

THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE IN DAN 12:1e-2 OR HOW TO REVERSE THE DEATH CURSE OF GENESIS 3*

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A cursory reading of Dan 12:1e-2 reveals that at a certain point in time some people who were still living would be preserved in that state and that others who had died previously would “awaken” to “eternal life” or “reproaches and everlasting contempt”. A cursory reading does *not* reveal, however, the criterion for assignment to one category or another. It will be the contention of the present paper that references to earlier biblical passages are present in the phrasing of Dan 12:1e-2 and that these show clearly the grounds upon which a Divine assessment of the individual would be based. A number of years ago, George Nickelsburg dealt with this particular segment of Daniel in his celebrated work, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*.¹ He highlighted a number of connections made by Daniel with other biblical passages as well as indicating the links with contemporary extra-canonical works, thus rendering a great service to the scholar and student alike. It is the opinion, though, of the present writer that Nickelsburg was not cognisant of the full extent of the biblical references² in Dan 12:1e-2 and that these are accessible only by tracing the use of each individual word in the biblical tradition. This leads to the uncovering of a network of thought, culled from a variety of biblical texts, on the subject of continued or resurrected existence. In the case of Dan 12:2 it will be shown that the core text is Genesis 3 where mankind is condemned to death and denied access to the tree of life while Dan 12:1 centres upon who will be saved upon the Day of the Lord. This is not to suggest that the author/s of Daniel approached the subject as a dry academic exercise,

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¹G. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

² In Dan 12:2 the links which Nickelsburg sees are with Isa 26:19 (קִיץ and עֵפֶר) and 66:24 (דְּרֹאוֹן). In Dan 12:1 of the words or expressions used in the present paper Nickelsburg links עַת צָרָה with Jer 30:7; סִפֵּר with Ps 69:28; Isa 4:2-6; Mal 3:16-18.

rather it is likely that a conviction that justice would prevail on “the Day of the Lord” for the dead, as well as the living, which gave rise to a meditation upon the relevant “Divine” words, is encapsulated in the sacred texts.

The approach to Dan12:1-2 which has just been outlined is new but it is one which has been recognised to a large, although incomplete, extent in the case of Dan 9:2. That particular text specifies that “the books” gave understanding as to the meaning of the seventy years of the Exile predicted by Jeremiah and it is acknowledged by scholars that the methodology used by the author/s of Daniel is Peshar although it is not called such in Daniel 9 itself.³ In order to illustrate, and hopefully make more credible, the method which will be applied to Dan 12:1-2 in this paper it is proposed to show it in operation first in Dan 9:2 where the results will accord with current scholarly thinking but further it through close attention to the vocabulary used. Dan 9:2 reads,

- a) “In year one of his reign, I, Daniel,
בשנת אחת לקלט אמי הנביא
- b) understood by the books the number of years
בינתי בספרים מספר השנים
- c) as the word of Yahweh was to Jeremiah the prophet
אשר דבר יהוה אל ירמיה הנביא
- d) to fulfil the desolations of Jerusalem, seventy years”.
למלאות לתקנות ירושלים שבעים שנה

It is not proposed to deal with the first statement, “In year one of his reign” as this merely repeats part of verse one⁴ and space does not permit a lengthy foray into that verse.

That Daniel “understood by the books” is the only explicit statement in the whole work that the Scriptures were the source of his references. The core text to which Dan 9:2 refers is 2 Chr 36:21.⁵ It reads,

³ J. Goldingay (*Daniel* [WBC; Dallas: Word Books, 1989] 231) likens the hermeneutic of Daniel to the Qumran Pesharim, as do L. Hartman and A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1971) 247, 250; M. Delcor, *Le Livre de Daniel* (Paris: Gabalda, 1971) 187.

⁴Theodotian omits it although it is present in MT and LXX (apart from manuscript B). As Theodotian is inclined to omit the repetitions in Daniel it is likely that the MT and LXX are correct.

⁵ Although some scholars—e.g., Goldingay, *Daniel*, 231-32; Knibb, “The Exile in Intertestamental Literature,” *HeyJ* 17 (1976) 254; Hartmann and DiLella, *Daniel*, 250 (2 Chr 36:21 is misprinted as 2 Chr 37:21); O. Plöger, *Das Buch Daniel* (Gutersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1965) 137; P. Grelot, “Soixante-dix Semaines d’annees,” *Bib* 50 (1969) 182; L. Hartman, “The Functions of some so-called Apocalyptic Timetables,” *NTS* 22 (1976) 3; J. Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9,” *AUSS* (1979) 7; M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985)

“to fulfil *the word of Yahweh* by the mouth of *Jeremiah*
 לְמַלְאוֹת הַבְּרִיחָהּ כְּפִי יְרֵמְיָהוּ
 until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths
 עַד הַתְּעָה הָאָרֶץ אֶת שַׁבְּתוֹתֶיהָ
 all the days she lay desolate she kept sabbath
 כָּל יְמֵי הַשָּׁמָה שָׁבְתָהּ
to fulfil seventy years”.
 לְמַלְאוֹת שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה

The words which are italicised are the ones which appear in Dan 9:2.

2 Chronicles is referring to Jeremiah’s prediction that Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon would overrun Judah (Jer 25:9) and that the land would be left desolate whilst people served Babylon for seventy years (Jer 25:11-12, cf., Jer 29:10). Nevertheless the Chronicler goes beyond Jeremiah’s statements (and a surface reading of Dan 9:2) in that he interprets the seventy years as a period of rest, a sabbath. Indeed he has combined Jeremiah’s prophecy with Lev 26:34⁶ which, talking about a time of exile, states:

“Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths
 אֶת הַתְּעָה הָאָרֶץ אֶת שַׁבְּתוֹתֶיהָ
 all the days of waste ...”.
 כָּל יְמֵי הַשָּׁמָה

It is apparent in Dan 9:24, where according to the angel Gabriel “seventy weeks are decreed upon your holy city to finish transgression and to make an end of sins (חַטּוֹת) ...”, that Daniel picked up the allusion to the sabbath in the text from Chronicles and furthered it through a reference to Lev 25:2-4 where the seventh year is a sabbath to the Lord.⁷ A further allusion is present behind the notion of “seventy weeks (of years)” (Dan 9:24).⁸ This is Lev 26:18 (cf., also vv. 21, 24, 28) which

482—recognise that Dan 9:2 is aware of 2 Chr 36:21 this is the first time, to the knowledge of the present writer, that 2 Chr 36:21 is presented as the core text to which Daniel refers and whose vocabulary he repeats in part.

⁶The allusion to Lev 26:34 in 2 Chr 36:21 is well recognised by modern scholars e.g., Grelot, “Soixante-dix Semaines,” 172, Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks,” 7, despite the denial by J.A. Montgomery (*The Book of Daniel* [ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1926] 360) of the validity of the suggestion to this effect by A. A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892) 145.

⁷ This allusion is recognised by a number of scholars e.g., Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks,” 8; A. Lacoque, *Livre de Daniel* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1976) 132; J. Steinmann, *Daniel* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1950) 132, n. 6; Grelot, “Soixante-dix Semaines,” 180.

⁸ For the chiasmic structure between seventy years and seventy weeks in Dan 9:2 and 9:24 respectively cf., Doukhan, “The Seventy Weeks,” 17.

Bevan⁹ long ago suggested should be taken into account. There God threatens Israel that if they did not listen to him then

“I will chastise you seven times more for your sins (חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם)”.

(Noticeably the same word for “sins” appears in both Lev 26:18 and Dan 9:24). By the time of Antiochus Epiphanes the seventy years predicted by Jeremiah were long past and yet the people were still sinning. In view of the above assertion of Lev 26:18 it was natural that the seventy years should be multiplied by seven. The number seven of course suggests both the sabbath and a week.

In case Daniel’s readers were still in any doubt that the number of years was seventy times seven¹⁰ an allusion to Lev 25:8 which reads

“And you shall number (וּסְפַרְתָּ) seven sabbaths of years (שָׁנִים) to you ... ”

was also included in Dan 9:2 where the phrase “number of years” (מִקְפָּר) appears.¹¹

The congruence of vocabulary between Dan 9:2 and 2 Chr 36:21 is striking and much closer than between the former text and the relevant passages in Jeremiah and Leviticus. However the word for “desolations” (תְּרוֹבוֹת) in Dan 9:2 does not appear in Chronicles and although it occurs in the singular a number of times in Jeremiah (7:34; 22:5; 25:11, 18; 27:17; 44:2, 6, 22), on the two occasions it appears in the plural it does not apply to Jerusalem or even Judah (25:9; 49:13), rather to her enemies and their territory. The singular also appears in Lev 26:31, 33 (i.e., just prior to the verse from Leviticus cited above) and it applies to Israelite cities which God will make desolate because of the sins of his people. The context then is appropriate although Jerusalem is not mentioned by name. The actual phrase “desolations of Jerusalem” does however appear in Isa 52:9¹² in the context of God’s announcement of the end of the exile. This accords with 2 Chr 36:21-22 where a return to Jerusalem and Judah will be permitted in the first year of Cyrus the Persian. If this message is

⁹ Bevan, *Daniel*, 146. This allusion is recognised also by Steinmann, *Daniel*, 132, n. 7; Hartman and DiLella, *Daniel*, 250; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 232.

¹⁰ For the use of 70 and 490 in biblical and extra biblical texts cf., Goldingay, *Daniel*, 232 and J. J. Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic*.

¹¹ The allusion to Lev 25:8 is recognised by a number of scholars e.g., Lacoque, *Daniel*, 132; Steinmann, *Daniel*, 132, n. 7. However no one, to the knowledge of the present writer, has recognised the linguistic congruence between Lev 25:8 and Dan 9:2.

¹² The present writer is not aware of any previous scholar making the connection between Dan 9:2 and Isa 52:9.

applied to Daniel 9 where the ruler is Darius the Mede, who preceded Cyrus (according to Daniel 5-6) it indicates that the period of “exile” is not yet over.¹³

To sum up then as far as Dan 9:2 is concerned: 2 Chr 36:21 is the central reference accounting for “the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah ... to fulfil seventy years”. The Chronicler himself has drawn upon Lev 26:34 in his interpretation of Jeremiah’s prophecy, thereby introducing the notion of sabbaths. In the interpretation of the seventy years which appears in Dan 9:24 Daniel has then combined 2 Chr 36:21 with Lev 25:24 where the seventh year is a sabbath and has also alluded to Lev 26:18 among other texts. A further allusion which applies to both Dan 9:2 and 9:24 is Lev 25:8 where “seven sabbaths of years” appear. “Desolations of Jerusalem” in Dan 9:2 has been culled from Isa 52:9, a passage which, like 2 Chr 36:21, deals with the end of the exile. Nevertheless the above exegesis pays closer attention than previous ones to the vocabulary used by Daniel and its appearance in the passages upon which he draws. The recognition that Daniel actually quotes part of 2 Chr 36:21, where יהוה appears, substantiates the majority scholarly opinion that the Tetragrammaton in Dan 9:2 is original.

To move on now to Dan 12:1e-2. It is proposed to deal with Dan 12:2 first because of the clear reference to Genesis 3. Dan 12:2 reads,

- a) "And many of those who sleep in the earth of dust

וְרַבִּים מִלְּשׁוֹן אֲדָמַת עָפָר

will awake,

יָקִימוּ

- b) Some to everlasting life and some to reproaches,

אֶתְּחִי לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם וְאֶתְּחִי לְתַרְסוּחַ

to everlasting contempt”.

לְרִיבֵי עוֹלָם

“Those who sleep in the ... dust” is a clear reference to the dead. “Dust” as the location of the dead also appears in Job 7:21; 21:26; 34:15; Ps 22:16[15]; 104:29; Isa 26:19. Isa 26:19 is highlighted by a number of commentators¹⁴ as the likely background to Dan 12:2a because of its assertion that the dead will arise. Whilst not wishing to deny the relevance of Isa 26:19 for Dan 12:2 (and it will be shown below that it is important) in the case of the phrase “earth of dust” Isa 26:19 contains only עָפָר (dust).

¹³ Knibb (“The Exile,” 253-72) showed that a number of post exilic works, especially apocalyptic ones, view “the Exile” as continuing to their own time.

¹⁴ Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 17-18) makes much of the links between Isa 26:19 and Dan 12:2; cf., also Goldingay, *Daniel*, 285; Hartman and DiLella, *Daniel*, 307; Lacoque, *Daniel*, 179.

The phrase “earth of dust” in Dan 12:2 is a literal translation of the Massoretic text. Some of the ancient versions render the phrase as “dust of the earth” and in this have been followed by a number of the english translations.¹⁵ It is understandable that this should be so for “dust of the earth” is a much more familiar phrase: the man was formed “from the dust of the earth” in Gen 2:7. However Gen 2:7 represents “birth” and Gen 3:19 “death”. Gen 3:19 is part of the punishment meted out to Adam for his disobedience to God. It promises a life of hard toil,

“until you return to the earth (הָאָדָמָה)
for out of it you were taken
for dust you are
and to dust (עָפָר) you shall return”.

It is noteworthy that here “earth” precedes “dust” as in Dan 12:2. Sleeping in the earth of dust and then awakening from it in Dan 12:2 suggests that Daniel is alluding to a reversal of the death pronouncement of Gen 3:19. The latter text implies, although does not explicitly state, that if Adam had obeyed God he would not have died. It should be noted, as it will be relevant later in the exegesis of Dan 12:2, that Genesis 3 presents another way of obtaining eternal life: through the taking and eating of the tree of life (v. 22) and to prevent this happening God drove mankind from the garden of Eden and barred its return.

Dan 12:2 uses the adjectival form of the root שָׁן to indicate “those who sleep in the earth of dust”. The verbal form of this root is used to indicate the sleep of death in Jer 51:39, 57; Ps 13:4[3] and the nominal form (שָׁנָה/שָׁנָה/שָׁנָה) to the same purpose in Job 14:12; Ps 90:5; 76:6; Jer 51:39, 57. Like the other passages, Job 14:12 indicates that such sleep is everlasting but in such a way that it could later be reinterpreted:

“Man lies down and will not arise
until the heavens are no longer, he will not awake (יִקְיֹצֵה)
Nor will they be aroused from their sleep (לֹא יִשְׁתָּעֲרֹתוּ)”.

Note that Job uses the root קָץ for “awake” as well as the root שָׁן “sleep”, both of which appear in Dan 12:2.

Three biblical passages combine to contradict Job 14:12. These are Isa 26:19; 51:6; 66:22. Isa 26:19 reads,

“Your dead will live (יָחִי)
my dead bodies will arise (יִקְיֹמוּ)
Awake (קָץ) and sing, you who dwell in the dust (עָפָר)
for you dew is as the dew of herbs
and the earth (אָרֶץ) will cast forth its dead”.

¹⁵ LXX, Theod., Vg., Pesh.; cf., Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 17, n. 17) for a survey of scholarly suggestions as to the translation of אֲדָמָה עָפָר.

It reverses the negativity of Job (at least in the case of the righteous), echoing its vocabulary: the dead *will arise* (אָרִיז); those who dwell in the dust *will awake* (אָרִיז) with the latter verb being picked up by Dan 12:2. It is to the other two Isaianic passages though that one must look for an assertion that the heavens will be no longer (Job 14): Isa 51:6 contrasts the everlasting nature of God's salvation and righteousness with the transient nature of the heavens and the earth, positing that "the heavens like smoke will disappear". Read in the light of Isa 51:6 then, Job 14:12 changes from being a negative statement to a positive one. Isa 66:22 furthers the theme:

"For as the new heavens and the new earth
which I will make will remain before me,
says the Lord,
thus your seed and your name will remain".

This verse is addressed to the people of Israel and if it is related to Dan 12:2 suggests that "the many" who awake from "the earth of dust" are also Israel.¹⁶ Indeed there are good linguistic grounds to support this contention as will be seen below. The reader who thinks that a linking of Isa 66:22 with Dan 12:2 is rather far fetched should be made aware that

¹⁶ The identity of the many has been a subject of debate amongst commentators. There appear to be three main lines of interpretation although there are various nuances within each one: 1) "many" means all Israel—e.g., Bevan, *Daniel*, 201; Plöger, *Daniel*, 171; 2) "many" means Israel and some Gentiles—e.g., J. G. Baldwin, *Daniel: Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament; Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1978) 204; 3) "many" means only the recent in Israel—e.g., R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929) 327; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 19; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 307. A subdivision of line 3 appears in B. J. Alfrink, "L'idee de Resurrection," *Bib* 40 (1959) 362-371; he believes that the wicked do not rise but are eternally condemned to death. Alfrink is followed by a number of commentators—e.g., Hartman and DiLella, *Daniel*, 308; Lacoque, *Daniel*, 179. An extensive critique of these views is not possible here but some points can be made. As far as view 2 is concerned Baldwin cites various biblical passages where "many" appears. However a perusal of these shows that where "many" indicates Gentiles it is used adjectively with "nations". The other citations are from the servant passages in Deutero-Isaiah where the meaning of "many" is far from clear. View 3 and its variant poses other problems: they do not account satisfactorily for the partitive ׀ן. Further, if as most commentators claim, Daniel was interested in justice then surely that extends to those Israelites who lived prior to the persecution of Antiochus; also Dan 12:2 categorically states that both those destined for eternal life and those for reproaches and eternal contempt will "arise".

Isa 66:24 (two verses later than the one quoted above) is incontestably linked with Dan 12:2 for the word דְרֵאוֹן (contempt/contemptible) only appears in these two verses in the whole Hebrew Bible.¹⁷ Isa 66:24 reads,

“They will go forth and look upon
the carcasses of the men who have sinned against me
for their worm will not die nor their fire be quenched
and they will be contemptible (דְרֵאוֹן) to all flesh”.

A double judgement then, if not a double resurrection, at the time of the new heavens and new earth is posited in Isaiah 66. It seems clear that just as Isa 66:22 was addressed to Israel so is Isa 66:24, for those whose “worm will not die” are said to have transgressed against God (v. 24) with the kind of crimes being specified in v. 17. These include eating swine’s flesh and the mouse, prohibited to Israel in the dietary laws of Leviticus 11. By contrast, the individual whom God looks favourably upon is

“he who is humble (עָנִי) and smitten (גָּדָה) in spirit¹⁸
and trembles at my word” (Isa 66:2).

“Humble” (עָנִי) appears frequently in the Psalms denoting the person who throws himself upon God’s mercy (Ps 34:7[6]; 35:10; 40:18[17]; 69:30[29]; 70:6[5] etc.) recognising that God is his only helper. This coheres with the notion of one who trembles at God’s word in Isa 66:2. Such a person, unlike Adam, would not disobey his deity.

Job 14:2, Isa 51:6 and 66:22 then throw light upon the time when an awakening from the sleep of death can be expected, i.e., at the eschatological end and new beginning and Isaiah 66 gives an indication of a double judgement for Israel where those who can expect contempt are the people who have transgressed God’s commands whilst those who have been preserved have been obedient to his word and expressed their dependence upon him.

In Dan 12:2 it is said that “many”, i.e., not all from those who sleep in the earth of dust, will awake. It is likely, as stated above, in accordance with Isaiah 66, that “many” (רַבִּים) indicates Israel. A perusal of the use of

¹⁷ Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 20) links the two, as does Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 493.

¹⁸ This links with the characteristics of the Suffering Servant, cf., Isa 53:4, 50:6. Many commentators have observed that Daniel 11-12 alludes to the servant passages of Isaiah, e.g., H. L. Ginsberg, “The Oldest Interpretation of the Suffering Servant,” *VT* 3 (1953) 400-4; Charles, *Daniel*, 331; Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 493.

“many” (רבים) in the Bible lends support to this argument.¹⁹ Pharaoh describes the Hebrews as “many” (רבים) in Exod 5:5 and 1 Kgs 4:20 reads,
 “Judah and Israel were many (רבים)
 as the sand which is by the sea in multitude ...”.

The singular רב is also used to describe Israel in 1 Kgs 3:8 and 2 Chr 1:9. The context is the same in both, with God appearing in a dream at night and asking Solomon what he would like to request. In 1 Kgs 3:8 Solomon states,

“Your servant is in the midst of your people
 which you have chosen, a great (רב) people,
 who cannot be numbered or counted because of its multitude,”
 and in the following verse (1 Kgs 3:9) he makes his request—one which is interesting in view of the context of “many” in Daniel where it is a prelude to judgement. The request is,

“Give your servant an understanding heart
 to judge your people, to discern between good and evil
 for who is able to judge this your weighty people”.

In 2 Chr 1:9 Solomon describes Israel as,

“a people, many (רב) like the dust of the earth,”
 and asks for “wisdom and knowledge” so that he can judge them.

It is noticeable that three out of the four passages cited describe Israel in terms reminiscent of God’s promise to the Patriarchs: “as the sand by the sea in multitude” (cf., Gen 22:17; 32:12); “who cannot be counted or numbered because of its multitude” (cf., Gen 16:10; 32:12) “like the dust of the earth” (Gen 13:16; 28:14). The verb רבה also is used (in the hiphil) by God in his promise that Abraham’s descendants will be many (cf., Gen 17:20; 26:4, 24 etc.). Abraham’s descendants were (and are), of course, Israel.

To return to Dan 12:2, only the “many” or “Israel” will awaken from the earth of dust, not people from other nations. It was only Israel which was bound in a covenant relationship with God and thus was under an obligation to serve him. The fulfillment of such an obligation or lack of it would be the yardstick for reward or punishment: some would have everlasting life and others reproaches and everlasting contempt. Dan 12:2 then posits a reversal of the pronouncement of Gen 3:19 where death was decreed for Adam because he disobeyed God.

¹⁹ “The Many” at Qumran is used to indicate the community which saw itself as the true Israel. It has accordingly narrowed the biblical conception of “many” just as it has narrowed the earlier biblical conception of “Israel”.

Genesis 3 presents another way of obtaining eternal life: through the taking and eating of the tree of life (v. 22) and to prevent this happening God drove mankind (הָאָדָם) from the garden of Eden and barred his return.

Some of those who rise in Dan 12:2 are destined for eternal life. Eternal life as such is not mentioned elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible although Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs 2:11) are recognised as not suffering death. Nevertheless there are many other passages, mainly in Psalms and Proverbs concerned with the source of, or the way to, life. It is well accepted that, in their own context, such expressions do not imply survival beyond the human life span²⁰ and yet those who reflected upon such statements at a later time period would see that they all tend in the same direction. The Psalms particularly posit that God is the source of life.

Ps 36:10(9) "For with you is the fountain of life.
In your light we shall see light."

Ps 103:4 "The one who redeems my life from destruction"
God's power in this respect is made clear in Deut 32:39,
"I kill and I make alive".

The sayings in Proverbs posit that righteousness, mercy, the fear of the Lord, humility and understanding lead to life. The first time the key word appears the Hebrew is given.

Prov 10:11 "The mouth of a righteous one (צַדִּיק) is a fountain of life (מַקְוֵה חַיִּים)."

Prov 10:16 "The labour of a righteous one leads to life."

Prov 11:19 "Thus righteousness (צֶדֶקָה) [leads] to life
He who pursues evil [does so] to his death."

Prov 12:28 "In the path of righteousness is life,
and the way of the path does not [lead] to death."

Prov 21:21 "He who pursues righteousness and mercy (חֶסֶד) finds life, righteousness and glory (כְּבוֹד)."

Prov 14:27 "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to turn from the snares of death."

Prov 22:4 "The reward of humility (עֲנָוָה) [and] fear of the Lord is riches, glory and life."

Prov 16:22 "Understanding (שֵׂכֶל) is a fountain of life to he who has it."

Some of the qualities leading to life such as צֶדֶקָה and חֶסֶד are qualities relating to covenant fidelity. Others, such as fear or reverence for the

²⁰ Notwithstanding the arguments of M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1970).

Lord and humility, say more about an attitude to God although that does not exclude the way his covenant is regarded. The last passage cited, Prov 16:22, posits that “שָׂדֵה (understanding) is a fountain of life”. שָׂדֵה in post-exilic literature appears to have been connected with the keeping of the Torah (cf., 1 Chr 22:12; 2 Chr 30:22; Neh 8:8; Prov 3:4) but it is also linked with wisdom (חָכְמָה) in Ps 111:10. This is interesting in that the Hebrew Bible posits that Wisdom (חָכְמָה) is a way to the tree of life, that is, an alternative to the direct physical access barred in Gen 3:22. Prov 3:18 says,

“She (Wisdom) is a tree of life to those who lay hold on her”.²¹

Wisdom then represents another path to the tree of life, but Wisdom itself became identified with the Torah in Sirach 24 . It may well be that Ben Sira was making explicit here what he thought was implicit through parallelism in Proverbs 3. Prov 3:1-2 says,

“My son, do not forget my teachings²² (תּוֹרָתִי),
but let your heart keep my commandments (מִצְוֹתַי),
For length of days and years of life
And peace they will add to you”.

Compare 3:13, 16

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom (חָכְמָה)
Length of days is in her right hand”.

Further, the benefits of Wisdom are spoken of in Prov 3:23-24 in terms reminiscent of the Shema.

The paths, then, of keeping the Torah and adherence to Wisdom converge: both lead to eternal life.

An analysis of the Biblical background to the awakening to “reproaches and everlasting contempt” in Dan 12:2 will now follow. It will be seen that contravention of the Torah is the main reason for such punishment.

The plural of the noun חֲרָפָה is used for “reproaches”²³. חֲרָפָה is something which is experienced by the innocent (e.g., Job 19:5; Jer

²¹Two other passages in the Hebrew Bible which contain “tree of life” are Prov 11:30 and 15:4. The first reads, “The fruit of a righteous one is a tree of life” and the second, “Healing of the tongue is a tree of life”. This links with Prov 18:21, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat the fruit thereof”.

²²In its original application תּוֹרָתִי is likely to have indicated “teachings” in the general sense rather than the technical one of the teachings of God or Moses cf., J Jensen, *The Use of tora by Isaiah: His Debate with the Wisdom Tradition* (CBQMS 3; Washington: C.B.A. of America, 1973) 44.

²³“Reproaches” appears in all the ancient versions although many commentators regard it as a gloss because it appears superfluous and disturbs

15:5; Ps 69:7[8], 9[10], 10[11], 19[20], 20[21]) but it is also something which is brought about by wickedness: the reproach of the adulterer will not be wiped away according to Prov 6:33. The Psalmist pleads with God concerning the wicked in Ps 71:13.

“Let them be ashamed [and] consumed
who are adversaries of my soul.

Let them be covered with reproach (תְּרִפָּה)
and dishonour that seek my hurt.”

The last verse in the Psalm suggests that God complied with his request. In Ps 78:66 God,

“smites his enemies backward.

He put them to eternal reproaches (תְּרִפָּה עוֹלָם)”.

A further passage which contains תְּרִפָּה עוֹלָם is Jer 23:40 where God says,

“I will bring everlasting reproaches upon you
and perpetual shame which will not be forgotten”.

This is directed against adulterers (v. 10); prophets and priests who are profane (v. 11) and the prophets of Jerusalem who commit adultery, lie and strengthen evildoers (v. 14).

Two other passages in Jeremiah where God makes people “a reproach” (תְּרִפָּה) are 24:9 and 29:18. The former is addressed to the “bad figs” of Jeremiah’s parable and the latter, which is worded very similarly to the former, adds that the people will be a reproach,

“because they have not listened to my (i.e., God’s) words”.

Ezekiel also contains two passages where God makes Israel “a reproach”. These are Ezek 5:14 and 22:4. The former reads,

“And I will make you a desolation and a reproach
among the nations which are around about you,
in the eyes of all who pass by”.

This is part of God’s judgement upon his people (cf., Ezek 5:8) which he is bringing about because

“You are more turbulent than the nations around about you,
You have not walked in my statutes or done my judgements

the parallelism between “eternal life” and “everlasting contempt”. Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 19) omits it and in n. 51 lists others who do likewise. It is unnecessary to regard “reproaches” as a gloss and, as a perusal of its appearances elsewhere in the Bible shows, it is something brought about by God upon those who have contravened his covenant.

nor have you acted according to the judgements of the peoples who are around about you” (Ezek 5:7).

In other words God’s chosen nation had behaved in a worse manner than the nations he had not chosen.

In the later passage in Ezekiel (22:4) God tells Jerusalem that he will make her “a reproach to the nations” because of the following sins of which her people are guilty: the shedding of blood and the making of idols (v. 4); oppression of the stranger and wrongdoing towards orphans and widows (v. 7); profanation of the sabbath (v. 8); sexual sins (vv. 9-10); bribes and usury (v. 12).

“Reproach/reproaches” then in the Hebrew Bible, when it is a punishment of the wicked of Israel, indicates that those upon whom it will fall have contravened the covenant with God.

“Everlasting contempt” (דְּרֹאוֹן עוֹלָם) as well as “reproaches” was to be the punishment of some who awake in Dan 12:2. As mentioned above, דְּרֹאוֹן appears elsewhere only in Isa 66:24 where those who have sinned against God will be “contemptible” (דְּרֹאוֹן) to all flesh.

This concludes the analysis of Dan 12:2. It was discovered there that at the time of the eschaton when the heavens and earth would pass away Israel would undergo a reversal of what God had decreed in Gen 3:19; the sleep of death would be finished and there would be an awakening for judgement. Some would have everlasting life and others reproaches and eternal contempt and the criterion for assignment to one category or the other would be adherence or lack of it to God’s commandments. The path to eternal life was wisdom but this was seen to converge with the path of obedience to the Torah and/or the correct attitude to God, that is, humility or fear of the Lord.

The separation of Dan 12:2 from 12:1 is in many ways a false one. An analysis of the latter in its entirety is not possible here due to the limitations of space but given the title of the present paper it is essential to consider the last two statements:

- e) “And at that time your people will be delivered
וְקִבַּעַת הַדָּוָה יִסְלַם עַמּוּךְ
- f) Everyone who is found written in the book”.
כָּל־דֹּעֲמָא קְחוּב בְּסֵפֶר

“At that time” refers back to the “time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation unto that time”. There is a tradition in the Hebrew Bible of God saving Israel in a time of trouble especially when they called upon him (Neh 9:27; Jer 14:8; 30:7) but also of him helping the individual righteous, oppressed or humble person in such a time (Ps 9:10[9]; 10:1f; 34:18[17]; 37:39; 116:3; Neh 1:7). The times of trouble in such passages are not eschatological in nature but Zeph.1:14-15 identifies a day of trouble (צָרָה) with the Day of the Lord. The notion

of birth pangs became associated with such a time through the use of צרה in Jer 4:31; 6:24. It is likely that the time of trouble in Dan 12:1 should be understood as the Day of the Lord²⁴ in that it is described as being “such as there never was, since there was a nation unto that time”. This is very specific, harking back to the time of Noah.²⁵ Gen 10:32 states that separate nations began after the deluge:

“... and of these (Noah’s descendants) were the nations (גוים) divided after the flood”.

In other words the time of trouble in Daniel is being likened to the flood! This is interesting for, of course, only Noah and his family were allowed to survive. Gen 6:8 says this was because,

“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord,”

whereas Gen 7:1 says that Noah was told to go with his family into the ark

“... because you I have seen righteous (צדיק) before me in this generation”.

Noah is mentioned in conjunction with Daniel and Job in Ezek 14:14, 20 (and in 14:16, 18 which refer to the two as “these three men”) in a divine oracle. God specifies four ways in which he will punish a land which has sinned against him: by famine or wild beasts or sword or pestilence and on each occasion he says if Noah, Daniel and Job were in the land, they alone, *not* their families, would be delivered because of their righteousness. This then makes the “time of trouble” worse than the flood.

Dan 12:1 says “at this time your people will be delivered”. “Your people” is Daniel’s people. The verb used for “delivered” is גלם. It is in the incomplete niph'al in Dan 12:1e and there are five relevant occurrences elsewhere. These are Ezek 17:15, 18; Prov 28:26; Joel 3:5(2:32); Mal 3:15. The verses in Ezekiel concern Zedekiah, King of Judah, immediately prior to the fall of Jerusalem and the exile in Babylon. God says that Zedekiah made a covenant with the King of Babylon but broke it by sending ambassadors to Egypt to ask for material aid. God then asks the questions:

²⁴ A number of commentators believe that the “time of trouble” in Dan 12:1 is a reference to Jer 30:7—e.g., Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 15; Lacoque, *Daniel*, 17; Delcor, *Daniel*, 251; Charles, *Daniel*, 326—although all acknowledge that the “time of trouble” indicates the events of the end. The linking of a time of trouble with the Day of the Lord in Zephaniah does not appear to have been connected previously with Daniel.

²⁵ Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 15, n. 25) thinks it should be “the nation” and therefore Israel. Goldingay (*Daniel*, 306) holds a similar view.

- v. 15 “ ... shall he prosper?
 shall he who does these things be delivered (יִקָּלַט)?
 will he who breaks a covenant be delivered (יִקָּלַט)?”

God then answers his own questions in vv. 16-17 detailing what will happen to Zedekiah and justifying it in vv. 18-19.

- v. 18 “For he who has despised an oath by breaking a covenant.
 Behold he gave his hand and yet he did all these things
 he will not be delivered (יִקָּלַט).”

- v. 19 “Therefore, thus says the Lord God, As I live,
 Surely my oath which he despised
 and my covenant which he broke, I will bring it upon his
 head.”

Ezekiel is talking about a specific occurrence in history, nevertheless the passage has a message for Dan 12:1, those who break the covenant will not be delivered, whether it be the Mosaic covenant made with God himself or one made with another human being, invoking God's name.

Prov 28:26 has a positive message:

“ ... he who walks in wisdom will be delivered (יִקָּלַט).”

Joel 3:5(2:32) is very appropriate as a background to Dan 12:1e for it concerns the Day of the Lord. The four preceding verses detail what will be the signs of its approach:

3:1(2:28) “ ... your sons and daughters will prophesy,
 your old men will dream dreams,
 your young men will see visions.

3:2(2:29) And also in those days I will pour out
 my spirit upon your servants
 and upon your handmaids.

3:3(2:30) And I will give signs upon the heavens and upon the
 earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

3:4(2:31) The sun will be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood,
 before the coming of the day of the Lord,
 the great and terrible day.

3:5(2:32) And it will come to pass,
 all who call on the name of the Lord
 will be delivered (יִקָּלַט) ... ”.

Once again then showing humility and expressing dependence upon God by “calling on His name” is seen as the prerequisite for survival. Joel gives greater detail than Zephaniah of what should be expected at the approach of the Day of the Lord (in 4:15[3:15] he says both sun and moon will be darkened and the stars lack their shining, which is reminiscent of the time prior to creation [Gen 1:2]).

Mal 3:15 is part of a passage where God reminds those who have spoken against Him of what they have said. Amongst other things, they have cynically expressed the belief that,

“... those who perpetrate wickedness are built up
and those who tempt God are delivered (מַלְאִים)”.

These words caused a reaction amongst those “who feared the Lord” for they spoke amongst themselves. God listened,

“... and a book of remembrance was written before Him
for those who feared the Lord and considered His name”(v. 16).

In the following verse God announces that such people will be His, saying,

“And I will spare them, as a man spares
his own son who serves him” (v. 17).

Verse 18 makes it clear that the difference between the righteous and the wicked is that the former serve God whereas the latter do not. In earlier verses Malachi details some of the sins against God which constitute a lack of service to Him: polluted or blemished offerings (1:7-14); priests leading others astray (2:8-9); marriage to non-Israelite women (2:11); divorcing the wife of one's youth; sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, those who oppress the wage earner, the widow, the orphan and do not treat the stranger in accordance with the Torah (3:5); robbing God through not paying the proper tithes (3:8-9). The sum of what God required is encapsulated in 3:22(4:4):

“Remember the Torah of Moses, my servant, which I commanded
him at Horeb for all Israel, statutes and judgements”.²⁶

Mal 3:19-22(4:1-3) details what will happen on “the day which comes” (3:19[4:1] is probably to be identified with “the great and terrible day of the Lord” [3:23{4:5}]). The day “burns as a furnace” (3:19[4:1]) and it will completely destroy the wicked. The righteous, those who fear God's name, will survive and to them “the sun of righteousness will arise with healing in its wings”. Suffice to note though, as far as the question of מַלְאִים is concerned in Dan 12:1, Malachi tells us that those who fear the Lord, keep his covenant and consider His name are the ones who will be delivered or spared.

There are a number of passages which contain מַלְאִים, although not in the niphal incomplete, and which support the notion that the righteous will be delivered. These are Prov 11:21; Ps 41:2(1); 107:20. To appreciate the full import of Prov 11:20 it needs to be read in its context. The whole chapter concerns a contrast between the wicked and the righteous.

²⁶Many scholars think that this is part of an appendix but the message is compatible with Malachi.

Verse 19 reads,

“Thus righteousness leads to life,
and he who pursues evil (goes) to his death”.

Verse 21,

“An evil one will not be unpunished,
and the seed of the righteous will be delivered (מִקְלָט)”.

Like Ps 116:3-4 then these verses suggest that life or death are the consequences of one's actions.

Ps 41:2(1) specifies what is required for deliverance:

“Happy is he who considers (מִשְׁכִּיל) the poor (דָּל)

On the day of evil (רָעָה) the Lord will deliver him (יִמְלֹטוּ).”

and in v. 3(2) appears the conviction that life is the reward of such a one

“The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive ...”.

Ps 107:20 asserts that even those who have gone astray (cf., v. 17), if they cry to God, He will save them:

“... He delivers (וְיִקְלָט) from their destructions”.

In summary, it has been found that מִלֵּט is used of the delivery, sometimes explicitly from death, of those who keep God's covenant, call on His name, fear Him, walk in wisdom, are righteous or consider the poor. To turn to God, even at the last minute, will bring deliverance.

The verb נִצַּל is used in a very similar way as was demonstrated above in the example of Ps 116:4, 8. It is not proposed to deal extensively with its occurrences, for it is a common verb, rather simply to mention a few which cohere with what has been said about מִלֵּט.

Prov 11:4 “Riches have no profit on the day of wrath,
Righteousness delivers from death.”

Prov 11:9 “Through knowledge (דַּעַת) the righteous will be
delivered”

Ps 33:18-19 “Behold the eye of the Lord is upon those who fear
Him ... to deliver their soul from death”

Ps 34:8(7) “The angel of the Lord encamps around those
who fear Him and delivers them.”

Ps 18(17) “The righteous cried and the Lord heard
and delivered them from all their troubles (צָרוֹתָם).”

Prov 11:9 and Ps 34:8(7) are interesting for they add new dimensions to what was discovered with מִלֵּט. Prov 11:9 says that it is through דַּעַת, knowledge, that the righteous will be delivered. Knowledge of God, for instance, in Hos 6:6 was more important than burnt offerings and if that statement is read in conjunction with the following verse it suggests that the knowledge which is meant is the knowledge of the covenant. Wisdom and knowledge are sometimes coupled (Isa 47:10, Eccl 1:16;

2:21 etc.)²⁷ as are knowledge and fear of the Lord (Isa.11:2). דעת was regarded as very important at Qumran.

Ps 34:8(7) links with Dan 3:25, 28 where a fourth man who looked like “a son of the gods” or “an angel” was seen in the midst of the fire and delivered the three friends. It is interesting also for its parallelism with its own v. 18(17) where God, rather than the angel, delivers the righteous. God and the angel of God, then, perform the same function which in turn connects with Michael, the angelic figure of Dan 12:1 whose name means “who is like God”.

Dan 12:1f defines those who will be delivered as “everyone who is found written in the book”. A number of biblical passages make it clear that there was a belief in ancient Israel that God had a record of the deeds of each person,

“my tears are they not in your book” (Ps 56:9 [8])?

Indeed there is evidence of a book which recorded the names of only those who were in right relationship with God,

“And the Lord said to Moses, whosoever

has sinned against me, I will blot from my book” (Exod 32:33).

Mal 3:16 supports the notion of a written record of those who are righteous,

“ ... a book of remembrance was written
before Him for those who feared the Lord
and considered his name”.

In Ps 69:29(28) and Isa 4:3 the connection is made between those who are in the book and life. They read,

Ps 69:29(28) “Let them be blotted out of the book of life”.

Isa 4:3 “Everyone that is written unto life in Jerusalem”.²⁸

These passages, then, make it clear that only the righteous were recorded in God’s “book” (Exod 32:33; Mal 3:16) and that a link was

²⁷Prov 8:10 implies that דעת belongs to Wisdom, cf., also Sir 1:19; 21:11-18

²⁸A book is also mentioned in Ps 139:16. It reads,

“Your eyes saw my embryo (גלם)

And in your book were written all of them

Days they were fashioned

And not (yet) one among them”.

The interpretation of this verse is much disputed partly because of textual variations and likely corruptions. It may even refer to predestination in the sense that even before a person is born their life (days) is planned. Certainly much of the Psalm concerns God’s intimate knowledge of a person’s deeds (v. 2) and words, even before they have been spoken (v. 4).

made between those who were in the book and life (Ps 69:29[28], Isa 4:3).

The phrases in Dan 12:1 which have been considered cohere with Dan 12:2, the main difference being that 12:1 concerns those who were alive at the eschaton whereas 12:2 deals with those who had died previously. The criterion for continued life or being awakened to eternal life was seen to be the same in both cases: adherence to the covenant, humility or fear of the Lord, following the path of wisdom and association with a righteous one.²⁹ It is generally asserted that it was the death of those who were faithful to God in the Antiochene persecution which gave rise to the conviction that God would not allow them to go unrewarded and conversely that those who had betrayed him would be punished. Such a historical crisis may well have provided the impetus for such beliefs but it is the contention of the present paper that Dan 12:1-2 evidences reflection upon passages in the Hebrew Bible which suggest that the “death” pronouncements of Genesis 3 could be overturned.

²⁹The passages behind the verb *נצל* or *מלט* “deliver” in 12:1, though, also mentioned that “one who considers the poor” will be delivered on the day of evil (Ps 41:2[1]) and that “Riches have no profit on the day of wrath” (Prov 11:4)