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Where Is the Son of Man Coming or Going?

Daniel 7:13–14's Place in Jesus's Eschatology

Anthony J. MacPherson | ORCID: 0009-0003-2565-2734
Avondale University, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia
anthony.macpherson@avondale.edu.au

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Abstract

In Daniel 7 the 'Son of Man coming with the clouds' appears to move toward (or within) heaven. In the apocalyptic discourses Jesus has the Son of Man moving in the opposite direction to earth, traditionally understood as the Second Coming. Resolutions of the discrepancy include arguing that Daniel 7 refers to Jesus's ascension, that the Synoptics use Daniel's language to refer to a coming in judgement against Jerusalem in A.D. 70, others suggest evolutionary developments in the early church or a mistaken Jesus. This article suggests Jesus's use of Daniel reflects a close exegetical reading of the text. There is no discrepancy.

Keywords

apocalyptic – eschatology – Jesus – Daniel – Synoptic Gospels – Parousia

1 Introduction

Commentators have offered a range of explanations for the meaning of Jesus's use of the Danielic phrase, 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven' in the apocalyptic discourses of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.[1] The Second

1 While sometimes called 'the little apocalypse' or 'the Synoptic apocalypse' they are not actual apocalypses but scholastic-styled dialogues more accurately termed an apocalyptic

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Coming, the ascension, and the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. have all been suggested as explanations. To better discern between these positions this study asks whether the Synoptics present Jesus's explanation of the coming of the Son of Man as arising out of a close exegetical-style reading of the text of Daniel or alternatively if Jesus (or his interpreters) are freely reusing Daniel in a creative way that is not constrained by the text.[2] If Jesus's comments derive from exegeting Daniel, then any interpretations of the Son of Man coming must meet the double-test of satisfying the particulars of *both* Daniel 7 and the Synoptics. Conversely, if Jesus's words are not intended as a close exegetical reading of Daniel, then all commentators need to do is show what event fulfils Jesus's words in the Synoptics. They need not fulfil the particulars of Daniel. The issue then is whether Jesus's answer to the disciples' question (Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:4; 21:7) arises out of an exegetical reading or a free improvisation of the language from Daniel 7 for a different but analogous event.

This article argues that the apocalyptic discourses do reflect a close exegetical reading of Daniel. They understand Jesus's words as intentionally reflecting what Dan. 7:13–14 intends. It is also argued that only the Second Coming interpretation fulfills the double-test of satisfying the particulars of both Dan. 7:13–14 and the apocalyptic discourses. This study begins with a brief survey of representative views, then offers three potential exegetical readings of Dan. 7:13–14 that may be behind Jesus's reading of Daniel, and finally seeks to draw some conclusions.

2 Major Positions

Historically the most common understanding of the 'coming of the Son of Man' in both Daniel and the Synoptics' apocalyptic discourses is that it refers to the Second Coming of Christ.[3] This is the view of many of the early church fathers.

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discourse. See Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2007), 594.

2 The debate about the designation 'Son of Man' in the Gospels is extremely vast and beyond the scope of this study. See Maurice Casey, *The Solution to the 'Son of Man' Problem* (London: T & T Clark International, 2009); Mogens Müller, *The Expression Son of Man and the Development of Christology: A History of Interpretation* (London: Equinox, 2008); Geza Vermes, 'The Son of Man Debate Revisited (1960–2010)', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 61/2 (2010), 193–206 https://doi.org/10.18647/2958/JJS-2010; *'Who Is This Son of Man?': The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus*, ed. by Larry W. Hurtado and Paul Owen (London: T & T Clark, 2011); *The Son of Man Problem: Critical Readings*, ed. by Benjamin E. Reynolds (London: Bloomsbury, T&T Clark, 2018). What generally is not disputed is that Matt. 24:30, 31; Mark 13:26, 27 and Luke 21:27 allude to Daniel 7:13, 14.

3 Commentators who affirm that the Second Coming is in view often also see references to

They read Jesus's words and Daniel 7 as a straightforward prediction of the Second Coming.[4] Hence, Jesus explains rather than creatively reuses or improvises Daniel's words for an alternative event. This initially appears to be a good match. However, commentators have been perplexed by an apparent contradiction. In Daniel, the Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven while in the Synoptics he moves to the earth.[5] The directions of movement are apparently opposite. This has led some commentators to see Jesus as freely reinterpreting Daniel 7 either as still referring to the Second Coming,[6] or even to an imminent end-of-the-world event that never takes place. In this latter scenario, Jesus is mistaken and misinterprets Daniel.[7] Some scholars shift the blame for a mistake from Jesus to later interpreters.[8] All tend to pursue historical reconstructions of theological or textual developments within the early church as explanations.[9]

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the 70 A.D. fall of Jerusalem in the apocalyptic discourses but usually connect this to the abomination of desolation rather than the coming of the Son of Man. The discourses are understood as either a blending of the two events, a dual reference, or a typological relationship between them, however 'the majority conclude that it [Mark's apocalyptic discourses] deals both with events of the time [fall of Jerusalem] and the parousia of Jesus and the final end'. E. Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven: Cosmic Catastrophe in the New Testament and Its World* (London: Continuum, 2007), 135. See also W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, Jr, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew XIX–XXVIII*, International Critical Commentary, III (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 330–31; Grant R. Osbourne, *Matthew*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 865.

4 *Matthew 14–28*, ed. by M. Simonetti, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, NT Ib (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 201–03; *Mark*, ed. by T. C. Oden and C. A. Hall, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, NT II (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 178–79; *Luke*, ed. by A. A. Just, Jr, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, NT III (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 324–25.

5 'This descent is described using imagery drawn from Daniel 7:13–14, except that the direction of the movement is reversed.' J. Marcus, *Mark 8–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible, 27a (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 908. Marcus notes this repeatedly in pages 905–08.

6 Davies and Allison, *Matthew XIX–XXVIII*, 331.

7 Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 864–66. See also A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, trans. by W. Montgomery (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2005), 369. A key driver of this are statements of Jesus that appear to claim his coming will happen within the lifetime of that generation (Mark 9:1; 13:30; Matt. 10:23). Paula Fredriksen also has an eschatologically mistaken apocalyptic Jesus whose imminent Parousia does not materialize and a church (especially Luke) that reinterprets his message. See Paula Fredriksen, *When Christians Were Jews: The First Generation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 99–108. Clayton Sullivan bluntly states that Jesus was mistaken, in error, and that his message was an unfulfilled hope. See C. Sullivan, *Rethinking Realised Eschatology* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988), 64.

8 Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 865–66.

9 An alternative counterproposal to these views maintains that Jesus did not give a false

Another tradition argues that Daniel 7 is referring to the exaltation of Jesus. This is usually understood as his ascension.[10] Others locate the exaltation primarily with the crucifixion, Great Commission, or resurrection.[11] This view has the apparent advantage of getting the perceived directional movement of the Son of Man right. But if the ascension is the fulfilment of Dan. 7:13–14 then what of its use by Jesus in the apocalyptic discourses? This view seems to require Jesus reinterpreting, or reapplying Daniel's apparent ascension imagery to a later Second Coming event. A different version of the exaltation perspective is found in John A. T. Robinson. Stanley Porter describes his view as asserting that 'the church has entirely misunderstood the notion of Jesus's Second Coming, in that there was only the one coming of Christ that has already occurred but is ongoing, and which leads to all of humanity becoming one with God.'[12] Jesus's coming is one event of his life, death, resurrection, and a non-spatial ascension to God.[13] Robinson argues that Jesus's earliest interpreters misunderstood him and gradually the idea of a Second Coming developed.[14]

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prophecy; instead his comments were in line with OT prophecy which is conditional and contingent upon the responses of human beings. The timing of the eschaton is linked to Christian response, ethical living, and mission. See Christopher M. Hays and others, *When the Son of Man Didn't Come: A Constructive Proposal on the Delay of the Parousia* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2016).

10 'This, in my judgement, ought to be explained of Christ's ascension.' John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Daniel*, trans. by Thomas Meyer (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852), 40–43. See also, D. Farrow, *Ascension Theology* (London: T & T Clark, 2011), 15, 20, 25; P. Schreiner, *The Ascension of Christ: Recovering a Neglected Doctrine* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), 55.

11 For the idea that the Parousia of Jesus refers to his vindication by God at his resurrection, see Ernest van Eck, 'Eskatologie en Koninkryk in die Markusevangelie', *HTS Teologiese Studies* 64/1 (2008), 567–97 https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v64i1.33. Peter Bolt sees Mark 13 fulfilled in Jesus's death, resurrection and ascension rather than the destruction of Jerusalem or the Second Coming. See Peter G. Bolt, *The Cross from a Distance: Atonement in Mark's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004).

12 Stanley E. Porter, 'John A. T. Robinson: Provocateur and Profound Johannine Scholar', in *The Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation*, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Roy C. Fay (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2018), 141–72 (147). 'Henceforth' or 'from now on' this coming is still occurring and will bring all things together to God. The Parousia is a myth of Christ's ongoing work but loses its value if made into a literal event or literal bodily return. See J. A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming* (Nashville, TN: Abington, 1957), 181–82. Robinson is clear that 'coming in the clouds' is a reference to Jesus's ascent at his exaltation (43).

13 Somewhat similar to Robinson is Lohfink's view of an existential reign of God that is continually coming now. The 'end of the world does not come "at the end", for we are already in the midst of the "end of the world". We already live in the end time. Every moment is "the last hour".' G. Lohfink, *No Irrelevant Jesus: On Jesus and the Church Today*, trans. by L.M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 34.

14 Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, 118–59; Porter, 'John A. T. Robinson: Provocateur and Profound Johannine Scholar', 147.

A third and increasingly common view is that the coming of the Son of Man refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.[15] Currently, the views of N. T. Wright are very influential in this regard. Wright argues that in the Synoptics the coming of the Son of Man refers to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and not the Second Coming.[16] He states, '[W]hen Jerusalem is destroyed, and Jesus' people escape from the ruin just in time, that will be yhwh becoming king, bringing about the liberation of his true covenant people, the true return from exile, the beginning of the new world order.'[17] The imagery of cosmic signs and coming in the clouds are considered stock poetic figures and metaphors of the military-political destruction of a kingdom or city drawn from prophetic descriptions of earlier such falls or collapses (e.g., Babylon, Edom, etc.).[18] Wright is adamant that the coming of the Son of Man in clouds is not to be taken literally as a prediction of Jesus flying about in mid-air on a cloud.[19] This is a claim he often repeats.[20] Instead, in the Synoptics the Son of Man's

15 R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 890–960. Wright actually combines an exaltation position with the 70 A.D. position. 'And everything we have seen so far from Paul, Matthew and from Luke insists that we should read this language [Mark 13:24–27] in terms of the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus on the one hand and the fall of the Temple (the heaven-and-earth place) on the other.' N. T. Wright, 'Hope Deferred? Against the Dogma of Delay', *Early Christianity* 9 (2018), 37–82 (77) https://doi.org/10.1628/ec-2018-0003. He sees Jesus's allusions to Dan. 7:13–14 in Matt. 22:69; Luke 22:67–70 and Matt. 28:18–19 as indications that the exaltation of Jesus as coming Son of Man refers to 'a new state of affairs, not to a single event' which culminates in the fall of Jerusalem (74–75).

16 N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), 517. Note Wright does believe that a Second Coming will take place but he argues it is not spoken of by Jesus and only appears post-Jesus. See N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (London: SPCK, 2007), 135–48.

17 Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 364.

18 Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 512–23. Isa. 13:6–13; 34:4–5. Robert Stein counters Wright on this saying: 'The sayings are clearly understood by the Gospel writers as referring to a second coming of the Son of Man at the end of history. The return of the Son of Man with the holy angels in Mark 8:38; his separation of the goats and the sheep into eternal punishment in Matt. 25:31–46; the return of the Son of Man in the new world in Matt. 19:28; the removal from his kingdom of all evil; and the casting of the weeds into the furnace of fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in Matt. 13:41–42; the question of whether the Son of Man will find faith when he comes in Luke 18:8; etc. cannot be demythologized into being a metaphorical reference to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Luke understands the return of Jesus, the Son of Man, as being visible and personal in Acts 1:11.' R. Stein, 'N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God: A Review Article', *Journal of the Evangelical Society* 44/2 (2001), 207–18 (216).

19 Wright, 'Hope Deferred? Against the Dogma of Delay', 73.

20 Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 342, 345, 362. Despite these assertions the ascension seems to affirm a literal visible Jesus mid-air in clouds. Daniel Marguerat notes that

coming is one of judgement on Jerusalem via the armies of Rome.[21] Wright makes the fall of Jerusalem the special vindication of Jesus as prophet and Messiah. 'When [Jesus's] prophecy of its destruction comes true, that event will demonstrate that he was indeed the Messiah who had authority over it.'[22] It is not entirely clear how this is so.[23]

3 Exegeting Daniel 7:13–14

To evaluate these approaches, we will offer three possible and plausible readings of the text which may lie behind Jesus's use of Daniel. Chapter 7 of Daniel consists of two parts, the dream itself (verses 1–14) and an interpretative discussion (verses 15–28).[24] A clue to the dream's structure (vv. 1–14) is indicated in the first verse's reference to Daniel seeing both a singular dream and plural visions.

'In V. 9–11 werden nicht weniger als vier Verben des Sehens gebraucht: βλέπω, ἀτενίζω … ἐμβλέπω … θεάομαι.' Daniel Marguerat, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022), 70. Recognising the problem, Wright tries to fit Acts 1 into his view by claiming that this is a moment of radical novelty. That here is the first mention of the return of Jesus and the first time that 'coming in the clouds' has ceased to be a metaphor of vindication and has become an historical event. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 462–63. Considering how Acts follows on from the book of Luke, it would be more natural for readers, unaware of Wright's schema, to read Acts 1 in light of Luke 21. Both seem to want to describe visible events.

21 For Wright Daniel 7 is part of Jesus's answer to the disciples' questions which he understands as 'a classic piece of reworked apocalyptic'. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 346.

22 Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 511. Others have pointed out that 'The NT does not place the vindication of Jesus in A.D. 70. Rather, it sees this as taking place in his resurrection. Paul states that Jesus was "designated Son of God in power … by his resurrection from the dead (1:4)".' Stein, 'N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God', 216. Wright has since acknowledged the resurrection as the vindication of Jesus, see N. T. Wright, 'In Grateful Dialogue: A Response', in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God*, ed. by Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 281–88 (269). This admission is in tension with his earlier claims and appears to undercut their need or validity.

23 Stein asks how the fall of Jerusalem, which was in effect a first-century holocaust which included 'the expulsion from the land and continued domination and persecution of God's people by Rome', would be recognized by a first-century Jew (or Jewish Christian) as the long hoped for prophesied return from exile. Stein, 'N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God', 218.

24 The second section of the interpretative discussion consists of Daniel's reaction (vv. 15–16), the angel's initial interpretative summary (vv. 17–18), Daniel's follow-up question and summary (vv. 19–22), and the angel's second, fuller interpretation (vv. 23–28).

'Dream' appears to refer to the prophet's whole experience while 'visions' refer to the visual parts or subsections of the dream that passed through his mind (vv. 1, 15). Daniel 2:28 likewise references a dream (sing.) and visions (pl.). Although Daniel 2 does not clarify what the visions are in distinction from the dream, the King is said to have twice 'looked' (*ḥāzêh*), first at an image (v. 31) and later at a stone (v. 34), suggesting two sections or 'visions' (the image and the stone). Daniel 4:4 refers to a singular dream in which are 'images' and 'visions'. When the King describes his dream, he mentions the 'visions' where he 'looks' (*ḥāzêh*) and 'beholds' (*wa'ărū*) a tree (v. 10). Later there is another of the 'visions' in verse 13 in which he 'looks' and 'beholds' a watcher. The dream evidently consists of two images or visions (a tree and a watcher).

The dream of Daniel 7 is similar to chapters 2 and 4 but with its own more complex substructure marked by its own clear and consistent use of words 'night visions', 'behold', and 'looking' (see Table 1).[25] The dream consists of Daniel 'looking' (*ḥāzêh*) at three sequential 'night visions' (vv. 2, 7, 13).[26] Within each vision the interjection 'behold' (*wa'ărū*, vv. 2, 5, 6, 7, 13; *wa'ălū*, v. 8 twice) introduces the appearance of a new agent. Within each distinct vision Daniel keeps 'looking' (*ḥāzêh*) 'until' (*'aḏ*) he observes a transformative development that affects an agent.[27] These three 'visions' function like three separate Acts within a play. Our interest is in the third Act or night vision concerning the 'son of man'.[28]

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25 I am here using the language of the NASV.

26 Agus Santoso also divides the vision into the same three sections. Agus Santoso, *Die Apokalyptik als jüdische Denkbewegung: Eine literarkritische Untersuchung zum Buch Daniel* (Marberg: Tectum, 2007), 141.

27 In 7:4 is a dramatic transformation of the Lion. In 7:9 a judgment convenes to deal with fourth beast/little horn. In 7:11 continuing boastful words lead up to the destruction of the fourth beast/little horn.

28 The possibilities of ANE mythemes and OT 'Divine Warrior' or 'Coming of God' motifs as background sources for Daniel's Son of Man have received much attention. See the surveys in Edward Adams, 'The "Coming of God" Tradition and Its Influence on New Testament Parousia Texts', in *Biblical Traditions in Transmissions: Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 111, ed. by Charlotte Hempel and Judith M. Lieu (Boston: Brill, 2006), 1–19; Carol A. Newsom and Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville: KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 217–20; Scott C. Ryan, *Divine Conflict and the Divine Warrior: Listening to Romans and Other Jewish Voices*, WUNT, 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019). Space precludes an extensive discussion but three points can be noted. First, these motifs are in an enormously diverse set of sources. Second, the motifs are reused in a great variety of ways. Third, whatever sources Daniel may have used, they have in keeping with the tradition, been used selectively, and reshaped to serve the author's purposes.

TABLE 1 Structuring features within Daniel 7

Three visions within the dream	**Agent/character appearing within the three visions**	**New developments to the agents/characters**
Key words: 'looking', 'night visions'.	**Key word: 'behold'.**	**Key words: 'looking', 'until'.**
I was **looking** in my **vision by night** (v. 2)	**behold**, four beasts, first a lion (vv. 2–4) **behold**, another beast, a bear (v. 5) **behold,** another one, like a leopard (v. 6)	I kept **looking until** ... Its wings were plucked (v. 4)
I kept **looking** in the **night visions** (v. 7)	**behold,** a fourth beast (v. 7) **behold**, another horn (v. 8) **behold**, possessed human eyes (v. 8)	I kept **looking until** ... Ancient of Days (v. 9) I kept **looking** *because* ... of the boastful words (v. 11) I kept **looking until** ... beast was destroyed (v. 11)
I kept **looking** in the **night visions** (v. 13)	**behold** ... a son of man was coming (v. 13)	

3.1 *Exegetical Reading A*

The first potential exegetical reading (Reading A) is the simplest which involves a strict sequential reading. The coming of the Son of Man to the heavenly judgement is after the beastly horn has finished persecuting and has been judged and destroyed (see Diagram 1). Importantly, the text in Aramaic does not speak of an ascension of the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days but only of an approach.[29] In this reading, there is no overlap between the Son of Man and

29 'The text does not indicate whether the figure is ascending or descending or moving horizontally.' J. J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 311. Ferch says that Daniel is silent on whether this is an ascent or

ACT 1: The Beasts (1–6)	ACT 2: The Fourth Beast (7–12)					ACT 3: The Son of Man (13–14)	
I saw in my vision by night four winds … beasts … Lion … Bear …. Leopard	**After this I saw in the night visions** … a fourth beast	it had ten horns	… there came up a little one … [with] a mouth speaking great things.	… the Ancient of Days took his seat … the court sat in judgement, and the books were opened.	… the beast was killed … destroyed …	**I saw in the night visions** … a Son of Man *came* to the Ancient of Days And was given dominion	All nations … shall worship him. His dominion and Kingdom … will not pass away

DIAGRAM 1 Reading A

the fourth beast. The beast's kingdom is destroyed and only then does the Son of Man receive a heavenly kingdom. In the angelic explanation in v. 27 the kingdom 'under the whole heaven' is 'handed over' to the saints. Taking vision (v. 14) and explanation (v. 27) together there is a movement of the kingdom from heavenly Son of Man to the earthly saints. The Son of Man can be read not merely as a symbol of the saints but instead as their heavenly representative comparable to a high priestly figure.[30] Such an understanding is supported by verse 27 which speaks of the saints (plural) receiving the kingdom but also maintains and reiterates verse 14's Son-of-Man language stating that 'his (singular) kingdom' (v. 27) will never end and all nations will worship or serve 'him'.[31] There is

descent and both notions are introduced from later sources. A. Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, VI (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983), 166.

30 Perrin describes the Son of Man as an eschatological High Priest. See N. Perrin, *Jesus the Priest* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 167–82. For a view of the Son of Man as an 'eschatological figure with a messianic function as the representative of Israel', see Michael Bird, *Are You the One Who is to Come?: The Historical Jesus and the Messianic Question* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 79–87. Or as a divine being, see Markus Zehneder, 'Why the Danielic "Son of Man" Is a Divine Being', *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 24/3 (2014), 331–47 https://doi.org/10.2307/26371180.

31 Immediately after the saints receive the kingdom in verse 27 it states that 'His kingdom' is everlasting. Some translations arbitrarily emend 'His' to 'their' kingdom (ESV). This collapses the separate identity of the Son of Man into the saints. Others argue that 'His' refers to the nearest referent, the 'Most High', and indicates the Ancient of Days' kingdom (eliminating the Son of Man). This is clearly preferable to a plural emendation; however, verse 14 which verse 27 is explaining is clear that the kingdom is the Son of Man's and that he is served or worshiped. An additional explanation is offered by James Hamilton who, following Caragounis and Gentry, argues that based on subtle but distinct forms of the title 'Most

then an explicit coming of the Son of Man to the heavenly judgment to receive the kingdom and then an implied coming of the Son of Man to earth to share his heavenly kingdom with the saints.[32]

3.2 *Exegetical Reading B*

There is good reason to believe that reading A awkwardly forces too strict and rigid a progression. Act 2 of Daniel 7 is seeking to tell the entire story of the fourth beast kingdom from beginning to end. The Son of Man and his kingdom require their own description in a separate Act to follow. Nothing rules out concurrency of actors. To insert the Son of Man into Act 2 would totally change its focus from the fourth beast to the Son of Man. Having their own separate sections allows the overall story to be told properly but it does not mean there is no overlap or connection between the two entities. There are a series of close connections between the beastly horn and the Son of Man.[33] Both entities are at the centre of the Judgement scene (vv. 9–14). The little horn oppresses the saints while the Son of Man is the heavenly representative of the saints. The later interpretive half of Daniel (7:21–27) strongly reinforces this. In verse 22 the judgement renders a positive verdict for the saints, it is then followed by their possession of the kingdom. In verses 26 and 27 the judgement renders a negative verdict on the little horn, which is then followed by the little horn's destruction and the handing over of the kingdom to the saints and the Son of Man.[34] The heavenly judgement scenes of Acts 2 and 3 clearly overlap.

High' this should be understood as a reference to the Son of Man. This is not only due to v. 27's obvious allusion and parallel to verse 14. Hamilton notes that Daniel consistently uses the Aramaic term *illaya* for the Most High (3:26; 4:14, 21, 22, 29, 31; 5:18, 21; 7:25a). But in 7:18, 22, 25, 27b when Daniel uses the phrase 'saints of the Most High' he always uses the term *elyonin* for the Most High. He suggests this is actually a Hebrew adjective with an Aramaic plural ending. *Elyonin* appears to be a way of referring to the Son of Man as the Most High who receives kingdom and worship (vv. 14, 27) and is intimately related to the saints, who also receive the kingdom. It (*elyonin*) both associates him with the Most High (*illaya* / Ancient of Days) and also distinguishes him from that Most High. See J. M. Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 149–52. Hamilton is building on C. Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 75, and P. Gentry, 'The Son of Man in Daniel 7: Individual or Corporate?', in *Acorns to Oaks: The Primacy and Practice of Biblical Theology*, ed. by Michael A. G. Haykin (Toronto: Joshua Press, 2003), 59–75 (73).

32 Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7*, 184.

33 The Son of Man is 'the heavenly counterpoint to the little horn'. Bird, *Are You the One Who is to Come?*, 86.

34 'The judgement is first negative (against the "little horn" of the fourth beast), and then positive (in favor of "one like a son of man").' J. P. Tanner, *Daniel*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), 417.

				ACT 3: The Son of Man (13–14) *FLASHBACK to before little horn's destruction*		
				I saw in the night visions … a Son of Man came to the ***Ancient of Days***	He was given dominion, glory and kingdom	all peoples, nations … shall worship him …
ACT 1: The Beasts (1–6)	**ACT 2: The Fourth Beast** (7–12)					
I saw in my vision by night four winds … beasts … Lion … Bear …. Leopard	**After this I saw in the night visions** … a fourth beast	it had ten horns	… there came up a little one … [with] a mouth speaking great things.	… the ***Ancient of Days*** took his seat … the court sat in judgement, and the books were opened.	… the beast was killed … destroyed …	his dominion is an everlasting dominion and his Kingdom … will not pass away

DIAGRAM 2 Reading B

The Son of Man's appearance to the heavenly judgement should be read as taking place sometime *during* the Ancient of Days' deliberations over the little horn and not strictly after.[35] Act 3 follows Act 2 less due to a strict sequence (although there is a general sequence) than due to a separate focus (Act 2 is focused on the beast while Act 3 is focused on the Son of Man). The judicial decision against the little horn is at least in part a counterpoint to a favourable decision for the saints (vv. 21–22). There is thus an element of flashback in Act 3 and it overlaps with the end of Act 2.

3.3 *Exegetical Reading C*

Our third reading 'C' explores potential ways to translate the perfect and imperfect verbs of the vision. The third Act of the vision begins with Daniel seeing the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.[36] His coming is described using a present participle *ātēh* (come). Immediately, connected to the participle *ātēh* is

35 The beast's destruction and the Son of Man's reception of the kingdom occur at a similar time.

36 The location and direction of the present coming is not expressly indicated. Coming in the clouds *of heaven* implies a heavenly location. The movement could possibly be toward Daniel, who is presumably situated on earth near the great sea (v. 1). The immediately preceding event was the earthly destruction of the little horn which would also imply an earthward movement.

the verb *hăwāh*. This is significant because 'in Aramaic the verb *hăwāh* is often used with a participle to make a periphrastic tense expressing continuous and habitual action'.[37] The translation should read the Son of Man 'was coming' in an ongoing present tense.

The following three verbs in verses 13 and 14a are in the perfect tense and Jacques Doukhan argues they should be translated by a pluperfect in the past tense. The Son of Man who is currently seen as coming with the clouds, '*had come* (*metāh*) to the Ancient of Days, *had been brought* (*hăq·reḇû'·hî*) to him, and there *had been given* (*yehîḇ*) unto him the dominion, the glory, and the kingdom'.[38] These are completed or past tense events that the visible coming Son of Man has accomplished. Then there is a shift in verse 14b in which there are three verbs in the imperfect tense which are best translated by a future: 'And all peoples, nations, and men of every language *will worship* (*yiṗ·leḥûn*) him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that *will not pass away* (*lā yĕʿ·dēh*), and his kingdom one that *will never be destroyed* (*lā ṯiṯ·ḥăb·băl*).'[39] These uncompleted or future tense events describe what will happen to the visually present coming Son of Man after he has received the kingdom from the heavenly judgment. This would indicate that the vision of the coming Son of Man is primarily about *who* he is, and this is followed by descriptions of *what* he has done and will be doing, and *where* he has been and will be going. This sequence of introducing by visually depicting who someone is, followed by their activity, would be consistent with the rest of the vision, where an agent or character is first seen and visually depicted before its actions or activity are then described.[40]

The events re-arranged according to this translation of the verb tenses gives the following sequence of events. The Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days in the heavenly judgement and is given dominion, glory, and a kingdom. As glorious King, he moves from the heavenly judgement and dramatically and visually comes to the earth. As a result of this glorious coming, he will receive the worship of the nations and share his kingdom with the saints. Temporally the visual coming is between the heavenly judgement and the earthly worship

37 G. L. Archer, R. Laird Harris, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1999), 1007.

38 Translation based on J. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 117–18.

39 Based on Doukhan's translation. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 117–18.

40 The Lion is first visually depicted and then we have a verbal description of what happens to the lion. The same is true for all the following beasts. There is an extensive visual description of Ancient of Days and the setting he is in before we are told that he is engaging in a heavenly judgement.

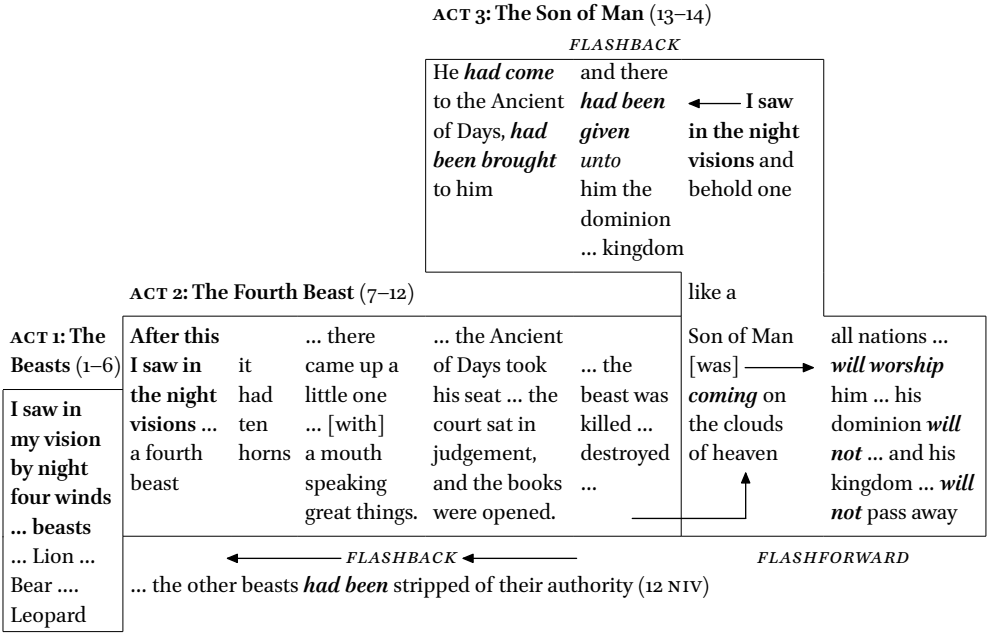

DIAGRAM 3 Reading C

of the Son of Man. Directionally, the visual coming is a movement of descent from heaven to earth. The perfect verbs suggest a flashback and the imperfect verbs suggest a flashforward.[41] What results is a subtle variation of the previous reading B now as reading C (see diagram 3). But what is most important is that the focus of this vision is Daniel seeing a glorious authority-invested-coming Son of Man. Around this coming other events find their significance.[42]

41 Some translations read verse 12 as a flashback: NIV, NCV, NRSV. The NIV reads it as a parenthesis and flashback.

42 Theodotion largely follows the Masoretic Text. See *Septuaginta: With Morphology* (*Alternate Texts*), ed. by Albert Rahlfs, electronic (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979). It starts with a present particle (ἐρχόμενος). It translates the first three Aramaic perfect verbs as aorist indicatives (ἔφθασεν, προσηνέχθη, ἐδόθη). The last three imperfect verbs are translated by a present indicative (δουλεύσουσιν, most likely an iterative present) and two future indicatives (παρελεύσεται, διαφθαρήσεται). The visionary context which is interested in narrating a sequence of events allows for the aorist, present and future indicatives to be read as conveying past, present (iterative) and future tenses within the flow of the vision. This bears some similarity to reading C. The LXX/Old Greek translates very differently (a series of three imperfects followed by a present participle and two aorist subjunctives) and does not reflect reading C. See Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta*.

4 Two Comings and Further Features of Daniel 7

What is consistent with all three readings is that there are two movements or comings of the Son of Man.[43] There is an initial explicit (completed or past tense) coming or rather approach to the Ancient of Days and the heavenly court. There is also a second strongly implied subsequent coming of the Son of Man to the earthly nations and saints who will worship him. Confirmation of this reading comes by re-examining a curious feature of the dreams structure (Table 1) which we have temporarily overlooked. In Daniel 7:1–13 the interjection 'behold' (*wa'ărū*) is used to introduce a new agent. Strangely, this is true of every agent except the Ancient of Days. How can this be? It cannot be that the Ancient of Days is of lesser importance, as he is God and everything hinges on his conferring a kingdom to the Son of Man (vv. 13, 14, 22). It cannot be that Daniel is too deferent to admit seeing God, as prophets can and do see God in vision (Isa. 6:1, Ezek. 1:27–28). Daniel 'looks' (*ḥāzêh*) at the Ancient of Days (vv. 9, 13) but does not 'behold' (*wa'ărū*) him. Importantly, Daniel both 'looks' (*ḥāzêh*) and 'beholds' (*wa'ărū*) the Son of Man. But if he cannot 'behold' the Ancient of Days in the heavenly judgment, how can he 'behold' the Son of Man in the same event?

There is a parsimonious explanation. This involves understanding 'behold' as indicating not primarily visual identification but visual proximity. This comports well with the NIV decision to translate 'behold' (*wa'ărū*) in Daniel 7's vision by the phrase 'there before me was'. This places the beasts and the Son of Man on the earthly plane proximate to Daniel. The beasts arise out of the great sea (v. 2) while Daniel sees the Son of Man 'coming' (directional movement) to him on earth. However, the Ancient of Days, the thrones and angelic attendants (vv. 9–10, 13b), while visible to Daniel are not visually proximate to him because they are in the heavenly realm. Rather only the Son of Man is described as initially being before the Ancient of Days in heaven (therefore far from earthly Daniel) and later as 'there before me [Daniel]' (v. 13 NIV). This means that the Son of Man first comes to the Ancient of Days and the heavenly court, something that Daniel can see only from afar, and then subsequently comes to the earth, something visually proximate to Daniel. This preserves a transcendence for the heavenly realm and allows an immanence for the Son of Man. There are thus two comings. One heavenly and distant, the other earthly and proximate. The only one of our three readings which captures this dynamic is Reading C in which the verb tenses allow for flash-

43 Readings B and C are the more likely way Daniel 7 has been read.

backs and flashforwards but the focus is on a visibly proximate coming Son of Man. This effectively removes one of the most significant objections to the traditional view which claims Daniel and Jesus cannot be describing the same event because they speak of opposite movements. Instead, we have found that both Daniel and Jesus speak of a descending coming (equivalent to the 'Second Coming'). Daniel itself suggests a coming or descent from heaven to earth.

There are other exegetical features relevant to the words of Jesus. The imagery of coming in the clouds of heaven brings with it the idea of angel attendants (Pss. 18:10–12; 68:17; 104:3).[44] Verse 13 implies, as seen in multiple translations, that a group escorts the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days.[45] The idea of a Son of Man who is attended by angels is a feature of the text of Daniel itself. In addition to angel attendants, the heavenly judgement also grants the Son of Man glory, dominion/power, as well as a kingdom. In the narrative flow of the vision these features become what dynamically defines the Son of Man. He accumulates these characteristics. And where the Son of Man goes, so do these characterisations.

Taken together all of these observations indicate that in Daniel 7 when the Son of Man comes to the saints, nations, and kingdoms *under* the whole heavens (v. 27), that he is coming to earth. And when he comes to earth he will be coming on the clouds with angels, power, great glory, and a kingdom.[46] Furthermore, this kingdom is universal and eternal and will replace all other kingdoms. There is no slow evolutionary change but a cataclysmic replacement of earthly kingdoms by a singular heavenly one.[47] To this can be added other elements which are common to Daniel and the Synoptics. These are detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2 shows more than a limited allusion to Daniel 7:13 (i.e., Matt. 26:64; 28:18–19) or a loose collection of echoes; this is an overwhelming set of allusions and correspondences characteristic of exposition or exegesis.[48] The similarity

44 Sprinkle says the Son of Man being brought near indicates an 'angelic entourage'. J. M. Sprinkle, *Daniel*, Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary (Bellingham: WA: Lexham, 2020), 182, 393.

45 He 'was led into his presence' (NIV), 'was presented to him' (NRSV, NASB), 'they brought him near' (NKJV, WEB), 'was escorted before him' (NET).

46 This would be true of Reading A and B.

47 This is reinforced by reading the kingdom in Daniel 7 in light of the kingdom in Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, which obliterates all other kingdoms without leaving a trace.

48 Space does not permit extensive engagement with another important set of texts which allude to Daniel 7:13–14 and have been interpreted as references to the ascension (Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69). It is not necessary to read the verses this way. For posi-

TABLE 2 Allusions and correspondences between Daniel 7 and Matthew 24

Daniel 7	**Synoptic apocalyptic discourses (Matt. 24)**
After a period of tribulation and persecution	After a period of tribulation and persecution
(Daniel *sees* a *visible* coming)	(Saints/the nations *see* a *visible* coming)[a]
Son of Man	Son of Man
Coming	Coming
(To earth)	To earth
With Clouds of heaven	With Clouds of heaven
Dominion/power and glory	Power and glory
Angels	Angels
All nations	All nations
Saints	Saints (elect)
(Universal: under the whole heavens)	(Universal: one end of heaven to the other)
(The end of history)	(The end of history)

a '*They will see*' (*opsontai*). This verse echoes Dan. 7:13–14, but the only one who *sees* in Daniel 7 is the seer himself. Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 903, 904. Jonathan Pennington states that the two occurrences of 'heaven' in the singular in Matt. 24:30 are to 'emphasize the visible appearing of the Son of Man in the human/earthly realm'. J. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 158.

of Daniel 7 to Jesus's words in the apocalyptic discourses is striking. The Synoptic passages appear to arise from a close exegetical reading of Daniel. All features are either explicitly present in the text of Daniel or logically derived from it. This does not appear to be a loose improvisation of imagery from Daniel 7 to an analogous event. The intent in the discourses is for the disciples and readers to understand Jesus as answering the disciples' question by a close reading of Daniel.[49] Having identified common features that seem to derive from

tions that support a Second Coming reading for these verses, see Barry L. Blackburn, 'The Meaning of a Matthean Redaction: Ἀπ' Ἄρτι in Matthew 26:64', *Novum Testamentum* 64 (2022), 1–17 https://doi.org/10.1163/15685365-bja10009; Murray J. Smith and Ian J. Vaillancourt, 'Enthroned and Coming to Reign: Jesus's Eschatological Use of Psalm 110:1 in Mark 14:62', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 141/3 (2022), 513–31 https://doi.org/10.15699/jbl.1413.2022.6.

49 Concerning the 'abomination of desolation' which precedes Jerusalem's destruction Jesus alludes to Daniel (Matthew has Jesus explicitly stating he is referring to what was *spoken* of by Daniel the prophet), and both Matthew and Mark ask the reader (of Daniel) to understand. The verse Jesus is referring to is most likely Dan. 9:26, 27 which combines abomination, desolation, war, and statements explicitly mentioning Jerusalem and its

exegesis, we can line up these features common to Daniel and Jesus (Table 3) and then compare them to alternative interpretations to see which pass the double-test.[50]

Table 3 shows why each position attracts advocates. All positions can find some level of support from either parts of Daniel 7 or the Synoptic passages. But only the traditional Second Coming view emerges as a compelling exegetical reading which satisfies *all* features of *both* texts. The Son of Man's coming as described by Jesus, if understood as the Second Coming, stands out as a comprehensive fulfilment of Daniel. The partial nature of the correspondences for the alternative positions precludes first-order fulfilment for the exaltation/ascension or fall of Jerusalem positions. It suggests that they can at best be seen as secondary, inaugural, proleptic or typological style fulfilments. For example, if we consider the ascension text in Acts 1:9–11, it is unclear whether it alludes to Daniel 7 or not. Wright thinks so.[51] Zweip explicitly denies that Luke alludes to Daniel 7.[52] Even if we allow for an allusion to Daniel 7:13–14 it still does not indicate that the ascension fulfils Daniel 7. The angels seem to indicate that the future descending return of Jesus (Acts 1:11; Luke 21) will happen in the same manner as his ascension. If Acts 1 alludes to Daniel 7, it is not to indicate that the ascension is the fulfilment of Daniel 7 but rather to indicate that the ascension acts as a visual parallel and inverse foreshadowing (a type?) of the later end-time descent of Jesus in clouds which qualifies as the actual fulfilment of Daniel 7.[53]

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temple's destruction. In contrast Dan. 8, 11, and 12 speak differently. Daniel 8 does not refer to 'abomination'. Dan. 11:31 and 12:11 speak of the taking away of the *tamid* and defiling or desecrating the sanctuary but not its destruction, nor do they speak of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

50 Table 3 involves a series of decisions which not everyone will always agree with. But it illustrates the relative ease or difficulty of the various positions in conforming to *both* Daniel's and Jesus's words.

51 N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 374.

52 Zwiep notes that in Luke there is a parousia cloud (Luke 21:27), a transfiguration cloud (Luke 9:34–35) and an ascension cloud (Acts 1:9). They might be the same cloud but it does not mean they are the same event. A. W. Zwiep, *The Ascension of the Messiah in Lukan Christology*, Novum Testamentum, Supplements, 87 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 105, 119.

53 Something similar is probably at play in the Great Commission passage (Matt. 28:18–20). In Daniel 7 all nations will serve the Son of Man but in Matthew 28 this has not happened. Instead, the disciples are being sent on a mission to invite the nations to follow Jesus. This mission will last to the 'end of the age' which is associated with the universal, visible return of Jesus (Matt. 24:3, 30). If Matthew 28 alludes to Daniel 7, it is sparse, restrained, and lacks its universality, finality, a coming Son of Man in clouds, and the destruction of God's enemies, all of which are in Matthew 24. Matthew 28 may be related to Daniel 7 but only in Matthew 24 can Daniel 7:13–14 be said to be fulfilled.

TABLE 3 Double-test comparison of views

Features common to the *Coming of the Son of Man* in both Daniel & Synoptics[a]	**The ascension**	**Fall of Jerusalem**	**Second Coming**
Coming is Visible (Dan. 7:13 / Matt. 24:30)	Yes	No	Yes
Coming with Clouds (Dan. 7:13 / Matt. 24:30)	Yes	No	Yes
Coming with Angels (Dan. 7:13 / Matt. 24:31; 25:31)	Yes	No[b]	Yes
Coming in Glory (Dan. 7:13 / Matt. 24:30; 25:31)	Not stated	No	Yes
Coming to Earth (Dan. 7:14, 27 / Matt. 24:30)	No	No[c]	Yes
Coming with Authority/Power (Dan. 7:14, 27 / Matt. 24:30; 25:31)	Yes[d]	Yes	Yes
Coming is Universal (Dan. 7:14, 27 / Matt. 24:30–31)	No	No	Yes
Coming extends to All Nations (Dan. 7:25–27 / Matt. 24:30–31; 25:31)	No[e]	No	Yes
Coming delivers the Saints (Dan. 7:14, 18, 22, 25–27 / Matt. 24:30–31)	No	No	Yes
Coming leads to Judgement on Enemies (Dan. 7:26–27/ Matt. 24:39, 51; 25:41, 46)	No	Yes	Yes

a Synoptic references are representative and use has only been made of Matthew.

b Wright interprets the angels as human messengers. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 363. But in Daniel it is clearly angels.

c Unless understood as a metaphorical coming in judgement.

d The idea of 'authority' is part of the ascension if it is seen as incorporating the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20).

e The language of 'all nations' is conceivably part of the ascension if it is seen as incorporating the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). However, the commission is only to disciples who are to then go to the nations. The nations encounter a call to follow Jesus; they do not see the coming Jesus.

This study calls into question the idea that Jesus is mistaken. If Jesus is reading Daniel 7 exegetically then he is unlikely to be Albert Schweitzer's mistaken interpreter, who imagined that he is the Son of Man who must make the kingdom of God come. In Daniel 7 the Son of Man receives the final kingdom in and from the heavenly judgement first.[54] He does not, to use Schweitzer's language, try and force the wheel of history to turn on earth. He understands that the kingdom is received from God in heaven before it comes to earth.[55] This study also questions the need to imagine that later New Testament affirmations of a Second Coming are the work of later re-interpreters or mis-interpreters of Jesus.[56] Nor do we need to create an artificial divide, as N. T. Wright does, between a Jesus whose language of a coming exclusively refers to the fall of Jerusalem, and that the Apostles' identical language of a coming refers to the Second Coming.[57] There is no need to impose an arbitrary chasm between

54 The idea of a heavenly judgement which precedes the earthly coming of the Son of Man is not usually mentioned by Jesus. His interest is with earthly rather than heavenly activity. The heavenly judgement should be seen as enthymematic. It is present but unexpressed. See the following footnote.

55 In Dan. 7 the sequence is a legal-judicial conferral of the kingdom in the heavenly judgment to the Son of Man, followed by the earthly saints possessing/receiving the kingdom (vv. 21–22; 25–27). Jesus's words in Mark presuppose Daniel 7. Vernon K. Robbins suggests, 'The narration in Mark 13:26–27 presents Case-Result argumentation that presupposes the results of God's transfer of power to one like a son of man in Dan 7.

> **Case:** (26) And then they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory.
>
> **Result:** (27) And then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.
>
> [**Unexpressed Rule:** The dominion of the one like a son of man is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed (Dan 7:14b).]'

See V. K. Robbins, 'The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the Gospel of Mark', in *The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the New Testament*, ed. by Duane Frederick Watson, SBL Symposium Series 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 11–44 (37). This is a kind of enthymematic situation. All the features of Dan. 7:13, 14 lie behind Jesus's words but not all are expressed.

56 Because he thinks that Daniel 7 only contains a coming in or to heaven and not also a coming to earth, James Dunn feels the need to speculate about a tendency 'to reverse the direction of the travel in the course of transmission of the Jesus tradition. What began as a straight forward evocation of Daniel's vision, of an exaltation and implied enthronement in heaven, has steadily developed into the complex thought of enthronement followed by a redescent [*sic*] to earth.' James Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, Christianity in the Making, 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 758. Complexity is already present in Daniel 7 and Jesus as astute interpreter works from it. There is no need for speculative reconstructions.

57 Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 635; Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 461–64. 'It is here [Acts 1:10], for the first time in Luke's story, that mention is made of the return of Jesus'. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 463. The shared con-

them. It is more likely that the interpretations attributed to Jesus ended up shaping the entire apostolic tradition.

5 Conclusion

Where is the Son of Man coming and going? In the apocalyptic discourses Jesus is presented as reading the text of Daniel in an exegetically sensitive manner. Such a reading reveals a visible coming of the Son of Man to earth from heaven with the clouds, angels, authority, power, and great glory, to all nations, to be worshiped, and to share with his saints a universal, eternal kingdom which will replace all other kingdoms. Potential interpretations of Jesus words should affirm all these features. Only the traditional 'Second Coming' interpretation appears capable of accomplishing this.

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cepts and language concerning the 'coming' between the Synoptics and the rest of the New Testament includes 'coming', 'come', 'glory', 'gathering', 'trumpet', 'heaven', 'angels', 'power', 'reward', 'appear', 'destruction/punishment', 'clouds', 'thief', 'every eye will see', 'resurrection', etc. Contra Wright it appears the same event is being referred to.