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The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Dan 7:13 as a Test Case

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The problems posed by Daniel chapter 7 and its vision of a "one like a son of man" (v. 13) are well-known. A final resolution of those problems will require extensive discussion: there are numerous sets of textual data, both biblical and extra-biblical, the latter stretching from second millennium B.C. Ugaritic to late intertestamental, intricate issues of a literary and a tradition-historical nature within Daniel 7 and its pivotal context in the book as a whole, and wider methodological questions, all of which must be addressed. As befits the genre of the present volume, what follows is a preliminary sketch of a thoroughgoing reappraisal of the issues and a new proposal. In places the sketch has been filled in with detail: in others only the pencil drawing shows the outline.

The *Status Quaestionis*: Towards a New Possibility

In the attempt to interpret our passage there are two overriding issues which have hampered the struggle for an interpretative consensus. These are, first, the search for the text's appropriate life setting and, secondly, the defining of the conceptual parameters within which a vision of heavenly and earthly realities should be read and understood.

History-of-Religions Context:
Ancient Near Eastern Chaoskampf and the Temple Cult

Regarding the *Sitz im Leben* of Daniel 7 there are broadly two approaches. First, there are those since Gunkel who have emphasised a very specific history-of-religions background: the ancient Near

East's *Chaoskampf* tradition.¹ Secondly, there are those, particularly within the New Testament academy, who have resisted the importance of that background and simply read Daniel 7 within its own immediate literary context and the wider religio-political situation of the Antiochene crisis.² The former give due weight to the *background*, whilst the latter privilege the text's *foreground*. The impasse will only be resolved if these two can be integrated.

The case for a background in ancient Near Eastern mythological traditions in which a god defeats the forces of chaos threatening social and cosmic stability is impressive and have recently been laid-out in detail by J. J. Collins.³ First, the context of Daniel shares with that background the struggle for divine kingship in a time of religious and political conflict. Secondly, the beasts, representing the kings or kingdoms arise in 7:2ff from the sea, whence emerge the chaos monsters in Mesopotamian and Canaanite tradition. The pagan kings are thus viewed as the embodiment of the primeval power of chaos. Thirdly, within the broader ancient Near Eastern background the relationship between "one like a son of man" and the Ancient of Days specifically recalls that between Baal who is victorious in the defeat of the sea monster and El, the head of the Canaanite pantheon. Baal is known as the "rider of the clouds" and El, attended by his divine council (cf. Dan 7:10), is known as "Father of years."

There are, however, problems in supposing the importance of this background, which have led some to reject its relevance in determining the identity of "the one like a son of man". Chief amongst these is the use of traditions which are thoroughly polytheistic in a way which, taken to their logical conclusion implies that the "one like a son of man" is to the Ancient of Days, what Baal

¹ H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895), 323-335, cf. e.g. J. A. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," *JTS* 9 (1958) 225-42; J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977) 95-106; J. Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). For a recent overview and rejection of other history-of-religions proposals see D. Bryan, *Cosmos, Chaos and the Kosher Mentality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 218-228.

² E.g. M. Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979) 23, 35-8, cf. A. J. Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel Seven* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1979) 40-77.

³ "Stirring up the Great Sea: The Religio-Historical Background of Daniel 7," *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (ed. A. S. van der Woude; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993) 121-136, esp. 125-128 and his commentary *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) esp. 280-294.

is to El, i.e. a second deity. Of course, in the present scholarly climate, its leading proponents have to confess that “[t]his configuration has no precedent in the biblical tradition.”⁴

Commentators in the Gunkel tradition such as John Day and John J. Collins have not left the identification of the “one like a son of man” with the Baal background, but have moved from that allusion to a primary reference to an angel.⁵ Such a move is not unfounded given that the language at 7:13 is similar to that used elsewhere in Daniel of angels (cf. 8:15; 10:16, 18) and the fact that within the post-biblical period polytheistic traditions are transformed into a developed angelology: pagan gods have become Jewish angels. But the very specific leap from Baal (or Marduk) to an angel coming on the clouds of heaven is a big one. Nowhere else in contemporary texts do angels travel on or with the clouds and nowhere else is there any indication that Jewish angelology takes over the very specific traditions associated with the *Chaoskampf* or with the god Baal.⁶

So, whilst the ancient Near Eastern mythological material provides data which are indisputably in the *background* of Daniel 7, there is a significant gap between that background and the text’s foreground. Collins, for one, is aware of that gap and only recently writes “.. for the present we must ... hope that some future textual discoveries will clarify the exact channels by which the material was transmitted.”⁷

Older scholarship, for example that of Bentzen and Emerton argued that the means of transmission of this mythological pattern was the annual New Year enthronement festival.⁸ The hypothesis that such a festival ever existed has been difficult to prove. Amongst those who maintain the importance of the Canaanite mythology there are many like J.J. Collins who have hesitated to see the cult as its means of transmission and have suggested instead its survival “either as folk tradition or in learned circles”.⁹

⁴ Collins, “Daniel,” 290. Neither the objection on the grounds of historical distance from the Canaanite material nor the assumption that an “orthodox” Jew in the Antiochene crisis would not draw on this material has any weight. Collins has ably responded to such criticisms (“Stirring up the Great Sea,” 123, 127-132).

⁵ They are ultimately indebted to N. Schmidt, “The Son of Man’ in the Book of Daniel,” *JBL* 19 (1900) 22-28

⁶ The role of Michael in the combat myth in Rev 12-13 may be a parallel, but the text is much later than Daniel 7.

⁷ “Stirring up the Great Sea,” 134.

⁸ A. Bentzen, *King and Messiah* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970) 64; Emerton, “Origin,” 240-42.

⁹ “Apocalyptic Vision,” 102.

However, John Day remains convinced by much of the New Year festival hypothesis and has insisted that there is good evidence that the mythology was indeed passed on through the cult where it has been picked up in Daniel 7. From the wide spread of passages in Israel's Psalter which presuppose the *Chaoskampf* (see e.g. Psalms 24; 29; 65; 74; 89; 93; 104), the importance of God's kingship during the New Year liturgy in post-biblical tradition, the connection between these two in Zechariah 13-14 and other considerations a good case can be made for the endurance of a liturgical recollection of God's victory over the forces of chaos during the New Year festivities throughout the post-exilic period.¹⁰ As a corollary of our discussion we will find new evidence for the importance of a post-exilic "enthronement" festival and the likelihood that Daniel 7 may be one of our best witnesses to that tradition. Whilst the nature of the Temple New Year festival can explain the transmission of this mythological material, as an adequate explanation of both *foreground* and *background* it would need to explain the implicit "ditheism" which the mythology imposes on the vision's symbolic world.

Besides the general notion of an angelic "one like a son of man" commentators have traditionally turned to texts such as 11QMelchizedek where a similar pattern may be present. More recently P. Mosca has made the attractive suggestion that there is some anticipation of the Canaanite background to Dan 7:13 in one of Israel's kingship psalms.

Mosca argues that in Psalm 89 the king plays a similar role in the Israelite adoption of the *Chaoskampf* to that of the "one like a son of man" in Daniel. In vv. 10-11 [Eng. vv. 9-10] of that psalm Yahweh's cosmogonic power is celebrated with reference to his ruling the raging sea, stilling the waves and crushing the chaos monster Rahab. However, in v. 26 [Eng. v. 25] the fruits of this divine victory are shared with David whose "hand is set on the sea and ... right hand on the rivers." The pairing of sea and river reminds us of the two parallel names in the Baal epic Yamm and Nahar and this characterisation of David is set in the context of other reminiscences of the relationship between Baal and El: "David is in a sense invited

¹⁰ For recent representatives of this view see e.g. Day, "God's Conflict," 18-21, 34, 158, 165 etc.; T. D. N. Mettinger, *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 92-122; J. Day, *Psalms* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1990) 67-87; J. D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil. The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1994) esp. 31-2.

to play Baal to Yhwh's El".¹¹ Mosca's case is strong and it has been greeted with qualified approval by J. J. Collins.¹² This kingship reading has the support of the parallelism between the prerogatives given to the "one like a son of man" in Dan 7:14 and the sovereignty, glory and dominion given to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 2:37 and 5:18.¹³

However, Mosca's proposal suffers from a number of decisive weaknesses. For example, there is no real parallel in Psalm 89, nor the biblical kingship material in general, to the image of the "son of man" *coming with clouds*.¹⁴ Secondly, apart from the reference to Daniel and his friends being drawn from the royal family in Dan 1:3 the book shows no real interest in the Davidic monarchy.¹⁵ This is not surprising since the issue at stake during the Antiochene crisis was the threat to the Temple cult where the priesthood presided and where there was no real monarchic presence at this time.

The Apocalyptic Worldview and the Angelomorphic-Humanity Tradition

The second problem with which the interpreter of Daniel 7-12 in general and of Dan 7:13 in particular has had to contend is whether realities referred to are heavenly or earthly. The modern discussion has been a battle - of some hostility - between those who insist on a human (e.g. Israel) focused reference and those who take the "one like a son of man" to refer to a divine or angelic figure. This battle, it should be noted, has been provoked and fuelled by the modern inability to hold together the earthly and heavenly, the divine and the human.

In another study I have appealed for a cease-fire in hostilities by proposing a new understanding of the text's apocalyptic conceptual parameters which removes the necessity to choose between one side or the other.¹⁶ There is a significant tradition within Jewish texts of

¹¹ "Ugarit and Daniel 7: A Missing Link," *Bib* 67 (1986) 496-517, (p. 512), cf. generally pp. 508-515.

¹² *Daniel*, 293 and "Stirring up the Great Sea" 133.

¹³ Collins, *Daniel*, 311.

¹⁴ See Emerton, "Origin," 233; Bryan, *Cosmos*, 231-2. Mosca appeals to the reference to the "enduring witness in the cloud(s)" in Ps 89:37 [Eng. v. 38] ("Ugarit and Daniel 7," 514), but there their function is very different from that of Dan 7:13.

¹⁵ Collins, *Daniel*, 309.

¹⁶ Besides Lacocque's work (below) my approach is anticipated somewhat by, e.g., M. Black, "Die Apotheose Israels: eine neue Interpretation des danielischen

the period in which both human individuals and communities are regarded as angelomorphic: they possess an identity or function which is otherwise predicated of supra-human angels.¹⁷ This angelomorphic-humanity tradition, which approximates to the belief in a "divine" humanity, is associated with the following; the prelapsarian Adam; Israel as a whole; specific communities within racial Israel, such as the Essenes; Israel's righteous patriarchs and heroes (e.g. Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Jacob, Moses) and particular offices within the divine economy amongst which kingship and the priesthood are the most prominent. Surveying that tradition, and bearing in mind that Adam, Israel, Enoch, the king and a high priest have all at some time been candidates within modern discussion for the role of the "one like a son of man" it at once becomes apparent that we may have here a justification for believing Dan 7:13 refers to a mediatorial figure who is very much human yet also deliberately described in terms reminiscent of the angels and even God himself.

This angelomorphic-humanity tradition is already enshrined in the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint (see e.g. Num 24:17; 2 Sam 14:17, 20; 19:27; Isa 9:5; Zech 12:8; Mal 2:7; Esther LXX 15:4-19), was evidently well established before the Maccabean crisis and was apparently well known to the author of Daniel (viz. Dan 12:3).¹⁸ In a number of traditions the human figure concerned is not only raised to an angelic level of existence, (s)he is also described in ways otherwise reserved for God such that they receive worship and we are reminded of the contours of a later *Two Powers* "heresy".¹⁹ Daniel 7 is, of course, a key text within that later tradition; the full divinity of the man-like figure may already be assumed in the Old Greek Septuagint tradition and is insinuated in the use of clouds as a means of transport.²⁰

Whilst I believe this angelomorphic-humanity tradition and its centrality to the apocalyptic worldview means we no longer need to choose between one side or other in the argument over heaven and

'Menschensohn', " *Jesus und der Menschensohn: Für Anton Vögtle* (ed. R. Pesch and R. Schnackenburg; Freiburg: Herder, 1975) 92-99.

¹⁷ *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (WUNT 2.94; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997) esp. 11-18, 109-215.

¹⁸ For Dan 12:3 as an eschatologisation of an intra-historical, this worldly angelomorphic belief pattern see my *Luke-Acts*, 138, 213.

¹⁹ See Hecataeus of Abdera (Diodorus Siculus' *Bibliotheca Historica* 40.3.5-6; *A History of the Visit to Jerusalem of Alexander the Great* (Josephus *Ant.* 11:331: see my *Luke-Acts*, 124-5 for discussion); *Life of Adam and Eve* 12-16; Ezekiel the Tragedian *Exagoge* 79-80; *Eth. Enoch* 48:5; 62:9.

²⁰ For Daniel 7 in the *Two Powers* debate see A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden: Brill, 1977) 33-36, 47-52, 122-3, 128-132, 149, 151.

earthly perspectives, we are left with a need for clarification: if the “one like a son of man” is an angelomorphic human then who exactly is he? Which of the different characters or communities in the tradition I have plotted is in mind in Dan 7:13? Since P. Mosca has made a good case for the adoption of a Davidic tradition behind the Baal-like “one like a son of man”, are we to think of the many biblical and post-biblical texts which speak of the king in angelomorphic terms?²¹ Mosca’s recourse to kingship traditions, which have their roots in the pre-exilic period, does not fit well in Daniel as a whole or the seventh chapter. What is needed is an angelomorphic figure who on other grounds we should judge at home amidst Daniel 7’s visionary furniture: a figure who quite naturally comes with clouds before the divine throne, who is bound up very closely with the people of God and yet, to whom the characterisation of Baal could be applied.

Glancing at the *Curricula Vitae* of the candidates for the post described in Dan 7:13-4 the high priest is the front runner.²² In the first place, since the high priest is a representative character some of the other figures are included in his candidature: the high priest wears on his breastplate and shoulder pieces the names of the twelve tribes and so represents Israel (Exod 28:9-10, 21, 29). To the extent that the arrival of the “one like a son of man” before the Ancient of Days is interpreted in 7:18, 22, 27 as the giving of the kingdom to Israel, the former must either represent, or be symbolic of, the people of God. The high priest is, at the very least, a representative of Israel, if not her concrete embodiment within the cultic drama.

As a number of scholars have recently demonstrated, the high priestly garments also associate him with Adam, which is only natural given the strongly Edenic symbolism of the Temple.²³ In Dan 7:2 the “four winds stirring up the great sea” reminds us of Gen 1:2 and the *Chaoskampf* mythology is firmly embedded in ancient Near Eastern creation accounts so the vision quite naturally climaxes with the coming of a “one like a *human being*” just as does Gen 1:1-31. As

²¹ For the texts see my *Luke-Acts*, 110-118.

²² For the angelomorphic (high) priest see e.g. *Ep. Aristeas* 99, Sirach 50:6; *Jub.* 31:13-15; 1QSb 4:25; 4Q511 35; 4Q545 17-18. To these texts and those discussed in my *Luke-Acts* (pp. 118-129, 186-196) should be added Wis 18:15-18, 21-24 where Aaron is set in antithetical parallelism to the λόγος, the Angel of the LORD.

²³ Besides Ezek 28:12-19 and Sirach 49:16ff, see C. T. R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A non-biblical sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996) 44-7, 71-2 for the High Priest’s garments as those of Adam in post-biblical literature.

we shall see, Enoch, with whom one tradition of Daniel interpretation identified the Son of Man, is none other than the archetypal priest.

In the second Temple period, under the political constraints of Persian and Hellenistic rule the high priest has also taken over many of the characteristics of the king.²⁴ In Daniel 7 verse 14 has been just cause for those who would see in v. 13 a messianic king, since there he is given "dominion, and glory and *kingship*". However, in Israel's pre-exilic period sacral kingship involved the king in a position tantamount to that of high priest and there was good scriptural warrant, upon which the Hasmoneans would capitalise, for a high priest with royal powers (esp. Psalm 110). In the case of Daniel 7:13-14 two passages are particularly pertinent in this respect. First, in the midst of Josephus' account of Alexander the Great's encounter with the high priest Jaddua (*Ant.* 11:326-339) the Jerusalem high priest is said (by Alexander!) to have the power to bestow upon the Macedonian leader the Persian empire (11:334). This predication of cosmocratic power to the high priest is immediately followed by a reference to Daniel as the scriptural prediction of Alexander's conquests (11:337). Secondly, in the *Testament of Moses* ch. 10 the coming of God's kingdom in the eschatological dénouement, is bound-up with the appointment of a heavenly warrior priest who will avenge Israel of her enemies (10:2f). George W.E. Nickelsburg has tied the tenth chapter of the *Testament of Moses* closely to Dan 12:1-3 and its author may also have had in mind Dan 7:9ff.²⁵

Not only does the high priest have a strong candidacy since he is wedded so closely to other angelomorphic figures, he does so in that context (the Temple cult) which was evidently the most significant for the development of the human angelomorphic tradition. Time and again there are telling signs that it is the temple cult, its drama and costume, its holiness and the experience of worship in a time and space qualitatively other, which have contributed to a given literary angelomorphic characterisation.²⁶

For there to be certainty that in Dan 7:13 there is described a high priest we will need to establish whether and in what context a high priest could be described as coming with the clouds before the Ancient of Days. Ideally we will also need evidence that the high priest could play Baal to Yahweh's El in the *Chaoskampf* complex. Before we achieve either of these aims, and with a view to bringing

²⁴ The best example close to Daniel being Sirach 50:1-4.

²⁵ *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) 28-31, 82-4.

²⁶ See my *Luke-Acts*, 118-129, 137, 142, 147, 155, 168-9, 172, 186-96, 199.

the text's cultic *Sitz im Leben* into sharper focus, it will be as well to survey the evidence in support of a Temple and priestly centred reading of Daniel 7.

A Jerusalem Temple Setting in Daniel 7: Some Observations

Within Daniel 7, the work as a whole and its history of interpretation there are many considerations which point to a Temple setting for at least vv. 9-15 of chapter 7 and the importance of that setting within the cultic interests of the book as a whole. These considerations further help to clarify the symbolism of the vision.

The High Priest in the Temple in the History of Interpretation of Daniel 7

In his 1979 commentary André Lacocque proposed that "the vision in chapter 7 has the Temple as its framework", within which the "one like a son of man" coming on the clouds of heaven refers to an eschatological high priest who receives the eternal and irrevocable dominion.²⁷

Regrettably Lacocque's interpretation has not received the attention it deserves.²⁸ This is probably because it lacks the necessary history-of-religions support for the possibility that the high priest could be characterised as the man-figure of 7:13-14. Initially Lacocque seems aware of this problem and comments that "[w]e must not allow ourselves therefore to be carried away by the heavenly decor of Dan. 7.13ff".²⁹ However, a little further on he jeopardises sympathy for his approach with the claim that not only is the "one like a son of man" a high priest, he is also Michael.³⁰ He is not able to produce any evidence to support the equation of the high priest with Michael and the implausibility of his interpretation is further compounded by his belief that the particular high priest in question is Judas Maccabeus.³¹ There is some slight evidence that an identification of

²⁷ *The Book of Daniel* (London: SPCK) 124-5. Lacocque's view of the priestly nature of Daniel's apocalyptic *Sitz im Leben* is reiterated in his *Daniel in His Time* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988) 28-9 and "The Socio-Spiritual Formative Milieu of the Daniel Apocalypse," *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings*, (ed. A. S. van der Woude; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993) 315-343, 335-6.

²⁸ It is summarily dismissed by Goldingay, *Daniel*, 196.

²⁹ *Book of Daniel*, 125.

³⁰ *Book of Daniel*, 133-4. He arrives at a similar conclusion in his interpretation of the "prince of the host" in Dan 10:11 (p. 162).

³¹ *Book of Daniel*, 125.

the "one like a son of man" with Judas was entertained in antiquity, since Jerome was aware of the possibility in his *contretemps* with Porphyry.³² However, aside from the common perception that the authorship of Daniel cannot easily be equated with the Maccabean party (in view, in particular, of the possibly slighting reference to the Maccabees in Dan 11:34), taking the man-figure to be a reference to Judas Maccabeus entails a dating of Daniel 7 after the temple's restoration, which is nigh impossible.³³

Although the interpretation in Lacocque's commentary lacks methodological rigour, it is suggestive and can be reworked. Whilst we can disregard Lacocque's identification of the high priest with Michael, there is ample data from the period for a view of the high priest as heavenly.³⁴ Lacocque has not been the only commentator to insist on a priestly perspective for the work, and his approach can be substantiated by much else.³⁵

The Temple-Cult focus in Daniel 7-12 and the Book's Implied Authorship

Daniel 1-6 is set in the Mesopotamian exile and chs. 2-6 come from either the Persian or Hellenistic periods. Daniel 7-12 is from the early second century B.C. and describes events during the crisis of Antiochus IV. That crisis was centred on a perceived threat to the Jerusalem Temple cult. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Temple is centre stage throughout chapters 8-12. The cult is not only that sacred space most threatened by Antiochus (8:10-14; 11:30-31; 12:10-13), the author(s) of the visions assume(s) that the time of salvation comes when the Temple at last fulfils exilic prophecy (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10) and performs its atoning function (9:24-27; 12:30).³⁶ Although ch. 7 is linguistically and literarily bound to the preceding chapters, its

³² For the text see G. Archer, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958) 89-81. Lacocque's interpretation is otherwise anticipated by H. Sahlin, "Antiochus IV Epiphanes und Judas Mackabäus," *ST* 23 (1969) 41-68 and G. W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews. Translation, Comment and Conclusions* (New York: Doubleday, 1972) 42-48.

³³ Goldingay, *Daniel*, 196.

³⁴ For the texts see n. 22 (above).

³⁵ Compare J. C. H. Lebram, "Apokalyptik und Hellenismus im Buche Daniel," *VT* 20 (1970) 503-24, 514-515; O. H. Steck, "Weltgeschehen und Gottesvolk im Buche Daniel," *Kirche. Festschrift für Günther Bornkamm* (ed. D. Lührmann and G. Strecker; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1980) 53-76, (p. 58).

³⁶ Cf. J. C. H. Lebram, "The Piety of the Jewish Apocalypticists," *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983) 171-210, 186.

setting in life and apocalyptic genre bind it to what follows and so we might expect that *it also* has a temple focus.

Jürgen C. H. Lebram has noted that in the context of the ancient world the ascetic elements in the preparation of the seer's visions belong in the context of cultic asceticism (see 9:3; 10:2-3): "The connection between vision and cult is emphasised moreover in ch. 9 by the angel approaching the seer at the time of the evening sacrifice."³⁷ By the second century B.C. there was already a well-established tradition within Judaism of priestly visions and auditions closely associated with the Temple as the place where heaven and earth met. Within the (proto-)apocalyptic corpus we should recall the visionary activity of the priests Ezekiel (esp. chs. 8-11; 40-48) and Zechariah (chs. 1-6).³⁸

There is perhaps some allusion to the priestly identity of the implied authorship of Daniel in the description of Daniel and his friends in 1:4. Though they are in part drawn from the Judaeen royalty, they are also from the among "the nobility", which during the Hellenistic period would mean they were priests. It is therefore not surprising that they are to be "without blemish" and will become versed in the "literature and language of the Chaldeans", the latter being a priestly caste within late Mesopotamian society.³⁹

In the search for the identity of the book's author(s) commentators have rightly seized on the use of the word *משכילים* for the book's heroes (11:33; 12:3, 10). "The wise" are evidently set over against "the many": those who either act against the covenant (9:27) or are in need of instruction from the former. The role of the priests as the teachers in Israelite society was ingrained during this period, and Lebram is probably right to see in "the wise" and "the many" the priesthood and the laity.⁴⁰ Whilst this identification of the work's authorship is by no means necessary for the rest of our argument, it is worth noting that the appropriation of the division between the *maskilim* and the *rabbim* at Qumran, where the leadership was thoroughly priestly, accords well with this proposal.⁴¹

Outside of the canonical Daniel there is also some important evidence that the Israelite Daniel around whom various traditions

³⁷ "Piety," 185, cf. 184-5.

³⁸ Outside the biblical corpus see e.g. Josephus *Ant.* 11:326-7 (in context of a specific reference to Daniel (11:337)); 13:282-3.

³⁹ See Lacocque, *Book of Daniel*, 27.

⁴⁰ "Apokalyptik," 514. For priests as teachers see e.g. Lev 10:11; Deut 17:10; Hag 2:11-13; Mal 2:7; Deut 33:10.

⁴¹ See e.g. 1QS 3:13; 9:12, 21; 1QSB 1:1; 3:22; 5:20; 4Q510-11 *passim*; 4QShirShabb *passim*.

were formed was regarded, by some at least, as a priest. In the opening paragraph of the Old Greek version of *Bel and the Serpent* Daniel is said to be a priest. The absence of this identification from the Theodotian recension is perhaps due to a conformity of the latter to the canonical Daniel where no such identity is made explicit. In any case there is no need to see here a very "different strand of tradition" from that of our canonical Daniel and every reason to assume this Greek addition represents widespread opinion.⁴²

Geographical Stage Markers: The Great Sea and the Chaoskampf

The vision opens in Dan 7:2 with the four winds stirring up the "great sea". Inside and outside of the biblical corpus this expression is always used of the Mediterranean.⁴³ However, this creates a problem, since it could not be said literally of the first, second and third beasts that they came from the Mediterranean because they symbolise Babylon, Media and Persia respectively. Only the fourth beast (Greece) can be thought to come from that direction. This has led some to dismiss the overwhelming linguistic significance of the phrase "great sea" and to opt instead for a mythological sea from which the forces of chaos arise.⁴⁴ As we have seen that mythology is essential to the proper understanding of the present chapter.

So how can this apparent tension be resolved? The choice of both the Mediterranean *and* the mythological *Chaosmeer* is, I suggest, deliberate because from the Israelite perspective the myth was already thoroughly bound up with Jerusalem, the Temple and Zion as the cosmic mountain. As it has long been suspected and has now been ably demonstrated by Jon D. Levenson the old ancient Near Eastern beliefs about temples and their mountains as the centre of the universe, the point at which creation takes place and the meeting point of heaven and earth, were axiomatic in biblical literature.⁴⁵ Those commentators, such as John Day and John Collins who emphasise the importance of the *Chaoskampf* in interpreting Daniel 7 do not actually take full cognizance of the fact that that tradition is

⁴² Pace Collins, *Daniel*, 419.

⁴³ See BDB 410 and 1QapGen 21:16: Goldingay, *Daniel*, 160.

⁴⁴ E.g. L. F. Hartman and A. A. DiLella, *The Book of Daniel* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978) 211; Collins, *Daniel*, 295.

⁴⁵ J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion* (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985); *Creation, passim*, cf. R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972).

fundamentally temple centred.⁴⁶ In the Mesopotamian literature (esp. *Anzu* and *Enuma Elish*) and also in the Ugaritic Baal material the god's conflict with the forces of chaos, whether or not represented by the sea, is inseparable from the search for a temple in a situation where the cosmic stability provided by the cult is either absent or under threat. It is precisely that context in which Daniel was written and which, therefore, suggests that in Daniel 7 we have to do with a struggle centred on the Jerusalem cult.

We can be fairly sure that this mythology was assumed by the author of Daniel 7. Within the (proto-)apocalyptic stream of which his vision is an example Zion and the temple are everywhere assumed to have some kind of cosmological identity. We should note, for example, within Ezekiel 38-9 the importance of the *omphalos* myth in 38:12. With the importance of primeval stone and/or foundation stone imagery in Zech 4:7-10b and the image of living waters flowing from Jerusalem in Zech 14:8 this mythology is presumed in both first and second Zechariah.⁴⁷ Arguably, this is a defining element within the emergence of late biblical and post-biblical apocalyptic. Within Daniel 7, verse 25's reference to Antiochus' attempt to change "the sacred seasons" probably assumes the belief that Israel's cultic calendar is a perfect synchronisation of heavenly and earthly cosmologies, which we know so well from the apocalyptic *Jubilees*.

Within this constellation of ideas, where the chaos mythology has its home, Mount Zion is the epicentre of all cosmic conflict: it is where God's enemies are judged and destroyed (cf. Ezekiel 38-9; Joel 3 & Zechariah 14) and whence God's healing creative presence flows (e.g. Zech 14:8; Joel 3:18; Ezekiel 47).⁴⁸ The importance of these texts and the significance of their Temple focus was noted in J. A. Emerton's important 1958 article on the origin of the Son of Man imagery.⁴⁹ Emerton failed, unfortunately, to spell out their implications for the geographical location of the visual drama, and his observation has not been given adequate attention in subsequent discussion.

⁴⁶ Goldingay sees the absence of the temple context in Daniel 7 as a point of contrast with the ancient Near East's *Chaoskampf* (*Daniel*, 153).

⁴⁷ On the former text see, for example, A. S. van der Woude, "Zion as Primeval Stone in Zechariah 3 and 4," *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F.C. Fensham* (ed. W. Claassen; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988) 237-248.

⁴⁸ The classic expression of these motifs outside the Bible is the Babylonian *Epic of Creation*, but it is generally recognised that they are assumed and occasionally alluded to in the Ugaritic texts from Ras Shamra.

⁴⁹ "Origin," 234.

With these texts in mind, since the implied reader is somewhere in Israel, (s)he is meant to think of beasts arising out the Mediterranean, coming on to land and threatening the people of God as was the present experience under Antiochus IV.⁵⁰ I would suggest that the vision then moves spatially in v. 9 from the pagan coastline to Jerusalem and the Temple as the site of God's earthly throne-room. With the fourth beast "committed to the burning fire" in v. 11 we are perhaps meant to think of Topheth or Gehenna, the place of burning punishment in the valley outside Jerusalem.⁵¹

We are still on earth, but with the eschatological judgement we have heaven on earth. This is entirely natural because in the microcosmic symbolism of the Jerusalem Temple the sanctuary, and in particular the holy of holies, is heaven - the site of God's throne. So, within Daniel 7 as a whole, literal, Jerusalem centred geography and mythological space are combined because that combination was a fundamental assumption for the author and one which was made all too real in the present conflict between paganism and the "orthodox" Temple cult: we do not need to choose between the Mediterranean and a mythological *Chaosmeer*. When, in Dan 11:45, Antiochus meets his end "between the sea and the glorious mountain" a later author in the apocalyptic Daniel tradition has understood quite rightly the topographical imagery of chapter 7.

The Literary Parallelism between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7

All the commentators agree that there is a deliberate parallelism between Daniel chapters 2 and 7. In both there is a dream vision of a four kingdom schema followed by the eschatological manifestation of God's kingdom in Israel. That parallelism functions within a wider set of resonances between chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, 6, 7 respectively, which create a chiasmic structure within the Aramaic portion of the book.⁵²

Taking such clear intratextuality seriously we are provided with further evidence that Daniel 7 is ultimately Temple centred. In chapter 2 the fourth kingdom of the statue is superseded by God's eternal kingdom symbolised by a rock cut from a mountain which becomes a huge mountain filling the earth (2:34-5, 44-5). The image clearly symbolises, not just the Israelite state, but Zion and her

⁵⁰ So, e.g., Casey, "Son of Man," 18-19 and Goldingay, *Daniel*, 164-5.

⁵¹ Collins, *Daniel*, 304.

⁵² See e.g. A. Lenglet, "La Structure littéraire de Daniel 2-7," *Bib* 53 (1972) 169-190 & Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision*, 11-14.

Temple. There are multiple echoes of biblical and post-biblical Zion/Temple-stone imagery here.⁵³ As Collins notes, these have their home in the ancient Near East's cosmic mountain mythology.⁵⁴ So, as another point of symmetry between chapters 2 and 7, this further confirms our argument that in chapter 7 the four kingdoms are succeeded by a shift to the cosmic mountain where God's judgement takes place.⁵⁵

The Mischwesen from the Sea and Jewish Purity Consciousness

The source of the composite zoomorphic imagery for the beasts in Dan 7:4-8 has been the cause of much discussion. Various derivations from ancient Near Eastern animal imagery have been proposed, but none of these has been found entirely convincing.⁵⁶ David Bryan has now made the persuasive case that a primary concern in the creation of such imagery is the kosher mentality of purity conscious Judaism. The mixing of animal forms (e.g. lion and eagle) and the depiction of wild quadrupeds (lion, bear & leopard) evokes the Torah's judgement that such animals are unclean (Lev 11:27, 29, 41-42). The fact that the first beast looses his wings, and thus his hybrid form, and that he stands on two feet being given a human heart evokes the conversion and purification of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4. "The series of *Mischwesen* forms the perfect background for the emergence of the kingdom of God, represented by [the one who is like a "man",] the archetypal land creature who, according to P, was made in the image of God."⁵⁷ Drawing in particular on the work of Mary Douglas, Bryan demonstrates that here the combination of purity consciousness and monsters representing the forces of chaos is entirely fitting given the concern of biblical purity taboos with order and the threat of chaos. Because Leviathan - the principal expression of chaos in the older, Canaanite *Chaoskampf* mythology - would himself have been viewed as the "king of the unclean creatures", the substitution of the four monsters in Daniel 7, in dependence upon the four kingdoms schema, is entirely natural.⁵⁸

⁵³ See e.g. Zech 4:7-10; Isa 2:2-3 and compare the later 'eben shetiyah tradition. The threshing floor image of 2:35 reminds us of Isa 41:12-16 but also 2 Sam 24.

⁵⁴ Collins, *Daniel*, 165 n. 128.

⁵⁵ The parallelism is appreciated by 4 Ezra 13 where the man from the sea of Daniel 7 carves out the mountain of Daniel 2.

⁵⁶ Collins, *Daniel*, 295-6 and see Bryan's review of suggestions (*Cosmos*, 218-227).

⁵⁷ Bryan, *Cosmos*, 238-9.

⁵⁸ Bryan, *Cosmos*, 239-245.