Collins, John J. *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature.*
The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 20. Grand Rapids,
Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984. xii + 120 pp. Paper-
back, $14.95.

This slender volume, authored by one of the most prolific writers on
apocalyptic and the book of Daniel, is one in a series of twenty-four to be
published in the 1980s. The series is aimed at presenting a form-critical
analysis of every book of the OT.

Collins divides the volume into (1) an introduction to apocalyptic
literature, and (2) a form-critical analysis of the canonical Daniel. The
second section follows a fourfold development: (a) a presentation of the
structure of each chapter (except chaps. 10-12, which are discussed as a
unit); (b) a classification of genre and subgenres; (c) suggestions as to the
setting of each individual unit; and (d) a discussion of intention of each
pericope. The author observes that though apocalyptic literature has been
recognized as a distinct class of writing since 1832, form-critical analysis of
this type of document has been attempted seriously only during the last
two decades, as exemplified in the publications of P. Vielhauer, K. Koch,
the SBL group's results recorded in *Semeia* 14 and more recently D. Hell-
holm. It is significant that this approach was called for a decade and a half
ago by Koch, who contended that one of the reasons for the decline of
research in apocalyptic was the lack of the application of the historico-
critical method, especially form-critical analysis, for apocalyptic. Though
Hellholm's study of the genre is still incomplete, it is clear that he relies
more on text linguistics than on traditional form-criticism, of which he is
somewhat critical.

According to Collins, the two main types or subgenres of apocalyptic
are "historical apocalypses" (characterized by a review of history in some
form) and "otherworldly journeys" (visionary experiences mediated by an-
gels, who serve as guides and interpreters), though the component forms of
both often overlap. Examples of "historical apocalypses," in which the
most common medium of revelation is the symbolic dream vision (other
forms include epiphany, angelic discourse, revelatory dialogue, midrash,
etc.), are Daniel, Jubilees, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, etc. Biblical tradition has no
clear precedent for the apocalyptic "otherworldly journey." Ezek 40-48, the
closest biblical approximation to this type of apocalypse, has, however,
neither an ascent to heaven nor a descent to the netherworld. Extracanon-
ical examples of this second subgenre include 2 Enoch, 3 Baruch, the
Apocalypse of Abraham, etc. The medium of revelation in the second
kind of apocalypse is (1) transportation of a visionary, or (2) a revelation
account.

Collins disagrees with those who see the origin of apocalyptic in the late sixth century B.C. and maintains that the genre as defined by him emerged in Judaism during the Hellenistic age. Moreover, in his opinion, apocalyptic literature is not all the product of a single movement, hence the *Sitz im Leben* could be a conventicle rather than a community or a movement.

With regard to the book of Daniel, Collins only obliquely refers to the sensitive theological question regarding the authenticity of Daniel. Related to this issue is the distinction which he draws between ostensible settings explicitly given in the text (which he consistently regards as fictional) and the putative "actual" settings. In his assessment, he relies on the dated results of H. H. Rowley and of other persons unnamed. Indeed, on matters of introduction and setting, which are significant for any form-critical analysis, the author argues as if few advances have been made since S. R. Driver (1900). Collins either chooses to ignore, or is unaware of, several important twentieth-century discoveries and recent scholarly evaluations, such as studies of Dan 1:1 in the light of the *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings* (published by D. J. Wiseman in 1956); the cuneiform data for the evidence of a *Bēl-šar-uṣur*, the son of Nabonidus and the Belshazzar in Daniel (*ANET*, p. 309, n. 5); relevant evidence from Qumran; etc.

A similar stance is revealed by Collins in a recent article ("Daniel and His Social World," *Int* 39 [1985]:131-132) wherein he throws scholarly caution to the wind and attempts to elevate a hypothesis to the level of demonstrable fact by stating, "We are relatively well-informed about the situation in which Daniel was composed. Despite the persistent objections of conservatives, the composition of the visions (chaps. 7-12) between the years 167 and 164 B.C. is established beyond reasonable doubt." Nowhere does Collins respond to the evidence to the contrary, some of which I have mentioned in *AUSS* 21 (1983):129-141. Instead, he uncritically reflects here, as elsewhere, dated positions.

Collins conveniently resorts to the genre "apocalyptic" as an endorsement for his conclusions. His position begs the question, however, by contending that the book of Daniel finds its best parallel in the Pseudepigrapha and then proceeding to impose upon Daniel the features of *ex eventu* and pseudonymity, which are so characteristic of pseudepigraphic works. Methodologically, such reasoning is highly questionable, for it does not follow that the prophecies in Daniel must be *ex eventu* and *pseudonymous* just because they have affinities with the genre apocalyptic. This is particularly evident when we remember that the prime specimen of apocalyptic is the last book of the NT—a book that is commonly considered as *not* pseudonymous. Moreover, scholars generally recognize that while there are significant affinities between the book of Daniel and apocalypses of the

second century B.C. and later, there are also distinct differences which should not be ignored.

In the absence of a militant ideology in Daniel, Collins continues to maintain, against the scholarly *communis opinio*, that the author(s) of Daniel is (are) not Maccabean nor from among the Hasidim, but instead from among the wise teachers called the *maśkîlîm*. These, in Collins's view, were quietists communing with the angel world, and are possibly to be identified with educated teachers from the urban upper (though not necessarily rich) classes.

Only a few of the genre analyses suggested by Collins can be reported here. Collins dismisses such popular form-critical classifications of Dan 1-6 as *Märchen*, legend, aeteological narrative, and midrash. Instead, he argues that the overall genre-label should be court legends or legends in a court setting. This overall genre, in turn, accommodates subsidiary forms such as dream report, political oracle, doxology, interrogation, indictment speech, *pesher*, etc.

Turning to chaps. 7-12, Collins correctly objects to recent redaction-critical analyses which make insufficient allowances for the use of variations as a stylistic device and which depend far too heavily upon assumptions of occidental consistency. Also, contrary to his earlier opinion, he now believes that the traditional prayer of Dan 9 was included by the author of Dan 9 rather than by a later redactor.

Collins gives the genre-label "symbolic dream visions" to Dan 7 and 8, and he classifies Dan 10-12 (with the exception of the epilogue in 12:5-13) as an historical apocalypse in the form of a revelation resembling Dan 9 rather than the symbolic visions of Dan 7 and 8. The dominant genre of Dan 9, in his view, is an angelic discourse which, in turn, is a midrash on Jer 25:11-12 and 29:10.

It is with Collins's comments on the traditio-historical background to Dan 7 that I would like to take particular issue. His response (*JSOT* 21 [1981]:83-100) to my criticism (*JBL* 99 [1980]:75-86) of his thesis that Dan 7 presupposes a mythology ultimately derived from the Ugaritic complex somewhat modifies his earlier suggestions (reflected in *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel*, HSM 16 [Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977]), but his position still remains unconvincing and without factual support. Collins claims that the imagery of the sea, beasts, Ancient of Days, and the manlike being in Dan 7 has striking similarities to, and carries over allusions and associations from, the second-millennium-B.C. mythological conflict between Baal and Yam and the association of El and Baal. In his view, the Canaanite mythological material has actually influenced the author of Daniel.

To be sure, Collins does not maintain that the Baal cycle as known to us today was the exact prototype for Dan 7. Nevertheless, to all intents and

purposes there is little, if any, difference between the alleged variant that supposedly lay before Daniel and the Ugaritic material with which we are acquainted. In support of his thesis, Collins draws attention to several descriptive parallels (e.g., Daniel's third and fourth beasts have heads and horns, like the seven-headed Ugaritic dragon; Daniel's manlike being comes with clouds, like Baal who is a "rider of the clouds"; Daniel's Ancient of Days has white hair and presides over a judicial session, like El of Ugarit, who is depicted as an old, bearded person presiding over a heavenly council).

Further, Collins proposes that Dan 7 derived not only "fragmentary motifs from Canaanite mythology" but a whole "pattern," given the constellation of the individual motifs evident in Daniel (*Apocalyptic Vision*, pp. 101-105). He summarizes the sequence of events in the Canaanite stories as (a) the revolt of Yam (sea), (b) the defeat of Yam by Baal, and (c) the manifestation of Baal's kingship; and he maintains that the similarity between Dan 7 and points (a) and (c) of the Ugarit material "leaves no room for doubt that Daniel 7 is modelled on the same mythic pattern as the conflict of Baal in Yam" (*Apocalyptic Vision*, p. 106). Other mythic patterns are identified behind Dan 8 and 10-12, developing a system which allegedly forms the "framework of the message of the vision." Collins adds, significantly, that "the mythic pattern is one important factor which determines the meaning of the vision" (*Apocalyptic Vision*, p. 106; cf. pp. 165, 172, 207).

In his *JSOT* article mentioned above, Collins urges that the Ugaritic myths do not so much prove "the immediate source," but rather give "an example of traditional usage which illustrates the allusive context of the imagery" ("Apocalyptic Genre," p. 91). The "allusions" and "associations" are, of course, still anchored to the Baal cycle, as is evident from the repeated references that are made to descriptive parallels and similarities between the two bodies of literature.

Though Dan 7 interprets the sea as the earth and the beasts as four kings or kingdoms (vss. 17, 23), Collins contends that insistence on these meanings is a confusion of the "reference of the symbols" (i.e., earth, kings, kingdoms) with their "expressive value," which is "chaos" ("Apocalyptic Genre," pp. 92-93). Given the fact that "chaos" is not identified as an "expressive value" by the author of Dan 7, it can only be surmised that Collins derives this "value" from his interpretation of the Ras Shamra texts and then proceeds to urge this external meaning on the text of Daniel.

Another example of the dubious use to which the alleged mythological background is put is the proposition that the allusions associated with the imagery in both Daniel and Ugarit convey the idea of confrontation between the forces of chaos (in Daniel the sea, the four beasts, and the little horn are all considered the embodiment of the primordial forces of chaos,

just as in Yam in Ras Shamra) and heavenly figures (the Ancient of Days and the manlike figure, similar to El and Baal in Ugarit). It is evident that the proposed "expressive value" chaos is now pressed into service of further interpretation. For Collins it is this confrontation, and not "the temporal succession of world-kingdoms," which is the "main focus of Daniel 7" (*Apocalyptic Vision*, p. 106). Similarly, he maintains that the mythic pattern behind Dan 8 and 10-12 conveys the notion of confrontation between chaotic forces and heavenly figures and that it influences the biblical material to such a degree as to place main focus on instantaneous confrontation between God and worldly kingdoms, rather than on chronological developments in history. Collins notes, "It is crucial for the understanding of the vision that the mythic pattern takes precedence over the sequence of the four kingdoms [which implies chronological succession]" (*Apocalyptic Vision*, pp. 159-162).

It becomes apparent that Collins's hypothesis is beset by several problems:

(1) It oversimplifies the complexity of the Ras Shamra tablets, ignores their poor state of preservation, and disregards the variety of religious conceptions in the Canaanite world and the diversity of scholarly interpretation of the tablets. The theory assumes the existence of a well-established Baal cycle and a sequential arrangement for the "Canaanite myth" in which Baal is given his kingship by El after besieging Yam, but these are only unproven assumptions.

(2) The thesis concentrates on rather remote resemblances (the parallels of the kind that Collins postulates may be found in a variety of non-biblical religious texts), while downplaying significant differences which jettison the proposition. Since I have already argued this point elsewhere, I need not repeat any examples here (see *JBL* 99 [1980]: 79-86). These significant differences invalidate the constellation of motifs and alleged "allusive contexts" suggested by Collins.

(3) Collins concedes that there is always "discontinuity" in symbolic usage between an original source and a later writer. He recognizes correctly that "symbols do not necessarily carry the same reference as in the original" and that any use of earlier imagery involves the superimposition of one level of reference upon another. Just as symbolic language need not be univocal, so symbols may not have the same "expressive value" in two different contexts. What criteria, therefore, determine the continuity of symbolic usage between two texts? What control factors may be applied in order to safeguard scientific theological research? Collins's proposal that the meaning of one association of symbols determines or influences the meaning of another similar set is suspect, even if we merely consider the

hundreds of years which separate Ugarit and Daniel and the uncertainty about the history of the images involved.

(4) The postulate that the "expressive value" of sea and beasts in Daniel is "chaos" is disputable. J. C. H. Lebram notes that symbolization of world empires through beasts signifies neither a chaos battle nor creation myth, and that the appearance of "one like a son of man"—even in association with clouds—need not prove any relation to the Baal myth, for a similar figure features in Sir 24. Lebram observes that in the larger context of Dan 7, it is not mythology which keeps the individual elements together, but an apocalyptic scheme in which successive periods of history characterized by an ever-increasing lack of order are brought to an end through divine judgment and destruction of imperial powers (see *Theologische Realenzyklopaedie*, 8 [Berlin and New York, 1981]: 334). The allusion which the mood and attitude associated with the four beasts and the little horn evoke is more appropriately "imperial rule."

(5) Another serious problem with Collins's hypothesis is the disproportionate weight that it attributes to the supposed influence of the mythic patterns on the meaning of Daniel's visions. The alleged myths behind Dan 7-12 are considered as informing the message of Daniel to such a degree that, as we have noticed earlier, Collins deemphasizes the chronological development (i.e., the temporal succession of world empires) in favor of a spatial axis of history. This is not to deny the notion of a spatial axis of history in Daniel, but the excessive emphasis on "instantaneous confrontation" is a *tour de force* which glosses too readily over the explicit temporal designations and a four-empire scheme intended to convey the temporal axis of history.

Collins's volume on Daniel concludes with a sixteen-page glossary of forms, also citing the German equivalent designations. This book is the most comprehensive form-critical genre-label classification of the book of Daniel on the market and should prove useful to the researcher interested in such analysis. While it will encourage some consistency in classification, this reviewer suspects that it will not be the last word. Indeed, given the current theological interest in text totalities, one can only wonder if this series is not somewhat anachronistic.

Collins has gathered together extensive up-to-date bibliographies. It is only to be regretted that some significant articles and books representing presuppositions different from his own have escaped his notice (e.g., Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries [Downers Grove, Ill., 1978]). A casual reference to the "prayer of Azariah" and "Hymn of the Three Jews" is not matched by a corresponding discussion of the other apocryphal or deutero-canonical additions, such as "Susanna" and "Bel and the Dragon."

Though Collins's work reflects much research, students and/or pastors expecting another exegetical or expositional volume will be disappointed, for this is first and foremost a form-analytical handbook.

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Demarest, Gary. *1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus.* The Communicator's Commentary, vol. 9. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984. 333 pp. $14.95.

The purpose of "The Communicator's Commentary" series is to provide commentaries on the NT that make use of the insights gained from NT scholarship, yet are practical and devotional in nature. The aim is to fill the gap between commentaries whose depth of scholarship makes them useful only to the expert and popular commentaries that do not seriously touch base with the biblical text. Thus, these volumes have the potential to contribute, at a practical level, to a major hermeneutical concern: namely, to bridge the rift that has developed between teaching and preaching, between exegesis and application, and between the study of biblical concerns as opposed to the concerns raised by twentieth-century students of the Bible.

The series editor, Lloyd I. Ogilvie, has attempted to find authors who combine knowledge of the original languages and the current scholarly debate with a pastor's sensitivity to people's needs, who have an ability to discover and use vivid illustrations, and who can express themselves with simplicity and clarity in their use of the English language.

The author of the volume here under review, Gary W. Demarest, would appear to be well qualified for the assignment. During the past two decades he has been the pastor of the La Canada, California, Presbyterian Church; and in addition, he teaches preaching at Fuller Seminary. Thus, he is a "communicator" in both a preaching and a teaching role.

Although Demarest rarely addresses scholarly issues, he does seem to be aware of them. He uses word studies, archaeology, and background information wherever these help him to address what he perceives to be the concerns of his readers.

An example of the general approach used in this commentary may be of interest here. Demarest notes (p. 232) that by "reading between the lines" (a very noble scholarly pursuit these days!), one gets the impression that Timothy was rather shy and retiring, and uncomfortable with the major responsibilities that Paul had placed upon him; and thus there is a helpful message with special appeal to "all of us Timothys who, regularly or periodically, are required to do things beyond our natural desires and