

Chapter 7

Was Daniel a Historicist?

To date, this study has merely laid the crucial foundation for my research proper, which starts here. If the Book of Daniel is part of an apocalyptic corpus marked by a deterministic stream of time prophecies between the seer's day and the Eschaton,¹ we have little choice but to view them through year-day spectacles.² But if, in contrast, its forecasts are conditional as in classical prophecy,³ another option may win our vote.

Daniel must be allowed to speak for himself.⁴ If the inspired prophet indicates that his time prophecies be interpreted in historicist terms, DARCOM's decade of apologetic toil will stand justified. If not, it has applied a *foreign* hermeneutic to the Word.

We have already noted DARCOM's broad interest in the year-day principle of prophetic interpretation.⁵ Before any assessment, though, it is proper that it be heard in detail, too, regarding both the ideology *per se* and its applications to Daniel's temporal predictions. John the Revelator's will be treated at a more appropriate point.⁶

The Year-day Principle in Broad Perspective

The most detailed treatment ever offered by Adventism is Shea's vigorous apologetic.⁷ Under three broad headings, he seeks to deduce whether its hermeneutic "has been established through reasonable interpretations of Scripture."⁸

General Lines of Evidence

Shea has four points here. First, in the OT, God's mighty acts for his people are recited through biblical history from Abraham to Ezra. Old Testament history involves both a recitation of those events and prophetic evaluations of their character.⁹

Only historicism avoids a vast prophetic gap in Christian days from Jesus' era to ours.¹⁰

Secondly, time prophecies generally depict adverse human conditions that improve in both classical prophecy and the apocalyptic Daniel and Revelation.¹¹ In the former, the literal time periods were ample for the outworking of evil's purposes.

If the time periods in apocalyptic are also interpreted as literal, however, the same principle of fairness in the great controversy would not appear to operate. The great sponsor of these evils could reasonably complain that he was not given sufficient time to demonstrate the superiority of his program if the 3 1/2 days, 10 days, 3 1/2 time-years, etc., in apocalyptic were only literal time units.¹²

¹ *Supra*, 47, 48f.

⁴ *Supra*, 9f.

⁷ "Year-day Principle", *passim*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 68f.

² *Supra*, 4f.

⁵ *Supra*, 4f.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 69f.

³ *Supra*, 26-31.

⁶ *Infra*, 135-170.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 70.

Thirdly, if the apocalyptic time periods are literal, they are far shorter than others. For instance, the longest, 2,300 days, Dan. 8:14, is just 6¹/₂ years, while Gen. 15:13 predicts 400 years. Also, the classical prophets normally addressed their contemporaries. But apocalyptists had a longer-range view, sometimes through to the Eschaton. So the longest prophecies have the short-range view, and the shortest the long-range view.¹³

The most reasonable way to resolve the paradox and restore parallelism and balance to this equation is to interpret the time periods in apocalyptic as symbolic and standing for considerably longer periods of actual historical time.¹⁴

Fourthly, Daniel describes the rise and fall of major powers from his day until the time of the End and the end of time. Yet many centuries have passed since his day. This implies that the small numbers in his time forecasts are not literal. Moreover, it seems untenable that the height of rebellion against God could be resolved in just 3¹/₂ years.¹⁵

Symbolic Time Versus Literal Time

Shea adds seven points here. First, in the historical narratives and classical prophecies, the details of the forecasts are literal. This includes the time periods. In contrast, apocalyptic prophecy generally makes much more use of symbols. So these symbolic contexts strongly suggest that we should also treat their time units as symbolic.¹⁶

Secondly, apocalyptic time periods are sometimes expressed in unusual units. For instance, the “2,300 evenings and mornings”, Dan. 8:14, suits the sanctuary context.¹⁷ Likewise, the ““time, times and half a time””, 7:25, involves a purposely symbolic unit, and “symbolic units must be interpreted to determine the actual time”.¹⁸ Furthermore, they were probably chosen to stress that symbolic time is employed here.¹⁹

Thirdly, none of Daniel’s time units is expressed as it would have been if it had been used to express literal time in the normal manner. The unusual way in which these prophetic periods are expressed, both with regard to units of time and the numerals used with them, suggests once again that symbolic rather than literal time is involved.²⁰

Ferch offers a very similar rationale in parallel to the DARCOM series. The symbolism of the vision chapters includes time elements that are also cast in figurative language. According to Daniel 7:25, the Little Horn would oppress the saints of the Most High for “a time, [two] times and half a time.” In the audition of Daniel 8, one angel tells another that the sanctuary would be restored after “2,300 evenings and mornings” (verse 14, NIV). What do these somewhat strange time expressions signify?

At the outset, it is important that we recognize the symbolic context in which the temporal expressions occur. Consistency would require that the time elements be treated in the same way as the rest of the imagery.

The interpreting angel clearly said that the ram with the two horns signified the kings of Media and Persia. The he-goat... signified the king of Greece. Consequently, neither the beasts nor the time references should be taken literally. It is most reasonable, therefore, to assume that just as the accompanying images of the short-lived animals... signified powers whose dominion extended over long periods of time, so also the time elements must signify extensive time intervals.²¹

¹³ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 71f. Cf. Strand’s horizontal continuity, *supra*, 13, @ fn. 22.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Op. cit.*, 88.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ “Year-day Principle”, 73f.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

Shea's fourth argument is more sweeping as he examines Daniel's use of *days* in general.²² In his historical narratives, the Hebrew behind *time* in 1:18²³ is the noun for *days*. Likewise, the equivalent Aramaic noun is back of *time* in 4:34. Each specifies the flow of a general count of years. The same usage is evident in Daniel's forecasts.²⁴

Moreover, God's title, Ancient of Days, 7:9, 13, 22, "describes His past existence, which is not measured in literal days or years, but in ages."²⁵ Again, the Hebrew behind *years* in 11:20 is the noun for *days*. These must refer symbolically to a period of years. Likewise, *days* is behind *time* in 33, with clear reference to the 3½ times of 7:25. So the period entails years, not just days. In all these cases, the days are not literal.

Therefore, on the basis of this antecedent usage, one would expect in instances where time units like "days" are enumerated in the prophecies that they too would refer to... symbolic time periods.²⁶

Fifthly, "the shorter a prophetic time period is in apocalyptic prophecy, the less likely it is to refer to literal time."²⁷

Shea's sixth argument appeals to purported parallels between John's trumpet and bowl septets,²⁸ although appraisal must await my investigation of the Revelation:²⁹

The prophecies given under the fifth and sixth trumpets contain references to *time*, while their corresponding members in the series of plagues do not. The ready explanation for this is that the plagues come at the end of time; while the trumpets, on the other hand, appear to prophesy a series of events that span the preceding continuum of history leading up to those final plagues. Thus the time periods under the trumpets should lead up to the end of time in which the plagues occur.

However, in order to extend that far, the fifth and sixth trumpets would require a substantial period of time for their accomplishment. This could only be the case if the units of time mentioned with these trumpets are construed as symbolic, standing for longer periods of actual historical time.³⁰

Finally, some of Daniel's time prophecies span more than one realm. The 70 weeks of 9 start in the Persian era, when rebuilding Jerusalem began. The 69th, when Messiah was cut off, occurred in the Roman era. So the 70 weeks cannot be literal time. Likewise, the 2,300 days of 8 began in Persian times and extend well past the Roman.³¹

Year-for-a-day Equation

Shea adds no fewer than 11 points here, in by far his most important section.

First,³² the OT historical narratives recognise a particular kind of relationship between "days" and "years" that transcends the mere idea that the latter were made up of the former. In these instances the word "days"... was actually used to stand for "years."³³

Shea notes three variants. *Days* stands for *year* in an annual event. For example, in Hebrew, "year after year", Ex. 13:10, literally reads "from days to days".³⁴ And "annual sacrifice", 1 Sam. 2:19,³⁵ is actually "sacrifice of the days".

²² "Year-day Principle", 75-77.

²⁴ As in 2:28, 44; 8:26; 10:14. Cf. 12:13.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 77f.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 64f. Strand's structural theory, which he cites, is treated *infra*, 251-270.

³⁰ "Year-day Principle", 78.

³² *Ibid.*, 79-81.

³⁴ Cf. 1 Sam. 2:19.

²³ Cf. 5.

²⁵ "Year-day Principle", 76.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁹ *Infra*, 144, 145f., 146, 150.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 78f. Cf. 95.

³³ *Ibid.*, 79.

³⁵ Cf. 20:6.

Days was also used to specify a time span of a year. For instance, “a year and four months”, 1 Sam. 27:7, literally reads “days and four months”.³⁶ *Days* often equates as well with the years of a person’s life. For instance, “advanced in years”, 1 Ki. 1:1, literally reads “advanced in the days”. The genealogy of Gen. 5 repeatedly employs the formula, “all the days of... were... years”, RSV.³⁷ Shea’s favourite example is the prophecy of Gen. 6:3: “his *days* will be a hundred and twenty *years*.” This period

conveys a *prophecy* about a future probationary period... And in this *first time prophecy* of Scripture the terms “days” and “years” are linked directly together.³⁸

Here is Shea’s own helpful summary of this whole argument:

[T]he relationship... between the terms for “day” and “year” forms the general linguistic usage and thought pattern from which a later, more specific quantitative relationship in prophetic texts will spring. It is evident that the year-day principle did not crop up suddenly in prophecy *sui generis*. When it came upon the scene of action, it was drawn from a more general relationship that was already a part of Hebrew thought.³⁹

Secondly, “Hebrew poetry provides us with further examples of the thought patterns out of which the year-day principle naturally developed.”⁴⁰ For example:

All his *days* the wicked man suffers torment,
the ruthless through all the *years* stored up for him. Job 15:20;

All our *days* pass away under your wrath;
we finish our *years* with a moan.

The length of our *days* is seventy *years*... Ps. 90:9f.

I will stand aside and permit Shea to draw his own confident conclusion here:

The parallelism... does not employ “days” to refer to short periods of time and “years” to long periods. The terms refer to the same periods but are calibrated in shorter and longer units. This is the same manner of thinking that is encountered in time prophecies, but there the equivalence has been made more numerically specific.⁴¹

Thirdly, the year-day principle first appears in Lev. 25:1-7. After six years of normal agriculture, ““in the seventh year the land is to have a *sabbath* of rest,”” 4. The parallel directive is: ““The land is to have a *year* of rest,”” 5. That is, “a word with more specific connections to individual days” – *sabbath* – “has been applied by analogy... to individual years.”⁴²

Shea’s fourth argument appeals to the Jubilee legislation of Lev. 25:8: ““Count off seven sabbaths of years — seven times seven years — so that the seven sabbaths of years amount to a period of forty-nine years.”” Manifestly, a sabbath of years is a seven-year period. “Thus *each day* of the ‘weeks’ that end with these ‘sabbaths’ in the jubilee cycle stands for *one year*.”⁴³ Moreover, in prophecy, this

use of the year-day principle is paralleled [*sic*] most directly by Daniel 9:24-27. A different word... is used in that prophecy, but it means the same thing that the “sabbaths” mean in Leviticus 25:8, that is, “weeks.” The applicability of the year-day principle to the time periods of Daniel 9:24-27 is especially evident, therefore, from the parallel construction of the Levitical instruction on the jubilee year. One could almost say that the time period involved in Daniel 9:24-27 was modeled after the jubilee legislation.

Since it is legitimate to apply the year-day principle to the days of the weeks of Leviticus 25 to reckon time into the future to the next Jubilee, it is also legitimate to apply that same year-day principle to the days of the weeks of Daniel 9 to reckon time into the future from the beginning of their cycle.⁴⁴

³⁶ Cf. Nu. 9:22.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, 83-85, citing 84.

³⁷ 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 31.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 81-83, citing 81.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 85f., citing 85.

³⁸ “Year-day Principle”, 81.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 85f.

Fifthly, “the third specific biblical use of the year-day principle”⁴⁵ is in Nu. 14:34: ““For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins””. But in apocalyptic prophecy, the year-day principle is used... in a slightly different way than it is used here. In this instance *a past day* stands for *a future year*; in apocalyptic *a future day* stands for *a future year*.⁴⁶

Sixthly, this “year-day principle found in Ezekiel 4:6 is... linguistically the same as that found in Numbers 14:34.”⁴⁷ Basically, both include the expression *day for the year* in the Hebrew. In context, 4-6, the first reads, “put the sin of the house of Israel upon yourself... I have assigned you the same number of days as the years of their sin ... I have assigned you 40 days, a day for each year.” But there is a difference.

Ezekiel’s prophetically future “days” are derived from historically past “years.” This is the reverse of the situation in Numbers where the “years” of judgment follow the “days” of sinfulness. In Numbers, therefore, we have a day-for-a-year application, while in Ezekiel we have a year-for-a-day situation.⁴⁸

Since “the same year-day principle could be employed in different ways on different occasions”,⁴⁹ the apocalypticist’s application of the principle is just another variant.

Shea’s seventh and eighth arguments come right to the heart of the matter in Dan. 9:24-27. I will delay comment, though, till the next major section. Likewise, his ninth argument treats the 2,300 evenings-mornings of 8:14, so the detail is best deferred.⁵⁰

Shea’s tenth argument involves a pragmatic test of historical fulfilment.⁵¹ He contends that the 70 weeks of Dan. 9 began in 458/457 B.C., that the 69th week stretched to A.D. 27, and that the entire period ended in 34. However, since prophetic fulfilment falls outside the scope of this investigation,⁵² I will set this argument aside here.

Shea’s final argument is a pragmatic test of predictive use. Drue Cressener utilised the year-day principle in 1689 to terminate John’s 1,260 days around 1800. Since the Pope was deposed in 1798, this forecast was remarkably perceptive:

The extraordinary chronological accuracy with which Cressner’s [*sic*] prediction met its fulfilment lends support to the idea that he had indeed employed the correct hermeneutical tool with which to interpret this time prophecy...⁵³

I should also ignore this alleged fulfilment, but will make an exception in due course.⁵⁴

Shea concludes his defense where he started. In the Book of Daniel, the year-day principle “has been established through reasonable interpretations of Scripture.”⁵⁵

The Seventy Week-Years of Dan. 9:24

The expression, “[s]eventy weeks of years”, Dan. 9:24, RSV, is the one on which Adventism now places most weight in defending its principle.⁵⁶ For example, Shea

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 86f., citing 86. Here and @ fn. 46, cf. Hasel, “Daniel 8:9-14”, 433n.

⁴⁶ “Year-day Principle”, 86.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 87-89, citing 88.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Infra*, 63-65.

⁵¹ “Year-day Principle”, 100f.

⁵² *Supra*, 3.

⁵³ “Year-day Principle”, 101.

⁵⁴ *Infra*, 212.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁵⁶ W. G. Johnsson, “Three years after Glacier View”, *Adventist Review*, Sept. 22, 1983, 3, admits of the year-day principle: “In the past... we could appeal only to Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6—a rather weak case.” These proof-texts are resilient, though, as in B. Neall, “Confessions of a Bible Teacher: Can we Still Believe the Sanctuary Doctrine after a Century and a Half?”, *Adventist Review*, October 6, 1994, 29. Cf. @ my fn. 45.

argues that the 490 literal years that Daniel obviously intends are derived from 490 symbolic days. Then, “[b]y extension, this same principle can be reasonably applied also to the ‘days’ of the other time prophecies in Daniel.”⁵⁷ Ferch concurs entirely:

Given the symbolic nature of the time references in the visions, the parallel nature of the visions, and the special link between Daniel 8 and 9, it is not unreasonable to assume... that in the prophetic chapters of Daniel a day represents a year. While the book of Daniel does not state this principle explicitly, Daniel 9:24-27 provides an internal key by which the time prophecies in the remaining chapters may be understood.⁵⁸

Shea has already surmised that Daniel may have modelled the crucial time period of Dan. 9 on the Jubilee Year statute of Lev. 25.⁵⁹ Now he elaborates.

The decisive noun is *šābûaʿ*, rendered mainly in two strikingly distinct ways. First is as *weeks*. Via the year-day equation, each day of these weeks becomes a historical year. Second is as *sevens*, *heptads* etc. Here *šābûaʿ* is deemed a period of seven literal years *per se*. This patent attempt to counter the historicist interpretation is baseless because *šābûaʿ* stems from the Hebrew noun for *seven* “as a specialized term to be applied only to the unit of time consisting of seven days, that is, the ‘week.’”⁶⁰

Shea sees no import in the fact, stressed by some commentators,⁶¹ that in Dan. 9 *šābûaʿ* has the masculine plural ending, not the feminine utilised elsewhere in the OT.⁶² With greater precision, he could have annulled the point merely by stating that Dan. 10, where *šābûaʿ* has the literal meaning *day*, also uses the masculine plural ending.

Shea notes that in its 13 appearances outside Dan. 9,⁶³ *šābûaʿ* always means *weeks*. It should therefore be rendered *weeks* in Dan. 9, too, in the interests of consistency.

In Dan. 10:2f., *šābûaʿ* is qualified by *full*.⁶⁴ Literally, the Hebrew back of *full* is of *days*. Yet this does not imply that in 9, *šābûaʿ* denotes *weeks of years*, as some commentators claim⁶⁵ – including both Ferch⁶⁶ and Hasel.⁶⁷ Rather, Dan. 10 employs a Hebrew idiom as in “whole month”, Gen. 29:14, and “full years”, 41:1. Here Shea cannot be faulted. In fact, he does not even parade all of the relevant data.⁶⁸

Also, the Septuagint usually renders *šābûaʿ* as *week* in the Greek. So it means *week* in Dan. 9, and “carries the year-day principle along with it in the 70-weeks prophecy.”⁶⁹

Shea now returns to the source of the 70 weeks.⁷⁰ Dan. 9 is bounded by two prophetic periods, reference, 2, to Jeremiah’s prophecy of the 70 years of captivity, and the 70 weeks themselves, 24-27.

A relationship between them can be seen from the fact that both are prophetic in nature, and the latter is given in answer to the prayer about the former.⁷¹

⁵⁷ “Year-day Principle”, 86. Cf. 89, 92.

⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, 90.

⁵⁹ *Supra*, 60. Cf. Hasel, “Interpretations”, 11.

⁶⁰ “Year-day Principle”, 89-92, citing 90. Shea consistently transliterates the noun as *šābûʿa*.

⁶¹ E.g., J. E. Goldingay, *Daniel* (Dallas, 1989), 229. This is a professional commentary not intended for lay employment, however. Shea has the support of Hasel, “Interpretations”, 11.

⁶² Lev. 12:5 is no exception. Here the noun has the standard dual ending.

⁶⁴ As in the RSV.

⁶³ Actually, the count is 12. See @ fn. 145.

⁶⁵ E.g., Price, *op. cit.*, 265.

⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, 89f.

⁶⁷ “Interpretations”, 11f.

⁶⁸ Full years, Gen. 41:1; 2 Sam. 13:23; 14:28; Jer. 28:3, 11, and whole months, Gen. 29:14; Nu. 11:20, 21; Deut. 21:13; Jud. 19:2; 2 Ki. 15:13. The RSV reproduces the idiom more often than most. Shea errs, though, in including Lev. 25:29 in his list. Despite appearances in English translations, this idiom does not appear there.

⁶⁹ “Year-day Principle”, 92.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 92-95.

The two periods are also linked by the common number 70. The 70 weeks are modelled on the 70 years. In fact, they relate like the Sabbatical years and the Jubilee cycle:

Sabbatical Period	Jubilee Cycle
Lev. 25:1-7 – 7 years	Lev. 25:8-17 – 7 weeks of years x 7
Dan. 9:2 – 7 years x 10	Dan. 9:24 – 7 weeks of days x 7 x 10

Table 7.1

The fact that the 70 years of captivity were viewed as ten Sabbatical-year periods is clear from the interpretation of the Exile in 2 Chron. 36:21, RSV – “to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.” In view of this relationship, the 70 weeks relate to the Jubilee period. “Thus the 70 weeks... may be seen as ten jubilee periods even as the 70 years were seen as ten sabbatical-year periods.”⁷²

Shea completes his argument by claiming that, while *šābûa* ‘always means weeks in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Essenes normally interpreted the 70 weeks as ten Jubilees. Moreover, the 70 weeks were fulfilled in the Sabbatical years 457 B.C., and A.D. 27 and 34.⁷³ I treat the first of these quite peripheral points briefly in my Appendix B.

Shea’s summary, based on these internal and external affinities, is that

it is reasonable to interpret the 70-week period by the calibrations provided by the 70-year prophecy... and by the jubilee period. It was linked to both, and both indicate that the period should be interpreted symbolically to represent literal years.⁷⁴

However, Shea belatedly adds a final theological argument worthy of note:

The theology behind Sabbatical years may... add some significance to the events prophesied in chapter 9. In Sabbatical years the slaves were to be released and land was to revert to original owners. Such a connection can be seen with the events of 457 B.C. at the beginning of the 70 weeks.⁷⁵

The 2,300 Evenings-mornings of Dan. 8:14

Shea has already asserted that the 2,300 evenings-mornings of 8:14 started in Persian times.⁷⁶ If so, they cannot be literal since the prophecy focuses on a bold attack on Yahweh beyond Alexander’s day. And this prophetic time period has most relevance to that attack, as the question-answer format of 13f. attests with forceful clarity.

Shea’s analysis is an integral part, then, of his defense of the year-day principle:

It is important to decide just what vision is referred to in the initial clause of this question, since it is the length of that vision that is measured off by the time period given in answer to this question in... 8:14. There are two alternatives here: Either the vision in question is the whole vision that the prophet has seen up to that point (vss. 3-12), or it is only that portion of the vision that has to do with the little horn (vss. 9-12).⁷⁷

Shea gives the first option fivefold support. First, the elements in 13 are *tāmîd*⁷⁸ plus desolation, sanctuary and host. But these occur in reverse order in 10-12.⁷⁹ This order

⁷² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁷⁵ “Unity”, 226.

⁷⁸ *Supra*, 6.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 94f. Cf. *idem*, “Unity”, 225f.

⁷⁶ *Supra*, 59.

⁷⁹ “Year-day Principle”, 96.

⁷⁴ “Year-day Principle”, 95.

⁷⁷ “Year-day Principle”, 96.

leads naturally back into those elements of the vision that were not explicitly cited in the question, and in its present position the word for “vision” becomes a summary for all of them.⁸⁰

Secondly, in restricting *vision*, 8:13, to the Little Horn, there really are two visions, one vision about the ram, the goat, and the four horns, and another vision about the little horn. Since no demarcators to support such a division appear in the middle of this vision’s description, and since the vision is described in continuous fashion from verses 3 to 12, there are no grounds in the text for making such an arbitrary division.⁸¹

Thirdly, Shea notes two distinct Hebrew nouns back of *vision* in 8.⁸² First, *ḥāzôn* refers to the whole vision in 1f. In 15, where Daniel seeks understanding, it appears to have the same sense. For Gabriel’s explanation, 20, begins with Persia. He seems to make like reference in 17 and 26. So *ḥāzôn* should be taken as the whole vision in 13.

The other word for *vision* is *mar’eh*, 16, 26, 27. Here W. H. Shea points us to part of an earlier article.⁸³ Since he concedes that its meaning does not materially affect the interpretation of *ḥāzôn* in 8,⁸⁴ I can be selective in surveying this peripheral article.

In demonstrating that *mar’eh* has special reference to some aspect of an individual’s *appearance* – here the appearance of the holy ones and their discussion, 13f.⁸⁵ – Shea appeals to the epiphany of 10:5f., where it so applies. He claims, too, that in 7f. Daniel applies this particular noun to this epiphany fully three times more.⁸⁶

Shea also discusses a possible objection.⁸⁷ In 9:21, Daniel describes Gabriel as “the man whom I had seen in the earlier vision [*ḥāzôn*]”. If he meant his personal appearance, “the distinction drawn between... these two words cannot be upheld.”⁸⁸

The earlier vision is specified in 8:1 as that of 7. But where is Gabriel here?

Gabriel was the interpreter-messenger who appeared on each occasion when Daniel was given all four of his major prophecies. This is explicitly stated in 8:16 and 9:21; 9:21 refers back to 7:16, and it is strongly implied for Daniel’s informant in ch 10.⁸⁹

So Daniel may have utilised *ḥāzôn* in 9:21 because Gabriel participated in the court scene of 7. More importantly, except for the final three verses, 7 is written in Aramaic. *Mar’eh* does not occur in this language, which has no cognate for its root *rā’āh*. So the bilingual Daniel would naturally have utilised *ḥāzôn* in 9 when referring to 7, where six times over the cognate noun *ḥezû* occurs.⁹⁰

Shea’s fourth argument summarises Daniel’s usage of *ḥāzôn* outside 8.⁹¹ Twice⁹² it refers collectively to visionary experience. And three times it refers back to one of his previous visions – 9:21 to 7 and both 10:14 and 11:14 probably to 8. So these five are all inclusive regarding the vision(s) to which they refer. None supports the notion of applying the word in 8:13 only to the portion 9-12 of the whole vision.

Shea’s final argument contrasts 8:13 and 12:11.⁹³ The latter specifies the length of time – 1,290 days – from the abolition of the *tāmîd* and the establishment of the abomination that causes desolation. But it does not utilise *vision*. The former does, with

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*, 96f.

⁸³ “The Relationship Between the Prophecies of Daniel 8 and Daniel 9”, S & A, 232-239.

⁸⁴ “Year-day Principle”, 97.

⁸⁵ “Relationship”, 235-237.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁹⁰ 1, 2, 7, 13, 15, 20, *ibid.* Shea writes the noun as *hezev*.

⁹¹ “Year-day Principle”, 97f.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 232f.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 237f.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁹² 1:17; 9:24.

⁹³ “Year-day Principle”, 98f.

the same concern. This seems to explain the difference between the time periods.

The larger overall total of 2300 days is more for the vision, while the smaller figure of 1290 days is more specifically for the daily and the abomination of desolation. The latter... should be subsumed under the former...⁹⁴

Basically, Hasel agrees with Shea's point regarding the question-answer of 8:13f.:

Those who would limit the intent of the question to the period of the "little horn" are insensitive to the Hebrew noun for "vision" which is *hāzôn* in verse 13... A study of this term here and in the remainder of... the book of Daniel... reveals that it is distinguished from the word *mar'eh*, a word which carries the meaning of "appearance"...

The word *hāzôn*... in verse 13 contextually refers to the vision of the ram, he-goat, and the "little horn" as its first usages in verses 1-2 clearly indicate. The *mar'eh*... more narrowly refers to the "appearance" of the heavenly beings who engage in conversation regarding the trampling of the sanctuary and its restoration...

... In short, the time span covered by the *hāzôn*-vision in the question of verse 13 includes the entire range of events the prophet was shown in verses 3-12. Contextually and terminologically it is not limited to the "little horn" period.⁹⁵

However, Hasel offers a further line of supportive evidence. Although translations like the RSV speak in 13 of "the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot", the Hebrew lacks the construct chain through which the noun *hāzôn* would be limited to the items which follow it in its sentence.⁹⁶ Therefore,

it is clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that the year-day principle is functioning in chapter 8. The 2,300 evenings (and) mornings must cover the whole period of the events symbolized, beginning at some point during the ram period. An understanding of the 2,300 evenings-mornings as literal days does not fit the context of the question... The prophet himself provides the key to the year-day principle...⁹⁷

The Nexus between the 2,300 Evenings-mornings and the 490 Years

Strictly speaking, Adventism's crucial argument that the 490 years were cut off the 2,300 evenings-mornings, thus providing the latter's Persian point of departure, has much to do with the pure theology which I have excluded *per se* from this critique.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, its inclusion is warranted by its frequent appeal to interpretive details.

Shea examines the relationship between Dan. 8 and 9 on two distinct levels.⁹⁹ The first is the distribution of Daniel's visions, with particular reference to structure.¹⁰⁰

In broad perspective, both 7 and 8 involve a vision and its explanation. In contrast, 9 has an explanation alone. Likewise, since the epiphany of 10:5-9 has just local im-

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁹⁵ "Daniel 8:9-14", 434.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 434f. I have spared my lay reader the truly daunting technical details! Although he does not cite it, the NEB seems to capture the essence of Hasel's analysis: "For how long will the period of this vision last? How long will the regular offering be suppressed, how long will impiety cause desolation, and both the Holy Place and the fairest of all lands be given over to be trodden down?" However, he would prefer "Until when...?" to "For how long...?", "Daniel 8:9-14", 429f., 433. I treat the detail in the next section, where it is most relevant.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 435.

⁹⁸ *Supra*, 2f.

⁹⁹ "Relationship", 228. Shea summarises most of the following in "Unity", 227-30 and "Daniel 9:24-27", 105-108. Cf. Hasel, "Daniel 8:9-14", 436-439.

¹⁰⁰ "Relationship", 228-232. He considers relevant linguistic details, 230, in the following section. So, then, do I.

port, 10-12 involves no more than explanation, too. Clearly, such a precise structure links the latter parallel pair of explanatory prophecies with the earlier parallel pair of prophecies presented by way of visions... Thus an examination of the overall structure of the prophetic section... underscores the importance of *both* Dan 9 and 10-12 as supplying more detailed explanations of the visions given previously in Dan 7 and 8.¹⁰¹

Shea's second structural point is that normally, a prophecy is given then calibrated in temporal terms. But in 9, the chronology occurs first. So the 490 years adjoin the 2,300 days, suggesting again that the two time periods are directly related.

On the lower level, Shea explores four relational details – technical terms for prophetic experience, phraseology, common themes and historical application.

I have already surveyed Shea's efforts to distinguish between *mar'eh* and *hāzōn*.¹⁰² He draws a sharp distinction between *hāzōn*, used alone in 14 in 10, and the prior four appearances of *mar'eh*. So *hāzōn* "logically points back to the preceding vision of Dan 8, just as the similar reference in 9:23 does." In 9:23, the former makes specific reference to 8:13f. That is, the angel relates the 70 weeks directly to the 2,300 days.¹⁰³

Shea places some weight upon *neḥtak*, the initial verb of 9:24.¹⁰⁴ He allows that, as the root *hātak* occurs only here in the OT, it is hard to choose between its two meanings, *cut off* or *decree*. The verb's only extrabiblical sources are late (Mishnaic) Hebrew and Ugaritic. In the former, *hātak* has the sense *cut* more often than *determine*. Shea grants that such late data is not decisive for Dan. 9:24, but he is not finished.

Shea argues that the normal verbs for *cut* and *determine* – *kāraṭ* and *hāraṣ* respectively – both experience an extension of meaning over time. To the concrete sense *cut* was added the abstract sense *decide*. With *hātak*, which experienced like change, the idea of "cut" probably predominated even more in Daniel's time than in the Mishnaic period. However, this conclusion does not completely exclude the possibility that Daniel could have used this word with the less-frequent meaning of "decide, determine," which may (or may not) have come into use by his time. Unfortunately, our late Mishnaic sources do not provide sufficient evidence with which to decide this question with finality.¹⁰⁵

Shea turns, then, to the Ugaritic texts. The verb in review is represented by a noun meaning father or son. Therefore *hātak* in Dan. 9:24 "could suggest the picture of the 2300 days... as the father of the 70 weeks".¹⁰⁶ If so, the nuance *cut* is easier to explain than *determine*. Regardless, the Ugaritic evidence "is not strongly determinative".¹⁰⁷

I have already noted Shea's claim that *šābūa'* supports historicism.¹⁰⁸ In the earlier essay under review here, Shea airs an additional argument which merits attention.¹⁰⁹

Shea notes that, while *šābūa'* normally has a feminine ending in the plural, in Dan. 9 it is masculine. This atypical ending could be "used to designate an unexpressed but understood relationship to the evenings-mornings of the preceding prophecy."¹¹⁰

Shea is not quite through with the verb *hātak*,¹¹¹ either. Those common verbs for *cut* and *decree*, *kāraṭ* and *hāraṣ*, both occur in Dan. 9:24-27. The first describes Mesiah's fate in 26. The second refers to decreed events in 26 and 27. Moreover, like *hā-*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 230.

¹⁰³ "Relationship", 232f., 238f., citing 233. See fn. 100 about the overlap between levels.

¹⁰⁴ "Relationship", 241-246.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 245.

¹⁰⁹ "Relationship", 246f.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 246.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 247.

¹⁰² *Supra*, 64. Cf. 65.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 243f.

¹⁰⁸ *Supra*, 62.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 247f.

tak in 24, both verbs are passive. If word play is evident here, as Shea suggests,

Daniel did not choose to use the common word that meant “cut” or the common word that meant “decree,” both of which occur later in the same prophecy, perhaps because he chose to use a word that conveyed both meanings at the same time...

In that case the 70 weeks were first ‘cut off’ of [*sic*] the 2300 evenings-mornings, and then they were in turn ‘decreed’... upon God’s people.¹¹²

Shea’s final argument¹¹³ is that interpreters struggle to fit the 2,300 days into Antiochus Epiphanes’ era when they apply them to the entire vision, from Persian times. However, the actual point of departure is not defined in 8. Since the prophecy of 9 begins in the same era and is exactly defined, it is sensible to start them simultaneously.

Within the DARCOM series, Hasel lists yet another link, the verb *understand* and its cognates.¹¹⁴ Adventism would have us believe that what Daniel did not understand, 8:27, and what Gabriel clarified, 9:22, was the 2,300 evenings-mornings, 8:13f.,¹¹⁵ especially when Gabriel specifically referred Daniel back to a prior vision.¹¹⁶

Likewise, Hasel asserts that 8 does not specify the calendar years which bound its 2,300 evenings-mornings. Instead, “[e]mphasis is placed primarily upon what takes place at the end of the time span and beyond in verse [*sic*] 13-14.”¹¹⁷ His rationale is important, however daunting to lay readers. In essence, the question of 8:13 opens with

the Hebrew words ‘*ad-māṭay*. They are customarily rendered... with the phrase “how long”... However, several commentators note that the... Hebrew should be rendered differently... The first word, ‘*ad*, is a temporal preposition which should be rendered “until.” It is joined to the temporal interrogative adverb, *māṭay*, meaning “when.”

Some leading lexicographers translate the compound expression ‘*ad-māṭay* as “until when.”... The thrust of the expression (until when) is upon what is to take place at the end of the time span and beyond.

... The emphasis is not *duration* (how long) but *termination* (until when) and what follows. This exegetical insight finds contextual support in the temporal “until” (*ad*) in the answer of verse 14a which in turn is followed by “then”... in the last part of... 14.¹¹⁸

Therefore,

the expectation that the starting point of the entire time span is to be found elsewhere is sound. This expectation finds its contextual support in verse 26 where the angel interpreter comes to the time element of the 2,300 “evenings-mornings,” but does not attempt at that point to explain the matter.¹¹⁹

The Time, Times and Half a Time of Dan. 12:7

Shea appeals belatedly to the time, times and half a time, Dan. 12:7, in defense of historicism, albeit implicitly, for he merely locates it within the stream of history.

Noting several strong verbal links between 11:32-35 and 12:7-10, Shea resolves that “the time period of Daniel 12:7 should be applied to date the length of the persecu-

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 248.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 249f.

¹¹⁴ “Daniel 8:9-14”, 437.

¹¹⁵ J. Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9: an Exegetical Study”, S & A, 254f., is a typical if learned case.

¹¹⁶ E.g., Shea, “Relationship”, 237f.; “Unity”, 228f.; “Daniel 9:24-27”, 105f.; Hasel, “Daniel 8:9-14”, 437. Interestingly, while both take the explanation as applicable to the 2,300 evenings-mornings, one sees 7 in view in 9:21, while the other sees 8.

¹¹⁷ “Daniel 8:9-14”, 436.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 429f. Cf. 433, 439.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

tion described in Daniel 11:32-35.”¹²⁰ Likewise, numerous links bind 11:31 and 12:11 together. Therefore, “the 1290 days... should be used to date the taking away of the ... continual and the setting up of the abomination of desolation”.¹²¹ Moreover:

Of special importance... is the reference to the “time of the end” in Daniel 11:40. In the Book of Daniel the time of the end... is a period of time (cf. 8:17; 11:35; 12:4). Events occur in that period of time, and some of those events are described in Daniel 11:40-45. Now the question arises, What is the relationship of the time periods in Daniel 12 to “the time of the end” prophesied at the close of Daniel 11. [*sic*] The answer has already been given... *They occur before it.* They are not time periods which belong to the time of the end... because the 1290 days of Daniel 11:31 and the 1260 days of Daniel 11:32-35 occur in this prophecy *before* the time of the end appears in Daniel 11:40.¹²²

Evaluation

Has Shea set forth “a series of convincing arguments” for the year-day principle, as Johnsson so confidently claims?¹²³ Certainly, Adventism has never offered a more detailed apologetic than his. Shea has left virtually no stone unturned in his vigorous defense. And where he has faltered, Hasel, especially, has been quick to oblige. Adventism’s crucial ideology therefore stands or falls with their sweeping evidence.

Shea’s Four General Lines of Evidence

First, his argument that historicism alone avoids a vast prophetic gap in the Christian era between Jesus’ day and ours is valid only if God *intended* this era to span two millennia or more. As I will argue in due course,¹²⁴ though, first century saints were *taught* by inspired writers to expect Jesus’ Return in *their* day. The passage of subsequent time is easily explained in terms of the *conditional* nature of Bible prophecy.¹²⁵

Secondly, Shea’s claim that short apocalyptic time periods would be unfair to the evil one – a non-biblical concept – is fraught with problems on several levels, even philosophical. Why would any fiend crave time to prove the superiority of any program that engulfs the saints in his evil? Shea’s surmise is even more implausible in light of one signal difference. The evils God’s people face in the major prophets are *punishments* for their sins. What they face in Daniel and Revelation is *persecution*.

Regardless, how many times must the one point be made? Shea admits that “[t]he literal time periods... of... the classical prophets were ample for the outworking of evil’s purposes.”¹²⁶ So his totally speculative appeal to fairness here is quite effete.

The greater hurdle facing Shea, however, is theological. In due course I will assess each time period on Shea’s list in the Book of Revelation.¹²⁷ And without exception, one by one they will prove quite persuasively to be “only literal time units.”¹²⁸

Shea’s third polemic, that the longest prophecies occur with the short-range view, and the shortest with the long-range view, faces two serious problems, at least. The

¹²⁰ “Time Prophecies”, 336-338, citing 338.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 338-340, citing 340.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 340f., italics original.

¹²³ “Three years after Glacier View”, 3.

¹²⁴ *Infra*, 180-182. Cf. fnn. 129f.

¹²⁵ *Infra*, 191, 195, 196, 197, 197-200.

¹²⁶ See @ fn. 12.

¹²⁷ *Infra*, 142, 145f., 155-163.

¹²⁸ Returning Shea’s words @ fn. 12.

Book of Revelation has no long-range view. John expected Jesus to return in his day.¹²⁹ And his time periods often pertain to a very brief period just prior to the Parousia.¹³⁰

At very least, then, Shea falls victim to sweeping generalisations and unwarranted assumptions here. Daniel *must* be permitted to speak for himself in the matter. And he has already warned us to make no facile surmise that he is an apocalypticist.¹³¹

Fourthly, from the rise and fall of major powers from Daniel's day till the Eschaton, Shea infers that the small numbers in his temporal predictions cannot be literal. I have said quite enough already to demonstrate that even Daniel's key forecasts were conditional.¹³² So Shea makes the unwarranted assumption again that God *intended* long centuries to pass since Daniel's day. Moreover, as my conclusions about John's 3½ years also indicate,¹³³ God can readily rout Satan and his host in this literal time span.

In brief, Shea has no success whatever in this entire section. It is riddled with pre-suppositions that at best place words in Daniel's mouth, and at worst fly in the face of the clearest intent of John's book, as he himself will reveal in due course. That is, at least in terms of general evidence, the year-day credo is just an *external* hermeneutic.

Shea's Sevenfold Appeal to Symbolic Time Versus Literal Time

First, in appealing to apocalyptic prophecy's pervasive use of symbolism to infer that its time periods are equally symbolic, Shea falls victim to serious oversimplification. In general, one searches almost in vain for any forecasts, even in Daniel and Revelation, that do not entail some literal elements. For example, the Little Horn of Dan. 7 is certainly symbolic. However, he is just one of four key players in the great drama. Neither the Ancient of Days, nor the Son of man, nor even the saints are pictured in other than literal terms. Likewise, neither the persecution they suffer, nor the judgment that frees them, nor God's kingdom they receive is symbolic. Shea has no rational reason, then, to impose symbolism upon the 3½ years of persecution.

Secondly, Shea is right that Daniel's time units must be interpreted to glean his intent. But he outruns the evidence in asserting that such unusual units better fit symbolic time and probably were chosen to stress the point. For one thing, if the evenings-mornings, 8:14, are symbolic, their patent stress on the *daily* ministrations in the sanctuary is totally lost,¹³⁴ and with it all relevance to context. For another, the same Aramaic noun rendered *time* in 7:25 is so translated in 4:23, 25, 32. Yet there is no reason to read it there other than literally. Indeed, its ready use in a literal context quite robs Shea's polemic of all credence. I will reserve further comment on these expressions and one equivalent in the Book of Revelation until I assess them in their own right.¹³⁵

Since Shea's third argument is really a reiteration of his second, I need say no more here than the above. Nor are Ferch's comments any more perceptive here. Likewise, Shea's fifth point repeats the substance of his second, and merits no separate attention.

Shea's fourth argument is best assessed in light of his similar, more general polemic in the next section. Having already deferred judgment on his sixth argument till

¹²⁹ *Infra*, 97, 98f., 101-103, 112, 138f., 244+n. Cf. fnn. 124, 130.

¹³¹ *Supra*, 147-156.

¹³³ *Infra*, 162.

¹³⁰ *Infra*, 145f., 160, 162.

¹³² *Supra*, 51-55.

¹³⁵ *Infra*, 150-163.

¹³⁴ *Supra*, 58; *infra*, 110.

I consider the Book of Revelation, I am left with his seventh here. Yet even this point is best treated in light of the fuller data I have outlined in the apposite sections.¹³⁶

In brief, with the possible exception of his fourth argument, and his few points still awaiting attention, Shea's second section is no more helpful to his case than his first.

Shea's Protracted Defense of the Year-for-a-day Equation

Together with Shea's fourth argument from the previous section, his first two here give ostensible support to the notion that there is a distinct nexus between *days* and *years* in Scripture upon which the year-for-a-day equation is very firmly founded.

But first, RSV speaks for a large body of scholarly opinion which reads Dan. 11:20 thus: "within a few *days*...". So this verse can be ignored here. Moreover, Shea fails to stress that the Hebrew noun for *day* is its basic time unit, with a very broad range of nuances. For example, even the singular can denote an indefinite time span, as in Isa. 7:18, 20, 21, 23, when the plural normally does so, 17, RSV. So Shea has no cogent reason to single out any nexus between *day(s)* and *year(s)* in the Hebrew.

Even when Shea is correct that these refer to the same time period, this is no basis for the year-day nexus. Neither the OT historical records nor the poetry he cites offers *any* evidence that the nexus "transcends the mere idea that the latter were made up of the former."¹³⁷ At best, 365 days¹³⁸ embody one year, as when Job equates "*all his days*" and "*all the years*", Job 15:20, or when David equates "*as many days*" and "*as many years*", Ps. 90:15. Compare *days* (plural) behind *year* (singular) or equivalent, explicit or implicit, in Ex. 13:10; 1 Sam. 2:19; 27:7, in Shea's confident polemic.

None of this has anything whatever to do with the *one-to-one* correspondence between a day and a year so crucial to the year-day principle. Indeed, Shea's assertion that "the same manner of thinking... is encountered in time prophecies, but there the equivalence has been made more numerically specific"¹³⁹ is a transparent assertion lacking all evidence. The principle must stand upon its own merits or be abandoned.

A modern example highlights the fallacy of Shea's assertion. Many societies use the metric system of measurement. Here 100 centimetres and one metre are exactly equivalent. So that beautiful shrub in my front garden is both 200 cm and 2 m. tall.

Most societies also support many construction industries, be they building roads, cars, houses or a hundred other modern conveniences. Basic to all such activities are scale plans. That road or car is first drawn in miniature by an architect or draftsman, often with powerful computer support. A common scale is 100:1. That is, the three m. drain beneath the road appears on the master plan as a detail three cm wide.

However, the common knowledge that 100 centimetres and one metre are equivalent did not lay the foundation for the 100:1 scale or any other. A scale drawing must use the current units of measurement. And the scale is one of mere convenience. For example, I used to trek this beautiful land's wildernesses with the aid of a one mile per inch map. I now drive its highways with the help of a 3¹/₃ km per cm road atlas.

¹³⁶ *Infra*, 71-80.

¹³⁷ Citing Shea's words *supra*, @ fn. 33.

¹³⁸ My modern precision of 365 days does not weaken my polemic. ¹³⁹ See @ fn. 41.

In other words, we know that a scale exists when we see a scale model or drawing. But in *none* of these early arguments has Shea demonstrated the existence of a temporal “scale” of *any* type in Bible prophecy. He has resorted to mere speculation.

Nevertheless, Shea seems to have a strong point in his third argument. Is the use of *sabbath* for *year* in Lev. 25:1-7 not a definite instance of a day for a year? Not when we take a closer look at the precise dynamics in operation here. Follow me carefully.

According to exponents of the year-day principle, a specific period cited in terms of *days* is taken as literal *years*. For example, those 1,260 symbolic *days* of Rev. 12:6 represent 1,260 literal *years* of papal supremacy between A.D. 538 and 1798. That is, this prophecy is viewed as treating this *one* event. But there is none covering the 1,260 days *per se*, even as a historical antecedent. The distinction is crucial and decisive!

However, no such process occurs in Lev. 25. God merely takes the *noun* Sabbath, which normally refers to the seventh *day* of each week, and applies it to each seventh *year*. There is no specific *Sabbath day* to be understood as a specific *sabbatical year*. The *meaning* of the noun *Sabbath* has simply been extended. From this edict onwards it can denote either the seventh *day* of the week or each seventh *year*. Context alone is the arbiter in interpretation. No conversion formula need ever be employed.

Fourthly, I have no doubt that “the time period involved in Dan 9:24-27 was modeled after the jubilee legislation”,¹⁴⁰ although my rationale must await the next section. Meantime, Shea strains credibility even with his effort to tie the Jubilee year to prophecy through reference to the future. Even if it can be shown that Lev. 25 has future import, it has no nexus whatever with prophecy.

Nevertheless, Nu. 14:34 is at long last an instance of a year-for-a-day equivalence – one involving prophecy at that. Yet even it scarcely assists Shea’s struggling case.

Shea perceives the basic problem himself: “In this instance *a past day* stands for *a future year*; in apocalyptic *a future day* stands for *a future year*.”¹⁴¹ The difference is not slight, though, as he suggests. Moreover, Nu. 14:34 mentions *two* distinct events, the 40 days the spies explored Canaan, and the 40 years the nation was punished. But that is not how the year-day principle is applied in prophecy, as we have just noted.

Exactly the same objection can be raised to Shea’s sixth argument. Eze. 4:4-6 cites *two* events, not just one, as in the prophecies which most elate historicists. Moreover, this passage is even more remote from them than Nu. 14:34. As Shea himself admits, past *years* are linked to future *days*, while historicism reads prophetic *days* as literal *years*. Indeed, the variance is so great, even with Nu. 14:34, that he is quite gratuitous to deem the time prophecies in Daniel and Revelation just another variant.

Possibly apart from the few details still awaiting attention, then, nothing here has offered Shea’s crucial year-day hypothesis the slightest cogent support, either.

Shea’s Appeal to the Seventy Weeks of Dan. 9:24

In this pivotal polemic, Shea deserves warm commendation for a generally cogent submission. Indeed, it towers head and shoulders above most of his others.

¹⁴⁰ See @ fn. 44.

¹⁴¹ See @ fn. 46.

Yet even here he has still quite failed to validate the crucial year-day principle.

Certainly, Daniel's 70 weeks are closely linked to Jeremiah's 70 years. Moreover, 2 Chron. 36:21 specifies that the latter were to span ten seven-yearly Sabbaths.¹⁴²

However, the 70 weeks may not be ten Jubilee cycles as Shea asserts. Indeed, he is rather remiss not to point out that there is some confusion over the exact length of the cycle.¹⁴³ In Shea's view, the period was 49 years. Yet the most natural reading of Lev. 25:10 is that there were a full 50 years. If so, ten cycles cover 500 years, not 490.

What matters is that Lev. 25:8 directs: "Count off *seven sabbaths of years*—*seven times seven years*—so that the seven sabbaths of years amount to a period of *forty-nine years*." Therefore, mediated through the 70 years, or ten cycles of septennial Sabbaths, the 70 weeks are ten cycles of seven septennial Sabbaths.

The cardinal question then becomes, Is any year-day principle at work here? The simple answer is, Not when it is absent from Lev. 25, as Shea argues his case. If the principle is not clearly evident in its own right in Dan. 9, he has not made his point.

In Lev. 25, God merely applies the *noun* Sabbath, which usually means the weekly seventh *day*, to each seventh *year*. Now context alone is arbitral in interpretation.

Likewise, in Dan. 9, God simply gives the noun *šābûa'*, with the normal meaning week of seven *days*, the extra nuance, week of seven *years*. What arbitrates between them from Daniel's day onward is context. No conversion formula is needed. So the year-day formula should not be used to convert the 70 weeks to 490 literal years. The sense *seven years* inheres in *šābûa'* from the instant Gabriel mouths it in Dan. 9:24.

Even if it did not, the year-day principle should not be extended to Daniel's other time prophecies without his clear invitation. Dan. 9:24 is a very special case with an extremely well defined background which his other time periods simply do not share.

One further comment on *šābûa'* is apropos. Ford is obdurate that the year-day principle is inapplicable because most linguists deem the noun a heptad. That is, it has *always* had the collective sense *seven*, with context supplying specifics.¹⁴⁴ It was not restricted to *week*, with an extension from *days* to *years* first occurring in Dan. 9.

Strictly speaking, it is not my task to adjudicate between DARCOM and Adventism's critics. Yet, as a direct challenge to my own case, the heptad alternative is one which I cannot ignore entirely. Indeed, it warrants a more technical assessment than I am willing to expose my lay readers to. So I have banished it to Appendix B of this volume. Nevertheless, this much is of immediate relevance to my polemic.

The noun *šābûa'* occurs just twenty times in the entire OT,¹⁴⁵ although Eze. 45:21 is difficult,¹⁴⁶ and is best laid aside here. Outside the Book of Daniel, then, by far its most frequent reference is to the Feast of Weeks.¹⁴⁷ Interestingly, the noun occurs consistently in the plural in this case. Manifest reference is to the seven weeks of harvest preceding the feast, Deut. 16:9. It does not refer to the seven days *per se* of the feast.

¹⁴² *Supra*, 63.

¹⁴³ E.g., see J. Mortenstern, "Jubilee, Year of", *IDB* 2, 1001b-1002b.

¹⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, 202-208. See Appendix B.

¹⁴⁵ Gen. 29:27, 28; Ex. 34:22; Lev. 12:5; Nu. 28:26; Deut. 16:9 [*bis*], 10, 16; 2 Chr. 8:13; Jer. 5:24; Eze. 45:21; Dan. 9:24, 25 [*bis*], 26, 27 [*bis*], 10:2, 3. Its second occurrence in Deut. 16:9 has been masked in translation in NIV.

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix B.

¹⁴⁷ Ex. 34:22; Nu. 28:26; Deut. 16:10, 16; 2 Chr. 8:13.

What matters here is this. The Feast of Weeks establishes that *šābûa'* and *šabbāt* are synonyms. The latter is the regular noun for *Sabbath*. But it also means *week* in the command, ““count off seven full weeks””, Lev. 23:15. For seven full Sabbaths makes little sense in this context. This directive, fundamental to the Feast of Weeks, is repeated in Deut. 16:9. Only this time the relevant noun is *šābûa'*.

So, in a very real sense, the foundation for the latter's dynamic extension of meaning in Dan. 9 was laid way back in the nation's first exodus from captivity, first in the Feast of Weeks statute, then in the Jubilee Year legislation.

Shea is perfectly correct, therefore, that the “theology behind Sabbatical years may ... add some significance to the events prophesied in [Daniel] chapter 9.”¹⁴⁸ Just as the 2,300 evenings-mornings have special import in the sanctuary context of their prediction,¹⁴⁹ so also *šābûa'* has special import in a prophecy rich in promise of restoration.

Basically, every seventh year debts were to be cancelled, Deut. 15:9; Neh. 10:31, and slaves set free.¹⁵⁰ Each Jubilee year, ““the year of freedom””, Eze. 46:17, however, everyone was to return to his clan and property, Lev. 25:10.¹⁵¹ This included servants, 39-41. If necessary, property would revert to its original owner, 28.¹⁵²

The parallels with the promised restoration of Dan. 9 are manifest. At the outset of the 70 “weeks”, the people were indeed set free and permitted to return to their own land, 25. The greater liberation, though, to be achieved before their finish, would be from sinfulness of every possible complexion, 24.¹⁵³

“But what about the Feast of Weeks?”, I hear some astute reader object. “Have you really explained the use of *šābûa'* in Dan. 9 unless the prophecy bespeaks harvest?” An excellent point! But my reader need not fear. In general, the harvest motif refers both to gathering Yahweh's people from captivity, Isa. 27:12f., and to the rout of Babylon the oppressor, Jer. 51:33. In particular, it is striking that, in the only passage to apply *šābûa'* to the actual harvest process, Deut. 16:9, the Feast of Weeks should be a time to rejoice that they have returned from captivity and settled in their own land, 11f.

In brief, I accept that in Dan. 9, *šābûa'* is no heptad, but a word for *week*. Furthermore, the numeral refers the period back to sabbatical- and Jubilee-year legislations. So I accept the noun as wholly suited to the restoration import of the entire prediction.

However, I part company with Shea in invoking the year-day principle to convert a week of days to a week of years. Rather, both nuances inhere in the one noun from Daniel's day. Likewise, even Adventism now admits that “[s]eventy weeks of years would be 490 literal years, without (here) applying the day-year principle”.¹⁵⁴

Shea's Appeal to the 2,300 Evenings-mornings of Dan. 8:14

Shea's initial appeal to the order of the items in 8:13 is quite effete. These repeated elements focus the question of 13 on the Little Horn's activities, especially the deso-

¹⁴⁸ See @ fn. 75.

¹⁵⁰ Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12; Jer. 34:14.

¹⁵² Cf. 27:24.

¹⁵³ I “accept” that this prophecy is Messianic, *supra*, 6. However, it is also eschatological, *infra*, 78.

¹⁵⁴ *SDABC* 4, 851b. However, I do not imply that the revised Commentary accepts my etymology.

¹⁴⁹ *Supra*, 69.

¹⁵¹ Cf. 13.

lation of the sanctuary. They do not lead back to anything. Nor would they do so even if they were as chiasmically listed as Shea claims. Rather, they are a totally self-contained unit. They are equally the focus, then, of the 2,300 evenings-mornings.

Secondly, Shea is quite right that there are not two distinct visions in this chapter. But this does not mean that “the time span covered by the *ḥāzôn*-vision in the question of verse 13 includes the entire range of events the prophet was shown in verses 3-12.”¹⁵⁵ As I will verify shortly, Daniel is well able to apply *ḥāzôn* to the climax of his visions, as if no other detail of its revelation had ever been received or recorded.

Thirdly, Shea holds that, while *ḥāzôn* denotes a full vision, *mar’eh* refers to some aspect of an individual’s appearance in a vision, not to the vision itself. The point is most useful to Shea’s effort to link the temporal predictions of 8 and 9 via the common noun *mar’eh*.¹⁵⁶ Yet Shea’s initial assertions also merit assessment in some detail.

My primary purpose here is more pastoral than theological. One can only admire the confidence with which Shea presents his vigorous arguments whether in writing or in person. His audience is easily overwhelmed by his torrent of seeming scholarship, even to the point of suspending normal critical judgment. Regrettably, though, the scholarly errors that punctuate this portion of his polemic sketch his fallibility in a somewhat sober light, and warn us not to take everything he asserts for granted. I hasten to stress, though, that I am passing no judgment on his honesty or sincerity.

For example, in which manuscript does the Aramaic portion of Dan. 7 return to the Hebrew at 26?¹⁵⁷ All standard editions of which I am aware return at 8:1.

More seriously, Shea’s claim that Aramaic lacks *mar’eh* and its root *rā’āh* is quite correct,¹⁵⁸ except that he should have said *biblical* Aramaic. Even then, the Aramaic verb *rā’āh* is represented in the OT by the noun *rēw*, meaning *appearance*, like *mar’eh* as Shea understands it. And it occurs only in Dan. 2:31 and 3:25 in the entire OT.

Its absence from 7 is very significant. Indeed, among Daniel’s constant references to visionary details, only once does he so employ *any* noun with the meaning *vision*: the Little Horn “*looked* more imposing than the others”, 20. And that involves a rare atypical use of *ḥezû* which has nothing remotely to do with the angel Gabriel.

Shea has no cause, then, to apply *ḥāzôn* atypically to him in 9:21, especially when Daniel does not explain what he means by “the earlier vision”, and Gabriel is specifically involved with *mar’eh* in 8, much closer to hand than 7.

It is by no means certain, moreover, that Daniel applies this noun to Gabriel’s appearance in 9:21, even if he so employs it elsewhere, as Shea suggests. But if in fact he does, Shea unwittingly falls foul of his own objection, and his crucial “distinction ... between... these two words cannot be upheld”¹⁵⁹ – at least in the Book of Daniel.

Whatever, as this portion of my study proceeds, I will repeatedly confirm the fact that, for other reasons, these two nouns are synonymous in part, meaning *vision per se*.

Shea is equally lax with his data in 10. Actually, the noun back of *vision* in 7f. is *mar’-āh*, not *mar’eh*, as he claims.¹⁶⁰ His error persists even into the rest of the DARCOM

¹⁵⁵ See @ fn. 95. I cite Hasel’s words, not Shea’s, simply for convenience.

¹⁵⁷ *Supra*, 64.

¹⁵⁹ See @ fn. 88.

¹⁵⁶ *Supra*, 66.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ See @ fn. 86.

series,¹⁶¹ even though Hasel offers one list of data which, intentionally or not, should have arrested and corrected Shea's rather embarrassing blunder.¹⁶²

What effect, then, do these cognate nouns have on Shea's polemic? *Mar'eh's* primary sense is visionary detail. Yet at times it can denote an entire vision, as in Eze. 11:24, where the seer is transported "in the vision".¹⁶³ Even Hasel admits that this noun "carries the meaning of 'appearance' but, at times, is also translated as 'vision.'"¹⁶⁴

In contrast, *mar'ah* normally denotes a complete vision, as in Eze. 8:3, where the Spirit also transports the seer.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, the vision can be so far removed from visible details that it applies alone to audition, as in 1 Sam. 3:15. Moreover, in Eze. 43:3 the seer mentions vision three¹⁶⁶ times: "The vision [*mar'eh*] I saw was like the vision [*mar'eh*] I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions [*mar'ah*] I had seen by the Kebar River". This demonstrates that *mar'eh* may be equivalent to *mar'ah*.

This related word is used almost exclusively for vision(s) as a vehicle for divine revelation to prophets. The words alternate in this obvious sense in Ezekiel and Daniel.¹⁶⁷

Therefore, no facile assumption concerning Daniel's intent with *mar'eh* should be made. Among his visions, only in 10:18 – "one who looked like a man" – and in 6 – "appearance of lightning", RSV – does it definitely mean some visionary detail. As I will shortly establish, elsewhere it is synonymous with *hazôn* or *mar'ah*, with the sense of *vision per se*, not the mere semblance of a visionary figure or detail.

Despite such awkward scholarly errors, is Shea correct that *hazôn* should be understood as the entire vision in 8:13? As I stated in response to his first argument, as the questioner focuses specifically on the high point of the vision, the tyranny of the Little Horn, so also this alone is the scope of the 2,300 days in the answer in 14.

Nor does Hasel drive a wedge between *hazôn* and the Little Horn's atrocities in 13. He fails to specify that relationship can be well expressed other than through the construct chain. For example, the common preposition *le* approximates an English dative with the sense *to* or *for*. This includes the idiom of possession as in Eze. 30:3, where it replaces the normal construct chain even in the signal expression *day of Yahweh*.

More generally, in the *reference* sense, the meaning of *le* is something like

"in reference to" with the exact meaning derived from the context. Abraham requested of Sarah, "Say, 'in reference to' me" (Gen 20:13). A census could be conducted "'in reference to' (i.e. 'according to') fathers' houses" (Num 1:2).¹⁶⁸

In Dan. 8, the preposition *le* is twice applied to the key noun *hazôn*, and both times, 17, 26 (second), *reference* is the most cogent nuance. At first sight Hasel himself appears to see Daniel's point clearly, summarising it thus:

[T]he *explicit* emphasis in the vision-audition of chapter 8 focuses on the end-time. The angel-interpreter informs Daniel in explicit terms that "the vision is for the time of the end" (vs. 17, RSV); and again, "the vision of the evenings and the mornings... pertains to many days hence" (vs. 26, RSV). In verse 19... the vision "pertains to the appointed time of the end" (RSV). This end-time emphasis in chapter 8 corroborates the end-time significance of the question-answer dialogue in verses 13-14.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶¹ E.g., "Daniel 9:24-27", 106.

¹⁶² "Daniel 8:9-14", 437n.

¹⁶³ *Supra*, 23.

¹⁶⁴ "Daniel 8:9-14", 434.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. 40:2.

¹⁶⁶ Four in the Hebrew, one untranslated.

¹⁶⁷ *TWOT*, 824b. The Wordbook has cited no author here or @ fn. 168.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 463a.

¹⁶⁹ "Daniel 8:9-14", 430. But see my ensuing discussion regarding *vision* in 19.

However, this emphatic statement appears only at the conclusion of Hasel's argument¹⁷⁰ that the Hebrew temporal expression *'ad-māṭay*, which launches the crucial question of 13, refers to the *close*, not the *duration*, of the 2,300 evenings-mornings. That is, in the citation before us, Hasel understands that the preposition *l^e* points us unequivocally to the terminus of the vision, not its contents.

Hasel's confidence may well be misplaced here. For one thing, the expression *'ad-māṭay* occurs 29 times in the OT.¹⁷¹ And its inherent interest in the *terminus* of the relevant period of time is well illustrated indeed in the parallelism of Prov. 6:9:

How long will you lie there, you sluggard?
When will you get up from your sleep?

However, concerns over the *content* of the period, which engender the question, are often prominent, too. For example, the psalmist's anguished question, "How long... will the wicked be jubilant?", Ps. 94:3, is bounded by a call for Yahweh to judge the wicked, 1f., and a survey of their *present* reign of arrogant terror, 4-7. Likewise, Jeremiah asks, "How long will the land be parched...?", Jer. 12:4a, then replies: "Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished", 4b.

Do the *contents* of the 2,300 evenings-mornings support Hasel's assertion? Simply stated, the Little Horn's reign of terror, not his ruin, predominates in Dan. 8:23-25.

Little wonder, then, that Hasel can parade only "[s]ome leading lexicographers"¹⁷² in support of rendering *'ad-māṭay* as *Until when?*, not *How long?*¹⁷³

For another, Hasel's reliance on the preposition *'ad* prefacing the 2,300 evenings-mornings is hasty. For the nuance of duration is not impossible to find. For instance: "While they waited, Ehud got away", Jud. 3:26.¹⁷⁴ And: "How can there be peace... as long as...?", 2 Ki. 9:22b. It can even mean *before*, as in Nu. 35:32.¹⁷⁵ At very least, then, it is possible that in Dan. 8:14, *'ad* speaks of the *duration* of the outrages of 13.

For yet another, in closer focus, the preposition *l^e* may well tip the scales against Hasel's argument in 17, 19 and 26. He hears these verses saying, in effect, "the vision *points to* its completion." The more natural sense, however, is this. "The vision will be *fulfilled*, by and large, in the time of the end." This is clearest in 19, even though the noun *vision* is wanting in the Hebrew. For Gabriel's promise, "I am going to tell you what will happen", is precisely equivalent to "the vision concerns...", 17.

The first portion of Gabriel's temporal information may be rendered, "what will occur *in the latter part* of the wrath", 19. For the noun *'aḥārîṭ* is translated *latter part* in 23, and is prefixed by *b^e*, whose basic temporal sense is *during*.¹⁷⁶

Therefore, when Gabriel continues, "for it refers [*l^e*] to the appointed time of the end", NRSV, the preposition *l^e* does not point us to the *close* of the revelation and its sequel, as Hasel asserts, but to its *contents*. Why, then, should it differ in 17 or 26?

¹⁷⁰ *Supra*, 67, @ fn 118.

¹⁷¹ Ex. 10:3, 7; Nu. 14:27; 1 Sam. 1:14; 16:1; 2 Sam. 2:26; 1 Ki. 18:21; Neh. 2:6; Ps. 6:3; 74:10; 80:4; 82:2; 90:13; 94:3 [*bis*]; Prov. 1:22; 6:9; Isa. 6:11; Jer. 4:14, 21; 12:4; 23:26; 31:22; 47:5; Dan. 8:13; 12:6; Hos. 8:5; Hab. 2:6; Zech. 1:12.

¹⁷² *Supra*, 67, @ fn 118.

¹⁷³ Even then, he should have mentioned the fact that *BDB* renders the expression "until when ? how long ?".

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Neh. 7:3; Job 32:11b; Ps. 141:10; Jon. 4:2, and "lasts but a *moment*", Job 20:5.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. the word's use as a conjunction in Gen. 48:5; Nu. 10:21; 35:12; 1 Sam. 4:24; 2 Ki. 16:11; Eze. 33:22.

¹⁷⁶ E.g., "[*d*]uring the seven years", Gen. 41:47.

The import of Gabriel's reference to "the wrath" and "the appointed time of the end" will clarify shortly.¹⁷⁷ But for now, it is surprising that Hasel makes no appeal to 12:6, where, for the only other time in the entire book, a heavenly being also asks, "How long [*ad-māṭay*]...?" with specific reference to "the *end* of these wonders", RSV.

The linen-clad man replies: "It will be for [*l^e*] a time, times and half a time", 7. In its *temporal* sense, in sharp contrast to *b^e*, the preposition *l^e* has punctiliar force, denoting a point in time, not the span somewhere during which an event occurs. Occasionally it refers specifically to the terminus of a period, as in "[t]wo years *later*," 2 Sam. 13:23.¹⁷⁸ This is the patent sense, too, in Dan. 12:7, even at this early point in its analysis.¹⁷⁹ So in this case, at least, *ad-māṭay* means *until when?* However, this does not dictate its sense in 8:13, where Hasel's argument is far from persuasive.

Even though *ḥāzōn* includes the rise and fall of both Medo-Persia and Greece, 3-8, 20-22, Daniel can write as if it refers only to the time of the End, 17, 26. Specifically, he details the 2,300 evenings-mornings, which are mostly eschatological in so transparent a context. So they can scarcely be other than completely literal.

That is, Hasel is quite mistaken in his confident conclusion that "it is clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that the year-day principle is functioning in chapter 8."¹⁸⁰ Regardless, Shea's two final arguments still deserves a fair hearing. Even then, his appeal to the 1,290 days, 12:11, is best judged in assessing his latest, related polemic.¹⁸¹

Even if *ḥāzōn* applies habitually to a vision *per se* outside 8, context argues firmly against the fact in 8:13. However, Shea's claim is not accurate. In 11:14 the heavenly courier forecasts: "The violent men among your own people will rebel in fulfilment of the vision." In a long list of details, does this single small incident fulfil the entire vision? Of course not! Likewise, 8:13 has a limited view – the one expressly detailed.

In short, there is not a single shred of cogent evidence here that the 2,300 evenings-mornings are other than literal, and eschatological in general stress at that.

Shea's Attempt to Link the 2,300 Evenings-mornings and the 490 Years

First, as I will verify shortly in treating the *understanding* motif, the vision of 10 is self-contained. I will also show that Shea's structural argument is likewise dubious.

Secondly, the 490 years are not contiguous with the 2,300 evenings-mornings. Between is Daniel's fervent prayer, 9:4-19, which, I will shortly verify, owes nothing to 8. Moreover, as my appraisal of the *understanding* motif will also establish, the prophecy of 9 is just as self-contained as that of 10. Neither owes anything to that of 8.

Thirdly, I have already detailed Shea's unscholarly error in not recognising *mar'āh* in 10:7f.¹⁸² Since this is a synonym of *ḥāzōn*, it confirms that the latter does not assist his polemic by pointing back to 8. Likewise, as Shea has quite failed to demonstrate any difference whatever, as Daniel uses them for reporting visions, between *mar'eh* and *ḥāzōn*, his conclusion that 9:23 has specific reference to 8:13f. is groundless. My evidence that these nouns are synonyms here will shortly be supplemented, in fact.

¹⁷⁷ *Infra*, 81.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. "[s]even days *from now*", Gen. 7:4; "*after seven days*", 10.

¹⁸⁰ See @ fn. 97.

¹⁷⁹ *Infra*, 80-83.

¹⁸¹ *Infra*, 80, 82, 83.

¹⁸² *Supra*, 74f.

Fourthly, Shea has offered no credible evidence whatever that *ḥāṭak* has the sense *cut off* in 9:24. If not, he has no cogent reason to begin the 2,300 days in 457 B.C.

More broadly, the 2,300 evenings-mornings and the 490 years do not commence together. In fact, I have shown that the former cover the activities of the Little Horn till the End.¹⁸³ I have yet to verify that the latter span all of history from Daniel's day.

For Adventists, the 490 years normally close faintly in A.D. 34, when Paul turned to the Gentiles.¹⁸⁴ But *end* looks very much like the Eschaton itself in both of its appearances in 9:26, especially when it translates the same Hebrew noun which is rendered consistently, no fewer than eight times, in 8, 11, 12¹⁸⁵ by the latter.

However, there is a more salient reason. I have "accepted" the Messianic interpretation of the 490 years.¹⁸⁶ Yet the very finality of 9:24 warns that the End, not just Calvary, is in focus.¹⁸⁷ This time is given both "to atone for wickedness" and also "to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, . . . to bring in everlasting righteousness".

That is, the 2,300 evenings-mornings and the 490 years have a common close, not a common opening. And as the longer, the latter subsumes the former, not the reverse.

Shea's surmise, fifthly, that the masculine plural ending of *šābūa* in Dan. 9 implies a nexus between these two periods is pure speculation, especially when, in 10:2f., the noun has precisely the same ending in the plural as the noun in 9.¹⁸⁸

Likewise, Shea's appeal to word play to establish that the 490 years were cut off the 2,300 days depends much more upon pervasive fancy than cogent exegesis.

Shea is quite correct, finally, that interpreters struggle to match the 2,300 evenings-mornings and Antiochus Epiphanes' career. Interpretation has no place in my study,¹⁸⁹ so I will not comment. Notably, though, DARCOM often defends its stance by stating that the only alternative is inept, when in fact the truth may lie elsewhere altogether.¹⁹⁰

It remains to assess Hasel's appeal to the *understanding* motif in a final attempt to link Dan. 8 and 9. Actually, this logic seems sound, especially as reference to vision, 9:23, appears otherwise hard to explain. However, certain problems advise caution.

The relevant portions of 8:15f. read, "I . . . was watching the vision [*ḥāzôn*] and trying to understand [*bînāh*] it . . . 'Gabriel, tell this man the meaning [*bîn*] of the vision [*mar'eh*].'" The chiasm further demonstrates that *ḥāzôn* and *mar'eh* are equivalent:

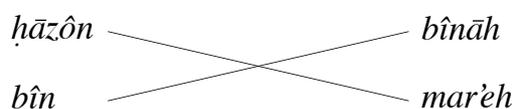


Table 7.2

In manifest obedience to the directive, Gabriel tells Daniel, "understand [*bîn*] that the vision [*ḥāzôn*] concerns the time of the end", 17. Placing the directive and the response together, it is obvious again that here *mar'eh* and *ḥāzôn* are interchangeable:

¹⁸³ *Supra*, 76f.

¹⁸⁴ E.g., Shea, "Daniel 9:24-27", 80-82, 103f.

¹⁸⁵ 8:17, 19; 11:35, 45; 12:4, 9, 13 [*bis*].

¹⁸⁶ *Supra*, 6.

¹⁸⁷ E.g., Shea, "Daniel 9:24-27", 78-80, applies the following sweeping goals merely to Jesus' day.

¹⁸⁸ Hasel has a far better rationale, *infra*, 246, 247.

¹⁸⁹ *Supra*, 3.

¹⁹⁰ *Infra*, 209-212.

directive – *bîn*.....*mar'eh*
 response – *bîn*.....*ḥāzôn*

Table 7.3

In helping Daniel understand the *mar'eh*, Gabriel guides him in discerning the *ḥāzôn*.

Nevertheless, Daniel's closing comment is, "I was appalled by the vision [*mar'eh*]; it was beyond understanding [*bîn*]", 27. This forms an envelope – what scholars call an *inclusio*¹⁹¹ – with his opening comment, 15. Placing these side by side,

opening comment – *ḥāzôn*.....*bînāh*
 closing comment – *mar'eh*.....*bîn*

Table 7.4

it is clear yet again that *ḥāzôn* and *mar'eh* are quite interchangeable in 8. It follows, moreover, that it was the total vision, not just the 2,300 days, that perplexed the seer.

Indeed, one must ask, Is it only the *mar'eh* which is true, 26a, especially in light of the sweeping vistas of 2:45 and 10:1? And, Why should the *ḥāzôn* alone be sealed, 8:26b, especially when it was the *mar'eh*, according to Adventism, that Daniel did not comprehend? For, as I will shortly demonstrate, the very point of sealing a vision is to ensure that it not be understood till later – perhaps well beyond the seer's death.

Again, the decade of delay since the vision of 8¹⁹² seems never to have been clarified satisfactorily by Adventism.¹⁹³ Did Daniel wait *ten whole years* for illumination? And does 9:2 really link the two prophecies? The simple facts of this matter are these.

Here Daniel *understood*. This positive use of this verb is in stark contrast to both its negative form in 8:27 and the command of 9:23. So there is no continuum here.

Moreover, the prophet's concern was that God not delay the return from exile, 19. How, though, could he possibly have gathered this idea from 8? The sanctuary to be desecrated there *in the future* was still desolate as he studied Jeremiah's prophecy.

The true import of *vision*, 9:23, will clarify as we study the rest of the *understand* motif Adventism often ignores. But first, Gabriel's words merit close scrutiny: "“Consider [*bîn*] the message [*dābār*] and understand [*bîn*] the vision [*mar'eh*]”", 23.

It seems no coincidence that the verb *bîn* is applied to both modes of revelation in the one verse. This suggests that the answer [*dābār*] just given by God, 23, is revealed in the vision [*mar'eh*] of Gabriel, whom God had likewise just despatched, 21. That is, *mar'eh* includes both Gabriel's appearance and his words.

Confirmation is close at hand. But before moving on, one major question remains. Does Gabriel's message answer Daniel's concern? Indeed it does! Here alone in this entire book do we find reference to "“the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem”", 25.

After 9:25 [*ṣākal*], the *understand* motif next appears in 10:1 – "“a revelation [*dābār*] was given to Daniel... The understanding [*bîn*] of the message [*dābār*] came to him

¹⁹¹ Cf. Hasel's less convincing microstructure, "Daniel 8:9-14", 436.

¹⁹² For Belshazzar's third year, 8:1, as 549 B.C. and Darius' first, 9:1, as 539 B.C., see Baldwin, *op. cit.*, 155, 163f.

¹⁹³ E.g., Hasel, "Date", 122, even calls it "a relatively short period".

in a vision [*mar'eh*].” With every key words present, therefore, the parallel with 9:23 is most manifest. The first conclusion, then, is this. If *mar'eh*, the medium for revealing the *dābār*, is current in 10, it is most likely so in 9, too, not a decade back in 8.

Gabriel’s words to Daniel agree. “‘Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding [*bîn*] and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them... to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision [*hāzôn*] concerns a time yet to come’”, 10:12-14.

The minor point here is the patent parallel with 9:21-23. Clearly, Daniel had been seeking an answer for three whole weeks, 10:2f. But Gabriel had been delayed, 13.

The major point here is that, because *hāzôn* is a synonym for *mar'āh* and *mar'eh* in 10,¹⁹⁴ the *hāzôn* to which Gabriel refers is the *mar'eh* of 1. This entails both his semblance, 5f., and his words, 11:2-12:4, just as in 9:23. So the vision in 9 is self-contained like that of 10-12. Neither stems from Daniel’s lack of comprehension back in 8.

This is verified as the *understand* motif runs its course. After Gabriel’s long explanation, Daniel admits, “‘I heard, but I did not understand [*bîn*]’”, 12:8a. So his confusion in 8:27 is not unique and needs no special attention. In fact, his closing, explicit appeal for enlightenment, 12:8b, is rejected: “‘Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end’”, 9. Therefore, when Daniel was told to seal up the *hāzôn* in 8:26b, he would have received no further explanation of it.

DARCOM’s final rationale therefore fails the test of close scrutiny, too. Its crucial nexus between the 2,300 evenings-mornings and the 490 years is completely illusory.

Shea’s Appeal to the Time, Times and Half a Time, 12:7

Here I link two of Shea’s arguments, related but offered some decade apart. In the first, he notes that 8:13 and 12:11 both mention the abolition of the *tāmîd*¹⁹⁵ in favour of the abomination that causes desolation, though the former alone uses *hāzôn*. Thus he infers a variance between the 2,300 and 1,290 days.¹⁹⁶ In the second, exegesis leads him to limit the 1,290 days to these atrocities. Likewise, he judges that the 1,260 days of 12:7 is the period of persecution of 11:32-35. Moreover, both of these latter periods occur prior to the time of the End.¹⁹⁷

Clearly, it is his exegesis that warrants most attention. But sadly, this is marred by major oversights. Above all, the persecution of 11:32-35 is only partial in extent. The same Hebrew verb behind *fall* in 33, 34 recurs in 35 to inform us that only “‘some of those who are wise shall fall’”, RSV. And, without exhausting all the word’s wealth of meaning,¹⁹⁸ *wise* is clearly a synonym for *saint*, 12:3, 10.

Compare 8:10, where the Little Horn cast “‘some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them.’” *Host* means stars¹⁹⁹ or angels²⁰⁰ or God’s people, 12:3. The latter is the most likely sense here, where they are persecuted, 8:24.

¹⁹⁴ *Supra*, 74f.

¹⁹⁶ *Supra*, 64f.

¹⁹⁸ E.g., see Baldwin’s helpful survey, *op. cit.*, 196.

¹⁹⁹ E.g., Deut. 4:19; 17:3; 2 Ki. 23:5; Isa. 34:4; 40:26; Jer. 8:2; 31:35; 33:22.

²⁰⁰ E.g., 1 Ki. 22:19; 2 Chr. 18:18; Ps. 103:21.

¹⁹⁵ *Supra*, 6.

¹⁹⁷ *Supra*, 67f.

Yet here the vision concerns the appointed time of the End, and explains what will occur in the latter part of the time of wrath, 17, 19. *Wrath* is cited again only in 11:36. The expression *the time of the end* is fairly frequent.²⁰¹ But *appointed* singles out 11:35. These are within the account, 21-45, of the “contemptible person”, 21. It seems, then, that he is the Little Horn, especially when the latter quashes the *tāmîd*, 8:11, just like the former, 11:31. Moreover, the “rebellion that causes desolation”, looks like “the abomination that causes desolation”, 11:31. In 36, “there is no hint that the subject might be different from that in vv 21-35.”²⁰² So the Horn’s outrage reaches “the time of the end”, 40. Thus, in stating that “the vision concerns the time of the end”, 8:17,²⁰³ Gabriel has torment in mind, too. And the wrath is the Horn’s, 19, not God’s.

Persecution will intensify greatly, in fact. The time of the End will have “distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then”, 12:1. Indeed, it rages till “the power of the holy people has been finally broken,” 7. What frees them, 1, is the Eschaton, which ushers in eternal bliss, 2f. The parallel account is in 7:21f., 25-27. Here the span is a time, times and half a time, 25. So the peerless time of distress, 12:1, not the era of sporadic persecution, 11:33-35, is in view in 12:7.

At least three obvious objections may be raised against this deduction. First, does 9:27 not restrict the abomination of desolation to the last 3½ years of the 490 years? If so, the 2,300 evenings-mornings, which I deduce as launching this abomination,²⁰⁴ are excessive by almost this entire time span all over again.

In fact, while the Hebrew text in question is somewhat obscure, it has no parallel, manifestly, in those that treat the abomination of desolation,²⁰⁵ as the accurate RSV rendition shows: “[U]pon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate”. It is especially noteworthy that here, in contrast to every other reference, more than the one supreme abomination is in view, and that the person who desolates is in specific focus. But the greatest contrast is the time element inherent in the enigmatic noun *wing*. The NEB reads it thus: “[I]n the train of these abominations shall come an author of desolation”, with Shea’s support, at least in principle. *Upon the wing* appears to be an idiom to express immediate consequences... Thus in contrast to the antigod activities of the power in 8:12-13; 11:31; and 12:11, this desolator and his desolations... come on the scene of action after the abominations have appeared.²⁰⁶

It is still possible to argue that the desolator executes the abomination of desolation at the start of the last 3½ years. However, with focus on a *series* of desolations, 9:26, onus of proof rests entirely with anyone who sees the former anywhere in this passage.

Another possible objection is that in context, the time, times and half a time, 12:7, covers a vast sweep of history. For mention of the river and the man clothed in linen, who is joined by two others, 5f., makes manifest reference to 10:4-6. So the context is the entire vision of 10:1-12:4. This, though, is altogether impossible, even if the year-day principle is invoked. It only stretches the time, times and half a time about half as far as the 2,300 evenings-mornings. And that is not enough to span the millennia.

²⁰¹ 8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9.

²⁰² Goldingay, *op. cit.*, 304. Fn. 61 treats the suitability of this tome for lay reading.

²⁰⁴ *Supra*, 73f., 75f.

²⁰⁶ “Daniel 9:24-27”, 97. This does not endorse his consequent interpretation.

²⁰³ Cf. 26.

²⁰⁵ 11:31; 12:11. Cf. 8:13.

It follows that *a prophetic time period can be applied to no more than the climax of a prediction, not to a total vision*. DARCOM has no cause to protest, then, when critics like me insist that the 2,300 evenings-mornings apply only to the activities of the Little Horn, with very persuasive contextual support. This conclusion is fortified greatly, too, in that, in both 8:23-25 and its thematic parallel, 11:21-45, Daniel quite obviously invites us to view a single individual over a span of just a few literal years.

It may be objected, too, that the period allowed the Little Horn is just 1,290 days, 12:11, not 2,300. However, we are not told what event terminates the former period. The only choices offered by context are the time of the End, 9, and the resurrection, 13, 2, at the end of time. Moreover, the enigmatic 1,335 days, 12, may well follow the 1,290 days, for the RSV renders the Hebrew accurately: “Blessed is he who *waits* and *comes to* the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.” This hardly reads as if they start together. Whatever, I may safely set the latter aside and permit the time, times and half a time to speak for themselves about their purported year-day equivalence.

The first question is, What does *time* mean? The term can be quite literal.²⁰⁷ But the problem is, the Aramaic noun *‘iddān* is no synonym for *šēnāh*. The latter means *year*, as in 7:1.²⁰⁸ But the former means an unspecified period of time, as in 2:8.²⁰⁹ It is noteworthy, too, that in 4:16, 23, 25, 32, the translators do not normally interpret the noun.

The expression “time, times and half a time” recurs in Hebrew in 12:7. Here the relevant noun is *mô‘ēd*, with a broad range of meanings. In temporal terms, it has the sense *appointed season*, as in Jer. 8:7.²¹⁰ But it does not have the sense *year*.

The second question here is, How many units do we have? Semitic languages like Aramaic and Hebrew have a distinctive feature not present in English. When we say “apples”, for example, we mean “more than one apple”. We add precision, if we wish, with a numeral like two or five. However, the Semites utilised a special form of noun when the count was just two. Such unique nouns are termed *dual*, not *plural*. They require no numeral because their duality inheres quite unambiguously in their form.

In both Dan. 7:25 and 12:7, the respective nouns back of *times* are plural not dual. Then strictly speaking, there are three or more units, indefinite since there is no numeral. So the “time, times and half a time” seems to tally 4½ unknown units or more.

This is scarcely a good basis for Adventism’s assertion that 1,260 literal years are in view.²¹¹ Granted, the rule seems to lapse now and then,²¹² so the sense 3½ times is still possible. But dogmatism is ill-advised, even though John cites Daniel in Rev. 12:14. For, while John certainly intends 3½ years, he means them to be read literally.²¹³

Therefore, what settles this matter here, as far as possible, is the contexts in which the expression rests in the Book of Daniel. I have already considered that of 12:7.

It would take a small Commentary to cover all of the important points in the context of 7:25. Obviously, such a task is well beyond the scope of this small critique.²¹⁴

²⁰⁷ *Supra*, 69.

²⁰⁸ Cf. Ezra 4:24; 5:11, 13; 6:3, 15.

²⁰⁹ Cf. 2:21; 4:16, 23, 25, 32; 7:12. In 3:5, 15 its sense is *when*; in 2:9 *situation*.

²¹⁰ Cf. Dan. 8:19; 11:27, 29, 35.

²¹² E.g., *wings*, 7:4, is plural not dual, as in 6, and *horns* is dual not plural in 7, 8 [*bis*], 20, 24.

²¹³ *Infra*, 155-163.

²¹¹ See fn. 216.

²¹⁴ *Supra*, vii-ix.

So some selectivity is necessary. To be fair to DARCOM, I will survey its position here. But I will elaborate only those particulars central to the specific task in hand.

In broad perspective, Daniel’s vision in 7 involves four great beasts, 2-7, which represent four kingdoms, 17. The fourth is the most intriguing, 19. Like most conservatives, DARCOM interprets these as Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.²¹⁵

More interesting even than the fourth beast is the Little Horn that ousts three of its ten horns, 8, 20. Its major activities are persecuting the saints, 21, and opposing God, 25. The oppression lasts ““for a time, times and half a time””, 25. DARCOM equates this with the 1,260 years of papal dominance from A.D. 538 to 1798.²¹⁶

Yet this faces several quite hopeless hurdles, even within the bounds of my critique.

Least of DARCOM’s worries here is the fact that the Little Horn ““was waging war against the saints and defeating them, *until* the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints . . . , and the time came when they possessed the kingdom””, 22. That is, the saints experience a sudden, total change of circumstances. They step out of persecution straight into the eternal Kingdom! So this oppression occurs in the very shadow of the Eschaton, not way back in the Middle Ages.

The worst problem with DARCOM’s interpretation is the timing of the judgment which liberates the saints. As I have already demonstrated,²¹⁷ it is the fourth beast, 11, not just the Little Horn, 26, that is routed by the judgment.²¹⁸ This is utterly foreign to Adventist eyes, in which imperial Rome gave way to ten kingdoms, the source of the Little Horn. Rather, DARCOM should accept the patent fact that the judgment was scheduled for Roman days, and that the time, times and half a time were quite literal.

In short, there is not a single shred of evidence that the time, times and half a time are other than literal. Moreover, they were meant to close with the coming of God’s eternal kingdom. There is no evidence whatever that they refer to the Middle Ages – at least, in terms of the paramount exegesis that alone concerns my current critique.

Broad Chronology

It remains for me to suggest a broad chronology of the Book of Daniel, although I am well aware that this is tentative due to the uncertainties discussed above:

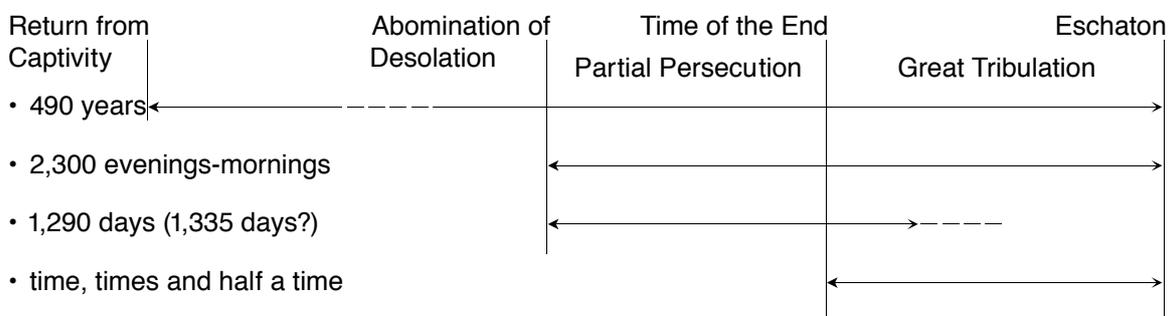


Figure 7.1

²¹⁵ E.g., Shea, “Unity”, 172-174. Many more could readily be added both here and in the following fn.

²¹⁶ E.g., *idem*, “Time Prophecies”, 333f.

²¹⁷ *Supra*, 52f.

²¹⁸ Cf. Ferch, “Authorship”, 44; Hasel, “Daniel 8:9-14”, 500.

 Summary and Conclusion

The year-day principle – the very cornerstone of historicist prophetic interpretation – has never enjoyed as enthusiastic, thorough or creative a defense as Shea’s. Indeed, the lay reader may often find it hard to grasp the complex technical points he offers so confidently and verbosely. While final judgment must await DARCOM’s application of historicism to the Olivet Discourse²¹⁹ and the Revelation,²²⁰ its use of the hermeneutic in the Book of Daniel may be evaluated, then, with finality. The ideology certainly stands or falls with Shea’s comprehensive, perhaps exhaustive, apologia.

Unfortunately, however, his strenuous efforts appear to be pervasively sterile. He has laid no foundation whatever for the principle in his general lines of evidence, or even demonstrated that the time periods in so-called apocalyptic prophecy are symbolic. Indeed, one by one they bear personal witness to their uniformly literal nature.

Quite apart from the uncertainties regarding the basic unit and its count, the time, times and half a time, 7:25; 12:7, equates with the unparalleled Great Tribulation, 12:1. As such it is eschatological, terminated by the inbreak of God’s eternal kingdom. It has nothing whatever to do with the Middle Ages.

Moreover, in 12:7 this period cannot apply to the entire vision in which it occurs, even were the year-day principle valid. That is, Daniel can readily apply a time span to the climax, not the totality, of a long prophecy.

Likewise, in the only other question-answer audition in the whole book, the 2,300 evenings-mornings, 8:13f., date from the Little Horn’s atrocities, not from the Persian era, just as immediate context specifies. Indeed, Gabriel’s repeated assertion that the vision refers to the time of the End, 17, and therefore should be sealed, 26, quite precludes Adventism’s applying it *in toto* before the time of the End, quite apart from the fact that the very choice of term – evening-morning – rules out symbolic interpretation. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that the persecution of its early stage is only partial. So it begins before the Great Tribulation of the time, times and half a time.

Shea’s entire polemic therefore stands or falls with the purport of the key noun *šābūa’*, 9:24-27. He merits warm praise for discerning its derivation in the Jubilee-year legislation, which also enriches its theological import. The captives will be liberated to return to their own land after ten long cycles of 49 years! Nevertheless, Shea quite fails to take stock of a crucial parallel. Just as the noun’s synonym *šabbāt* experiences an on-the-spot expansion in meaning from week of days to week of years in Lev. 25:8, so also *šābūa’* takes on board precisely the same extended import the moment Gabriel mouths it in Dan. 9:24. The year-day transformation is entirely superfluous! The sense *week of years* inheres in the noun thereafter, dependent on context alone.

Shea also misses the harvest inference of *šābūa’*, which dominates the expression *the Feast of Weeks*. That is, in its own right *šābūa’* is singularly apposite in implying God’s “reaping” his people and gathering them back to himself in the Promised Land.

In brief, the Book of Daniel gives historicism not even the faintest shadow of a hint of support. The year-day dictum is a hermeneutic quite *foreign* to its inspired pages.

²¹⁹ *Infra*, 171-200.

²²⁰ *Infra*, 135-170.