly refuses to submit to it. There can be no more allowance for one who knows but does not submit. There can only be a complete removal of the king and his kingdom – and this is what occurs to Belshazzar.

After Daniel’s speech he interprets the writing, which relates God’s judgment against Belshazzar. It states that his kingdom is taken and given to the Medes and Persians, and he has been judged and found guilty. The last depiction of the king relates

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<sup>282</sup> Fewell sees connections between Daniel 3 and 5 that suggest a comparison between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar in the corresponding chapters. She states, “Both are kings, both ‘make’ grand things. Both invite a multitude of subjects to admire and/or participate in these things. The second sentence of the story gives us information that formally links the two kings. ‘When he tasted the wine, Belshazzar commanded that the vessels of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem be brought...’ Consequently, we learn that the two kings are not simply being paired, they fall into a chronological pattern: One comes after the other. One knows of the other and imitates. A son models his father.” *Circle of Sovereignty*, 115. In addition, the connection between the two kings may also be found in the contrast between Daniel 4 and 5, which can be noted in Daniel’s speech.

his death, “That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean was killed (5:30).” This final depiction represents the complete and final destabilization of the king through his death and through the rise of a new king (Darius; 5:31).

#### b. God as Judge

God is portrayed as sovereign judge through three incidents: 1) the detached handwriting on the wall, 2) Daniel’s prophetic speech, and 3) the mysterious message itself. Through these narrative elements, God’s judgment of Belshazzar is revealed and thus God is portrayed as supreme judge over human kings/kingdoms. First, the frightening scene in which a detached hand writes a message of judgment on the wall of the palace does not explicitly state that God is sovereign (5:5), but the location of the incident in the story implies the divine origin of the hand. Moreover, the detached hand itself suggests a more than human personality behind it.

Second, Daniel’s speech to the king explicitly depicts God as sovereign over King Nebuchadnezzar, specifically as divine judge (5:17-22), as well as sovereign over Belshazzar. Furthermore, the phrase, “the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways (5:23)” also portrays God as sovereign over Belshazzar (and all living beings). Daniel’s speech also depicts God as sovereign when Daniel uses terms such as “Most High (5:21)” and “Lord of heaven (5:23).” Finally, the message of the writing portrays God as sovereign judge over King Belshazzar and as one who determines when kings and kingdoms rise and fall (5:24-29). The death of Belshazzar also adds to the depiction of God as sovereign judge (5:30) who executes final judgment on human kings.

### c. Daniel

Daniel is portrayed as an ideal wise man and God's representative or prophet of judgment. The words of the queen and king, as well as Daniel's own words, are used to portray him. The queen describes Daniel effusively as one who possessed "the spirit of the holy gods (5:11)" and "light and understanding" like that of the gods. She also states that "...an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel (5:12)." The king's words also depict Daniel as one who can reveal mysteries (5:14-16), but his words are not as effusive as the queen's. Finally, Daniel's speech to the king and his interpretation of the message is similar to the prophecies of indictment by HB/OT prophets. Thus, Daniel is depicted as a wise man who presents God's message of judgment against the king.

### d. Secondary Characters

Again, as in Daniel 4, the wise men are passive characters who function as foils for Daniel. Their failure to interpret the writing (5:8) prepares the way for the introduction of Daniel through the words of the queen.

## **4. Daniel 6**

### a. Destabilized King

King Darius portrayal as a destabilized king focuses on his inability to resist the Persian officials and his inability to save Daniel. The king's decision to sign the injunction presented to him by the officials indicates that he may be either weak or unwise. The text does not state the reason behind the king's decision to sign the

injunction, but his willingness to sign the decree into law without due consideration implies he is either rash or imprudent (6:9).

Once the king realized that the decree threatened Daniel's life, he sought to rectify the problem immediately (6:14), but he could not. Consequently, one may note the limitations of the king's power. He is not able to overturn his own decree and save Daniel. His actions during the night, his refusal to eat, to be entertained, or to sleep also depicts his destabilization. Furthermore, the king's early morning plea to Daniel may also portray his destabilization since he must rely on the power of God rather than his own power to save Daniel.

#### b. God as Deliverer

God's sovereignty is depicted through his act of deliverance, which is described through the words of Daniel, and the decree of the king. In 6:21-22 Daniel describes God's miraculous act of deliverance. He states that, "God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths (6:22)."<sup>283</sup> The miracle demonstrates God's sovereignty over human laws and judgments, as well as over the animal kingdom. In response to this act of deliverance, the king makes a decree (6:25-27) that praises God and his kingdom. Thus, the chapter ends with God's sovereignty depicted through the words of a foreign king.

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<sup>283</sup> Seow notes that in the king's question to Daniel he addresses God as "the living God." He asserts, "In the Bible, that divine designation is frequently used for the God of Israel as the true God...or as the God who manifests power in the face of threats posed by foreign nations against Israel...Now, put in the mouth of a foreign king regarding the possibility of divine deliverance for a Jewish exile, the designation is tantamount to a confession, however tentative that may be." *Daniel*, 93. Thus the king also testifies to God's sovereignty even prior to his decree at the end of the chapter. Previously, when Daniel was first put into the lions' den, the king called God "your God, whom you serve continually." Therefore, it seems that a change may have taken place regarding the king's view of God or it may point to the king's hope for deliverance.



### c. Daniel

Daniel is depicted as a trustworthy administrator and God's faithful servant, which is similar to the depiction of the three Jews in Daniel 3. This is portrayed through the intentions and words of the king, the words and actions of the plotting officials, and through Daniel's actions and words. King Darius's relationship with Daniel indicates Daniel's trustworthiness and skill as an administrator. In Daniel 6:3 it states that King Darius intended to place Daniel over the entire kingdom because Daniel had "an excellent spirit." In addition, the king tried tirelessly to free Daniel from the unjust fate maliciously designed by the officials. Thus, the king's intention, actions, and words point to Daniel's skill and trustworthiness as an administrator.

Moreover, the actions and words of Daniel's enemies also indicate that he is a trustworthy official and a faithful Jew. In Daniel 6:4, 5 the officials' words reveal Daniel's faithfulness in his work and in his religion. Finally, Daniel's actions and words reveal his ideal character. In 6:10 Daniel prays to God despite the threat of death. His courage parallels the courage of the three Jews in Daniel 6. Furthermore, Daniel's respectful words towards the king (6:21-22) also paint Daniel as an ideal statesman.

### d. Secondary Characters

The officials in Daniel 6 are more integral to the story than the Chaldeans in Daniel 3. This may be due to the favorable light in which the king is depicted, therefore, the story needs another antagonist. The officials are depicted as jealous, malicious, and vicious through the narrator's words and the actions and words of the officials. In Daniel 6:4 the narrator notes that the presidents and satraps "sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom." This was in response to Daniel's

success. This implies that the officials were jealous of Daniel and sought to bring about his downfall.

In addition, the words and actions of the officials depict their character. In 6:5 they seek to use Daniel's religious integrity as a pawn in their attempt to destroy him. In 6:6-9 the officials are duplicitous before the king and deceive him into signing their injunction. Furthermore, in 6:11-13 their deception reaches its climax when they spy on Daniel and cleverly inform the king of Daniel's violation of his law. Even when the king tries to extricate Daniel from the death decree the officials seem to pressure the king into executing the judgment against Daniel (6:15). This negative depiction of the officials persuades the reader to see them as the villains in the story. This leads to the perception that their death, although seemingly tragic (with their families), is in some way justified.<sup>284</sup>

## **5. Daniel 7**

Daniel 7 is the beginning of the apocalyptic section of the book, which signals a change in genre from court story to apocalypse. Consequently, the characters that are found in the narratives no longer appear, except for Daniel. In a sense, one may see the symbolism in the apocalyptic dream as a form of characterization. Thus, God is portrayed as a divine king in his court (7:9-11) who judges the "beasts" or kings of the world. Consequently, Daniel 7 offers a climax to the events in Daniel 2, and 4 and 5, in which

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<sup>284</sup> Seow also points to the violent or tragic nature of the punishment that Daniel's enemies receive. He notes, "Commentators, while noting that retribution for false witnesses is to be expected..., are justifiably horrified by the excessive violence in this folkloristic flourish." *Daniel*, 95. He further notes that Calvin suggests the detail of the death of the officials contradicts the possible idea that Daniel was saved because the lions were not hungry. Therefore, the incident that occurred could only be attributed to divine power.

God is divine judge over human kings/kingship. In addition to Daniel, a new character is introduced, the heavenly interpreter. The being is anonymous, and Daniel meets him in his dream (“one of those who stood by”); therefore, it is difficult to determine whether or not Daniel dreamed his interaction with the being. The narrative of the seer will be analyzed in greater detail in Chapter Four of this study.

## **6. Summary**

In Daniel 3-7 it is possible to identify recurring character elements that were noted above in the delineation of the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2. The characters of 1) a destabilized kings, 2) God as judge and deliverer, and 3) Daniel and/or his three friends under a death decree or depicted as a wise man. The king as a destabilized main character becomes a repeated pattern in the subsequent chapters (Nebuchadnezzar [Daniel 3, 4], Belshazzar [Daniel 5], and Darius [Daniel 6]). In addition, God as sovereign over human dominion is depicted through the actions and words of his representatives (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6), through the words of foreign kings (Daniel 3, 4, 6), and through his divine acts of judgment (Daniel 4 and 5) and deliverance (Daniel 3 and 6). As in Daniel 2, Daniel and his three friends become witnesses to the sovereignty of God, whether through religious integrity (Daniel 3 and 6; witness through martyrdom) or through mantic wisdom (Daniel 4 and 5, with embedded prophetic message).

### **D. Summary for Part II**

In Daniel 3-7 it is possible to identify the repetition of certain narrative elements (in plot and character) that were identified in the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 in Part I of this study. Regarding plot, the

emphasis on the king's knowing and on the embedded narrative in the dream is repeated in various ways in Daniel 3-7. First, the emphasis on the king's knowing can be identified in Daniel 3, 4, and 5. In Daniel 4 and 5 kings are judged according to their knowledge of God's sovereignty and how they react to it. Although Daniel 3 does not include the repetition of the term "know," it is still part of the chapters that address Nebuchadnezzar's developmental knowledge of God. In Daniel 6 the term "know" occurs infrequently, but the king's doxology suggests that he has come to know the sovereignty of God through the deliverance of Daniel.

Second, the emphasis on the narrative of divine-human conflict delineated in the embedded narrative of the dream in Daniel 2 also persists in Daniel 3-7 through the depiction of kingly hubris and its conflict with God. In Daniel 3, 4, and 5 the hubris of the kings is referred to through the use of vertiginous elements such as the golden image (Daniel 3), a large tree (Daniel 4), and the repetition of the constituent materials of the image in Daniel 2 (Daniel 5). The divine-human conflict is depicted directly in Daniel 4 and 5 and indirectly in Daniel 3 and 6, through God's representatives. The conflict in Daniel 6 is only indirectly identified since the king is tricked into signing an injunction that conflicts with God's absolute sovereignty. Daniel 7 shifts to a new genre, but the plot elements of 1) the king's hubris, 2) king in conflict with God do occur.

Third, in Daniel 3-7 the hubris of the kings is usually linked to cultic or worship matters. For example, in Daniel 3 the construction and erection of the golden statue, which the king desires to be worshiped, is closely linked to the king. In Daniel 4 the great tree, which represents Nebuchadnezzar, reaches to heaven. In Daniel 5 Belshazzar defiles the utensils from the house of God and uses them to praise gods of metal, stone, and

wood. Although the text does not explicitly state that Darius is arrogant in Daniel 6, he is tricked into authorizing an injunction that places him on the same level as God. Finally, the little horn of Daniel 7 intends to change religious law and time.

Regarding the characters, in Daniel 2 the king becomes a main character whose power is destabilized. The king as a destabilized character becomes a repeated pattern in the subsequent chapters (Nebuchadnezzar [Daniel 3, 4], Belshazzar [Daniel 5], and Darius [Daniel 6]). In addition, God as sovereign over human dominion is depicted through the actions and words of his representatives (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6) and through the words of foreign kings (Daniel 3, 4, 6). As in Daniel 2, Daniel (and his three friends) becomes a witness to the sovereignty of God, whether through his religious integrity (Daniel 3 and 6; witness through martyrdom) or through mantic wisdom (Daniel 4 and 5) with embedded prophetic messages.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

### **Summary**

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2 a narrative shift occurs in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift that occurs (see Table 3.7 below). The plot of Daniel 1 coheres around the conflict between God and the king of Babylon with respect to sovereignty. God demonstrates absolute sovereignty while the king of Babylon grasps after absolute sovereignty. This conflict expands to include Daniel and his three companions, the main characters who strive to maintain their religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation.

In contrast to Daniel 1 and corresponding shift in language, in Daniel 2 the plot transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on Nebuchadnezzar's search

for knowing concerning his menacing dream. All of the incidents and events in the narrative inevitably lead to the king knowing the revelation and interpretation of the dream. The dream builds upon the conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2 and situates and reconfigures it within a wider, universal context. The dream itself functions as an embedded narrative that offers divine commentary on human kingship. The message of the dream is what God wills that the king should know and understand, and it is what he did not know in Daniel 1. According to heaven's view, human kingship is filled with pride. It is also powerful and wealthy, but its power is transitory and derivative. Human kingship is also associated with the cultic/religious sphere, and ultimately doomed to destruction by God's representative.

With respect to the characters, it is also possible to identify a narrative shift that corresponds to the language shift. In Daniel 1 God and Nebuchadnezzar are depicted as behind-the-scenes-powers in conflict. God is depicted as absolute sovereign as he influences and controls the incidents in the narrative through his three acts of giving. The king is depicted as a monarch who grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. However, God's acts of giving and his followers' faithfulness undermine the king's power. Daniel (and his three friends) is a member of the Judean elite taken as captives to Babylon. He is depicted as a pious follower of Yahweh who determines to avoid defilement during the three years of preparation for the king's service.

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2, a notable change in characters and characterization can be identified. In Daniel 2 the characterization of God and the king changes. God is characterized indirectly through various characters rather than primarily

through divine actions. Daniel is the primary character through whom God is portrayed. The king, in contrast to his depiction in Daniel 1, is foregrounded as a character and becomes a destabilized power due to the absence of knowing his menacing dream. His wise men, who were minor characters in Daniel 1, are also foregrounded as they are portrayed as wise men without knowing because they cannot reveal the king's dream. Finally, Daniel is elevated exponentially as a character, more so than in Daniel 1, due to God's gift of wisdom and power.

The results of the analysis in part 2, identification of the repetition of the language shift-narrative in Daniel 3-7, demonstrate a persistence of the narrative shift that accords with the language shift (see Table 3.7). Regarding plot, the emphasis on the king's knowing and on the embedded narrative is repeated in various ways in Daniel 3-7. First, the emphasis on the king's knowing can be identified in Daniel 3, 4, and 5. In Daniel 4 and 5 kings are judged according to their knowledge of God's sovereignty and how they react to it. Although Daniel 3 does not include the repetition of the term "know," it is still part of the chapters that address Nebuchadnezzar's developmental knowledge of God. In Daniel 6 the term "know" occurs infrequently, but the king's doxology suggests that he has come to know the sovereignty of God through the deliverance of Daniel. Daniel 7 shifts to a new genre, but the plot elements of 1) the king's hubris, 2) king in conflict with God, and 3) king associated with the cultic/religious sphere recur.

Regarding the characters, in Daniel 2 the king becomes a main character whose power is destabilized. A destabilized king becomes a repeated pattern in the subsequent chapters (Nebuchadnezzar [Daniel 3, 4], Belshazzar [Daniel 5], and Darius [Daniel 6]). In addition, God as sovereign over human dominion is depicted through the actions and

words of his representatives (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6) and through the words of foreign kings (Daniel 3, 4, 6). As in Daniel 2, Daniel (and his three friends) becomes a witness to the sovereignty of God, whether through his religious integrity (Daniel 3 and 6; witness through martyrdom) or through mantic wisdom (Daniel 4 and 5) with embedded prophetic messages.



Table 3.9 LS-NSC from Daniel 1 to 2 and Repetition of LS-NSC in Daniel 3-7

	Plot	Characters			
		God	King	Daniel	Wise Men
<b>Daniel 1</b>	Conflict between two powers	God as absolute sovereign through 3 acts of giving	King is sovereign	Daniel + 3 friends are faithful wise men	Wise men bested by four Hebrews
<b>Daniel 2</b> <b>Language Shift at 2:4b</b>	Emphasis on knowing and divine-human conflict	God as absolute sovereign through deliverance, judgment, characterization	King is destabilized	Daniel is preeminent wise man; 4 Jews face death decree; delivered	Wise men are destabilized; “unwise”
<b>Daniel 3</b>	King grasps for absolute power (kingly and cultic)	God as Deliverer	King grasps for absolute power	3 friends face death decree due to faith; delivered	Wise men in conflict w/3 Jews
<b>Daniel 4</b>	King learns to know God as absolute sovereign	God as judge	King judged; accepts knowledge of God; reinstated	Daniel reveals God’s judgment; mantic wisdom	Wise men are “unwise”
<b>Daniel 5</b>	King rejects knowledge of God; grasps for absolute sovereignty (kingly/cultic)	God as judge	King rejects knowledge of God; judged and killed	Daniel reveals God’s judgment; mantic wisdom	Wise men are “unwise”
<b>Daniel 6</b>	King (unknowingly) grasps for absolute power (kingly/cultic)	God as deliverer	King accepts knowledge of God	Daniel faces death decree due to faith; delivered	Officials vs. Daniel; fail; punished by king
<b>Daniel 7</b>	4 Kings/kingdoms grasp for power; little horn challenges God’s power	God as judge; Son of man receives dominion	Four kingdoms judged by God	God’s people persecuted; receive kingdom	N/A

## Conclusions

The links between Daniel 2 and Daniel 3-7 suggest that the narrative that occurs at the point of the language shift in Daniel 2 lays the foundation for the subsequent chapters in the Aramaic section. Although Daniel 1 is the introduction to the rest of the book of Daniel, Daniel 2 appears to possess a stronger link to the ensuing chapters in Aramaic. One may conclude from the above analysis that the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 forms the basis for subsequent recurring elements in plot and character in Daniel 3-7. One may also conclude that the dream in Daniel 2 has a narrative function as well as an eschatological function.

It has been noted by commentators that Daniel 2 establishes a repeating structure for the book of Daniel with the revelation of the four-kingdom schema. This structure is repeated in Daniel 7 and throughout the apocalyptic section of the book, in which it is progressively expanded. However, in addition to this function, the dream has a more immediate function according to the language shift-narrative shift correspondence. The narrative emphasis establishes narrative elements in plot and character that recur in Daniel 3-7. Thus Daniel 2 is foundational to both the narrative and apocalyptic sections of the book of Daniel. Consequently, the overall shift in language in Daniel 2 occurs at a strategic juncture in the book of Daniel, at which point a foundational narrative for the Aramaic section appears.

CHAPTER FOUR  
LANGUAGE SHIFT-NARRATIVE SHIFT CORRESPONDENCE  
BETWEEN DANIEL 7 AND 8

Chapter Four is divided into two parts. In Part I, the results of a narrative analysis of the plot and characters in Daniel 7 and 8 are presented and compared. Then the language shift-narrative shift correspondence in plot and character from Daniel 7 to Daniel 8 is identified. Finally, a summary of the results is presented. In Part II, the repetition of the language shift-narrative shift correspondence in plot and character identified in Part I is traced through Daniel 9 and 12. At the end of the chapter, the summary and conclusions of the study are presented.

**Part I: Identifying the Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence Between  
Daniel 7 and 8**

A. Introduction

In Chapter Three of this study, it was proposed that the language shift in Daniel 2 coincides with a narrative shift in plot and character. Furthermore, the narrative that is formed in Daniel 2 at the point of the language shift persists to Daniel 7 through the repetition of plot and character elements from the reconfigured narrative. Thus, one may conclude that there is a language shift-narrative shift correspondence that occurs between Daniel 1 and 2 and persists through Daniel 3-7.

Similar to the occurrence in Daniel 2, at the beginning of Daniel 8 another shift in language occurs, from Aramaic to Hebrew. This language shift is different from the first language shift in Daniel 2:4b, which transitioned from Hebrew to Aramaic in the middle of the verse. The language shift in Daniel 8 occurs immediately, so the entire chapter is

written in Hebrew, which obtains to the end of the book. It is the contention of this study that a language shift-narrative shift correspondence, similar to that found between Daniel 1 and 2, can be identified between Daniel 7 and 8. Moreover, the reconfigured narrative in Daniel 8 lays the foundation for the subsequent chapters (Daniel 9-12), which repeat plot and character elements found in Daniel 8.

The relation between Daniel 7 and 8 mirrors the relation between Daniel 1 and 2. This may occur due to the uniqueness of Daniel 7.<sup>285</sup> In Daniel 7 three significant changes occur, specifically changes in 1) genre (from court story to apocalypse), 2) person (from third person to first person) and, 3) chronology (from Darius to the first year of Belshazzar). These changes create somewhat of a break between Daniel 6 and 7. Thus, a “new beginning” in which Daniel 7 is the introductory chapter to Daniel 8 and the subsequent chapters is created. Therefore, a similar context obtains between Daniel 7 and 8 that obtains between Daniel 1 and 2.

Although Daniel 7 and 8 share several common characteristics,<sup>286</sup> as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 a narrative shift occurs in plot and character that corresponds to the

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<sup>285</sup> For example, see Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, TOTC (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 137 in which she states, “Though chapter 7 opens the second part of the book, it has affinities with what has gone before in two obvious respects. It is still in Aramaic, and from the language point of view continues the narrative of 2:4-6:28. It also has much in common, from the point of view of subject-matter, with chapter 2, so much so that it is impossible to interpret the one without reference to the other...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...”

<sup>286</sup> Lacocque notes, “Everyone agrees that there are numerous, specific parallels between chapter 7 and chapter 8...Yet substantial differences are to be noted. The tone has become more somber, the attacks against the integrity of the people and against God’s honor are graver, and, above all, those attacks are, one after another, crowned with success. The evil one uses clever delusions that deceive many.” *The Book of Daniel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018 ), 189. Collins also notes, “This vision is directly related to the preceding one in ch. 7, to which it apparently refers in v. 1...” *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, FOTL, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 85. Hasel is more specific and states, “The Daniel 8:13-14 passage is an expansion, supplementation, and enlargement of the end-time investigative preadvent

language shift that occurs in Daniel 8. In the narrative of the dream in Daniel 7, the plot is centered around a God-centered kingly cosmic conflict in which four beasts arise to reign on the earth. This conflict is controlled and restricted by God, who will judge those earthly kings, take away their dominion, and ultimately give it to his divine representatives, the one like a son of man and his saints. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, Daniel desires to “know” the dream.<sup>287</sup> He emphasizes his desire to know more about the fourth beast and the little horn; his interest focuses the interpretation on those elements, most notably the latter.

In contrast, in Daniel 8 a narrative shift in plot occurs in which the conflict depicted in Daniel 7 is reconfigured so that the narrative coheres around a horn-centered cultic cosmic conflict that highlights the violent attack of the little horn against God, his sanctuary, and his representatives. Initially, the conflict involves two kings/kingdoms vying for power, but with the rise of the little horn the conflict centers upon its fight for power, primarily in the cultic realm. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 8, in contrast to the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, a narrative shift occurs that emphasizes the angelic

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judgement scene of 7:9-10, 13-14, 21-22, 25-27.” Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End,” in *Symposium on Daniel*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986), 378-461, 460.

<sup>287</sup> The form of the dream and interpretation in Daniel 7 is similar to the form of the dream and its interpretation in Daniel 2. See A. Leo Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society), 1956; Jean-Marie Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Shaul Bar, *A Letter that Has Not Been Read: Dreams in the Hebrew Bible* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2001). However, Daniel 8 is not a dream like those in Daniel 2, 4, and 7. Goldingay notes, “Chapters 8-12 are not dreams...Daniel is awake for the symbolic vision.” John Goldingay, *Daniel* WBC 30. revised edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 409. Despite this distinction Goldingay concludes, “The vision’s broad contours follow those of ch. 7 and earlier visions (409).” Thus, according to the genre of apocalypse, in Daniel 7 and 8 the chapter is delineated into two parts, the narrative of the dream (Daniel 7:2b-14; Daniel 8:2b-14) and the narrative of the seer (7:1-2a, 15-28; Daniel 8:1-2a, 15-27).

epiphany that introduces Gabriel, destabilizes Daniel, and accompanies the interpretation of the vision.

Similarly, concerning the characters, as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 there is a narrative shift in character. In Daniel 7 God is portrayed as a transcendent royal judge at his court. This depiction is achieved through the physical description of the Ancient of Days, of his throne, and of his attendants. Furthermore, the angel interpreter is anonymous, so his presence as a character is minimal. Finally, the seer is portrayed as a destabilized character searching to know his enigmatic dream, which causes him physical and mental anguish. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the description of God is muted and subdued. Moreover, the angelic interpreter becomes a more consequential character. Finally, the seer searches for “understanding,” rather than “knowing,” of the vision and experiences an even more destabilizing occurrence with regards to the vision, namely an angel epiphany.

## B. Analysis of Plot in Daniel 7 and 8

### 1. Daniel 7

Daniel 7 contains two narratives, the narrative of the dream (7:2b-14) and the narrative of the seer (7:1-2a, 15-28). The plot of the narrative of the dream is made up of connecting acts arranged in a cohesive pattern around a God-centered royal conflict. This conflict or tension occurs between God’s absolute sovereignty and humanity’s limited sovereignty. The dream begins with a foreboding setting that is evocative of divine creation and violent conflict. From the tempestuous sea four ferocious and violent creatures arise to reign on the earth. As each beast arises, God’s divine sovereignty works to restrain the inherently violent tendencies of the animals, but divine restraint lessens

with the rise of each new creature until the fourth creature emerges without divine restraint with one of its horns in open rebellion against the Most High.

The climax and turning point in the plot occur with God's kingly cosmic judgment. This event signals the end of the reign of the four creatures and leads to the destruction of the fourth beast and its little horn, the removal of the dominion of the other three beasts, and the installment of the Son of Man as eternal ruler and his saints as inheritors of the kingdom. In the plot of the dream, it is possible to identify a classic plot pattern in which the incidents and events of the plot rise, climax, fall, and conclude (see below).<sup>288</sup> This pattern in the plot can be delineated as follows: A. Introduction – Setting of Creation/Conflict (7:2b); B. Rising Actions: Beasts in Kingly Conflict (7:3-8); C. Climax-Turning Point: Divine Judgment and Kingly Conflict (7:9-10); D. Falling Actions: End of Kingly Conflict (7:11-12); E. Conclusion – Order: Establishment of Divine King and Kingdom (7:13-14).

### **C. Climax-Turning Point (7:9-10)**

#### **B. Rising Actions (7:3-8)**

#### **D. Falling Actions (7:11-12)**

#### **A. Introduction – Creation/Conflict (7:2) E. Conclusion: Order (7:13-14)<sup>289</sup>**

The plot of the narrative of the seer (7:15-28) coheres around Daniel's search to know his dream, specifically to know the meaning of the fourth beast, its 10 horns, and

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<sup>288</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 121.

<sup>289</sup> For a discussion of the structure of Daniel 7 see Helge S. Kvanvig, "Struktur und Geschichte in Dan 7, 1-14," ST 32 (1978): 95-117 and Arthur J. Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7*. AUSDDS v. 6. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1979; 136-137. John Goldingay's structure, (*Daniel*, 535), is based on the work of the two previous authors.

the little horn. An additional dreamscape appears that focuses only on these three elements, with special attention given to the actions of the little horn. An anonymous heavenly interpreter responds to Daniel's request for knowing with two interpretations that progressively address Daniel's request. The plot of the narrative of the seer can be delineated as follows: 1. Daniel's desire to know (7:15-18); 2. Daniel's desire to know more (7:19-27). The chapter concludes with Daniel's reaction to the dream, which destabilizes him and causes him emotional and physical distress. The chapter can be delineated into the following sections: a) Introduction (7:1-2a), b) Narrative of the Dream (7:2b-14), c) Narrative of the Seer (7:15-27), d) Conclusion (7:28).<sup>290</sup>

a. Introduction (7:1-2a)

The setting for the chapter is presented in the opening verses. In this section, the chronological or historical time of the dream, the place of the dream, and the dreamer are identified. These elements situate the reader in a new context, which is significantly different from the previous six chapters. The conflict plot that proceeded from Daniel 1, was transformed in Daniel 2, and was repeated through Daniel 3-7 will now be reconfigured again and portrayed in a more violent and dynamic representation. Furthermore, the four-kingdom schema introduced in Daniel 2 will also be reconfigured. Finally, the character of Daniel will become central. His three companions, the Gentile

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<sup>290</sup> For other delineations and structures of Daniel 7 see Arthur Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7* AUSDDS (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1979), 130-137 and 142; Helge S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and of the Son of Man*, (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1988); and Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed. WBC 30 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 348. Goldingay's structure of Daniel 7 builds upon the work of Ferch and Kvanvig.



kings, and the wise men no longer appear. Daniel will be the only human character. Thus, the first few verses attempt to situate the reader into this new context.

As in Daniel 1 and 2, there is a return to the opening royal date formula, “In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon,” (בְּשָׁנַת נְדָה לְבִלְשַׁצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל). From the narrative in the court stories, particularly Daniel 5, the reader will be aware of the negative characteristics of Belshazzar’s kingship (see analysis in Chapter 3).<sup>291</sup> Such a link forebodes conflict and possibly anti-Temple/Yahweh actions. In Daniel 3-6 the royal date formula is omitted, but in Daniel 7 it reappears, possibly as a link to Daniel 2 or as a signal to the reader of another transition (or perhaps both).

The chronology of the royal date formula breaks with the chronology of the previous chapter, Daniel 6, which is located in the time of King Darius and the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. This is a notable shift in narrative time and sequence. Thus, Daniel 7 institutes a new narrative time and sequence. This chronological shift also corresponds to a transition or shift from third to first person. The person shift occurs when Daniel begins to relate his dream in 7:2b. This grammatical form will continue until the end of the book (except for 10:1). These shifts in royal chronology, narrative time and sequence, and person are signals to the reader of a significant transition in the book of Daniel. Such upending changes in the text may prepare the reader for the new context.

The above-mentioned shifts also correspond to a significant shift in genre from court story to apocalypse. The court story genre began in Daniel 1 and obtained up to and

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<sup>291</sup> A royal date formula under his reign may imply a continuation of the conflict portrayed in Daniel 5. Stefanovic states, “Daniel’s dream was ‘occasioned by the kind of negative political rule that was typified by the story of Belshazzar.’” *Wisdom to the Wise*, 254. See also Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *The Book of Daniel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflection, The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 7 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996).

including Daniel 6. Now, the book transitions to the genre that will obtain until the end of the book. Most commentators structure the book according to the shift in genre.<sup>292</sup> Since this shift corresponds to the three other shifts mentioned above, it is possible that altogether these shifts create the appearance of a new beginning that mimics the relation between Daniel 1 (the introductory chapter) and 2. Therefore, the narrative shift noted in Chapter 3 of this study may also occur between Daniel 7 (the “new” introductory chapter) and 8. This conclusion may be supported by the location of the second shift in language. The shift in language does not occur along with the four other shifts. It occurs one chapter later, in Daniel 8. Thus, a narrative shift may occur that corresponds to the language shift from Daniel 7 (the chapter in which the four shifts occur to start a “new” beginning) to Daniel 8.

The setting of the dream and the dreamer are also reported in the introductory section. It is stated that the dream occurred in the night while Daniel was in bed. The phrase “Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed” (7:1) is similar to the phrase used in 2:38 concerning Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, “Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these.” Therefore, Daniel’s dream is reminiscent of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2. Finally, Daniel is noted to be the one who receives the dream. This is a new circumstance since in the previous narratives only kings received dreams (chs. 2 and 4) or divine messages (ch. 5).

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<sup>292</sup> Notably, Lenglet does not suggest a structure that follows the shift in genre. Instead, he argues for a structure that follows the shift in language. However, his study primarily focuses only on Daniel 2-7. See Lenglet, “La Structure Littéraire de Daniel 2-7,” *Biblia* 53 (1972): 169-190.

b. Narrative of the dream: God-centered kingly conflict (7:2b-14)

**1) Setting: creation/conflict (7:2b-3).** The beginning of the conflict can be detected in the first scene of the dream, in which the four winds of heaven stir up the Great Sea (7:2b). The imagery paradoxically points to God's sovereignty in creation and to violent conflict in creation. Regarding God's sovereignty in creation, the imagery of the four winds and the great sea are reminiscent of Gen 1:2, which states, "the Spirit of God was moving upon the waters."<sup>293</sup> The similarity between the terms "Spirit" and "wind" and "waters" and "sea" suggests the scene in Daniel is evocative of Creation. Regarding violent conflict, the four winds of heaven violently churn up the sea, from which four beasts arise.<sup>294</sup> This violent action is indicative of conflict.<sup>295</sup> Furthermore, in the Bible the term "great sea" can refer to the Mediterranean Sea, which is to the west of Babylon and, in a symbolic sense, the term "sea" can refer to negative or violent forces, such as "the power which is hostile to God."<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> In addition to Gen 1:2, the phrase "four winds of heaven" can also be found in Dan 8:8; 11:4; Zec 2:6; 6:5.

<sup>294</sup> *HALOT*, s.v. "𐤏𐤁𐤁." The term is translated as "stirring up" (NSRV) or "churned" (NASB). The term only occurs here in Aramaic.

<sup>295</sup> Montgomery suggests the four winds are the "cardinal winds, 'the south wind, the north wind, the east wind and the west wind' of the Babylonian Seven Tablets of Creation." James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of the Book of Daniel*. ICC. (New York: Charles Scribner, 1927), 285. He also cites Ezekiel 37:9, in which the Lord commands Ezekiel to summon the breath from the "four winds" to vivify the slain. This may suggest the global or universal nature of the events that follow. However, the term "wind" is used in several places in the Bible as a destructive force. For example, it is found in Ezek 27:26 where the east wind wrecks rowers in the sea. Most notably in Jon 1:4 God sends a wind to create a storm on the sea to upend the boat in which Jonah is hiding from God. Yet, the primary meaning of the term "four winds" is the cardinal points of the earth. See Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel Concordia Commentary*. (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2008), 341.

<sup>296</sup> *HALOT*, s.v., "𐤍." The term "sea" can be found in Gen 1:2; 7:11; Job 38:8; Ps 46:2, 3; Psa 93:3, 4; Isa 17:12-14; 51:10; Jer 6:23; 46:7, 8; Amos 7:4.

Many proposals have been suggested with regards to the literary background of the imagery in the introductory scene and in Daniel 7:2b-14 as a whole.<sup>297</sup> Regarding the

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<sup>297</sup> Egger identifies 12 different theories for the literary influence behind the imagery in Daniel 7:2-14. They include 1) Babylonian, 2) Greek, 3) Canaanite, 4) Astrological, 5) Phoenician, 6) Iranian, 7) Egyptian, 8) Treaty curse, 9) Birth omen, 10) Vision of the netherworld, 11) ‘Kosher mentality’, and 12) Hebrew Bible. He notes that the most important extra-biblical backgrounds for the dream in Daniel 7 are Babylonian and Canaanite influences. He continues and states, “Influence from the Old Testament on the first part of the vision of Dan 7 is generally acknowledged by most scholars. However, the use of the biblical passages referred to and – dependent on this – also the degree of their influence on Dan 7, differs among scholars.” *Influences and Traditions Underlying the Vision of Daniel 7:2-14* (Fribourg: University Press, 2000), 28. He also outlines five different ways scholars use HB/OT passages as the background to the dream (28-35). These five are: 1) “as a reference source without tradition-historico evaluation,” 2) “as evidence for the transmission (and reflection) of mythological concepts,” 3) “as reflector of ancient Near Eastern concepts and symbols in general,” 4) “as evidence of a ‘demonstrably biblical pedigree,’” and 5) as evidence of “a general biblical reference (28-35).” See Collins’s detailed discussion on the literary background of Daniel 7 in *Daniel, Hermeneia*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1993), 280-294. In contrast to most scholars, E. Haag concludes that the HB/OT is the literary background to Daniel 7. He suggests “three biblical traditions that were employed by the author of Daniel 7 in the formation of his vision: The Zion-David-tradition, the four-empire-tradition, and the enemy-of-God-tradition.” Egger, *Influences and Traditions*, 35. Ernst Haag, “Der Menschensohn und die Heiligen (des) Hochsten,” in *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings*, ed. A. S. van der Woude (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993), 137-184. For an additional treatment refer to André Caquot, “Sur les quatre bêtes de Daniel vii,” *Sem* 5 (1955): 5-13 and “Les quatre bêtes et le ‘Fils d’homme’ (Daniel 7),” *Sem* 17 (1967): 37-71; Carsten Colpe, “Neue Untersuchungen zum Menschensohn-Problem,” *TRev* 77 (1981): 353-372; Mathias Delcor, “Les sources du chapitre vii de Daniel,” *VT* 18 (1968): 290-312. Delcor situates the literary sources of the beasts within the context of the signs of the zodiac. In addition, refer also to Helge S. Kvanvig, “An Akkadian Vision as Background for Dan 7,” *ST* 35 (1981): 85-89 and, specifically for the Son of Man figure, see “Henoch und der Menschensohn,” *ST* 38 (1984): 101-133. See also Montgomery for another summary of the different proposals, *The Book of Daniel*, 285-286. Paul A. Porter puts forth the suggestion that the symbolic language in these chapters should be explored “from the vantage point of modern metaphor theory.” *Metaphors and Monsters* (Uppsala, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1983), ix. Porter applies the interaction theory, developed by language philosopher Max Black, to Daniel 7 and 8. He suggests a connection between the animal imagery of both chapters and Mesopotamian omen traditions. More recently, “In an attempt to understand what is and is not symbolic about the language of apocalypses,” Bennie Reynolds utilizes dream reports to create a starting definition, and the work of De Saussure, Pierce, and Levi-Strauss to develop more specificity in his analysis. Bennie Reynolds, *Between Symbolism and Realism* (Oakville, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012). He concludes that Pierce’s work on symbols helps one understand the “symbolic structure that underlies that symbol and gives it meaning.” Consequently, Reynolds suggests the following “conventional pairs” that persist in Daniel’s apocalypses: beasts symbolize kingdoms, horns symbolize kings, humans and stars symbolize angels. Furthermore, he argues that these symbols are situated within motifs or associations rooted in the culture of ancient Judaism and the ancient Near East (157-159). Goldingay suggests that, “individual symbols belong to systems and thus call to mind ‘numerous ideas, images, sentiments, values and stereotypes’ which are (selectively) projected on the entity symbolized.” Goldingay, *Daniel* WBC 30. Revised edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 148. He further notes, “As symbol and not merely metaphor, the figures in Dan 7 come from public usage. They are not an individual poet’s new minting. They thus bring with them the resonances and the hallowing of tradition, the more so where they come from the community’s sacred scriptures. It is more so in the case of mythic symbols that make it possible to refer to transcendent realities.” Reynolds states that Collins follows Russell’s methodology with regards to the analysis of the language of apocalypses. Russell

introductory scene, Newsom proposes that both imagery of creation and of mythological conflict occur in the dream. She concludes, “The full meaning of the imagery can only be grasped if one hears both elements – sovereign creation and conflict – in play at the same time.” She also states:

The echo of Gen 1:2 connotes that this process is part of God’s creative control of historical as well as of cosmic processes. But the more distant echo of the chaotic sea and of the combat myth indicates that there is something inherently unruly and dangerous in the Gentile kingdoms, which will ultimately have to be dealt with by force. This imagery articulates the classic apocalyptic response to the mystery of evil. It is understood as never fully autonomous but as playing a designated role in a divine drama, a drama that leads to evil’s ultimate destruction and elimination.<sup>298</sup>

Thus, the imagery in the introductory scene is simultaneously indicative of God’s sovereignty over Creation and over the drama of divine conflict. This element, the depiction of primordial elements (wind and water) as malevolent anthropomorphic entities in conflict with God, is not uncommon in the biblical text.<sup>299</sup> Therefore, the

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uses the “methodological framework of Gunkel’s *Schöpfung und Chaos*” which “continues to provide the standard methodological framework.” Although Reynolds does not conclude that there is a problem with Collins’ work, he does suggest that, “there are multiple layers of representation and that language as plot/motif is categorically different than language as poetics.” *Symbolism and Realism*, 45. Collins argues that the literary background to the imagery of Daniel 7 is located within ancient Canaanite myth. *Daniel*, 280-294. In contrast, Lucas and Goldingay argue that the literary background is located within the ancient myth of Babylon. Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*. ApOTC (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 167-176 and *Daniel*, WBC 30, 150-152; Goldingay also suggests the imagery arises from earlier material in Daniel and other HB/OT books (148-150). Newsom suggests the imagery may be situated within the biblical concept of the Davidic king. Carol A. Newsom with Brennan Breed, *Daniel*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 217-220.

<sup>298</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 221. Newsom also notes, “The contrast terms ‘heaven’ and ‘sea’ certainly seems to point to the background of a cosmic conflict.”

<sup>299</sup> Commentators use the term “myth” to describe this literary element. The term has been defined in many different ways. In this context, it refers to “the religious stories of the ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman world. When we speak of mythological allusions in the apocalyptic literature, we are referring to motifs and patterns that are ultimately derived from these stories.” Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 22. See Brevard S. Childs’ discussion on the distinction between ancient Near Eastern myth and HB/OT myth in *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1960). With reference to Daniel 7, Egger suggests the three most important influences are Babylonian, Canaanite, and astrological

concept of the drama of divine conflict with creatures arising from the sea can already be found in several other biblical texts.<sup>300</sup> The Bible's unique integration of such imagery may be the primary reason behind some of the imagery that appears in Daniel 7.<sup>301</sup>

The introductory scene and the ensuing rising actions of the appearance of the four beasts demonstrate a paradox in God's relation to the created order. On the one hand, God displays sovereign control over the created order because he has brought all things into existence, including the four winds, the sea, and all life. On the other hand, the created order appears to be in conflict with its Creator. The four winds churn up the sea, which is in contrast to the peaceful picture of the wind and the sea in Genesis 1:2. Moreover, the four beasts that arise out of the sea do not maintain or follow God's created order found in Genesis 1. God created three separate spheres in which he placed appropriate living things. For example, birds were created to inhabit the sky, fish were created to inhabit the sea, and beasts were created to live on land. In Daniel 7, three beasts that look like animals that usually are found on land (a lion, a bear, a leopard) arise from the water. Furthermore, two of the three beasts are endowed with wings, elements

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for 7:2-8 and Babylonian, Canaanite, and Iranian for 7:9-14. For 7:2-8, the first two refer to mythic traditions, but the last one points to the zodiac. For 7:9-14, all three refer to mythic influences; See also Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic* and Robert D. Miller, II, *The Dragon, the Mountain, and the Nations: An Old Testament Myth, Its Origins, and Its Afterlives*, (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2017). For Daniel 8, most scholars note that mythological allusions are not as prominent, except for an allusion to the "myth of the Day Star," which Newsom suggests ultimately comes from "Canaanite mythology but drawn most directly from Isa 14." *Daniel*, 258 (cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 343). Researchers conclude that there are more allusions to biblical texts such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. See Newsom, *Daniel*, 256-266 and Goldingay, *Daniel*, 201-206.

<sup>300</sup> Some biblical texts that fit this concept are: Job 7:12; 9:13; 26:12, 13; 41:1; Ps 68:30; 74:13-17; 80:13; 89:9-11; 104:25, 26; Isa 27:1; 51: 9, 11; Eze 29:3; 32:2-8; 38; 39; Zec 2:1-4 (cf. Egger, *Influences and Traditions*, 35-42).

<sup>301</sup> For studies on the HB/OT's use of ancient Near Eastern mythology and other texts see Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament*; John N. Oswalt, *The Bible Among the Myths* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009); John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.); Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008).

that occur primarily on animals that inhabit the sphere of the sky, not land or sea. In addition, the fourth beast is a conglomeration of organic and metallic features, a mixture completely absent from the created order. Finally, all four of the beast-like creatures reign on the earth, a situation that contradicts the Genesis 1 order where human beings reign over all life on earth. Thus, one may conclude that the dream depicts a created order that is overturned or in conflict with God's sovereignty over creation.<sup>302</sup> The introductory scene prepares the reader for the ensuing creation-conflict beasts that arise from the sea to reign on the earth.<sup>303</sup>

## **2) Rising actions: Kingly conflict (God's absolute sovereignty vs. human kingship [7:4-8])**

The next scene (7:4-8) creates rising tension in the plot of the dream narrative and builds upon the foreboding imagery in the introductory scene. From the tempestuous sea arise four beasts that reign upon the earth. In contrast to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, in which the four kings/kingdoms schema was shaped into four precious and powerful metals, Daniel's dream depicts the four-kingdom schema as four ferocious and violent beasts that reign on the earth. In Genesis 1 God ordained humans to reign over the earth and its animal inhabitants. In contrast to God's creation mandate, in Daniel 7 the animals

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<sup>302</sup> Lacocque states, "The nations proceed from chaos (v. 2) and are the works of chaos." André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 172.

<sup>303</sup> Like the four winds, four beasts appear. This use of the number four may also point to the global nature of the reach of the beasts. The term "beast" occurs 20 times in the book of Daniel. The only chapter other than Daniel 7 that uses it almost as frequently is Daniel 4. In that chapter, Nebuchadnezzar experiences a negative reversal, where he is given the mind of a beast. This term may offer some background for the use of the term in Daniel 7. Thus, the figure of the beast may be a negative opposite of that of a man. This idea is supported by Goldingay's structure of Daniel 7, which is derived from the structures of Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7* and Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic*.

reign on the earth. Consequently, the reign of the four beasts depicts an inversion (or perversion) of God's original creation mandate for human kingship upon the earth.

Research on the literary background for the four beasts is linked to the study of the four winds and great sea (see note 9). Similar to her proposal for the introductory scene, Newsom argues that the literary background for the four beasts represents a blending of imagery.<sup>304</sup> Specifically, she proposes the imagery of cosmic struggle is blended with or superimposed onto the Biblical idea of God's divine plan for human history. Such a mixing of imagery mitigates the conflict so that the three beasts are not battling God but simply part of his predicted plan for history.<sup>305</sup> In many ways this is true, but the progressively violent tendencies of the beast-like figures portray a tension between God's absolute sovereignty and human kingship. Amy C. Merrill Willis concludes

...the symbolism of the first vision cycle maintains the oppositional character of the beasts in tension with the divine utilization of them. Within the unfolding drama of imperial threat in vv. 4-6, the deity and the divine council are at work commissioning, commanding, and giving. The text repeatedly uses the verbs *נָתַן* ('to give,' vv. 4, 6) and *קָמַן* ('to stand, establish,' vv. 4, 5) to communicate this activity with respect to the beasts. The repeated use of these two verbs captures well the dynamic of divine prerogative and imperial will that often duel with each other in chs. 1-6. In the tension between divine and royal wills, these verbs signal a battle over who has the power to move history. The vision cycle does not deny the royal power of the first beasts, but it

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<sup>304</sup> According to Newsom, the second scene constitutes a "blended narrative" formed by intermingling the "myth of cosmogonic struggle" with "a schema of political historiography." Daniel, 222. Consequently, the Mesopotamian battle motif is muted and superimposed with God's divine plan for human history. Another view of the literary background of the beasts is proposed by Mathias Delcor. He states, "En tout cas, c'est dans tout ce contexte astrologique où l'on croyait à l'influence des signes zodiacaux et d'autres astérismes, à la fois sur le corps humain, le microcosme, et sur les diverses parties du monde, le macrocosme, qu'il faut situer la description des trois bêtes de Daniel." "Les sources du chapitre vii de Daniel." *VT* 18 (1968) 290-312, 300.

<sup>305</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 221.



does limit it by showing such power to be derived from, and relative to, the divine prerogative.<sup>306</sup>

Consequently, the tension between God's restraining absolute power and the derivative power of human kings is indicative of conflict or at least dynamic tension between the two entities, despite God's absolute power. As noted in the message of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2 (see Chapter 3), the pride and power that is inherent in human kings naturally places them at odds or in direct conflict with God's sovereignty. However, in Daniel 7 the dream emphasizes their violent and dangerous tendencies, rather than their hubris, as that which creates tension. Therefore, the tension between God's absolute reign and the reign of human kings that was displayed in the court stories is now portrayed in a more violent representation with the rise of the four beasts.<sup>307</sup> As each beast rises, God's absolute power works to restrain the violent power of the beast. This is portrayed in the text through passive and imperative verb forms. However, such language decreases with the rise of each new beast until the fourth beast and its little horn rise without any divine restraint.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Amy C. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in The Book of Daniel* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 70.

<sup>307</sup> God sent Nebuchadnezzar two dreams to cause him to know God's sovereignty upon the earth. The second dream was due to the king's inability to accept God's absolute sovereignty. Furthermore, God negatively judged Belshazzar for knowing God's sovereignty and blatantly defying him. Within this context of tension between God and human kings, God's followers (Daniel and his three companions) at times suffered under the threat of death (Daniel 2, 3, and 6). Thus, Gentile kingship at times posed a grave danger to God's people. Such events also occurred in the book of Esther. Due to the plotting of Haman, the Jews were under the threat of death.

<sup>308</sup> Doukhan notes that the rising of the fourth beast is also similar to the rising of the first three since all four rise from the water (personal comment).

a) First beast.

The first beast to rise from the sea looks like a lion and has wings like an eagle.<sup>309</sup>

Immediately, God's absolute sovereignty restrains the beast. First, in 7:4 its wings are plucked (to pluck; מרט), then it is lifted up from the earth (to lift up; נטל), and finally it is made to stand (to stand; קום) like a human. All three of the verbs mentioned are in the passive form. Therefore, the actions are performed by another, stronger power. The transformation from beast to human continues when it is given (to give; יהב) a human mind. The verb for "to give" is in the passive form also.<sup>310</sup> The act of divine giving is reminiscent of God's acts of giving in Daniel 1 (vv. 2, 9, 17) and Daniel 2 (vv. 37, 38).<sup>311</sup> The humanization of the first beast implies a struggle in which the wildness of the beast is at odds with the divine impetus to change it into its polar opposite, a human being.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> In Hebrew, the term for lion occurs approximately 11 times in the Bible and generally refers to a wild animal that roars or tears its prey to pieces (See Jer 50: 17; Ezek 22:25; 2 Samuel 1:23). It is also coupled with a bear, as in 1 Sam 17:34-37. *BDB*, 71d. For further examples see Nahum 2:12; Zeph. 3:3; Jer. 50:17; Ezek. 19:2-6; Prov. 28:15 as well as Haag, *Influences and Traditions*, 38-39. In addition, in the Bible eagles are swift, high-flying, soaring birds that are predators.

<sup>310</sup> The verb appears 8 times (7:4, 6, 11, 12, 14, 22, 25, 27) in chapter 7 and only in the passive form (once as a reflexive/passive verb in v. 25, see below). The use of the passive form and the word "to give" may suggest that God is the subject of these acts of giving, which mirrors God's three acts in Daniel 1. For example, in Daniel 1:2 God gives the enemy of his people (Nebuchadnezzar) power and authority over King Jehoiakim just as he gives authority to the first three beasts. This similarity continues throughout chapter 7.

<sup>311</sup> Many commentators suggest that the imagery related to the first beast points to the story in Daniel 4, especially the plucking of the wings and the giving of a human heart (4:13 [MT]). See Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*. TOTC. England: Intervarsity Press, 1978), 139; Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*. NAC 18. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 197; Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*. ApOTC (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 178; Choon Long Seow, *Daniel*. WBC. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 103.

<sup>312</sup> God's interaction with King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 1-4 evinces God's absolute authority to give him power and authority and also to remove them from him when he refuses to acknowledge God's authority. God completely removes the kingdom from Belshazzar in Daniel 5 and gives it to the Medes and the Persians. God's control over Gentile nations in the book of Daniel is similar to God's control over

b) Second beast.

Immediately following the first beast, another beast arises from the sea. The second beast (7:5) looks like a bear.<sup>313</sup> Unlike the first beast, the second beast already displays violent tendencies as it has three ribs in its mouth between its teeth (7:5). Only two commands are given to the bear: “Arise! Eat much meat,” (to rise; **אָרִיז**, to eat; **אָכַל**). Both terms are in the imperative form. The nature of the commands suggests it is of divine origin, so it appears that God is directing or controlling the violence of the animal. In contrast to the divine actions upon the first beast, the beastly nature of the bear is not transformed. Its beastly tendencies are simply directed toward destruction. God’s divine restraint upon the second beast is apparently less than the divine restraint of the first beast. God’s authority to raise up kings and remove them (Daniel 2:20-23) through the agency of another violent nation may be the goal behind the divine command. Thus, the command to eat may refer to the destruction of the previous kingdom (Babylon). This is not completely evident, but nevertheless divine restraint appears to be lessening.

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Leviathan in Job 41. In response to Job’s complaint against God, God describes how he is able to control and conquer Leviathan the sea beast. The description of the water beast and God’s ability to control it is reminiscent of God’s interactions with Gentile kings, especially as creatures that arise from the water (see Job 41:34).

<sup>313</sup> The term for “bear” occurs approximately 14 times in the Old Testament. *BDB*, 179a. It generally refers to a violent animal that may cause great harm to humans. In the Bible, bears are paired with lions as wild, ferocious predators. They are described as violent, especially when it is a mother deprived of her cubs. See 1 Sam 17:34-37; 2 Ki 2:24; Prov 17:12. and Haag, *Influences and Traditions*, 39-40.

c) Third beast.

The third beast (7:6) arises and looks like a leopard with four wings and four heads.<sup>314</sup> This animal only receives one act of divine giving; it is given dominion. No action or command of divine restraint is given. Yet, God is still the source of authority for the third beastly kingdom. This is the last time that divine giving or restraint will occur in relation to the beasts.

d) Fourth beast.

The description of the fourth beast is separated from that of the first three beasts. It is notably different from them and does not receive any divine command or restraint. The separation between the first three beasts and the fourth is depicted in at least three ways, first by the introductory formulas used for the four beasts, second by the use of the term “different,” and third by the use of active rather than passive verbs. Goldingay argues:

The vision report appropriately opens with a long formula, and the fourth creature is advertised to be of special significance by a particularly long and resumptive formula (v. 7).<sup>315</sup>

Thus, the text itself delineates the fourth beast from the first three through the use of a “particularly long and resumptive formula.” Furthermore, in 7:7 the statement “It was different from all the beasts that were before it” is added to the introduction to the

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<sup>314</sup> The term for “leopard” in Hebrew (נמר) occurs approximately 6 times in the Old Testament. It usually refers to a wild animal that is swift and predatory. See Isa 11:6, 7; Jer 5:6; Hos 13:7, 8. The hybrid appearance of the animals may enhance the ominous and possibly abominable nature of the beasts. Lucas, *Daniel*, 178.

<sup>315</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 349.

fourth beast. This statement also explicitly separates it from the first three beasts. Finally, the use of active verbs also distinguishes the fourth from the first three. The first three beasts are linked to passive verbs and imperative commands that denote the restraint of God upon the beasts. In contrast, the fourth beast is linked only to active verbs.<sup>316</sup> This suggests that the fourth beast reaches a state of complete recalcitrance before God. Seow concurs and states:

These first three creatures are described with passive verbs – four verbs, two verbs, and one verb, respectively. By the time we read about the fourth predator, there is no more passivity; only active verbs are used to describe the beast: ‘devouring,’ ‘breaking in pieces,’ and ‘stamping.’ These pernicious creatures seem to have become increasingly bold in their activity and in asserting their independence from the source of all dominion and power.<sup>317</sup>

Consequently, the fourth beast is a culmination of the progressive recalcitrance of the beast-like kings/kingdoms. Progressively, each beast becomes more recalcitrant before God’s restraining power until there is open resistance.

The description of the fourth beast corresponds to its violent recalcitrance to divine restraining. It is first described using three adjectives, “terrifying and dreadful, and exceedingly strong (v. 7; ESV).” The term for “terrifying” means “to fear” (לִּירֵא) and occurs five times in Daniel.<sup>318</sup> It refers to the description of the great image in Daniel 2

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<sup>316</sup> Newsom states, “What is most important in the description... is the shift from the divine control over the first three beasts, represented through the use of the divine passive and direct command – and the fact that this different beast acts autonomously, signified by active verbs: eating and crushing and trampling.” *Daniel*, 225.

<sup>317</sup> Seow, *Daniel*, 105.

<sup>318</sup> *HALOT*, s.v. “לִּירֵא.” In addition to the fourth beast, the term refers to the great image (2:31), Nebuchadnezzar’s second dream (4:5, ET), people’s fear of Nebuchadnezzar (5:19), and King Darius’ decree to fear Daniel’s God (6:26).

and to the fear of God decreed by King Darius (6:26). The term for “dreadful” (אִימָה) means “terrible” and only occurs here in the Bible. The term for “strong” (רַקִּי) occurs four times in the book of Daniel.<sup>319</sup> Notably, two times it refers to the fourth kingdom of the great image in Daniel 2. The previous beasts were not described with such language of terror, although the ferocity of the animals was pronounced.

Next, the fourth beast is described as having “great iron teeth,” (7:7) which is a metal that represented the fourth kingdom in Daniel 2. Such material for an animal is unnatural. The previous beasts, although the first and third are mixed with wings, were biologically animal in nature. The fourth beast possesses physical characteristics that are unnatural to animals. This may suggest that the fourth beast is more than just a creature-like figure. Furthermore, it is portrayed as devouring, breaking in pieces, and stomping.<sup>320</sup> The last term also refers to the stone’s utter destruction of the great image in Daniel 2:45. This extreme level of violence corresponds to the absence of divine restraint.

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<sup>319</sup> HALOT, s.v. “רַקִּי.” In addition to the fourth beast, it refers to the fourth kingdom of the great image (2:40, 42), and God’s might (4:3, ET). It also occurs in Ezra 4:20 to describe the might of kings.

<sup>320</sup> The term “to devour” (אָכַל) occurs 7 times in the book of Daniel (3:8, 4:33 [ET], 6:24, 7:5, 7, 19, 23). Three times it refers to the fourth beast. Metaphorically, it means “to devastate” (7:23). HALOT, s.v. “אָכַל.” The term “to break in pieces” or “to crush” (רָדַד) means “to crush into small pieces, ground up fine,” and occurs 10 times (2:34, 35, 40, 44, 45; 6:24; 7:7, 19, 23). It almost exclusively refers to the fourth kingdom of Daniel 2 and 7. HALOT, s.v. “רָדַד.” The term “to stomp” (רָפַס) means “to tread down” and only occurs 2 times (7:7, 19). It only refers to the fourth beast in Daniel 7. HALOT, s.v. “רָפַס.”

Finally, it is described as having 10 horns.<sup>321</sup> Horns are frequently used as symbols of power or strength in the HB/OT, and its use here is similarly representative.<sup>322</sup>

e) Little Horn.

The fourth beast's unrestrained power is continued and intensified in the figure of the little horn. The rising action of the fourth beast concludes with its appearance. The text delineates the little horn from the previous figures. Goldingay explains, "The same effect (the delineation of the fourth beast) is achieved for the small horn by the use of a different and stronger verb and a different particle, which is repeated (v. 8)."<sup>323</sup>

Three of the previous horns were plucked up or uprooted before the little horn (7:8). This action is expressed in the passive form.<sup>324</sup> As noted above, the passive form points to a divine action. Therefore, the uprooting of three of the ten horns is a divine action. Such a conclusion suggests the little horn is not only a beast-like power like its

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<sup>321</sup> The word for "horn" usually refers to animal horns or horns on a sacrificial altar. However, it can also have a figurative meaning, such as a symbol of strength, haughtiness, or arrogance. *BDB*, 901d. Regarding the number 10, Goldingay holds that ten suggests "fullness." *Daniel*, 164. Newsom agrees and states that the number 10 can represent totality, like the numbers 4 and 7, and "is often used in apocalyptic schemas for designating successive periods." *Daniel*, 225. In contrast, Doukhan argues, "We must regard the number 10 in Daniel as symbolically alluding to a number beyond which it is impossible to count (cf. Gen. 18). The tenth also represents the smallest part (Isa. 6:13; Lev. 27:30), thus the kingdom could not be any more divided than it already is." Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*. (Maryland: Review & Herald, 2000), 105-106.

<sup>322</sup> See Ezek. 29:21; Zech. 1:18. Newsom also argues that horns were used in the ancient Near East to depict the power of deities. *Daniel*, 225. This conclusion is similar to Egger's regarding the single horn in Daniel 8. Jürg. Egger, *Iconographic Motifs from Palestine/Israel and Daniel 7:2-14*. PhD diss., (Neyruz: University of Stellenbosch, 1999), 296. For an extensive study on the horn motif see Margit L. Suring, *The Horn-Motif in the Hebrew Bible and Related Ancient Near Eastern Literature and Iconography*, AUSDDS v. 4 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1982).

<sup>323</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 349.

<sup>324</sup> The term for "plucked up" or "uprooted" (רָקַע) occurs as a verb, Ithpeel 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular. In Hebrew, the passive form of the word is used in Zeph. 2:4, in which God destroys several nations (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron). The last nation is described as "uprooted."

source beast, the fourth beast, but also a human-like figure (eyes and mouth of a man) that has divine authority or is working under the auspices of God or is a representative of God. This association between kingly power and cultic/religious power was an undercurrent in Daniel 1-6 (see Chapter 3). Now, here in Daniel 7, this association becomes more explicit. Goldingay argues, “the passive again suggests the action of God...who clears the way for the small horn by removing three others.”<sup>325</sup> He further suggests, “its human features point toward the right and responsibility to rule over God’s creation.”<sup>326</sup> Steinmann concurs and states, “The passive verb once again implies divine action. The uprooting is done with God’s permission, and it also demonstrates the power of the little horn.”<sup>327</sup> However, the connection between the little horn of the fourth beast and God suggests a complex linkage that allows for the mixed imagery of beast (horn) and humanity (eyes and mouth). Daniel 8 will explain this complex relation further. Nevertheless, the passive form demonstrates that the power of the little horn is in some way related to God.

Such an association between beast-like kingly power and divine authority may be reminiscent of the mixture between human kingship and cultic/religious power that was an undercurrent in Daniel 1-6. This conclusion may be supported by the depiction of the little horn. It is described using mixed imagery, beast-like (horn) and human imagery (eyes and mouth). As a beast, it is a horn (a source of kingly power) that is attached to the fourth beast, which resists divine restraint. In contrast, as a human, it has eyes and a

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<sup>325</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 360.

<sup>326</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 360.

<sup>327</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 348.



mouth, which links it to the divine realm or to the authority of the divine realm. This is a striking mixture, especially since its parent beast resists all divine restraint. Therefore, two diametrically opposed elements are linked together, the horn and the eyes/mouth. Even more, the association of the horn with human features with the fourth beast is also striking. This depiction is similar to the depiction of the fourth kingdom in Daniel 2. Just as the iron kingdom transitions to a kingdom of two diametrically opposed elements, iron and clay, the fourth beast is succeeded by a little horn that possesses both human (eyes and a mouth) and bestial (horn of an animal) characteristics.

Despite the little horn's physical link to humanity, it lacks an element of humanity that the book of Daniel identifies as necessary to know God, namely a mind/heart (7:4; 4:16, 17 [ET]). Newsom concludes the human qualities of the little horn are not positive, like the first beast. She states,

But whereas the first beast had a human mind, a positive feature, the horn has 'eyes' and 'a mouth speaking arrogantly'... In Israelite wisdom tradition, body parts, including the mouth and the eyes, are used as indicators of character and elements that must be properly directed and controlled.<sup>328</sup>

Therefore, the human elements of the little horn are not depicted in a positive light. Finally, the little horn is portrayed as speaking "great things (7:8)." The content of its words is not revealed, but it will be explained later in the chapter (7:25). The term "great" occurs 20 times in the book of Daniel and can refer to a position of leadership (chief or captain) or a quality of greatness attached to a king, God, sea, feast, or words.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 226; cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 360. See also Isa 2:11; 10:12; 37:23.

<sup>329</sup> *BDB*, 1112a.

This may suggest that the words of the little horn reflect its power, authority, or greatness. As a consequence of the presentation of the little horn, it may be assumed that it represents a fusion of beast-like kingly power and divinely linked cultic/religious power; however, the religious power (or human aspect) of the little horn is not depicted in a positive light. Consequently, it may suggest a kingly power that has a complex relation to God or that is in rebellion from God or that has fallen from grace before God.<sup>330</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, when human kings grasp at absolute power, this act consists of a grasp at both kingly and cultic/religious power.

### **3) Climax-Turning Point: Divine Kingly Judgment (7:9-10)**

The plot of the dream narrative reaches its climax and turning point in the divine kingly judgment scene in 7:9-10. The unrestrained power of the fourth beast combined with the mixture of kingly and cultic/religious features of the little horn depict an extreme grasp after absolute power. This is met with the unrestrained majesty and power of divine kingship in the depiction of the Ancient of Days and his kingly judgment (7:9).<sup>331</sup> God emerges as a divine king whose brightness and fiery presence supersedes the

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<sup>330</sup> The mysterious appearance of the horn, having eyes and a mouth, may point to its conflict with heaven. Goldingay identifies a clear parallel between the imagery of the little horn and that found in Isa. 37:23, which expresses the pride of Sennacherib. “Whom have you mocked and reviled? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes to the heights? Against the Holy One of Israel!” Goldingay, *Daniel*, 164. He further notes that the true character of the human qualities of the horn are revealed in 7:25 (cf. 8:23; 11:36; 1 Macc. 1:24; Rev. 13:5-6). Collins argues, “The little horn here should not be understood in purely human terms. By analogy with chap. 10, we must also reckon with the angelic (or demonic) ‘prince’ of Greece, with whom Michael struggles.” *Daniel*, 320. This would also include the “prince of Persia.” See also Newsom, *Daniel*, 226 whose comments concur with Goldingay’s conclusions.

<sup>331</sup> Although several commentators conclude that the setting of the scene transitions to heaven (see Baldwin, *Daniel*, 141; Lucas, *Daniel*, 181; Seow, *Daniel*, 106; Collins, *Daniel*, 103), Newsom follows Goldingay and argues that the setting is on earth. Newsom, *Daniel*, 228; cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 164. Baldwin argues that the shift from prose to poetry and the shift in characters correspond to a shift in setting from earth to heaven. She states, “The balanced poetry conveys the order and beauty which surround the divine judge as opposed to the chaos of the sea and its beasts.” *Daniel*, 141.

ferociousness of the earthly beast-like kings/kingdoms. Previously, God acted implicitly as he tried to restrain the violent natures of the beast-like kings/kingdoms. In 7:9-10 God's power and authority over all kings is explicitly demonstrated through his kingly judgment. He alone is absolute king.

Goldingay sees this scene as akin to an ancient Near Eastern royal court. The imagery of thrones, attendants, and books are evocative of such a context.<sup>332</sup> The first image, that of thrones, emphasizes the Ancient of Days as king. The plurality of the term "thrones" may suggest emphasis or the exalted nature of God's kingship.<sup>333</sup> The description of his brightness emphasizes his link to the ineffable and transcendent. His white hair may coincide with his title or name, "Ancient of Days," which may indicate his eternal existence.<sup>334</sup>

The text returns to the throne as a central image, but now it is engulfed in flames, so much so that they spill over and stream out like a river before it. Here again the divine kingship of God is expressed in transcendent terms.<sup>335</sup> Fire is a common element in HB/OT (Exo. 3:2; 19:18). Similar to previous theophanies, the fire depicts God's

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<sup>332</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 166. For example, he states regarding the presence of books, "This feature of court practice was naturally included when the royal court image was used to picture the workings of heaven." Regarding books, he further states "God's books sometimes record God's purposes regarding the final issues of history or regarding particular segments of history..."

<sup>333</sup> See Lucas for a concise summary of the different explanations for the plurality of the term "throne." *Daniel*, 180-181.

<sup>334</sup> Lucas suggests this conclusion derives from Canaanite imagery and a culture that revered its elders. *Daniel*, 182.

<sup>335</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 230. The Hebrew word for fire (אֵשׁ) is most prominent in the book of Ezekiel (it occurs approximately 47 times), specifically in connection with the appearance of God in chapters 1, 8, 10. Chapters 8-10 emphasize the theme of God's judgment against Judah. Thus, the fiery appearance of God may be linked to his act of judging. See Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 272-326. He sees 10:1-22 as the burning of Jerusalem, which is part of God's response to its abominations in the temple.

awesome glory, majesty, and destructive splendor. Previously, the beasts were depicted as ferocious animals, but here God's majesty is more dangerous.

Finally, the Ancient of Days is portrayed as surrounded by a multitude of attendants, "a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him (7:10)." Such an extravagant number of attendants corresponds to the transcendence of God's kingly court in comparison to human royal courts. The description of the divine royal judgment concludes with a description of the beginning of God's judgment. Books are at the center of the depiction of the judgment scene. Lucas suggests, "Most relevant to Dan 7:10 may be the records of the deeds that people have done (Neh 5:19; 13:14; Is 65:6)."<sup>336</sup> All of these images create a transcendent image of God, who alone is worthy to administer judgment. None of the beast-like kings/kingdoms are worthy or powerful enough to administer universal judgment. Moreover, the extravagant imagery of the Ancient of Days and his fiery throne elevate this court to an otherworldly sphere.<sup>337</sup> This depiction of God as absolute royal judge is understood to be the climax and turning point of the dream.<sup>338</sup>

#### **4) Falling Actions: End of Kingly Conflict (7:11-12)**

After the climax/turning point of God's royal judgment, the plot quickly falls toward resolution in 7:11-12. The four beasts that appeared in 7:4-8 now re-appear, but without their beastly power. Daniel's attention returns to the sound of the great words of the little horn (7:11). As he turns his attention to it, he sees the beast (the fourth), but it is

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<sup>336</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 183.

<sup>337</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 230.

<sup>338</sup> Ferch, *The Son of Man...*, 136-137

dead. Its body is destroyed and “given over to be burned with fire (7:11).” Here again is a verb in the passive form, which indicates divine action. As in 7:8, the fourth beast is delineated from the other three.<sup>339</sup> The other three beasts have their dominion removed, but their lives are “prolonged for a season and a time (7:12).”<sup>340</sup>

##### **5) Resolution of conflict: Order restored, installation of divine king (7:13-14)**

The drama of divine conflict finally reaches a resolution as the original created order established in Genesis 1 is restored through the installation of a human-like king on earth.<sup>341</sup> The vision ends with a return to divine imagery that portrays a heavenly investiture. This is expressed through the repetition of terms related to kingship. For example, the term “dominion” (מְלִכָּה) occurs in vv. 6, 12, 14, (as well as vv. 26 and 27)

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<sup>339</sup> Newsom states, “. . .the intent appears to be to intensify the claim that the fourth kingdom is of a distinctly different and more horrible nature, a point that is made both in the initial description (v. 7) and in the specific focus on it in the interpretation (vv. 19, 23).” *Daniel*, 233. The fourth beast experiences a common biblical punishment related to divine judgment, execution by fire. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 166.

<sup>340</sup> This verse presents a conundrum for commentators. Lucas explains, “Those looking for a detailed historical interpretation suggest that it refers to the fact that Babylon, Media and Persia kept their identity in some measure even after the loss of their empires” *Daniel*, 183. However, he prefers a theological explanation, namely that the fourth beast is punished according to the magnitude of its transgressions, and that Israel will rule over its former oppressors, the first three beasts. Steinmann argues this phrase is literally “until a time and a time.” He suggests it could be translated as “for a period of time.” In this context, he proposes that it refers to a time or duration in which the three beasts await their final judgment. Steinmann, *Daniel*, 339, 354-355.

<sup>341</sup> Seow articulates the nature and extent of the conflict when he states, “. . .the struggle of the faithful in the face of seemingly overwhelming evil is articulated in terms of the cosmic battle for good. The holy ones on earth do not fight alone, for they mirror a reality that transcends the earthly. Nothing less than *world order* is at stake, and ‘the holy ones of the Most High’ – both the celestial and the terrestrial – are together the champions fighting on the side of all that is good.” *Daniel*, 111, italics supplied. Collins similarly asserts, “The parallelism between the Jewish people and its heavenly counterpart extends to adversity. When things go badly on earth, it is supposedly because they are going badly in the heavenly battle too. When the Ancient of Days arrives in judgment, fortunes are reversed on both levels.” *Daniel*, 320.

and refers to sovereignty.<sup>342</sup> It is a quality that God controls since he gives it to others (vv. 6, 14, 27). However, God gives eternal dominion to the Son of Man (vv. 14). Here again, the term “give” is linked to God’s divine act, as in Daniel 1 and 2. This time God does not give kingship to a foreign king. Instead, he gives kingship to his human-like divinely appointed representative. Notably, the term “dominion” occurs three times in v. 14 in relation to the dominion given to the Son of Man.

The figure of the “one like a son of man” (7:13) is portrayed in contrast to the four beast-like kings/kingdoms.<sup>343</sup> For example, the four beasts arise from the tempestuous sea, while the origin of the Son of Man is omitted. The text states that he comes “with the clouds of heaven (7:13).” Ferch concludes, “The theophanic cloud symbolism certainly appears to be an exclusively divine attribute.”<sup>344</sup> Next, the Son of Man resembles humanity, which is in contrast with the beastly figures of the four earthly kings/kingdoms. In addition, the beasts only receive dominion for a transitory period (7:12). In contrast, the Son of Man receives an everlasting dominion (“which shall not pass away and...shall not be destroyed”) in which, “...all peoples, nations, and languages

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<sup>342</sup> *BDB*, 1115d; It occurs in chapters 3 and 4, but it occurs most frequently in Daniel 7. Terminology such as king and kingdoms occur throughout the book of Daniel and are prominent in the Aramaic section. The term “kingdom” (Aramaic) occurs 53 times in the book of Daniel. The term “king(s)” (Aramaic) appears approximately 135 times in the book. In Daniel 7 the term “kingdom” appears in vv. 14, 18, 22, 23, 24, and 27. It is mostly used in relation to the Son of Man (v. 14, [27]), the saints (18, 22, 27), and the beasts (v. 23, 24). The term king(s) occurs in vv. 1, 17, 24 in relation to Belshazzar and the four beasts. Interestingly, it is never used in this chapter in relation to God.

<sup>343</sup> See Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7* for a detailed analysis of the term Son of Man. Ferch notes, “The sole occurrence of this locution in the Bible is in Dan 7:13 (154).” He further states, “...the locution...may be rendered by ‘one like a man,’ ‘one like a human being,’ ‘one who resembles a human being,’ or ‘one in human likeness.’ In Dan 7 this locution does not appear to be a title or a name (162).”

<sup>344</sup> Ferch, *Son of Man*, 171.

should serve him (7:14).” According to Ferch, the Son of Man is “a transcendent figure,” unlike the transitory four beasts.<sup>345</sup>

The removal of the four beasts leaves a power vacuum. Therefore, the human-like being comes with the clouds of heaven and is “given dominion and glory and a kingdom” (v. 13). Such a description of dominion parallels the dominion of God (2:44-45; 3:33 [4:3]; 6:27 [26]). Thus, the human-like figure receives God’s dominion. This event is in contrast to the rise of the four beasts that reign briefly on the earth and whose dominion was removed by divine judgment. Consequently, the judgment sets the stage for the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth, which was also the final event in the dream in Daniel 2.

The dream ends as it began, with creation imagery. Just as humans were given authority to reign over the earth (Gen 1:2), so the one that resembles humanity is given authority to reign, but his reign consists of greater authority, a greater domain, and eternal longevity. This ending is a resolution to the problem initiated at the beginning of the chapter, specifically the conflict over who will reign on the earth.

c. Narrative of the Seer: Daniel seeks to know (7:15-27)

### **1) The purpose of Daniel’s dream.**

In 7:15-27 the seer desires to know the meaning of his dream. Unlike the dream in Daniel 2, there is no one to introduce the dream so that its purpose may be made known.

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<sup>345</sup> Ferch, *Son of Man*, 174. He further explains, “...the manlike being is depicted with divine attributes, while at the same time accepting a subordinate role in the presence of the Ancient of Days...In the sense that the Danielic figure appears on the scene of Dan 7 when history, as symbolized by the preceding visionary elements, has run most of its course, the SM may be described [as] an eschatological being...In short, the SM...is an individual, transcendent, eschatological being which exercises messianic royal powers (176).”

The reason for the occurrence of Daniel's dream is not explicitly stated. Although the date and setting are given at the beginning of the chapter, such information does not explicitly state the reason for Daniel's dream. He did not request the dream and the dream is not situated within a narrative context like Nebuchadnezzar's dream. To address this matter, it may be helpful to note how Daniel 7 depicts the four-kingdom schema to determine its unique message. The fact that Daniel 7 includes the same four-kingdom schema found in Daniel 2 suggests that it may further illuminate the nature of the conflict regarding human kingdoms briefly presented in Daniel 1:1-2 and expanded in the dream of Daniel 2, namely the conflict between human kings and God regarding God's absolute sovereignty.

In Daniel 7 the four kingdoms of Daniel 2 are portrayed with greater violence and ferocity. First, the four kingdoms are represented as four violent beast-like animals, a lion with eagle's wings, a bear, a leopard with four wings, and an unnamed beast. Second, two of the beasts are committing violent acts. The bear has ribs in its mouth and the unnamed beast devours, crushes, and tramples its enemies. Although the fourth kingdom is portrayed as violent in both Daniel 2 and 7, the latter depiction puts greater emphasis on the violent actions of the kingdom. In addition, Daniel 7 depicts the second phase of the fourth kingdom, which is portrayed as a dual kingdom with two diametrically opposed characteristics (iron and clay) in Daniel 2. It is portrayed as a power with dual characteristics (beastly and human) that is in open rebellion against God. Such opposition was not included in the description found in Daniel 2.

The difference between the two depictions of the four-kingdom schema in Daniel 2 and 7 may be due to the fact that each dream is shaped to fit the dreamer. Whereas the



dream in Daniel 2 was shaped according to the king's social, political, and religious location, the dream in Daniel 7 is possibly shaped according to Daniel's social, political, and religious location. Thus, the dream illuminates information regarding the conflict that is germane for Daniel's personal context.

Consequently, Daniel's dream is shaped according to God's message for him and according to his religious conceptualization of the world, which is heavily influenced by the HB/OT text. (Therefore, the depiction of Gentile kings as violent animals that arise from the sea and reign upon the earth, according to Daniel's HB/OT context, may be an inversion of God's creation mandate in Gen 1:26.<sup>346</sup>) Daniel must come to know the violent nature of the conflict, and its ultimate goal, which is to break from God's restraint and challenge his absolute sovereignty. This is displayed in Daniel 7 through the depiction of the beastly kingdoms and primarily through the actions of the little horn figure, who violently attacks God's representatives and challenges God's law. Therefore, one may conclude that the purpose of Daniel's destabilizing dream is to make him aware of a more sinister perspective of human kingdoms that will lead to a blatant attack upon God's sovereignty, not only in the human sphere of the court but also in the divine sphere of the heavenly cult.

The plot in the narrative of the seer coheres around Daniel's search for knowing. The narrative can be delineated into two parts: 1) Daniel's desire to know (7:15-18) and Daniel's desire to know more (7:19-27). The first part relates Daniel's reaction to the

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<sup>346</sup> D. Bryan promoted the idea of "kosher mentality" to explain the origin of the imagery of the four beasts in Daniel 7. He argues that, "a Mischwesen (hybrid) represents an extreme form of uncleanness." Egger, *Influences and Traditions*, 27. Regarding the audience or readers, the religious conceptualization that relates to the dreamer is to be shared or understood by the readers.

dream (7:15), his first request to know, and the interpreter's response (7:16-18). The second part relates Daniel's second request to know (7:19-22) and the interpreter's second response (7:23-27). The chapter concludes with a second expression of Daniel's reaction (7:28).

The first part includes an interpretation that is broad and general and that introduces the new element of the saints (holy ones) of the Most High. The second part consists of two repetitions of elements in the dream concerning the fourth beast, the 10 horns, and the little horn. Therefore, by the end of the chapter, if one includes the main dream, three depictions of the fourth beast, 10 horns, and little horn are presented. Very little new information accompanies the repetition of the first two, but the description of the little horn progressively expands. This repetition and expansion places significant attention upon the actions of the little horn.

## **2) Daniel's desire to know (7:15-18).**

### **a) Daniel's reaction to the dream (7:15-16).**

The plot begins with Daniel's negative reaction to the dream (7:15). The dream alarms Daniel and causes him great anxiety (7:15).<sup>347</sup> This is similar to King

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<sup>347</sup> The term "anxious" (אָתְּכָרַיִת) means "to be distressed, troubled, disturbed," *BDB*, 1097d. According to Rosenthal, the form of this verb, which is the only occurrence, is the (h)ithpe'el form. He states, "Whether this vocalization is exceptional, instead of an expected hitbanyat (a form not attested in Biblical Aramaic), or whether it is to be considered the normal form in BA (as it is in later Jewish Aramaic) cannot now be decided..." Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006) 55-56. Van Pelt suggests that the form is the Ithpeel stem, which is a variant of the Hithpe'el stem. The basic difference is accounted for by the change in spelling of the stem prefix (*hit* to *it*). Miles Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Aramaic*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 127. However, Vance, Athas, and Avrahami follow Rosenthal's conclusion. Donald R. Vance, George Athas, Yael Avrahami, Jonathan G. Kline, *Biblical Aramaic: A Reader and Handbook*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2017), 40. The term "alarm" (בְּהַל) means "to alarm, dismay," *BDB*, 1084a. It occurs several times in the book in relation to a disturbing dream or message (Dan 4:2, 16 [2 times]; 5:6, 9, 10; 7:15, 28).

Nebuchadnezzar's reaction to his dream in Daniel 2:1.<sup>348</sup> Although the dream appears to have ended, Daniel is able to speak to an anonymous being in the dream (7:16).

Therefore, one may surmise that the dream has not ended.

Daniel approaches and requests “the truth concerning all this.” In response to Daniel's broad and general request, the anonymous interpreter makes “known” the interpretation. Here, the term “to know” (יָדַע), which was used frequently in Daniel 2, 4, and 5 with reference to a king's knowledge of God's sovereignty, now refers to mantic knowledge or knowledge of interpreting dreams. It only occurs once in Daniel 7. In addition, the term “to interpret” (רָשַׁף) also occurs, which also occurred frequently in Daniel 2 (9 times), 4 (5 times), and 5 (6 times). It also only appears once in Daniel 7. For the first time in the book, Daniel needs assistance in “knowing” and interpreting a dream. Just as the foreign kings came to “know” God as sovereign in the local conflict between human and divine kingship, so Daniel must come to “know” God as sovereign in the cosmic conflict that adversely affects, not only Daniel, but all humanity. The combination of Daniel's desire to know and the presence of a heavenly interpreter that will cause him to know will become a recurring portrayal in the subsequent chapters of the book.

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<sup>348</sup> Collins argues that Daniel's reaction is a “typical reaction to a dream or vision.” *Daniel*, 311; cf. Lucas, *Daniel*, 187. Newsom suggests Daniel's reaction is somewhat different from the common reaction since she states, “The alarm of the dreamer of a mysterious dream is a literary trope... In those instances, however, the alarm is experienced after the dreamer has awakened. Here the pattern is influenced by the postexilic prophetic vision tradition, where the request for interpretation is made within the context of the vision itself... The closest parallels are the night visions of Zechariah (1:8-10; 2:1-4; 4:1-7; 6:1-8).” *Daniel*, 236. See also Susan Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 174. Interestingly, Goldingay concludes Daniel's reaction is a rhetorical device that creates tension because it separates the dream/vision from its interpretation and thus withholds the meaning of the dream from the reader. Therefore, it generates anticipation in the reader. *Daniel*, rev. ed., 370. Nevertheless, one may conclude that dreams in the book of Daniel produce a destabilizing effect on the dreamer, as it causes them great alarm.

b) Heavenly interpreter: First interpretation (7:17-18)

Following Daniel's general request, the heavenly interpreter gives a broad and general interpretation to the dream. He states that the four beasts are "four kings who shall arise out of the earth (7:17)."<sup>349</sup> Next, he explains that the saints will receive the kingdom and possess it forever (7:18). This is the first reference to the saints of the Most High in the chapter.<sup>350</sup> In the dream, the Son of Man was given dominion. In 7:18 it states that the kingdom is given to the "saints" (שׂוֹמְרֵי) or "holy ones."<sup>351</sup> This new reference to saints may suggest two conclusions. First, the saints may refer to a group that is important to or linked with Daniel. Second, the judgment depicted in 7:9-10 not only involves the four beasts, but also involves the saints. In the Bible, judgment has two aspects to it - both negative and positive. Those who are judged negatively will

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<sup>349</sup> In the dream, the four beasts came out of the sea (v. 3), but the interpretation explains the four kings arise out of the earth (v. 18). Seow explains this difference as follows: "Here, as elsewhere in the Old Testament (see Isa. 17:12-14), myth is historicized. Mythological symbols are given earthly equivalents. Thus, one gathers that the battle against the chaotic forces of evil is not a distant reality, but a very present one." *Daniel*, 110. Lucas argues, "The statement that the kings 'arise from the earth' does not contradict the statement in v. 3 that the beasts 'rose out of the sea'. Different theological emphases are being expressed. If, as we have argued, the background of the sea imagery of v. 3 is the Babylonian creation epic, it carries the idea of kingdoms opposed to the creator god. The point being made in v. 18 is that these kingdoms are of an earthly, human origin. This contrasts with the kingdom symbolized by the 'one like a son of man', which has a heavenly, divine origin: *Daniel* 187-188.

<sup>350</sup> For an analysis of the nature of the group "the saints of the Most High" see Joseph Coppens, "Les Saints du Très-Haut sont-ils à identifier avec les milices célestes," *ETL* 39 (1963): 94-100 and Joseph Coppens and Luc Dequeker, "Le Fils de l'homme et les Saints du Très-Haut en Daniel, vii" *ALBO* 23 (1961): 55-101.

<sup>351</sup> The phrase "holy ones of the Most High" occurs in vv. 18, 22, 25, and 27 of Daniel 7. For an analysis of the relationship between the Son of Man and the "saints of the Most High," see Ferch, *Son of Man*, 175-180. See Lucas, *Daniel*, 191-192 for a brief summary on the theories concerning the identity of this group. For a more comprehensive treatment see Collins, *Daniel*, 313-317. Some commentators conclude the phrase refers to heavenly beings, which according to Lucas possesses the "strength of semantic evidence (191)." Several scholars oppose this conclusion, notably Hasel 1975, Poythress 1976, Baldwin 1978. Longman notes, "The debate on this issue has raged, but the angelic interpretation is by far the most dominant today." *Daniel*, NIVAC 188.

experience punishment, but those who are judged positively will be vindicated or restored to a position of honor.<sup>352</sup>

### **3) Daniel's desire to know more (7:19-28)**

a) Daniel's detailed request (7:19-22).

After the heavenly interpreter's broad and general explanation, Daniel requests "to know" (7:19) for a second time; however, this time he wants to know more about specific aspects of his dream. His second request is partially in the form of a second dreamscape that emphasizes the saints. Thus, the structure of the chapter is somewhat more complex than the common ancient dream report. Some commentators have offered differing reasons for this additional dreamscape that is not found in the main dream (7:19-22).<sup>353</sup> Collins concludes, "It is not surprising that the vision of the fourth beast should be elaborated in the request for clarification, and chap. 8 can be understood to be influenced by chap. 7..."<sup>354</sup> Newsom suggests the novelty in the second visionary depiction is "the framing of the conflict in terms of the aggression of the king and his temporary success, rather than focusing only on the moment of divine victory." She further notes that this is a "tension-building technique."<sup>355</sup> Both conclusions may be appropriate within this context. The repetition and elaboration of the dream in the second

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<sup>352</sup> See Jiri Moskala, "Toward a Biblical Theology of God's Judgment: A Celebration of the Cross in Seven Phases of Divine Universal Judgment (An Overview of a Theocentric-Christocentric Approach)," *JATS* 15/1 (2004) 138-165; 139-140 and note 8.

<sup>353</sup> Goldingay states, "In vv. 21-22 a more significant elaboration of vv. 9-14 is signaled by the return to the report of the symbolic vision, with the resumptive... 'I watched.' The wickedness of the small horn becomes explicit." *Daniel*, rev. edition, 378.

<sup>354</sup> *Daniel*, 320.

<sup>355</sup> *Daniel*, 239.

request and the second interpretation highlights elements that will influence the vision in Daniel 8 and the subsequent chapters (see below). In addition, the dream format may create dramatic tension as it relates tense events in an immediate portrayal. It happens as Daniel sees it happening. Thus, the reader sees the event along with Daniel. This dramatic tension progressively creates a mounting level of terror and anxiety.

In 7:19 Daniel explains he “desired to know the truth about the fourth beast.” In his request he adds specific details about the fourth beast that were stated in the dream (see Table 4.2), except for the “claws of bronze.”<sup>356</sup> Next, in 7:20 Daniel adds to his request information about the 10 horns and little horn that was also noted in the dream (see Table 4.4).<sup>357</sup> He again adds a new element, namely that the horn “seemed greater than its companions.” In 7:21 Daniel appears to transition to relating what he sees in the dream when he states, “As I looked.” This new perspective returns to the introductory dream formulas used in 7:2b-14. In the dreamscape Daniel states, “this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them.” Here the horn’s actions against the saints are emphasized. The saints were only recently introduced in the first interpretation. Now, Daniel sees them incorporated into a second dreamscape in which the horn makes war with them (see Table 4.3). Thus, the saints progressively become more important to the revelation and depiction of the little horn. This war continues “until the Ancient of Days

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<sup>356</sup> According to Newsom, “There is no reason to think that this phrase was originally part of the description; it is not unusual for the interpretation of a vision to elaborate. Moreover, since the list of the beast’s activities described two actions, one performed with the mouth (devouring and crushing) and one with the feet (trampling), the addition of a note about the appearance of the feet complements the details about the iron feet.” *Daniel*, 238.

<sup>357</sup> In the dream (7:8), the verb used to depict the “uprooting” of the three horns before the little horn was in the passive form and thus denoted an act of God. In 7:20 the verb “to fall” is used and it is in the form of a Peal Perfect third masculine plural. Here, the action is in the Active form, but it only states the fact that the horns fell. There is no information about how they fell and who is responsible for their fall.

comes.” In 7:22 Daniel relates an abbreviated version of the scene in the dream in which the Ancient of Days administers judgment (7:9-10). He comes, judgment is given for the saints, and they possess the kingdom. Here again the saints are depicted as the ones who will receive God’s kingdom. At this point, Daniel’s request/dreamscape ends.

b) Heavenly interpreter: Second interpretation (7:23-27).

The anonymous interpreter responds to Daniel’s detailed second request/dreamscape. In his response he also gives detailed information and addresses the same topics in the same sequence as is found in the request/dreamscape. Thus, the description of the fourth beast, 10 horns, and little horn is depicted for a third time. In a narrative sense, the second interpretation may depict greater anxiety in the conflict as it gives more details about the little horn’s most belligerent and egregious actions (see Table 4.4).

Daniel begins to relate the interpreter’s response in 7:23. As in Daniel’s request, the interpreter begins with the fourth beast and relates the basic elements of the description from the main dream (see Table 4.2). Next, in 7:24 the interpreter turns to the 10 horns and the other horn and relates elements of the description from the main dream (See Table 4.4).<sup>358</sup> Then, in 7:25 the interpreter gives specific and new information about three actions carried out by the little horn. This new information partially explains the

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<sup>358</sup> This is the third time in the chapter that the felling of the three horns is depicted. Here, the verb “to put down” (לפס) is used. It is in the Haphel imperfect third masculine singular form. This is the causative stem and denotes the little horn as the cause of the removal of the three horns. Therefore, in accordance with the passive use in the dream, the little horn has a complex relation with God since its actions can be depicted as synonymous with God’s actions. The verb means, “to humble” and occurs three other times in the book of Daniel (4:37 [ET], 5:19, 22). In the first two occurrences it refers to God humbling Nebuchadnezzar. In the third occurrence it refers to Belshazzar refusing to humble himself before God.

“great words” of 7:8. First, he states that the horn will, “speak words against the Most High (7:25a).” Thus the “great things” that the horn spoke in the dream are now explained as words against God; however, the content of his words are not explained.<sup>359</sup> Second, the little horn will “wear out the saints of the Most High.”<sup>360</sup> Again, the fate of the saints is highlighted, as in the heavenly interpreter’s first interpretation and Daniel’s dreamscape. Specifically, they will experience persecution at the hands of the little horn.

Third, the horn “shall think to change times and law (7:25b).” This phrase is similar to the phrase in 2:21, which refers to actions that God alone performs, specifically “changing times and seasons.” The terms that occur in both verses are the verb “to change” (שנה) and the noun “time” (זמן). In 7:25 the term for “time” is linked to the term for “law.”<sup>361</sup> The phrase refers to the sacred days in the Hebrew calendar, including the seventh-day Sabbath.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Newsom explains, “The arrogant words are sometimes interpreted in light of the divine titles (e.g. ‘God manifest [Epiphanes]’) used by Antiochus on some coinage (so J. Collins 321-22; Bauer 163; Willis 84). Yet the underlying dynamic of human kings who challenge YHWH in any fashion is an implicit claim to equality, if not divinity...” *Daniel*, 240. This may coincide with the words of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30-31 [ET] and King Belshazzar in 5:143, 23.

<sup>360</sup> The term “wear out” (בלה) means “to wear out” like an old garment; it also means to hurt seriously “with reference to Arabic.” *HALOT*, s.v. “בלה.” Steinmann concludes that, in the context of Dan. 7:25, it refers to the little horn’s words against the Most High and to its attempt to “wear out” the saints over time. *Daniel*, 363, 374. Several other scholars hold to the definition, “to hurt seriously,” specifically to persecute. See Lucas, *Daniel*, 193.

<sup>361</sup> The Aramaic term “law” (תִּי) means “command, state legislation, or the law of the God of heaven, or law as religion.” It can also refer to “Jewish religious law and practice paralleled with Persian state legislation” (Ezra 7:26); *HALOT*, s.v. “תִּי.” It occurs 9 times in Daniel; 2: 9, 13, 15; 6:5, 8, 12, 15; 7:25; and 5 times in Ezra; 7:12, 14, 21, 25.

<sup>362</sup> According to Stefanovic, “The Semitic noun *zimmin*, ‘set times,’ is used in the Old Testament for the important days in the Hebrew calendar (Ezra 10:14; Neh. 10:34; 13:31; Esther 9:27, 31). The second noun *dat*, ‘law,’ is in the singular and should be considered the Aramaic equivalent to the Hebrew word *Torah*. These two nouns are placed next to each other in order to express a single concept (hendiadys). Therefore, the whole expression means ‘the set times regulated by the law,’ and it includes the seventh-day



The last clause in 7:25 identifies how long the horn will persecute the saints. Prior to this information, the text implies a possible parallel between the Babylonian exile of God's people and the persecution of the saints. The text states that the saints were "given into his hand" for "a time, times, and half a time (7:25c)." The former statement is similar to Daniel 1:2 in which it states, "And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God." In Daniel 1 God's three acts were depicted using the term "to give." In 7:25 the term "to give" is in the passive form (Hithpeel imperfect masculine singular). The passive form and the term "to give" indicates that the act of giving the saints over to the horn is an act of God. If the action is similar to the act in Daniel 1:2, then it may be due to or the result of the sins or transgressions of the saints.

The interpretation, as in the main dream and Daniel's second request/dreamscape, climaxes with God's judgment in Daniel 7:26, 27. The terror and belligerence of the horn comes to an end when "the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end (7:26)." As in the main dream and in Daniel's second request/dreamscape, the little horn's actions only cease when the judgment occurs. Three times it is emphasized that the judgment ends the violent and rebellious reign of the little horn. Finally, in 7:27 it states for a third time that dominion "shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."<sup>363</sup> In contrast to its previous

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Sabbath. The book of Daniel teaches that God is the only One who 'changes times and seasons,' (Dan 2:21." *Wisdom to the Wise*, 274. Other explanations of the phrase also refer to "keeping the Sabbath and other Jewish feast days." See for example Lucas, *Daniel*, 193.

<sup>363</sup> Collins states, "...the most satisfactory understanding of this phrase is to take the genitive as possessive: the people pertaining to or under the protection of the holy ones...the kingdom given to the people is analogous to that given to the 'one like a son of man,' and that both are analogous to and manifestations of the kingdom of God." *Daniel*, 322. Stefanovic argues, "The Aramaic word 'am, 'people,'

use, the term “to give” now refers to a positive divine act for the saints. They will be given the kingdom. For the saints, the coming of the judgment brings relief to the suffering they experience under the dominion of the little horn. The end of its dominion leads to the beginning of the reign of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is everlasting (7:27).

As noted above, this section repeats and expands upon information from the main dream in 7:2b-14. Concerning the fourth beast (see Table 4.2), Daniel’s second request (7:19-22) mainly repeats several features of the fourth beast and adds very little new information. In addition, if one looks at all the descriptions of the fourth beast, namely in the dream, Daniel’s second request, and the second interpretation, it is possible to note that the descriptors of the fourth beast actually decrease with each repetition. Very few new descriptors are added to the description of the fourth beast. It is repeatedly depicted as violent and belligerent.

In contrast, the descriptions of the little horn and the saints (which were not in the dream but introduced in the first interpretation) repeat and expand with each new request and interpretation. Concerning the saints (see Table 4.3), in Daniel’s second request and in the second interpretation the fate of the saints becomes more detailed and traumatic. After the little horn is destroyed, the saints receive the kingdom and live in safety. Concerning the little horn (see Table 4.4), in Daniel’s second request he repeats the description of the felling of the three horns (7:20) and adds, “The other horn” is also “greater than its companions.” He also adds that the little horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them. In the second interpretation, the same information about the

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is used here to describe the saints, lending support to the view that they are human beings. Daniel 12:7 says that the ‘holy people’ will be persecuted for ‘a time, times, and half a time.’” *Wisdom to the Wise*, 275.

little horn from the dream is repeated a third time, but a significant number of details are added. For example, in 7:25 the little horn speaks against God, thinks to change God's law of sacred time, and persecutes the saints for three and a half times. This new information depicts its actions as progressively becoming more and more egregious. This may suggest that the little horn may play a significant role in the cosmic conflict and in the subsequent chapters. Despite this progressive revelation, the sequence of fourth beast, 10 horns, little horn is repeated three times and does not change (1st 7:7-8, 2nd 7:19-22, 3rd 7:23-25).

Despite the expanding information about the little horn, the complex relation between the little horn and God that was noted in 7:8 is not explained. Three times the text describes the horn in relation to the three horns that fell. In each description a different verb is used. First, in 7:8 a passive verb is used (uprooted; עקר), which denotes divine action. Second, an active verb is used (fell; נפל), but it only refers to the fact that the three horns fell. Third, an active verb in the Haphel stem is used (to humble: שפל) to state that the horn is behind this action. This term only occurs four times in the book and the first two occurrences refer to God humbling Nebuchadnezzar. The third occurrence refers to Belshazzar refusing to humble himself before God. Consequently, the little horn seems to cause the humbling of the three horns, which is in some form an act similar to God's humbling of Nebuchadnezzar. This complex relation between the little horn and God has yet to be answered and may be addressed in the next chapter.

Table 4.1 The Fourth Beast: Decreasing Information

Fourth Beast Dream (7:7)	Interpretation 7:17-18	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dreamscape 7:19-22	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interpretation 7:23-27
Fourth (7:7, רְבִיעִיָּה)	Four kings (7:17)	Fourth (7:19, רְבִיעִיָּה)	Fourth (7:23, רְבִיעִיָּה)
Terrifying (7:7, דחל)	----	Terrifying (7:19, דחל)	----
Dreadful (7:7, אִימָתָן)	----	----	----
Strong (7:7, תִּקְיָף)	----	----	----
Iron teeth (7:7, שֵׁן פְּרָזֶל)	----	Iron teeth (7:19, שֵׁן פְּרָזֶל)	----
Devoured (7:7, אָכַל)	----	Devoured (7:19, אָכַל)	Devour (7:23, אָכַל)
Break in pieces (7:7, דָּקַק)	----	Break in pieces (7:19, דָּקַק)	Break in pieces (7:23, דָּקַק)
Stamped (7:7, רָפַס)	----	Stamped (7:19, רָפַס)	----
Different (7:7, שָׁנָה)	----	Different (7:19, שָׁנָה)	Different (7:23, שָׁנָה)
Ten horns (7:7, עֲשָׂרָה קַרְנֵיָא)	----	Ten horns (7:20, עֲשָׂרָה קַרְנֵיָא)	----
	----	(Added) Bronze claws (7:19, טַפְרֵיהֶּ דִּי־נְחָשׁ)	----
	----	----	(Added) Trample (7:23, דוּשׁ)

Table 4.2 The Holy Ones: Increasing Information

	Dream 7:2b-14	1 <sup>st</sup> Interpretation 7:17-18	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dreamscape 7:19-22	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interpretation 7:23-27
Holy Ones	----	Receive the kingdom (7:18, קִבְּלוּן מְלְכוּתָא)	----	Given kingdom... (7:27, מְלְכוּתָהּ, יְהִיבַת, שְׁלֹטְנָא)
	----	Possess the kingdom (7:18, חֲסָנוּן מְלְכוּתָא)	Possess the kingdom (7:22, מְלְכוּתָא הֲחָסְנוּ)	----
	----	----	Judgment given for them (7:22, וְדִינָא יְהַב)	----
	----	----	- LH made war with them (7:21, עֲבָדָה קָרַב) - LH prevailed over them (7:22, יִכְלָה לְהוֹן)	- LH will “wear them out” (7:25, בַּלָּה) - Given into LH’s hand (7:25, וְיִתִּיְהִבוּן בְּיַדָּהּ) - 3 ½ times (7:25, עַד־עַדְן וְעַדְנִין וּפְלַג עַד)

Table 4.3 The Little Horn: Increasing Information

	Dream (7:2b-14)	1 <sup>st</sup> Interpretation (7:17-18)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dreamscape (7:19-22)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interpretation (7:23-26)
Little Horn	Uprooted three horns (7:8, עקר)	----	Three (horns) fell before LH (7:20, נפל)	Different (7:24, שנה)
	Eyes of man, mouth speaks great things (7:8, עֵינֵי כְּעֵינֵי פֶּם, אֲנָשָׁא (מַמְלַל רַבְרָבָן)	----	Eyes, mouth speaking great things (7:20, עֵינֵי לֵה וּפֶם (מַמְלַל רַבְרָבָן)	Put down three horns (7:24, שפל)
	----	----	Greater than companions (7:20, רב מן־חֲבֵרָתָהּ)	Speaks words against MH (7:25, וּמַלְיָן לְצַד, עַל־אֵי מַלְל)
	----	----	LH made war with holy ones (7:21, עֲבָדָה קְרִיבָה עִם־ (קְדִישִׁין)	Wears out the holy ones (7:25, בלה)
	----	----	LH prevailed over them (7:21, יִכְלָה לְהוֹן)	Thinks to change times and law (7:25, יִסְבֵּר לְהַשְׁנִיָּה זְמַנֵּי וְדָת)
	----	----	----	Holy ones given into LH's hand 3 ½ times (7:25, בְּיַדָּהּ וְיִתְיַהֲבֹן)
	----	----	----	Dominion taken away to be consumed, destroyed (7:26, וְשִׁלְטָנָהּ יִהְיֶה לְהַשְׁמָדָה וְלִהְיוֹבְדָה)

d. Conclusion (7:28)

The chapter concludes with another description of Daniel's reaction. Again, as in 7:15, Daniel states that his thoughts "alarmed" him. Even more, his thoughts negatively

affected him physically, as his “color changed.” Despite his suffering, he decided not to share this information with anyone.

## **2. Daniel 8**

As noted above, at the beginning of Daniel 8 another shift in language occurs, from Aramaic to Hebrew. This language shift is different from the first language shift in Daniel 2:4, which transitioned from Hebrew to Aramaic in the middle of the verse. The language shift in Daniel 8 occurs immediately, so the entire chapter is written in Hebrew and obtains to the end of the book.

Corresponding to this language shift, a narrative shift occurs between Daniel 7 and 8, similar to the narrative shift that was noted above between Daniel 1 and 2. The narrative shift that occurs reconfigures the narrative of the dream in Daniel 7, which depicted a God-centered kingly conflict situated within the context of divine kingship. The narrative of the vision in Daniel 8 begins a reconfigured narrative that depicts a horn-centered conflict that is situated within the context of cultic imagery. In addition, the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7 is reconfigured also so that in Daniel 8 the narrative of the seer emphasizes the role of Gabriel in Daniel’s search for understanding.

This language shift-narrative shift correspondence is possible because the three shifts noted above in Daniel 7 create the appearance of a new beginning. The three shifts of genre, chronology, and person that occur in Daniel 7 create a break from Daniel 1-6 so that one can identify Daniel 7 as a “new introduction.” This would make Daniel 7 an introductory chapter, which is similar to the positioning of Daniel 1 in relation to Daniel 2 and the subsequent chapters. Therefore, Daniel 7 and 8 have the same relation as that which obtains between Daniel 1 and 2.

Regarding the plots of the narratives of the dream in Daniel 7 and the vision in Daniel 8, the narrative shift that corresponds to the language shift from Aramaic to Hebrew is a transition from a God-centered royal conflict (Daniel 7) to a horn-centered cultic conflict (Daniel 8). As noted above, this shift is also a reconfiguration of the conflict depicted in Daniel 7. Regarding the plot of the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7 and 8, the narrative shift is a transition from the depiction of an anonymous interpreter's revelation in Daniel 7 to a detailed angelic epiphany in Daniel 8 that accompanies the interpretation of the vision.

Daniel 8 can be delineated into four acts: a) Introduction (8:1-2a), b) Narrative of the Vision (8:2b-14), c) Narrative of the Seer (8:15-26), and d) Conclusion (8:27). The introduction presents the seer's setting. The narrative of the vision depicts three rising incidents or actions: 1) the ram, 2) the goat, and 3) the little horn. The climax of the narrative occurs at the point when two holy ones speak to one another. Nevertheless, there are no falling actions or points of resolution. The vision ends without depicting the fall or judgment of the little horn. In the narrative of the seer three elements are presented, 1) Daniel's search for understanding, 2) an angel epiphany with Gabriel, and 3) the interpretation of the vision. The chapter concludes with Daniel's reaction.

The narrative development of the vision can be depicted as follows:

**E. Climax and Conclusion (8:13-14)**

**B. 3<sup>rd</sup> Rising Action (8:9-12)**

**C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Rising Action (8:5-8)**

**D. 1<sup>st</sup> Rising Action (8:3-4)**

**A. Introduction (8:1-2)**

a. Introduction (Daniel 8:1-2a)

The introduction in Daniel 8 strategically positions the chapter so that it points to and away from Daniel 7. First, the introduction in Daniel 8 is similar to the introduction in Daniel 7 in that both begin with a royal date formula under the reign of King Belshazzar.<sup>364</sup> As noted previously, the narrative in Daniel 5 reflects the negative implications of his reign for Daniel and the temple utensils taken into exile; therefore, Daniel 8, like Daniel 7, begins on a foreboding note. Next, the two chapters are also linked together through the use of the phrase “I Daniel” (אֲנִי דָנִיֵּאל) in Daniel 8:1. This phrase first appeared in Aramaic in Daniel 7:15, 28.<sup>365</sup>

These similarities in the introduction link the two chapters; however, several dissimilarities in the introduction distinguish the chapters as well. In contrast to Daniel 7, Daniel 8 begins in the third year of King Belshazzar (8:1) rather than in his first year as king. Moreover, chapter 8 begins in the first person, which is in contrast to the third person beginning in Daniel 7:1-2a. In addition, the seer situates the vision after the dream of Daniel 7 as he states, “...a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first.” This locates the vision in a successive sequence in relation to the dream

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<sup>364</sup> The royal date formula of the first and third year of Belshazzar may indicate a literary pattern. According to Talmon, “It cannot go unnoticed that the book dates two of Daniel’s visions in the third regnal year of a king: one in the third year of Belshazzar (8:1) and one in the third year of Cyrus (10:1). Likewise, Ahasuerus gave his banquet, which was to become of crucial importance in Esther’s life history (compare Belshazzar’s feast in chap. 5 and Pharaoh’s in Gen. 40:20), in the third year of his reign (Esther 1:3). Although the possible exactitude of this date cannot be categorically ruled out in this or the other case, its recurrence in visions and tales in Daniel and Esther appears to reveal a predilection for this literary convention among post-Exilic writers (see further 2 Chron. 17:7).” Shemaryahu Talmon, “Daniel,” 343-356 in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, eds. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 349.

<sup>365</sup> Daniel stresses that the vision appeared to him by using the phrase “I Daniel.” It may indicate emphasis, especially with respect to Daniel’s statement that he himself received the vision.



in Daniel 7.<sup>366</sup> Finally, in 8:2a, Daniel no longer uses the term “dream” to describe what he saw. Instead, he states that he saw “in (the) vision.” The term for “vision” (וִיזוֹן) becomes the primary term used to describe what Daniel sees in chapter eight.<sup>367</sup>

## b. Narrative of the Vision: Horn-Centered Cultic Conflict (Daniel 8:2b-14)

### 1) Geographic setting of the conflict (8:2b).

In Daniel 7 the visionary sees the four winds of heaven stirring up the Great Sea (7:2b). This geographic setting is omitted in Daniel 8. The vision in Daniel 8 is more representational or more realistic than the dream of Daniel 7. It has been noted that Daniel 7 contains more non-representational elements than Daniel 8, which is noted to have more representational elements in the vision.<sup>368</sup> Consequently, Daniel 8 begins with

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<sup>366</sup> The prepositional phrase gives more information about the vision’s chronological context. This vision appeared “after that which appeared to me” (אַחֲרַי הַנִּרְאָה אֵלַי). The preposition “after” has a temporal meaning and indicates sequence or order with reference to a previous element and can be translated as “after or the time when,” *HALOT*, s.v. “אַחֲרַי.” The phrase “that which appeared” includes a definite article and a Niphal perfect 3ms form of the verb “to see.” According to Williams, “Sometimes the article is prefixed to a verb with perfect aspect ... and can be translated as a relative pronoun.” Ronald J. Williams, *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., revised and expanded by John C. Beckman (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007), 38. Thus, it is possible to translate the prepositional phrase as “after that which appeared to me.” The phrase “at the first” (בְּתַחֲלָה), identifies a previous vision that appeared to Daniel, namely the vision in chapter seven. The phrase consists of the preposition “in, at” and the term for “beginning.” It means, “at first, first in order; at the first, first (or former) time, first in a series of occurrences. *BDB*, 321a and *HALOT*, s.v. “תַּחֲלָה.” It occurs in Daniel 8:1; 9:21, 23.

<sup>367</sup> The term can refer to a vision, or a word of revelation *HALOT*, s.v., “וִיזוֹן.” In addition, it can also refer to a vision as seen in the ecstatic state, a vision in the night, divine communication in a vision, an oracle, or prophecy; it can also refer to the title of a book of prophecy or of other writings of prophets. *BDB*, 303d. The term occurs 35 times in the Bible, primarily in Daniel (12 times – 1:17; 8:1, 2, 13, 15, 17, 26; 9: 21, 24; 10: 14; 11:14) and Ezekiel (7 times – 7:13, 26; 12:22, 23, 24, 27, 13:6). In Isa. 29:7 the terms “vision” and “dream” appear together and occur as a parallelism.

<sup>368</sup> For example, Stefanovic argues, “In chapter 8, the wild beasts that represented earthly power in the previous chapter are replaced by domestic, clean, sacrificial animals. The Ancient of Days and the humanlike Person to whom he grants authority and power are replaced by the institution of the temple and its continual services.” *Wisdom to the Wise*, 294. Goldingay concludes the visionary dreams of Daniel 2, 4, and 7 “are now over.” Chapters 8-12 are not dreams, and the characteristic terms to denote a dream-vision...do not appear.” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 409.

a setting or context that refers to a specific location. In Daniel 8:2b the seer states that he saw in the vision that he was “in Susa the citadel” (בְּשֹׁשַׁן הַבִּירָה) in the “province of Elam.”<sup>369</sup> In the Bible, this location was the winter residence of Persian kings and it was also “a capital city of Elam in the early period, and under the Achaemenids one of the capitals of the empire.”<sup>370</sup> Elam was a populated city NE of the Lower Tigris. Thus, the vision is situated east of Babylon.<sup>371</sup> In addition, Daniel states that he is situated at the Ulai canal,<sup>372</sup> which refers to a canal and/or a river that flowed east of Susa.<sup>373</sup> In contrast to the turbulent setting of the Great Sea, where Daniel saw the four winds stirring it up, Daniel is now near a smaller body of water in a specific province that is far to the east of Susa.<sup>374</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Goldingay explains, “Daniel is in Elam in his vision; the account presupposes a visionary journey such as Ezekiel experienced...” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 419. He further notes that the geographic location near a body of water is not uncommon in relation to dreams and visions, especially in the book of Daniel (cf. Dan 10:4; 12:5-7), Genesis (cf. Pharaoh’s dream in chapter 41), and Enoch (1 En. 13:7-8). Collins explains, “The location of the vision in Susa, while still in the reign of a Babylonian king, is a clue from the author that the vision concerns the Persian Empire. It is integral to the strategy of the book that Daniel is supposed to see things that happen at a much later time.” *Daniel*, 329.

<sup>370</sup> *BDB*, 1004c. The term is found 17 times in the Bible, mostly in the book of Esther with the term “citadel” and in Neh. 1:1.

<sup>371</sup> Elam was sometimes viewed as the home of early invaders of Palestine, an ally of Assyria, a foe of Babylon, or the abode of dispersed Israelites. Dan. 8:2 gives a purely local designation; *BDB*, 743d.

<sup>372</sup> Both Goldingay and Newsom conclude that Daniel is at Susa as a result of his visionary experience. Goldingay states, “The vision is located at a gate opening toward a waterway, in the tradition of Ezekiel’s vision by the Kebar canal...it presupposes a visionary journey such as Ezekiel also experienced..., which has taken the subject far from his bodily setting.” *Daniel*, 208; see also Newsom, *Daniel*, 260, who prefers the translation “stream” over “gate.” “Modern scholars have determined that the Ulai was actually an artificial irrigation canal, starting about twenty miles northwest of ancient Susa...” *AYBD*, 6:721

<sup>373</sup> *HALOT*, s.v. “יָרָה.”

<sup>374</sup> The city of Susa was, “the capital of Elam and later the winter residence and main capital of the Persian Empire...Ethnically, culturally, and politically, Susa was always linked to both Mesopotamia and the Iranian plateau.” *AYBD*, 6: 242. It is located, “at the periphery of the Mesopotamian plain and at the foot of the Zagros Mountains.” During the Persian period, Susa prospered so much so that it experienced a “golden age.” *AYBD*, 6: 243.

## 2) 1<sup>st</sup> Rising action: The ram with two horns (8:3-4)

In Daniel 7 the seer saw four great beasts coming out of the Great Sea (7:3). In Daniel 8 only two animals appear, thus the pattern of four, with reference to the beasts, is not continued here. In Daniel 8:3 the first rising action depicts the first combatant in the conflict. Daniel states that he sees a ram, “standing on the bank of the canal (v. 3).” In contrast to the wild, ferocious, hybrid beasts in Daniel 7, the vision in Daniel 8 begins with the depiction of a representational or lifelike animal that occurs frequently within the context of the temple/cult as a sacrificial animal.<sup>375</sup> The animal appears in the east standing on the banks of the canal.

The description of the ram only focuses on its horns. It had two horns with one of them higher than the other. The one higher came up last. This description is reminiscent of the description of the bear in Daniel 7. However, in contrast to the description of the beasts in Daniel 7, which included a diversity of descriptors, here in Daniel 8 the horns of the ram are the only physical descriptors emphasized. This is one of the reasons one may conclude the plot emphasizes a horn-centered focus in the vision.

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<sup>375</sup> The term refers to a male sheep that was used for food and sacrifice. It occurs 161 times in the Bible, with the majority of occurrences referring to sacrificial cultic contexts (66 times in Numbers, 23 times in Exodus, 22 times in Leviticus, 15 times in Ezekiel, 8 times in Daniel). Notably, in Ezekiel (Ezek. 17:13) the metaphorical usage is not uncommon. For example, in 31:11 “ram” denotes a mighty one, in 32:21 it refers to chiefs, in 34:17 it states that God judges between rams and male goats, and in 39:18 it denotes the mighty. However, the rest of the verses refer to sacrificial animals.

After the description of the ram, in 8:4 the ram's violent conflict for power is noted.<sup>376</sup> Daniel sees the ram charging in three directions, west, north, and south.<sup>377</sup> Afterwards, the power of the ram is expressed in three phrases, 1) “no beast could stand before him (לֹא־יַעֲמְדוּ לְפָנָיו),” 2) “there was no one who could deliver (נֹצֵל) from his power (יְדוּמָה),” and 3) “he did as he pleased and became great (לָדָל) (v. 4).”<sup>378</sup> Newsom argues that these phrases are in contrast with the divine sovereign control depicted over the first three beasts in Daniel 7.<sup>379</sup> This conclusion coincides with the absence of the divine gift of sovereignty and of divine directives or commands to restrain the ram's

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<sup>376</sup> The ram is seen as charging or “thrusting” (נִגְנַן), which means to gore, thrust, or push (נָגַן). The term is commonly used to describe one nation/person overcoming another or when a country is waging war. In the Piel form it means “to push” or “thrust at.” It is found 11 times in the Bible (Exod 21:28, 31, 32 (law concerning a bull who gores someone); Deut 33:17 – metaphor for tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) pushing peoples to the ends of the earth; 1 Kgs 22:11 (2 Chr 18:10) – metaphor, iron horns (power of Judah) used to push Syrians; Ezek 34:21 – leaders push around/overpower the weak; Ps 44:5 – metaphor for strength; Dan 11:40 – king of the south pushes against king of the north. *BDB*, 618.

<sup>377</sup> The absence of the eastward compass point may suggest the ram's origin. Goldingay notes that, “from a Palestinian perspective he (Cyrus) is the ruler of the east (Isa. 41:2).” (*Daniel*, 209). Furthermore, Doukhan states this is a “colorful way to suggest the expanse of its conquests extending to three corners of the earth and omitting the corner of its origin, the east.” *Secrets of Daniel*, 122. Newsom inserts the term “east” since it is found in other textual versions (Papyrus 967, MS 88m and the Syro-Hexapla); however, it is missing from Theodotion and MT. *Daniel*, 254)

<sup>378</sup> The phrase “as he pleased” (כִּדְבָרוֹ) is a prepositional phrase that denotes the extent of the power and authority of the ram. The phrase includes the noun “desire.” The noun refers to will, desire, or pleasure. It can refer to God, to do his will (Ps. 40:9; 143:10; Ps. 103:21; Ezra 10:11) or to man, to do according to his will, exactly as he pleased; it also refers to desire or self-will (Gen. 49:6). *BDB*, 953a. The word (לִיְדוּמָה) means “to be great, become great, to exalt, or to grow.” In the Hiphil form it means to do great things whether in a good sense, (of God) or in a bad sense, of an earthly power. See Joel 2:20 and Dan. 8:4, 8, 11, 25. *BDB*, 152a. It can also mean to magnify oneself (Lam. 1:9), against the Lord with ones mouth (Ezek. 35:13). It appears in the Bible 30 times, mostly in Genesis (15 times). In Daniel it occurs 9 times (1:5; 8:4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 25; 11:36, 37).

<sup>379</sup> Newsom argues the ram is portrayed as “all-powerful.” She concludes that the first two phrases mentioned (“as he pleased” and “to become great”) “underscore his dominance.” *Daniel*, 261. Similarly, Goldingay proposes that the last part of the third phrase suggests hubris on the part of the ram because “...the expression is only used in an unequivocally good sense of God (1 Sam 12:24; Ps. 126: 2, 3); of human beings it tends to suggest arrogance (Jer. 48:26; Joel 2:20; Zeph. 2:10; Ps. 35:26; Ps. 55: 13 [12]), or at least achievement at someone else's expense...The expression has the foreboding ambiguity of the mouth speaking great things in 7:8, 20.” *Daniel*, 209

power. The portrayal of the reign of the ram is without divine restraint and only emphasizes its unrestrained power, before which no other kingdom could stand. This does not mean that the depiction in Daniel 7 is erroneous; it probably means Daniel 8 has a different overall focus than Daniel 7. It emphasizes the violent and self-willed conflict for sovereignty between human empires. As noted above, the focus of Daniel 8 is a horn-centered cultic conflict, rather than the God-centered royal conflict in Daniel 7. The emphasis in Daniel 8 appears to highlight the negative side of human kingship more so than God's sovereignty over kings.

### **3) 2<sup>nd</sup> Rising action: The goat with one horn (8:5-8)**

In Daniel 7 the four beasts arose sequentially one after the other to reign on the earth. Notably, God was depicted as having the power to control this process. However, in Daniel 8, the rising and falling of kings/kingdoms is determined by violent conflict. In Daniel 8:5-8 the second rising action depicts the rise of another representational or lifelike animal that also occurs in the context of ritual sacrifice in the temple/cult, namely a goat.<sup>380</sup> The narrative highlights its violent conflict with the ram. Two aspects of the goat are noted in its description, its speed and its notable horn (8:5). It is depicted as coming swiftly from the west “across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground (v. 5).” In addition, it has “a conspicuous horn” between its eyes. Again, as in the description of the ram, the goat's horn is important to its description.

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<sup>380</sup> The phrase for “goat” (צִפְיִר־הָעִזִּים) is made up of two terms “male goat” (צִפְיִר) and “goat” (עִז). The former term is a loanword from Aramaic. *HALOT*, “צִפְיִר.” In the Bible, it only occurs in the books of Daniel, Ezra and Chronicles. The latter term occurs more frequently in the Pentateuch (approximately 50 times), particularly in the books of Leviticus (12 times) and Numbers (25 times).

In contrast to the description of the rise and fall of kingdoms in the dreams in Daniel 2 and 7, which highlighted God’s sovereignty over the process, in Daniel 8:5-8 the rise of the goat’s kingdom occurs primarily as a consequence of the goat’s violent actions and of its own accord. The goat attacks the ram in his “powerful wrath (בְּחֵמַת כָּחוֹ), (8:6).”<sup>381</sup> He was “enraged (מָרַר)” against him and “struck (נָכָה)” him and “broke (שָׁבַר) his horns.”<sup>382</sup> Furthermore, the ram “had no power to stand before him (לֹעֲמָד לְפָנָיו).” Next, the goat became even more violent and “cast him down to the ground (וַיִּשְׁלִיכֵהוּ אֶרְצָה) and trampled on him (וַיִּרְמֹסֵהוּ).” Finally, there was “no one who could rescue (נָצַל) the ram from his power (מִיָּדוֹ).”

The actions of the goat are similar to the previous actions of the ram during its rise to power. The following words and/phrases occur in both descriptions: 1) “to stand before him (8:4, 7)” 2) “to rescue (8:4, 7),” and 3) “from his power (8:4, 7).” Although the goat’s actions against the ram are far more violent (see terms above), some of the actions were, in a general sense similar. This may suggest that a pattern emerges with the rise of each new combatant.

After the goat successfully destroys the ram, it becomes very prominent. The ram rose to prominence and “became great (גָּדַל)” in 8:4, but the goat, in comparison to the

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<sup>381</sup> The goat rushes at the ram in his “powerful rage” (בְּחֵמַת כָּחוֹ). The prepositional phrase “in the wrath” occurs 30 times in the Bible. It is primarily found in Ezekiel (11 times) in which it refers to the wrath and fury of God.

<sup>382</sup> The root word for “enrage” (מָרַר) means bitter. The root word for “trample” (רָמַס), which means to trample with ones feet, may mean to crush to death by stepping on a person.

ram, becomes “very great” (דָּגְדָּג לְעֵדֹם־אֵלֶּיךָ). The term “great” in this context, according to Goldingay, suggests hubris because,

“...the expression is only used in an unequivocally good sense of God (1 Sam 12:24; Ps. 126: 2, 3); of human beings it tends to suggest arrogance (Jer. 48:26; Joel 2:20; Zeph. 2:10; Ps. 35:26; Ps. 55: 13 [12]), or at least achievement at someone else’s expense... The expression has the foreboding ambiguity of the mouth speaking great things in 7:8, 20.”<sup>383</sup>

One may conclude that the repetition of the term “great” and its expansion in quality (e.g., exceedingly great) may compare to the lessening of the occurrence of divine passives in Daniel 7, however, in an inverse pattern. Therefore, as the quality of greatness rises, so does the hubris or pride of the king/kingdom.<sup>384</sup> Notably, after a king/kingdom becomes great its fall is not far behind. For the ram, the goat comes to destroy it. For the goat, the conspicuous horn is broken, and four horns take its place.

#### **4) 3<sup>rd</sup> Rising action: The little horn (8:9-12)**

Daniel 8:9-12 emphasizes the actions of the little horn figure. The previous emphasis on the two animals with horns (the goat – two horns; the ram – one horn, then four) and the emphasis on the actions of the little horn is indicative of a horn-centered conflict. The violent and confrontational conflict between the ram and goat prepares the reader for the rise of the little horn. In contrast to the conflict in Daniel 7, which emphasized the sovereignty of God over human kings/kingdoms, Daniel 8 emphasizes

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<sup>383</sup> *Daniel*, 209

<sup>384</sup> Newsom notes that here in Daniel 8 the cause behind the succession of kingdoms is no longer divine but inherently animalistic. Previously kingdom succession was an act of divine sovereignty, in Daniel 8 it appears that kingdom succession occurs as the result of the inherent violent nature or natural inclination of the animal (male rams/goats butt heads in the wild). Thus, Daniel 8 elaborates on and further illuminates Daniel 7 and the nature of the rise and fall of kingdoms, which now consists of violent battles for dominance. See Newsom, *Daniel*, 261.

the violence and power of human kingdoms. This change in emphasis is due to the narrative shift and the process of reconfiguration that accompanies it. This process is a factor of the language shift-narrative shift correspondence explained above. In 8:9-12 the third and final rising action depicts the violent conflict initiated by the enigmatic little horn, which exhibits intense violence similar to that of the previous two animals but on a wider scale and in a cultic context.

The information about the little horn does not emphasize details that were repeated in Daniel 7, such as its origin and its relation to the ten horns (it uprooted three other horns). Instead, these verses focus on the little horn's conflict with the host and the Prince of the host. The details of this section explain the nature of the little horn's complex relation to God, which was not explicated in Daniel 7.

#### a) The Little Horn: Similarities with the Ram and Goat

The previous two rising actions lead steadily to this one. The emphasis on their horns, the violent actions or incidents, the violent conflict between the goat and the ram, and the hubris of the animals/kingdoms prepare the reader for the heightened attack of the little horn. Therefore, the actions of the little horn against the Prince of the host, the host, and the stars bear a resemblance to the previous two rising actions.

As shown in Table 4.4 below, each successive depiction of each figure parallels and expands upon the actions of the previous figure. The actions of the goat parallel and expand on the actions of the ram, and the actions of the little horn parallel and expand on the actions of the goat. For example, the phrase "stand before him" occurs in the section concerning the ram and the goat. The term "trample" occurs in the sections concerning



the goat and the little horn. Therefore, the horn-centered conflict of the ram and goat are previews of the actions of the little horn.

Table 4.4 Terminological Parallels Between Ram, Goat, and Little Horn

	Description	Actions
1. Ram	<p>8:3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two horns</b></li> <li>• One higher than other</li> <li>• Higher one came up last</li> </ul>	<p>8:4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging (נגג) west, north, south</li> <li>• No beast could <b>stand (עמד) before him</b></li> <li>• No one who could <b>rescue (נצל) from his power</b></li> <li>• Did as he pleased and <b>became great (גדל)</b></li> </ul>
2. Goat	<p>8:5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the west</li> <li>• Not touching the ground</li> <li>• <b>Conspicuous horn</b></li> </ul>	<p>8:6-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ran at ram in his powerful wrath</li> <li>• He was enraged against him</li> <li>• Struck him, broke his two horns</li> <li>• Ram had no power to <b>stand (עמד) before him</b></li> <li>• He <b>cast (שלך) him down to the ground and trampled him (רמס)</b></li> <li>• No one who could <b>rescue (נצל) the ram from his power</b></li> <li>• Became <b>very great (גדל)</b></li> <li>• Great horn broken</li> </ul>
3. Horn	<p>8:9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of one of them</li> <li>• <b>Little horn</b></li> </ul>	<p>8:9-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grew <b>exceedingly great (גדל) toward south, east, glorious land</b></li> <li>• <b>Grew great (גדל) to the host</b></li> <li>• Threw some host and stars <b>to ground and trampled (רמס) them</b></li> <li>• Grew <b>great (גדל) to Prince of host</b></li> <li>• Took away הַתְּמִיד<sup>385</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>385</sup> The term תְּמִיד means “regular or continuous.” Its occurrence in Daniel 8 is due to the frequent use of cultic terminology in the chapter. In the biblical text, the term (without the article) primarily occurs in the book of Psalms and means “always or continually.” The term (with the article) primarily occurs in the book of Numbers to refer to the regular showbread (4:7) or the regular grain offering (4:16), but it is most often used to refer to the regular burnt offering (Num. 28, 29). Goldingay rightly states, “it can thus also hint at a wider range of observances; it may here suggest the religious practices of the temple in general...” The term occurs 5 times in the book of Daniel and only with the article, it does not occur in the anarthrous form. In the book of Daniel, it primarily occurs in Daniel 8 (3 times; also in 11:31 and 12:11) in 8:11, 12, and 13. It refers to the little horn’s attack against the Prince of the host (8:11). He removes the תְּמִיד from him. In 8:12 the little horn “is given” (passive form of “to give”) a host and the תְּמִיד, which may suggest that a divine action allows the attack to occur. Finally, in 8:13 the term is included in a summary of the little horn’s actions. Rodriguez addresses the usage of the term in Daniel and concludes it, “should be understood in the broadest possible sense,” as it is used in the absolute form in Daniel. As a consequence, “it refers to the cultic acts performed in the holy place or which had indirect relation to the holy place. The theological concept underlying those activities was that of intercession.” Therefore,

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cast down (שִׁלַּךְ)</b> place of his sanctuary</li> <li>• <b>Throw (שִׁלַּךְ)</b> truth <b>to ground</b>; act and prosper</li> </ul>
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b) The little horn: Different from the ram and goat

Despite the parallels between the little horn and the two previous animals, it is also different from them. For example, unlike the two animals, the direction that the horn comes from is not noted. Mysteriously, it comes from “one of them (8:9).”<sup>386</sup>

Furthermore, it is not attached to an animal, like the other horns. Moreover, unlike the two previous animals, the horn “becomes great (8:9)” from the very beginning of its appearance. Its movement is described as follows: It “grew exceedingly great toward the south, east, and the glorious land.” For the previous animals, such “greatness” or arrogance only occurred after their violent campaigns. Here, the horn exhibits an extreme

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Rodriguez suggests that the translation “continual intercession,” would be most appropriate. Angel M. Rodriguez, “Significance of the Cultic Language in Daniel 8:9-14,” in *Symposium on Daniel* (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986), 527-549, 533. Although the words “burnt offering” are supplied, the Hebrew term for “the daily” (תָּמִיד) can function as representative of the whole ritual service of the temple. Elias Brasil DeSouza explains that the term is used to refer to several elements related to the ritual system of the sanctuary. *The Heavenly Sanctuary/Temple Motif in the Hebrew Bible: Function and Relationship to the Earthly Counterparts*, PhD, diss. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2005), 458. He concurs with Rodriguez, who states that it “was used in connection with the main activities the priest was commanded to perform continually in the sanctuary.” Rodriguez further concludes that these activities are primarily related to the priestly ministry in the first apartment of the sanctuary. “Significance of the Cultic Language in Daniel 8:9-14,” 533.

<sup>386</sup> Most commentators understand the origin of this horn to be from one of the four horns that replaced the conspicuous horn in verse 8. Lucas, *Daniel*, 214. Lucas states that the horn in Daniel 8 differs from the horn in Daniel 7 in that the former comes from one of the four horns and the latter appears among the 10 horns of the fourth beast. However, some have suggested that the origin of the little horn is from one of the four winds rather than the four horns. See Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 124-125. Currently, Doukhan sees the phrase “one of them” referring to one of the four beasts via the four winds. See *Daniel 11: Decoded* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019), 38-39. William H. Shea, *Daniel*, (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 177 and *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986), 42-52. A few commentators note that the origin of each animal corresponds to the direction from which it charges against its enemies (e.g., vv. 4, 5). See Stefanovic, *Wisdom to the Wise*, 304. In addition, see the discussion below in section 2. b. 4). d.

level of arrogance (תגדל-ליתך) from the very beginning.<sup>387</sup> At this point, the reason behind it is not revealed. Notably, there is a direct relation or correlation between excessive violence and greatness in Daniel 8.

c) The little horn and the host and stars

In the above analysis of Daniel 7, it was noted that information regarding the “holy ones” was introduced in the narrative of the seer and increased with each interpretation (see Table 4.2). Notably, in Daniel 7:25 it states that the “holy ones” or “saints” were given into the hands of the little horn, who violently attacked them. Similarly, in Daniel 8, the little horn is depicted as violently attacking two groups linked to God or the Prince of the host, namely the host and the stars.

These two groups first appear in 8:10, where it states that the little horn throws some of the “host” and “stars”<sup>388</sup> to the ground or causes some of the host of heaven “to fall” (נפל) to the earth, where he tramples them. The use of the causative may suggest the translation “to throw” to the earth. This action mimics that of the goat when it attacked

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<sup>387</sup> The Hebrew term used here (תגדל) can mean “remainder, excellence, excess,” and in this context the term means to grow great “in excess, exceedingly.” *BDB*, 451d. It can also mean “too much, excessively.” *HALOT*, s.v. “תגדל.”

<sup>388</sup> The phrase “host of heaven” is found approximately 18 times in the Hebrew Bible and primarily refers to celestial entities or the worship of astral deities. See Deut 4:19; 17: 3; 1 Kgs 22:19; 2 Kgs 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4, 5; Isa 34:4; Jer 8:2; 19:13; 33:22. However, the term for host itself primarily refers to “army, war, or warfare.” *BDB*, 838d. In some contexts, it can refer to the service of the Levites in sacred places. The Hebrew term for “star” occurs about 40 times in the Bible and primarily refers to celestial entities. However, the term is most prominent in Genesis, especially with reference to the offspring of Abraham. (See Gen 15:5; 22:17; 26:4; 37:9 [Joseph’s brothers]). This association continues in Exod 32:13; Deut 1:10; 10:22; 28:62. Notably, the phrase “stars of heaven” is used in the context of a battle in Judges 5:20, in which Deborah sings of the battle between the Israelites and Sisera. See Hasel’s discussion regarding the different views on the use of the *waw*, “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Heavenly Sanctuary, and the Time of the End: A Study of Daniel 8:9-14,” 378-461 in *Symposium on Daniel*, Frank B. Holbrook, ed. (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986), 397-398.

the ram. In addition, like the goat, the horn trampled upon some of the host and the stars.<sup>389</sup> The horn brings the bestial violence into the realm of heaven.

Furthermore, in Daniel 8:12 it states that a host is “given” to the little horn. The use of the term “give” is similar to its use in Daniel 7:25, where the term “give” is in the passive form (ܒܗܝܢ) in Aramaic.<sup>390</sup> The Hebrew term for “give” in 8:12 is also in the passive form.<sup>391</sup> The usage in both verses may indicate similar actions regarding the holy ones and the host. Both verses may consist of actions that may also be similar to the divine action in Daniel 1:2, in which the Hebrew term “give” (נתן) also occurs. God gave King Jehoiakim and some of the vessels of the temple to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Moreover, the host in Daniel 8:12 is “given” to the little horn because of “transgression (ܒܦܫܥܐ),” which is a reason that may be similar to the reason behind the exile of Judah (Dan. 1:1-2), according to the book of Jeremiah. The presence of the preposition (ܒ) may suggest the translation “for” or “because” (see Is 50:1; Mic 1:5). Consequently, a host is given over to the little horn because of transgression. Therefore, God’s sovereignty over the little horn is maintained despite the attack against his representatives and his sanctuary, since he is the one that gives over the host. The little horn is able to do these things only because God allows it.

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<sup>389</sup> In the Hiphil form the verb means “to cause to fall (8:10) or “causing death.” BDB, 656c.

<sup>390</sup> The term is in the Hithpeel imperfect third masculine plural form. “The Hithpeel stem is commonly described as the reflexive/passive voice counterpart to the Peal stem... Though labeled as reflexive/passive, the use of the passive voice is much more common than the reflexive voice.” Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Aramaic*, 125. John A. Cook notes, “The switch to the passive plural verb indicates a switch in subject to ܩܕܝܫܝ ܥܠܝܘܢܝܢ as the nearest eligible antecedent.” *Aramaic Ezra and Daniel* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019), 303.

<sup>391</sup> The term “give” (נתן) is in the Niphal imperfect third feminine singular form.

d) The little horn and the Prince of the host

The little horn's actions take place on two different planes. Similar to the previous animals, the horn acts on the horizontal plane and grows great to the south, east, and toward the "glorious land." The phrase "glorious land" generally refers to the land of Israel or the mountain of Zion.<sup>392</sup> After this movement toward Yahweh's cultic center on earth, the horn changes directions and moves vertically toward Yahweh's cultic center in heaven.

The horn moves progressively higher until its primary conflict is with the Prince of the host (God) (8:11).<sup>393</sup> The actions of the horn in relation to God may be the explanation that was not presented in Daniel 7 about the horn's complex relation with God. The horn grows to be equal with the Prince of the host (8:11).<sup>394</sup> This takes place

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<sup>392</sup> "The word is used in phrases denoting both the land... and the hill of Zion in particular." Goldingay, *Daniel*, 209. Vogel discusses at length the cultic connotation of Mount Zion. He states, "...Zion apparently came to embody the very essence of Israel's center and even that of the world and was frequently used to designate Jerusalem and the mountain of the sanctuary where God has his dwelling place." He further asserts, "The identification of Zion with God's holy mountain or the sanctuary/temple in the Old Testament is very explicit, either by direct syntactical construction or by parallelism. Since the sanctuary was situated on the mountain, the two are frequently used interchangeably." Notably, Vogel explains that "It has been demonstrated that Zion, the holy mountain of God, had within its cultic notion the strong connotation of kingship and the reign of God. 'The central theological notion evoked by the symbol of Zion is the kingship of Yahweh.'" Finally, he comments, "The designation *הַהַר הַזֶּה* has also been recognized as a definitely royal notion with obvious links to Zion and to the cult, reinforcing the concept of the holy mountain as the place where Yahweh sits enthroned as the king." *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 25, 26, 31. See for example Isa. 24:23, "The Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem" and Mic. 4:7, "The Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion." Goldingay translates the term (*הַהַר הַזֶּה*) as "the fairest." *Daniel*, 209. Newsom reviews its translation in the OG ("the north") and Th ("the host"), but she concludes "the beautiful land" is "the most likely explanation." *Daniel*, 254-255. In the Bible it refers to the land of Israel (Ezek 20:6, 15; Jer 3:19). It appears again in Daniel 11:16, 41, 45 probably with a similar connotation.

<sup>393</sup> Collins argues, "In view of the mention of the daily offering and 'his sanctuary,' there can be no doubt that the reference is to God. Similarly, in Dan. 8:25 the king opposes the 'prince of princes,' and in 11:36 he offends 'the God of gods.'" *Daniel*, 333.

<sup>394</sup> In general, the phrase or title refers to a human commander of an army. However, in Joshua 5:14, 15 there is a unique occurrence in which a heavenly commander of the host of the Lord appears. His status is evinced by the command to Joshua to remove his shoes since the ground is holy as a consequence

when he takes away **דַּתְמִיד**, a ritual term that can represent the entire ritual service of the first apartment of the sanctuary, and overthrows the place of God’s sanctuary (8:11).<sup>395</sup> The use of the phrase “place of his sanctuary”<sup>396</sup> may refer to the heavenly location of the sanctuary.<sup>397</sup> Like the Prince of the host, the little horn now receives a host, which is given over to it. Since the horn now possesses the ministry of the **דַּתְמִיד** and a host, the little horn essentially becomes like the Prince of the host or takes his place (replaces him).<sup>398</sup> Finally, the little horn throws truth to the ground and continues to prosper and perform his antagonistic actions against the Prince of the host and his sanctuary (8:12).<sup>399</sup> In the horn’s attacks its upward movement is accompanied by a simultaneous casting down of the host, the stars, the place of the sanctuary, and truth.

According to the actions of the little horn, one may conclude that the horn’s complex relation with God, which was briefly depicted in Daniel 7, is that it seeks to take

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of the commander’s presence (v. 15). See 1 Sam 17:55; 1 Kgs 1:19, 25; 1 Kgs 11: 15, 21; 2 Kgs 4:13; 25:19; Jer 52:25; 1 Chr 19:18; 25:1; 26:26. Some commentators see the Prince of the host as a divine figure or God himself. See Goldingay, *Daniel*, 210; Collins, *Daniel*, 333; Newsom, *Daniel*, 264.

<sup>395</sup> For a detailed discussion of the verb for “to be high, exalted” (**רָם**) see Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 59, n. 202.

<sup>396</sup> The Hebrew term for “place” (**מְכוֹן**) occurs 17 times in the Bible, and can refer to God’s throne, his dwelling place, or the foundation of his throne whether in heaven or on earth. The term can also refer to Mount Zion. It can also mean the support for something, specifically God’s throne or the foundations of the earth. *HALOT*, s. v. “מְכוֹן.”

<sup>397</sup> Newsom argues, “The double term ‘place of his sanctuary’ (*mekon miqdaso*) is unusual, though the words are used in poetic parallelism in Exod 15:17. *Miqdas* is the common word for sanctuary in the priestly literature and in Ezekiel. *Makon* is less common but occurs in poetic contexts, where it is frequently used of the heavenly dwelling of God (1 Kgs 8:39, 43, 49; Isa 18:4; Ps 33: 14), though it can also refer to the earthly habitation (Exod 15:17; 1 Kgs 8:13).” *Daniel*, 265.

<sup>398</sup> See Collins, *Daniel*, 334, for a discussion of the possible ways to interpret verse 12.

<sup>399</sup> “The truth in question is most probably not the abstract truth, but the Jewish law.” Collins, *Daniel*, 335. The Hebrew term for “truth” occurs about 37 times in Psalms and refers either to a characteristic of God (which is translated as “faithfulness”) or to God’s word or law. See Pss. 19:9; 25:5; 43:3; 51:6 (truth of God’s word); Pss. 26:3; 30:9; 31:5; 40:10, 11 (faithfulness of God).

the place of God by taking over cultic activities solely belonging to God. Therefore, one may conclude that the reason for the use of the divine passive in Daniel 7:8 is because the little horn makes itself equal to God and thus the action of “uprooting” the other three horns is perceived as a divine action. Therefore, Daniel 8:9-12 explicates the nature of the little horn’s complex relation to God.

As shown in Table 4.5, the little horn is in conflict with two entities, God’s sanctuary ministration and his representatives (“host” and “stars”). He attacks the latter using violence and he attacks the former by supplanting or taking over God’s divine cultic prerogatives related to the **תַּמִּיּוֹת**. God as sovereign gives these elements to the little horn due possibly to transgression of or related to the host. The results of such an attack would be shocking to Daniel – a human ruler violently overtakes God’s cultic or priestly ministration in the heavenly temple and places himself in the position of God; he casts down the place of the heavenly sanctuary and of truth; he also viciously attacks the stars and hosts of God. The implications of the little horn’s attack against God and his sanctuary are linked to the meaning of the **תַּמִּיּוֹת** and its function in the heavenly sanctuary service. The implications of the little horn’s attacks against God’s representatives may point to their persecution or death. In addition, the implications of God’s act of giving over the host, the stars, and the **תַּמִּיּוֹת** may offer insight into God as judge over his representatives.

Table 4.5 Dual Focus of the Little Horn’s Attack

The Host	God and His Sanctuary
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<p><b>8:10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It <b>grew great</b> (לָגַד) to the host of heaven</li> <li>• It <b>caused some of the</b> host and some of the stars to <b>fall down</b> (נָפַל) to the ground</li> <li>• It <b>trampled</b> (סָרַח) on them</li> </ul>	<p>8:11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It <b>became as great</b> (לָגַד) as the Prince of the host</li> <li>• It <b>took away</b> (רָחַק) the (תְּמִינָה) from him;</li> <li>• It <b>overthrew</b> (שָׁלַח) the place of his <b>sanctuary</b> (מִקְדָּשׁ)</li> </ul>
<p><b>8:12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A host will be <b>given</b> (נָתַן) over with the (תְּמִינָה) because of <b>transgression</b> (עֲשׂוּף)</li> </ul>	<p>8:12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A host will be <b>given</b> (נָתַן) with the (תְּמִינָה) because of <b>transgression</b> (עֲשׂוּף)</li> </ul>

In the little horn's attacks against and conflict with God is an echo of the conflict of the Day Star in Isa. 14:12-15 (cf. Ezek. 28).<sup>400</sup> As such, the conflict takes on a cosmic character, as was found in Daniel 7. The desire of the Day Star to “ascend to heaven above the stars of God...above the heights of the clouds (vv. 13-14)” and to make himself like the Most High is similar to the actions of the little horn. It becomes like the Prince of the host as it moves higher and higher into the sphere of God. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, God sovereignly gives the host and תְּמִינָה ministrations over to the little horn as a result of the transgression of the host.

### 5) Climax of horn-centered conflict: The two holy ones (8:13-14)

Daniel 8:13-14 is the climax of the plot of the vision. The previous rising actions create greater and greater tension as the struggle for supremacy becomes more and more

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<sup>400</sup> Collins, Goldingay, and others have noticed a parallel between the actions of the horn and the actions of the figure in Isa. 14:12-15. Collins states, “The elevation of the little horn to the stars has a clear biblical precedent in Isa. 14:12-15...This passage is an allegory of the career of the king of Babylon but evidently presupposes a myth about the unsuccessful aspiration of the Day Star.” Collins, *Daniel*, 332. See also Goldingay, *Daniel*, 202; Hartman and DiLella, *Daniel*, 236; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 334. Collins suggests the reference is originally from a Canaanite myth of the unsuccessful attempt of the morning star to take Baal's throne.

violent. The third rising action creates the most tension as the little horn brings the violent struggle for supremacy into the heavenly sphere against the stars and host of God, and against God himself in his heavenly sanctuary. In Daniel 7, heaven responded to the violent earthly struggle for supremacy, especially to the actions of the fourth beast and little horn, with a heavenly scene of divine royal judgment that is visually transcendent.

In Daniel 8 the plot also turns to a heavenly scene after the depiction of the little horn's violent acts against the host, the stars, the sanctuary, and the Prince of the host. This scene parallels the divine royal judgment in Daniel 7, but it is visually muted in comparison. It does not visually depict the judgment, but it foretells the time when divine cultic judgment will begin. Since the imagery in the vision of Daniel 8:2-14 suggests a cultic rather than kingly context for the judgment, the scene probably foretells of cultic rather than kingly divine judgment. Several images and terms in the vision of Daniel 8:2-14 suggest that the divine cultic judgment foretold has similarities to the cultic holy day of Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, described in Leviticus 16.<sup>401</sup>

In Daniel 8:13-14, the visionary phrase "I saw" (8:2, 3, 4, 6, 7) is replaced by the phrase "I heard (8:13)." Daniel hears two holy ones conversing and he relates what he hears. An emphasis on hearing the judgment foretold may complement the highly visual scene of judgment in Daniel 7:9-10. Daniel hears one holy one ask the other, "How

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<sup>401</sup> For a clear explanation of the possible indications of the Day of Atonement in Daniel 8 see Brasil de Souza, *The Heavenly Sanctuary in the Hebrew Bible*, 460-463.

long”<sup>402</sup> or “Until when”<sup>403</sup> (8:13). The question offers a summation or distillation of the incidents found in Daniel 8:9-12 and so emphasizes specific elements of the vision:

הַחֲזוֹן הַתְּמִיד וְהַפְּשָׁע שֶׁמִּם תֵּת וְקִדְשׁ וְצָבָא מְרֻמָּה. Similar to the vision’s depiction of the little horn’s actions in 8:9-12, the question focuses on two entities, 1) God’s sanctuary and 2) the host. Concerning the former, the question refers to the תְּמִיד and to the trampling of the sanctuary. Concerning the latter, the question refers to the transgression that makes desolate and to the trampling of the host.

The first holy one responds with a cryptic time message, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state (or cleansed) (8:14)”<sup>404</sup> As noted above, if one notes the sequence of events in Daniel 7 and 8, it is possible to see a parallel between the judgment depicted in Daniel 7 and the message of the holy one that

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<sup>402</sup> Newsom, Goldingay, and others see a connection between Zech. 1:7-17 and the cry “How long...” by one of the holy ones. *Daniel*, 266 and *Daniel*, 212. Newsom also suggests Zech. 2:3-4 [7-8] exhibits parallels with the conversation of the two holy ones in Daniel 8:13-14. Goldingay notes that the question of the holy one is similar to the “how long” asked by the angel in Zech. 1:7-17 and similar to that found in the lament psalms, especially those that refer to the “devastation of the land and the defiling of the sanctuary.” Goldingay, *Daniel* 212. (See Ps. 94:3; Isa. 6:11; Jer. 12:4). Moreover, the question primarily emphasizes vv. 10-12, which is the context of the little horn’s actions. This is similar to the emphasis in 7:8, 11, in which the “the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking” is the focus of the seer immediately before and after the vision of the judgment scene. Furthermore, 7:24-26 also focus on the single horn, which attacks the Most High, his saints, and religious law. In Daniel 8:13 the emphasis is upon the תְּמִיד, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot. This may be a summation of the horn’s attack against the Most High, the saints, and the heavenly sanctuary.

<sup>403</sup> See DeSouza’s argument for this translation. *The Heavenly Sanctuary Temple Motif in the Hebrew Bible*, 454-456.

<sup>404</sup> See “‘Ereb Boqer of Daniel 8:14 Re-Examined” by Siegfried J. Schwantes, 475-496 in *Symposium on Daniel*, Frank B. Holbrook, ed. (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1986) for a thoughtful discussion on the different theories about the 2300 evenings/mornings. See also Goldingay for a brief discussion of the most recurring interpretation. *Daniel*, 213 and also see Alfred-Felix Vaucher, “Daniel 8:14 en occident jusqu’au Cardinal Nicolas de Cusa,” *AUSS* 1 (1963): 139-151. For a discussion of the terms referring to the interlocutors, see Raimund Köbert, “Eine alte Erklärung von ‘palmoni’ (Dan. 8, 13),” *Bib* 35 (1954): 270-272. Furthermore, see Claus Schedl, “Mystische Arithmetik oder geschichtliche Zahlen?” *BZ* 8 (1964): 101-105 for an analysis of the prophetic enumeration.

foretells judgment that will bring restoration to the temple. Thus, the announcement in 8:13-14 corresponds to the divine judgment in 7:9-10. Consequently, the time message points to when divine judgment will begin so that the little horn's actions against the host and God will cease and when the heavenly sanctuary will be restored to its proper functioning (or made right, cleansed).<sup>405</sup>

c. Narrative of the Seer: Daniel Seeks to Understand (Daniel 8:15-26)

### 1) The purpose of Daniel's vision.

As noted in the analysis of the plot of the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, the purpose of Daniel's dream is not explicitly stated. Similarly, the purpose of the vision is not explicitly stated, but there are some clues that may reveal its purpose. The royal date formula is linked to the royal chronological setting of Daniel 7, but that may not offer as much information as is needed to determine the purpose of the vision. However, in the same verse, the dream of Daniel 7 is referred to so that the vision in Daniel 8 is explicitly sequential to the dream. Therefore, one may conclude that the vision builds on Daniel 7.

In addition, the expanded treatment of the horn-imagery also suggests that the vision offers more information about the little horn in Daniel 7. Furthermore, the key word related to Daniel's comprehension of the vision is no longer "know" as in Daniel 2-

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<sup>405</sup> The niph'al (נִפְּלָא) of the verb for "to be righteous" (נִפְּלָא) may be translated as "be put right/justified/vindicated." It is found mostly in the book of Job and has a juridical meaning in relation to vindication, acquittal, or justification. This form could also be viewed as a divine passive. In a sense, all of the meanings mentioned may be possible. See *BDB*, 841c. See also Niels-Erik Andreasen, "Translation of Nisdaq/Katharisthesetai in Daniel 8:14" in 475-496 in *Symposium on Daniel* (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986); Richard M. Davidson, "The Meaning of Nisdaq in Daniel 8:14," *JATS* 7 (1996): 107-119. Goldingay argues that the "overthrowing" of the sanctuary "consists in its being prevented from functioning as a place of worship of the true God." Further, he notes that the one carrying out this action probably behaved in such a way that he assumed "authority that belonged to God alone," which is an act of arrogance. *Daniel*, 211.

7, it is now “understand.” The term “know” is the same in Aramaic and Hebrew, so Daniel 8 could have continued its repetition. However, Daniel’s need is not to know God as sovereign, as the foreign kings, because he is already a faithful follower of God. According to the reference in 8:1 and the focus of the vision, Daniel’s need is to understand the actions of the little horn. This is what he requested in Daniel 7:20-22. Daniel’s request in these verses may be the foundation for the meaning of the vision in Daniel 8. Daniel 8, and the subsequent chapters in Hebrew, helps Daniel to “understand,” comprehend, or grasp the character of the conflict in which the little horn is central.

This conclusion may also be supported by the sphere in which the little horn focuses its attack. Since its attack is against the divine cultic realm and God’s representatives that are benefitted by God’s cultic ministration, the people of God may be directly and negatively affected by the little horn’s attack.<sup>406</sup> Therefore, it is important for Daniel, and for all of God’s followers, to understand the nature of the little horn’s attack.

## **2) Daniel seeks understanding (8:15).**

At the conclusion of the vision, the narrative of the seer returns. The plot of the narrative coheres around Daniel’s search for understanding. Immediately after the vision ends, Daniel seeks to know or “understand” it (8:15).<sup>407</sup> In Daniel 7, the term “know”

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<sup>406</sup> In this study, the term cultic is used broadly to refer to the temple structure, whether in heaven or on earth, and to its appurtenances and to divine and human officiants. In addition, the term refers to Israelite or non-Israelite religious references to worship.

<sup>407</sup> The noun form of the term “understanding” occurs in 8:15 and three other times in the Hebrew section of the book (1:20; 9:22; 10:1); the last two occurrences are also found in a context that refers to understanding a vision. The verb form of the term occurs 22 times in the Hebrew section, Dan. 1:4, 17; 8:5, 16, 17, 23, 27; 9: 2, 22, 23; 10:1, 11, 12, 14; 11:33, 37; 12:8, 10. The term may have a similar function as the term “know” in the Aramaic section; however, the term “know” refers primarily to the kings, but in the Hebrew section the term “understanding” refers primarily to Daniel (except 11:30, 37).

was carried over from Daniel 2-6 as an important key word. In Daniel 8, the term “understand” becomes a key word. The term for “understand” (יָבִין) will also occur frequently in the subsequent chapters. This emphasis on understanding highlights Daniel’s personal search. Contemporaneous with Daniel’s search for understanding is the appearance of one that has an appearance like a man.

### **3) Gabriel: Angelic epiphany (8:16-18)**

The character described as “one having an appearance like a man” appears for the first time in the book (8:16). In contrast to Daniel 7, in which an anonymous interpreter speaks to Daniel, here in Daniel 8 a named interpreter comes into view. It is not clear if he is the same being as the anonymous interpreter in Daniel 7, although it is possible. Nevertheless, the introduction of Gabriel is the beginning of several significant appearances in the Hebrew section of a heavenly interpreter or “angelic epiphany.”<sup>408</sup> As in Daniel 7, and throughout the rest of the book, Daniel will need the help of an angelic interpreter to understand his dreams, visions, and revelations.

Next, Daniel hears a human voice between the banks of the Ulai canal; however, the source of the voice is not divulged.<sup>409</sup> The voice commands Gabriel to “Make this

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<sup>408</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 218. The name appears again in 9:21; other figures appear in 10:11-12:4; 12:5-7 but the name Gabriel does not occur again after 9:21.

<sup>409</sup> Although Daniel only hears a voice, in Daniel 12:6 he will see a being in linen in a similar position (“above the waters”). Lucas notes that there is no concensus among commentators regarding the identity of the owner of the voice. He states, “Most assume that it is another angel,” but Lucas concludes, “However, given the other parallels with Ezekiel’s experience in this chapter, the ‘human voice’ may allude to the ‘voice’ of Ezek. 1:28, which comes from God, who appears ‘in human form’ (Ezek. 1:26). Lucas, *Daniel*, 219, See also Goldingay, *Daniel*, 214 and P. M. Lederach *Daniel*, BCBC (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994), 191

man understand the vision (8:16).”<sup>410</sup> Gabriel’s response to the command initiates the angelic epiphany, which will also be presented in Daniel 10, but in an expanded form. Gabriel comes close to Daniel, but he becomes frightened and faints to the ground. Gabriel then states, “Understand O son of man,<sup>411</sup> the vision is for the time of the end (8:17).”<sup>412</sup> When Daniel hears his voice, he falls into a deep sleep (8:18). Only the touch of Gabriel’s hand awakens him so that can hear the interpretation.

#### 4) The interpretation (8:19-26)

In 8:19-26 the narrative of the seer continues with Gabriel’s explanation of the vision. In contrast to the interpretation in Daniel 7, which consists of a two-part interpretation that is driven by Daniel’s broad and specific requests, the interpretation in Daniel 8 consists of one part and is a response to Daniel’s general request for understanding. First, Gabriel follows a common dream/vision interpretation by simply identifying the referents of the symbols (8:19-22). However, the interpretation shifts to an

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<sup>410</sup> A new term for “vision” (הַרְאָה) occurs in 8:16 that is different from the previous term for “vision” (חִזְיוֹן) in 8:1. The term “vision” (חִזְיוֹן) occurs in Daniel 1:17; 8:1, 2, 13, 15, 17, 26; 9: 21, 24; 10:14; 11:14. The term “appearance (הַרְאָה) occurs in 1:4, 13; 8:15, 16, 26, 27; 9:23; 10:1, 6, 18. The latter term occurs frequently in Ezekiel (36 times). The former term occurs only 7 times in Ezekiel. Goldingay suggests “The supernatural conversation (vv. 13-14) refers to both a vision (חִזְיוֹן) and a revelation (הַרְאָה). Each word relates to a verb for seeing and suggests a visual disclosure. In v. 26, however, and presumably then in v. 27, the latter word refers to the verbal message about the 2300 evenings and mornings; the same reference will apply in v. 16, the revelation being that in vv. 13-14 (the term refers to a verbal message in 9:23...).” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 427.

<sup>411</sup> Gabriel calls Daniel “son of man” for the first time in the book, an epithet found frequently in the book of Ezekiel (94 times).

<sup>412</sup> Pfandl argues that the phrase “time of the end” (עֵת־הַסֵּפֶר) in 8:17 is eschatological in nature and refers to the end of the world, “the end of history.” *Time of the End*, 264-267. Pfandl further notes, “...all interpreters consider (עֵת־הַסֵּפֶר) to be an eschatological term. Yet they do not agree as to its application (266).”

explanation of the horn that does not identify the referent. It is rather a characterization of the king that is the referent of the little horn (8:23-25).

a) 8:19-22 Ram and goat.

Gabriel tells Daniel that he will “make known” to him “what shall be at the latter end of the indignation (8:19).” Here again, as in Daniel 7, the term “know” occurs to describe the process by which Daniel understands the vision. The term translated as “indignation” (אִתּוֹ) generally refers to God’s wrath.<sup>413</sup> Here it refers to the wrath or anger of human kings and kingdoms. Gabriel explains this “latter end of the indignation” refers to “the appointed time of the end.”<sup>414</sup>

Gabriel first identifies the referents for the ram and goat, respectively. The ram with two horns is identified as the kings of Media and Persia (8:20). The goat refers to the King of Greece and its prominent horn is its first king (8:21). The four horns that arise

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<sup>413</sup> The term “indignation” (אִתּוֹ) is linked to the definite article here and in 11:36, but it occurs without the article in 11:30. In the latter verse it refers to the anger or indignation of a human power. In the former verse it refers to a (possibly divinely) decreed period of time. It can refer to the indignation of men or of God. *BDB*, 276d. It also refers to God’s curse. *HALOT*, s.v. “אִתּוֹ.” It occurs most frequently in the book of Isaiah (5 times) and refers to God’s anger against his people or another nation. God’s anger is executed when he uses foreign nations to unleash his anger upon his people or another nation. Steinmann argues, “The noun...denotes furious judgment in a strong reaction to human sin. With the possible exception of Hos 7:16, it always refers to God’s wrath.” *Daniel*, 414. However, Lucas argues, “...in Zech. 1:12 (a passage which, as we have seen, has various similarities with this chapter), God is said to have been ‘wrathful’ or ‘indignant’ with Israel for the seventy years of the exile...However, it is important to note that, in Zechariah, although the exile was caused by Israel’s sin, the ‘ongoing’ wrath is not seen as a continuing, deserved punishment for Israel’s sins, but rather as the harsh treatment of Israel by the nations into whose power God has delivered her.” *Daniel*, 219-220. Similarly, Goldingay concludes, “...the link with Zech 1 and the vision’s beginning with the Persian era suggest that the whole period from the fall of Jerusalem to Antiochus is the time of wrath denoted here.” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 428; See also Collins, *Daniel*, 339.

<sup>414</sup> See Pfandl, *Time of the End*, 244-246. He concludes “that both phrases, ‘the last end of the indignation’ and ‘the appointed time of the end,’ are eschatological expressions referring to the final events in history (267).”



after him are four kingdoms that arise from the Greek empire, but they will arise without his power (8:22).

b) 8:23-26 A king.

Next, instead of naming the referent for the little horn, Gabriel characterizes its actions (8:23-25). He first situates the rise of this king during or after the time when “the transgressors have reached their limit (8:23).”<sup>415</sup> Then, similar to the depiction of the horn’s complex relation with God in Daniel 7:8 and 8:9-12, Gabriel portrays the horn as consisting of two disparate character traits, one beast-like and belligerent the other wise, but deceptive (8:24-25). For example, in 8:23 it states, “a king of bold face, one who understands riddles shall arise.” The term “bold face” refers to a harsh ruler<sup>416</sup> while the phrase “one who understands riddles” refers to one who is wise. This is striking because, in the book of Daniel, only those who are God’s representatives are denoted as wise. Within the book of Daniel, these two terms refer to two diametrically opposed characteristics, perspectives, or ideologies. Yet, they merge together in the little horn.

Goldingay similarly concludes that 8:23b summarizes two “key aspects” of the little horn that are expanded in vv. 24, 25, “his ruthless boldness and his artful cleverness.”<sup>417</sup> He further notes that these two aspects, “are both elements in the standard

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<sup>415</sup> Stefanovic explains, “In a few places in the Bible, God is portrayed as waiting and allowing sin to reach a measure of gravity before proceeding with his judgment (cf. Gen. 15:16). *Wisdom to the Wise*, 316. Goldingay concurs and writes, “The notion of rebels or rebellious reaching full measure applies well to gentiles: see Gen 15:16; Wis 19:1-4.” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 431.

<sup>416</sup> The term “bold face” occurs two other times in the Biblical text, Deut 28:50 and Eccl 8:1. In both texts it refers to a king or ruler “who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young (Deut 28:50).”

<sup>417</sup> *Daniel*, rev. ed., 431.

portrayal of a tyrant.”<sup>418</sup> Although such a conclusion is probable, one may also state again that within the book of Daniel wisdom comes from God alone and only his followers are given wisdom. The Hebrew term “riddle” (הִדְרִי) generally refers to difficult sayings (cf. Judges 14:12-19; 1 Kgs. 10:1), but in the book of Daniel the term occurs one other time, in Aramaic, and only refers to Daniel’s wisdom (הִדְרִיָא, 5:12).<sup>419</sup>

As noted in Table 4.8, Daniel 8:24 and 25 explicate the two characteristics of the king. Daniel 8:24 outlines the king’s “bold” characteristics. It states that “His power shall be great...and he shall cause fearful destruction...and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints.” Three arrogant and/or violent acts portray the reign of the horn: 1) “His power shall be great,” 2) “he shall cause fearful destruction,” and 3) he will “destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints.” As noted above, when the term “great” describes human actions, it may refer to human hubris. The term “to destroy” (תחש) occurs twice in 8:24. In the Bible, it occurs most frequently in the book of Jeremiah (19 times) and refers to the destruction God’s people experience as a consequence of their sinfulness. Similarly, the horn causes “fearful destruction,” and destroys mighty men and the “holy ones of God.”

In contrast to the little horn’s traits of belligerence, in 8:25 Gabriel outlines the horn’s qualities of “understanding riddles” or wisdom. He states, “By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand...and in a time of tranquility he shall destroy

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<sup>418</sup> *Daniel*, rev. ed., 431. See also Lucas, *Daniel*, 220; Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision*, 230–231.

<sup>419</sup> Lucas explains, “...cleverness can lead to hubris, as in the case of the Prince of Tyre, whose great wisdom led him to think of himself as a god (Ezek 28:2, 6). The hubris of this king becomes clear in v. 25, when it leads him to oppose the ‘Prince of princes.’ *Daniel*, 221.

many.” Three actions of the little horn portray its wisdom, 1) “his cunning,” 2) his ability to make deceit prosper, and 3) his work of destruction during a time of peace.” With reference to the term “cunning,” (לְכָלִי) it mostly refers to “good sense,” “skill,” or “cunning.”<sup>420</sup> It is generally depicted as a positive virtue. However, the king uses his skill or cunning to “make deceit prosper.” Thus, the king uses a good characteristic for wicked purposes. The term for “deceit” (הַמְרִימָה) mostly refers to the actions of the wicked.<sup>421</sup> It is used to refer to Rebekah and Jacob’s trickery to gain the birthright and to the duplicitous response of Jacob’s sons to Shechem and Hamor. The actions of the king parallel the description in Jer. 9:8 of those who are deceitful, “...with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor, but in his heart, he plans an ambush for him.” Newsom identifies a similar usage in Isa. 10:13 where “the motif of the king’s wisdom is included, an element that Ezekiel makes central to his portrait of the King of Tyre in Ezek. 28:1-9.”<sup>422</sup> Isa. 10:13 states the King of Assyria proclaimed, “By the strength of my hand I have done it. And by my wisdom, for I am prudent (NKJV).” Therefore, in the hand of an arrogant and violent king, wisdom or cunning is used for wicked purposes.

Table 4.6 Daniel 8:24, 25 The Dual Characteristics of the Little Horn/King

<b>Destruction (8:24)</b>	<b>Clever Deceit (8:25)</b>
1. His strength (קֹחַ) shall be mighty (קִצְעוּ), but not by his own strength	1. By his cunning (לְכָלִי)

<sup>420</sup> See Prov 12:8; 13:15; 16:22; 19:11; 23:9.

<sup>421</sup> See Pss 5:6; 10:7; 17:1; 24:4; 34:13; 35:20; 36:3; 38:12.

<sup>422</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 271. She concludes that such terms are morally neutral and only become negative when linked to the arrogance and violence of the king.

2. He shall cause fearful destruction (תחש), and succeed	2. Under his hand he shall make deceit (מרמה) prosper
3. Destroy (תש) mighty men	3. And in/by/with peace (שלום) he shall destroy many
4. Destroy (תש) the people who are the saints	4. In his heart he shall be great (גדל)/He shall stand (עמד) against the Prince of princes

Such a conclusion coincides with the statement in 8:25 regarding the hubris of the king. It states, "...in his own mind (heart) he shall become great...and he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes." Consequently, the king's hubris is linked to his self-understanding. Possibly, he thinks his wisdom makes him equal to the Prince of princes. This self-understanding is very similar to the description of the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28.

The description of the king's corrupt wisdom probably explicates the little horn's action of casting down truth to the ground in Daniel 8:12. According to Lacocque, the term "truth" (אמת) refers primarily to the Torah.<sup>423</sup> Steinmann asserts that it refers to the Law of Moses.<sup>424</sup> Goldingay also concludes the term can "concretely" refer to the Torah, specifically to Torah scrolls.<sup>425</sup> Nevertheless, he also defines the term as "a more general word and it points more generally to the way things are supposed to be. Truth is the opposite of 'deceit' (v25)." In addition to the conclusions of Steinmann and Lacocque, and in accordance with Goldingay's conclusion, the act of casting down truth may

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<sup>423</sup> *The Book of Daniel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 197.

<sup>424</sup> *Daniel*, 403.

<sup>425</sup> *Daniel*, rev. ed., 423. Newsom argues the term "truth" refers to "the course of history as determined by God and to the proper relation of divine to human sovereignty." *Daniel*, 266.

correspond to the deceitfulness and duplicity of the king. Thus, it refers to the use of lies to deceive and one's plans to destroy an opponent.

Moreover, the king's clever deceitfulness and his self-understanding may also lead him to stand against the Prince of princes. The Prince of princes may be the Prince of the host in the vision. Therefore, the king may use his clever deceit to carry out the acts against the Prince of the host noted in 8:11-12. Consequently, the king uses his cleverness and skill to remove the **הַתְּמִיד** service from the Prince of the host and to overthrow the place of his sanctuary. In this manner, the king casts truth to the ground. In 8:24 the king uses strength (not his own) to destroy God's representatives and in 8:25 he uses clever deceitfulness to coopt the prerogatives of God concerning the heavenly sanctuary service.

The Hebrew term **שְׁלוֹה** can be translated as “ease,” “rest,” “security,” or literally “in the midst of peace.”<sup>426</sup> Although the term is difficult to translate in its grammatical context, it is possible that the literal translation may be most helpful since it may correspond to the idea of deceit or cunning. For example, the king may use the guise of peace as an opportunity to destroy the people of God and the mighty. Thus, his enemies may not initially perceive the little horn as violent and destructive. Through his cunning and deceit, the mighty and the people of God are lulled into a false sense of peace or tranquility. Under such circumstances, the little horn is able to cause great destruction.

Gabriel's interpretation corresponds to the dual focus of 8:9-12 and of the holy one's question in 8:13, which highlights the little horn's attack against two entities: 1)

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<sup>426</sup> HALOT, s.v. “שְׁלוֹה.” Lucas calls the phrase “grammatically difficult.” *Daniel*, 221.

God's sanctuary and 2) God's representatives, the host. The dual characteristics of boldness and clever deceitfulness also correspond to the dual focus of the little horn's attacks. The king uses his boldness to destroy the host, but not in his own strength. Furthermore, the king uses clever deceitfulness to appropriate the prerogatives of God in his sanctuary, especially since a human ruler is not capable of physically attacking God. The depiction of the king and the actions of the little horn suggest this entity has kingly and cultic connections and aspirations.

Gabriel ends his interpretation through characterization by stating the certainty of the vision.<sup>427</sup> He also tells Daniel to close up the vision "for it refers to many days from now (8:26)." Miller concludes the term "to close up" refers to preserving the vision for future generations rather than to hiding or closing the vision. He states that, "ancient documents were sealed for their preservation, and this is the idea here."<sup>428</sup>

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<sup>427</sup> (See notes 358 and 400) Two Hebrew terms for vision occur in Daniel 8 (חִזְוִן and מַרְאֵה). The latter term generally refers to a visual appearance. Here, it refers to the visual appearance of the two beings conversing and revealing the cryptic 2300 evening/morning prophecy. Shea explains, "In Daniel 8, both types of vision are present. From verse 1 to verse 12 there was a *hazon*, a symbolic vision. By verses 13 and 14, however, the *hazon* vision was over, and two angels, two personal beings, appeared. This appearance was a *mareh*. The Hebrew wording of Daniel 8:26 makes it clear that chapter 8 contains both types of visions: 'The vision [*mareh*] of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision [*hazon*]. For it concerns the distant future.'" Shea, *Daniel, A Reader's Guide*, 186. See also Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed, 427; Miller, *Daniel*, NAC, 236.

<sup>428</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 236. Lucas explains the "command to 'shut up' the vision has its parallels in certain genres of Akkadian literature...and other apocalypses...The verb used here...is used more of keeping something safe than of keeping it secret. *Daniel*, 221. The term also occurs in Daniel 12:4, where Daniel is told to "close up" and seal the book. Miller concludes that both terms refer to the preservation of the book until the end, a time in which the prophecy will be pertinent. It is not apparent in the text how or whether Daniel hides or closes the vision.

#### d. Conclusion (8:27)

Similar to Daniel 7, the chapter concludes with a description of the seer's response to all he has seen. In contrast to Daniel 7, the seer experiences greater emotional and physical destabilization due to the symbolic vision. He is so overwhelmed that he lay sick for a period of days. After he is well enough to return to work, he states that he was "appalled" (אָמַשׁ) by the vision and he did not understand it.<sup>429</sup> This conclusion is in contradistinction to Gabriel's attempt to make him understand. This may indicate Daniel's desire to continue his search for understanding, which may be the focus of the subsequent chapters.

### C. Comparative Analysis of Plot in Daniel 7 and 8

#### 1. Introduction

A comparative analysis of the plots in Daniel 7 and 8 suggests a narrative shift that corresponds to the language shift that occurs at the beginning of Daniel 8. Regarding the plot of the narratives of the dream/vision in Daniel 7 and 8 respectively, three shifts occur. First, a shift occurs from a God-centered kingly conflict to a horn-centered cultic conflict. The former depicts a universal conflict over kingship of the earth that is under God's divine control. The latter depicts a horn-centered cultic conflict that emphasizes three things: 1) horn imagery introduced in Daniel 7 (10 horns and little horn), 2) the rise to power as a product of violent, confrontational conflict, rather than God's divine

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<sup>429</sup> The term "to be appalled" (אָמַשׁ) primarily occurs in Ezekiel (25 times), Jeremiah (11 times), and Isaiah (10 times). Here it refers to the experience of being overcome with amazement, numbness, or horror. *HALOT*, s.v. "אָמַשׁ."

control, and 3) the violent actions of the little horn power against God and his people. The first two elements anticipate and prepare the reader for the third.

The second shift naturally derives from, corresponds to, and accompanies the first shift. As one transitions from Daniel 7 to 8, a narrative shift regarding imagery occurs. Since the little horn's actions in Daniel 7 are related to its perplexing relation to the Most High, a shift towards religious or cultic imagery is warranted to explicate its actions. Furthermore, Daniel's request for understanding emphasized the actions of the little horn. Therefore, a shift from kingly to cultic/temple terminology and imagery occurs. Third, the animal imagery also changes from creation-conflict to realistic or representational imagery as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8. These three shifts are a product of a reconfiguration of the introductory narrative information found in Daniel 7. Thus, the transition from Daniel 7 to Daniel 8 depicts a narrative reconfiguration that corresponds to the language shift from Aramaic (Daniel 7) to Hebrew (Daniel 8).

Regarding the plot of the narratives of the seer, a narrative shift also occurs. In Daniel 7, the interpreter of the dream is an anonymous being that Daniel finds standing within the dream. Moreover, the interpretation of the dream occurs in two steps to coincide with Daniel's two-step request, in which Daniel seeks to "know" the dream. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the heavenly interpreter is identified by name in a scene that depicts an angelic epiphany between Daniel and Gabriel. Furthermore, the process of interpretation occurs only once. In addition, the key word shifts from "know" in Daniel 7 to "understand" in Daniel 8.



## **2. Comparison of Plot: Narratives of the Dream/Vision**

### **a. From God-centered royal conflict to Horn-centered cultic conflict**

In Daniel 7 the narrative emphasizes God's divine sovereignty over the conflict that rages over who will reign on the earth. First, God is depicted as being in control over the actions of the wild beast-like creatures that arise from the Great Sea to rule on the earth. This is expressed through the use of divine passives that restrain the actions of the first three beasts (7:3-7). The fourth beast and its little horn are not restrained by God (7:7, 8), but they are judged and executed by God's divine judgment (7:11, 12). Second, God's royal sovereignty is depicted in the cosmic judgment scene in 7:9-10. God is portrayed as a transcendent divine king, whose glory and majesty far surpasses that of human kings. The imagery of fire strengthens the portrait of God as transcendent. Third, God's sovereignty in the conflict over who will reign on the earth is further portrayed in the investiture of the Son of Man (7:13-14). God alone gives dominion to rulers, so he wills that the Son of Man figure will receive an eternal and indestructible kingdom.

In contrast, Daniel 8 depicts a horn-centered conflict that emphasizes 1) horn imagery, 2) the violent, confrontational actions of the bestial powers, and 3) the violent, confrontational actions of the little horn power against God and his people. Daniel 8 returns to and expands upon Daniel 7:8, 20-21, 24-25, thus centering the text upon the little horn figure. This process of returning and expanding is a reconfiguration of the imagery and events in Daniel 7.

First, the horn imagery that originated in Daniel 7 becomes more prevalent in Daniel 8. From the beginning of the vision, the depiction of the "beasts (8:4)" in conflict over sovereignty emphasizes the horns of each animal. The description of the first animal, the ram, emphasizes its two horns – one horn being higher than and coming after

the first (8:3). The description of the second animal, the male goat, emphasizes its speed and prominent horn (8:5). Finally, the little horn figure appears as a single horn without an animal and as such represents the culmination of the previous depictions of kings/kingdoms.

Second, in Daniel 8 the representations of the rise of the combatants emphasize the violent actions that each animal performs to become “great (8:3-7).” The conflict in Daniel 8 is more violent and confrontational than that found in Daniel 7 and is not described using passive verbs to depict divine control over the process of becoming great. For example, the rise of the ram depicts it thrusting or goring to three different directions. Even more so, the depiction of the goat’s attack upon the ram is described using several violent terms (8:5-7), such as breaking, casting down, and trampling. Furthermore, the little horn’s actions in 8:9-12 highlights its violent attack against God’s representatives (the host, the stars) and God’s priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. As noted in Table 4.6, the little horn uses two methods to attack these two elements: 1) it uses destruction against God’s representatives, and 2) deception to coopt God’s priestly ministry in heaven.

Finally, the narrative shift in plot in the vision of Daniel 8 emphasizes the violent and confrontational actions of the little horn power. This emphasis builds upon the request of Daniel in Daniel 7:19-22. He sought to know the meaning of the actions of the little horn power. Therefore, the vision depicts the anticipation of the little horn power in the actions of the ram and goat and the actions of the little horn power. Daniel 8:9-12 depict the little horn power’s horizontal movement as it becomes great to the south, the

east, and the glorious land; its rise against the host and the stars; and finally its rise against the Prince of the host and his sanctuary.

b. From kingly terminology/imagery to cultic terminology/imagery

Table 4.7 Comparison of Kingly and Cultic Terminology in Daniel 7 and 8

<b>Kingly Terms</b>	<b>Daniel 7</b>	<b>Daniel 8</b>
1. Dominion <sup>430</sup>	vv. 6, 12, 14, 26, 27	----
2. Throne <sup>431</sup> *	v. 9* (2 times)	----
3. King(s) <sup>432</sup>	vv. 1, 17, 24	vv. 1, 20, 21, 23, 27
4. Kingdom <sup>433</sup>	vv. 14, 18, 22, 23, 24, 27	vv. 1, 22, 23
5. Judgment*	vv. 10, 22, 26	----
<b>Cultic Terms</b>		
1. Ram	----	vv. 3, 4, 6, 7, 20
2. Goat	----	vv. 5, 8, 21
3. Sanctuary	----	v. 11 (שְׂדֵדָה); vv. 13, 14 (שְׂדֵדָה)
4. Transgression	----	vv. 12, 13

<sup>430</sup> The term “dominion” (שְׂדֵדָה) occurs in vv. 6, 12, 14, 26, and 27 and refers to power and sovereignty. *BDB*, 1115d; It occurs in chapters 3 and 4, but it occurs most frequently in Daniel 7. It is a quality that God controls since he gives it to others (vv. 6, 14, 27). For example, he gives dominion to the third beast (v. 6). The passive verbs used for the first three beasts imply God’s control over their reign. However, the fourth beast’s rise is accompanied by active verbs. This may imply that the fourth beast is in rebellion or conflict against God. However, the fourth beast’s little horn performs acts of explicit rebellion against God (v. 8, 25). Despite this conflict, God displays his ultimate kingship by burning the fourth beast and its little horn and removing the dominion of the other three (vv. 11-12, 26). Finally, God gives eternal dominion to the Son of Man and the saints (vv. 14, 27). Notably, the term “dominion” occurs three times in v. 14 in relation to the dominion given to the Son of Man. This repetition may refer to the completeness of his reign.

<sup>431</sup> The term אֲרָגְלָהּ means “throne.” It occurs twice in Daniel 7 in relation to the Ancient of Days. The first occurrence is in the plural form, which has caused commentators some difficulty. In the second occurrence the throne is singular and described as bathed in fire, “his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire.” The term contrasts the reign of the Ancient of Days with that of the four beasts. In addition, it is used in the context of judgment. Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 361.

<sup>432</sup> The term מְלִכָּה means “king.” It occurs in vv. 1, 17, 24 in relation to Belshazzar and the four beasts. Interestingly, it is never used in this chapter in relation to God or his representatives. The term מְלִכְוֹתָא means “kingdom.” In Daniel 7 the term appears in vv. 14, 18, 22, 23, 24, and 27. It is mostly used in relation to the Son of Man (v. 14, [27]), the saints (18, 22, 27), and the beasts (v. 23, 24). Both terms occur throughout the book of Daniel and are prominent in the Aramaic section. The term “kingdom” (Aramaic) occurs 53 times in the book of Daniel. The term “king(s)” (Aramaic) appears approximately 135 times in the book.

<sup>433</sup> See note 144.

5. הַתְּמִיד	----	vv. 11, 12, 13
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\* Only occurrence in the book of Daniel

In Daniel 7 the theme of kingship is evident due to the frequent use of four terms related to the subject, specifically, 1) dominion, 2) king (s), 3) kingdom, and 4) throne. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the theme of cult becomes more evident as the terminology and imagery transitions away from an emphasis on kingship to an emphasis on cult. Seven terms occur that are commonly related to the cult, 1) horn, 2) ram, 3) goat, 4) sanctuary, 5) place (of his sanctuary), 6) daily, and 7) holy.

### 1) Kingly terms in Daniel 7

In Daniel 7 the term “dominion” (דְּלִטָּן) occurs in vv. 6, 12, 14, 26, and 27 and refers to power and sovereignty.<sup>434</sup> It is a quality that God controls since he gives it to others (vv. 6, 14, 27). For example, he gives dominion to the third beast (v. 6). Finally, God gives eternal dominion to the Son of Man and the saints (vv. 14, 27). Notably, the term “dominion” occurs three times in v. 14 in relation to the dominion given to the Son of Man. This repetition may refer to the completeness of his reign. Furthermore, the term “king” (מֶלֶךְ) occurs in vv. 1, 17, 24 in relation to Belshazzar and the four beasts.

Interestingly, it is never used in this chapter in relation to God or his representatives. The term “kingdom” (מְלָכְוֹת) appears in vv. 14, 18, 22, 23, 24, and 27. It is mostly used in relation to the Son of Man (v. 14, [27]), the saints (18, 22, 27), and the beasts (v. 23, 24). Both terms occur throughout the book of Daniel and are prominent in the Aramaic

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<sup>434</sup> *BDB*, 1115d; It occurs in chapters 3 and 4, but it occurs most frequently in Daniel 7.

section.<sup>435</sup> In addition to the terms noted above, the term “throne” (כְּרִסִּי) occurs twice in Daniel 7 in relation to the Ancient of Days. The first occurrence is in the plural form, which has caused commentators some difficulty.<sup>436</sup> In the second occurrence the throne is singular and described as bathed in fire, “his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire.”

## 2) Cultic terms in Daniel 8<sup>437</sup>

As one moves to Daniel 8 there is a prevalence of cultic terminology and imagery, such as the terms “ram,” “goat,” “sanctuary,” and “הַתְּמִיד.” This imagery depicts the little horn’s actions in the divine cultic context, which addresses the problem of the complex relation between the horn and God that was not explained in Daniel 7:8, 20-21, and 24-25. Notably, the term “horn” (קַרְנֵי) can refer to the horns of an animal, as in Daniel 8, but in the rest of the Biblical corpus it occurs most frequently in relation to cultic altars.<sup>438</sup> Moreover, the two animals depicted in the vision, the ram and goat, also occur in the context of the temple or cult.<sup>439</sup> They are commonly depicted as sacrificial animals.

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<sup>435</sup> The term “kingdom” (Aramaic) occurs 53 times in the book of Daniel. The term “king(s)” (Aramaic) appears approximately 135 times in the book.

<sup>436</sup> See Lucas, *Daniel*, 181.

<sup>437</sup> See also Rodriguez, “Significance of the Cultic Language in Daniel 8:9-14,” 530-531.

<sup>438</sup> The Hebrew term for “horn” (קַרְנֵי) occurs most frequently in Exodus, Leviticus, and Psalms. In the books of Exodus and Leviticus all of the occurrences refer to the horns of altars. In the book of Psalms the use of the term refers to a part of an animal (Ps. 22:21), but it is mostly used as a metaphor for power, strength, or a leader (Ps. 18:2; 75:4, 5, 10; 132:17). See also Ezekiel 29:21 and 34:21.

<sup>439</sup> The Hebrew term for “ram” (אֵילִם) frequently occurs in Exodus and Leviticus, but it is most prevalent in the book of Numbers (approximately 66 times). In the book of Numbers, it is most prominent

Next, several cultic terms are clustered in 8:9-14 since these verses focus on the actions of the little horn in relation to the Prince of the host and his sanctuary. First, the term “daily” or “continuous” or “regular burnt offering” (דָּבָר) occurs in 8:11, 12, 13. The term (with the article) only refers to the table of showbread, and never to the daily sacrifices. It primarily occurs in the book of Numbers to refer to the regular showbread (4:7) or the regular grain offering (4:16). Goldingay rightly states, “it can...also hint at a wider range of observances; it may here suggest the religious practices of the temple in general...”<sup>440</sup> The term “sanctuary” (מִקְדָּשׁ)<sup>441</sup> only occurs once in 8:11 and it occurs in the context of the little horn’s attack and is part of the phrase “place of his sanctuary,” which points to the Prince of the host as the one to whom the sanctuary belongs. The term “place” (מָקוֹם) in the phrase “place of his sanctuary means “place or foundation.” It occurs 17 times in the Bible, and can refer to God’s throne, his dwelling place, or the foundation of his throne whether in heaven or on earth. The earthly dwelling place

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in chapters 7 and 29. The former describes the offerings at the consecration of the tabernacle and the latter describes the offerings for the different feasts. Interestingly, the offering of the ram in Num. 5:8 is called “the ram of atonement.” The Hebrew term for “goat” in Daniel is composed of two terms, (עִזִּים) and (עִזִּים). The former occurs only in Daniel, Ezra 8:35, and 2 Chronicles 29:21. The latter occurs more frequently, and is mostly found in Genesis, Leviticus, and Numbers. The book of Numbers contains the most occurrences and, like the term for ram, it is most frequent in chapters 7 and 29.

<sup>440</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 211. The term occurs 5 times in the book of Daniel and only with the article, it does not occur in the anarthrous form. In the book of Daniel, it primarily occurs in Daniel 8 (3 times; also in 11:31 and 12:11) in 8:11, 12, and 13. It refers to the little horn’s attack against the Prince of the host (8:11). He removes the דָּבָר from him. In 8:12 the little horn “is given” (passive form of “to give”) a host and דָּבָר, which may suggest that a divine action allows the attack to occur. Finally, in 8:13 the term is included in a summary of the little horn’s actions.

<sup>441</sup> *HALOT*, s.v. “מִקְדָּשׁ.” In the biblical text, it occurs approximately 75 times. It is most prevalent in the book of Ezekiel (31 times), which includes a focus on the desecration and destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. It is also the preferred term for sanctuary in the book of Leviticus. It occurs 3 times in the book of Daniel (8:11; 9:17; 11:31).

usually points to the temple or the mountain of Zion.<sup>442</sup> In the book of Daniel, the term is linked with the term for sanctuary (שְׁדֵרָה). Consequently, the heavenly temple may be the focus of the little horn's attack.

In addition, the term “holy” (שְׁדֵרָה)<sup>443</sup> occurs three times, twice in Daniel 8:13 and once in 8:24. It refers to the two beings speaking (8:13) and to the holy people that are destroyed by the harsh king (8:24). Finally, the term “be cleansed” קָדַשׁ occurs in 8:14. It means “to be just, right or to declare or make someone just or right.” Its use in the context of the sanctuary points to a juridical process. In the Niphal conjugation it only occurs here in Daniel 8:14. (The passive form of the verb may suggest a divine passive, thus God will perform this act of restoration.<sup>444</sup>) Goldingay uses the same terminology as the NEB's translation, “emerge in the right.”<sup>445</sup> This definition expresses the juridical

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<sup>442</sup> The term can refer to the place or site of Yahweh or of Mount Zion. It can also mean the support for something, specifically God's throne or the foundations of the earth. *HALOT*, s.v. “מְכוֹן.” It occurs primarily in 1 Kings 8, Psalms, and 2 Chronicles 6 (4 times each). 1 Kings 8 and 2 Chronicles 6 consist of Solomon's dedicatory prayer for the temple. Solomon uses the term to situate God's dwelling place, which is heaven.

<sup>443</sup> The root word occurs over 30 times in the Aramaic and Hebrew section of the book of Daniel. In Aramaic, it is primarily used in connection with God (5:11; “the holy gods”), the “watchers” (4:17 [ET]), or the people of God (7:18; “the saints of the Most High”). In Hebrew it can refer to the sanctuary (8:11), heavenly beings (8:13), the holy hill or city (9:20, 24), the Most Holy Place (9:24), the holy covenant (11:28, 30), the holy mountain (11:45), and the holy people (12:7). In Daniel 8 the root occurs 6 times. In the Biblical text the adjective occurs over 100 times and primarily appears in Leviticus (20) and Isaiah (38 times). It refers to God or to places, persons, things connected with God (temple, priests, sacrifices). (The noun occurs more frequently throughout the biblical text.)

<sup>444</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 406. The root word (righteous) occurs over 100 times in the biblical text and is most prevalent in the Psalms and the books of Isaiah and Job. It refers to God as righteous; or to ethical or moral correctness, and legal justification or vindication.

<sup>445</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 402. He further states, “The forensic metaphor that describes judgment being given for the holy ones on high (7:22) reappears as at least one aspect of the vision's promise that the sanctuary will ‘emerge in the right...’” (425). Such a statement implies that the divine act that returns the sanctuary back to its proper functioning is essentially the divine process of vindicating the holy ones through divine judgment.

function of the term, which is common in its usage in the Biblical text and its general definition.<sup>446</sup> Davidson also argues for the meaning “be put right,” “be shown to be in the right,” and “be cleansed.”<sup>447</sup> In this context, the term can be interpreted as having the broad meaning of “purification/cleansing and vindication/elevation.”<sup>448</sup> This response is similar to heaven’s response to the Little Horn in chapter 7, in which a juridical process addresses the conflict over dominion on the earth (7:9-10).

c. From creation-conflict imagery to realistic imagery

Finally, the language shift-narrative shift correspondence also accords with a transition from creation-conflict imagery that depicts a primordial conflict over the created order over kingship to representational or realistic imagery. The description of the four beasts in Daniel 7 indicates their conflict with God’s original created order in Genesis 1. Four land animals arise out of the water, a sphere primarily for sea creatures. The first and third beasts possess wings, a physical trait of birds, creatures that inhabit the sphere of the sky. Moreover, the third beast-like creature has four heads, a distinction that is not found in God’s created order. Notably, the fourth beast is a mixture of natural and inorganic features (7:7; iron teeth and 7:19; bronze claws). This is another physical feature that is completely absent from God’s created order. Thus, the beasts in Daniel 7 are depicted as creation-conflict creatures that possess features in conflict with God’s

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<sup>446</sup> It primarily occurs in the book of Job (17 times) and it refers to being right before God (Job 4:17; 9:2, 15, 20; 11:2). In other texts it can be translated as “acquit” (Isa. 5:23), “prove” (Isa. 43:9), justify (Isa. 45:25), or “vindicate” (Isa. 50:8); cf. *HALOT*, s.v. “נָסַף.”

<sup>447</sup> Richard M. Davidson, “The Meaning of Nisdaq in Daniel 8:14.” 117; cf. M. T. Pröbstle, “A Linguistic Analysis of Daniel 8:11, 12.” *JATS* 7/1 (1996): 81-106.

<sup>448</sup> Niels-Erik Andreasen, “The Translation of Nisdaq/Katheristhesetai in Daniel 8:14,” 475-496; cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 336 where he states, “The versions give the clearer paraphrase, ‘cleansed.’”



created order or features completely absent from God's creation. The four beast-like creatures rule over the earth, which again is in contrast to God's created order wherein humans rule over the creatures.

In contrast, in Daniel 8 the animals are not creation-conflict creatures; instead, the animals are basically representative of animals that exist in God's created order (ram with two horns; and goat with one horn), especially in the context of the cult/temple. This accords with the geographical imagery in Daniel 8. The setting refers to a specific location in space, namely Susa in the province of Elam near the Ulai canal. This realistic representation is a shift away from the creation-conflict imagery in Daniel 7.

Next, a further transition from creation imagery to realistic imagery is the depiction of the four winds in Daniel 7 and 8. In Daniel 7:2, the four winds of heaven stir up the Great Sea. This scene exhibits echoes of creation and the drama of divine conflict (see discussion above). In addition, the four winds work as one to create the watery context from which the ferocious beasts arise. However, in Daniel 8 the term "four winds" is no longer a foreboding phrase that, with the Great Sea, depicts a combative primordial setting. Instead, the four winds are now the geographical settings for the horn-centered conflicts. It is the plane on which the combatants become great (8:4, 5, 8, 9).

The four winds are now separated into the corners from which the combatants emerge and move forward. This depiction emphasizes the confrontational nature of the conflict because the direction that the combatant moves from and toward are directional opposites (see also note 91). For example, as shown in Table 4.8, the ram is situated in the east in Susa, but first moves toward the west to establish its greatness. Similar to the ram, the goat, which flies from the west (8:5) and moves towards the east to crush the

ram. Therefore, each combatant uses the direction opposite to its point of origin to begin its bellicose movements towards greatness (8:4, 5, 9). Before the goat can dominate the remaining two directions, it loses its prominent horn (8:8). However, the four horns that take the prominent horn's place are able to move toward all four directions of the world to conquer the earth.

Finally, the little horn figure comes "from one of them (8:9)," and moves first towards the south then east and then to the Glorious Land (west; 8:9) to carry out its violent rise to greatness and world domination. Thus, the little horn figure probably arises from the north.

Table 4.8 Geographic Setting of Conflict in Daniel 8 - "Four Winds of Heaven"

	<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Directional Opposite</b>
<b>1. Ram</b>	East (8:2; "in Susa," "in the province of Elam")	West [north, south] (8:4)
<b>2. Goat</b>	West (8:5, stated)	East (8:6; toward the ram)
<b>3. L. H.*</b>	North (8:9, implied)	South [east, Glorious Land/west] (8:9)

\*Little Horn (This conclusion links Daniel 8 to Daniel 11, in which the North-South confrontational conflict becomes central.)

### 3. Comparison of the Plot: Narratives of the Seer

In both Daniel 7 and 8 the depiction of the reaction of the seer expresses his anxiety and fear due to the dream or vision. However, Daniel 8 differs from Daniel 7 in its emphasis on the angel interpreter Gabriel. An angel epiphany is depicted in Daniel 8, which is in contrast to the anonymity of the interpreter in Daniel 7. In addition, Daniel 8

differs from Daniel 7 in that it uses the term “understand” rather than “know” to identify the seer’s desire with reference to the vision.

a. From Anonymous Interpreter to Angel Epiphany

In Daniel 7 the narrative of the seer focuses primarily on the message rather than the messenger. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the messenger receives more attention in the context of an angel epiphany. In Daniel 7, after Daniel finishes the report of his dream and relates his reaction to the dream, he speaks to “one of those who stood by” and asks him for the meaning of his dream (7:16). The interpreter is not identified by name and is only described as “one of those who stood by.” He is not set apart from the people in the dream nor is he given a command to enlighten Daniel regarding his dream.

However, in Daniel 8:15, 16 Daniel’s search for understanding coincides with the introduction of Gabriel as the angel interpreter. His physical appearance is described as “the appearance of a man (8:15).” A detached voice above the waters gives the angel’s name and commands him to “make this man understand the vision (8:16).” Finally, Daniel 8:17-18 depicts an angel epiphany where Daniel faints and falls into a deep sleep as Gabriel comes near him. The angel’s touch strengthens Daniel so that he is able to hear the interpretation.

In the subsequent chapters, the depiction of the angel interpreter will mirror this scene, as it is the foundation for similar scenes (9:20-23; 10:10-21). In some texts it is not evident which heavenly being speaks to Daniel (10:10-21), but the occurrence of an angel interpreter scene similar to the one found in Daniel 8 will be an integral part of the ensuing chapters.

b. From “Know” to “Understand”

In Daniel 7 the term “know” is used to describe the seers desire to comprehend his dream. In contrast, the term “know” does not occur in Daniel 8. Rather the term “understand” (יָבִין) is used to refer to Daniel’s search to comprehend his vision. The noun occurs once in Daniel 8. In 8:15 after Daniel sees the vision he states, “I sought to understand it.” The verb occurs five times in Daniel 8 (5, 16, 17, 23, 27) and four out of the five times it refers to the narrative of the seer, in which he seeks understanding and the angel interpreter makes him understand. The verb (22 times) and the noun (4 times) occur frequently in the Hebrew section of the book of Daniel (especially 8-12) and are noted as key words for the book.<sup>449</sup>

D. Analysis of Characters in Daniel 7 and 8

**1. Daniel 7**

In Daniel 7 God, the angel interpreter, and Daniel are not portrayed symbolically. Thus, this study will designate these three entities as characters in Daniel 7 and in the subsequent chapters. God is portrayed as a transcendent royal judge at his court. This depiction is achieved through the physical description of the Ancient of Days, and the description of his throne and his attendants. The angel interpreter is anonymous, so his presence as a character is minimal. Finally, Daniel is portrayed as a destabilized character due to his enigmatic dream, which causes him physical and mental anguish.

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<sup>449</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 298. She also notes of Dan 11:33-34 that, “...the ‘wise’...will similarly bring understanding to the people. Thus the angel who is able to interpret the hidden meanings of visions and texts stands as the model for the authors of Dan 7-12 and their immediate circle.”

a. God

The primary depiction of God in Daniel 7 is contained in verses 9-10. He is portrayed as a transcendent royal judge. His depiction follows “a tradition of biblical throne visions and theophanies.”<sup>450</sup> The depiction begins with an image of thrones, which usually denotes kingship. The plural form of the term “thrones” (כְּרִסִּים) has generated much discussion, yet the text indicates that the Ancient of Days is the only one that sits (7:9).<sup>451</sup> The term “Ancient of Days” (עֲתִיקַיּוֹמַיִן) may be suggestive of the context in which the text was written. It derives from a culture that honored and respected the aged, especially for their wisdom. Thus, as the Ancient of Days, God has the necessary wisdom to judge the kings of the earth. In addition, the epithet may highlight God’s eternal existence or immortality, as he is the one who has existed from ancient times.<sup>452</sup>

The physical description of God further emphasizes his royal transcendence. He is described as wearing a garment as “white as snow” and having hair “like pure wool (7:9).” These physical features reflect God’s royal splendor.<sup>453</sup> Some suggest such qualities also demonstrate God’s purity and/or holiness.<sup>454</sup> The transcendence of God is also depicted through the fiery image of his throne. The throne and its wheels are bathed in fire, so much so that the fire overflows into a river or stream of fire issuing from God (7:9-10). Goldingay notes, “There is an ambiguity about the OT’s frequent association of

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<sup>450</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 181.

<sup>451</sup> See Lucas for a brief summary of the various views put forth. *Daniel*, 181.

<sup>452</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 361; (Isa 41:4; Pss. 90:2; 93:2; 102:24-27).

<sup>453</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 362.

<sup>454</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 182.

fire with God.<sup>455</sup> He further states, “While fire can be an encouraging image, associated with light, protection, and guidance, more commonly it suggests something transcendent and absolute, awesome and dangerous, mysterious and destructive.”<sup>456</sup> Moreover he concludes, “The destructiveness of fire makes it a natural symbol of judgment (Deut 4:24; Pss. 18:8-13 [9-14]; 21:9 [10]; 50:3; 97:3).”<sup>457</sup>

Next, the portrait of God and his attendants emphasizes the transcendence of the divine heavenly court. The exorbitantly large number of attendants (7:10) indicates God’s unsurpassed royal court. Newsom notes, “The overwhelming sublimity of the divine presence is completed with a reference to the thousands and myriads of angelic figures who stand in attendance and serve him.”<sup>458</sup> Newsom continues, “Here the image serves to suggest the unlimited power and splendor of the divine court.”<sup>459</sup> Finally, the phrase “the court was seated and the books were opened (7:10)” points to the overall purpose of the scene. The transcendent portrait of God presented in 7:9-10 finds its ultimate purpose in the presentation and depiction of divine judgment. Such a scene is understood in contrast to the previous depictions of human kingship, namely the four beasts. Despite their power and strength, God’s kingship transcends all forms of human kingship. Therefore, God is the ultimate king who has the right, ability, and power to judge human kings. Briefly, in Daniel 7:13-14, God is again depicted as the Ancient of Days, but here his right to judge

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<sup>455</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 362.

<sup>456</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 362.

<sup>457</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 362.

<sup>458</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 230. She further notes that the “high numbers may also draw on a second tradition that associated God with huge heavenly armies (Ps 68:17 [18])...” *Daniel*, 231.

<sup>459</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 231.

and rule are represented by his investiture of the Son of Man.<sup>460</sup> God alone gives dominion to human kings. Here he gives the Son of Man eternal dominion, glory, and kingdom so that all nations will serve him as king.

#### b. Angel Interpreter

The angel interpreter is depicted as an anonymous entity that helps Daniel to know the meaning of his dream. It is difficult to determine whether this figure is an angel or some other being since he is only described as “one of those who stood by (7:15).”

#### c. Daniel

The character of Daniel is portrayed as a destabilized seer in search of the meaning of his dream. Previously in the court stories, only kings received dreams or mysterious messages that originated from God. Daniel alone possessed the ability to interpret the dreams or enigmatic messages of the kings (chapters 2, 4, 5). In contrast, in chapter seven Daniel becomes the destabilized dreamer and needs assistance understanding the meaning of his dream. His physical and mental destabilization is described in Daniel 7:15, 28.

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<sup>460</sup> See Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel Seven*, for his treatment on the identity of the Son of Man. He explains, “Indeed, the manlike being is depicted with divine attributes, while at the same time accepting a subordinate role in the presence of the Ancient of Days. Though the ontological status of the SM is touched upon, his functional role is more prominent in these verses...In the sense that the Danielic figure appears on the scene of Dan 7 when history, as symbolized by the preceding visionary elements, has run most of its course, the SM may be described as an eschatological being...In short, the SM of Dan 7:9-10, 13-14 is an individual, transcendent, eschatological being which exercises messianic royal powers (174).” The figure described as “one like the son of man (7:13-14)” is also depicted as a royal personage. He comes to the Ancient of Days and receives an everlasting kingdom.

## 2. Daniel 8

In contrast to Daniel 7, where God was depicted as a transcendent royal judge, the depiction of God in Daniel 8 portrays him using nonvisual terms as a priest ministering in his heavenly temple. Similarly, in contrast to Daniel 7, the angelic interpreter becomes a more substantial and defined character. The character of Daniel continues to be portrayed as a destabilized seer, with an even more destabilizing experience in relation to the angel epiphany and the vision.

### a. God

The vision in Daniel 8 portrays God as a priest ministering in the heavenly temple (8:11-12). He is given the title “Prince of the host (8:11).” The epithet may refer to “Yahweh of hosts.”<sup>461</sup> Stefanovic notes, “The title ... ‘prince,’ is sometimes used in the Bible to describe the leader of the priests and Levites who served in the temple (1 Chron. 15:5; Ezra 8:24). The title ‘Prince of the host,’ on the other hand, is used of an army leader (Gen. 21:22; 1 Sam. 12:9).”<sup>462</sup> Newsom asserts, “Although some have attempted to identify this figure with Michael...most agree that the reference is to none other than God.”<sup>463</sup> Consequently, it is possible to suggest that the Prince of the host in Daniel 8 is a depiction of God as a priest in his heavenly temple.

Unlike the depiction of God in Daniel 7, the depiction in Daniel 8 is not transcendent. There is no transcendent description of God’s physical appearance. In addition, the emphasis is no longer on God’s actions, but on the violent attacks of the

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<sup>461</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 216.

<sup>462</sup> Stefanovic, *Wisdom to the Wise*, 302.

<sup>463</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 264.



little horn against the host, stars, and God's heavenly ministration. Consequently, God is portrayed as less triumphant and victorious in the vision in Daniel 8. This may be the reason some commentators note the somber tone in Daniel 8.<sup>464</sup> Furthermore, the voice that commands Gabriel may also be a muted depiction of God. In the narrative of the interpretation, a voice commands Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision. Some commentators conclude that the voice above the waters is that of God.<sup>465</sup> Such a depiction corresponds with the muted tone of the divine depiction, especially in comparison to the description of God in Daniel 7.

#### b. Angel Interpreter

In Daniel 8, in contrast to Daniel 7, the angel interpreter becomes a substantial figure in the narrative of the seer and is introduced in an extended angel epiphany scene. Immediately after Daniel seeks understanding of the vision, he sees "the appearance of a man (8:15)." Seow states, "The language is reminiscent of Ezekiel's vision by the river Chebar of a virtual reality of divine presence a 'likeness...that seemed like a human form (Ezek. 1:26).'"<sup>466</sup> Daniel hears a voice call the man Gabriel and command him to make

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<sup>464</sup> Lacocque states, "substantial differences are to be noted (between Daniel 7 and 8). The tone has become more somber, the attacks against the integrity of the People and against God's honor are graver, and, above all, those attacks are, one after another, crowned with success. The evil one uses clever delusions that deceive many." *The Book of Daniel*, 189.

<sup>465</sup> Lucas states, "Commentators differ over the source of the 'human voice' in v. 16a. Most assume that it is another angel. However, given the other parallels with Ezekiel's experience in this chapter, the 'human voice' may allude to the 'voice' of Ezek 1:28, which comes from God, who appears 'in human form' (Ezek 1:26) (so Goldingay 1989: 214; Lederach 1994: 191)." *Daniel*, 219. Collins suggests, "In the context of the vision, this represents an angelic voice." He continues and notes, "...there is a tradition that the first holy one in 8:13 is Michael." However, in Genesis Rabbah 27:1 the voice in v. 16 is attributed to God. *Daniel* 336.

<sup>466</sup> Seow, *Daniel*, 126.

Daniel understand the vision. Goldingay asserts, “Gabriel is a ‘man of God’; he is himself addressed by a humanlike voice that is actually God’s voice.”<sup>467</sup>

Lucas explains, “Daniel is the only book in the HB in which angels are named.”<sup>468</sup> The name “Gabriel” can mean God’s hero, man of God, or God is my hero/warrior.<sup>469</sup> As a man of God, Gabriel calls Daniel “son of man,” which “suggests both solemnly and encouragingly the awesomeness and the honor of an ordinary human being hearing this man of God address him.”<sup>470</sup> It is his duty to make Daniel understand the vision. However, his very presence causes Daniel to faint and fall to the ground in a deep sleep (8:17). Daniel is strengthened by the touch of Gabriel and made to stand and receive the interpretation (8:18). This scene of an angel epiphany will be repeated in Daniel 10, where it will be significantly expanded.

### c. Daniel

In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 8, Daniel continues to be a destabilized seer as in Daniel 7. However, the angel epiphany causes him even more physical and emotional distress than he experienced in Daniel 7. For example, he falls to the ground in a deep sleep when the angel draws near to him (8:17). Daniel was terrified by this heavenly personage and fell on his face. Only when the angel touches Daniel is he able to bear the message from heaven. In addition, at the end of the chapter it states that Daniel “fainted and was sick for days (8:27).” Daniel is so physically and emotionally

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<sup>467</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 427.

<sup>468</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 218. See Daniel 8:16; 9:21 (Gabriel) and 10:13, 21; 12:1 (Michael).

<sup>469</sup> See Longman, *Daniel*, NIVAC, 205; Lucas, *Daniel*, 219; Collins, *Daniel*, 336.

<sup>470</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 427.

overwhelmed by the visionary experience that it makes him ill. This experience causes him more distress than the dream in Daniel 7. Moreover, even after Daniel received Gabriel's interpretation, he still did not understand the vision. Therefore, it is possible that another heavenly explanation is needed.<sup>471</sup>

Daniel's search for understanding moves beyond his desire to know in Daniel 7. In Daniel 7, the seer is first introduced to the information in his dream. In Daniel 8, the seer is given visionary information regarding a very specific element from his dream in Daniel 7. The vision emphasizes the actions of the little horn figure against the host and against God and his sanctuary service. This appears to be what Daniel needs to understand.

In the language shift-narrative shift correspondence from Daniel 1 to 2, and repeated in Daniel 3-7, the importance of human kings knowing the absolute sovereignty of God and the danger of human hubris was emphasized. Thus, the purpose of the LS-NSC was to explain and expand upon the events in Daniel 1, specifically Daniel 1:1-2. In the LS-NSC from Daniel 7 to 8, the importance of Daniel's understanding regarding the divine-human conflict involving the little horn figure is emphasized. He must be able to understand and recognize the deceptive and destructive actions of this figure, especially since he uses deception to coopt God's place in the heavenly sanctuary service. Therefore, Daniel (and other followers of God) must understand how to recognize this deception. In the subsequent chapters (9-12), the narrative of Daniel's search for understanding obtains to the very end. Daniel at times experiences success in his search and at other times he experiences frustration. Throughout this process Daniel relies on

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<sup>471</sup> See Lucas, *Daniel*, 221.

divine guidance. Although he never experiences full understanding (see 12:8), Daniel is assured of heaven's approbation (9: 23; 12:13) as he seeks to understand the nature of this conflict.

## E. Comparative Analysis of Characters in Daniel 7 and 8

### 1. Introduction

A comparison of the characters in Daniel 7 and 8 evinces a narrative transition. Specifically, concerning the depiction of God, a transition occurs from the depiction of God as a royal judge in his court to a divine priest ministering in the temple. In addition, the angel interpreter depicted in Daniel 7 is replaced with a named heavenly messenger, Gabriel, in Daniel 8. His role in the narrative of the seer is more significant than the anonymous interpreter in Daniel 7, in the narrative of the seer. Finally, Daniel continues to experience destabilization due to his heavenly experiences; however, in Daniel 8 he becomes more physically and emotionally destabilized (8:27).

### 2. Comparison

#### a. God: From Royal Judge to Divine Priest

As one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 a narrative shift occurs regarding the depiction of God. In Daniel 7, in the narrative of the dream, God is depicted as a royal judge in his court. However, in Daniel 8, in the narrative of the vision, God is depicted as a transcendent priest within the heavenly temple. Moreover, the depiction of God in Daniel 7 is triumphant and transcendent, but in Daniel 8 the power of the little horn is emphasized rather than the power of the Prince of the host. This shift is in accordance with the overall language shift-narrative shift correspondence noted above.

Table 4.9 Depictions of God in Daniel 7 and 8

	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
1 Related Imagery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiery throne(s)</li> <li>• Multitudes of attendants</li> <li>• Books</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stars, host</li> <li>• Sanctuary</li> <li>• Place of his sanctuary</li> <li>• הַתְּמִיד</li> <li>• Ulai River (above it)</li> </ul>
2 Physical Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White hair</li> <li>• Resplendent clothing</li> <li>• Fiery throne</li> </ul>	----
3 Divine Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrains first three beasts</li> <li>• Oversees divine judgment</li> <li>• Gives/removes sovereignty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives host to little horn</li> <li>• Will cleanse sanctuary</li> <li>• Commands Gabriel (8:16)</li> </ul>
4 Overall depiction	Triumphant	Under Attack

b. Angel Interpreter: From Anonymous Figure to Named Figure

A narrative shift occurs in the depiction of the angel interpreter from Daniel 7 to 8. In Daniel 7 the angel interpreter is anonymous and there is no physical depiction of this figure. His interpretation is the primary focus of the narrative. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the angel interpreter becomes a more developed character as his name and appearance are described. In addition, an angel epiphany occurs that overwhelms Daniel and causes him to faint. A similar scene will be presented in Daniel 10, but in an extended sequence.

c. Daniel: From Destabilized Dreamer to Destabilized Visionary

In both narratives of the seer Daniel is portrayed as destabilized and overwhelmed by his visionary experience. However, in Daniel 8 the seer experiences greater trauma both mentally and physically. The angel epiphany causes him to faint because of his

intense fear. Furthermore, the vision itself leaves Daniel sick for some days. Finally, Gabriel's attempt to make Daniel understand seems to have failed since he did not understand the vision at the end of the chapter.

## F. Identification of Narrative Shift from Daniel 7 to 8

### **1. Introduction**

As noted above, the language shift from Aramaic to Hebrew occurs at the very beginning of Daniel 8 (verse 1). This language shift also corresponds to a narrative shift in plot and character that also occurs as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8. One may say that the language shift-narrative shift correspondence of Daniel 8 begins a reconfigured narrative that emphasizes two major elements, 1) the actions of the little horn figure (8:9-12) and 2) Daniel's search for understanding regarding the narrative of the little horn figure. Daniel's search is aided by the help of Gabriel, who as a character becomes more significant in the angelic epiphany scene. This reconfigured narrative that accords with the language shift-narrative shift correspondence may continue, as the Hebrew language, to the end of the book.

### **2. Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence in Plot**

Regarding the plot of the narrative of the vision (8:2-14), one may state that it emphasizes a horn-centered conflict. Initially, the conflict focuses on the careers and clashes of the ram and the goat. However, it becomes apparent that they only prepare the reader for the primary focus of the narrative, the little horn and its attack against God and his representatives. The conflict is depicted with graphic confrontational violence and

intensity. This is depicted through the use of violent terms and direct confrontations between the combatants.

The little horn's violent confrontations supersede those of the ram and goat by their scope and opponents. Its attacks are focused on two elements: 1) God's representatives (the host and stars) and 2) God's ministration in the heavenly temple. The little horn attacks the former through acts of violent destruction (8:10, 24) and the latter through acts of deception (8:12, 25; see Table 4.9). Through deception the little horn coopts God's ministration of the **ד'מקדש** and overthrows the place of God's sanctuary. Due to this emphasis on the little horn's attack against God as divine priest, there is a prevalence of cultic/temple imagery.

Finally, in the narrative of the seer, Daniel begins the process of searching for "understanding" concerning the vision with the assistance of a named heavenly interpreter, Gabriel. The angelic epiphany overwhelms Daniel and highlights the angelic character, Gabriel. In Daniel 7, the heavenly interpreter was not identified and, therefore, the emphasis was more on what was said rather than who said it. In contrast, Daniel 8 emphasizes the significance of Gabriel in the context of Daniel's journey to understanding. The angelic epiphany may point to the importance of divine assistance in the process of understanding the actions of the little horn power.

### **3. Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence in Character**

Regarding the characters, God is depicted as a divine priestly figure in the vision, but he and other heavenly figures are depicted in a subdued fashion that is in contrast to the visually overwhelming depiction of God in Daniel 7. In Daniel 8, God is depicted as a divine priestly figure (Prince of the host) in the vision. Moreover, the appearance of the

two holy ones at the climax of the vision is not visually described at all. In the narrative of the seer, the one who commands Gabriel is not given an appearance. He is only described as a voice above the Ulai. Some suggest that this depiction also refers to God.

Gabriel becomes a central figure in the narrative as he is given a name and an angelic epiphany. He becomes the intermediary between heaven and Daniel and assists Daniel in his search for understanding. In addition, the Hebrew term for “understand” becomes a key word that is linked to Daniel’s search. Finally, Daniel’s destabilization is heightened through the angel epiphany and his interaction with the overwhelming vision.



Table 4.10 Language Shift-Narrative Shift from Daniel 7 to 8

<b>Narrative Shift or New Narrative Emphasis</b>	
<b>Plot</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative of the Vision               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Horn-centered conflict:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Horned-animal (ram, goat) conflict prepares the reader for the little horn conflict</li> <li>▪ Emphasis on little horn’s conflict:                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1) against host, stars; 2) against God as priest                           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Against host, stars: LH brings <b>destruction</b></li> <li>• Against God: LH brings <b>deception</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Violent, confrontational conflict</li> <li>○ Heavenly temple/Cultic emphasis (terminology, imagery)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Narrative of the Seer               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Daniel’s search for “understanding” (key word) of the vision</li> <li>○ Angel epiphany</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (or heavenly figure):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Depicted as a priestly figure (in vision)</li> <li>○ Absence of visual depiction</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Gabriel               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Angel epiphany, named interpreter</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Daniel               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Greater destabilization</li> <li>○ Search for “understanding”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### G. Summary of Part I.

The results of the above comparative narrative analysis of Daniel 7 and 8 indicate the presence of a narrative shift in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift at Daniel 8:1 from Aramaic to Hebrew. This language shift-narrative shift correspondence results in a reconfigured narrative in Daniel 8. Regarding the plots of the narratives of the dream in Daniel 7 and the vision in Daniel 8, there is a transition from a God-centered cosmic conflict over who will reign on earth, to a horn-centered cosmic conflict that emphasizes the little horn’s act of supplanting God as divine priest, coopting and/or overturning the heavenly temple service, and destroying the host and stars. A transition also occurs in the plots of the narratives of the seer from Daniel 7 to 8. Daniel’s

search for knowing transitions to his search for understanding. In addition, an angel epiphany is depicted to introduce the new character of Gabriel.

A comparison of the characters in the narratives of the dream in Daniel 7 and the vision in Daniel 8 evinces a similar narrative transition that coincides with the language shift-narrative shift correspondence in plot. Specifically, concerning the depiction of God, a transition occurs from the transcendent depiction of a royal judge in his court to a non-visual depiction of a divine priest ministering the ritual services in the heavenly temple. In addition, the angel interpreter depicted in Daniel 7 is replaced with a named heavenly messenger, Gabriel, in Daniel 8.

In the narratives of the seer in Daniel 7 and 8 the description of the angel interpreters shift. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 8 Gabriel is more significant than the anonymous interpreter in Daniel 7. Finally, Daniel continues to experience destabilization due to his heavenly experiences; however, in Daniel 8 he becomes even more destabilized due to the angel epiphany and the violent confrontation depicted in the vision.

The reconfigured narrative that arises as a consequence of this language shift-narrative shift correspondence is the foundation for the subsequent chapters (9-12) in the Hebrew section. This will be delineated in the next section.<sup>472</sup>

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<sup>472</sup> The shift in language is one of several shifts in the book of Daniel. For example, the genre (between chapters six and seven, and the shift in form between chapters eight and nine. However, the language shift coincides with the appearance of two foundational dreams/visions (Daniel 2 and 8) that structure the subsequent chapters (Daniel 3-7 and Daniel 9-12). See analysis below.

**Part II. Identification of Repetition of Language Shift-Narrative Shift**  
**Correspondence in Plot and Character between Daniel 8 and Daniel 9-12**

A. Introduction

To determine whether the language shift-narrative shift correspondence of plot and character in Daniel 8 persists throughout the rest of the Hebrew section (Daniel 9-12), it is necessary to compare its reconfigured narrative of plot and character to the plots and characters/characterization in the ensuing chapters (Daniel 9-12). The results of this comparative analysis are presented below.

B. Repetition of LS-NSC in Plot in Daniel 9-12

Commentators have noted the close relation between Daniel 8 and Daniel 9 and 10-12.

For example, Goldingay concludes:

The explanation of the symbolic vision in chap. 8 actually explains little, and this prepares the way for the following vision(s). Verse 8:27b thus leads into chaps. 9 and 10-12, which offer further reaffirmation and more explanation of the vision's fundamental perspective.<sup>473</sup>

He further states concerning Daniel 8, "Its epiphany and detailed quasi-prophecies are paralleled on a larger scale by those in chaps. 10-12."<sup>474</sup> Other commentators have also identified links between Daniel 8 and 10-12. Newsom states, "The apocalypse in Dan 10-12 bears a particularly close relationship with ch. 8. Not only does it develop an interest in historical patterns of power, outlined there, but even at the level of narrative

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<sup>473</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 208.

<sup>474</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 208.

details and vocabulary, chs. 10-12 are modeled on ch. 8.”<sup>475</sup> Consequently, one may conclude that Daniel 8 is at the very least linked and/or parallel to Daniel 9 and 10-12.

Daniel 9-12 is literarily diverse and does not follow the general format of the dream/vision report of Daniel 7 and 8. The chapters consist of a prayer, revelations, and angelic/divine epiphanies. Overall, the narrative of the seer found in Daniel 8 becomes more prominent and encompasses the better part of each chapter (except for Daniel 11). The expansion of this narrative coincides with more or longer occurrences of angelic/divine theophanies. Finally, divine revelations take the place of divine dreams/visions as Daniel’s search for understanding, specifically concerning Daniel 8, is highlighted.

Despite the literary diversity of Daniel 9-12, the chapters exhibit several links to the reconfigured narrative of the LS-NSC between Daniel 7 and 8. First, the term “understand,” which occurs in Daniel 8, becomes a key word in the subsequent chapters. In the first LS-NSC (from Dan. 1 to 2; Hebrew to Aramaic) the kings’s relation to God was emphasized through the use of the key word “know.” In this second LS-NSC (from Dan. 7 to 8; Aramaic to Hebrew) the focus shifts from the kings to Daniel. Therefore, Daniel’s relation to God is emphasized. However, this emphasis highlights Daniel’s need to understand. As noted above, Daniel’s knowledge or knowing of God is not the obstacle in the reconfigured narrative of Daniel 8. His search, and therefore what he needs to know, is to understand the actions of the little horn and its peculiar relation to God,

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<sup>475</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 327. She also notes that Willis has offered “the most extended comparison.” See Amy C. Merrill Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel* (New York: T& T Clark International, 2010), 159 n. 28. However, Doukhan’s analysis of Daniel 11 includes a detailed examination of the parallels between Daniel 8 and 11. *Daniel 11 Decoded* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019).

specifically how it attacks God as priest and how it attacks the host and the stars. The term for “understand” occurs throughout the subsequent chapters (Daniel 9 [5 times], 10 [5 times], 11 [4 times], 12 [3 times]).

Second, the narrative of the seer and Daniel’s search for understanding become central to several of the chapters. Daniel takes the initiative, through prayer and fasting, to understand the vision of Daniel 8. The revelations in Daniel 9 and 10-12 are responses to Daniel’s personal attempts to understand the vision. Third, the emphasis on conflict between kings/kingdoms also continues in Daniel 9-12. This coincides with a focus on conflicts that adversely affect God’s representatives and/or God’s cultic/temple. In Daniel 9, although the temple is rebuilt, it and Jerusalem are destroyed again by the prince “who is to come.” In Daniel 10, the angel notifies Daniel of his conflict with the princes of Persia because it delayed him from responding to Daniel’s petition. Although these are examples of depictions of conflict, they are brief in scope. However, in Daniel 11 kingly conflict returns as the central event. The earthly conflict between the Kings of the North and South eventually transitions to a conflict between the King of the North and God, in addition to its conflict with the King of the South. In this chapter, the destruction and deception linked to the bold-faced king that is identified in the interpretation of Daniel 8 appears once again and is depicted with greater detail and scope. In Daniel 11 one sees the depiction of the King of the North and its attacks against God’s sanctuary and God’s representatives.

Finally, cultic/temple terminology and imagery continue to occur. Daniel 9 consists of a liturgical prayer and a revelation about a coming Messiah that is intimately linked to the fortunes of the (earthly) temple. Daniel 10 depicts a theophany of the man in

linen, garb worn by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. Daniel 11 depicts the King of the North's attack against God's temple, and Daniel 12 depicts a temple scene and emphasizes the chronological information regarding the attack against the temple services or the **דְּבָרֵי הַתְּמִינָה**.

## 1. Daniel 9

Four plot elements of the LS-NSC of Daniel 8 appear in Daniel 9, 1) “Understand” as key word, 2) Daniel's search for understanding, 3) heavenly temple/cultic terminology, and 4) violent, confrontational conflict. The narrative of the seer becomes the overriding focus as Daniel's liturgical priestly prayer dominates this section.

### a. Key Word: “Understand”

The term for “understand” (**יָבִין**) occurs four times in Daniel 9 as a verb (vv. 2, 22, 23, [2 times]) and once as a noun (9:22). The chapter begins with Daniel “understanding” the number of years (70) of the desolation of Jerusalem, according to the book of Jeremiah (v. 2). This may be a link to 8:27, which stated that there was no understanding of the vision (or the interpretation). Therefore, Daniel may be taking it upon himself to study the words of Jeremiah to understand the time prophecy linked to the vision in Daniel 8 (2300 evenings/mornings).

The next four occurrences of the term are situated in vv. 22-23. This is the point of transition from the prayer to the revelation. Notably in 9:23 the term is used twice in

the angel's speech to Daniel.<sup>476</sup> Here, Gabriel reveals that his main intention is to help Daniel "understand," which was the previous command given to him in Daniel 8:16.

b. Daniel's search for understanding

The repetition of the term for "understand" is indicative of the narrative's focus on Daniel's search for understanding, especially concerning the vision he received in Daniel 8. In the first occurrence of the term, it refers to Daniel's search through the book(s) of Jeremiah for an understanding of the duration for Jerusalem's desolation. This may possibly indicate Daniel's search for understanding of the 2,300 evening/morning time period. The next three occurrences of the term for "understand" refer to Gabriel's efforts to make Daniel understand. In 9:22 Daniel states that Gabriel made him "understand." Then Gabriel explains the same point, that he has come to give Daniel "insight and understanding." In Daniel 9:23 Gabriel directs Daniel to "consider (יִבֵּן)" the word and "understand (יִבֵּן)" the vision.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Newsom translates the Qal imperative as "pay attention," but the ESV translates it as "Consider."

<sup>477</sup> Shea concludes that there is a direct link between Daniel 8 and 9 concerning the explication of the vision. He argues, "The specific words used by the angel, as recorded in the Hebrew text, make that connection even more direct. This constitutes the third argument for connecting these two time periods in chapters 8 and 9. When Gabriel came to give Daniel the prophecy of chapter 9, he pointed Daniel back to the preceding prophecy in a specific way: 'Therefore, consider the message [which I Gabriel bring to you] and understand the vision [*mareh*]' (Dan. 9:23).' When Gabriel came to Daniel in 9:23 and told Daniel that he had come to help him understand the 'vision,' he used the word *mareh*. What *mareh* is Gabriel referring to? Obviously this had to be a vision that Daniel had already received. Thus when Gabriel pointed Daniel back to a preceding *mareh* vision, he was pointing him right back to Daniel 8:26, which in turn refers to Daniel 8:14. Thus there is a direct link between Daniel 9:23 and Daniel 8:14 through Daniel 8:26." Shea, *Daniel, A Reader's Guide*, 186-187.

### c. Heavenly Temple/Cultic Terminology

As in Daniel 8, chapter 9 contains terms and images related to the cult and/or temple. Daniel 9 consists primarily of two parts, Daniel's prayer (vv. 2-19) and Gabriel's revelation (vv. 20-27). In both there are elements of cultic terminology that point to the temple/sanctuary, cultic ritual, or the priesthood. Concerning the prayer, Vogel has noted

It has been pointed out that the prayer in Dan 9 is of a liturgical character and reminiscent of Solomon's confessional prayer at the dedication ceremony of the first temple in 1 Kgs 8 and other such 'prose prayers of penitence,' which corresponded to concrete cultic acts and was reminiscent of them.<sup>478</sup>

In addition to its penitential liturgical character, the prayer emphasizes the re-establishment of God's cultic center, specifically the temple mount. Vogel argues that the prayer "contains direct references to the mountain as a cultic location."<sup>479</sup> For example,

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<sup>478</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 34. See also Goldingay, *Daniel*, 233-235. He identifies parallels to the prayers in Ezra 9:6-15; Neh 1:5-11 and 9:5-38. He describes them as examples of a "communal prayer of confession" that was a "postexilic phenomenon" that developed according to the preexilic communal lament, but with the idiosyncratic "why" concerning punishment replaced by Deuteronomistic covenant theology and an acceptance of God's justice. Goldingay argues that the prayer in Dan 9 "has the characteristic repetition of liturgical style," that originates with the "Deuteronomistic covenant tradition." *Daniel*, 233-234. This tradition emphasizes Israel's covenant with God, namely Israel's unfaithfulness and God's mercy and faithfulness. He continues and states, "Both Leviticus and Deuteronomy envisage the relationship between Yahweh and Israel being fundamentally disturbed by Israel's faithlessness and disobedience, yet see Yahweh's response in punishing Israel as stopping short of finally terminating the covenant. If those in exile acknowledge their wrongdoing and the justice of Yahweh's punishment of them, he will remember his covenant with them (Lev 26:39-45); if they return to Yahweh, he will restore them (Deut 30:1-10; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46-53; Jer 29: 10-14)." *Daniel*, 234. See André Lacocque, "The Liturgical Prayer in Daniel 9," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 47 (1976), 119-142. The study compares Daniel to other penitential prayers and attempts to determine its origin, *Sitz im Leben*, and purpose. Lacocque concludes that the prayer's social context "is the liturgy for Friday and, more specifically, the liturgy for days of expiation, most of all Yom ha-Kippurim. It is as such that the prayer of Daniel 9 has been adopted in the official service of the Synagogue. Its content makes clear that it was from the outset meant to be a dirge for a day of fasting or public atonement." "The Liturgical Prayer in Daniel 9," 141. See also M. Gilbert, "La prière de Daniel," *RTL* 3 (1972): 284-310 and R. Le Déaut, "Aspects de l'intercession dans le Judaïsme ancien," *JSJ* 1 (1970): 35-57. See J. F. A. Sawyer, "Types of Prayer in the Old Testament," *Semitics* 7 (1980): 131-143 for a treatment on form and prayer in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. For the context of prayer in a broader theological discussion see A. Jepsen, "Gnade und Barmherzigkeit im Alten Testament," *KD* 7 (1961): 261-271.

<sup>479</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 34.



he cites the phrases “your holy mountain” and “holy mountain of my God,” located in 9:16 and 20 respectively, as referring to the temple mount. As further evidence, he also points to the antithetical parallelism in vv. 16 and 17, in which Daniel implores God to turn his anger from his holy mountain and to shine his face upon his sanctuary. Thus, he concludes there is an association of the city, holy mountain, and sanctuary. He states, “...when the holy mountain is in view the sanctuary is clearly in mind as well, and when the sanctuary is mentioned its location on the holy mountain is always implied.”<sup>480</sup> Consequently, Daniel’s repeated plea for God to restore the city and the people implicitly points to his plea to re-build or re-establish the temple mount.

In the revelation (9:24-27) several terms occur that are connected to the cult. First, in response to Daniel’s prayer and prior to the revelation, Gabriel appears to Daniel “at the time of the evening sacrifice (9:21).” Goldingay suggests, “The times of morning and evening offerings were regular hours for prayer...especially the latter.”<sup>481</sup> The absence of a temple did not prevent Daniel from continuing to observe the times of the morning and evening offerings through prayer. Thus, the regular practice of cultic ritual is indicated here.

Next, the revelation points to the time of “70 weeks (v. 24),” which has been linked to cultic temporality. Collins argues, “The influence of the sabbatical theology of Leviticus 25-26 has been widely noted...Daniel 9 extends the duration of the desolation

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<sup>480</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 35.

<sup>481</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 128; see 1 Chr 23:30; Ps 141:2 and Ezra 9:5.

to seventy weeks of years, or ten jubilees.”<sup>482</sup> Fishbane understands the 70 weeks as “70 sabbatical cycles.”<sup>483</sup> The concept of sabbatical years is introduced in Leviticus 25, in which the weekly Sabbath was integrated into a longer sense of time (years) as far as the Jubilee year (after 49 years or 7 x 7 years). Thus, the concept of cultic time became an integral part of a wider sense of temporality for Israel. Similarly, the revelation of the 70 weeks incorporates a cultic sense of time with regard to the prophetic time period in the revelation. Koch offers a unique but plausible argument for the numbers,

Die spatIsraelitische Apokalyptik findet bei ihrer Suche nach Regeln des geschichtlichen Ablaufs und seiner zeitlichen Struktur sowohl die Angaben des Königsbuches über 480 Jahre Exodus-Tempelbaubeginn und 430 Jahre von da bis zum Exil vor wie auch die Angabe bei Jeremiah und Chron. über 70 Jahre Exilszeit. Liest man diese Bücher nebeneinander, so ergänzen sie sich und ergeben vom Auszug bis zum zweiten Tempel 980 oder 2 mal 490 Jahre. 490 aber gilt als die SUMme eines potenzierten Jobeljahres (wie 70 als diejenige eines potenzierten Sabbatjahres). Die Entdeckung dieser Zahl muß die Leser geradezu elektrisiert haben. Sollte diese, von der Sieben geprägte Einheit, nur für die Vergangenheit prägend gewesen sein? Eitere, zum großen Teil noch ausstehende 490 Jahre weissagt Daniel 9 24 vom Ergehen des Wortes über den Wiederaufbau bis zum Ende der Weltzeit. Das ist keine pure Spekulation, wie man weithin voraussetzt, sondern ein logisches Fortschreiben bisheriger geschichtlicher Entwicklungen.<sup>484</sup>

Furthermore, the 70-weeks time period is punctuated by significant events related to the temple/cult and a messianic figure that is intimately linked to the temple. The first

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<sup>482</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 352. See G. Lambert, “Une exégèse arithmétique du chapitre ix de Daniel,” *NRT* 74 (1952): 409-417; J. van Bebbber, “Zur Berechnung der 70 Wochen Daniels,” *BZ* 4 (1960): 119-141; Pierre Grelot, “Soixante-dix semaine d’annees,” *Bib* 50 (1969): 169-186; Klaus Koch, “Die mysteriösen Zahlen der jüdischen Könige und die apokalyptischen Jahrwochen,” *VT* 28 (1978): 433-441.

<sup>483</sup> Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford, Clarendon Press: 1985), 483. He notes, “It is intriguing to suppose that the references in Isa 61:1 to the post-exilic restoration as a release of prisoners may reflect an even earlier exegetical application of Lev 25:1-55.”

<sup>484</sup> Koch, “Die mysteriösen Zahlen der jüdischen Könige und die apokalyptischen Jahrwochen,” *VT* 28 (1978): 433-441, 439.

seven weeks begins with the rebuilding of Jerusalem, which is also called the “holy city (v. 24),” and ends with the coming of “an anointed one, a prince (v. 25).” The terms “holy” and “anointed one” further the emphasis on temple or cultic associations. Moreover, the allotment of seven weeks (7x7) is equivalent to a jubilee year or a sacral time of release. The description of the final week of the 70-week time period focuses on an “anointed” leader and the destruction of the “city and the sanctuary (v. 26).” In addition, there will be “an end to sacrifice and offering,” namely, two rituals that are central to the functioning of the temple services.

In 9:24 the terms “transgression” (עֲשׂוֹנָה), “sin” (חַטָּאת), “iniquity” (רִשָּׁעוּת), and “atone” (כִּפּוּר) are a response to Daniel’s prayer for God’s forgiveness of his wayward people. According to Lucas, “Since these statements follow on from the prayer, and have verbal links with it, it seems natural to take them as referring to Israel’s sin.”<sup>485</sup> The last term is “an important verb in the vocabulary of the cult...associated with the removal, and so forgiveness, of sin.”<sup>486</sup> All of the terms refer to the process of atonement, which is a foundational ritual of the temple services.

#### d. Violent, confrontational conflict

Finally, the revelation (9:26, 27c) points to one who will destroy the temple and bring it to a violent end. In 9:26 it states, “And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end

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<sup>485</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 241. See Collins, *Daniel*, 354 and Goldingay, *Daniel*, 259 for a different understanding of the terminology.

<sup>486</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 241.

there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.” The term “to come” (אִבַּ) usually refers to one who comes in battle. For example, in Daniel 1:1 King Nebuchadnezzar “came” against King Jehoiakim of Judah. In the book of Daniel, the term primarily refers to one who comes in battle. Furthermore, the latter part of 9:27 states, “And on a wing of abominations, one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” The term for “desolations” (דְּמוּ) is also found in Daniel 8:13 and refers to the desolating transgression in the vision.

## 2. Daniel 10

Four elements of the LS-NSC in plot between Daniel 7 and 8 occur in Daniel 10, 1) the term “understand,” 2) cultic/temple terminology/imagery, 3) focus on the narrative of the seer, 4) violent conflict.

### a. Key Word: “Understand”

Daniel 10 continues the emphasis on the concept of understanding started in chapter 8. The Hebrew verb occurs four times (10: 1, 11, 12, 14) and the noun occurs once (10:1). In Daniel 10:1, the verb and the noun occur together. The verb is linked to Daniel’s understanding of “the word” and the noun is linked to his understanding of “the vision.”<sup>487</sup> Daniel 10 may refer to the ending of Daniel 8 since it begins with Daniel possessing “understanding.” Newsom notes “The trope of Daniel’s not understanding the revelations he receives recurs...though the introductory verse (10:1) assures us that Daniel did understand the revelation... Thus the series of revelations can end, because

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<sup>487</sup> See note 188.

now Daniel has understood.”<sup>488</sup> Consequently, the process of Daniel’s understanding is a complex progression rather than an immediate experience.

Next, the verb appears in verses 11 and 12. Gabriel speaks to Daniel and commands him to “understand” the words that he speaks to him (v. 11). This is a continuation of his initial purpose. In 8:16 he was commanded to make Daniel understand. This process has now spanned three chapters. He also reveals to him that Daniel’s words were heard from the beginning of his determination to “understand,” which consisted of an act of self-abnegation (v. 12). This is described in verses 2-3, in which Daniel mourns in a way similar to that found in 9:3 (supplications, fasting, sackcloth, ashes). The last occurrence of the verb, in verse 14, repeats Gabriel’s purpose, to make Daniel “understand.” Here, Gabriel specifically refers to “what will happen to your people in the latter days.”<sup>489</sup> According to the next phrase, “for the (a) vision is yet for days,” the understanding is linked to the “vision” (רָזוּן).

Besides the link regarding the term “understanding,” other terms connect chapter 10 to chapter 8. Daniel 10 has two Hebrew terms for revelatory appearances and/or visions that are also found in Daniel 8. The Hebrew term for vision or appearance (מַרְאֵה) occurs twice (10:1, 6) and the term for vision (רָזוּן) occurs once (10:14). In verse 1 the term refers to a vision, but in verse 6 it refers to the overall appearance of the man in

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<sup>488</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 329. She also states that this understanding is only temporary since he asks for further clarification at the end of the revelation (12:8).

<sup>489</sup> For an extended treatment of the phrase “latter days” see Gerhard Pfandl, *The Time of the End in the Book of Daniel*.

linen in verses 5-6. The term for vision or appearance (רָאָה) appears to have a broader semantic range than the term for vision (רָאָה).

#### b. Heavenly Temple/Cultic Terminology

Daniel 10 consists of the appearance of a man in linen (vv. 4-5). Several commentators argue that the figure is reminiscent of the figures in Ezekiel 1 and 9-10 and is dressed in cultic garments. Goldingay states, “The appearing of the man in linen...reflects that of the supernatural beings in Ezek 1:9-10...Linen is the garb of a priest; here as in Ezek 1; 9-10 the servants of the heavenly temple concern themselves with the affairs of its earthly equivalent.”<sup>490</sup> Vogel argues the “white garment in fact alludes to the officiating High Priest on the Day of Atonement, alluding to Lev 16:4, 23 and also Ezek 9:2, 3.”<sup>491</sup>

In Lev 16:4 (and 23) Moses gives instructions on the type of garments the high priest should wear as he officiates in the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). The high priest must wear linen garments (tunic, trousers, sash, turban) as he officiates. The linen garments are only worn by the high priest on this day and are removed (16:23) once he completes his special duties. In Ezek 9:2-3, a man clothed in linen attire also appears. Ezekiel 9 is situated in the context of Ezekiel 8-11, in which three visionary events occur: “(1) the departure of the glory...; (2) the abominations

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<sup>490</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 290. See Newsom’s comparison of Dan 10:5-6 and Ezek 1 and 8-10. *Daniel*, 330-331). She also concludes, “Many of the details of the appearance of the angel in Dan 10 are also used by the author of Revelation to describe the Son of Man (1:13-16) (331).”

<sup>491</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 13.

being perpetrated in the temple...; (3) the judgment inflicted on Jerusalem...”<sup>492</sup> In 8:3ff Ezekiel is taken by the Spirit to the door of the north gate of the inner court of the temple and shown the abominations committed in the temple. In the vision he sees the man in linen, who has a writing utensil that he uses to mark those who are groaning over the abominations committed in the temple. Thus, the figure in linen is situated within a temple vision, which is a cultic context.

Although the figure in Dan 10:5-6 is not situated within a cultic context, he possesses the cultic appurtenances of a priest, specifically a high priest officiating during Yom Kippur. However, the various elements of his appearance, (sash of gold, bronze body, eyes of fire, voice of a multitude), point to a divine, transcendent figure.<sup>493</sup>

#### c. Daniel’s search for understanding

In 10:1 the text returns to the third person and gives introductory information about Daniel’s search for understanding. The royal date formula indicates Daniel’s visionary experience occurred in the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia. During this time “a word was revealed to Daniel (10:1).” The text also states the certainty of the word and its overall focus, namely “a great conflict” (לִדְוִלָּא אֲרָצָא). Then, the text notes that Daniel has finally understood the word and the vision. Thus, Daniel 10 (and subsequently Daniel

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<sup>492</sup> Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24* (NICOT) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 272-273.

<sup>493</sup> Collins states, “Linen was traditional priestly garb for certain ceremonial occasions (Lev 6:10; 16:4; Exek 44:17), but here, as in Ezekiel, it indicates an angelic being.” Therefore, Collins does not link the garments to the cult, but to the heavenly sphere. He points to Rev 1:13 in which the “one like a son of man” wears a long robe, a term used for linen in the LXX of Ezek 9:2. Lacocque suggests the figure in vv. 5ff is not Gabriel but a supernatural being greater than Gabriel and Michael. He sees Gabriel appearing in verse 16. *The Book of Daniel*, 241-242. Seow also argues that the figure in vv. 5ff is a supernatural personage. He concludes, “The...description...all suggest a supernatural presence, something like the presence that Ezekiel envisioned by the river Chebar...” *Daniel*, 156.

11) depicts Daniel finally obtaining the understanding that he has searched for since Daniel 8, but even after the extended revelation in Daniel 11 Daniel will again search for understanding in Daniel 12.

Furthermore, Daniel 10:2-3 depict Daniel's reaction to the previous visions and revelations or his physical and spiritual importuning for divine help to understand. In 10:2 Daniel states that he was fasting for "three full weeks," which consisted of his abstinence from "delicacies, meat, and wine." Probably in response to Daniel's act of self-abnegation, he receives another appearance (10:5-6) and a longer divine revelation (11:1-12:3).

d. Violent, confrontational conflict

In Daniel 10:13 there is a brief mention of an enigmatic struggle that takes place outside of the narrative frame. Gabriel tells Daniel that his words were heard from the time he focused his attention on understanding through the process of humbling himself, namely at the beginning of his three-week fast. However, he was not able to come to him immediately because he was prevented by "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." The text does not give the identity of the "prince," but it seems that he has the power to withstand the powerful angel Gabriel (according to his name). In addition, the text next identifies the enemy as "the kings of Persia," a group that Gabriel was left to fight against on his own. This struggle continues for three weeks, which is the same duration as Daniel's period of mourning and fasting (10:2-3). Only after Michael arrives to help Gabriel was the angel able to go to Daniel and give him a word regarding his search for understanding. Therefore, the power of Michael seems to supersede Gabriel's power.



### 3. Daniel 11

Several commentators have noted links between Daniel 8 and 11.<sup>494</sup> In Daniel 11 a long, violent, confrontational conflict is the center of the narrative. In addition, starting at v. 21 imagery and terminology similar to that found in 8:24 and 25 emerge along with temple/cultic terminology. According to the LS-NSC of Daniel 7 and 8, Daniel 11 emphasizes three plot elements: 1) “understand” as a key word, 2) violent, confrontational conflict, 3) heavenly temple/cultic terminology.

#### a. Key Word: “Understand”

In Daniel 11 the term for “understand” occurs four times (vv. 30, 33, and 37 [twice]). In Daniel 11:30 and 37 the verb is linked with the preposition “upon, over, above” (עַל), thus it means, “pay attention to, to consider.” Steinmann translates the term as “favor” so that he translates the clause as follows: “he will...favor those who abandon a holy covenant (v. 30)” and “He will not favor the God of his fathers. He also will not favor desire of women...”<sup>495</sup> However, in 11:33 the term for “understand” follows the

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<sup>494</sup> Newsom explains, “The apocalypse in Dan 10-12 bears a particularly close relationship with ch. 8. Not only does it develop the interest in historical patterns of power, outlined there, but even at the level of narrative details and vocabulary, chs. 10-12 are modeled on ch. 8.” *Daniel*, 327-328. Willis states the links between the two chapters consist of “verbal paraphrases, direct borrowings, and plot parallels.” Willis, *Dissonance and the Drama of Divine Sovereignty in the Book of Daniel*, 159 n. 28. Doukhan also asserts there are, “linguistic and thematic parallels and echoes that relate chapters 8 and 11.” *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 29. The audition in Daniel 11 expands upon the vision and interpretation in Daniel 8. Several links occur between the two chapters. In 11:4 and 8:8 a king shall be “broken” (שָׁבַר) and his kingdom will be split “toward the four winds of heaven” (לְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם). In 11:15 and 8:4 a king is not able to stand or is without strength (אֵין כֹּחַ לַעֲמֹד). In 11:16, 41 and 8:9 (הֶעָזַר). In both chapters (11:24; 8:25) a king destroys in a time of peace or without warning (בְּשֵׁלְוָה). Furthermore, the following links also occur: a reference to an appointed time and the end (מוֹעֵד) (11:27, 35, 40; 8:17, 19); the desolation of the sanctuary and the disruption of the daily sacrifice (תְּמִיד; מִקְדָּשׁ) (11:31; 8:11); a king that does as he pleases (עָשָׂה כְּרִצּוֹנוֹ; עָשָׂה כְּרִצּוֹנוֹ) (11:36; 8:4) and prospers (צָלַח) (11:36; 8:12); a king that exalts himself (יִתְרוֹמֵם; גָּדַל) (11:36-37; 8:10, 11, 25), even to the Most High; a reference to wonders (נִפְלְאוֹת) (11:36; 8:24); and the end or completion of the wrath at the end of a specific or appointed time (בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיּוֹם; עַד-כְּלֵה יוֹם) (11:36; 8:19).

<sup>495</sup> *Daniel*, 508, 533.

meaning that is primarily found in the book of Daniel. It refers to “the wise among the people” who will “make many understand.” Despite their laudable actions, they will also experience great suffering and persecution (sword, flame, captivity, and plunder). Such an experience is representative of the suffering of God’s representatives.

b. Violent, confrontational conflict

Similar to Daniel 8, in Daniel 11 a violent, confrontational conflict between kings is depicted. The terminology of violence and power that occurs in Daniel 8 also occurs in Daniel 11, but a welter of other terms related to conflict are also added. Goldingay notes,

...ch. 11 in particular is characterized by the use of a variety of terms within certain fields of meaning that help give it a particular cast: terms suggesting royal authority and power...its acts and achievements, the rise and fall of kings and their empires, military matters, military action, victory, and defeat, and movement more generally.<sup>496</sup>

Several terms occur repeatedly in this narrative of kingly conflict. Specifically, the terms “stand,” “come,” “turn,” and “act” occur throughout the chapter. Goldingay suggests this repetition helps to demonstrate patterns in human history regarding the nature of human kingship, which repeatedly displays the characteristics of violence, arrogance, and deceitfulness.

The conflict between the King of the South and the King of the North occurs in two phases, 1) Part I (11:5-15) and 2) Part II (11:21-39).<sup>497</sup> The first phase prepares the

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<sup>496</sup> *Daniel*, 522. He further explains, “Family words are drawn in, often in the context of the making of alliances, as are religious terms such as words for God, gods, idols, and sacred vessels, and expressions of time.”

<sup>497</sup> Newsom states the revelation is “narrated in a slightly coded fashion.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 336. Unfortunately, “the rich detail of ch. 11 makes it difficult to discern a clear outline.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 337.

reader for the second phase, as in Daniel 8 where the conflict between the ram and the goat prepares the reader for the conflict between the little horn and God. This similarity may be linked to the reason for the occurrence of cipher or coded language, such as the phrases “King of the North” and “King of the South.”<sup>498</sup> The narrative of the rise of several “Kings of the North” in conflict with several “Kings of the South” prepares the reader for the conflict between the final King of the North and King of South in Part II, which gradually shifts to a cultic/temple context, as in Daniel 8:9-12.

A brief comparison of the terminology that occurs in both 11:5-15 and 21-39 evinces the precursory or preparatory relation between the two sections. In Table 4.7 terms that occur in both Daniel 11:5-15 and 21-39 are identified. The parallel terms may suggest that the conflicts in 11:5-15 prepare the reader for the larger, final conflict that occurs in 11:21-39. Both sets of terms are indicative of the chapter’s emphasis on kingly power, conflict, and rule. Certain terms are repeated more than others, such as “strong” (קָטָן), “stand, arise” (קָמָה), and “come” (בָּא). These three terms are key words that occur regularly in the chapter. Most notably, the terms “stand” and “come” are prevalent since they refer to the repeated and violent rise and fall of kingly powers. These two

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Lucas’ outline could be viewed as similar to the basic contours followed by most modern commentaries. He divides the narrative as follows: 1. 11:2a, 2. 11:2b, 3. 11:3-4, 4. 11:5-9, 5. 11:10-19, 6. 11:20, 7. 11:21-45. Lucas, *Daniel*, 264; cf. Collins, *Daniel*, 371; Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., 520; Newsom, *Daniel*, 337. Frank W. Hardy’s delineation of the chapter follows different transition points: 1. 11:2, 2. 11: 3-15, 3. 16-22, 4. 23-28, 5. 29-39, 6. 11:40-45. Frank Wilton Hardy, *An Historicist Perspective on Daniel 11* (MA Thesis Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1983), 180. Shea follows the basic contours of Hardy’s outline: 1. 11:2, 2. 11: 3, 4, 3. 11:5-15, 4. 11:16-22, 5. 11:23-39, 6. 11:40-45. William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, 241-268. Doukhan’s chiastic outline is more detailed, but also identifies similar transition points. Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 68. In his chiasm he identifies the “rhythm of seven,” where 12 sections (six on each side) culminate at 11:22. 1. [*Inclusio* 10:21b] 2. 11:1-4, 3. 11:5-8, 4. 11: 8-13a, 5. 11: 13b-15, 6. 11:16-21, 7. 11:22, 8. 11:23-24, 9. 11:25-27, 10. 11:28-39, 11. 11: 40-43, 12. 11:44-45, 13. [*Inclusio* 12:1a]. Doukhan and Hardy emphasize 11:22 as the center of the revelatory narrative.

<sup>498</sup> Goldingay uses the term “cipher” to identify the method of communication used in Daniel 11. *Daniel*, rev. ed., 515. The term means “a secret or a disguised way of writing.”

terms represent the concept of kingly power depicted in Daniel 8, which perceives the rise and fall of kings/kingdoms as determined by violent conflict between powers (rather than God's sovereignty alone as in Daniel 7). Between these two sections, namely in Daniel 11:16-20, one may find terminology from Daniel 9:26. Specifically, Daniel 11:16 includes the phrase, "the one who comes," which is also found in Daniel 9:26. This phrase points to a king/kingdom that destroys the earthly temple that is intimately linked to the messianic figure. Thus, Daniel 11 may incorporate terminology from both Daniel 8 and 9 so that it brings together the previous elements and constructs a narrative that depicts the wider narrative in which Daniel 8 and 9 play a significant part.

Table 4.11 Comparison of Terminology in Daniel 11:5-15 and 11:23-39

	Daniel 11:5-15	Daniel 11:21-39
1.	v. 5, 7 “strong, prevail” (חזק)	v. 32 “firm” (חזק)
2.	v. 5 “rule” (משל)	v. 39 “rulers” (משל)
3.	v. 5 “great” (רב)	v. 25 “great” (גדול)
4.	v. 6 “alliance” (חבר)	v. 23 “alliance” (חבר)
5.	v. 6 “agreement” (מישרים) (only occurs once in Dan.)	
6.	v. 6, 7, 8 “arise, stand” (עמד)	v. 25, 31 “stand” (עמד)
7.	v. 7 [twice], 8 “come, enter, carry off” (בוא)	v. 24 “come” (בוא)
8.	v. 7 “army” (חיל)	v. 25 “army” (חיל)
9.	v. 7 “fortress” (מעוז)	v. 31 “fortress” (מעוז)
10.	v. 8 “Egypt” (מצרים)	[vv. 42, 43]
11.	v. 8 “vessels” (כלי) (only here and 1:2)	
12.	v. 8 “silver, gold” (כסף, זהב)	v. 38 “silver, gold” (כסף, זהב)

Furthermore, terminology similar to that found in 8:24 and 25, where the two characteristics of destruction and deceit are used to describe the methods of the little horn, emerge beginning at 11:21. For example, in 11:21 the term “peace,” or “prosperity” (שלום) occurs. It also occurs in 8:25. In Daniel 11:21 its context is similar to that in 8:25, in which it describes how the little horn will “destroy many.” Another term is “flatteries” (חלקלקות) in 11:21. It does not occur in Daniel 8, but its meaning is synonymous to deceitfulness. Steinmann notes that the Hebrew term means “insincerely.”<sup>499</sup> It describes how the king will obtain power. In 11:23 the term “deceit” (מְרִמָּה) occurs in relation to the king’s actions in an “alliance.” The term “peace” (שלום) occurs again in 11:24 to describe how the king will enter and pillage provinces. The term “to plan” (חשב) occurs, which may mean to devise or plot cunning plans to destroy another (Gen. 50:2a, Jer.

<sup>499</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 515-516.

48:2, Mic. 2:3, Nah. 1:11). Another such term is “lies” (v. 27; רָצַב). Interspersed between these terms are terms that refer to destruction, like “power” (v. 25), “break” (v. 26), and “forces,” (פְּרָצוּ). In 11:28, the king’s actions turn to the cultic sphere.

### c. Heavenly Temple/Cultic Terminology

In Daniel 11 cultic terms occur near the end of the chapter. Starting at verse 28 several terms related to the Israelite cult appear. In 11:28 the Hebrew term for “holy” (קֹדֶשׁ) occurs for the first time in the chapter. Afterwards it occurs three more times, twice in 11:30 and once in 11:45. The first three occurrences refer to the “holy covenant” and the last occurrence refers to the “glorious holy mountain.” Several commentators suggest the phrase “holy covenant” refers to the “covenant people...They are the people who are in a covenant relationship with God.”<sup>500</sup> Concerning the phrase “glorious holy mountain,” Vogel argues that it refers to the location of the sanctuary.<sup>501</sup>

In Daniel 11:31 the occurrence of cultic terms increases further. For example, the “temple” (מִקְדָּשׁ) is “profaned” (חִלְלָה), the “regular burnt offering” (תְּמִנָּה) is removed, and an “abomination” (שִׁקְצוֹן) is set up. The first and third terms specifically refer to the cult. The second term is mostly found in Ezekiel (34 times) and Leviticus (16 times) in cultic

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<sup>500</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 301. See Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, 165, where he suggests, “The ‘holy’ qualification points to Daniel 8:13-14...where the word *qadosh*, ‘holy,’ is a keyword in the spiritual context of the sanctuary.” See also Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 264 and Collins, *Daniel*, 383. Both Lacocque and Collins see 11:28 as a reference to Antiochus IV’s attack on Jerusalem and the temple after he was expelled from Egypt.

<sup>501</sup> He states that, “...the use of the term... as the qualifying description of the mountain in Dan 9 and 11 provides further support for the fact that the author is indeed referring to the location of the (now defunct) sanctuary by making use of this cultic element.” He further notes, “...when the holy mountain is in view the sanctuary is clearly in mind as well, and when the sanctuary is mentioned its location on the holy mountain is always implied.” Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 37, 35. See also Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, 92.

contexts. The fourth term is also mostly found in Ezekiel (8 times), in which it refers to defilement especially as it relates to idols. Finally, in verse 41 and 45 the phrases “the glorious land” and the “glorious holy mountain” also point to cultic elements, namely the land of Israel and the temple mount respectively.

#### **4. Daniel 12**

In Daniel 12 three plot elements occur that link it to Daniel 8, 1) “understand” as a key word, 2) Daniel’s search for understanding, and 3) temple/cult imagery/terminology.

##### **a. Key Word: “Understand”**

In Daniel 12 the term “understand” occurs three times (vv. 8 and 10 [twice]). The term retains its usual meaning found in the book of Daniel, namely, to comprehend heavenly secrets. First, in verse 8 the term refers to Daniel’s lack of understanding regarding the new heavenly revelation. Second, in verse 10 the term occurs twice and refers to the separation between the wise and the wicked. The wise will purify themselves and “understand” but the wicked shall act “wickedly” and not “understand.”

##### **b. Daniel’s search for understanding**

As in Daniel 8:13-14, Daniel hears the conversation between the being on the bank and the man in linen. However, he does not understand what he hears. Consequently, he asks about the final outcome of these things (12:8). The answer to this question is the final words in the book. Daniel is commanded to “Go your way.” He

states that “the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.”<sup>502</sup> Furthermore, he states that many will purify themselves and make themselves white, but the wicked will not “understand.” Only the wise will “understand (12:9-10).” The speaker offers two more enigmatic time periods (1290 days, 1335 days) and again tells Daniel to “Go your way.” The book ends with a confirmation of Daniel’s position at “the end of days (12:13),” but Daniel apparently does not understand. Possibly, the ending of the book points to the suggestion that an assurance regarding ones place at the end of days is more important than a complete understanding of heavenly secrets. Daniel’s search for understanding ends here, but he is depicted as still searching at the end of the book. Such an open or unfinished ending creates instability in the reader since full understanding is never achieved. Consequently, in the Hebrew section of the book, Daniel and the reader experience destabilization due to the absence of full understanding.

### c. Heavenly Temple/Cultic Terminology

The man in linen introduced in 10:5-8 occurs again in 12:6. As noted above, a linen garment is worn by the high priest when he officiates during the Yom Kippur rite in the temple. According to Vogel, the description of the man in linen is “pointing to a high-priestly figure officiating on the Day of Atonement...”<sup>503</sup> The man in linen responds to the question of “how long” (12:7) and may be the one that answers Daniel’s request. In the latter, he refers to two cultic terms, תַּמִּיד and יְקִיָּץ. The first term refers to the daily

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<sup>502</sup> Both Daniel 8 and 12 include the command to seal the book because the vision refers to the time of the end (שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת הַסֵּפֶר עַד־עֵת קֵץ) or refers to a distant time (וְהָיָה לְיָמֵי רַבִּים).

<sup>503</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 49, 163-168.



ritual service of the temple. In 8:11 the little horn takes away (or receives) this service from the Prince of the host. Consequently, the time prophecy may refer to that action. The second term mostly occurs in Ezekiel (8 times), where it refers to idol worship. It also occurs three times in the book of Daniel (9:27, 11:31, 12:11). The term in 12:11 may refer back to 8:13 and/or 11:31. Steinmann argues, “Literally, ‘a detested thing desolating’ is similar to... ‘the transgression causing desolation’ in 8:13, and to... ‘the detested thing causing desolation’ in 11:31. It is less similar to a statement in 9:27... ‘on the wing of detested things (is) a desolator.’”<sup>504</sup>

Table 4.12 Repetition of LS-NSC in Plot Elements: Daniel 9-12

Daniel 8 Repeated Plot Elements	Daniel 9	Daniel 10	Daniel 11	Daniel 12
<b>Narrative of the Seer</b>				
“Understand”	5 times	6 times	4 times	3 times
Daniel’s search for understanding	Daniel searches in Jeremiah to understand	Daniel understands	(Extended revelation)	Daniel does not understand
Cultic Elements	Liturgical prayer			
<b>Narrative of the Vision</b>				
Cultic elements	70 weeks; temple	Man in linen	Sanctuary fortress, 𐤕𐤓𐤕𐤓	Man in linen; 𐤕𐤓𐤕𐤓
Violent conflict	One who comes destroys the temple	Michael, Angel struggle with prince of Persia	Struggle between Kings of North and South	Shattering of the power of the holy ones

<sup>504</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 567.

## C. Repetition of Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence in Character in

### Daniel 9-12

Regarding the characters, Daniel continues his search for understanding until the end of the book, thus the term “understanding” continues to function as a key word linked to his actions. Gabriel returns in Daniel 9, but his name does not appear again. However, an angelic interpreter does appear in Daniel 10 and 12. Finally, a divine figure is depicted as a priest in the vision of the man in linen in Daniel 10 and in the final vision in Daniel 12.

In Daniel 9-12 the characters are primarily located in the narrative of the seer. This includes Daniel, angelic interpreter, and a heavenly figure as priest usually located in a vision or appearance. The narrative of the seer focuses on Daniel’s search for understanding, specifically concerning the vision in Daniel 8. As one moves from Daniel 9-12, Daniel struggles to understand the heavenly vision. He is aided by heavenly figures that help make him understand.

#### **1. Daniel 9**

##### a. Daniel

In Daniel 9 the narrative of the seer is extended to include Daniel’s liturgical prayer for his people, Jerusalem, and God’s earthly temple. His prayer is a corporate prayer of penitence and importunity. As in Daniel 8, Daniel is depicted as a distressed seer. Unique to Daniel 9, Daniel first seeks understanding in the text of the prophet Jeremiah (9:2), next, he prays concerning his understanding, then receives a divine response. Daniel’s distress is visible in his prayer for Jerusalem, the temple, and the

people. The revelation gives Daniel greater understanding (or corrective understanding) than what he found in the text of Jeremiah.

b. Angel Interpreter

Collins states, “The most distinctive feature of Daniel 8...is the epiphany of the interpreter in vv. 15-18.”<sup>505</sup> Unlike Daniel 7, in which the interpreter is anonymous, Daniel 8 introduces the angel interpreter Gabriel in a detailed epiphany. The subsequent appearances of Gabriel in the ensuing chapters build upon this episode. Thus, in Daniel 9, in response to Daniel’s prayer, Gabriel appears again (vv. 21-22). He is named and identified as, “the man Gabriel.” This is similar to Daniel 8:15, in which the phrase “one in the likeness of a man” is used in connection to the epiphany.

c. Heavenly figure as Priest

In Gabriel’s revelation concerning the temple (9:24-27), the appearance and end of a messianic figure announced in 9:25 is inextricably linked to the construction and destruction of the temple.<sup>506</sup> First, the coming of the anointed one is 7 weeks, 62 weeks from the decree to rebuild the temple (9:25). Next, after the 62 weeks the anointed one will be “cut off” and have nothing (v. 26). Afterwards, the temple and the city will be

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<sup>505</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 342.

<sup>506</sup> Doukhan identifies a structure in 9:24-27 that “points out a remarkable dialectic in terms of construction-destruction.” “Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9: An Exegetical Study,” *AUSS* 17, no. 1 (1979): 1-22, 14. Stefanovic notes the term for “Messiah” (מִשְׁחָ) can be considered definite because “the passage is poetic and most of the nouns in the verses 24-27 are indefinite.” Commentators have offered a variety of answers to the question concerning the identity of this figure, such as Cyrus the Great (Isa. 45:1), Zerubbabel (Ha. 2; Zech. 4), Jeshua, son of Jehozadak (Ezra 2:2, 36), and Jesus of Nazareth. *Wisdom to the Wise*, 355. Referring to 9:26, Lucas notes, “Most modern commentators see here a reference to the murder of the high priest Onias III in 171 BC.” *Daniel*, 245. In contrast, see Doukhan, “Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9” for an exegetical analysis of 9:24-27 in support of the conclusion that the messianic figure’s death is substitutionary and refers to a heavenly figure.

destroyed (9:26). Finally, the anointed one will strengthen a covenant “with many for one week” and in the middle of the week “he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering.” Consequently, the coming of the messianic figure is linked to the re-building and destruction of the temple. Moreover, the actions of the messianic figure bring an end to the ritual services of the temple.<sup>507</sup>

## **2. Daniel 10**

### **a. Daniel**

Daniel and a heavenly figure appear together in an extended epiphany scene, as in Daniel 8:15-19 where Daniel and Gabriel appear. Daniel’s inner conflict or personal distress is more pronounced than in Daniel 8. This is portrayed through Daniel’s distress and the touch of the heavenly being that occurs three times (10:14-21). Consequently, Daniel’s inner conflict and the heavenly being’s assistance is the focal point. The biblical text does not clearly distinguish between the man in linen and the being speaking with Daniel. Daniel 10 may follow the epiphany in Daniel 8, so one may conclude that the man in linen is similar to the voice Daniel heard “between the banks of Ulai” in Daniel 8:16 and the interpreting angel that strengthens Daniel may be Gabriel since he performs similar actions (8:18).

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<sup>507</sup> Several commentators see the “he” as referring to Antiochus IV and “the covenant referred to would be that which he made with the hellenizing Jews according 1 Macc. 1:11. Lucas, *Daniel*, 244. Lucas further notes that, “Messianic interpretations differ in their handling of this verse (v. 27). Some take the verb in v. 27a to mean ‘cause to prevail’ rather than ‘confirm/make strong’, and see in v. 27ab a reference to the ministry of Jesus ending in his death (his being ‘cut off) in the middle of the week.” *Daniel*, 245. See Doukhan, “Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” n. 29. He also links the “he” in v. 27a to Jesus and his substitutionary death.

Daniel is depicted as overwhelmed by the appearance of the man in linen (10:8, 9). He is frightened by the vision, hears the sound of his words, and falls into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground (10:9). Then, a heavenly being touches Daniel and sets him on his hands and feet (10:10). Afterwards, Daniel is spoken to and commanded to stand up, at this he stands but with trembling (10:11). Daniel's personal distress reappears and is assuaged a second time by the touch of the heavenly being. Daniel turns to the ground and becomes mute at the words of the speaker, who touches his lips (10:16). This allows Daniel to speak, but he is still too weak to receive the message (10:17). The speaker strengthens Daniel with a third and final touch (10:18) and tells Daniel to be strong and courageous. At this, Daniel is strengthened to receive the revelation (10:19). In the final verses (10:20-21) the heavenly being introduces the final revelation.

b. Angel interpreter

The heavenly being tells Daniel not to fear, a common phrase in theophanies. At this point he briefly relates a brief but important heavenly conflict (10:12-14). The man was delayed in answering Daniel's petition for 21 days due to his conflict with the prince of Persia, who withstood him (10:13).<sup>508</sup> Only Michael was able to help him so that he could leave and meet with Daniel (10:14). Michael is not a character in the epiphany since he is only mentioned in reported speech. However, he is one of the few characters

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<sup>508</sup> The prince of Persia has been described as a human figure or an otherworldly figure. See Stefanovic, *Wisdom to the Wise*, 39; cf. Lucas who states, "The nature of the 'opposition' referred to here has been understood in two main ways. 1. Since Jerome, there have been those who have regarded it as legal in nature...2. Others have understood it as a 'military' struggle, whatever that might mean in the heavenly realm." He continues, "Either way, presumably the idea implied is that 'the prince of Persia' tried to prevent the declaration of the message, because the declaration of God's intention means its implementation. In this case, the message begins with the announcement of the end of the Persian Empire and its replacement by the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great. *Daniel*, 276.

given a name. The name Michael means, “who is like El.” He is also described as a chief prince that is able to overcome the Prince of Persia, who withstood even the angel interpreter.<sup>509</sup> He is stronger, and probably higher in authority, than the one speaking to Daniel. From this brief description, Michael may be the one that represents and fights for heaven in the conflict. This conflict is not explained in detail, but it gives a glimpse of a conflict.

Newsom concludes that the passage in chapter 10 that contains Daniel’s interaction with an angel interpreter (verses 7-19) “is an elaboration of his previous encounter with Gabriel in 8:18...”<sup>510</sup> She, and others, also suggest both passages are influenced by Ezekiel 1:28b-2: 2. In Daniel 8:17-18 Gabriel approaches Daniel and he faints from fear. As the angel speaks to him, he falls into a deep sleep as he lies with his face toward the ground. The angel touches Daniel and causes him to stand upright. Similarly, in Daniel 10:8-11 and 15-18 the angel comes to Daniel again, in 10:12-14 the words of the angel are recorded.

### c. Heavenly figure as priest

The phrase אִישׁ־אָזָז לְבוּשׁ בְּדִים translates as “man clothed in linen.” The phrase appears in one other place in the biblical text, Ezekiel 9:2. Also, commentators argue that

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<sup>509</sup> Michael is named here for the first time in the biblical text. “In the *Book of the Watchers* in *1 Enoch*, he, like Gabriel, is one of the chief angels...He is one of the four archangels in the Qumran ‘War Scroll’ (1QM 9:15-16).” Lucas, *Daniel*, 276. Stefanovic argues Michael is “the guardian angel of Israel. The name Michael means ‘Who is like God!’ and this name discloses the secret of his victories.” He also suggests that “Michael can be identified with the humanlike person of Daniel 7:13 and the Messiah of Daniel 9:25, 26.” *Wisdom to the Wise*, 389. Lucas concludes that the character of Michael “...could be a development of the figure of ‘the prince of the army of Yahweh’ (Josh. 5:14).” *Daniel*, 276.

<sup>510</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 332. Goldingay also identifies a connection with 8:18 (*Daniel*, 291). There is no consensus regarding the number of heavenly personages found in chapter 10.

the figure is reminiscent of the figures in Ezekiel 1 and 9-10, who are dressed in cultic garments. Goldingay states, “The appearing of the man in linen...reflects that of the supernatural beings in Ezek 1:9-10...Linen is the garb of a priest; here as in Ezek 1; 9-10 the servants of the heavenly temple concern themselves with the affairs of its earthly equivalent.”<sup>511</sup> Vogel argues the “white garment in fact alludes to the officiating High Priest on the Day of Atonement, alluding to Lev 16:4, 23 and also Ezek 9:2, 3.”<sup>512</sup>

In Lev 16:4 (and 23) Moses gives instructions on the type of garments the high priest should wear as he officiates in the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). The high priest must wear plain linen (טל) garments (tunic, trousers, sash, turban) as he officiates, which is in contrast with the fine linen (שש) garments he normally wears. These linen garments are worn by the high priest on this day and are removed (16:23) once he completes his special duties.

In Ezek 9:2-3, a man clothed in linen attire also appears. Ezekiel 9 is situated in the context of Ezekiel 8-11, in which three visionary events occur: “(1) the departure of the glory...; (2) the abominations being perpetrated in the temple...; (3) the judgment inflicted on Jerusalem...”<sup>513</sup> In 8:3ff Ezekiel is taken by the Spirit to the door of the north gate of the inner court of the temple and shown the abominations committed in the temple. In the vision he sees the man in linen who has a writing utensil that he uses to

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<sup>511</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 290. See Newsom’s comparison of Dan 10:5-6 and Ezekiel 1 and 8-10 (*Daniel*, 330-331). She also concludes, “Many of the details of the appearance of the angel in Dan 10 are also used by the author of Revelation to describe the Son of Man (1:13-16) (331).”

<sup>512</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 13.

<sup>513</sup> Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 272-273.

mark those who are groaning over the abominations committed in the temple. Thus, the figure in linen is related to or situated within a cultic context.

Although the figure in Dan 10:5-6 is not situated within a cultic context, he wears the cultic appurtenances of a priest, specifically a high priest officiating during Yom Kippur. In contrast, the various elements of his appearance, (sash of gold, bronze body, eyes of fire, voice of a multitude), point to an otherworldly rather than earthly cultic figure.<sup>514</sup>

### **3. Daniel 11**

a. Only the revelation is included.

### **4. Daniel 12**

a. Daniel

Daniel again appears as a visionary/seer who is perplexed by heavenly revelations. This again evinces his inner conflict and struggle to understand, which never truly ends. A first-person narrative reappears in 12:5. He again relates a visionary experience in which he hears another audition (see also 8:13-14). As in Daniel 8, he does not understand, so he asks for the end of these things (v. 8). Throughout the apocalyptic section (chapters 7-12) there have been repeated attempts to make Daniel understand, but in Daniel 12 his search for understanding ultimately ends with the command “Go your way (v. 9).” Two more enigmatic time periods are given to help him understand, but he is

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<sup>514</sup> Collins states, “Linen was traditional priestly garb for certain ceremonial occasions (Lev 6:10; 16:4; Exek 44:17), but here, as in Ezekiel, it indicates an angelic being.” Therefore, Collins does not link the garments to the cult, but to the heavenly sphere. He points to Rev 1:13 in which the “one like a son of man” wears a long robe, a term used for linen in the LXX of Ezek 9:2. Lacocque suggests the figure in vv. 5ff is not Gabriel but a supernatural being greater than Gabriel and Michael. He sees Gabriel appearing in verse 16. *The Book of Daniel*, 241-242. Seow also argues that the figure in vv. 5ff is a supernatural personage. He concludes, “The...description...all suggest a supernatural presence, something like the presence that Ezekiel envisioned by the river Chebar...” *Daniel*, 156.



again commanded to “Go your way (v. 12).” However, this command is not dismissive. These words point to the security of knowing that his future personal position or place in God’s plan is safe, despite his lack of understanding.

b. Angel interpreter

A heavenly interpreter addresses Daniel in vv. 4 and 9-13. This is a continuation of the character relationship between the seer and the heavenly interpreter that first appeared in Daniel 8 and Daniel 10. Daniel’s search for understanding through the assistance of a heavenly interpreter continues to the end of the book.

At the end of the long revelation found in Daniel 11, the heavenly interpreter that revealed the revelation speaks to Daniel (12:4); however, the name of the interpreter is not given. It is possible that the angel in the angelic epiphany in Daniel 10 is the interpreter for the revelation in Daniel 11 and is the one that speaks to Daniel in chapter 12. Thus, the narrative incident of the heavenly interpreter relating the revelation in Daniel 11 spans chapters 10, 11, and 12. He tells Daniel to “seal the book until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase (12:4).”

After this command, Daniel uses the visionary phrase “and I looked and behold” before the final depiction of heavenly beings is related (12:5). It combines and adds to the heavenly depictions in Daniel 8:15-16 and 10:5-8. Instead of one man (Gabriel), two “others” stand opposite each other on the banks of the river. In addition, the voice above the waters in Daniel 8:16 changes to “the man in linen,” who was described as a transcendent being in 10:5-8. Similar to the heavenly conversation in Daniel 8:13-14, one of the beings that stood on the banks asks the man in linen how long until “these

wonders” cease.<sup>515</sup> The transcendent man in linen raises both hands to heaven and swears “by him who lives forever,” that the duration for this occurrence will be for “a time, times, and half a time (12:7).” This is the same phrase found in Daniel 7:25. After Daniel requests understanding, the being that speaks ends the chapter with a brief explanation regarding the time and a confirmation of Daniel’s position at “the end of days (12:13).”

c. Heavenly figure as priest

(See also discussion on heavenly figure as priest in Daniel 10.) In Daniel 12, Daniel sees the man in linen above the river and two beings that stand on the opposite sides of the river, on the riverbanks. This configuration may be suggestive of the configuration of the Most Holy Place, where the angels depicted on the ark of the covenant face opposite each other. In this configuration, God was understood to be present from between the cherubim and over the mercy seat (Exodus 25:22).

Table 4.13 Repetition of LS-NSC in Characters: Daniel 9-12

<b>Daniel 8 Characters</b>	<b>Daniel 9</b>	<b>Daniel 10</b>	<b>Daniel 11</b>	<b>Daniel 12</b>
<b>Heavenly Figure as Priest</b>	Coming/death of Messiah link to temple	Man in linen	(Extended revelation)	Man in linen flanked by two beings
<b>Daniel</b>	Daniel searches for understanding	Daniel strengthened to understand	(Extended revelation)	Daniel searches for understanding
<b>Gabriel/Interpreter</b>	Gabriel	Interpreter	(Extended revelation)	Interpreter

\* *Parentheses: Identity not stated in text*

<sup>515</sup> Both Daniel 8:13-14 and 12:6 contain the question “How long,” (עַד-מַתַּי) in reference to a prophecy. Moreover, the term “wonders” (נִפְלְאוֹת) occurs in 12:6 and 8:24.

#### D. Summary of Part II

Daniel 8 contains several plot elements that closely link it to Daniel 9-12.

Regarding the plot elements, three recurring elements obtain throughout the ensuing chapters. First, the term “understand” (*bin*) is a *leitwort* that initially occurs in Daniel 8 in the context of visionary revelation. This term recurs several times in chapters 9-12 in similar contexts as Daniel searches to understanding the meaning of the revelations that he has received. Second, the angelic epiphany portrayed in Daniel 8 becomes the foundational visionary experience that is expanded upon and elaborated in the ensuing chapters. Notably, Daniel 10 consists of a very similar epiphany that is repeated. Finally, violent confrontational conflicts also continue to occur in Daniel 9 and 10, but most notably in Daniel 11. These conflicts inevitably adversely affect the cultic/temple context. In connection to this element, cultic elements appear in the remaining chapters and become prominent in the Hebrew section.

Regarding the characters, Daniel, Gabriel (or angel interpreter), and a voice above the Ulai (or the man in linen) continue throughout the remaining chapters. Daniel’s search for understanding obtains to the end. Gabriel and the voice above the Ulai persist also until the final vision of the two beings on the banks of the river and the man in linen above the river. This construction may point to a climax that possibly depicts a Most Holy Place construction with the two angels facing one another and the presence of God in the midst of them or above them.

### III. Summary and Conclusions

#### Summary

Similar to the occurrence in Daniel 2, at the beginning of Daniel 8 another shift in language occurs, from Aramaic to Hebrew. This language shift is different from the first language shift in Daniel 2:4, which transitioned from Hebrew to Aramaic in the middle of the verse. The language shift in Daniel 8 occurs immediately, so the entire chapter is written in Hebrew. The language obtains to the end of the book. It is the contention of this study that a language shift-narrative shift correspondence (LS-NSC) that was identified between Daniel 1 and 2 can also be identified between Daniel 7 and 8.

As one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 a narrative shift occurs in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift that occurs in Daniel 8. Concerning the plot, in the narrative of the dream in Daniel 7 the plot is centered around a God-centered kingly cosmic conflict in which four beasts arise to reign on the earth. This conflict is controlled and restricted by God, who will judge those earthly kings, take away their dominion, and ultimately give it to his divine representatives, the one like a son of man and his saints. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, Daniel desires to “know” the dream.<sup>516</sup> He

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<sup>516</sup> The form of the dream and interpretation in Daniel 7 is similar to the form of the dream and its interpretation in Daniel 2. See A. Leo Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society), 1956; Jean-Marie Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); Shaul Bar, *A Letter that Has Not Been Read: Dreams in the Hebrew Bible* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2001). However, Daniel 8 is not a dream like those in Daniel 2, 4, and 7. Goldingay notes, “Chapters 8-12 are not dreams...Daniel is awake for the symbolic vision.” *Daniel*, rev. ed., 409. Despite this distinction Goldingay concludes, “The vision’s broad contours follow those of ch. 7 and earlier visions (409).” Thus, according to the genre of apocalypse, in Daniel 7 and 8 the chapter is delineated into two parts, the narrative of the dream (Daniel 7:2b-14; Daniel 8:2b-14) and the narrative of the seer (7:1-2a, 15-28; Daniel 8:1-2a, 15-27).

emphasizes his desire to know more about the fourth beast and the Little Horn; his interest focuses the interpretation on those elements, most notably the latter.

In contrast, in Daniel 8 a narrative shift in plot occurs in which the conflict depicted in Daniel 7 is reconfigured so that the narrative coheres around a horn-centered cultic cosmic conflict that highlights the violent attack of the little horn against God, his sanctuary, and his representatives. Initially, the conflict involves two kings/kingdoms vying for power, but with the rise of the little horn the conflict centers upon its fight for power primarily in the cultic realm. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 8, in contrast to the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, a narrative shift occurs that emphasizes the angelic epiphany that introduces Gabriel, destabilizes Daniel, and accompanies the interpretation of the vision.

Similarly concerning the characters, as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 there is a narrative shift in character. In Daniel 7 God is portrayed as a transcendent royal judge at his court. This depiction is achieved through the physical description of the Ancient of Days, of his throne, and of his attendants. Furthermore, the angel interpreter is anonymous, so his presence as a character is minimal. Finally, the seer is portrayed as a destabilized character searching to know his enigmatic dream, which causes him physical and mental anguish. In contrast, in Daniel 8 the description of God is muted and non-visual, but points to God as a priest in his sanctuary. Moreover, the angelic interpreter becomes a more consequential character. Finally, the seer searches for “understanding” rather “knowing” of the vision and experiences an even more destabilizing occurrence with regards to the vision and angel epiphany.

Daniel 8 contains several elements that closely link it to Daniel 9-12. Regarding the plot elements, three recurring elements obtain throughout the ensuing chapters. First, the term “understand” (bin) is a *leitwort* that initially occurs in Daniel 8 in the context of visionary revelation. This term recurs several times in chapters 9-12 in similar contexts as Daniel searches to understanding the meaning of the revelations that he has received. Second, the angelic epiphany portrayed in Daniel 8 becomes the foundational visionary experience that is expanded upon and elaborated in the ensuing chapters. Notably, Daniel 10 consists of a very similar epiphany that is repeated twice. Next, violent confrontational conflicts also continue to occur in Daniel 9 and 10, but most notably in Daniel 11. These conflicts inevitably adversely affect the cultic/temple context. Fourth, in connection to this element, cultic elements appear in the remaining chapters and become prominent in the Hebrew section.

Regarding the characters, Daniel, Gabriel (or angel interpreter), and a voice above the Ulai (or the man in linen) continue throughout the remaining chapters. Daniel’s search for understanding obtains to the end. Gabriel (or another heavenly interpreter) and the voice above the Ulai persist also until the final vision of the two beings on the banks of the river and the man in linen above the river. This construction may point to a climax that possibly depicts a Most Holy Place construction with the two angels facing one another and the presence of God in the midst of them or above them.

Table 4.14 LS-NSC from Daniel 7 to 8 and Repetition of LS-NSC in Daniel 9-12

Plot Elements	Narrative of the Seer	Narrative of Dream/Vision	Characters		
Daniel 7	Daniel seeks to know dream	Kingly-cosmic conflict	God as king	Anonymous Interpreter	Daniel seeks to know dream
Daniel 8	Daniel seeks to understand vision	Violent conflict/cultic terminology	God as priest	Gabriel as interpreter	Daniel seeks to understand vision
Daniel 9	Daniel searches book of Jeremiah to understand	One who comes destroys the temple/ Liturgical prayer; 70 weeks; temple rebuilt, destroyed	Messiah linked to temple	Gabriel brings a word concerning the vision	Daniel made to understand vision
Daniel 10	Daniel prepared to understand	Michael, (Gabriel) struggle with prince of Persian/ Man in linen	Man in linen	Angel Epiphany	Daniel understands vision
Daniel 11	(Extended revelation)	Conflict between Kings of North and South/ Sanctuary fortress; 𐤕𐤍𐤑	N/A	(Extended revelation)	N/A
Daniel 12	Daniel does not understand	Shattering of the power of the holy ones/ 𐤕𐤍𐤑	Man in linen flanked by two beings	Two men on the banks; angel reveals two prophetic time periods	Daniel seeks understanding

## Conclusions

The links between Daniel 8 and Daniel 9-12 suggest that the narrative that occurs at the point of the language shift in Daniel 8 lays the foundation for the subsequent chapters in the book. Although Daniel 7 is the center of the book and the broad introduction to the apocalyptic section, Daniel 8 appears to possess a stronger link to the ensuing chapters. Therefore, the language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 7 and 8 persists to the end of the book.

A comparative narrative analysis of Daniel 7 and 8 and a study of the links between Daniel 8 and chapters 9-12 indicate that the language shift corresponds to a narrative shift that obtains to the end of the book. The reconfigured narrative reconfigures the conflict in Daniel 7 and emphasizes the violent actions of the little horn in the context of the heavenly cult. This emphasis obtains in chapters 9-12. Consequently, one may conclude that the language shift has a rhetorical function that intends to further develop the concept initially noted in Daniel 1:2, reconfigured in Daniel 2, repeated in Daniel 3-7, reconfigured a second time in Daniel 7 and finally re-shaped in Daniel 8.

These conclusions are similar to the conclusions drawn regarding the language shift-narrative shift between Daniel 1 and 2 and linked to 3-7. Consequently, the shift in language in chapters 2 and 8 apparently occur at strategic junctures or locations in the book of Daniel, at which point reconfigured narratives appear that are foundations for the ensuing chapters (chapters 3-7 and 9-12 respectively).



## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

Chapter Five addresses the research questions proposed at the beginning of this study. In Chapter One, in the Problem Statement section, seven research questions were posited to guide the analysis. These questions are revisited to assess whether the data from the analysis answered and/or addressed them. The questions are as follows: 1) At the chapter level, what happens to the narratives in Daniel 1 and 2 as the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic? 2) Does the narrative shift that occurs from Daniel 1 and 2 persist in Daniel 3-7? 3) At the chapter level, what happens to the narratives in Daniel 7 and 8 when the language shifts from Aramaic to Hebrew? 4) Does the narrative shift that occurs from Daniel 7 to 8 persist in Daniel 9-12? 5) How do the narrative shifts from Daniel 1 to 2 and Daniel 7 to 8 relate to the shifts in language from Hebrew to Aramaic and from Aramaic to Hebrew? 6) According to the conclusions drawn from this study, what are some plausible explanations for: a) How bilingualism is used in the book and b) The persistence of Aramaic up to and including Daniel 7? 7) How does the language shift-narrative shift correspondence affect and contribute to the literary and theological meaning in the book of Daniel?

## Interpretation of Findings

QUESTION 1: At the Chapter Level, What Happens to the Narratives in Daniel 1 and 2 as the Language Shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic?

### LS-NSC in Plot from Daniel 1 to 2

The first language shift corresponds to the first narrative shift, which occurs as one transitions from Daniel 1 to 2. The plot of Daniel 1 coheres around the conflict between God and the king of Babylon with respect to sovereignty. God demonstrates absolute sovereignty while the king of Babylon grasps after absolute sovereignty. This conflict expands to include Daniel and his three companions, the main characters who strive to maintain their religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation.

In contradistinction to Daniel 1, in Daniel 2 the plot transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on Nebuchadnezzar's search for knowing concerning his menacing dream. All of the incidents and events in the narrative inevitably lead to the king knowing the revelation and interpretation of the dream. The dream builds upon the conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2 and situates and reconfigures it within a wider, universal context that highlights the expansive drama of divine (God)-human (kings/kingdoms) conflict. The dream itself functions as an embedded narrative that offers divine commentary on human kingship. This is what God wills that the king should know and understand, and it is what he did not know in Daniel 1. According to heaven's view, human kingship is filled with pride, wealth, and power, but its power is transitory and derivative. In a nuanced and sometimes covert depiction, human kingship is also

linked to the cultic/religious sphere. Despite such power and connections, this human government is ultimately doomed to destruction by God's representative.

### **LS-NSC in Character from Daniel 1 to 2**

With respect to the characters in Daniel 1 and 2, in Daniel 1 God and Nebuchadnezzar are depicted as behind-the-scenes-powers in conflict. God is depicted as absolute sovereign as he influences and controls the incidents in the narrative through his three acts of giving. The king is depicted as a monarch that grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. However, God's acts of giving and his followers' faithfulness undermine the king's power. Daniel (and his three friends) is a member of the Judean elite taken as a captive to Babylon. He is depicted as a pious follower of Yahweh who determines to prevent defilement during the three years of preparation for the king's service.

As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2, a notable change in characters and characterization can be identified. In Daniel 2 the characterization of God and the king changes. God is characterized indirectly through various characters rather than primarily through divine actions. Daniel is the primary character through which God is portrayed. The king, in contrast to his depiction in Daniel 1, is foregrounded as a character and becomes a destabilized power due to his lack of knowledge about his menacing dream. His wise men, who were minor characters in Daniel 1, are also foregrounded as they are portrayed as wise men without knowing or wisdom when they are unable to reveal the king's dream. Finally, Daniel is elevated exponentially as a character, more so than in Daniel 1, due to God's gift of wisdom and power.

Table 5.1 Language Shift-Narrative Shift Correspondence from Daniel 1 to 2

	<b>Plot</b>	<b>Characters</b>			
<b>Daniel 1</b>	Conflict between two powers	God is depicted as absolute sovereign by his 3 acts of giving	King is formidable sovereign	Daniel + 3 friends are pious and faithful followers of Yahweh	Wise men bested by four Hebrews
<b>Daniel 2</b>	Emphasis on knowing and divine commentary on conflict	God is absolute sovereign through deliverance, characterization	King is destabilized	Daniel is preeminent wise man due to his (and his 3 friends') connection to God	Wise men are destabilized; "unwise"

QUESTION 2: Does the Narrative Shift that Occurs from Daniel 1 to 2 Persist in Daniel 3-7 (the Aramaic section)?

**Repetition of LS-NSC in Plot in Daniel 3-7**

The LS-NSC identified above persists through Daniel 3-7 through the repetition of plot and character elements identified in the reconfigured narrative delineated in Daniel 2. Regarding plot elements, the emphasis on the king's knowing and on the embedded narrative of divine-human conflict is repeated in various ways in Daniel 3-7. First, the emphasis on the king's knowing can be identified in Daniel 3, 4, and 5. In Daniel 4 and 5 kings are judged according to their knowledge of God's sovereignty and how they react to it. This is emphasized through the repetition of the term "know" in Daniel 4 and 5. In Daniel 3, although it does not include the repetition of the term "know," Nebuchadnezzar's pride-filled question (Daniel 3:15) demonstrates his pride and lack of knowledge of God's sovereignty. Furthermore, Daniel 3 is a continuation of the

king's "education" that was initiated in Daniel 2 and climaxes in Daniel 4. In Daniel 6 the term "know" also occurs infrequently, but the Persian king's doxology suggests that he has come to know the sovereignty of God through the deliverance of Daniel.

Second, the emphasis on the narrative of divine-human conflict delineated in the embedded narrative of the dream in Daniel 2 also persists in Daniel 3-7 through the depiction of kingly hubris and the ensuing conflict with God. In Daniel 3, 4, and 5 the hubris of the kings is referred to through the use of vertiginous elements such as the golden image (Daniel 3), a large tree (Daniel 4), and the repetition of the constituent materials of the image in Daniel 2 (Daniel 5). In each chapter, the emblems of kingly hubris are related to the king's conflict with God. The conflict in Daniel 6 is only indirectly identified since the king is tricked into signing an injunction that conflicts with God's absolute sovereignty. Daniel 7 shifts to a new genre, but the plot elements of 1) the king's hubris (the little horn), 2) a king in conflict with God (four beasts and little horn), and 3) a king associated with the cultic/religious sphere (the little horn) occur.

In addition, the kings' hubris, which is ostensibly the primary offense against God in the divine-human conflict in Daniel 3-7 (and is also related to the kings' lack of knowing), is often linked to an element of cult or worship. In Daniel 2 the term "image" is used to describe the statue in the king's dream, but it is also a symbol for the pride of human kings/kingdoms. In the biblical text, the term is primarily linked to polytheistic worship. Thus, the kings/kingdoms of the earth are depicted as entities that indirectly or directly seek to deify their power and wealth. The term for "image" reappears in Daniel 3 in relation to the golden statue and is repeated frequently. The repetition of the term is repeatedly linked to King Nebuchadnezzar, thus identifying a close connection between

the two. The king's injunction to bow before the statue also hints at cultic or worship undertones. Thus, it appears that the king implicitly seeks to have an image that is closely linked to him worshiped.

In Daniel 4 the link between the king and cult or worship is more implicit. The text notes that the tree, a symbol for the king, reaches to the heavens. The term heavens may be a circumlocution for God. Moreover, the terms for "earth" and "heaven" are strategically repeated so that they represent conflict between the two. Daniel 5 explicitly links polytheistic worship to King Belshazzar, who defiles the cultic utensils of the house of God by drinking from them and using them to praise the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and wood. In the narrative it is noted that the king's act was an attempt to place himself above God. In Daniel 6, although the king is depicted in a positive light, he is tricked into signing an injunction that places him on a similar plane with God since the law temporarily forbids people in the kingdom from petitioning any man or god except the king. Finally, Daniel 7 explicitly depicts the little horn's great words against the Most High.

Table 5.2 Link Between Symbol of Kingly Hubris and Cultic/Worship (Daniel 3-7)

	Daniel 3	Daniel 4	Daniel 5	Daniel 6	Daniel 7
<b>Vertiginous Entity</b> (Symbol of kingly hubris)	Golden Statue	Great Tree	Repetition of material of great image in Dan. 2	(----	Great words (boastfulness) of the little horn
<b>Cultic/Worship Element</b>	Command to bow down and worship statue	Tree reaches up to heaven	King praises gods of metal, wood, stone	Injunction to only petition king instead of man or god for 30 days	Intends to change (religious) time and law

**Repetition of LS-NSC in Character (Daniel 3-7)**

Regarding the characters, in Daniel 2 the king becomes a main character whose power is destabilized. This becomes a repeated pattern in the subsequent chapters (Nebuchadnezzar [Daniel 3, 4], Belshazzar [Daniel 5], and Darius [Daniel 6]. As in Daniel 2, Daniel (and his three friends) becomes a witness to the sovereignty of God, whether through his religious integrity (Daniel 3 and 6; witness through martyrdom) or through mantic wisdom (Daniel 4 and 5) with embedded prophetic messages.

God as sovereign over human dominion is depicted through the actions and words of his representatives (Daniel 3, 4, 5, 6) and through the words of foreign kings (Daniel 3, 4, 6). This depiction demonstrates God as absolute sovereign through his power and authority to judge kings (chs. 4, 5, and 7) and to deliver his faithful followers (chs. 3 and 6). God gives human kings limited sovereignty on earth, but he alone has the power and authority to judge human kingship (Daniel 7). He raises up kings and takes away their throne. His power to remove kings is depicted through divine judgment.

Although God possesses absolute power, he tries to persuade foreign kings to come to the knowledge of his sovereignty or “know” him as sovereign. God uses dreams or enigmatic messages (chs. 2, 4, and 5) or miraculous acts of deliverance (chs. 3 and 6) to help the foreign king learn to know his sovereignty. However, God allows the kings freedom to choose whether they will come to know God as sovereign or not; however, if they refuse to know him as such, they will inevitably experience God’s executive judgment (chs. 4, 5, 7).

God’s divine judgment also affects his people. God judges his people for their sins (Daniel 1:1-2), but he also delivers and vindicates his faithful followers (Daniel 3, 6, and 7). Judah was sent into captivity because of their sins (Daniel 1:1-2), but God’s faithful followers receive God’s covenantal grace and the gifts of wisdom and understanding when they demonstrate faithfulness to his covenant. Moreover, Daniel and his three friends experience God’s miraculous protection in exile, namely his acts of deliverance, which overturn human judgment (Daniel 3 and 6). Divine judgment can negatively or positively affect God’s people, depending on their faithfulness or unfaithfulness.



Table 5.3 Repetition of LS-NSC: Daniel 2 and Daniel 3 to 7

	<b>Plot</b>	<b>Characters</b>			
<b>Daniel 2</b>	Knowing and Divine commentary on conflict	God is absolute sovereign through divine judgment and/or divine deliverance	King is destabilized	Daniel is preeminent wise man; 4 Jews face death decree; delivered	Wise men are destabilized; “unwise”
<b>Daniel 3</b>	King grasps for absolute power	God as Deliverer	King sees God’s deliverance	3 friends face death decree due to faith; delivered	Wise men in conflict with 3 Jews
<b>Daniel 4</b>	King learns to know God as sovereign	God as judge	King judged; accepts knowledge of God; reinstated	Daniel reveals God’s judgment; mantic wisdom	Wise men are “unwise”
<b>Daniel 5</b>	King rejects knowledge of God; grasps for absolute power	God as judge	King rejects knowledge of God; judged and killed	Daniel reveals God’s judgment; mantic wisdom	Wise men are “unwise”
<b>Daniel 6</b>	King (unknowingly) grasps for absolute power	God as deliverer	King accepts knowledge of God	Daniel faces death decree due to faith; delivered	Persian officials in conflict with Daniel
<b>Daniel 7</b>	4 Kings/kingdoms grasp for power; little horn grasps for God’s power	God as judge; Son of man receives eternal dominion	Four kings/kingdoms judged by God; kingdoms removed;	God’s people persecuted; finally receive kingdom	(----)

QUESTION 3: At the Chapter Level, What Happens to the Narratives in Daniel 7 and 8 (plot and characters) When the Language Changes from Aramaic to Hebrew?

### **LS-NSC in Plot from Daniel 7 to 8**

As one transitions from Daniel 7 to 8, a language shift from Aramaic to Hebrew occurs. In conjunction with this shift, a narrative shift in plot and character also obtains. This LS-NSC in plot continues the narrative of divine-human conflict that was introduced in Daniel 1, reconfigured in Daniel 2, and repeated in Daniel 3-7. As one transitions from the dream in Daniel 7 and the vision in Daniel 8, one may note a transition in plot from a God-centered cosmic conflict over who will reign as king on earth to a horn-centered cosmic conflict that emphasizes the little horn's actions, which were introduced in Daniel 7. A transition also occurs in the plots of the narratives of the seer from Daniel 7 to 8. Daniel's search for knowing in Daniel 7 transitions to his search for understanding in Daniel 8. In addition, the anonymous interpreter in Daniel 7 is replaced by an angel epiphany in Daniel 8 that introduces the new character of Gabriel.

### **LS-NSC in Character from Daniel 7 to 8**

A comparison of the characters in the narratives of the dream in Daniel 7 and the vision in Daniel 8 also evinces a narrative transition. Specifically, concerning the depiction of God in Daniel 7, a transition occurs from the transcendent depiction of a royal judge in his court to a non-visual depiction of a divine priest ministering over the ritual services in the heavenly temple. God is portrayed as the absolute sovereign through his power and authority as judge (7:9-10; 8:13-14). On the one hand, God allows humans to rule for a brief time according to their own dictates (7:2b-8; 8:2b-14). On the other

hand, God alone has the power and authority to judge human monarchs and decide when they will rise or fall. Overall, God's divine judgment overturns human kingship (7:11), vindicates/delivers his people (7:17-18), and re-institutes the heavenly ritual services and restores them so that they function properly. Regarding the Holy Ones or saints and the host, they are given over to the little horn power for a time.

In contrast, in Daniel 8, God is depicted as a divine priest (the Prince of the host) in his heavenly temple. However, the narrative emphasizes the actions of the little horn against the Prince of the host, notably his attack against the host and the stars, his appropriation of the *tamid*, his overturning of the place of his sanctuary, and his attack against truth. The divine response to the little horn power is non-visual and emphasizes the sound of two holy ones talking. The judgment against the little horn power is not depicted but it is foreordained in Daniel 8:14.

In the narratives of the seer in Daniel 7 and 8, the anonymous angel interpreter is replaced with a named heavenly messenger, Gabriel. His role in the narrative of the seer is more significant than the anonymous interpreter. Finally, Daniel experiences destabilization due to his heavenly experiences in both Daniel 7 and 8. However, in Daniel 8 he becomes even more destabilized due to the angel epiphany and the violent confrontation depicted in the vision.

Table 5.4 LS-NSC in Plot and Characters from Daniel 7 to 8

	Plot	Characters		
Daniel 7	God-centered kingly conflict over sovereignty	God is sovereign king that judges human kings	Daniel searches to know his dream	Anonymous interpreter makes dream known to Daniel
Daniel 8	Horn-centered cultic conflict over sovereignty	God is sovereign priest that cleanses the heavenly temple	Daniel searches to understand the vision	Gabriel makes Daniel understand the vision

QUESTION 4: Does the Narrative Shift that Occurs from Daniel 7 to 8 Persist in Daniel 9-12 (the Hebrew section)?

#### **Repetition of LS-NSC between Daniel 7 and 8 in Plot in Daniel 9-12**

Similar to the LS-NSC from Daniel 1 and 2, and its repetition in Daniel 3-7, the LS-NSC from Daniel 7 and 8 provides a narrative foundation for the ensuing chapters (Daniel 9-12) that elaborate on the foundational narratives (narrative of the vision and seer) reconfigured in Daniel 8. Daniel 8 contains several narrative elements that are repeated in Daniel 9-12. Regarding plot, four recurring elements obtain throughout the ensuing chapters, 1) the key word “understand,” 2) an angelic epiphany, 3) violent and confrontational conflict, 4) and cultic imagery.

First, the term “understand” (*bin*) is a *Leitwort* that initially occurs in Daniel 8 in the context of a visionary revelation. This term recurs several times in each of the ensuing chapters in a similar context, in Daniel 9 (4 times), Daniel 10 (4 times), Daniel 11 (4

times), and Daniel 12 (3 times). Overall, the usage of the term is used to depict Daniel's search for understanding of the vision in Daniel 8.

Second, the angelic epiphany portrayed in Daniel 8 becomes the foundational visionary experience that is expanded upon and elaborated in the ensuing chapters. In Daniel 9 Gabriel appears again, but Daniel is not overwhelmed by his appearance. Notably, Daniel 10 consists of an expanded epiphany scene that is parallel to that in Daniel 8. Daniel 11 is a continuation of Daniel 10. Finally, in Daniel 12 two heavenly figures appear with the man in linen above the water. However, Daniel is not adversely affected.

Third, violent confrontational conflicts also continue to occur in the Hebrew section, but most notably in Daniel 11. In Daniel 9, the revelation about the destruction of the earthly temple and the destruction of the prince that brings such destruction is revealed. In Daniel 10, the angel reveals that he was prevented from coming to Daniel because of his conflict with the prince of Persia. In Daniel 11 the revelation focuses on the conflicts between the kings of the north and south. These conflicts shift to a conflict between the king of the north and God. Daniel 12 does not depict a violent, confrontational conflict, but it does hint at the "shattering of the power of the holy people" in Daniel 12:7.

Finally cultic elements that were introduced in Daniel 8 also appear in Daniel 9-12. In Daniel 9, Daniel's penitential prayer and Gabriel's revelation focus on the temple mount and Jerusalem, the holy city of God. Daniel 10 includes the appearance of a divine figure in the apparel of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. In Daniel 11 kingly imagery is emphasized in the beginning of the chapter, but the emphasis transitions to

cultic imagery in verse 16. In Daniel 12 the man in linen appears again along with another prophecy that highlights the duration of the little horn's attack against the cultic ministry in heaven.

### **Repetition of LS-NSC from Daniel 7 and 8 in Characters in Daniel 9-12**

Regarding the characters, Daniel, Gabriel (or an angel interpreter), and a voice above the Ulai (or the man in linen) continue throughout Daniel 9-12. Daniel's search for understanding regarding the vision in Daniel 8 obtains to the end of the book. Gabriel and the voice above the Ulai persist also until the final vision of the two beings on the banks of the river and the man in linen above the river in Daniel 12. This construction may point to a climax that possibly depicts a Most Holy Place construction with the two angels facing one another and the presence of God in the midst of them or above them.

Table 5.5 Repetition of LS-NSC: Daniel 8 and Daniel 9-12

Plot Elements	Narrative of Seer	Narrative of Dream/Vision	Characters		
Daniel 7	Daniel seeks to know dream	God centered kingly cosmic conflict	God as king	Anonymous Interpreter	Daniel seeks to know dream
Daniel 8	Daniel seeks to understand vision	Horn-centered violent conflict/with cultic imagery	God as priest	Gabriel as interpreter	Daniel seeks to understand vision
Daniel 9	Seer's liturgical prayer	Revelation of 70 weeks	Messiah linked to temple	Gabriel brings a word concerning the vision	Daniel made to understand vision
Daniel 10	Seer fasts to understand	Man in linen/extended epiphany	Man in linen	Angel Epiphany	Daniel understands vision
Daniel 11	(Extended revelation)	Extended revelation	(----)	(Extended revelation)	(----)
Daniel 12	Seer does not understand	Final epiphany	Man in linen flanked by two beings	Two men on the banks; angel reveals two prophetic time periods	Daniel seeks understanding

QUESTION 5: How Do the Narrative Shifts from Daniel 1 to 2 and Daniel 7 to 8 Relate to the Shifts in Language from Hebrew to Aramaic and from Aramaic to Hebrew?

### **LS-NSC as Rhetorical-Narrative Device**

The relation between the language shifts at Daniel 1 and 2 and the language shifts at Daniel 7 and 8 and the narrative shifts at these same locations suggests the language shift may be a rhetorical-narrative device, namely a literary device that signals the appearance of a foundational narrative. The narrative shift from Daniel 1 to 2 corresponds to the language shift that occurs at this strategic location. Daniel 2 contains narrative elements (plot and character) that are foundational for the subsequent chapters in Aramaic. Thus, this language shift-narrative shift correspondence also persists from Daniel 3 up to and including Daniel 7.

Similarly, the narrative shift from Daniel 7 to 8 corresponds to the language shift that occurs at this strategic location. Daniel 8 contains narrative elements (plot and character) that are foundational for the subsequent chapters in Hebrew. Thus, this language shift-narrative shift correspondence also persists from Daniel 9 up to and including Daniel 12. According to this persistence of the narrative shifts alongside the persistence of the language shifts, one may conclude that the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic and from Aramaic to Hebrew may function as a rhetorical-narrative device that signals the appearance of a foundational narrative that contains plot and character elements that repeat in the subsequent chapters in the corresponding language.



### **LS-NSC as Rhetorical-Narrative Device: Daniel 1:1-2 and Daniel 2**

The LS-NSC is a rhetorical-narrative device that signals the appearance of a foundational narrative for the subsequent chapters in the corresponding languages. The first foundational narrative occurs at Daniel 2, which builds upon the introductory event in Daniel 1:1-2. These two verses depict Nebuchadnezzar carrying away the King of Judah and some of the vessels of the house of God to Babylon. He brings them to Shinar and places the vessels in the treasury house of his god. It is the Lord who is behind this act since he gives the king and the vessels into Nebuchadnezzar's hands or power. As noted above, this introductory event in the first two verses of the book introduces the combatants and context of the divine-human conflict over sovereignty. The two combatants, God and the King of Babylon, are delineated in these verses. In addition, the foundational contexts of the divine-human conflict are introduced as relating to the kingly sphere (King of Judah) and the cultic sphere (vessels of the house of God).

### **LS-NSC as Rhetorical-Narrative Device: Daniel 2, 3-7**

The divine-human conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2 is reconfigured in Daniel 2 as the language shifts to Aramaic and as the narrative shifts to the king's search for his dream. Daniel 1:1-2 is linked to Daniel 2:37 and 38 in the interpretation of the king's dream, which situates and reconfigures (or shapes) the conflict delineated in Daniel 1 into a broader divine-human conflict that involves four rather than one kingdom, and that highlights kingly hubris linked to issues of worship or cult. This conflict is explored and repeated in greater detail in Daniel 3-7, each chapter portraying, in varying forms, how kingly hubris is in conflict with God's sovereignty. Consequently, Daniel 2 offers a

foundational narrative of the divine-human conflict over sovereignty that is explored in the subsequent chapters of the Aramaic section.

### **LS-NSC as Rhetorical-Narrative Device: Daniel 7**

In Daniel 7 the divine-human conflict over sovereignty, introduced in Daniel 1:1-2, is reconfigured anew. Daniel 7 has a dual function as a climax for the divine-human conflict over sovereignty in Daniel 2-6 and as a new introductory depiction of the conflict for Daniel 8 (the pivotal location and purpose of Daniel 7 as the center chapter of the book has been noted in Danielic scholarship). First, it is a climax to the narratives in Daniel 2-6 because it is the ultimate depiction of their central focus. This gives an all-encompassing and ultimate expression of the focus of Daniel 3-7.<sup>517</sup> The four beasts and the royal imagery of divine judgment, the Ancient of Days, and the enthronement of the one like a son of man depict the final or ultimate expression of God's sovereignty on earth. It is the glorious fruition or depiction of the ultimate focus of the narratives in Daniel 2-7, namely God's victory over the hubris of human kings, the judgment and removal of those kings, and the establishment of God's sovereignty on earth through his representative.

Second, Daniel 7 is an introduction to a reconfigured depiction of the divine-human conflict. The shift in genre, chronology, and person in Daniel 7 create the context

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<sup>517</sup> Goldingay proposes that the book of Daniel, "is unique in the Old Testament for being a series of individual stories..., rather than a continuous narrative. There is some linearity in them (and in the visions), though less than in many other sequences of Old Testament narrative of comparable length. We would lose something if we read these stories and visions in a different order... These narratives bear closest comparison with the Abraham stories, which have in common that they build cumulatively but also that the bulk of them are arranged as a chiasm... Such patterning does not exclude linearity but does compromise it or work against it." "Daniel in the Context of OT Theology," 639-660, in *The Book of Daniel, Composition and Reception*, vol. II, eds John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, (Boston, MA: Brill Academic, 2002), 642,

for a new beginning that parallels the relation between Daniel 1 and 2. Therefore, Daniel 7 includes an introductory narrative that is explicated in greater detail in Daniel 8 as the foundational chapter for the subsequent Hebrew chapters (Daniel 9-12). The chapter introduces a new figure in the divine-human conflict, namely the little horn. The violence of the fourth beast and, even more so, the hubris of the little horn present a greater challenge to God's sovereignty. The latter openly defies God's sovereignty as it attacks God's law and the holy ones. As the language changes from Aramaic back to Hebrew, Daniel 8 builds on the introductory narrative of divine-human conflict in Daniel 7 and shifts away from the royal imagery and kingly context to horn and cultic imagery and a heavenly cult context to give greater definition to the conflict. Here, as in Daniel 2, another foundational narrative is presented that has narrative elements (plot and character) repeated in Daniel 9-12. These chapters explore the narrative elements of the divine-human conflict over sovereignty delineated in the narrative of Daniel 8.

### **LS-NSC as Rhetorical-Narrative Device: Daniel 8, 9-12**

Daniel 8 depicts the foundational narrative for the subsequent chapters in this second LS-NSC. The narrative in Daniel 8 shifts from a God-centered cosmic kingly divine-human conflict to a horn-centered cultic divine-human conflict. The plot emphasizes the little horn's attack against God's heavenly cultic ministry and against his host. As in Daniel 1:1-2 and 7:25, God allows his people to experience suffering at the hand of an enemy because of transgression (Daniel 8:12). The little horn persecutes the host and uses deception to appropriate God's heavenly cultic ministry (Daniel 8:24, 25).

The ensuing chapters explore God's response to the actions of the host and of the little horn. First, in Daniel 9 the ministry of the Messiah (9:24-27) is revealed as the

answer for the sin, transgression, and iniquity Daniel outlines in his penitential prayer. It is possible that Daniel's prayer is his reaction to the revelation in Daniel 8. He may understand the transgression of the host to refer to the sin of his people. Second, Daniel 10-12 outlines God's response to the little horn's attack against God's heavenly ministry. Daniel 10 introduces this section with the appearance of the man in linen (10:5-6), whose apparel is reminiscent of the clothing of a high priest on the Day of Atonement. This may signal heaven's divine judgment against the little horn figure.

In Daniel 11, the divine revelation of the rise and fall of the Kings of the North and Kings of the South demonstrates the divine wisdom of heaven since God has foreknowledge of the actions of human kings/kingdoms. Divine wisdom also knows when the final Kings of the North and South will arise and when the King of the North will openly attack the God of heaven. At this point, cultic imagery begins to appear more frequently (in 11:16).<sup>518</sup> Moreover, similar language to 8:24 and 25, in which the characteristics of the little horn are outlined, appear in 11:21 in relation to the "despicable person." Such language continues as the King of the North is depicted as having characteristics similar to those of the little horn of Daniel 7 and 8. In this depiction, the King of the North oppresses God's sanctuary (11:31) and those who have insight (11:33). He continues to prosper until the rise of Michael (Daniel 12:1-2), who brings divine judgment. Daniel 12:4-13 concludes the revelation with a climactic divine appearance and with a final cryptic time prophecy that further demonstrates God's sovereign wisdom regarding this divine-human conflict over sovereignty in the cultic context.

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<sup>518</sup> However, Doukhan notes that cultic terminology occurs prior to 11:16. For example, see the term "fortress" in 11:1; *Daniel 11: Decoded*, 92.

In summary, the language shift from Hebrew to Aramaic between Daniel 1 and 2 corresponds to the narrative shift from Daniel 1 and 2, and the language shift from Aramaic to Hebrew between Daniel 7 to 8 corresponds to the narrative shift at the same location. This relation or correspondence suggests the language shifts may have a similar function as the narrative shifts, specifically as a rhetorical-narrative device that identifies the appearance of a foundational narrative, for the Aramaic section Daniel 2 and for the Hebrew section Daniel 8, that contains narrative (plot and character) elements repeated in the subsequent chapters of the corresponding language. Each language shift-narrative shift correspondence signals a narrative that possesses foundational narrative elements that explore one of two aspects of the divine-human conflict over sovereignty (kingly aspect in the Aramaic section, and cultic aspect in the Hebrew section).

Goldingay explains that the book of Daniel does not follow a completely linear development common in most narratives. He suggests the narratives are episodic in nature, exploring “the same underlying plot in every episode.”<sup>519</sup> Therefore, the first language shift-narrative shift correspondence from Hebrew to Aramaic between Daniel 1 and 2 and the subsequent chapters in Aramaic (Daniel 3-7) explore the divine-human conflict over sovereignty in the context of kingship. However, this exploration links kingship to acts relating to cult or worship. The second language shift-narrative shift correspondence from Aramaic to Hebrew between Daniel 7 and 8 and the subsequent chapters in Hebrew (Daniel 9-12) explore the divine-human conflict over sovereignty in

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<sup>519</sup> “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” 639-660, in *The Book of Daniel, Composition and Reception*, vol. II, eds John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, (Boston, MA: Brill Academic, 2002), 643.

the context of cult. However, although the cultic context is primary in this part of the book, imagery and terminology of kingship remain. This two-part exploration of the divine-human conflict over sovereignty is structured according to the language shift-narrative shift correspondence. Despite this structure, both parts depict a close relationship between kingship and cult/worship. The Aramaic section highlights the context of kingship, and the Hebrew section highlights the context of cult/worship.

QUESTION 6: According to the Conclusions Drawn from the Study, What are Some Possible Explanations for: 1) The Use of Two languages (Hebrew and Aramaic), as Well as the Persistence of Aramaic Up to and Including Daniel 7?

The question of how the book of Daniel uses two languages is different from the question of why it uses two languages. These questions are related, but they address different issues. For example, the former question seeks to know how the languages are used within the literary context of the book of Daniel. In contrast, the latter question can refer to at least two types of inquiries. On the one hand, the question of why two languages are used asks what is the function of bilingualism, which is similar or related to how the languages are used. On the other hand, the question of why two languages are used may ask what social, political, and/or cultural context enabled or led to the use of two languages. Related to this line of questioning, one may further ask why Aramaic was chosen and accepted to be used along with Hebrew in a religious text. The answer to this “why” question requires inquiry into the use of bilingualism in antiquity, especially in ancient Judaism. Furthermore, it necessitates knowledge of the development of the use of Aramaic in sacred or religious texts in ancient Judaism, such as in the book of Ezra, the targums, and the Talmud. Therefore, it requires a method that can delve into the social,

historical, linguistic, and religious spheres. However, the former question (how) requires a synchronic method that analyzes the rhetorical use of the language in the bilingual text. This study addresses the former question rather than the latter.

Collins has concluded that bilingualism in the book of Daniel has a rhetorical function. Consequently, several studies have used methods that seek to analyze the rhetorical function of the two languages. The studies evaluated in Chapter One use methods that analyze the rhetorical use of the languages rather than the historical, sociological, political, and linguistic development of bilingualism with regards to Aramaic and Hebrew. Portier-Young's study addresses the socio-political use of language, but she does not delineate and analyze the development of bilingualism in the period during which the book was composed. The current study follows the other studies in using a synchronic method that analyzes the rhetorical use of the two languages.

### **Conclusions of Five Studies: How Bilingualism is Used in Daniel**

As noted in Chapter One of this study, several studies have attempted to address the use of two languages in the Bible as a whole (Ezra and Daniel) or in Daniel in particular. All of the studies address the use of bilingualism as a rhetorical device. This is evident in the methods and conclusions of each study. This study has attempted to conduct an analysis of the two language shifts in Daniel that addresses the limitations in the previously mentioned studies that were noted in Table 1.1 in Chapter 1. Table 5.6 presents the limitations noted in Table 1.1 and compares them to the conclusions related to the LS-NSC identified in this study. Overall, four limitations were identified in the analysis of the five studies: 1) an overemphasis on links with Ezra (Snell and Wesselius), 2) missing explanation for second language shift (Arnold), 3) limiting analysis to the

Aramaic section (Valeta, Portier-Young), and 4) lack of analysis of God as character (all five studies). Table 5.6 demonstrates how the LS-NSC attempts to address these limitations.

Snell and Wesselius conclude that the use of bilingualism in the book of Ezra is a template for its use in the book of Daniel. This conclusion has merit, but it suffers from an overemphasis on the links between the books of Daniel and Ezra. As shown in Table 5.6, the LS-NSC attempts to address the unique narrative characteristics of the book of Daniel by using a narrative analysis. This narrative analysis concludes that bilingualism in Daniel is a rhetorical-narrative device that signals a corresponding shift in narrative to a foundational narrative for the subsequent chapters, specifically Daniel 2 and 8. This conclusion does not negate Snell and Wesselius's theories; however, this conclusion emphasizes the use of bilingualism specifically in the book of Daniel.

Arnold's study offers a plausible conclusion for the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic in both Daniel and Ezra. However, it does not offer a definitive answer for the second language shift at Daniel 8, from Aramaic to Hebrew. In contrast, the LS-NSC study concludes that the second language shift corresponds to the narrative shift at Daniel 8 and signals to the reader that Daniel 8 is a foundational narrative for the ensuing chapters.

Next, Valeta uses the literary theory of Bakhtin to analyze the literary characteristics in the book of Daniel, specifically of the Aramaic section. He concludes that the shifts in language depict a shift in ideology that is endemic to the social context of an exile living under the oppression of an empire. His study's conclusion addresses the narrative and ideological characteristics of the text, but it does not address the Hebrew



section (Daniel 8-12), and thus does not analyze the second language shift at Daniel 8 within its Hebrew context. However, the LS-NSC addresses the Aramaic and Hebrew sections. Both the first and second language shifts signal foundational narratives that include plot and character elements that are repeated in the subsequent chapters.

Similarly, Portier-Young's study looks at the relation between language and empire. She sees the use of bilingualism as an inherent phenomenon within the context of empire. She also concludes that the book of Daniel using bilingualism to help the reader to align herself with the covenantal people of Yahweh. Portier Young's use of sociolinguistic theory and her focus on covenantal faithfulness offers helpful conclusions about bilingualism in Daniel. Nevertheless, her study would benefit from a similar analysis of Daniel 8-12. As with Valeta's study, the LS-NSC addresses the Aramaic and Hebrew sections.

Finally, none of the studies address the role of God as character in the two sections. This omission may be due to the fact that many studies emphasize the success of Jewish courtiers living in exile as a primary theme. This emphasis overlooks that fact that the character of God is an overwhelming element in the book as a whole. Humphreys noted that one of the most significant differences between the book of Daniel and Ahiqar (and similar stories) is its theological focus.<sup>520</sup> God is the source of wisdom rather than the courtiers and God is the source of deliverance for the courtiers rather than their own wisdom. He is also the divine judge that raises up and removes kings. This narrative

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<sup>520</sup> W. Lee Humphreys, "A Lifestyle for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *JBL* 92 (1973): 211-223, 220-221. He concludes, "In this stress on the devotion of the hero characteristic elements in the tale of the courtier are submerged. The God of Daniel is the central figure and not the courtier."

element is essential in understanding how bilingualism is used in the book and in understanding the literary meaning of the text.

### **Conclusion of this Study: How Bilingualism is Used in Daniel**

This study concludes that the book of Daniel uses bilingualism as a rhetorical-narrative device. The language shifts at Daniel 2:4b and 8:1 are signals to the reader that a narrative shift also occurs. This narrative shift at Daniel 2 and 8 presents foundational narratives for the subsequent chapters in the corresponding language (Daniel 3-7 for Aramaic and Daniel 9-12 for Hebrew). Furthermore, this language shift-narrative shift correspondence (LS-NSC) may be a key for the reader to help her/him understand the main problem (found in the foundational chapters in Daniel 2 and 8) and the exploration of that problem (found in Daniel 3-7 and 9-12). Ultimately, the language shifts structure the book so that it builds upon and responds to the introductory problem depicted in Daniel 1:1-2 and 3-21, namely divine-human conflict in a kingly and cultic context and its effects upon the people of God.

Table 5.6 Comparison: Limitations of Five Studies and Strengths of the LS-NSC

<b>Author</b>	<b>Limitations</b>	<b>LS-NSC</b>
<b>Snell</b>	a) Overemphasizes links to Ezra; b) Omission of God as character	a) Addresses literary characteristics particular to the book of Daniel; b) Analyzes God as character
<b>Arnold</b>	a) Lacks conclusion regarding shift from Aramaic to Hebrew in Daniel; b) Omission of God as character	a) Offers conclusion for shift from Aramaic to Hebrew; b) Analyzes God as character
<b>Wesselius</b>	a) Overemphasizes links to Ezra; b) Omission of God as character	a) Addresses literary characteristics particular to the book of Daniel; b) Analyzes God as character
<b>Valeta</b>	a) Limits scope to Aramaic section; b) Omission of God as character	a) Addresses both Aramaic and Hebrew sections; b) Analyzes God as character
<b>Portier-Young</b>	a) Further study of Hebrew section necessary; b) Omission of God as character	a) Addresses both Aramaic and Hebrew sections; b) Analyzes God as character

### **Limitations of the LS-NSC**

Despite addressing the four limitations found in the four previously mentioned studies, the LS-NSC fails to address the issue of bilingualism in the Bible in a broad sense. This is due to its singular focus on the narrative characteristics of Daniel. As noted above, the narrative analysis could have been implemented in a study on Ezra; unfortunately, such a study is beyond the parameters of the present study. Table 5.7 shows that this study's limitations derive from its assiduous focus on the book of Daniel, without comparison to Ezra or any other Biblical book. Thus, this study, along with the other studies, also suffers from its own peculiar limitations.

Table 5.7 Comparison: Strengths and Limitations of Previous Studies and LS-NSC

<b>Author</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
<b>This Study</b>	Narrative Analysis	Corresponds to two-part narrative of that portrays divine-human conflict over sovereignty and its consequences for God's people	Addresses literary characteristics particular to the book of Daniel; Analyzes God as a character	Omits broad analysis of bilingualism in the Bible (lacks comparison to the book of Ezra)
<b>Snell</b>	Comparative Analysis	Mimics older source material (Ezra)	Addresses the issue of bilingualism in the Bible holistically	Overemphasizes links to Ezra; omission of God as character
<b>Arnold</b>	Literary/Linguistic Analysis	Creates structure for social location	Addresses broader issue of language and of bilingualism in the Bible	Lacks conclusion regarding shift from Aramaic to Hebrew in Daniel; omission of God as character
<b>Wesselius</b>	Comparative Analysis	Mimics ancient dossier; points to parallels to Ezra	Addresses the issue of bilingualism in the Bible holistically	Overemphasizes links to Ezra; omission of God as character
<b>Valeta</b>	Genre Analysis	Expression of ideology	Addresses the idiosyncrasies of the genres in Daniel	Limits scope to Aramaic section; omission of God as character
<b>Portier-Young</b>	Socio-linguistic Analysis	Calls for the preservation of and faithfulness to Jewish identity	Addresses the broader issue of language and its social function	Further study of Hebrew section necessary; omission of God as character

Another possible explanation for how bilingualism is used in the book of Daniel is offered by Gleason Archer. He concludes,

A careful study of the subject matter yields fairly obvious answers: The Aramaic chapters deal with matters pertaining to the entire citizenry of the Babylonian and the Persian empires, whereas the other six chapters relate to peculiarly Jewish concerns and God's special plans for the future of his covenant people.<sup>521</sup>

He further suggests, regarding the composition of the book, that Daniel 2-7 were made available to the general public in the corresponding time periods of the Babylonian and Persian empires. This conclusion is based on the fact that Aramaic was the *lingua franca* in those two empires during the fifth and sixth centuries BCE.

QUESTION 7: How Does the LS-NSC Affect and Contribute to Literary and Theological Meaning in the Book of Daniel?

This study proposes that the LS-NSC in the book of Daniel functions as an intentional rhetorical-narrative device that delineates a two-part emphasis on divine-human conflict in the context of kingship and cult. This two-part emphasis also characterizes God as divine king and priest. Such a rhetorical-narrative device contributes to and engenders literary and theological meaning in the text. Literary meaning is achieved through the strategic location of the language shifts and the corresponding narrative shifts, which creates an interlocking literary structure for the book. Furthermore, instead of common narrative development, the LS-NSC may suggest a complex

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<sup>521</sup> Gleason Archer, "Daniel," 3-157 in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, Frank E. Gaebelein, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 6.

chronological narrative progression that moves from the foundational chapters (Daniel 2 and 8) to narrative climaxes at Daniel 7 (Aramaic section) and in Daniel 12 (Hebrew section). This two-part structure explores God's resolution to the narrative problem presented in Daniel 1:1-2, namely the consequences of exile: 1) the removal of the Judean king and 2) the temple vessels from Jerusalem to Babylon and 3) the threat to God's faithful people in exile. Theological meaning is derived from the literary meaning in the text. The two-part narrative emphasis and exploration on divine-human conflict in the context of kingship and cult engenders theological meaning about God, God's people, and human kingship and history.

## **Literary Meaning**

### LS-NSC and Literary Structure

Several scholars have noted the importance of the language shifts in relation to the overall structure of the book. In a general sense, in relation to the use of dreams as structuring devices in ancient Near Eastern narrative texts, Jean-Marie Husser states that "Dreams...appear to be a compositional technique particularly well suited to the structuring of a narrative text."<sup>522</sup> Although Collins structures the book of Daniel according to its two genres,<sup>523</sup> he suggests that the "retention of two languages in the final edition of the book...must be explained in terms of the structure as a whole. The retention

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<sup>522</sup> Jean-Marie Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 103-104. For an analysis of dreams in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible see Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, *Der Traum im Alten Testament* BZAW 73 (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1953). For the book of Daniel, he focuses on Daniel 2 and 4. For a more recent treatment, see Shaul Bar, *A Letter That Has Not Been Read: Dreams in the Hebrew Bible* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 2001). He looks at the intent of dreams, specifically in Daniel 2 and 4 (see pp. 205-217).

<sup>523</sup> Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 31. He identifies the first part (1:1-6:29; RSV 6:28) as "The Tales" and he identifies the second part (7:1-12:13) as "The Visions."

of Daniel 7 in Aramaic serves as an interlocking device between the two halves of the book.”<sup>524</sup> Valeta argues that the structure of the book of Daniel has a “1.5/1.5 doubled pattern”<sup>525</sup> that corresponds to the language shifts. In response to the question, “Why does the Aramaic of the book of Daniel not disappear when the kings disappear from the text at the end of Daniel 6,” he suggests that “the carryover is deliberate and serves its own narratological and ideological functions.”<sup>526</sup> He explains that the first six chapters begin with a Hebrew chapter followed by six chapters in Aramaic (1, 2-7; except for 2:1-4a). The last six chapters begin with an Aramaic chapter followed by six Hebrew chapters (7, 8-12). Valeta concludes that the two parts of the book are interrelated, and he also states that this “twinning pattern is important to the overall message of judgment in the book.”<sup>527</sup>

A recent commentary by J. Paul Tanner also suggests a literary structure for the book of Daniel that follows the language shifts. He states, “the book seems to have an overlapping structure. Two major divisions – chaps. 2-7 and chaps. 7-12 – overlap. Thus chap. 7 belongs to both halves.”<sup>528</sup> He follows Lenglet’s structure for Daniel 2-7, but he links Daniel 7 to both the Aramaic section and the Hebrew section. He lists three reasons that support his view: 1) it follows the “linguistic division of the book,”<sup>529</sup> 2) it follows

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<sup>524</sup> Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, 30-31; He also sees the Hebrew section as an *inclusio* for the Aramaic section (chapters 1 and 8-12 enclose chapters 2-7).

<sup>525</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 191.

<sup>526</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 189.

<sup>527</sup> Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions*, 189.

<sup>528</sup> J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 30.

<sup>529</sup> Tanner, *Daniel*, 31.

Lenglet's concentric structure for Daniel 2-7, and 3) it sees Daniel 7 as the first of four visions (Daniel 7, 8, 9, 10-12). He also notes four other points that support his theory. First, it corresponds to the temporal division of the book. Chapters 2-7 primarily focus on the historical past while Daniel 7-12 focus on the future. Second, it is delineated according to the difference in dating notices. The dating notices in Daniel 1 and 2 are different from those found in Daniel 7-12. Third, he states that the concluding motifs in 1-6 are different from those in 8-12, but Daniel 7 includes concluding motifs found in both sections. Finally, he sees this structure as coinciding with the change in the "person" of narration (third person [chs. 1-6, except in Daniel 4, beginning of 7] and first person [7-12]). Overall, Tanner concurs with Collins and concludes that Daniel 7 is the "hinge"<sup>530</sup> for the book of Daniel.

Finally, Steinmann's interlocked chiasmic structure of Daniel is another example of a structure that corresponds to the language shifts. He states, "the key to understanding the author's reason for the dual languages is recognizing the interlocked chiasmic structure of the book."<sup>531</sup> He also notes that large sections of material in the book of Daniel are constructed as a chiasm. Lenglet first identified the concentric structure of the Aramaic section, and several other authors have come to the same conclusion.<sup>532</sup> However, scholars do not agree on the structure of the Hebrew section. Steinmann suggests the

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<sup>530</sup> Tanner, *Daniel*, 34.

<sup>531</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary. (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2008), 21.

<sup>532</sup> "La Structure Litteraire de Daniel 2-7." *Biblia* 53 (1972): 169-190. See also John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977; *Daniel*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1993, 33-34; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, TOTC (Leicester, UK: Intervarsity Press, 1978), 59-60, André Lacocque, *Daniel in His Time* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press), 11.



Hebrew section possesses a concentric structure similar to that in the Aramaic section. He sees the two concentric structures in the Aramaic and Hebrew as interlocked chiasms. He explains

Both chiasms are bilingual. The first (1:1-7:28) begins with a Hebrew introduction (1:1-21) followed by the chiasm proper in Aramaic (2:1-7:28). The second chiasm (7:1-12:13) has an Aramaic introduction (7:1-28) followed by the chiasm proper in Hebrew (8:1-12:13). The two chiasms, moreover, are interlocked, since the first visions (7:1-28) serves both as the end of the first chiasm by virtue of its four-kingdom parallel to Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its Aramaic language, and also as the introduction to the visions by virtue of its visionary style and its chronological placement in the first year of Belshazzar.<sup>533</sup>

Steinman argues that the interlocked chiasms corresponding to the dual languages bring together the two very different genres (narratives and visions), Thus, the bilingualism of Daniel is a device that unifies the ostensibly disparate parts of the book. He also argues that the use and location of the two languages are intentionally incorporated into the text. Finally, he proposes that Daniel 7 is the hinge of the interlocking chiasm, therefore, it is central to understanding and interpreting the book.

Table 5:8 Steinmann's Interlocked Chiastic Structures of Daniel<sup>534</sup>

Introduction 1: Prologue (1:1-21)

- A Nebuchadnezzar dreams of four kingdoms and the kingdom of God (2:1-49)
- B Nebuchadnezzar sees God's servants rescued (3:1-30)
- C Nebuchadnezzar is judged (3:31-4:34 [ET 4:1-37])
- C' Belshazzar is judged (5:1-6:1[ET5:1-31])
- B' Darius sees Daniel rescued (6:2-29 [ET6:1-28])
- A' Introduction 2: Daniel has a vision of four kingdoms and the kingdom of God (7:1-28)
- D Details on the post-Babylonian kingdoms (8:1-27)
- E Jerusalem restored (9:1-27)
- D' More details on the post-Babylonian kingdoms (10:1-12:13)

<sup>533</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 23.

<sup>534</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 22.

This study also suggests the two language shifts structure the book of Daniel, but the structure corresponds to a complex narrative progression (see discussion below).

#### LS-NSC and complex narrative progression

It has been stated that “Daniel is unique in the Old Testament for being a series of individual stories (let alone visions), rather than a continuous narrative.”<sup>535</sup> However, Nolan Fewell gives a more nuanced argument and states:

The whole narrative of 1–6 is not, in a strict sense, a novella. It is not structured around a continuing, complex plot line; instead, it is paradoxically constructed—one plot line is linked with another plot line which is linked with another and so forth. Nevertheless, 1-6 does display continuity on other levels—characters, setting, theme, etc.—and does show development of character and situation as the narrative progresses.<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>535</sup> Goldingay, “Daniel in the Context of OT Theology,” in *The Book of Daniel, Composition and Reception*, v. 2, John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, eds. (Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 643 Goldingay states, “...the book reaches no closure; the work as a whole does not achieve resolution. It does not ‘solve’ the problem it sets itself, but rather explores it...Daniel is more a sitcom than a mini-series. In such works theme and characterization count for more than plot...” It may have been helpful if Goldingay had stated what he thinks is “the problem it sets itself.” Ryken suggests the stories in Daniel are examples of heroic narratives. He states, “The story of Daniel (Dan. 1-6) is so thoroughly governed by the principle of heroic narrative that it violates a basic rule of narrative, unity of action. The first six chapters of the Book of Daniel do not present a single sustained action. Each episode is self-contained, and Daniel himself does not even participate in two of the episodes. As we read these chapters, we participate in six separate ordeals spanning many years.” He continues, “...three other motifs constitute a useful unifying framework...All six ordeals involve a testing of the chief character and a rescue by God. This is the type scene that governs the story. Secondly, in a world where God’s sovereign activity is a constant reality, every one of the episodes includes miraculous or supernatural activity by God. Finally, in three of the six episodes the heroic act involves some form of resistance to the surrounding (pagan) culture.” Leland Ryken, *Words of Delight* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 109-110. Talmon also notes the continuity in the first six narratives, “The tales are linked by common motifs and literary imagery and by an apparent concentration on human affairs.” Shemaryahu Talmon. “Daniel.” Pages 343-56 in *Literary Guide to the Bible*. Edited by Robert Alter and Frank Kermode. Cambridge: Belknap, 1987, 143. For a further description of the narrative shape of Daniel see James H. Sims, “Daniel,” in *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), 324-336.

<sup>536</sup> Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 13.

Thus, it is true that the book of Daniel does not follow the common form of narrative development, however, narrative continuity in some form does exist. According to the conclusions of this study, as a consequence of the LS-NSC, it is possible to note that the text follows a complex narrative emphasis that chronologically progresses first in the Aramaic section and second in the Hebrew section. This progression seeks to address the dual problem that is depicted in Daniel 1:1-2, 3-21.

### **Narrative Problem in Daniel 1:1-2, 3-21**

Daniel 1:1-2 states that God gave the king of Judah and some of the vessels of the house of God into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. As noted above, this event is a pivotal occurrence that sets the tone for the rest of the chapter, and the book as a whole. The subsequent story in Daniel 1:3-21 does not address the carrying away of the king nor the vessels. It addresses how the people of God are affected by the events and consequences of Daniel 1:1-2. It situates the main characters within the context of the divine-human conflict and forces them to choose between God and the indoctrination of the King of Babylon.

Although it is possible to assume that the most evident problem in the narrative of the book of Daniel is the exile; however, according to the LS-NSC, the exile is only symptomatic of a larger, broader problem, namely divine-human conflict in the context of kingship and cult and the effects of this dual conflict upon God's people. God's people were thrust into this conflict due to their sinfulness or their covenant unfaithfulness, which is detailed in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Therefore, the book of Daniel places Daniel and his friends within this divine-human conflict in kingship and cult. Despite the self-contained nature of each chapter (except Daniel 10-12), the book of

Daniel presents a chronological narrative progression as it emphasizes the dual problem of conflict and its effects upon God's people.

### **The LS-NSC and Narrative Progression in Daniel 2-7**

In Daniel 2-7 the language and the narrative shifts to emphasize and explore the problem of the divine-human conflict in the context of kingship (or kingly hubris and its links to worship/cult) and its effects upon God's people in a chronological progression from the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar to Darius, as shown in Table 5.11. As shown in Table 5.9, God resolves the problem through his acts of deliverance (Daniel 3 and 6) and judgment (Daniel 4, 5, and 7). In this conflict, God's representatives demonstrate their faithfulness (Daniel 3 and 6) and their wisdom (Daniel 4 and 5), two characteristics that are inseparably linked in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 7, the problem of divine-human conflict in the context of kingship reaches its climax and is reconfigured. The divine judgment of the four human kingdoms and the giving of an eternal kingdom to the Son of Man and the holy ones is the ultimate climax of the dual problem.

However, Daniel 7 reconfigures the narrative. Through the shifts in person, genre, and chronology it creates a new beginning. The four kingdoms are now four beasts that arise to reign over the earth. In addition, the dual kingdom of the iron and clay is reconfigured as the little horn mixed with beastly (horn) and human (eyes and mouth) characteristics. This reconfiguration introduces the problem of divine-human conflict in the context of cult (with its link to kingship) with the rise of the little horn king. Its attack upon the law of God situates the conflict within the cultic sphere. Thus, Daniel 8-12 emphasizes and explores the divine-human conflict in the context of cult (with its links to kingship) and its effects upon God's people.

## The LS-NSC and Narrative Progression in Daniel 8-12

Following the new chronological progression instituted in Daniel 7, Daniel 8 reconfigures the conflict depicted in Daniel 7.<sup>537</sup> This reconfigured narrative (of the vision and seer) is the foundation for the subsequent chapters in Hebrew (9-12). As in Daniel 1, the covenantal unfaithfulness of God's people (8:13) causes them to be handed over into the power of an enemy, the little horn (8:13). Divine power allows the people of God and, furthermore, Yahweh's divine priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary to be handed over to the little horn (Daniel 8:13). In Daniel 8, God's sovereign act of judgment (cleansing the sanctuary) points toward the resolution of the problem of the little horn king's cultic hubris and its effects upon God's people, as well as the transgression of the host.

As shown in Table 5.12, Daniel 9-12 progresses chronologically from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Darius the Mede to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus. These chapters explore the ways in which God's sovereignty responds to the problem of his people's covenantal unfaithfulness, the little horn's kingly/cultic hubris, and its adverse effects God's people. As shown in Table 5.10, in the Hebrew section God's sovereign acts of deliverance and judgment address these problems. In Daniel 9, Daniel's liturgical prayer outlines the problem of the transgression of his people. The revelation depicts the divine solution of the Messiah, whose cutting off brings salvific deliverance and resolves the transgression of Daniel's people. In Daniel 10 the vision of the divine high priest precedes the revelation of the

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<sup>537</sup> It is possible to identify a connection between Daniel 8 and Daniel 1. Collins proposes that the Hebrew section (Daniel 1 and 8-12) forms an *inclusio* that frames the Aramaic section. John Collins, *Daniel, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees, with An Excursus on the Apocalyptic Genre* (Wilmington, DE, 1981), 24.

struggle between the Kings of the North and South. This may suggest that God's sovereign act of divine judgment (Day of Atonement imagery) may address the King of the North's belligerent acts against God. In Daniel 11 the King of the North storms the sanctuary fortress and magnifies himself above God. During this time those who have insight are persecuted, but this experience helps to purify and refine them.

Finally in Daniel 12, the fall of the King of the North coincides with the rise of Michael who will rescue God's people or "everyone who is found written in the book." This judgment separates those who will receive everlasting life from those who receive everlasting contempt (Dan. 12:2). This revelation reaches its climax with the scene of the man in linen above the waters with two beings on opposite sides of the banks (which may point to a Most Holy Place scene). The man in linen swears that after a time, time, and half a time "all these things shall be finished (12:7).

Table 5.9 God's Sovereignty Resolves Dual Problem in Daniel 2-7 (Aramaic)

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Daniel 2</b>	<b>Daniel 3</b>	<b>Daniel 4</b>	<b>Daniel 5</b>	<b>Daniel 6</b>	<b>Daniel 7</b>
Kingly Hubris	Great Image	Golden Image	Great Tree	Echo of Great Image	King's Injunction	Great words of the Little Horn
Link to Cult	Image	Worship of image	Tree reaches to the heavens	Praises gods	Injunction	God's law attacked
God's People Threatened	Death decree	Death decree	Wise man	Wise man	Death decree	Little Horn wears out holy ones
<b>Resolution</b>						
God's Sovereign Acts	God gives wisdom/Mountain crushes great image (divine judgment)	Divine deliverance	Divine judgment	Divine judgment	Divine deliverance	Divine judgment

Table 5.10 God's Sovereignty Resolves Dual Problems in Daniel 8-12 (Hebrew)

<b>Two problems</b>	<b>Daniel 7</b>	<b>Daniel 8</b>	<b>Daniel 9</b>	<b>Daniel 10</b>	<b>Daniel 11</b>	<b>Daniel 12</b>
Kingly/Cultic Hubris	Great words of the Little Horn	Little Horn usurps place of Prince of hosts	Prince who comes destroys the temple	(Extended epiphany)	King of the North attacks sanctuary	Power of the holy ones shattered
God's people threatened	Little Horn wears out holy ones	Host and stars attacked; host given to Little Horn	Temple destroyed	(Extended epiphany)	Wise suffer, refined, purified	Abomination set up
<b>Resolutions</b>						
Divine acts	Divine judgment	Cleansing of the Sanctuary (Divine judgment)	Messiah cut off (Divine deliverance)	Divine High Priest (Divine judgment)	See Daniel 12	Fall of King of the North/ Michael rises/ Divine judgment





Table 5.11 Possible Chronological Narrative Progression from Dan 1 to 2 and Dan 3-7

					<b>Reign of Cyrus/Darius</b>	
				<b>Fall of Babylon</b> (Last year of Belshazzar)	<b>Problem:</b> God's people threatened/ hubris of kingly edict	<b>Daniel 7</b>
			<b>Reign of King Neb.</b>	<b>Problem:</b> Kingly Hubris	<b>Daniel 6</b>	<b>Climax:</b> Heavenly scene/ Judgment
		<b>Reign of King Neb.</b>	<b>Problem:</b> Kingly Hubris	<b>Daniel 5</b>	<b>Solution:</b> Deliverance <b>Act of God</b>	
	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> year of King Neb.</b>	<b>Problem:</b> God's people threatened/ kingly hubris	<b>Daniel 4</b>	<b>Solution:</b> Judgment <b>Act of God</b>		
	<b>Hebrew to Aramaic</b>	<b>Daniel 3</b>	<b>Solution:</b> Judgment <b>Act of God</b>			
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> year of King Jehoiakim</b>	<b>Daniel 2</b> Image of Hubris/Death threat	<b>Solution:</b> Deliverance <b>Act of God</b>				
<b>Daniel 1</b>	Foundational chapter					
Introduction						

Table 5.12 Possible Chronological Narrative Progression from Dan 7 to 8 and Dan 9-12

			<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Cyrus</b>	<b>Problem:</b> King of the North's Cultic Hubris	<b>Daniel 12</b>
		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year of Darius the Mede</b>	<b>Problem:</b> Great Conflict	<b>Daniel 11</b>	<b>Climax:</b> Heavenly Scene/MHP
	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year of Belshazzar</b>	<b>Problem:</b> Host's Transgression	<b>Daniel 10</b>	<b>Solution:</b> Michael stands <b>Act of God</b>	
	<b>Aramaic to Hebrew</b>	<b>Daniel 9</b>	<b>Solution:</b> Divine man in linen (Judgment) <b>Act of God</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> year of Belshazzar</b>	<b>Daniel 8</b> LH's cultic hubris/Host's transgression	<b>Solution:</b> Divine Messiah <b>Act of God</b>			
<b>Daniel 7</b>	Foundational Chapter				
Introduction					

### Theological Meaning

Narrative and theology

The prevalence and frequency of narrative literature in the Old Testament suggests its importance. Waltke states, "Forty percent of the Old Testament is narrative, especially biographical narrative."<sup>538</sup> Such pervasiveness implies its importance for biblical theology of the Old Testament. Consequently, it is necessary to determine how a narrative relates to theology. Waltke argues that the evaluative point of view of the

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<sup>538</sup> Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 93. For a definition of narrative and its function see also Danna Nolan Fewell and David M. Gunn, "Narrative, Hebrew," in *ABD*, 4:1023; Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Bible and Literature Series, JSOTSup9 (Sheffield: Almond, 1983), 13.

narrator reveals the point of the narrative and thus its theological purpose.<sup>539</sup> Through literary devices, such as repetition and characterization, a narrative can emphasize a particular aspect and evaluate the events and characters depicted.<sup>540</sup> This evaluative point of view gives the reason for the narrative, which is also the theological point of the narrative. Waltke suggests if one is able to discern the biblical narrator's techniques to communicate his evaluative point of view, then one will be able to "draw his (the narrator's) theology, his message, from the text."<sup>541</sup>

Goldingay also argues that there exists a relation between narratives and theology. He suggests the theology of a narrative can be deduced by asking questions of the narrative. He states, "The key is reflection on what as narratives they have to say concerning who God is, and also on who we are."<sup>542</sup> Such questions help the reader draw out the theological themes, ideas, and subjects the narrative seeks to present or emphasize. From the conclusions of Waltke and Goldingay, one may suggest that Waltke's evaluative point of view can be derived from an analysis of the plot and characterization in a narrative (as well as other narrative elements). Furthermore, one

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<sup>539</sup> Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 93. Waltke follows Sternberg when he states, "...the narrator has three concerns: history, aesthetics, and ideology." Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 44. Waltke, in contrast to Sternberg, uses the term "theology" instead of "ideology. This study will follow Waltke's terminology.

<sup>540</sup> Gary A. Rendsberg identifies several rhetorical or literary devices that the Bible uses to construct meaning. For example, he mentions repetition, repetition with variation, alliteration, marking closure, and wordplay. *How the Bible is Written* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2019).

<sup>541</sup> Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 106. He concludes that distinguishing multiple points of view and analyzing characterization will help the reader understand the purpose of and the theology within the narrative.

<sup>542</sup> Goldingay, "Daniel in the Context of Old Testament Theology," 641. See also Goldingay's treatment of Biblical theology in *Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: 2016), 13-18 and his extended treatment of Old Testament Theology and Narrative in volume 1 of his three volume work, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: 2003, 15-41).

may suggest Goldingay's questions about God and humanity can be derived from characterization. Therefore, from narrative analysis of plot and characterization, it is possible to deduce the relation between narrative and theology in light of the LS-NSC and its rhetorical-narrative function in the book of Daniel.

#### Narrative and theology in Daniel: Plot and Characterization

This study's narrative analysis of the two language shifts in Daniel suggests they are used as an intentional rhetorical-narrative device that structures and delineates a two-part emphasis that explores the divine-human conflict over sovereignty in the context of kingship and cult and its effects upon God's people. As a consequence, one may see the overriding plot line of divine-human conflict as the evaluative point of view of the narrator, which may also be viewed as the prevailing theological thrust of the book.

Eugene H. Merrill also argues that "The major theme of the book is the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world as epitomized primarily by Babylon and Persia."<sup>543</sup>

Within the theological thrust of the book, one may also see what the text says about God, human kingship, and God's people. The evaluative view of the divine-human conflict is explored in both language sections of the book. A look at the themes that arise from the Aramaic and Hebrew sections may help one see how the prevailing theology of divine-human conflict is explored and how the characters of God, human kings, and God's people are depicted and defined.

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<sup>543</sup> Merrill, *Everlasting Dominion*, 548.

Table 5.13 Emphases or Themes in Daniel 2-7 (Aramaic Section)

Introduction	Plot	Problem	Solution
Divine-human conflict (Dan. 1:1-2)	Divine-Human conflict over sovereignty Dan. 2-7	Kingly hubris (Daniel 2, 4, 5, 7)	Divine judgment (Daniel 2, 4, 5, 7)
God's people affected by conflict (Dan. 1:3-21)		God's faithful people threatened by kingly hubris (Daniel 3, 6)	Divine deliverance (Daniel 2, 3 and 6)

**Divine-Human conflict: Emphases or themes in Daniel 2-7 (Aramaic Section)**

1. Divine-Human conflict: Introduction (Dan. 1:1-2, 3-21). The beginning of the book of Daniel (Dan. 1:1-2) lays the foundation for the primary problems that will challenge God and his people. Babylon's attack against the city of God (Jerusalem) through its king (Jehoiakim) and its cult (the vessels from God's house) and the mention of Shinar point back to the ancient story in Genesis 11:1-9 as the foundational background for the introductory verses.<sup>544</sup>

Westermann says the thrust of the narrative of the Tower of Babel is to demonstrate the heights of human ambition or pride.<sup>545</sup> He sees parallel expressions in Is. 14:13-14 and Jer. 51:53, where Babylon is depicted as the pride-filled enemy of God. He further explains that human hubris begins (Gen. 3:5; individual humans) and ends (Gen. 11:4; humanity collectively) the primeval section of the book of Genesis. Thus, the sin of humanity is expressed as the human desire for greatness, particularly through the

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<sup>544</sup> Baez states "the literary structure of Dan. 1:1, 2 reveals that at the very core of the allusions to Gen 11 is the understanding of a cosmic and religious conflict between Yahweh/Jerusalem and Marduk/Babylon." "Allusions to Genesis 11:1-9 in the Book of Daniel," 286-287

<sup>545</sup> Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, trans. John J. Scullion S.J. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984), 554. See also Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, Part II From Noah to Abraham, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magness Press, 1992), 225-249.

construction of a city and a tower. Waltke describes the human characters in the narrative of Gen. 11:1-9 as “rebels” and he sees the city and tower as symbols of “the ability of collective humanity to defy the rule of heaven.”<sup>546</sup>

Thus, the first two verses in Daniel echo the ancient narrative in Genesis 11 to introduce the foundational and ancient problem that instigates the conflict between God and humanity in the book of Daniel, namely human hubris.<sup>547</sup> Notably, in Gen. 11:1-9 human hubris is expressed in a very distinct manner. Specifically, human hubris is depicted as the human construction of two elements, a city and a tower, that are built separate from (or in conflict with) God. Some have noted that the tower is likely in the form of a ziggurat, which was a structure used at cultic sites in the ancient Near East. Thus, the construction of the city and the tower was a building project that represented political (city) and cultic (tower) independence from God. One may see in Dan. 1:1-2 a similar Babylonian emphasis of these two elements, specifically the King of Babylon carries the King of Judah (kingly power) and some vessels of the house of God (cultic site) to Shinar, to the house of Nebuchadnezzar’s god. One may conclude that the emphasis in Dan 1:2 upon the Babylonian king’s carrying away of the king and the vessels echoes the dual emphasis on the construction of a city and a tower in Gen 11:1-9.

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<sup>546</sup> Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredericks, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 177.

<sup>547</sup> This looking backward (toward earlier biblical texts) and reuse of Scripture occurs frequently in the book of Daniel. Stephen G. Dempster notes, “Passages found in the prophetic books in kaleidoscope and piecemeal fashion are now brought together in the book of Daniel in a more systematic manner.” Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity, 2003), 214. Dempster also quotes Richard Patterson, “Old Testament Prophecy,” in *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), 296-309, 303, where he states, “Although Old Testament kingdom oracles do foresee a time of cataclysmic upheaval and earthly destruction coupled with the hope of universal peace and happiness..., the realization of all of this is tied to God’s teleology (e.g., Dan. 2, 7).”

The dual emphasis in the first two verses of Daniel points again to a distinct form of human hubris that links kingly power or authority with cultic practice. In the subsequent chapters of the book of Daniel, faintly in the Aramaic section and explicitly in the Hebrew section, the link between kingly power and cultic practice becomes a recurring characteristic of all of the kings (see Chapters 3 and 4). Therefore, the Babylonian exile brings God and his people face to face with a distinct form of human hubris that instigates the divine-human conflict over sovereignty in the context of kingship and cult.<sup>548</sup> Consequently, the Babylonian exile brings conflict not only to God's people but also to God.<sup>549</sup>

2. Divine-Human conflict: Kingly hubris (Daniel 2-7). In the Aramaic section, the LS-NSC builds upon the introduction in Daniel 1:1-2 and vv. 3-21. Daniel 2, where the language shifts to Aramaic, is the blueprint or foundational outline for the subsequent chapters in Aramaic, where the theme of kingly hubris is explored. In Daniel 2, the

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<sup>548</sup> According to Merrill, "The major theme of the book is the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world as epitomized primarily by Babylon and Persia." *Everlasting Dominion*, 548.

<sup>549</sup> As the God of Israel, Yahweh had to bear the shame of his people. Niehaus states, "As a result of this divine abandonment, the enemy is able to attack and destroy the city and the temple, because both now lack divine protection." Jeffrey Niehaus, *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 118. Even more, it was possible that the gods of the subjugated nation might not only abandon the city and its temple, but also "go over to the enemy." Such an understanding of war and conflict suggests that Yahweh would have to vindicate his name. Walton remarks, "The most important aspect of the role of cities is to be found in their relationship to the temples and the gods. The patron deity of a city was typically considered the one who founded, built, and sustained the city." John Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 277. Consequently, Yahweh's name as God of Israel is dishonored and his sovereignty is challenged in the context of the Babylonian exile. However, although exile brought dishonor and shame upon the name of Yahweh, he faithfully followed his people into exile and kept his covenant with those, like Daniel and his three friends, who honored his covenant in exile (Dan. 1:9, 17). "Though God has abandoned his habitation in Jerusalem, he has not abandoned his people. He has accompanied them into exile, and the temple vessels serve as tangible symbols of God's ongoing presence, power, and restoration intentions for his people." Amber Warhurst, "The Associative Effects of Daniel in the Writings," in *The Shape of the Writings*, Julius Steinberg and Timothy J. Stone, eds. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 187-205, 198.

narrative of the king's search for his dream reveals the mortal danger that God's four Hebrew representatives must face in the conflict, and the narrative of the dream emphasizes kingly hubris encloded in cultic garb (the great image). Ultimately, the recurring plot or problem of divine-human conflict in the subsequent chapters arises from the recurring problem of kingly hubris, which seeks to appropriate God's authority by using kingly power linked with cultic practice. Dumbrell concludes,

Perhaps the four kingdoms are a picture of the totality of human government, representative of the human power structure, of the human image. Clearly the historical sequence of kingdoms which is presented is simply various fine tunings of the anti-God human power structure. Progressive human government will inevitably exhibit the same innate tendencies to search for its center within itself.<sup>550</sup>

Daniel 3 explicitly depicts the link between kingly power and cultic practice (the king builds a golden image and commands everyone to fall down before it). Daniel 4 emphasizes the king's hubris, but only implicitly links Nebuchadnezzar's kingly power to cultic behavior (4:11 [ET]). In Daniel 5 Belshazzar's kingly hubris is explicit and his desecration of cultic vessels is an explicit link to cultic practice. Dumbrell also sees in Daniel 3, 4, and 5 narrative elements that portray a "counterdemonstration of divine power" and a "challenge to divine authority."<sup>551</sup> However, in Daniel 6, he sees "an unreasonable royal command involving a religious practice."<sup>552</sup> Nevertheless, Darius's signature of the injunction places the law of the Medes and Persians, and indirectly Darius, in conflict with God's divine authority. In Daniel 7, the little horn power is first

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<sup>550</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1988), 258

<sup>551</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 261.

<sup>552</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 261.



introduced and described according to its curious merging of kingly power (beastly features) and cultic practice (human features; [see below]). Rolf Rendtorff notes the recurring emphasis on cultic or religious practice in the Aramaic section. He states, in the book of Daniel,

The religious element is constantly and expressly in the foreground. God gives Jehoiachim into the hands of the king of Babylon...; he creates the conditions for the young, exiled Judeans to be able to live at the Babylonian court in accordance with Jewish dietary laws...; and he equips them with great insight and understanding. But then the conflicts with the heathen surroundings, in particular, are given religious justification by him with the rejection of the worship of an idol of the king...and in Daniel's prayer to 'his God'<sup>553</sup>

3. Divine-Human conflict: God's faithful people threatened (Daniel 2-7). As a consequence of the divine-human conflict, God's faithful followers face persecution and/or death as they withstand kingly hubris and its demand upon their cultic or religious practice. In Daniel 1, the religious identity of the four Hebrews is threatened as their names are changed and their cultic purity is challenged (1:8). In Daniel 2, 3, and 6, the four Hebrews experience kingly death decrees, with the latter two chapters depicting contexts in which they must choose between renouncing their God or death. In contrast, Daniel 4 and 5 do not portray God's people threatened by kingly hubris. Instead, God's representative (Daniel) is used as a vehicle through which God brings judgment against kingly hubris seeking after cultic influence. Finally, in Daniel 7, the people of God are persecuted collectively as they are given into the power of the little horn.

The importance of the theme of God's faithful people suffering in exile can be seen in the conclusions of some scholars. For example, Dumbrell deduces that the theme

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<sup>553</sup> Rolf Rendtorff, *The Canonical Hebrew Bible* (Dorchester, UK: Deo, 2011), 387-388.

of the book of Daniel is “the survival and vindication of the people of God in the face of mounting world opposition. In this great struggle between the two imperia involved, the kingdom of God will prevail.”<sup>554</sup>

4. Divine-Human conflict: God’s acts of deliverance and judgment (Daniel 2-7). The theme or emphasis on divine-human conflict necessitates God’s power to deliver his people and to judge human kings and kingdoms.<sup>555</sup> Merrill similarly concludes that “The kingdom of God obviously necessitates the concept of God as King, the ruler over all he has created.”<sup>556</sup> God’s sovereignty is a recurring theme in the Aramaic section that is exhibited through God’s acts of judgment and deliverance. For example, in Daniel 2, 3, and 6, Daniel and/or his three friends are divinely delivered from mortal danger brought about by the will and laws of human kings. Furthermore, in Daniel 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 God’s judgment places his people in exile (Daniel 1), crushes the Great Image (Daniel 2), humbles Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4), removes Belshazzar from the throne (Daniel 5), and removes the four beast-like kingdoms to install his divine representative as eternal king of the earth (Daniel 7). According to Miller,

Without doubt the principal theological focus of the book is the sovereignty of God. Every page reflects the author’s conviction that his God was the Lord of individuals, nations, and all of history. In the stories in chaps. 1-6, Yahweh is set forth as the God who rules over the kings and nations of the earth.<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 265.

<sup>555</sup> Arthur Ferch, “Authorship, Theology, and Purpose of Daniel,” in Symposium on Daniel, Frank Holbrook, ed. (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986), 3-83, 53. See also P.R. Davies, “Eschatology in the Book of Daniel,” *JSOT* 17 (1980), 33-53, 39. Ferch concludes, “All kingship, greatness, majesty, power, and glory is derived from the Most High (2:37; 4:25; 5:18)” 54. God is depicted as the source of all forms of wisdom, including mantic and covenantal wisdom. Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 357.

<sup>556</sup> Merrill, *Everlasting Dominion*, 554.

<sup>557</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 50.

Table 5.14 Emphases or Themes in Daniel 8-12 (Hebrew Section)

Plot	Problem	Solution
Divine-Human Conflict in the context of the heavenly cult	Kingly/Cultic hubris (Daniel 8, 11, 12)	Divine, cultic judgment (Daniel 8, 10, 12)
	God's people: Transgression and persecution (Daniel 8, 9)	Divine Messiah (Daniel 9)

**Divine-Human Conflict: Emphases or Themes in Daniel 8-12 (Hebrew Section)**

1. Divine-Human conflict: Introduction (Daniel 7). As Daniel 1 functions as an introduction for the Aramaic section, so Daniel 7 also functions as an introduction for the Hebrew section (as well as a climax and conclusion for the Aramaic section). The theme of divine-human conflict is expressed in a new context, primarily in the heavenly cult. In the dream and interpretation in Daniel 7, the four kings/kingdoms of Daniel 2 are depicted in an ominous manner through the use of imagery that is reminiscent of Creation in Gen. 1 and 2 (Dan. 7:2, 3, 13). However, in contrast to the divine sovereignty observed in the Genesis narrative, in Daniel 7 the creatures that arise from the water appear as rebellious figures that have overturned or upended God's work of creation. The upending of God's Creation can also be viewed as a rebellion against God's authority because his act of Creation gives him authority to determine who reigns on earth and to judge all kings on the earth. In Daniel 7, instead of humans reigning over the beasts, beasts reign over the earth. As a consequence, the one like the Son of Man is contrasted with the four beasts. The former is God's representative who will reinstate divine authority upon the earth.

The reign of beasts upon the earth reaches its zenith with the rise of the little horn figure. It is described as having two characteristics, beast-like (horn) and human-like

(eyes and mouth). Such a duality is confounding since the dream sets up a polarity between beast-like beings and a human-like being. The latter represents God and receives an eternal earthly kingdom, but the former have violent, temporal kingdoms that are transitory and will ultimately be destroyed. The latter accepts God's will and establishes God's kingdom on earth, but the former progressively throw off God's restraint until there is open rebellion against God. Therefore, the dual nature of the little horn figure consists of two diametrically opposed characteristics, the beast-like image of the horn is linked to its exact opposite (according to the imagery in Daniel 7), the human-like imagery of the eyes and mouth. The human elements, notably the mouth, are used to make boastful words against the Most High. In this curious mixing of imagery, one may identify the previous image of the iron and clay kingdom, as well as the recurring theme of kingly power linked to cultic practice found in Daniel 2-6. Such a conclusion is supported later in the interpretation of the dream where the little horn figure is depicted as speaking boastful words against the Most High (kingly hubris), attempting to change times and God's law (kingly power linked to cultic practice) and persecuting the holy ones (threatens God's people with death). This violent and hubris-filled figure progressively becomes the central interest of Daniel, and thus of the dream.

Daniel 8 and 9-12 address how God will resolve the problem of the threat of the little horn's acute expression of human hubris through kingly power linked with cultic practice. Daniel 8 serves as the foundational outline or blueprint that the subsequent chapters will follow and expand upon. It depicts an exploration of the divine-human conflict as it is instigated by kingly hubris that invades the heavenly cultic context. This exploration focuses on the nature of kingly hubris in this context, God's cultic response

to kingly hubris, and its effects upon the people of God. This new focus in Daniel 8 is highlighted by the language shift, which returns to Hebrew.

2. Divine-Human Conflict: kingly hubris. In the Hebrew section, the peculiar and blasphemous actions of the little horn, its invasion of the heavenly cult, and its attack upon God's people, are explored and addressed in greater detail. Daniel 8 offers a foundational outline for the subsequent chapters (9-12). The theme of kingly hubris occurs again, but it is now presented and explored in the context of the heavenly cult. First, Daniel 8 depicts the violent conflict of the kings of Persia and Greece as they "become great" (vv. 4 and 8) and obtain kingly power. The nature of the kingly conflict shifts with the appearance of the little horn, but the violent aspect of the conflict continues.

The little horn is in conflict with none other than the Prince of the Host (8:11), the host of heaven (8:10) and the stars (8:10). He moves vertically to the heavenly temple and appropriates the Prince's heavenly cultic ministry after he attacks the stars and the host of heaven. The little horn's appropriation of the heavenly cultic ministry of the Prince of the Host suggests that he becomes like or usurps the position of the Prince. Vogel argues,

It is especially the little horn that is active against God. Interestingly enough, it battles against the cult, as is clearly outlined in chap. 8. According to 8:25, 'he shall even rise against the Prince of the princes;...' The holy mountain is the place from where God will defend his cult and his kingdom against the assaults of the rebellious usurper.<sup>558</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel*, 215.

The success of the little horn is due to the fact that the *tamid* and the host were divinely given over (8:12) into the power of the little horn due to the host's transgression. According to Daniel 1:2 and 7:25, the subject of these passive acts is probably God.

In Daniel 11, the theme of kingly hubris is further explored, especially with respect to the actions of the King of the North. Throughout the chapter kingly power is violently expressed through a perpetual conflict between the Kings of the North and South. However, beginning in 11:16 and following, cultic imagery and terminology occur in this conflict that are similar to the terms found in Daniel 8. Regarding the conflict, Doukhan states,

...it is in chapter 11 that the picture of the conflict reaches its climax. This chapter describes two conflicts that are spiritual in essence. One conflict is between the King of the North and the King of the South; the other conflict involves the King of the North and God (and His people).<sup>559</sup>

The King of the North becomes prominent in Daniel 11:21 where he will “magnify himself above every god (and) shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods (11:36).” Here, the theme of kingly hubris reaches its ultimate height.

3. Divine-Human conflict: God's people persecuted. The theme of suffering in relation to God's people occurs throughout the Hebrew section in Daniel [7 Aramaic], 8, 9, 11, and 12. God's people are handed over to the power of the little horn (7:25), they suffer from the attack of the little horn (8:10), they suffer from the shame of exile (9:8), and they are persecuted during the reign of the King of the North (11:33). The suffering

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<sup>559</sup> Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded*, (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019), 254.

of God's people is a common theme in the book of Daniel, especially in relation to the onset of the Babylonian Exile.

Such suffering appears to foster purity or righteousness for the saints of God (11:35). It is possible that the process of God's giving over his people (Dan. 1:2) into the power of the enemy forces God's followers to prove themselves faithful to God. In the context of the exile, God's people must resist the temptations of Babylon and hold fast to their faith. This process may strengthen their faith and resolve to serve God. In the book of Daniel, God's people enter into exile due to their sins (Dan. 1:2; Daniel 9:1-23). Similarly, it may be possible that the holy ones of God are also given over to the little horn (7:25; 8:10) because of their sin or transgression (8:12). The prayer in Daniel 9 may be related to this idea because the sinfulness of God's people is the central focus of the prayer (Daniel 9:1-23), which may be a response to Daniel's lack of understanding at the end of Daniel 8.

4. Divine-Human Conflict: God's acts of cultic judgment and deliverance. The theme of God's acts of cultic judgment and deliverance or salvation are primarily found in Daniel 8, 9, and 10. In Daniel 8, it has been noted by scholars that the Prince of the Host, who ministers in the heavenly sanctuary, is most likely God.<sup>560</sup> Here, God is depicted as a divine priest ministering in the heavenly sanctuary. In the Aramaic section, God was portrayed as absolute king over human kings and kingdom. In the Hebrew

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<sup>560</sup> See Stefanovic, *Wisdom to the Wise* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 302. He states, "Some interpreters argue that the title 'the Prince of the host' stands here for God..." He continues, "The title 'Prince of the host,' on the other hand, is used of an army leader (Gen. 21:22; 1 Sam. 12:9). Presumably, the person in question here is the leader of the armies of the Lord. Joshua 5:14 speaks of a person who called himself commander or prince of the army of the Lord. When this person appeared at Jericho, Joshua worshiped him. In the second half of Daniel's book, the title 'prince,' ...is applied to a supernatural being sometimes called Michael (8:25; 10:13, 20, 21; 12:1) (302).

section, God is now portrayed in the heavenly sanctuary in the role of a heavenly priest so that he may respond to the attacks of the little horn figure and bring deliverance (salvation) to his people. As such, he is able to resolve the problem of the little horn's attack on the heavenly temple ministry as well as the problem of transgression and the little horn's persecution related to the host.

God's resolution to the problem of the little horn is his cultic judgment (8:14), which will restore the heavenly temple to its rightful function. Furthermore, in Daniel 10, the heavenly man in linen is dressed as a high priest ministering during the Day of Atonement ritual ceremony. This imagery may also point to a heavenly cultic judgment. Stefanovic concludes,

He is dressed in white linen and has a golden belt around his waist, two details that give him the appearance of a priest and a king. His body looks like chrysolite, one of the twelve precious stones that the high priest wore on his breastplate in the sanctuary (Exod. 28:20).<sup>561</sup>

God's act of salvation responds to the sins of his people (Daniel 8:12; 9:1-23). The depiction of the Messianic figure in Daniel 9:24-27 is part of God's response to Daniel's liturgical or high priestly prayer for God's people and his holy mountain (or temple). This figure may put an end to transgressions and sins, and "make reconciliation for iniquity (9:24)." In 9:27 the text points forward to the self-sacrificing Messiah who dies for the sins of his people "the many." Finally, the promise of Michael standing for his people may also suggest a divine act of judgment for God's people that will usher in

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<sup>561</sup> Stefanovic, *Wisdom to the Wise*, 384.



the fall of the King of the North and delineate between those who have eternal life and those who will experience eternal shame (12:2).

### **Summary**

The LS-NSC is an intentional rhetorical-narrative device that helps to structure the book of Daniel according to the two language shifts. Daniel 1:1-2 lays the foundation for the divine-human conflict of kingly hubris, which is specifically depicted as kingly power linked with cultic practice, in conflict with God's absolute power. The rest of Daniel 1 identifies how God's followers are affected by the conflict. Daniel 2 produces narrative elements and themes that recur in the subsequent chapters of the book of Daniel in the Aramaic section, specifically the themes of kingly hubris and its mortal threat to God's people. God's acts of divine judgment resolve the problem of kingly hubris and his acts of deliverance resolve the problem of the mortal threat against his people. The divine-human conflict reaches its zenith in Daniel 7, which functions as the climax and closure of Daniel 2-7 and as an introduction to the Hebrew section. It depicts God's ultimate judgment against human kingdoms and the final installment of the one like the son of man as the eternal king of the earth, where God's people will also reign. Daniel 8 gives more details about the divine-human conflict between the little horn and God as it emphasizes the actions of the little horn and God's response to it. Daniel 8 is the blueprint and foundational outline for the subsequent chapters, which address how God resolves the problem of the little horn's invasion of the heavenly cult and the transgression and persecution of His people. God's acts of cultic judgment (8:14; 10:5-7) is heaven's response to the little horn's attacks against the heavenly cult and his people

(8:9-12; 11; 12:9-12), and God's act of deliverance or salvation through his Messiah (9:24-27) is heaven's response to the sins and transgression of his people (8:12; 9:1-23).

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary

This study's analysis identified two narrative shifts in plot and character that correspond to the two language shifts located between Daniel 1 and 2 and Daniel 7 and 8. This relation between the language shifts and narrative shifts is designated as the language shift-narrative shift correspondence (LS-NSC). This occurrence highlights a two-part emphasis in the book of Daniel on divine-human conflict that depicts the penchant of human monarchs to coopt God's absolute sovereignty, specifically within the spheres of kingship and cult.

William J. Dumbrell states concerning the book of Daniel,

The book falls into two clear halves, chapters 1-6 and 7-12. Such division, however, ignores the major exegetical problem of the book, namely, the use of two languages – Hebrew in 1:1-2:4a and chapters 8-12, and Aramaic in 2:4b-7:28. No analysis of the book is satisfactory which does not come to terms with the peculiarity of the two languages<sup>562</sup>

This study has attempted to address how the book of Daniel makes use of its two language shifts or bilingualism. The study used a rhetorical method, since former and current studies have demonstrated the benefits of such an analysis with relation to this aspect of the book of Daniel. As noted in Chapter One, at least five studies demonstrate the rhetorical nature of the use of bilingualism in the book of Daniel, specifically the studies of Snell (comparative study; bilingualism mimics older source material of Ezra),

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<sup>562</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 258.

Arnold (literary theory; bilingualism creates structure for social location), Wesselius (comparative analysis; bilingualism mimics ancient dossier similar to Ezra), Valeta (genre study; bilingualism creates an expression of ideology), and Portier-Young (socio-linguistic analysis: bilingualism creates a call for the preservation of and faithfulness to Jewish identity). In addition, Gleason Archer identifies the use of bilingualism as a rhetorical device that speaks to two audiences, empire (Aramaic) and the people of God (Hebrew). Despite the benefits of these studies, they tended to overemphasize the book of Daniel's dependence upon Ezra (Snell and Wesselius), limit their scope to one language (usually Aramaic: Arnold, Valeta, and Portier Young), and focus exclusively on the human characters to the exclusion of God as a character (all five studies).

In response to the contributions and limitations of these studies, this study sought to analyze the book of Daniel in its own rhetorical context (apart from Ezra), to analyze both shifts in language (therefore addressing both languages), and to analyze God as a major character. To this end, this study followed a narrative analysis to address the unique use of narrative in Daniel (in story and vision), which is absent in Ezra, and to address God as character in the narratives (mostly Aramaic) and in the dreams/visions (mostly Hebrew). This study analyzed the chapters located at the point or junctures that the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic, namely Daniel 1 and 2, and from Aramaic back to Hebrew, Daniel 7 and 8. Afterwards, this study analyzed the relation between Daniel 2 and the subsequent chapters in Aramaic, and between Daniel 8 and the subsequent chapters in Hebrew. The results of this analysis demonstrated the two language shifts correspond with two narrative shifts that lay the narrative foundation for the subsequent chapters in the corresponding language.

The first language shift, from Hebrew to Aramaic, corresponds to a narrative shift in plot and character. Regarding the plot, Daniel 1 coheres around the divine-human conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2, which emphasizes the two spheres of kingship and cult. God demonstrates absolute sovereignty through his three acts of giving while the king of Babylon grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. This conflict expands to include Daniel and his three companions, the main characters who strive to maintain their religious integrity in the face of Babylonian enculturation. In contrast to Daniel 1 and corresponding to the language shift, in Daniel 2 the plot transitions away from the conflict in Daniel 1 and focuses on Nebuchadnezzar's search for knowing concerning his menacing dream. All of the incidents and events in the narrative inevitably lead to the king knowing the revelation and interpretation of the dream. The dream builds upon the conflict introduced in Daniel 1:1-2 and situates and reconfigures it within a wider, universal context. The dream itself functions as an embedded narrative that offers divine commentary on human kingship. This is what God wills that the king should know and understand, and it is what he did not know in Daniel 1. According to heaven's view, human kingship is filled with pride. It is also powerful and wealthy, but its power is transitory and derivative. Human kingship is also associated with the cultic/religious sphere, and ultimately doomed to destruction by God's representative.

With respect to the characters, it is also possible to identify a narrative shift that corresponds to the language shift. In Daniel 1 God and Nebuchadnezzar are depicted as behind-the-scenes-powers in conflict. God is depicted as absolute sovereign as he influences and controls the incidents in the narrative through his three acts of giving. The

king is depicted as a monarch that grasps after absolute sovereignty through his acts of coming, besieging, and appointing. However, God's acts of giving and his followers' faithfulness undermine the king's power. Daniel (and his three friends) is a member of the Judean elite taken as a captive to Babylon. He is depicted as a pious follower of Yahweh who determines to prevent defilement during the three years of preparation for the king's service. As one moves from Daniel 1 to 2, a notable change in characters and characterization can be identified. In Daniel 2 the characterization of God and the king changes. God is characterized indirectly through various characters rather than primarily through divine actions. Daniel is the primary character through which God is portrayed. The king, in contrast to his depiction in Daniel 1, is foregrounded as a character and becomes a destabilized power due to the lack of knowledge (knowing) about the menacing dream. His wise men, who were minor characters in Daniel 1, are also foregrounded as they are portrayed as unwise wise men who cannot reveal the king's dream. Finally, Daniel is elevated exponentially as a character, more so than in Daniel 1, due to God's gift of wisdom and power.

The links between the narrative elements in Daniel 2 and Daniel 3-7 suggest that the narrative that occurs at the point of the language shift in Daniel 2 lays the foundation for the subsequent chapters in the Aramaic section. The recurring plot elements of verticality, kingly hubris, divine-human conflict, and royal link to cult/worship are found in the subsequent Aramaic chapters. Although Daniel 1 is the introduction to the rest of the book of Daniel, Daniel 2 appears to possess several links to the ensuing chapters in Aramaic, thus laying the foundation for them. Consequently, one may conclude that the

language shift-narrative shift correspondence between Daniel 1 and 2 persists to the end of the Aramaic section.

The second language shift occurs between Daniel 7 and 8. It is the contention of this study that a similar language shift-narrative shift correspondence noted between Daniel 1 and 2 can be identified between Daniel 7 and 8 that engenders a reconfigured narrative that persists to the end of the book of Daniel. As one moves from Daniel 7 to 8, a narrative shift occurs in plot and character that corresponds to the language shift that occurs in Daniel 8. Concerning the plot, in the narrative of the dream in Daniel 7, the plot is centered around a God-centered kingly cosmic conflict in which four beasts arise to reign on the earth. This conflict is controlled and restricted by God, who judges the earthly kings, takes away their dominion, and ultimately gives it to his divine representatives, the one like a son of man and his saints. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, Daniel desires to “know” the dream. He emphasizes his desire to know more about the fourth beast and the little horn; his interest focuses the interpretation on those elements, most notably the latter. In contrast, in Daniel 8 a narrative shift in plot occurs in which the conflict depicted in the dream of Daniel 7 is reconfigured so that the narrative coheres around a horn-centered cultic cosmic conflict that highlights the violent attack of the little horn against God, his sanctuary, and his representatives. The initial horn-centered conflict of the ram and goat vying for power is a preparation for the rise of the little horn, a conflict that centers upon its fight for power primarily in the cultic realm. In the narrative of the seer in Daniel 8, in contrast to the narrative of the seer in Daniel 7, a narrative shift occurs that emphasizes the angelic epiphany that introduces Gabriel, destabilizes Daniel, and accompanies the interpretation of the vision.

Similarly concerning the characters, as one moves from Daniel 7 to 8 there is a narrative shift. In Daniel 7 God is portrayed as a transcendent royal judge at his court. This depiction is achieved through the physical description of the Ancient of Days, of his throne, and of his attendants. Furthermore, the angel interpreter is anonymous, so his presence as a character is minimal. Finally, the seer is portrayed as a destabilized character searching to know his enigmatic dream, which causes him physical and mental anguish. In contrast, in Daniel 8 God is portrayed as a divine priest, but in nonvisual terms. Moreover, the angelic interpreter becomes a more consequential character. Finally, the seer searches for “understanding” rather “knowing” of the vision and experiences an even more destabilizing occurrence with regards to the vision and angel epiphany.

Daniel 8 contains several elements that closely link it to Daniel 9-12. Regarding the plot elements, three recurring elements obtain throughout the ensuing chapters. The plot elements of the recurring term “understand” (bin), the angelic epiphany, violent confrontational conflicts, and cultic elements are links to Daniel 9-12. Regarding the characters, Daniel, Gabriel (or angel interpreter), and a voice above the Ulai (or the man in linen) continue throughout the remaining chapters. Daniel’s search for understanding obtains to the end. Gabriel and the voice above the Ulai persist also until the final vision of the two beings on the banks of the river and the man in linen above the river.

### **Conclusions**

From the above summary, one may conclude that a language shift-narrative shift correspondence or LS-NSC occurs at both the first and second language shifts in the book of Daniel. As noted in Chapter Five of this study, this LS-NSC also corresponds to an interlocking literary structure (Steinmann) or a twinning pattern (Valeta).



In addition, the LS-NSC corresponds to a chronological narrative progression that depicts a problem-solution dialectic that is based on the introductory information in Daniel 1:1-2 and 1:3-21, specifically the problem of kingly and cultic hubris and its negative affects upon the people of God. Daniel 2 and 8 provide the foundational information that is developed in the kingly context (Daniel 3-7) and the cultic context (Daniel 9-12). Daniel 7 functions as a pivotal and central point that provides the climax for the Aramaic section and the introduction for the Hebrew section. Finally, the LS-NSC also helps to emphasize theological conclusions regarding God, his people, and human kingdoms and history.

The aforementioned narrative progression may suggest that the Aramaic section and the Hebrew section are inseparably linked as the two sections address the problems raised in Daniel 1. In addition, the Hebrew section builds upon the Aramaic section as it also addresses human hubris, but in the context of the divine cult. Thus, understanding the Aramaic section leads to a greater understanding of the Hebrew section.

Furthermore, one may also conclude that the rhetorical-narrative purpose of the language shifts may also include an explanatory function. The narrative reconfigurations that occur in Daniel 2 and 8 may help to explicate further the narratives in Daniel 1 and 7, the preceding chapters. The explanations that occur in Daniel 2 and 8 are expanded in the subsequent chapters, namely Daniel 3-7 and Daniel 9-12 respectively. Therefore, it is possible that interpretations of the book of Daniel may emphasize the LS-NSC at the junctures of Daniel 2 and 8 to understand the book of Daniel.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study does not address the rationale for the use of Aramaic as the language linked with Hebrew in the book of Daniel. Such an inquiry is a broader question that looks at the historical, social, cultural, and sociological background regarding the use of Hebrew and Aramaic in the ancient Near East. Furthermore, this study does not address the broad question regarding the function of bilingualism in ancient Near Eastern texts, which is an inquiry into the linguistic, social, cultural, and religious use of two or more languages in a single text. These two questions are beyond the scope of this study.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

The following suggestions may prove helpful for future research on bilingualism in Daniel. First, it may be helpful if further study is conducted on the relation between the language shifts and the literary structure of the book of Daniel. Currently, most scholars analyze and interpret the book according to its genre divisions; however, such a division does not consider the intentional rhetorical-narrative use of the language. Further studies may bring greater clarity to the relation between the use of language and structure to create or engender meaning in the book of Daniel.

Second, it may be helpful to analyze the use of bilingualism in Ezra using a rhetorical-narrative method to determine whether a language shift-narrative shift correspondence exists. The book of Ezra may use bilingualism (Hebrew and Aramaic) as it is used in the book of Daniel. Such a study may assist in understanding the complex organization of the book of Ezra and its complex relation to the book of Daniel.

Third, it may be helpful to look at bilingualism in the Bible from a linguistic-historical perspective. For example, it would be helpful if further research was conducted

on Aramaic with an emphasis on its relation to Hebrew as well as its use in sacred texts such as the Bible, Targums, and the Talmud. This may further our understanding of the broader function of Aramaic in Hebraic sacred texts.

Finally, a study on the relation between narrative and theology may also assist in explaining the theological import of the narratives in Daniel and the dreams and visions in narrative form. In addition, it may also be helpful if a methodology for developing theology based on biblical narratives were constructed. Such a methodology would be beneficial to the wider discipline of Old Testament theology.

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